The Proverbs of “Police” Administration:
Seven Habits for Improved Dispute Resolution
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Proverbs:

“A fact about proverbs that greatly enhances their quotability is that they almost always occur in mutually contradictory pairs.” Look before you leap”-but "He who hesitates is lost." This is both a great convenience and a serious defect—depending on the use to which one wishes to put the proverbs in question. If it is a matter of rationalizing behavior that has already taken place or justifying action that has already been decided upon, proverbs are ideal. Since one is never at a loss to find one that will prove his point—or the precisely contradictory point, for that matter—they are a great help in persuasion, political debate, and all forms of rhetoric.

But when one seeks to use proverbs as the basis of a scientific theory, the situation is less happy. It is not that the propositions expressed by the proverbs are insufficient; it is rather that they prove too much. A scientific theory should tell what is true but also what is false. If Newton had announced to the world that particles of matter exert either an attraction or a repulsion on each other, he would not have added much to scientific knowledge. His contribution consisted in showing that an attraction was exercised and in announcing the precise law governing its operation.”

Herbert Simon, “The Proverbs of Administration” (1946)

Simon goes on to argue that administrative “proverbs” had this defect of being contradictory and “proving too much”. In this paper, I will examine the proverbs of policing and show that these, too, are contradictory and prove more than is useful. I then, like Simon, make some suggestions to solve the dilemma.

Based solely on this one former police officer’s experience, the proverbs of policing are summed up with the following:

- Forget everything you learned in the Academy, now we’ll teach you how things are really done.
- They don’t pay us for what we do; they pay us for what we might have to do.
• All those policies, rulings and laws are more what you’d call “guidelines” than actual rules.
• There’s only one rule: We do whatever it takes to go home at the end of our shifts.
• Here’s your priorities: God, family, your partners, the organization, everyone else.
• I’d rather be tried by 12 than carried by six.
• Force must be met by superior force.
• We’re the police; we’re the biggest gang on the planet.
• To the bad guys, we are the boogey man; not the other way around.

From a veteran officer standpoint, the proverbs embody the wisdom for survival in the profession; but this truth came with years of experience and with understanding for the nuances of effective policing. For new officers, these proverbs are the guiding principles that lead to warped understandings and abuse of power. This further deteriorates our relationships with our communities.

Administrations draft rules and regulations in order to codify all mistakes of the past, but administrators also understand that it is impossible to account for all possible variables and that some degree of discretion must be allowed for officers (Waddington, 1999). Thus, administration engages in proverb writing as well:

• We will not break the law in order to enforce the law.
• The tie goes to the customer.
• We all make mistakes. The only mistake you can’t come back from are the ones where:
  o you knew it was wrong and you did it anyway; or
  o Someone is seriously hurt; or
o Those incidents however serious or minor in which you don’t tell the truth.

These proverbs seek to reinforce both the following of the rules and an acknowledgement of the officers’ practical proverbs as outlined above.

Further development of proverbs occurs at the front-line supervisor level. Sergeants further interpret the rules and policies and give troops advice on how better to integrate their proverbs with administrative rules:

- When faced with the individual who is rude or won’t go along with the program, don’t lose your temper and violate the law or policy. Simply put him or her on the 30-year plan. You don’t need to make a mistake or make an example of the person because in the next 30 years, if he or she continues in this line of behavior, you or one of your partners, will come in contact with him or her again when you have a lawful right to make an arrest. So just smile, be polite and bide your time. If he or she changes behavior, well then we’ve done our job and God bless the individual for the personal improvement.

- Referring back to the Administrator’s proverbs: While the tie goes to the customer, if he or she complains and I review the case, I’ll give the tie to you, the officer, because there may be things that occurred at the scene of which I am not aware. Don’t let this become a habit, however.

- If you lie, you die. Do not lie to me. I cannot help you if you lie to me.

These proverbs develop as employee responses to the uncertainty and the ambiguity of the police organization. In some ways, these are a philosophical way of dealing with the stress of the job.
Everyone who has worked the street knows that there are so many ways to get into trouble. Navigating the law, rules, policies, and politics is nerve wracking; so, the proverbs boil everything down to a set of workable guidelines: be safe, watch each other’s backs, don’t let the other guys see you sweat, don’t get too far outside the lines with your behavior, and, as long as you are o.k. with: your buddies; supervisors; administration; and, especially the politics, then the organization will take care of you.

But, in reality, the proverbs do not remove the ambiguity. The organization is still full of occupational and career hazards. Not only that, but the proverbs have unintended consequences in that they legitimize violating policies, rules, and laws when convenient as long as one can justify the circumstances. This leads to alterations of the truth in order to “pound to fit-paint to match” to policy; and because this is so widespread, the proverbs practically demand that officers cover for one another’s transgressions.

In addition, the proverbs encourage a culture where the cops view their job as one dimensional crime fighting. The idea here is that the police are the “thin blue line” of professionals, but who are more than professionals because “we are willing to give the ultimate sacrifice. This willingness to pay the ultimate price means that I get to name my own terms. Call it the last request of the condemned if you like, but since I volunteered, I get to place some conditions on the manner in which I make the sacrifice”. The cops figure that no one else will do what they do so they can make demands, but more often than not, no demands are made because officers just modify their attitudes and behaviors to match the proverbs. In my view, this is, by far, the more serious problem created by the proverbs. While I empathize deeply with the plight of the officer (and officers’ families when the ultimate price is paid), I am also deeply worried about the costs to the community from these seemingly reasonable proverbs.
I will argue later in this paper that the vertical justice system has deprived communities of ownership of justice and this has led to communities abandoning responsibility and accountability. The justice system and police departments have been optimistic that they can fill this gap, yet the evidence shows that neither the justice system nor police departments have proved effective. Furthermore, the justice system is very jealous of its territorial claims to all aspects of justice deliverance and does not readily allow community to have a meaningful say in justice delivery (Cristie, ?).

It is the major thesis of this paper, that a game changer is needed. Something needs to change in the system to restore ownership of justice to the community. This won't be easy for police departments to accept nor for the line officers to support, but this change is not unprecedented. Prior to the rash of school massacres that have occurred in the last 20 years, officer safety dictated that an officer did not attempt to handle a hostage situation until a perimeter had been set and a sufficient number of officers had arrived to be able to search the building in a systematic manner in order to isolate all suspects. At this point, hostage negotiators and entry teams were assembled. We even had a proverb to go along with the policies and practices: “Hostages are already bought and paid for”; meaning that while we would try to save hostages, there was an implicit agreement that hostages were already as good as dead and that it was not wise to risk one’s life unnecessarily for someone who was likely “unsaveable”. From an officer’s perspective, even today, this seems like good advice and good tactics. Despite this, the officers who have responded to school massacres have been sharply criticized for following these tactics. Consequently, we recognized that our proverb was out of touch with community values. While we thought this was a reasonable last request of the condemned that must be honored because no one else was willing to make the sacrifice, what we found was that nearly
everyone was willing to make the sacrifice in order to save kids. The communities’ feelings were that we had sworn the oath and taken the paychecks and that we’d better be willing to try to save our kids or they would find someone else who was willing. We quickly realized that we were willing to make that sacrifice and that we were willing to do so without any reservations. When we made this collective discovery, we changed policies and tactics. Now, when responding to an “active shooter”, we actively engage the threat. We pin down the suspect(s) while enabling and encouraging more potential victims to escape. At the same time, more officers respond for back up and these officers set up perimeters and prepare for an orderly clearing of the building(s). In essence, we trade children hostages for police hostages. This is a much better solution that may still end in tragedy but, is more acceptable than losing children without at least trying to save them. This realization and change in tactics is not dissimilar to what I propose in this paper. We, as the police, must reevaluate our relationship with the community. We must develop a philosophy, theories and practice to better nurture community and community members. This will not be easy and will require that each of the proverbs be examined and, likely, will require many proverbs to be abandoned.

I believe that major changes are needed in the way police officers and police departments view the world and their communities. In the next section, I outline the seven habits that I think are critical to overcome the deficits created by the proverbs of policing.

**Habit Number 1:**

**Mediate First; Engage in Non-Conventional Arbitration Second.**

Cops are good arbitrators but they resort to arbitration too quickly and without exploring mediation first. Many calls for service are disputes that officers listen to the parties’ respective
positions, but then officers often dictate a solution to the parties. While this may be the “right” solution, it lacks the buy-in that mediation can provide. When both parties agree to the process and arrive at a solution, they are much more likely to stick by that solution as when a solution is dictated to them (source).

It is important to long-term community relations with the police that we change our philosophy from arrest to mediation in many cases. While power must be exercised at least symbolically in order to be retained, illegitimate uses of power destroys that power (source). Thus, officers must learn to identify the core issues in any conflict or disturbance to which they are called and to first allow the parties the chance to come to a solution in a collaborative manner.

For those incidents that involve a clear violation of law or other legal principle, officers should move to Non-conventional arbitration. This may be simply an identification of issues that cannot be solved in the field and then a return to mediation in order to negotiate a truce while other legal steps are taken. This does not mean that officers must refer all cases; nor that officers must arrest immediately once a clear violation has been identified. On the contrary, officers should suggest mediation remedies. If there is equal power between the parties, and if parties freely agree, officers may be able to settle matters in the field (source).

Note, however that if there are high monetary costs, if the incident involves something of high gravity (e.g. giving up custody of one’s children), or if there could be significant legal consequences (i.e., leading to liability for the department) then officers should be trained to refer the case to the appropriate legal channels (Cooper, 1999).
Officers must also be able to evaluate how much time and effort this case will take from their other duties. Is this a case that should be kept for follow up or should it be referred to the appropriate mediation center or other resource?

Whether the case is kept for follow up or referred, officers should check in after the call is done, because this builds trust/capacity building, which is discussed further under habit #2 below.

While officers can develop mediation skills in order to better exercise and build these habits, the police organization must also embrace mediation practices. Cities and police departments should develop mediation capacity that includes the following: street level police officer mediation; non-conventional arbitration; ad hoc community mediation; and formal mediation centers. In particular, officers should become highly trained in Alternate Dispute Systems Design and be trained to use these skills to solve problems as they occur instead of viewing their role as merely “crime control”. Officers should abandon the narrow view that police departments control crime and should embrace a role as mediators. Officers should help customers seek harmony. Officers, of course, must be safe but they should also be polite and explain the process.

Departments must develop ways to mediate a truce if needed while a case is referred or follow up is completed. Finally, building capacity for mediation will undoubtedly require budget adjustments. Given this there is also a more pronounced role for the City Manager’s office to work with police departments to make these changes and implement these Alternative Dispute Systems.
Habit #2:

Explain in order to obtain consent and buy-in.

A major theme of this article is the community building role of officers. In order to do this, officers cannot give orders and expect obedience. Instead officers must nurture agreement. Officers must recognize that the people who live in a community know a little bit about what will be useful for their community. Unfortunately, our vertical justice system and monopoly of order maintenance by the Justice system, has deprived many neighborhoods of these unofficial leaders. I, of course, do not argue that all neighborhoods and communities lack unofficial capacity to maintain order. It is a well-documented observation that some communities are much more socially organized than others (Shaw, et. al). In my own experience, communities have people who could be effective leaders if someone would take the time to build up these leaders. The first step in this process is to be open to the community. Officers must be willing to explain one’s position (officer safety, the law, politics) and then be willing to listen to a community perspective. Finally, officers (and departments) must learn to have the patience to build the buy-in and consent from the community. Recognize that Rome wasn’t built in a day. You must overcome the Prisoner’s dilemma so that the parties trust each other (and you) as the rounds of play continue. In other words, officers must view this as a long game. How does an officer overcome moral dilemmas and adhere to a constitutionally protected rule of law; and also recognize that long term considerations may dictate a more restorative (and therefore, perhaps lenient) resolution method? In order to make decisions for the long-term, it would be helpful to have a model of Justice that addressed these issues. In Habit #3 below, I discuss just such a model of Justice.
Habit #3:

Develop a practical model of justice.

Reject the notion of winners and losers.

Many calls have no sovereign and, thus, are unlikely to have a “legal” outcome. Given this, an understanding of justice and a practical way of applying justice is needed. Any working cop knows this problem very well. A call between neighbors has no “right” or clear cut legal answer. Cops, therefore, engage in a variety of methods to “clear” the call. These range from a good old fashioned “kiss off” to the keeping of the peace (i.e., “Ok, you guys knock it off! If I have to come back out here tonight, somebody is going to jail!”). In an attempt to clear the call, the officer resorts to non-conventional arbitration in which a decision is made without adequate legal foundation (e.g. ruling in favor of whoever was more calm, whoever is more polite to the officer, or to whoever seems “less-wrong to the officer). The problem with this is not that it doesn’t work to solve the immediate keeping the peace problem. On the contrary, officers use these techniques because they work. The problem is that these solutions do nothing to solve underlying problems. In addition, these methods do nothing to find the underlying justice in the problem.

So how do we develop models of Justice that tend to solve underlying problems?

Roscoe Pound has an interesting idea in his seminal book “Introduction to the Philosophy of Law”. Pound notes that social problems develop until someone recognizes a common thread that suggests a solution. Every generation (or so) an idea emerges that best understands the problems
of the age and a new system is built from this foundation. But, Pound warns: the seeds of destruction are sown with every new idea. Even though an idea may solve the current crisis, there is often angst over the order and nature of things from one or more parties. Others have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. Over time this condition will lead to open conflict. And, this begins the search for new solutions.

These police calls have a very similar dilemma. The traditional policing tactics to “keep the peace” are sowing the seeds of destruction. Every officer knows that it is only a matter of time before another officer will need to come back to handle the problem again—we just hope that it doesn’t escalate to the point where someone is hurt.

In addition to these everyday problems, society, communities and neighborhoods have bigger issues that we might group into social structure or class categories. How do we avoid these problems? Do we welcome the conflict and institutionalize ways to identify it early and find solutions before the conflict rises to disruptive levels? Is it sufficient to assume that people are selfish so we must create checks and balances to control that selfishness? Or should we also look for practical models of justice through which we can periodically measure outcomes for overall justice?

Drawing from Adam Smith (Smith, 1776), Amartya Sen argues that we need an impartial party to be vigilant in examining practice in order to regulate the system and ensure that justice is served (Sen, 2009). John Rawls argues that we need to imagine that we each are in the “original position” and have not yet been born in order to devise rules that are fair to all based upon the idea that with uncertainty, we should be able to design a system that better embodies Justice.
Others argue that reasonableness cannot be judged by the concepts of a market system but must instead be based upon a search for human dignity (Newland, 1990) (Ramos, 1981).

There is insufficient room here to discuss these ideas, but I would argue that we do need a pragmatic understanding of justice for officers to follow. In this case, I argue that communities have long lives and that officers should be looking much farther than the end of their shifts and even longer than the ends of their careers. I argue that officers should be helping communities recognize that this is a long game and that every member of the community has an interest in making things better for the next generation. In the Athenian Oath, citizens swore to “transmit this City not only, not less, but greater and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us” and I see a role for officers to remind community members of this duty.

Given this, I recommend an idea of justice that holds the community to the role of the impartial judge. I further argue that the community can only do this by placing itself in a “final position” that we all recognize in our inevitable death and passing of the reins of power to the next generation. When it no longer matters for me, perhaps I can better negotiate to change the way communities are organized and this may suggest ways to transition from one idea of social organization to another. Finally, I ask police departments and individual officers to elevate human dignity to the top of the values that we hold and subordinate order preservation, rule making, rule enforcement, and preservation of our own position in the power structure to a position below that of enhancing the long term health and dignity of the community.

I recognize that these ideas may seem contradictory to the mission of enforcing laws, arresting law breakers, and maintaining order, but I argue that officers must question the old ways of doing things. For instance, I think it is informative to ask the following questions:
1. Is investigative subterfuge good for the community even though it may help solve this case?

2. Is the short term gain of confidential informants worth pitting neighbor against neighbor and brother against brother?

3. Is it good for the long term community health for officers to arrest people in order to demand respect?

4. What other things do we do day-to-day that undermines our legitimacy with the community?

I assert here that every call and every problem requires an officer (and a Police Department) to examine the system of justice and ask whether or not the proposed solution leaves the City greater and more beautiful. Have we enhanced human dignity? If the answer is “no”, I wonder how effective we are in that community.

If we can begin to perform in ways that are consistent with this of model of justice, I anticipate that community members can be encouraged to act more long-term as well.

**Habit #4:**

**Build the third way.**

Become an expert in dispute system design.

In much of the Western world, and particularly in the United States, we tend to assign all property rights to the market with strong faith that it will find the most efficient solution (Coase, year). Of course, we are not naïve in that we understand that there can be, and often are, market
failures. In those cases of market failure, we design governmental interventions. Elinor Ostrom argues that this presents an impoverished model for dealing with common pool resources (e.g. things like clean air, clean water, grazing rights, fishing rights, etc.). Ostrom shows that throughout time and space, humans have found many different ways to organize themselves to preserve common pool resources. In a similar manner, I argue in this paper that justice models have grown to rely too much on the market and on government. Society assigns individual and property rights to individuals and the right to protect rights and property to government. This results in a society that no longer relies on the idea of community, but instead asks the vertical government system to handle all social and crime problems.

Elinor Ostrom showed us that humans have many ways to manage common pool resources and I believe that humans have the ability to discover many different ways to solve crime problems and generally manage the common spaces. In short, this is the “third way”. We should first attempt to resolve disputes at the community level and only rely on government when community fails. Having made this assertion, I don’t think communities can do this unless and until they regain the skills to manage their common values and their common spaces. To accomplish this someone must Encourage, Inform, and Educate. Why shouldn’t some of this social energy come from police departments and individual officers?

Every community is unique and the systems will also be unique:

Officers are in a unique situation to be able to help communities build their own capacity for organization. We should use the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) toolbox to create a custom system but be open to accept innovation. The community will know what is right for them. One note of caution is needed here: while we shouldn’t force, we should preserve equity
when necessary so that all sides have ability to influence policy, but we should allow maximum flexibility outside these bounds. As I will argue below in more detail, it is a very legitimate goal of public administration in general to better ensure equitable treatment for all.

Someone needs to be the coach but ultimately once the skills have been taught and the capacity has been built, then public administrators—the police, need only remind people to treat each other well and use the tools of ADR to resolve disputes (Duke, 2003).

**Habit #5:**

**Be strong enough to apologize and be strong enough to forgive.**

Even when an apology is unwarranted, be sympathetic; but do give a genuine apology when it is warranted. Litigation and the fear of litigation have sealed our lips many times when the right thing to do would have been to apologize. We can easily understand the need to make plea bargains or agree to civil remedies once our incidents arrive in court—why can we not recognize a need for appropriate apologies?

The moments when an officer is too aggressive or over-reaches his or her power are opportunities, but it takes courage to face a citizen with an apology. Officers learn that the way to beat most citizens’ complaints is to “deny everything and demand proof.” To admit your mistakes means that you are more likely to be disciplined. While these are reasonable fears, in my own experience, I have been rewarded on each occasion when I recognized my own contribution to the conflict and apologized for it. Whether I had the internal understanding to
intervene immediately or whether I returned later, I always had better outcomes than when I took my chances that the citizen wouldn’t complain or wouldn’t have good evidence.

In minor altercations, I found that I gained lifelong friends and supporters. The symbolic value of an officer admitting fault was immeasurable. In one major altercation, I gained an important community advocate and concerned citizen informant as a result of a timely and honest apology. I can look back now and recognize that these people each helped my career advance more quickly than it would otherwise. In addition, I learned a great deal from each of these individuals because I listened better to their concerns.

Hand-in-hand with an ability to give a genuine apology is the ability to forgive and be open to giving second and third chances. Frankly, this is no more than the community has done for the police on many occasions. While I cannot speak for each officer, I know I made numerous mistakes that could have cost me my career, but somehow I was granted the chances I needed to become a good officer.

Admittedly, in areas with high call volumes, it may be difficult for the police to know who deserves a second or third chance. In those cases, consider asking the community for help determining who deserves those chances.

**Habit #6:**

**Remember that “temple moments” are justified.**

While I’ve stressed a reinvention of how policing is conducted, I don’t deny that the police are charged with protecting the rights of the weak. Righteous indignation is appropriate and should
be encouraged (but not overdone). For example, there is some evidence that Andrew Jackson used the legends of his fiery temper to intimidate transgressors and thereby avoid having to actually lose his temper (source).

There are two areas where I think officers are clearly justified in outrage: 1) Those things that are so clearly immoral that they cannot be tolerated; 2) Clear equity issues.

The people who are recruited to be officers would be of little use if they did not become outraged when someone violates another person’s body or personal rights. In those cases, there is little justification for ADR, restorative justice (RJ), or letting the community decide what is best for the offender. Officers are completely justified in taking legally sanctioned steps against the offender. There may be a place for ADR and RJ after the fact (i.e., to restore the balance of power between the suspect and the victim), but I don’t think we have a right to expect officers to make these overtures in the field. In this case, the officer’s role is akin to Adam Smith’s or Amartya Sen’s idea of a unbiased third party (Sen, 2009) (Smith, 1776). Someone must be the referee and society has placed this power in the hands of the police—we should not tie the hands of the police by expecting ADR and RJ to solve all problems.

This is true also for those issues that might not rise to the level of outrage as described above, but which are none-the-less harmful to the continued operation of a fair social system. H. George Frederickson cogently argues that public administration has a duty to more than the ideals of economy, effectiveness and efficiency. In addition to these ideas, Frederickson adds the ideal of Equity. According to Frederickson, public servants must always be alert to those situations in which one person or group is being taken advantage of by another (Frederickson, 1995). In these cases of Asymmetric power or force, public administrators must stand up and take action to
attempt to restore balance. For example, would atrocities be possible if public servants always performed according to this model? Could Jim Crow or Apartheid have remained viable systems if officers and other public employees refused to participate?

These injustices continue today in our communities. Some are subtle and some are blatant. Until officers recognize these issues and stand up for equity, the police will enjoy less success in building the relationships that will empower communities to heal themselves.

**Habit #7:**

**Be prepared to recognize shared values.**

Officers are socialized into the police system very carefully. The strict selection process, the police academy, the training program, and then socialization into the actual working team, lead officers believe that they are superior and different than those over whom they exercise power. While this is important for élan, it can create a distance from the community. Officers lose sight of the fact that the police power and the people are truly one and the same.

Parallel values may be viewed through a different lens, but officers lose the ability to see through any lens but the police lens. One solution for this problem is to cultivate the ability to use different lenses.

The case of Nelson Mandela in South Africa is one such example of a person who used this ability to resolve major disputes and form a new social system. Mandela discovered that literature revealed that people were the same across time, distance and cultures; and that political
or historical literature was an inferior source to judge similarities than were novels, poetry and other creative literature.

“Using Sonny Venkatrathnam’s Collected Works, prisoners took pleasure in reading and reciting favourite passages, acknowledging to one another that they found in these plays instances of self-awareness, conflict, and triumph over adversity which moved them and with which they could identify.” (Boehmer, 2008, location 1466, Kindle Edition).

“Around the same time as Mandela arrived at Fort Hare, the leading Zulu writer B. W. Vilakazi in his poem ‘Higher Education’ memorably spoke of how the ‘white man’s books’ and black praise-songs quarreled in his mind. It was a quarrel that was resolvable only if Africans were regarded as much as a part of humanity as whites, a view that Mandela did not hold in doubt but that apartheid of course directly refuted. Yet literature with its insights into the passions and conflicts which moved all societies, at the same time offered pathways to think through such quarrels. As Mandela appears to have found when reading Afrikaans poetry or Nadine Gordimer’s Burger’s Daughter in prison, or when performing Sophocles with fellow inmates, the point where different literatures converged lay in their insights into human subjectivity. Unlike in law books or historical studies, in novels and drama it was possible to see how the personal self sheared away from the politician’s agenda.” (Boehmer, 2008, location 1480, Kindle Edition).
Similarly, this research proposes that people communicate shared narratives. Modern communication, social media, and interpersonal communication gives unprecedented access to the stories, anecdotes and narratives that people share if we only realize that this treasure is all around us. It seems that these may be a rich source to be mined to discover basic truths of the human condition.

“...the diverse social structures and political traditions to which he (Mandela) was exposed created in him not merely a layering of values that might be inflected as the situation demanded. Another effect of this heterogeneity of political formation was that certain priorities and ideals intertwined and were reinforced, most particularly in Mandela’s case the vision of a secular, classless, and racism-free society that sustained him from the 1940’s.” (Boehmer, 2008, location 1487, Kindle Edition).

Just as Mandela found inspiration in literature to found a new type of society, narrative research may lead to better understandings between and among groups; and, between communities and the law enforcement that serve them. Officers must learn to be aware of and sensitive to these narratives.

Officers should look not just to the community but to the popular literature, music, and entertainment that is consumed by members of their community. This media may be rich in data about the community, but should also be explored through an exchange of ideas. Social and cultural norms are built in a very organic way. There should be significant participation by officers in this process.
Conclusion:

Police Departments and Police Officer rely to a great extent on informal bonds and upon the informal wisdom of the organization. This wisdom is often summed up in convenient proverbs, which, I have demonstrated, can be contradictory and lead to unintended consequences. In a reexamination of proverbs, we find that officers are estranged from the values of the community and this may explain why officers act in ways that are contradictory to what the community finds acceptable. In this paper I have argued that “business as usual” will no longer serve the needs of our communities. Officers and their Police Departments must examine operating procedures, policies, attitudes, and most of all the proverbs. Where these artifacts do not match with the needs and values of the community, the profession must be willing to change the meanings, modify, or abandon the artifacts or aspects of them. In furtherance of these goals, I have identified the seven (7) habits that will help officers accomplish this goal. Officers must be able to:

1. Mediate first: We should not abandon Non-Conventional Arbitration, but we should first attempt to mediate when circumstances allow;
2. Explain how dispute resolution and community building works: we must work to give control back to citizens and stand ready to help them build according to a communal idea of their ideal community;
3. Develop a practical model of justice that focuses on the long-term welfare of the community: we must recognize that the vertical system of justice may not be the most appropriate way to handle problems in ways that enhance the overall community. Additionally, we must recognize that methods of policing (including the manner in which we deal with people) impacts the long-term outcomes for the community;
4. Build the third way: Outside the bounds of the market and/or government paradigm, individuals and groups have limitless power to solve disputes and build their communities. Officers should build the skills to enable people to manage common spaces.

5. Offer sincere apology when appropriate; and be open to forgiving;

6. Be righteously indignant. Officers must protect equity for victims, for the disadvantaged; and have the courage to take on inequities in the system;

7. Recognize shared values: Officers must be able to recognize when community values and Justice System values do not align (and when individual Officer values conflict). Furthermore, officers must be adept at finding common ground. Officers must find ways to reframing moments when they can recognize the values they share with those upon which they enforce the law.
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