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Revised for the Tides and Currents in Police Theories Conference
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Linking the numerous characterizations of policing

- Power and politics
- Internationalism and globalization
- Managerialism and efficiency
- Risk
- Prediction and evidence
- Community sensitivity
- Drama of control
- Governance and securitization
- State use of force
- Government as philosopher, friend and guide
Limits of Current Policing Characterizations

- Tend to be one-dimensional – often focused on one set of elements affecting policing versus others
  - The problem of what to leave in and what to leave out
- May over-simplify complicated relationships
  - This is the bane of all models- to capture the study topic they must simplify
- Often miss the interconnections between macro-meso-micro level interactions and influences

Why a Metaphor?

- Metaphors are pervasive in language, thought and action
- Our conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical
- Understanding and experiencing one thing in terms of another – how metaphors shape beliefs, thinking and actions
- By abstracting one thing from another the metaphor also provides the opportunity to better understand complexity
Pros and Cons of Metaphors

Positive: “An idea is a feat of association, and the height of it is a good metaphor.” — Robert Frost

Negative: “Writers who have nothing to say always strain for metaphors to say it in.” - Florence King

Ambiguous: “Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar.” — Sigmund Freud

The Sea as a Metaphor for Policing

- The Sea
  - Profound power
  - Ubiquity (2/3’s of Earth)
  - Connecting isolated parts
  - Constant state of flux
  - Many things shape ebb and flow
  - Romanticized notions
  - Used for different reasons

- The Police
  - Extreme State power
  - Policing is ubiquitous
  - Policing connects social control elements
  - Policing in flux at the surface
  - Many things shape policing
  - Romanticized notions
  - Used for different reasons and motivations
The Dynamics of the Sea

- Tides – influenced by macro-level forces of celestial bodies and Earth’s rotation
- Currents – movements of the sea that convey waters around the Earth
  - Surface
  - Deep
  - Create the Earth’s conveyor belt
- Upwelling and downwelling – movement of nutrients from the depths to the surface and returning to the depth
- Eddies and Whirlpools – counter-cyclical movements of parts of the sea
- Riptides – currents that pose danger to those in the water close to shore

Tides

- Represent the linkage of Earth to other celestial bodies
- Tides are created by the gravitational pulls of the Moon and Sun, as well as the rotation of the Earth
- There are two tides per 24 hour cycle, the sub-lunar (when close to the Moon), and the antipodal (when close to the Sun)
- While tides are patterned and predictable, they are more treacherous near shorelines
- Tides at once are shaped by external forces and themselves shape the shorelines of the Earth
Surface Currents in the Sea

- At the surface currents are driven by Earth’s rotation and the prevailing winds
- In turn the prevailing winds are shaped by the Sun (temperature) and Earth’s rotation
- Surface currents play an important role in moving heat around the globe, from the equator to the poles
- Surface currents show considerable variation across the world, and can occupy vast expanses of the sea
- They flow clockwise in the Northern Hemisphere and counter-clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere

Surface Sea Currents
Deep Sea Currents

- Deep currents are driven by the density of sea waters, effected by salinity and temperature
- Dense sea currents can run contrary to surface currents as they are not influenced by prevailing winds
- Nonetheless, these currents move water around the world in what has been called the conveyor belt of the sea – called thermohaline circulation
The Global Conveyor Belt

Upwelling

- Occurs through the upward movement of waters from the depths to the surface
- Is created when the wind-generated Ekman transport, flowing at 90 degrees to the ocean surface (northern and southern direction), causes surface waters to diverge, making room for nutrient rich waters at the sea’s depths to rise to the surface and replenish surface waters
- It is most common along the Equator and near costal regions having eastern boundary currents
- When waters are driven by the winds at the Equator or near shorelines the opening in the waters affords waters from the depths to flow to the surface and be carried toward the poles, where it eventually cools
**Downwelling**

- Occurs when surface waters converge forcing surface waters downward
- Downwelling regions are typically nutrient depleted, as surface waters are driven to depths where they are replenished by nutrients
- Downwelling also occurs adjacent to eastern coastal regions where winds drive coastal waters near shore downward
- Waters at depths gather nutrients and begin the cycle of upwelling again

**Eddies**

- Meso-level and countervailing forces that are countercyclical motion to dominant currents
- Eddies “spin off” from larger currents, and in this sense get their energy from currents
- Eddies can occupy large expanses of the ocean and can last for several months
- They are often considered the sea’s weather, developing on cold or warm water flows
- They return to the dominant current flows eventually
Ocean Eddies

Whirlpools

- Masses of water that spin in a countercyclical motion, and sometimes with great force
- They occur in the rise and fall of tides, opposing currents and obstructions in the sea
- Actions of the winds can also shape whirlpools
- Most whirlpools are small and insignificant
- Maelstroms are whirlpools with considerable downward force (called vortex)
Salstraumen Maelstrom - Norway

Riptides or Rip Currents

- Contrary to dominant tides and conditioned by shorelines and prevailing winds
- As the sea comes to shore water is forced sideways, and in returning to the sea can create powerful currents moving away from the shoreline
- Riptides represent the contrariness of the sea
- It’s best not to swim against the riptide; rather parallel to it until the swimmer escapes the pull of the tide.
Rip Tides (Currents)

The Tides of Policing

- Broad social histories and values
- Macro economic, social and political conditions
- Political governance structures
- Institutional structures and their acceptance
- Globalization and internationalization
- Migrations and population shifts
The Currents of Policing

- Shifts in world and local politics
- Increased uncertainty in economic, political and social conditions
- Heightened awareness of crime and other social problems, typically through the media
- Rise in nationalism or nativism
- Tensions between majority and minority perspectives and communities

Upwelling

- Upwelling appears in the face of public fear or discomfort with a social, economic or political situation
- Has resulted in fear projected on out groups, immigrants, racial, religious or cultural minorities, youth
- Stems from moral panics, fueled by popular culture and the media
- Most often result in some form of repressive action taken, including those of the police
Downwelling

- Downwelling occurs through appeasement, redirection or reconditioning of public fear
  - This results in programs that seek short-term results
  - Reassurance and zero tolerance programs anchor the spectrum of police responses
  - Can lead to governance through fear and the manipulation of public perceptions by the government and the media
  - Often results in a cycle of fear-appeasement-calm-fear

Police Eddies and Whirlpools

- Reforms of the police aimed at greater transparency
- Efforts to improve governance and oversight of the police
- Programs that focus on engagement and greater interaction with the community – “sloganism” and “window-dressing” programs
- Improved police analytics
- More sensitive police responses
Riptides to Police Legitimacy

- Loss of confidence in the public
- Fear of public dislike for the police
- Excessive use of force
- Over and under policing
- Political policing
- Public concerns with procedural justice
- Over reach of police incursions into private life
- Loss of respect for the rule of law and human rights

Thank you, Merci, Dank u wel

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