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Toward an Analytical Framework for the Study of Race and Police Violence

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Abstract: *Treatments of race and police violence in the fields of public administration and policy have drawn eclectically from many disciplinary sources in historical, political, and managerial analysis. From an institutional perspective, emphasis has been on how organizational practices, rules, norms, and values, along with role socialization, shape germane behavior. Of particular interest to the authors is the phenomenon of race-related police violence in its systemic but also attitudinal and behavioral manifestations in the policing role. How does an academic or practitioner researcher specify evaluative perspectives applicable to this policy and administrative challenge? There is a prior need for defined analytical and ethical positions drawing closely from public administration and policy sources. This article suggests ways to develop such grounded frameworks, built on these distinctive traditions but also going beyond them, so as to allow for an integrative approach to evaluative analysis and action on this grave and contentious issue.*

The gravity and contentiousness of social issues such as those connected to the violence suffered by African Americans at the hands of police demand an informed policy response, based on adequate evaluative frameworks, so that there may be some movement toward their resolution. A first step might be consideration of what is known about the phenomenon of race-related police violence as well as of the options available for an effective response (Axtell 2000; Raadschelders 2011). In an effort at a closely tailored research synthesis, the authors will specify the public administration and policy sources on which they rely, as well as other essential sources, ranging from social and behavioral theory to public and professional ethics.

As Frederickson suggests, it is public administration that is "[distinctly] responding to the modern challenges of high fragmentation and the disarticulation of the state" (1999, 710), including problems of disorder, inequity, and instability resulting in violence. For Frederickson, distinctly public administration research represents a break with political science in connection with the liberal state, with its premises and promises of social equity, as these are often violated, particularly when it comes to the enacting of racism by public officials (Frederickson 1990). Police violence against African American and other communities of color in the United States may be seen as a form of state failure, given its virulence and persistence (L. Miller 2015). Because of its systemic quality, it may in fact be cast as "racialized state violence" (Amar 2010), and it is

certainly resistant to easy analysis. Because of their interdisciplinary nature and insistence on evidence-based action, the joined fields of public administration and policy may offer unique insights into this difficult subject.

Public administration scholars have drawn on social theory to account for the kind of police violence considered here. For instance, it is proposed that police may come to identify with their law enforcement roles to such an extent that they are blind to their aggressive responses to citizens of color (Wilkins and Williams 2008). Distorted forms of professional identification may help account for instances of police violence perpetrated against African Americans by African American police officers and other officers of color. Although it has been shown that the vast majority of fatal police shootings of unarmed African Americans are committed by non–African American police officers (Menifield 2015), law enforcement racial profiling occurs virtually irrespective of the race or ethnicity of the police officer who is involved (Ward 2002; Wilkins and Williams 2008). Instead, police-involved violence seems to be principally attributable to the organizational cultures and institutional norms and roles found in law enforcement agencies, particularly in a police officer's own department (Harmon 2016). Other researchers have extended the range of contextual influences from police departments to the communities, neighborhoods, and the larger society in which police officers are socialized long before they enter a police academy (Gaines and Kappeler 2011).

It is their eclectic approaches to social inquiry that singularly allow the public administration and policy disciplines to probe the extensive range of influences involved, be they cognitive and developmental factors or cultural, organizational, and institutional ones. The aim of the present article is to provide a tentative starting point for an integrative analysis of the phenomenon of race-related police violence in the United States, with stress on sufficiency of understanding and consideration of corrective options suited to public administration and policy. It is the authors' contention that one need not wait for a fully explanatory analysis—at any rate an impossible goal—before establishing options for responsive action.

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Sources for the Study of Institutional Racism

Ward and Rivera (2014) point to a conundrum in the public administration literature with regard to the study of institutional or systemic racism. On the one hand, the literature is inherently interdisciplinary and seemingly all-embracing; on the other hand, it appears to the authors to insufficiently address issues deriving from institutional racism. Institutional racism is often found in the gaps between (1) avowed political and organizational commitments to diversity and equity and (2) regressive, discriminatory practices, such as racial profiling. These gaps in knowledge persist largely because the concept of racism forces a research emphasis on hidden factors—cognitive and cultural ones, for example—that are difficult to specify and define. It is also the case, as already suggested here, that the complexity of the problem so defies explanation as to stymie elaboration of responsive options. Consideration of sources found in the varied literatures on which we draw brings us to several definitions that we find useful for a sufficient exploration of the issue and of corresponding public policy and programmatic options (Ward and Rivera 2014, 103–16).

One key concept on which the authors rely, particularly with regard to the demands of police professionalism, is *integrative complexity.* It is defined as the capacity for complex processing of differences with others that is needed for responsiveness to other races, ethnic groups, or cultures. This crucial perceptual and cognitive capability involves empathetic ways of perceiving, thinking, and acting on interracial differences that allow individuals to take expansive perspectives on attendant issues and problems. Integrative complexity involves openness to different races, ethnicities, cultures, and ways of life, a competency that is especially needed by public officials, whose obligation is to serve the entire citizenry equitably and fairly (Chaney and Robertson 2015; see also Ortiz and Jani 2010; Tuckman 1966).

Another set of key definitions relies on *contextual historical analysis;* legal history is relevant here, to the extent that it concerns racial bias and abuse in the public sector. *Critical race theory* (CRT) is a construct that relies largely on such historical as well as structural analysis (Heinze 2006). In adapting CRT to various studies in their recent text, Ward and Rivera (2014) incorporate it into a larger policy analysis that is consistent with a public administration and public policy focus. Relying more directly on CRT, Petrocelli, Piquero, and Smith contend that police are inclined "by oath" as well as by habitual threat perception to enforce laws differently by socioeconomic class; the authors cite arrest data from Philadelphia, where, as in other cities, arrests are notably higher in areas with high proportions of unemployed males and "female-headed households with children" (2003, 4).

Cultural analysis and *the politics of cultural identity* describe another pertinent set of concepts based on the construct of social devaluation, which involves the attribution of threat and blame to the cultural norms, traditions, values, and behaviors of racial and ethnic minorities. Here we examine how biased cultural outlooks impact people of color in various organizational and policy domains that include policing. Cultural identity is bound up with cultural pluralism—what Kwame Anthony Appiah (2005) calls the "irreducibly plural nature of human [and cultural] values"—and, as Jürgen Habermas argues, "identity formation depends upon relations of reciprocal recognition" (1993, 130–31) built on communicative competence. Those denied recognition because of prejudice are also denied access to the ethical spaces of community and political dialogue (Ermine 2007) and, therefore, are denied recognition of their very personhood. As Tastsoglou suggests, rather than an imputed quality, identity must be regarded as "other referenced, relational and comparative" and as "constructed and subject to ongoing negotiation" (Tastsoglou 2001, 3; see also Gutmann 2009). Abdelal et al. (2006) similarly treat race and identity as socially constructed categories, while Coyle (2010) stresses the harm done by foreclosed access to public discourse in a legal-critical analysis.

Another key concept is *institutional racism,* by definition systematic institutional and organizational practices differentially affecting people of color (see the article by Charles R. Epp, Steven Maynard-Moody, and Donald Haider-Market in this symposium). For instance, the lack of diversity among police departments is often cited as an underlying cause for police-involved violence against African American and other populations of color. However, as an indication of the complex causation involved, it is also true that relatively diverse police departments sometimes have racism imputed to them in certain cases of police violence, which points to the importance of institutional culture, norms, roles, and socialization factors in shaping this phenomenon. Institutional racism therefore refers to both intentional and unintentional, overt and covert forms of prejudice that subsist in systemic practices, for instance, in employment and promotion processes that disadvantage racial and ethnic minorities—hence the basic interchangeability of the terms "institutional" and "systemic" racism (Price 1997). Braham, Rattansi, and Skellington (1992, 106) suggest that widening the definition of discrimination to include indirect institutional racism allows for a better understanding of the formidable obstacles faced by racial and ethnic minorities in their everyday lives, including the experience of what might be de facto government-sanctioned violence in their encounters with police.

We also rely in this connection on the economic concept of *hysteresis,* or historical inertia, which pertains to the entrenchment

and normalization of privilege in the long-standing development of racist policies and practices. Thus, we contend that law enforcement racial profiling is systemic, often occurring irrespective of the race or ethnicity of the officer, and that racially motivated violence is not necessarily reduced by a having increased racial diversity in the given police force (Ward 2002; Wilkins and Williams 2008). Rather, institutional resistance to change (even with increasing diversity in police ranks) speaks to entrenched attitudes toward race and jaundiced perceptions of criminality.

Finally, we stress *professional and public ethics,* including concepts of public responsibility, answerability, and accountability, relying heavily on the public administration and policy literature streams. This is so because we consider ethical dimensions of racism at various levels of analysis, including the street-level behaviors of police officers whose encounters with African Americans seem especially conducive to racial profiling and violence. Here we explicitly articulate evaluative methods tied to political and philosophical ethics. A public ethics standpoint, one that is consistent with CRT and contextual historical analysis, allows us to consider how racial profiling reveals long-extant justifications of "hierarchies of power and privilege" (Lever 2016; see also FitzPatrick 2006). We are concerned, therefore, with what Sen and Wasow (2016) characterize as the "immutable" racialization of identity in public encounters between police and victims of color, which is inextricably tied to misperceptions of people of color. We have also probed the interplay of social and political interests with settled institutional agendas—what Pinderhughes (1989) calls "power-assigning structures"—so as to assess the reasons for the perpetuation of racial inequity and to propose new frameworks for its remediation.

Moreover, we have found significant evidence in the academic, practitioner, and periodical literatures that racial profiling (singling out individuals on the basis of race for traffic stops, frisking, and the like) often occurs irrespective of social class and other identity traits, even though these features of identity are noted as critically important by some scholars (Harris 2010; Ward 2002). It may literally be the subject's racial profile irrespective of class—young black man walking or (stereotypically) wearing a hoodie—that seems to prompt stops, interrogations, and (too often) police-involved shootings and other forms of violence. The stereotyping involved—the projection of dangerousness and menace onto African American men—is deeply embedded in American history, dating to the days of slavery. Notwithstanding this caveat on race as a frequently overriding factor, however, the close connection in the United States between race and class leads us to conclude that both racial and socioeconomic status traits are at play to different degrees in each incident of racial profiling.

Rather than attribute police abuses to individual misconduct, Luna points to "a systemic disorder within the institution of law enforcement" (2003, 186). An indication that racial profiling is somehow embedded in law enforcement culture rather than simply a matter of individual bias, such behavior is demonstrated by black and Latino officers as well, with minority motorists and pedestrians still the primary targets. This phenomenon speaks to the hyperidentification of officers with police culture and their organizations and, generally, to institutional factors rather than

merely cognitive and attitudinal ones (Ward and Rivera 2014, 106). However, it also speaks to socialization influences on police officers, most of whom retain the "rule-following expectations" and enforcement-mindedness they brought into the police academy and the profession (Musheno 2016; Oberfield 2010, 735). Instead of hyperidentification with a stilted version of professional norms, what police officers need is the capacity for identification with others, especially those who stand at the greatest sociocultural distance from them, as suggested in the earlier outline of key sources for this article. For Hennessy (1999), continuing police training must be closely adapted to the cognitive learning styles of police officers while also aiming to increase their cognitive capacity to deal adaptively with members of the public, particularly the minority public. Hennessy proposes that "people are usually attracted to occupations that appeal to their strongest preferences for doing things" (1999, 13). The implication is that prior socialization may be so imprinted when a cadet comes into the academy or an officer takes up in-service training that it limits the efficacy of continuing education efforts, whether these pertain to ethics or to cultural competency.

Assessing Perceptions of Threat: Institutional and Behavioral Lenses

In his extensive treatment of socialization influences on police and other public officials, *Becoming Bureaucrats,* Oberfield (2014) finds that both institutional and dispositional factors help shape officers' street-level behaviors, with dispositional ones pertaining to self-selection into the profession exhibiting singular strength. While we hold to evidence of institutional factors at work, we acknowledge that analysis of racial profiling through the lens of individual predispositions is also essential: it may suggest ways of addressing police-involved violence attributable to racism. Writing for the *Washington Post,* Erin Texeira (2006) addresses the topic of predisposition in relation to the daily challenges that African American men in particular face when confronting stereotypes. Texeira presents the story of black attorney Keith Borders and the lengths to which he goes to avoid being regarded as dangerous—trying to somehow diminish his six-foot, seven-inch frame, choosing physical stances (placement of hands and feet) that are nonthreatening, dressing conservatively, and using a soft voice and deferential speech—in encounters with police. Of this sort of defensive posturing, Borders says, "It's all about surviving, and trying to thrive, in a nation where biased views of black men stubbornly hang on decades after segregation and where statistics show a yawning gap between the lives of white men and black men." The interaction between victim and police officer is stereotyped, almost choreographed, and in this forced complicity, the officer should be presumed to bear the greater weight of responsibility as a public servant and a professional (Lepora and Goodin 2013). Eric Miller (2015) similarly notes the wide prevalence of this sort of defensive behavior among people of color, including avoiding "abrupt" movements in encounters with police—familiar fare for most African Americans.

Here we need to bring our critical analysis to a more encompassing level: the larger culture in which offending police officers have been socialized, personally as well as professionally. This point is illustrated by laboratory experiments conducted by social psychologists (Rattan and Eberhardt 2010) in which the

participants' perceptions of threat, and their decisions to shoot, were higher when confronted with armed black suspects compared with armed white suspects. By way of further illustration, Johnson and Rivera (2007) have found in classroom studies that African American men are subject to threatening stereotypes much more often than their white male counterparts, even among graduate and undergraduate university students. Garcia and Johnston-Guerrero (2016) find similar campus experiences and classroom manifestations of racism across the nation. Police bias based on unwarranted threat perception may prompt the use of excessive force in situations that involve both police discretion and prejudice (Friedrich 1980; McElvain and Kposowa 2008). However, this situated kind of abuse of power has many formative sources, as we have consistently noted.

After consideration of everything from attitudinal and dispositional factors to institutional ones, the question again arises whether public administration and public policy researchers need to thoroughly plumb the complex institutional and attitudinal sources of police-involved violence before making corresponding policy and programmatic recommendations, or whether (as we argue) undeniable evidence of a critical problem is sufficient warrant for action. Government policies and programs may be made subject to empirical evaluation for their effectiveness in remedying historically patterned incidences of profiling, arrests, killings, and incarceration, without our having to rely on a full explanatory foundation that is yet to be constructed.

Social Equity, Accountability, and Public-Professional Ethics

Public administration scholars such as Mitchell Rice, Blue Wooldridge, and Kristen Norman-Major have begun to address concerns such as these through social equity and public accountability as well as through cultural competency frames (Johnson 2012). More than any other single researcher in the discipline, however, it is H. George Frederickson (Frederickson and Ghere 2013) who is most closely associated with the study of social equity and related themes, and the dual public administration and policy discipline has yet to fully pick up the challenge posed by his seminal scholarship. Frederickson has long argued that the public administration field has insufficiently considered social equity when it concerns race and gender, for instance, in regard to the enduring implications of disparate educational opportunities (Frederickson 2010). Frederickson and the other researchers just noted have cast these subjects as social and political ones while laying stress on ways to implement corrective policies. These authors have also grounded social equity analysis in public and philosophical ethics. We find, for example, that Wooldridge and Gooden (2009), Norman-Major (2011), and Rivera, Johnson, and Ward (2010) all draw directly or indirectly on the work of John Rawls in *A Theory of Justice* (1971), with his definition of fairness as the maximally equitable extension of public goods consistent with the preservation of liberty (see also Rice 2015; Rivera and Johnson 2015; Shelby 2004).

These authors would recalibrate the balance between liberty and social justice, and between discretionary police authority and its

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regulatory constraint, in light of the persistence of institutional racism by stressing the value of social equity and the premise of public accountability. The term *accountability* has several implications: external and internal accountability in commonsense terms of *transparency,* accountability as a *responsibility* for public servants and public professionals, and accountability as both personal and institutional *answerability* (Dubnick 2003; Mulgan 2000). Notwithstanding important contributions to the subject, the public administration literature has only partially moved toward a direct, central, and sustained consideration of the demands of public and professional accountability connected with police-involved violence in the United States.

From Ferguson to Baltimore and Tulsa to Charlotte, police-involved violence against African Americans, especially African American men, has become a matter of almost daily news reports in the United States. Rothstein (2015) provides a summary account of the so-called Ferguson effect, that is, the purported chilling effect on policing of an antipolice backlash (see also Pyrooz et al. 2016). For Frederickson and Ghere (2013), police violence is a matter for consideration under the rubrics of social equity, accountability, and public and professional ethics, beyond the headlines and immediate controversies. This is the case for a number of reasons. The pattern and frequency of abuses are difficult to ascertain, given the difficulties involved in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of attendant data. All the same, the prevalence of what appears to many to be police violence motivated by racism can erode the perceived legitimacy of government and of state power. It makes for a widespread perception of moral failure on the part of government officials, particularly police and their overseers. Only "ethics reform promises to restore political legitimacy" and public trust, Frederickson and Ghere (2013, 4) argue. Those authors contend that a restorative emphasis based on normative ethics has become necessary (2013, 7). Their work suggests that in a postpositivist public administration field, interpretation, perception, expectation, and socially constructed meaning are the fulcrums for ethical responses to abuses of power.

Disciplinary, professional, and ethical considerations now coincide: "In this regard, it appears important to direct as much attention to what ethics *do* or *can do* for the professional as to what ethics *are* or *can be* as a unified body of theory and research" for public administration as a community of practice (Frederickson and Ghere 2013, 11). Public administration and policy research implicitly uses an ethical frame when it lays stress on the constraining effects of legislation and on administrative and regulatory limits on governmental discretion, including limitations on the discretionary authority of police officers (such as police oversight mechanisms; see Mulgan 2000).

The regulative ways in which governmental regulations condition individual moral agency may provide a basis for an articulation of public and professional ethics in this same context and for an examination of substantive concerns relating to public values such as social equity. Goodin (1985) argues that public and professional ethics should elicit broad social and political commitments on

policy questions such as state provision of health care or legal counsel, as these essential public goods determine access to other social goods. Goodin uses a Rawlsian "reflective equilibrium" procedure to draw out the implications of such a moral stance beyond the confines of established institutional order—in this instance, the expectation by people of color of equitable treatment on the part of police.

We are challenged to work from sufficient (if incomplete) reasons for evidence-based advocacy for change. In weighing how to evaluate incomplete evidence of voting bias, Goodin and Estlund argue that in "dealing with some racially charged issue," there are "of course plenty of other ways for one's suspicions to be aroused in these and cognate cases" (2004, 137–38). Concerned with deliberative democracy, Goodin (1988) argues for the removal of constraints to equitable political participation based on what we know of its impediments (e.g., to voting access). Inclusion and equity entail breaking the "circular motion" of closed-group obligations and a "reconfiguration of our [ethical] languages over time" (Stout 1988, 151). It also means going beyond the attempt by contractarian theorists like Rawls to "resolve the obligation of allegiance into the obligation of fidelity" (Dunn 1985, 63). Fidelity to narrowly drawn community or organizational (departmental) interests is bound to translate into arbitrary and exclusionary patterns of abuse of authority, as our consideration of hyperidentification of police officers with police culture suggests. Harmon proposes that "the most important fact about public policing for those interested in influencing police behavior: police officers don't exist outside of departments" (2016, 398). Harmon adds that "departments are the principal determinant of police conduct" (398). Manifest racism involves a drawing of boundaries against the other, or others, and for many police officers, the bounds of allegiance tend to coincide with the confines of their departments.

The comparative study of policing in relation to the restoration of governmental legitimacy may be helpful at this juncture— consider Light, Prado, and Wang (2015) on "redemocratization" in Russia, Brazil, and China in relation to policing; Min's treatment of regulative public professional ethics in China (1997); and Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004) and Ferraro and Garofalo (2010) on comparative government reform in relation to public ethics and regulatory reform. The present authors' work on contemporary public sector ethics in China and the West (Rivera and Ward 2013) suggests that comparative public ethics may also point toward a disciplinary synthesis suited to the analysis of governmental abuses of power, including police-involved violence. Therefore, we stress the need for integration of disciplinary positions regarding race and police violence, proposing that public and professional ethics stressing equity and accountability offer an apt approach for such a synthesis (see also Felkenes 1984; García and Sharif 2015; McGranahan 2016).

It is the state that must ultimately assume *remedial responsibility* for righting the wrongs it tacitly sanctions, even when certain individuals or organizations are held responsible for particular instances of wrongdoing; this is so because it is the state that must bear ultimate *causal responsibility* for the wrongs it permits (Pearson 2011). Remediation could come to include a national reparations program, although that discussion is outside the scope of the present article (for an authoritative treatment, of individual versus collective reparations, see Feagin 2004). The settlements that many American cities have had to pay as a result of police-involved shootings and other violence against African Americans are worth noting here. The City of Chicago recently paid $5.5 million in reparations (so described) to a group of black men systematically tortured by a graveyard shift of police officers on the city's South Side during the 1970s and 1980s (Seabrook and Wyatt-Nichol 2016). A similar compact is found in Cincinnati's collaborative agreement between the city and the American Civil Liberties Union and Black United Front to settle a 2001 lawsuit over racial profiling and discriminatory law enforcement (Ward and Rivera 2014; Copeland 2013). However, changing public discourse on race and policing may be as difficult to secure as reparations (Dyson 2016), as American race relations seem to be worsening. In this connection, Brown (2016) writes incisively on "racially divisive appeals" in the recent presidential debates, while Sellers and Arrigo (2016) and Pickett (2016) sharply critique anti-immigrant rhetoric and the stereotyping of immigrants as criminals.

Police Professionalism Based on Public Responsibility

Proposed remedies for police misconduct of the kind considered here include increasing the diversity of police departments (Hong 2016), introducing community-based policing, and implementing cultural competency training and *bias-reducing* practices (Stum 2016). The last-named practices should aim at the development of integrative complexity on the part of officers and, therefore, the elicitation of a greater capacity for empathy, as previously suggested. However, research suggests that higher education is a much better predictor of cognitive complexity and adaptability among police officers than most pre-service or in-service training, in addition to making for greater professionalism and restraint in potentially violent interactions with the public (Telep 2011).

There are also calls for better backgrounds checks, for tracking complaints relating to violent racial incidents, and generally for efforts to promote citizen involvement in police oversight (Rushin 2016). Additionally, there are proposals for better evaluation research aimed at police reform (Dukanovic 2016; McGregor 2016; Weitzer 2015), including the creation of a National Database of Officer-Involved Shootings (Alpert 2016). Vastly expanding the use of body-worn cameras so as to capture incidents of violence for purposes of investigation is among the most significant interventions in changing police behaviors, capturing such incidents in ways that can help keep enforcement interactions civil and protect officers and citizens alike (Mateescu, Rosenblat, and Boyd 2016).

As Epp, Maynard-Moody, and Haider-Markel (2014) suggest, police training needs to aim at changing the self-presentation of police officers in the direction of professionalism, civility, and respect, even though those stopped by officers are prone to resent them, whatever demeanor they bring to a critical situation. Felkenes (1984, 211) finds that in acting on complex role demands in difficult situations, police are more often prompted by personal ethics and standards of conduct than by formal codes such as the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics. The implication is that police ethics education and training need to focus more on the development of cognitive and emotive faculties, in particular critical self-awareness, and less on ethical codes specific to the profession. However, even the best training

carried out within police departments may be distorted by the kind of hermetic organizational and cultural influences that Harmon (2016) and Bornstein et al. (2012) consider the most significant determinants of police behavior and of police misconduct.

Remedial practices such as ethics and cultural competency training are essentially administrative in nature, whatever their thrust and their shortcomings, which brings our inquiry back to questions relating to the practice of public administration. These various remedies are limited in scope, and often the consequence of governmental intervention, including Justice Department receivership actions and consent decrees in offending communities (such as Ferguson and Prince George's County, Maryland), homeland security mandates, and other binding actions (Hutto and Green 2016). It should also be stated that they are too often prompted by police abuse of the poor, mentally ill, and powerless, irrespective of race. This occurred, for instance, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where Justice Department intervention followed the fatal police shooting of James Boyd, a mentally ill homeless white man, one of a string of police shootings interspersed with instances of killings of victims of color (Mateescu, Rosenblat, and Boyd 2016). In his treatment of the Boyd shooting, Correia (2016) considers such police violence to be a local, historically conditioned phenomenon rooted in community power relations.

Here again, police-involved violence defies simple association of wrongdoing with either perpetrators or victims of color as such, just as it defies simple solutions. Empirical research indicates that most of the remedies just cited are likely to be insufficient by themselves to change problematic police attitudes or behaviors (Oberfield 2010, 2016). Remedies need to be considered comprehensively, in relation to public service responsibility as defined in the public and professional ethics and social equity literatures. In this regard, Bornstein et al. (2012) take a CRT perspective on the limitations of New York City police training as such, proposing in its stead a comprehensive approach to continuing education in police ethics conceived of as professional ethics. Consistent with this view, Epp, Maynard-Moody, and Haider-Markel (2014) suggest that police training needs to be aimed at changing the demeanor of police officers in a more professional direction, in ways consistent with public service values, particularly accountability, responsiveness, and respect for others.

The problems considered here are not limited to race and racism in policing. They not only involve a much wider demographic (racial and ethnic minorities but also the poor and mentally ill, gender-variant minorities, and others) but also close connections between bias of all sorts and high arrest rates. Just as people of color do, the poor, homeless, mentally ill, and gender variant face a greater likelihood of death at the hands of police, along with grossly disproportional rates of arrest and incarceration (Hughey 2015; Nellis 2016). While we are far from an adequate understanding of the issues of bias and violence we examine, there is sufficient evidence that they are grave and that they require correspondingly urgent solutions.

Professionalization of police represents a way forward. Because of their status and power, police are expected to conduct themselves professionally,

aware of the procedural and substantive rights that should be enjoyed by all. Police officers have the discretion to make decisions affecting life, liberty, property, and the public welfare. The ethical values that should guide policing are essentially the same public service values of which Frederickson (2010) has written: integrity, responsibility, impartiality, equity, and accountability (see also Johnson and Cox 2004). These are especially binding when police function at the margins of discretionary authority. Those who defend the vast majority of the police against the disreputable actions of a few are asking that officers be treated as professionals, as public servants. Gaining respect as public professionals can best be attained through changes in perspective, perception, and commitment (Sklansky 2013). Interestingly, respect may be prompted by as simple a device as a body camera, which is capable of increasing self-awareness and prudence on the part of officers, while putting others on notice that their encounters with police are recorded for the protection of all involved (Epp, Maynard-Moody, and Haider-Markel 2014).

Conclusion

What sets apart the fields of public administration and public policy is their orientation toward effective practice—legislation, executive policy, and regulation. Whetsell characterizes this distinctive disciplinary perspective as "progressive, pragmatic problem resolution" (2013, 609). The questions that remain in the framing of possible responses to police violence are conceptual as well as practical in nature: How do we advance both policy and administrative analysis and workaday changes in policies and procedures such as those just outlined? Is there reason to expect that productive synergies will obtain among the various forms of interpretation considered at the outset of this study, or that there will be consequential state action, so as to make for sufficient reform? To what extent are the framing issues involved, particularly the balancing of police discretion with regulatory constraint, amenable to resolution? In the end, policy interventions must stem from fundamental attitudinal as well as institutional changes in the building of a responsible community and of public dialogue and consensus, where fragmentation and conflict now prevail.

From the perspective of traditional political philosophy, a liberal public ethics is founded on interest-based competition, political conflict, bargaining, compromise, and consent—when consent obtains at all, following as it does from public discourse that excludes much of the citizenry. However, the connective tissue binding public institutions and individuals—the regulative ways in which institutions condition moral deliberation and agency—may provide a firm grounding for public ethics. Responsible engagement of the citizenry would open the door to dialogue concerning accountable public service, social equity, and racial justice.

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Whatever the scope and level of analysis, or its starting and ending points, any exercise in public ethics needs to land squarely in the encounter between citizen and state, especially the victimized citizen and the state. As Hooker (2015) argues, an ethical inquiry into racism should first approach Michael Brown dying in a Ferguson street and only then try to address that reality conceptually. It is there, literally at street level, that the

kind of police violence of concern in this article is most palpably evident. Critical analysis in public administration in such situated contexts necessarily involves both definitions of the problem and ethical critique (Whetsell 2013). While it may be policy oriented and ameliorative in focus, public ethics has to be embedded in bare reality, addressing the complex interplay of personal and systemic factors in any consideration of problematic police–citizen encounters.

Concern for the inextricability of defining questions such as these in public administration is coming to the fore in disciplinary dialogue. Fitzpatrick et al. (2011) propose that the study of administrative reform (including police reform) in an era of increasingly complex intercultural and intergroup problems requires public administration research to build on theory and research using a mix of causal, descriptive, exploratory, and critical methods. Raadschelders (2011) argues that the "wickedness" of administrative challenges (such as racialized police violence) requires correspondingly robust but nuanced analytical methods. Wright (2011) argues that while public administration continues to rely on methods and theories from law, management, and political science, research has often become isolated from these disciplinary sources, making it difficult to frame questions in conceptually apt ways. Riccucci (2010) likewise argues that public policy and administration need to return to their distinctive traditions, based on "a public interest argument" and the requirements of public responsibility.

Consistent with these viewpoints, we argue for an integral approach to research on race and police violence—one that reconciles theory with practice and combines advocacy with the analytic neutrality that befits public administration scholarship. This line of research needs to bridge levels of analysis (individual, community, organizational, and governmental) even as it spans disciplinary perspectives. An ethical lens that takes in questions of social equity and accountability allows for the prior definition of research questions and the eventual determination of analytical conclusions, whether they principally have explanatory or evaluative importance.

Race-related police violence arguably represents a failure of public governance and therefore of the state itself, as we have proposed, following Frederickson (1999, 2010; Frederickson and Ghere 2013). Public administration as a community of practice is obliged to address the multilayered, complex, and daunting problems implicated in issues of race and policing in the interest of social equity, and in the public interest. As previously proposed, what is required of public administration is the building of an ethical space of shared responsibility among researchers and practitioners, affected communities of color, police professionals, and the public at large (Ermine 2007). Successfully undertaking the difficult dialogue required to address the contentious issues surrounding police-involved violence would be an ethical act in itself. A sustained effort at dialogue along all fronts—professional and civic forums, the media, and the public sphere in general—could begin to create a communicative space and summon shared responsibility among all involved.

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