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BRIAN LANDE
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The Value of the Arrest

The Symbolic Economy of Policing

Abstract

Deputy sheriffs make arrests for many reasons: to solve problems, generate statistics, rectify perceived moral wrongs, or enforce compliance with the law. Many studies of discretion in arrests have looked at situational and structural determinants of the decision to arrest. Citizen demeanor, race, gender, and the nature of the crime have all been examined. Turning from these approaches, this study considers the institution of policing, focusing on the relations among deputies to try and explain *who* makes an arrest, especially when more than one deputy is on scene. Drawing from data collected during a year and a half of ethnographic research as a deputy sheriff in a rural California county, we show that arrests are a form of symbolic capital. Arrests are given, taken, and fought for as deputies struggle to work with each other and compete for prestige and positions within the Sheriff's Office. Exchanged, gifted, and stolen as a valuable good, an arrest has the power to solidify existing relationships as well as foster divisions. As such, the arrest is a vehicle of social meaning and bonding, and a valued social commodity.

Keywords: Arrest; Police officers; California.

Introduction

Ambiguity, giving and competitive exchange

At around one in the morning, I park my patrol car behind two deputies who are speaking with a very intoxicated man on the side of a highway at the outskirts of a small rural town. The intoxicated man is swaying back and forth and balancing himself on the push bar of one of the deputy's patrol cars. T.D.[1]—an older deputy

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[1] To protect the confidentiality of the deputies observed, no real names are used in this paper.

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whom everyone calls a "team player," a guy who "isn't out just for his"—is talking with the other, younger deputy at the back corner of his patrol car. T.D. leans into the younger deputy, as if to avoid alerting the drunk as to what is about to happen. T.D. murmurs, "Why don't you take this hook? I had a busy week and I don't need it. If you need it, you take it." The younger deputy straightens up and, barely containing his happiness, says, "You're sure? Because it's your call… If you don't want the hook, you know *I'll take it!"* The younger deputy handcuffs the intoxicated man and, as he prepares to drive him to the sobering cell at the jail, he says to T.D., "You're the man!" I ask T.D. why he didn't just take the guy to jail. He replied, "I have my stats. No need to be greedy so I let him have it. You know," he chuckles, "spread the wealth!" (Field Note from Patrol, 5/10/08).

An arrest is a social process with serious consequences; arrests can deprive citizens of their freedom, their jobs, and occasionally their physical well-being. For this reason, arrests are highly regulated, bureaucratized, and rule-governed. Personal exchanges of gifts and favors are not expected to organize or influence the process of arrests. Yet arrests are laden with social meaning for deputies and, as the field note above suggests, they are far from an impersonal process. After working two years as a deputy at the Basin County Sheriff's Office (BCSO, a fictional name), the first author of this investigation learned that arrests are not neutral actions simply handled according to the rule of law. Instead, they can be hoarded, bartered, given away as a favor, or even stolen from an investigating deputy. In fact, arrests are an important currency of social relationships among deputy sheriffs at the BCSO. Arrests are given and taken; they are exchanged *among* patrol deputies. In this paper, we argue that the transaction in arrests is an ongoing exchange that facilitates the creation and recreation of social bonds, and operates as a stake and a weapon in struggles for organizational recognition and inclusion.

In this paper, we demonstrate that applying the theoretical framework of a symbolic economy can help us better understand the internal workings of a particular police department. We use one American case as an empirical example of how this framework might be applied—in this case, to the exchange of arrests. This case is not meant to be generally representative of police departments as a whole, either within the United States or beyond, which are diverse in terms of their internal structures and dynamics. To the extent that national trends in policing can be identified, this particular department might even fly in the face of US trends. That said, we believe the general theoretical framework might still be applicable to other departments, both in the United States and around the world. Although not all departments will value the exchange of arrests in the way demonstrated here, some will. Furthermore, the concept of an internal symbolic economy may also be applied to the exchange of other symbolically valuable goods besides arrests, such as "buying calls," a symbolic economy based on officers volunteering to handle calls for service for others as a way of demonstrating team membership. That may be relevant for understanding the internal workings of other police departments within the United States or within other national contexts.

Research on arrests

When sociologists study why arrests are made, they emphasize the relationship between law enforcement officers and suspects. Many researchers have examined whether or not situational factors such as a suspect's degree of deference to an officer's authority affects the likelihood of arrests [Worden 1989; Engel, Sobol and Worden 2000]. Repeated observational studies of police arrests show that arrests are a situated response to citizens' failures to be deferent [Black 1971; Lundman, Sykes and Clark 1978; Smith and Visher 1981]. Many studies have shown that the race, gender, class, and occupation of a suspect strongly correlate with an officer's decision to make an arrest [Friedriech 1977; Goel, Rao and Shroff 2016; Hollinger 1984; Klinger 1994, 1997; Lundman and Kaufman 2003; Riksheim and Chermak 1993; Worden and Shepard 1996; Visher 1983]. Other studies show that arrest decisions are influenced by the seriousness of the crime [Brooks 1986] or the demand by other citizens that an arrest be made [Mastrofski *et al*. 2000]. Finally, some studies look at how officers respond differently to similar situations when the organizational context (structure, goals, and values) varies. Wilson's classic 1968 study, for example, shows how differences in organizational complexity and professionalism shape how police respond to citizens.

These studies illustrate that relationships between officers and suspects (as well as other citizens) are critical to arrest decisions. This research focuses, for the most part, on how officers use their *discretion*[2] and make a *decision* to arrest [Moskos 2008; Liederbach 2007; Golub, Johnson and Dunlap 2007; Engel *et al.* 2000; Worden and Shepard 1996; Klinger 1994; Visher 1983; Lundman *et al.* 1978; Sykes and Clark 1975; Black and Reiss 1970; Skolnick 1967].[3] This focus ignores the internal relationships among law enforcement personnel, where arrests function as an object of exchange and a medium of social connection. Existing research neither describes why officers *desire* to make arrests [Moskos 2008], nor explains the nature of the struggle between deputies to determine who will claim an arrest as his or her own.

The asymmetrical power inherent in policing encounters [Skogan 2006] undeniably conditions the police-suspect relationship, which lends itself to the kind of abuse recently highlighted by the "Black Lives Matter" movement. We need to look internally, though, beyond the police-citizen dynamic, to truly understand policing behavior. Although the impulse may be to analyze how officers are consciously or unconsciously biased and discriminatory [Glaser 2014], or to more generally connect differences across police forces to national regulatory styles [de Maillard *et al.* 2016], or even to connect behavior like stop-and-frisk to a social-order drive to discipline the populace [Ericson 1982; Bradford and Loader 2016], we need to concretely situate policing behaviors within their proximate institutional contexts, looking instead at how certain kinds of practices are encouraged by virtue of departmental incentive structures, training practices, and internal policy [Epp, Maynard-Moody and Haider-Markel 2014]. To truly understand what motivates police officers, we need to understand the specific patterning of core pressures and dynamics at play in their world, such as the particular configuration of the "culture of results" that motivates officers to go after easy arrests like immigration violations and low-level drug offences [Fassin 2013]. And, by gaining the kind of understanding that can only be obtained by looking inwards, we may very well be better equipped to truly and effectively address the misconduct [Weitzer 2015] or racial disparities [Goel, Rao and Shroff 2016] that are contingent on these internal structures.

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[2] The concept of "discretion," an almost "god-term" [Burke] in the grammar of studies of law and the police, is deeply problematic. On the one hand it is a political concept [Davis 1969], not a sociological or analytical one [see Hawkins 1992], and it is one aimed at reforming the criminal justice system. Moreover, the mechanical concern with "decision making" has made many studies of "discretion" vulnerable to the same critiques that have been levied against rational choice theory in economics, structuralism in anthropology/linguistics, and rule-following in philosophy [see Bourdieu 1990; Garfinkel 1967; Taylor 1993; Dreyfus and Rabinow 1993]; for a critique of rule-following from the point of view of criminology, see [Weider 1974 and Waddington]. From a sociological standpoint, the deepest flaw inherent in the concept of "discretion" is its fetishizing of the individual and free choice [Campbell 1999]. "Discretion" places voluntarism and radical subjectivism, on the one hand, in opposition to the mechanical determinism of law as a kind of machine or apparatus that dictates the movements of people. In Davis's view, discretion is the voluntary choice of jurists constrained by legal limits. To use Dworkin's [1977] metaphor, discretion is the "hole in the donut" where individuals can act willy-nilly. "There is no room within this paradigm to consider how far individual 'free choice' may be already collective, ordered, routinised and structured by phenomena other than the law itself" [Campbell 1999: 80]. Even when behavior is "extra-legal," this does not mean that the conduct of jurists, police officers, or deputies is unfettered. Rather, the very process of determining whether or not a situation is "legal," and the classification of this conduct as "discretionary," depends on frames of reference that are anything but legal [Manning and Hawkins 1990]. Thus, a primary concern of this paper is not the "discretion" of deputies; it is instead the fact that *who* gets an arrest is structured by forces that transcend the individual, who finds himself or herself pushed and pulled in different directions, and who is guided by the socially-formed sense-making abilities that they apply to their world. The concepts and strategies deputies deploy are inherited and conditioned by the multitude of structures (linguistic, policy-based, legal, corporeal, and perceptual) that they encounter during their tenure in law enforcement.

[3] An exception is Moskos's [2008] investigation of how Baltimore police officers use arrests to accrue overtime pay.

To understand police encounters like the one that opens this paper, we have to depart from standard suspect-oriented approaches [Moskos 2008] and instead focus on how and why deputies feel pushed or pulled to make arrests, and more specifically, on how the exchange of arrests among deputies animates their social relationships. We argue that, in the process of an arrest, although the particular demographic properties of a suspect can be important to the officers and to arrest outcomes, at least equal in importance is the *value of the arrest* to the officers, and *who will get the arrest*. This observation motivates several interrelated questions: When two or more deputies are at the scene of an arrest, who makes the arrest and takes credit for it? What do deputies mean when they speak of arrests as a kind of "wealth" to be spread? How are we to make sense of arrests as elements of value that are traded or given among deputies?

Building on and yet departing from most research on police work, this study treats the practices of deputies as part of an economy that has its own specific profits, resources, forms of capital, interests, and laws of supply and demand. We examine how deputies distribute, exchange, and use arrests within the peculiar and localized market of the Basin County Sheriff's Office. As such, this is a study of the symbolic economy of a police force. While other studies of arrest behavior limit themselves to studies of cop-suspect encounters, we analyze how arrests figure into deputies' relations with one another, with street-level supervisors, and with administrators. This approach reveals a milieu of conflict and competition, structured by scarcity, obligations, and hierarchies of reward and profit. We show how deputies engage in daily labor to maintain and recreate social bonds through the vehicle of the arrest.

Data collection

The first author of this paper collected the data for this study while working for a year and a half as a deputy sheriff in a rural California county, referred to here as Basin County. Basin County has a population of 65,000 and is the second poorest county in California by all standard measures (per capita income, household income, proportion of population with college degrees, etc.). It is rural and agricultural, with the population spread out over 2,000 square miles of largely rugged and inaccessible terrain. He worked with 24 patrol deputies to provide a variety of services to the population of Basin County, including 911-call response, handling student truancy at local schools, narcotics interdiction, domestic violence arrests, DUI enforcement, and even high-risk mountain rescues during snow-drenched winters. Compared to many California agencies, the Basin County Sheriff's Office is small, underfunded, understaffed, and poorly trained.

During his "observant participation," the first author took detailed field notes on deputies' workday world. He noted his own interactions with other deputies and made careful observations of deputies' practices on the streets. He also examined the social relations and forms of talk prevalent back at the "station," at restaurants over lunch, and standing on the side of the road during traffic stops. Finally, he conducted interviews with members of other California law enforcement agencies concerning the giving, taking, and negotiating of arrests.

Exchanges in the workplace

Mauss [1990] and Bourdieu [1998; 1990; 1977] provide us with theoretical tools for understanding how arrests circulate as objects of exchange, how they are accrued as a form of capital, and how they become objects of desire. Mauss showed that gift exchanges are a form of economic activity that are predominantly personal and focally concerned with the creation of interpersonal obligations—to give, to receive, and to reciprocate. Gifts have the appearance of being free and disinterested when, in fact, generous parties have substantial stakes in the gift exchange. The "freely" given gift generates an obligation of return on pain of insult or dishonor, and obligations of reciprocity are bound up in rivalries. For Mauss, gifts can be things, symbols, rituals, labor, or favors. What defines a gift is the nature of the exchange; gifts bind giver and receiver together through the promise of future communion. A gift carries social and symbolic value in addition to any material use value or exchange value it may have.

Bourdieu's general economy of practice expands on Mauss's insight. Bourdieu argues that "[t]he theory of strictly economic practices is a particular case of a general theory of the economy of practices" [1990: 122]. Here, Bourdieu extends common economic concepts such as *capital*, *interest, profit, reward, supply, demand, necessity,* etc. to apply to other forms of social efficacy and power such as prestige, educational credentials, knowledge, and familiarity with cultural goods. For Bourdieu, there is no strict division between the economic and the non-economic.[4] Bourdieu asserts that it is impossible "to account for the structure and functioning of the social world unless one reintroduces capital in all its forms and not solely in the one form recognized by economic theory"—the money or commodity form [Bourdieu 1986: 242]. Thus, in Bourdieu's economy of practice, the money/commodity-based economy (or "restricted economy" to follow Bataille in *The Accursed Share*) is only one amongst many; economic capital stands alongside cultural capital (knowledge, expertise, degrees, etc.), symbolic capital (prestige, honor, recognition, etc.), and social capital (the strength and usefulness of networks of many kinds).

Importantly, giving and generosity are not dominated by equivalent economic exchanges (as in barter, loans, or monetary transactions), but they do demand some kind of return. Economic capital can be transfigured into social and symbolic capital, e.g., relations of devotion, filial bonds, alliances, political patronage, etc. [Bourdieu 1990]. Thus, for Bourdieu, parties to an exchange are "interested" in different ways.

Policing is one of the many workplaces where people forge relationships by exchanging goods and favors. The sociological study of public and private bureaucracies has long shown that the giving and receiving of valued goods and favors in the workplace structures social relationships. Blau [1963] argued that favor exchange between employees in two bureaucracies served as a "basic source of the informally-generated status differences in the group" [1963: 140]. He notes that employees confer status on other employees who are generous. Those who do not "repay" a favor are increasingly discredited. In other words, bureaucracies are internally governed not only by formal rules, but also by the logic of symbolic capital: status, prestige, credibility, etc. Flynn [2003], in a recent study of telecommunications employees, found that employees depend on the informal exchange of favors to increase their productivity. The giving and receiving allow labor to be redistributed in a manner that can increase productivity. The consequence of this productivity is not only material; it is also symbolic: the ability of an employee to provide goods and favors that increase another's productivity will, in turn, increase their own status with peers. Flynn and Brockner [2003] reached similar conclusions in their study of a federal law enforcement agency and of employees at an airline. This kind of "productive exchange" (where generosity allows two or more people to accomplish a task more effectively), has also been shown to increase solidarity [Lawler and Yoon 1996; Lawler, Thye and Yoon 2000].

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[4] Such a dichotomy "makes it impossible to see the science of 'economic' practices as a particular case of a science capable of treating all practices, including those that are experienced as disinterested or gratuitous, and therefore freed from the 'economy,' as economic practices aimed at maximizing material or symbolic profit" [Bourdieu 1990: 122].

The exchanges found in workplaces are varied and can take the form of shift exchanges, putting in a good word for another's promotion [Flynn and Brockner 2003], or sharing vital knowledge, resources, and abilities to direct activities that increase productivity [Flynn 2003]. Unlike many objects of exchange, those in the work place may not require the return of an equally valuable gift or favor [Blau 1964], and it can indeed be taboo to negotiate strict equity [Mauss 1990; Bourdieu 1990]. These exchanges are also ambiguous because there can be a separation in time between exchanges [Bourdieu 1990] and no guarantee of reciprocation at all [Bourdieu 1990]. This ambiguity can saturate work relationships with emotions like shame, embarrassment, dishonor, rebuke, and other "negative" social emotions [Bourdieu 1990; Lawler *et al.* 2000; Goffman 1967].

At the Sheriff's Office studied, many exchanges took place. Deputies helped other deputies "book" large quantities of evidence in order to expedite report writing; they swapped shifts to help another deputy have time off; and they handled calls for service when a deputy was "down paper" (had many reports to write). Favors like these generally fostered solidarity, commitment to future interactions, and general goodwill among officers. They often carried an implicit expectation of reciprocity in the future, though there were no guarantees of reciprocity and no certainty as to what form it might take.

Arrests are only one of the many forms of exchange in police work but, as we will illustrate below, they are a particularly important one. The redistribution of arrests functions as a system for the redistribution of symbolic capital (honor or prestige),[5] and it also generates other forms of social capital. While favors such as "booking evidence" are met with gratitude, they carry none of the gravity and risk of exchanging arrests simply because the labor and effort involved in "taking paper" and "booking evidence" are not scarce resources that symbolize status in the way that arrests do. As we will illustrate, honor is an important part of exchange in law enforcement. While it may superficially seem to be the case that arrest procedures are codified and set by departmental regulations and etiquette, we will show that explicit rules are insufficient to explain arrest distribution. Instead, we need to understand arrests as part of a fully-fledged symbolic economy.

Below, we describe an arrest as a multifaceted phenomenon engaging varied features of deputies' lives, including their need to preserve their honor, and to subvert bureaucratic control and market-based managerial accounting of performance [Manning 2008]. Within policing, the arrest is a total social fact that informs and organizes diverse social processes [Mauss 1990]. We can thus approach the question of "Who gets an arrest?" by examining: the "rules of the game" that create demand for arrests and generate restrictions on arrests; the objective regularities of deputies' work worlds that shape the distribution of arrests; the taken-for-granted assumptions about the value of an arrest; and, finally, how deputies come to use arrests as strategies of action in their social milieu.

Beyond arrest etiquette

Typically, there is a tense moment or a pause during an arrest; for a moment, the arrest literally comes to a standstill as deputies negotiate "who" will get the arrest. In some cases, the issue is resolved through turn-taking; in others, through explicit negotiation. At times, officers may beg for or even "steal" an arrest. All of these exchanges set up systems of obligations, gratitude, and recognition that are valuable aspects of deputies' social relations.

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[5] "Symbolic capital," as Bourdieu uses the term, refers to prestige, honor and recognition [Bourdieu 1990: 121; 189-191; 1977: 179; 214]. It "is an ordinary property (physical strength, wealth, warlike valor, etc.) which [when] perceived by social agents endowed with the categories of perception and appreciation permitting them to perceive, know and recognize it, becomes symbolically efficient" [1998: 102].

Understanding the value of an arrest means grasping the reciprocal relationships in which arrests occur. This means we need to look at *who* "gets" an arrest and how this is negotiated. Describing the internal dynamics that shape arrest attribution, Moskos [2008] writes:

> Every situation has a primary officer, the officer who makes the call on what should happen, who should be told to go home, who, if anybody, should be locked up, and how the paperwork will be categorized. Formally, the primary officer is the first officer to arrive on scene. Informally, post integrity demands that the post officer takes over any call dispatched on their post. But any action you choose to take, necessary or not, is your responsibility. This is captured in the well-worn phrase "on view on you" [Moskos 2008: 113].[6]

The rule governing who takes an arrest, at first glance, may appear simple and dominated by etiquette. Typically, the deputy that puts cuffs on a suspect gets the arrest. When two officers are sent to a call, the first on scene becomes "primary," even if the call is not in their beat. On the other hand, the beat officer has a moral obligation to his colleagues to "carry his weight" and take the "paper" (reports) that arise in his territory, especially if the report is expected to be long and tedious.

But determining who gets an arrest is rarely driven by such simple rules. Deputies easily depart from axiomatic duties (like "on view, on you") when it is in their interest to do otherwise. For instance, the first officer on-scene may decide to take the "paper" if it comes with the promise of an arrest. The beat officer may try to take over as primary officer for the same reason. A person may put cuffs on the suspect and not get an arrest because the officer is "down too much paper" and needs to catch up before processing another arrest. Frequently, newer deputies are uncertain whether to make an arrest and offer up the suspect to another deputy, hoping that the more experienced officer will sort out what to do. Complicated arrangements may come into play. As one officer reported, "If there are two arrestees, and two officers, the arresting officer gets a stat and the transporting officer gets a stat for his troubles" (Female Officer, 25, city PD). If there is a "surplus" of arrests, they may be redistributed to compensate other deputies or officers "for their troubles."

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[6] Peter Moskos has explained: "When I policed, it was always up to whosever's scene it was. The deference from other officers was not always 100%. But if you put cuffs on somebody not at the request of another, they're 'your' prisoner. You would do so because you had your own issues (like he ran from you or talked off or something). Generally, making an unprompted arrest at somebody else's scene was frowned upon. Instead, you would always ask, what do [I do] with this guy? It was up to the 'primary officer'—he who would have to write the report—to let him go or lock him up. The primary could handle the call/situation as he or she saw fit. (Though it was common that the primary, if he was on the fence about an arrest, would ask if anybody wanted a lockup. But then the arresting officer would take the lockup and do the paperwork)" [Moskos 11/1/2008, personal communication].

Arrest distributions are determined strategically and with multiple contextual considerations in mind. How arrests are exchanged or distributed amongst deputies depends on the immediate situation, on what is considered equitable in that situation, and on each officer's expectations concerning their present and future relationships. Expectations, of course, do not always match and, as we will see later, under these conditions, the "theft" of arrests becomes possible. There was no formal set of rules dictating who will get an arrest. The penal code and departmental policies and regulations were devoid of such rules. No coherent rule was articulated either formally or informally during fieldwork. Instead, there was an abundance of *ad hoc* accountings that deputies deployed on-scene or after an arrest to make sense of why one deputy rather than another got an arrest.

Take the following example of a negotiation over who will take an arrest:

> Four deputies had responded to a call of a home invasion in beat 7. The suspects had fled the scene in a gray pickup truck with a bed full of chopped wood. S.W., who was in beat 7, parked on the side of the road and waited for the vehicle to pass. F.R., a Sergeant, and I proceeded to converge on S.W.'s location. S.W. eventually spotted the vehicle and pulled behind it, unnoticed. The vehicle, according to S.W.'s radio transmissions, was all over the road, and he described the driver as "possibly deuce" [DUI]. F.R. and I arrive near S.W. first, and we pull off the road to set up a high-risk felony traffic stop. When S.W. gives a location near us, F.R. informs him of where we are; he asks him to activate his emergency lights and effect a stop when he passes us.
>
> S.W. passes, and F.R. and I pull behind him. S.W. activates his lights and the vehicle comes to a stop. F.R. and I position our vehicles on either side of S.W.'s and we draw our firearms. One by one, we pull each suspect out of the vehicle. We determine that the suspects are to be charged with crimes including possession of stolen property, drunk driving, and public intoxication. There are three suspects and three arrests to be made. The sergeant asks, "Who's gonna take the report?"
>
> F.R. says, "Hey man [S.W.], on view on you." S.W. says, "I don't want that kind of paper. It's my Friday." F.R. replies, "I guess I took the earlier cases with these idiots. I could also use the stats. But I don't want to do the dui." I also offer to take the reports because, as I told them, "I was on vacation and it looks like I have no stats for this month." The sergeant, eager to move things along inserts, "OK? So F.R. you take it, you already talked to the victims today. S.W., you transport [the prisoners]. Brian, see if you can get a consent waiver signed for a search of the suspect's home; see if you can recover the stolen property."

In this example, phrases like "on view, on you," "I could also use the stats," and "I don't want to do the DUI" are less verbalized rules than they are strategic utterances or *interventions* meant to shift the likelihood that one deputy or another will "catch paper" or get the arrests [Garfinkel 1967].[7]

Pressure of the arrest record: the value of arrest quantity

Tracking arrests was practically an obsession among deputies, and making arrests was their primary goal. Many deputies would log into the department's records management system (RMS) at the beginning of each shift to see how the month's tally of arrests had changed since they last looked. In this context, answering calls for service was ancillary to seeking creative ways to "hook" people.[8]

This obsession results, in part, from academy and field training. Trainees learn that making arrests is the most important thing a deputy can do. During training at the academy, the field training officer instructed my platoon: "Your goal should be to take at least one person to jail every day. That's what we do, arrest people" (Field Notes, May 2007). This message is also reinforced on the job. While in field training on the job, a sergeant entered the office where the first author was sitting and shouted at a deputy, "Hey! You arrest anyone today? No? You owe the Sheriff a check for the shift. Go get me an arrest today!" This logic is enshrined in idioms shared among deputies, such as "an arrest a day keeps the supervisors away." This saying suggests that making regular arrests is a good way of staying out of trouble with one's supervisors; the law-and-order *doxa* demands arrests.

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[7] Such statements are "accountings" that help to establish a sense of order in a situation rather than being rules or maxims that are followed [Weider 1974]. They are simultaneously moves made by deputies as they negotiate an uncertain outcome, i.e., who will get the arrests. It is up to the sergeant to establish who will take the report (and therefore who he needs to prod and guide in the completion of paperwork) and to transform the situation into an arena now understood as an opportunity for an arrest to be had. Thus the statements are not "descriptive" but are interventions into the situation altering the very field of events that they seem to describe. In other words, stating "I don't want to do the DUI" is not just a descriptive statement of F.R.'s dislike of DUI investigations; it is also a verbal intervention meant to pass the "buck" to another deputy. Plainly, the giving and taking of arrests is complemented by the verbal strategies and competencies that are needed to justify the taking of an arrest. Prospective and retrospective justifications for the exchange of arrests are typically part of a deputy's acquired competence.

[8] Readers should not have the impression that all deputies place the same value on arrests. The older deputies get, the less they value arrests as a mark of competence and prestige. Experienced deputies tend to see the prevention of problems as well as successful conflict mediation as key tasks. This more "mature" valuation of police competence is in line with the actual day-to-day tasks of police officers. Arrests, by contrast, may occur only a hundred times out of the two thousand contacts an officer makes during a year. That said, arrests are still valued at every age, even if their *relative* significance does decline.

If deputies have not learned to value arrests from their instructors and superiors, they will certainly learn it from their peers. Sitting around the South County Substation at 3.00 am eating lunch, the first author listened as two senior colleagues, G.F. and F.W., set up a bet to see who could get more arrests. G.F. said, "F.W., *I'm gonna beat you*! I bet you. Let's get J.P. and some of the other guys in. Whoever has the *least* arrests has to buy a bottle of really good single malt for the guys that beat him." Arrests were also linked to a "quiet system of patronage" among deputies [Young 1991: 81]. For instance, to become a member of the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team or K-9 squad, a deputy must be invited in by those already inside this high-status world. Getting noticed and invited is, of course, tied to making arrests. As the SWAT sergeant put it: "You want to be SWAT, you have to hook and book. You have to show us that you are a hard worker and that you aren't afraid to kick down doors and go hands on [cop talk for "fighting."]." In other words, if rookie deputies do not establish a reputation for being "high speed" or "gung ho" early in their careers, then they will fail to meet the expectations of officers who control entry into specialized or elite positions. The author heard several deputies who wanted "in" with the SWAT team discuss challenging arrests that they had made, hoping to leave a good impression with the SWAT commanders.

The recognition offered to officers with good arrest records takes many forms and can be relatively public. When an arrest is made, a radio transmission informs other deputies of the "10-15" (radio code for one in custody). The report log notes the arrest and who made it, and the report management system produces statistics on the number of arrests that a deputy makes in a given time. These statistics are easy to access and deputies frequently print out lists of *every* deputy's arrest statistics during a month, six months or a year. Consequently it is easy for deputies to know exactly where they stand compared to their peers.

The quasi-public nature of arrest records and the close connection between arrests and honor have a great bearing on the emotional lives of deputies and on their feelings toward one another [Baxter and Margavio 2000; William 1995]. Deputies sometimes describe themselves as embarrassed when they do not have many arrests. A deputy who had been on vacation for a week and had fewer arrests for the month than his peers commented, "I felt stupid for not having as many hooks as everyone on the shift, and they made fun of me for it too. But then I remember I was gone for a week and if I hadn't been on vacation I would have had the same arrests as everyone." Deputies do not hide their feelings about deputies who make few arrests, especially over extended periods of time. When reviewing the month's arrest statistics, G.F. mocked a deputy who had a small number of arrests for the last few consecutive months: "He's a lazy *mope*! Look at that, three arrests last month. What's this guy do all day? Sit with his thumb up his ass? *Useless.*"

In the form of arrest statistics, the quality of a deputy's character is constantly on display and constantly being evaluated by others [Goffman 1967]. A deputy's sense of self-worth is thus at stake in his arrest record. New deputies are in a particularly precarious position since they are not yet well known. They have yet to establish a "reputation," and every move they make has the potential to wipe out any credibility they have thus far earned. The early years in the Sheriff's Department can be precarious and anxiety-ridden.[9] Miller [1995: 202] captures a similar logic of honor and anxiety when he writes of medieval Icelandic society:

> The life of honour was always caught up in the comparison of the relative value of the people you judged and who judged you. If this were the comparison of things, of material wealth, we would have the shallowness of keeping up with the Jones's. But this is comparison of one's mettle, one's capacity for grand action, one's capacity for right action.

Because the Sheriff's department does not have a "bottom line," its members demonstrate their productivity and worth by conforming to a variety of procedures and practices that are considered legitimate both to the public and to the Sheriff's Department.[10] Fundamentally, the Sheriff's Department is engaged in a myth-making process [Crank 2003; Crank and Langworthy 1992; Meyer and Rowan 1977] where arrests are powerful symbols of the effectiveness of their law and order capabilities. Since the Sheriff's Department publicly proclaims to its tax-paying constituency that its job is the job of crime fighting and public safety, arrests are offered as proof of a job well done. The Sheriff and the administrative staff must appeal to the public's idea of what law enforcement should be and, at the same time, it must impose its vision upon the sergeants and the "troops" (i.e., patrol deputies).

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[9] Deputies who have "dry spells" for purely external reasons still tend to become very critical of themselves, doubting their abilities and worth as deputies. This is aggravated by the sometimes vicious mocking and insults that come from other officers. The constant judging and being judged creates a chronic state of anxiety.

[10] By no means is the Sheriff's Department expected to serve only the "law" as its constituents. Recently the Sheriff mandated a change in "mission," saying that he wanted deputies to "build the public's trust." Deputies and administrators have interpreted this to mean rapid response to calls, taking more reports, and making as many arrests as possible. There is a general consensus that this is what "the public" wants. If calls for service are any indication, the Sheriff's Department's constituency wants a wide range of idiosyncratic needs met (including police assistance with lost dogs, lost children, interpersonal conflicts, landlord/tenent disputes, etc.). Arrests, reports, and rapid response times are of varied relevance when it comes to meeting these needs.

Institutional myth-making in a bureaucratic environment creates pressure to measure and evaluate how members, shifts, and the department as a whole are doing in "looking and acting like" a Sheriff's Department. In order for this bureaucratic system of discipline to work, deputies must be individuated for record-keeping and evaluation purposes. Although there are no formally defined "quotas" (as this is prohibited by law) there is a *de facto* quota instituted by the administration—*the average performance of all deputies*. This standard results in a constant and ratcheting competition among deputies. The administrator's interest in measuring and increasing "organizational output" can, in effect, produce a masculinized and competitive game among peers [Burawoy 1978].

Formal annual evaluations consecrate and objectify the recognition generated by arrests. Arrests are a crucial strategy for acquiring positive annual evaluations that, in turn, are necessary to garner economic rewards such as annual pay raises (which are denied if a deputy performs "below standard"). Arrests are also consequential for promotions and for acquiring specialty positions such as detective or member of a SWAT team.

Fielding [1988] argues that "competence" is not a stable category or a value shared by all members of police organizations. Rather than seeing police culture as unified, we ought to see it as fragmented and defined by the power structure of policing. What counts as a "good cop," then, is not a universally shared concept, but rather a definition contested by officers who differ in terms of their years on the job, gender, rank, and specialized assignment. Definitions of competence are part and parcel of struggles over the definition of symbolic capital [Bourdieu 1986]. At BCSO, symbolic struggles over competence are dominated by the bureaucracy's formal accounting of "performance" in terms of arrests and its linking of arrests to financial and status-based incentives. While police officers and deputies may personally value "interactional tactics and goal-directed negotiations" [Fielding

1988: 60] as competence,[11] they are still forced to take into account the more frequently used and legitimized definition of competence. The institutionalization of arrest as the objective measure of a deputy's performance solidifies, both in the deputy's mind and in institutional measures and records, the centrality of the arrest as a measure of competence [Chappell, MacDonald and Manz 2006; Crank 1990].[12]

Upon receiving his one-year evaluation, the first author's shift sergeant told him, "Your stats are good. You're on the mid-high range for arrests, which is what I like to see. Your proactivity is mid-high too; you're out there keeping busy looking for stuff and that is what they [Admin] want to see" (figure 1). Deputies who bring in low "Stats" get "spanked" or have their "pee-pee slapped" by supervisors and the Admin, and are put on a PIP (Personnel Improvement Plan). Although there is no formal quota system, deputies are expected to perform at least close to the average arrest rate of the department. A deputy meets standards when their stats appear close to the average.

But, as Fielding has argued, "competence" is often defined contingently. D.F., the deputy who made the highest number of arrests for the year was ranked as one of the few deputies to "exceed standards." Other deputies devalued D.F.'s performance because, as G.F. said, "His arrests are chicken shit. They're all driving with no license arrests… *citations*. We aren't traffic cops! And it creates bad will with the public. You have to use your cites carefully because we need people to like us and want to help us. But he let that evaluation go to his head and he cites and hooks everyone for whatever he can, even dumb traffic stuff."

An equally important institutional factor shaping arrest-making practices is *actuarial*: an arrest can only be given to one person. The individuation of arrests for record-keeping purposes disregards the

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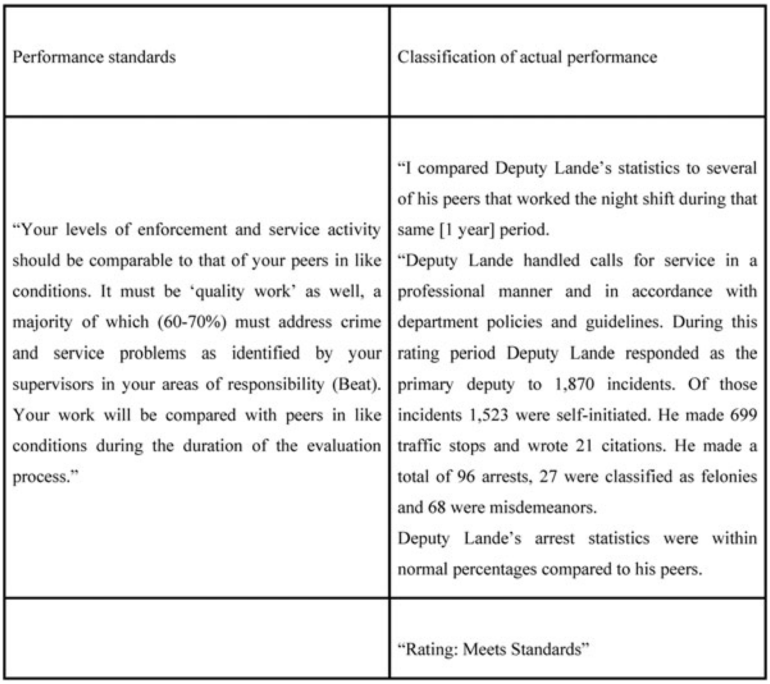
[11] Fielding reviewed a sample of ethnographic data on how police officers define each other's competence. He found that officers valued a wide range of skills ranging from "eye contact and kinesics to demonstrations of empathy, evocations of common biography/experience, the presentation of one's intervention as if it were unwilled personally but dictated by some outside force (the law), and so on" [1988: 60].

[12] "Organizational output" is largely measured in terms of arrests. According to Chappell *et al.*, "Arrest patterns […] remain a key component of police work because they represent a conceptually simple and available measure of police officer behavior." Mastrofsky and Uchida [1996: 213] distinguish police institutions from economic institutions by the former's lack of a "bottom line": "Here the nature of the organization's product or service and what constitutes performance are not readily specified in ways that are easy to confirm empirically; the technical capacity of such organizations to produce this service is not well known or well established. However these organizations succeed in their well-developed institutional environment to the extent that they conform to structures (procedures, programs, or policies) that are widely accepted as being right even though the relationship of these structures to actual performance is not well established."

FIGURE 1
Annual evaluation



Performance standards	Classification of actual performance
“Your levels of enforcement and service activity should be comparable to that of your peers in like conditions. It must be ‘quality work’ as well, a majority of which (60-70%) must address crime and service problems as identified by your supervisors in your areas of responsibility (Beat). Your work will be compared with peers in like conditions during the duration of the evaluation process.”	“I compared Deputy Lande’s statistics to several of his peers that worked the night shift during that same [1 year] period. “Deputy Lande handled calls for service in a professional manner and in accordance with department policies and guidelines. During this rating period Deputy Lande responded as the primary deputy to 1,870 incidents. Of those incidents 1,523 were self-initiated. He made 699 traffic stops and wrote 21 citations. He made a total of 96 arrests, 27 were classified as felonies and 68 were misdemeanors. Deputy Lande’s arrest statistics were within normal percentages compared to his peers.
	“Rating: Meets Standards”

normally collective labor that goes into making an arrest. The majority of deputies spoken to expressed frustration with the fact that not everyone involved in an arrest is able to get official credit for their participation. Deputies also suggested that the individuation of arrests creates an enormous amount of conflict and competition among them. As one deputy put it, “If we all got credit for our work [on an arrest] then you probably wouldn’t see guys jacking each other’s hooks. No one would give a shit.”

Instituting arrests as the primary metric of deputies’ performance imposes a definition of competence upon deputies and links arrest-making to *official* rewards and penalties. Further, individuating the appropriation of arrests makes them a scarce resource and part of a competitive system of social relations.

Good hooks and bad hooks: the value of arrest quality

Competence is not only measured and contested in relationship to arrest quantities, but also to arrest *quality*—some individual arrests are more valuable than others. A felony arrest or the arrest of a notable suspect accrues more prestige and a more meaningful stat. But felonies, on average, make up less than a quarter of any individual deputy's arrests. Only one or two deputies in the Sheriff's office are sufficiently Skilled to average a third to a half of their arrests as felonies.

Prestige is also associated with arrests that have an element of danger, e.g., arrests for firearms or "dope," and arrests that required some kind of physical combat. It generally takes many months for new deputies to tease out which arrests are worth their time and effort. Some arrests are not highly valued and are even classified as "chicken shit" arrests. Arrest value can also be contested. Take for example, peers' reaction to a low-value arrest that the administrators, by contrast, rewarded:

> Today I had another arrest based on stopping a guy for riding his bike with no front light. I was driving down HWY 20, again in the Oaks, when I saw a guy riding his bike the wrong way down a one way street. He also had no front light. I figure that this is a good reason to talk to him. I stop my car and turn on my spot light. I point it on the ground to the side of my car. The guy, Paulle, stops and gets off his bike. He dumps the bike on the ground.
> I ask him where he is coming from and he tells me that he is coming back from dinner at a friend's house. It is 0200 hours. Suspicious, I ask him some more questions. "How much you had to drink tonight?" He says, "Just a glass of wine a half hour ago at dinner." I figure he is bullshitting me. Who has dinner at 0130 and who only has a glass of wine on Memorial Day? I get on the radio and tell Central that I will be 10-6 [busy] on FSTs [field sobriety tests]. "You mind doing some FSTs for me, just so that I know you are good to walk home?" He folds his arms in contrition and leans against my car. "I stopped for you but I am not going to dance for you." As he talks I can smell waves of alcoholic-beverage odor coming off his person and breath. I look at the bike and I look at him. I figure he is DUI bike. I take his refusal to do FSTs as an acknowledgement of guilt—not to mention the fact that his refusal to cooperate pisses me off. I grab him firmly on the upper arm to test out his reaction. He doesn't pull away or resist. I take out a pair of cuffs and hook him.

> F.R. calls. "Hey, tough guy, what you got?" I tell him that I think I have a bike deuce [dui]. "You going to take him 10-15 (prisoner)?" "I think so," I reply, "but I don't know if I can. Maybe it's just a citation?" F.R. tells me to wait, "Let me check with D.S. and Rich and see if they want it for a stat for the dui task force." I hear some chatter in the background and F.R. says, "it's yours, they won't take a dui bike." I ask F.R., "should I take him for deuce or F?" I hear L.W. say, "took a guy dui bike once. Go 10-15." I shrug my shoulders and hang up the phone. I grab my chp guide book and flip through all the bike sections. Sure enough there is a brand new code for dui on a bike, 21200.5 cvc, a misdemeanor with a $250 fine. "That's it, I think to myself." I tell Central that I am "10-15 with one."

> Later, after I get the suspect booked, I go back to the substation to write my arrest report. I get a rash of shit from everyone there. D.S., L.W., A.D, , M.S., F. R., and T.D. mock me for going through all the work and time of arresting and booking the guy for dui on a bike. F.R. admonishes me, "you could have just taken him for F (647f PC, public intoxication). Now you got to write a big dui report, and you had to epas him. Come on, shit, you could have just given him a ride home." Ken chimes in, "You know there is something called discretion!" I complain that I thought L.W. told me to take him for dui on a bike, "I heard him say 10-15." A.D says, "No dummy that was me shouting to take him 10-15 for F." I get ripped on for the rest of the night for making a dui arrest on a bike. This is partly because I wrote such a long and thorough report.
>
> The next day I was at the main office in the north county, finishing another report. The records tech came in saying, "Nice bike arrest." I get defensive, "Okay, I already got made fun of for that so you can let it rest." The record tech looks surprised. She says, "No, I am not making fun of you. That was a great report and a great arrest. Even Sgt. H. said so." I am not convinced. I tell her what happened at the substation and she says, "Okay, come with me, we'll go talk to him." I stand next to A.B. while she knocks on Sgt. H.'s door.
>
> The record tech opens the door and Sgt. H. and an administrative Lieutenant are hunched over a desk working on something. A.B. says, "Hey, Lande thinks I am teasing him about the dui bike arrest he made yesterday. Tell him I am not." Hall looks at me and says, "I think you made two really good bike arrests. The dui one was great." A.B. says, "That was creative work. You found a code no one ever uses and you used it to get a 'dirt bag' off the streets." Sgt. H. adds, "That's what we want, we want you to make sure that there is no one walking around the town. We've had it there. He is a chronic drunk, always causing problems and you got him off the street for another day. You did good work, those other guys are just being lazy. It was a good arrest and an excellent report."

When, on another occasion, the first author recovered illegal brass knuckles on a bike stop, the deputies were much more willing to classify it as a "good hook." This is largely because it led to a felony charge. In summary, deputies struggle not only to keep, take, or steal arrests, but also to make *good* arrests—arrests that carry more serious charges or involve more personal risk to the deputy on the scene.

External constraints on the arrest market

A rookie deputy, who worked the north end of the county, complained one evening that his difficulty finding arrests forced him to consider moving to another department (Field Notes, 10/18/2008: Noise Complaint).

Another deputy (E.C.) and I park our cars, driver's side window to driver's side window, so that we can talk. It has been a slow week with few calls and few arrests.

> E.C. comments, “Fuck! There ain’t no one out there. I have been driving around for hours and it’s dead! I haven’t hardly gotten an arrest all month. Three, that’s it! I usually have the most!” “Welcome to graves [the shift from 8.00 pm to 6.00 am] during the winter!” I laugh. E.C. continues, “If this keeps up, I am going to leave the department. I am not committed to this county and I didn’t sign up to sit on my ass all night. Hook and book, that’s what I like and [beat] 3 is usually good for it!” “It’s not like I haven’t tried” E.C. continues, “I could have six arrests but I had to give away three.” “How’d that happen?” I asked.
>
> “Well, remember that white dope [crystal methamphetamine] we got last week? That got handed over to NTF [Narcotics Task Force] even though it was *my* stop. That I am cool with because it’s going to be a bigger case than just what we found in the car and they have been working the guy for a while. But *bam* there go two arrests that I would normally have had. The other is a freakin’ child molestation case. A couple of nights ago I had a missing child report out of beat 7. I figured out that this 13-year-old girl had taken off with some 23-year-old guy. I even figured out the approximate age of the guy and the kind of vehicle he was driving. I did a *ton* of leg work on it ‘cause it’s a missing child. Well yesterday I am at the X Market, getting some groceries and I see this gray truck pull in. A guy and young girl get out of the truck. I recognized the girl because I had been staring at her fucking picture the previous day. So I think, *oh shit, that’s my missing J* [juvenile]. I thought about detaining both the guy and the gal. The guy is good for contributing to the delinquency of a minor. But what am I going to do in my civilian clothes. I got my badge and gun, but that isn’t going to look good if I am running through the parking lot shouting ‘Sheriff’s department!” in my sweats and ratty t-shirt. So I get on the phone with G.F., who was working, and tell him get his ass over. G.F. shows up and detains them. I start talking to the dude and ask him what he’s doing with a 13-year-old. He tells me it’s his girlfriend! He later admits to me that he put his fingers up her hooch! Shit, there’s my felony hook right there. *But G.F. had to take them to jail and write the report, so how could I keep the arrest? He had to take it even though I did the work and found them. Whatever…*”

A slew of variables—economic, educational, familial, and governmental—create opportunities for crimes to be committed and discovered. In effect, there is a supply and demand for arrests. The demand is largely generated by pressure from administrators, but countless external forces affect the supply of arrests. These include laws defining who is arrestable, changes in weather (cold weather means less people to contact), downturns in the economy (may raise the likelihood of certain property crimes), and high gas prices (may reduce the ability of offenders to travel and commit offenses, while also increasing thefts of gas).

One important factor affecting arrest rates is the organizational environment of the District Attorney’s Office. During my tenure as an officer, the District Attorney’s Office decided that driving on a suspended license or without a license would be a citable infraction, but not an arrestable misdemeanor. Since these were two of the most common reasons for arrests, the change in classification had an enormous impact on deputies' opportunities to makes arrests. In E.C.'s case, the downturn in the economy, high gas prices, increasingly cold weather at night, and the reclassification of this crime conspired to produce fewer arrest opportunities. Moreover, he was working the graveyard shift, which meant that he was patrolling when considerably more citizens were asleep and there were fewer crimes committed. Whatever the cause may be, deputies are aware that there is a limited supply of arrestable people in public places at any given time and a limited number of calls for service that are likely to conclude with an arrest. Moreover, a recent surge in new deputies at BCSO (from 22 patrol deputies to 26) meant that the graveyard shift was "rolling fat." More deputies were competing for an already limited number of arrestable people. Deputies thus experienced an increasingly restricted economy of arrests where demand outpaced the supply (and where scarcity had become a greater concern).

When there is a mismatch between a deputy's subjective expectations for making arrests and the objective regularities in crime rates, calls for services, and arrestable people, morale takes a hit, boredom sets in, and some deputies contemplate moving to busier departments. On one summer night, the first author was sitting in the south county substation with G.F. at 4.00 am. He and G.F. worked graveyard shifts together during his rookie year. He had mentioned to G.F., "you know, when I was hired here, everyone told me that it would be call-to-call during summer graves." G.F. sighed, "Yeah, I know, that's what it was like last year. I don't know what's going on, but this pace is killing me. It's fucking July, and I haven't gotten a call for service in a week and I couldn't make an arrest if my life depended on it. There isn't a goddamn thing happening! If it's like this next year or I don't get moved to Swings, I'm moving to a busier department. This is *ridiculous*!"

Subjective factors and personal preferences affect an officer's response to the situation of arrest scarcity. The age and eagerness of deputies, for instance, varies widely. Cynical, older, and "lazy" deputies do not look for arrests and typically do only the minimal amount of work necessary to stay on the job. The number of these "lazy" deputies assigned to a beat increases the likelihood that an excited neophyte deputy on the same beat will have access to a greater number of arrests. F.R. tells me one day:

> I put in my dues. I don't need to go make a lot arrests to know that I know my job. Just look at my stats. They are low. I don't go looking for shit. But look at how many felonies make up my arrests. *More than half* are felonies. No one else

> in the department can say that. I handle good cases only, not little bullshit. I ain't a traffic cop and I don't like drunks. You new guys can handle that shit. *And* you can have all the DUIs in the world. I don't like going to court. And I don't need to. I got plenty of money and I'd rather spend time with my kid. I also don't like taking the paper on those. Too much work for someone who is going to get a plea bargain.

F.R.'s dislike for handling drunks is an opportunity for other deputies trying to make a hook. If F.R. has an "F" (647F Penal Code, drunk in public) or a "deuce" [DUI] he calls his beat partner or a nearby deputy who he knows *likes* doing deuces or making arrests, and has them drive out and handle the situation. If no one is available he will turn over deuces to the California Highway Patrol. In one month, 2 of 10 of the first author's arrests (20%) were "turnovers" from F.R. for deuces—something for which he is grateful and of which F.R. often reminds him!

In general, opportunities for arrests are shaped by individual deputy preferences and perceptions about what types of arrest are worthwhile. Most deputies do not like making "deuce" arrests. These arrests are often described as tedious, unrewarding, and a California Highway Patrol job. If a deputy works a beat with another deputy who is both proficient at and eager to do DUI work, both will have the opportunities to generate their arrests in a preferred niche area. Thus, both external supply and subjective demands and skills help create the conditions for the distribution for arrests.

The gift of the arrest

Marcel Mauss [1990] has articulated three moments of exchange, which can be summarized as: *give-receive-repay.* These three moments ensure "that sooner or later… things [are brought] back around to the persons [who give]… reconnect[ing] the point of arrival of all these gifts and counter-gifts with their original point of departure" [Godelier 1999: 10]. In Mauss's analysis, gifts were an extension of human relationships, and people identified with the things they possessed and exchanged. To give away a thing was to give away a part of the self, and thus the gift must always be returned so the self may be whole. In this way, Mauss believed, gift-giving produced and reproduced solidarity.

Importantly, in the gift exchange, the gift or present is exchanged "voluntarily" or spontaneously, not as the result of a contract. However, "in the final analysis [gifts] are strictly compulsory, on pain of private or public warfare" [Mauss 1990: 5]. Failure to meet gift-related obligations can result in insults, disrespect, blood feuds, etc. Also, not all items are available for exchange; some things are inalienable, meant to be kept, and not given as gifts [Weiner 1992]. For instance, it is common for deputies to give away misdemeanor arrests to their peers, but arrests that are more rare and more valuable, such as certain felony arrests, must be held onto (this will be addressed later).

To give something is to share it and thereby reduce social distance between donor and recipient. But the act of giving is ambivalent: On the one hand, giving generates solidarity by sharing; on the other hand, it creates a relationship of superiority or domination, since the person who receives a gift is indebted to the person who has given it. Gift-giving tends to occur in areas of social life where personal relationships play a dominant role. The giving of arrests tends to create a space in the Sheriff's Department's bureaucracy where personal relations can be meaningful. Moreover, gifting occurs in groups where there is an interest in reproducing the group and their relations while *appearing disinterested* in the profits of the exchange itself.

The gifts of arrest exchanged by deputies initiate a circulation of gifts/favors, provide a real benefit to those receiving them, and generate obligations to do unpleasant work or perhaps to buy someone lunch. Yet the act of giving is rendered in terms of generosity, not future profits. Over and over again, deputies describe their "interest" in giving as somewhat altruistic. They speak of being team players and they describe the giver as someone who is "not just out for his." In the Basin County Sheriff's Office, as with the pre-capitalist societies described by Mauss or Bourdieu, naked self-interest is seen as dangerous.[13] In Godelier's interpretation of Mauss, the demand for the *appearance* of disinterestedness is a necessary facet of the gift exchange because "what creates the obligation to give is that giving creates obligations" [Godelier 1999: 15].

Gift-giving is of paramount importance in whatever society or group it is found because it constructs and reaffirms social relationships. Deputies are socialized into the practice of gifting, that is, they learn to be generous in giving away arrests. A police officer at another agency, A.L., explained to me how she learned to give away arrests:

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[13] We can only speculate that this is grounded in the deep trust deputies have for one another—a faith that members of the group will "be there" or "jump in" when dangerous and risky moments arise.

> When I was in field training my FTO made me give away all my arrests. I didn't have any stats coming out of training. He [the FTO] told me "they [other cops] don't know you. When you give your arrest to your cover officer it shows 'em that you're a team player." Of course when I got out of training I had the impression that I didn't have to get lots of arrests because during training they weren't pressuring me to make "stats"! I was confused for a month or so until I learned the game. It's stupid because no one tells you why you should go make arrests.

Here, the giving away of arrests is a practice that is learned over time and one that is eventually balanced out so one's "stats" are acceptable. Giving away arrests helps new members ingratiate themselves with incumbents and begin the process of attaining credit and recognition. This new officer has learned that she is also expected to make arrests over time, to create a balance between what she keeps for herself and she gives to others.

This suggests another facet of arrest gifting at BCSO: Gifts take on different meanings among members of different status groups. Expectations of exchange between rookies and established deputies are quite different from the expectations of exchange between peers. The giving and taking of arrests between peers was frequent and relatively balanced, especially for newcomers with less than five years' experience. However, when senior deputies received arrests from rookies, there was rarely a return in kind.

Another relatively new deputy, B.S., learned the value of sharing arrests early on. B.S. was a promotional hire from the jail, where he worked as a correctional officer. He typically worked beat 3, the busiest beat in the northwest of the county. B.S. had a troubled start. His actions were sometimes brash and poorly thought out. Consequently, many deputies were wary of going on calls with him. B.S. was assigned to his beat because it was busy and his supervisor felt it would allow him to gain experience rapidly. Consequently, B.S. worked in a beat in which arrests were frequent and he had a higher-than-average arrest rate. He used his ability to give away arrests to ingratiate himself with some of the more established and well-respected deputies.

On one of the rare occasions when B.S. worked the south county with the first author, we spoke of the differences between working north and south. He told me:

> Down here you gotta *work* for an arrest. In beat three, it *rains* arrests. I can't not get 'em. If I wanted, I could probably take two people a night to jail just for 647 (f) (Public Intoxication). Now it's just not worth my time. I get so many DVs [domestic violence calls] that I am guaranteed at least a couple good felony

> hooks a month and a ton of 243s [actually 243(e)(1) PC, misdemeanor domestic battery] so I always have plenty of arrests. I guess F.W. has been having a hard time of it on graves. He was telling me that nothing was moving during graves and he was down arrests. He also said he had a bet going with G.F. that he would be able to score more hooks than him. The loser has to buy a $50 bottle of booze. So we were out a week ago and I stopped this "F" [shorthand for someone who is intoxicated in public] who was walking home from the bar. F.W. came to back me. I asked him, "Hey, you want this, man? I got plenty." He said "if you don't mind." "No problem, have at it." I've done that a couple of times this month. It don't matter to me, I already have 12 for the month. I don't need any more and it helps show that I am a team player.

I asked B.S. how he started giving away arrests and he told me:

> I remember hearing F.W. talking about how M.M. had taken one of his arrests, and how pissed he was. F.W. was saying how he tried to help everyone out, giving them an arrest when he could, but not thieving them! It just seemed obvious. Some people are out for their own and you don't want to be known as one of those guys, because no one wants to work with you. If you help a brother out, the guys see you as a team player… you are about more than just getting stats for yourself. This is a brotherhood. It can't just be about you.

B.S.'s training officers had also emphasized the importance of doing favors:

> My FTOs, they always were telling me things like, "when you're on your own, you have to answer up on the radio for calls that aren't yours" and "when you can, take paper for your shift mates." I don't know if they told me to ever give away my arrests, but I got the message: You have to help others out if you want to be seen as a solid deputy.

Although sharing arrests may not repair B.S.'s damaged reputation arising from his perceived incompetence, it did buy him some credibility. F.W. and several of the other deputies with three to five years of service have frequently commented that, despite B.S. being a "screw up," he is "a team player." As G.F. said: "He always tries to help out and if you're down a few [arrests] he'll throw you a bone. He's a dunce but a good guy." For a new deputy, this kind of recognition is the primary repayment that can be expected for a gifted arrest.

One way in which the giving of arrests shapes social relations is its potential to level disparities in the power and prestige between deputies. A neophyte deputy, with little connection or reputation in the department, can improve his reputation among senior deputies by giving them arrests. When he does so, he appears as a "team player" and, more importantly, as someone who is reliable and trustworthy. His public act shows his commitment to the existing status hierarchy. When a rookie gifts an arrest to an established colleague, he slackens the constant waves of ridicule, harassment, and hazing that mark the first year or so on the job. The gift of an arrest allows rookies to navigate the rough seas of the first few months' ritual hazing. Most deputies find it difficult, for a time, to mock rookies for their incompetence and mistakes if they have recently received a rookie's arrest as a gift. The arrest can thus serve as a vehicle of appeasement.[14]

To give an arrest to a senior deputy who is struggling also makes the neophyte deputy appear, at least on the surface, capable or proficient, and therefore able to keep up with the older and more experienced deputies. Deputies who make many arrests, especially good arrests, are seen as highly competent. Competency is critical to evaluating a deputy's worth, so the gifting of arrests can have substantial payoff for a deputy. To have many arrests and give them away is a demonstration of both competence and confidence. Moreover, the more selfless the act appears and the more uninterested a deputy is in his own "stats," the more he appears committed to the general good of the force. This in itself distinguishes a deputy as a "good guy" and an "outstanding cop." This designation is especially important in police work, where dangerous working conditions demand trust and reliability among colleagues.

So valued are arrests that some deputies plead for the generosity of others. S.W., for example, was a lateral transfer from a mid-sized city, where he was a police officer. He had the dual misfortune of starting patrol during the winter, when arrests are generally scarce, and adjusting from a city police department to a rural one, where arrests require more proactive work. He had enormous difficulty adjusting to rural law enforcement and making arrests. Once, while S.W., three other deputies, and the first author of this study sat chatting at the substation (11/08/08), S.W. announced: "Hey, if any of you come on an arrest you don't want, give it to me, I'm hurtin'. I'll take the paper *and* buy lunch." Later that night, the author got a call to a felony false imprisonment and battery. S.W. arrived to cover him. He already had the suspect detained but had not been able to begin the preliminary investigation. As S.W. was hurting for arrests, he said: "You want this? It's yours. But you have to transport and I want lunch!" S.W. eagerly agreed and the author relinquished his arrest to him. As they left, S.W. said, "Thanks, bud, I appreciate it. I owe you one."

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[14] There are other forms of exchange in police work that can help an officer garner reputation and respect. For example, the first author was assigned to a day shift as a "county rover" (that is, a unit with no assigned beat to patrol and that did not frequently have calls dispatched) while working at the Central Coast Sheriff's Office. When he was there, two deputies with about a year's more experience on the job taught him the importance of "buying calls." The following is an excerpt from his field notes: C.H. and T.H. tell me that being the "rover" is a good gig. C.H. cautions me, "Just remember, when you go in service, start buying calls right out of the gate." I asked C.H. what he meant and he told me, "Since you don't get calls dispatched to you, you have to take calls from the beat deputies, especially the 5 and 6 cars. Don't wait for them to get the calls stacked a mile high and for Dispatch to give you the call over the radio. You have to take it before the call gets dispatched to you. If you wait for it, it seems like you're sandbagging it [being lazy]. So check All Calls [a screen on the in car computers that shows active and pending calls for service] and buy the calls whenever you can." I ask why buying calls is important, and T.H. says, "Dude, you don't have to but it's kinda about the kind of reputation you want to have. It's not like nights where you can just go out and make lots of stops and hook and book. It's daytime, you can go do that, and leave your teammates picking up all the calls and you look like a selfish douche, or you can be a team player and help out your team."

No gift, of course, is truly free. As F.R. noted: "it's a gift but really the unspoken rule is that it's a barter. I *give* you an arrest, but you better take that corner's case, cause I hate those." This is sometimes made explicit. Recently (11/10/08), a north county deputy named J.V. needed the author to return a wallet to someone he had arrested. In return for the favor he said, "Thanks, I'll get you back for that, at least a burger." The author, like most other deputies, responded to such statements by saying, "no worries," "no problem," or "it's nothing, ask me anytime." Here, a favor appears to be a gratuitous act even if the person requesting the favor indicates that a reciprocal exchange is likely. It would be wholly inappropriate for him to ask J.V. how he was going to compensate me for spent time and effort.[15] Yet, later that night, J.V. called the author, very excited: "I got a way to pay you back. Want an easy hook?" J.V. gave me the location of a person with a warrant arrest who the author was able to take into custody.

Even S.W. found a way to repay the author and another deputy after he was able to make a good arrest on his own. Using some creativity with paperwork, he was able to generate four misdemeanor arrests from three suspects:

> S.W. pursued a vehicle driven by a 13-year old and occupied with two other juveniles. Another deputy and I join the chase and eventually the driver, after nearly crashing the car, came to a halt. All the occupants of the vehicle were under age and past curfew. S.W. ssaid to the other deputies on the scene, "Hey, I owe you all one. How 'bout this? I'll write up the paper on Speed Racer over there and you guys can cut cites for curfew [violations]." (Curfew violations are a misdemeanor ticket that counts as a stat.) S.W. then calls up Dispatch and

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[15] The giving of assistance must appear voluntary and the author, like his peers at the time, was not thinking about how he would be compensated. Instead, as a matter of habit, he simply agreed to help out a partner. When he asked deputies whether they thought about what they would receive after doing a favor or giving away an arrest, all said something to the effect of, "I just did it. It was the right thing to do." When favors and arrests are being given, it is in-the-moment and not well thought out. There is little time to be preoccupied with rational calculation in the midst of an arrest.

> argues with them about why they need to issue four case numbers for a single incident. I then call a sergeant for approval to override the dispatcher's insistence that only one case number is to be generated. We needed multiple case numbers in order to attribute responsibility for the arrests to all three deputies present. The sergeant approves S.W.'s scheme and S.W. walks away with two stats and the other deputy and I each have one.

Rarely are favors reciprocated so quickly or explicitly. When S.W. offers lunch in exchange for an arrest, this is not an economic conversion of an arrest into a $10 lunch. Indeed, having lunch can itself be a ritualistic and symbolic activity. At the start of most shifts, the deputies who work together find out who has brought lunch and who will be dining out. If more than one deputy is not "brown bagging it," they will typically arrange to "take code" together. "Taking code" is short for the radio code 7, used to signal that a deputy is out of service for lunch. "Taking code" together signifies solidarity and reproduces social bonds by providing a medium in which to dine, share stories, recount experiences, and discuss the goings on of the department. Being invited to "take code" with other officers is an important way of becoming part of the team, especially for rookie officers. Deputies get "code" as a way to signify friendship and engage in sociable activity. Thus, when a deputy offers lunch in exchange for a favor, he or she offers a gift that creates bonds and promotes social integration.

Giving away an arrest accrues for the giver a "capital of honor" [Bourdieu 1990: 118, 121]. Bourdieu uses this term to describe the profit of recognition, prestige, and reputation that can result from acts of generosity.[16] The importance of recognition becomes apparent if a deputy on the receiving end of an arrest gift fails to publicly acknowledge the gift. It goes without saying that the receiver must show gratitude to the deputy who gave the arrest by giving him or her credit. To deny the giver his/her credit is to deny the significance of the personal relationship established between giver and receiver; this is tantamount to an insult.

This unspoken rule was dramatized in an incident that occurred several week after the author gave S.W. a felony arrest. At that time, the suspect was "gift-wrapped" (handcuffed) and ready to be taken to jail. The following week, S.W. publicly slighted the author and another deputy who had given him an arrest:

> S.W. and I came back to "take code" at the substation. A sergeant was sitting in the office modifying the schedule because several deputies were injured or on

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[16] "The interest at stake in the conducts of honor is one for which economism has no name and which has to be called symbolic, although it is such as to inspire actions that are very directly material" [Bourdieu 1990: 121].

> medical leave. I interrupted the sergeant to say hello and we engaged in a discussion about the recent county and national elections. S.W. came over, and the sergeant, knowing that S.W. had a tough time making arrests lately, made a jab at him: "You arresting anyone this month or that no longer part of your job description?" S.W. turned bright red and retorted, "*Fuck you!* I made two arrests this month, one of them was a felony hook!" G.F., who was sitting in the report-writing area shouted angrily from across the room, "Yeah, and those were given to you, *gift wrapped*." S.W., now redder in the face, turned and shouted, "Hey, shut the fuck up! An arrest is an arrest." Later when relating the incident to my beat partner F.R., F.R. proclaimed, "The balls on that guy! That guy is brutal!" (11/12/08).

It is not acceptable for deputies to deny that a gift has been given. It is perceived as disrespectful. Even if G.F. does not get the "stat" for a "hook" that he gives away, he still expects to claim that we *would have had* "x arrests if I hadn't given x away this month." In other words, a deputy can still be recognized for an arrest he or she gives away (although the receiving deputy gets recognition from supervisors in the form of an official statistic). The giving of an arrest is not like a monetary exchange. Some part of the giver is transferred with the arrest. If the giver's personal connection to the arrest is unacknowledged, then a key element of the gift exchange has gone awry. The giver feels slighted and his or her honor is at stake.

Arrests are thus Janus-faced. On the one hand, deputies strive to make arrests as they compete for status and social credibility. The arrests distinguish competent deputies from the inept and lazy. Yet, at the same time, deputies actively give away arrests to secure social bonds. For this reason, deputies were often eager to give S.W. arrests because it helped to buffer him *and* the other "grunts" from the wrath of the ever-watchful, "stat"-minded supervisors and administrators. It was well known that one of the sergeants believed that S.W. was "lazy." To protect S.W. from negative evaluations as well as from bringing too much scrutiny to the graveyard shift, deputies gave him arrests that made him *appear* more proactive.[17] By giving arrests to S.W., deputies protected themselves from supervisors and worked to maintain solidarity within their own ranks. By exercising some discretion in *who* gets an arrest, deputies are able to repel some of the performance pressures exerted from above.

Arrest exchange is part of a constant struggle between deputies and their supervisors. Supervisors are interested in generating efficiency and improving the performance of individuals. They have an interest in gauging the "real" performance of deputies. One sergeant had been working with S.W. to improve his skill in rural policing. This sergeant admonished the author and another deputy for giving S.W. arrests:

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[17] In this sense, arrests serve a similar social function to the "making out" on the shop floor described by Burawoy [1979: Chapter 4].

> Sgt. J.G. turns to G.F. and me and points his finger at us, "I don't want you giving S.W. any more arrests." He looks at me and continues, "*especially* felonies. I know he is being lazy and you can't keep covering for him. It's sink or swim here, and he has got to figure it out and start being more proactive. And don't be hurting *your* evals."

This admonishment shows the sergeant's awareness that arrest-gifting is, in part, a strategic and self-interested game played by the rank and file to manage and deflect pressure from above.

Stealing arrests

> *"10-15" with 11360(a) Health and Safety Code*
>
> At about midnight, on a warm October night (2008), I was driving my patrol car in the area of a small village known for its chronic methamphetamine problems and unusually high rate of registered sex offenders and parolees. I heard my partner, M.S., calling out a traffic stop over the radio. "Central, 429, 11-96 [traffic stop]." "429, go ahead", the dispatcher replied. "Highway XX, at the Green and White Store, on Cal [California] commercial XX." M.S. was stopped on the main highway that linked my county to the more populated surrounding counties. Since I was in the area, I drove the three miles from my location to cover him, a rare luxury since our six deputy patrol units are spread out over 1,800 square miles, and the department is plagued by staffing shortages.
>
> As I drive up on M.S.'s position, I shut off my headlights and creep up behind his patrol car. He has his spotlights aimed at the side mirrors of the car he has pulled over, effectively blinding the occupants to what is happening outside their vehicle. M.S. is standing at his passenger side door with radio in hand. He says to me, "Something's not right about this vehicle. The driver seems *way* too nervous." I ask M.S. why he stopped the car. "No license plate light. I want to get in the car. I think they might have something but I don't have anything to get me in. I can't smell dope."

He points to his nose and indicates that he has a cold. M.S. also casually mentions that the driver does not have his license on him. Instead he has written down the information to give to Dispatch for a records check.

> I volunteer to help: "If you want, while you run them [for wants and warrants] I'll see if I can get into the vehicle." "Sure, thanks man." I walk up to the black SUV. I think to myself "how am I going to get in there?" It dawns on me that, since the driver doesn't have a license, I am allowed to search the vehicle for a valid government ID. I approach the driver and say, "So where you are coming from?" The man says, "Clearlake, we're headed to Willits." I say, "Cool. You mind if I take a look in the vehicle? Just want to check that you don't have any weapons, you know, like nukes or bazookas? No dead bodies in the back, right?"

Surprisingly the driver, a white male, in his mid-thirties, with a trucker mustache and greased back black hair, agrees. “You mind stepping out of the vehicle?” The man agrees. I then ask the other occupants to exit. A Native American female and a younger white male exit the vehicle.

I begin poking around the inside of the vehicle. I start with the driver’s side seat and look underneath; I swipe my hand in areas where I can’t see. Nothing. I check the central counsel and the glove box. Nothing. I get to the back of the SUV and get down to the floorboard. I take deeps breathes through my nose trying to detect something. *Pay dirt!* I smell marijuana on the floorboard. I now “own” the vehicle and its occupants. I can search everyone and everything.

I get to the driver’s side rear seat. I find a blue computer bag stuffed underneath. It stinks of marijuana. I pat the bag and feel a leafy substance covered by plastic grocery bags. I pull the bag out of the car and look toward M.S., who is standing over by the store watching and talking to the three occupants of the vehicle. “M.S., got it.” I take a quick look in the bag. It is stuffed with marijuana. I walk around the SUV to where M.S. is standing. “Whose is this?” The young man says, “It’s mine.” I put the bag down on the hood of the car and ask the young man to come towards me. “Turn around and put your arms behind your back. I grab his hands with mine and bring them behind his back. I cuff him up and say, “You’re not under arrest. I am detaining you in handcuffs until I can figure out what is going on. Understand?” He says “yes.”

I put the young man in the back of M.S.’s patrol car. His car is equipped with mobile audio/visual recording equipment and I want to interview the man about his marijuana. I briefly talk to the other two occupants of the SUV. Both deny ownership. They say they don’t know what’s in the bag and that they were only giving their friend a lift back to Mendocino county.

I open up the bag and examine the marijuana. There are four baggies of marijuana packaged in what are known as “eighths.” The other plastic bags of marijuana have weights marked on them, each about 6oz. It is obvious to me that the bags are weighed and measured for sales.

I return to the patrol car and Mirandize the young man. “I am going to read you your rights. You aren’t under arrest, you’re being detained, but I am going to admonish you anyway, okay? I read him his rights and he agrees to speak to me. I ask the young man about the packaging. He tells me the marijuana is for “personal use.” I ask him if he has a medical marijuana card. “No,” he replies. “You aren’t bagging that stuff for sales right?” “No sir! But you have it bagged to maybe just give to your friends, you know as a gift or something?” The young man jumps on my justification. “Yeah, you know, I have some friends who need it for medical reasons, and I give them some. But I don’t sell it.” Got ya! I think to myself. Possession for sales or distribution! A felony. “So why the weighing out of the stuff?” “Well, I was getting the stuff ready in Clearlake. Some of my friends were helping. They were like, ‘dude, let’s sell it.’ I said, ‘no way, that’s too much trouble.’”

I have all the statements I need and I tell the young man that he is under arrest for possessing marijuana for sales or distribution. I re-Mirandize him and try to find out where he is growing his weed and where he is selling it. He clams up. My interview is over.

I tell M.S. that I arrested the young man. He lets the others go. He asks the man to step out of the car. I assume that I am going to take the man and put him in

> my patrol car. I am planning to ask M.S. to burn me a DVD with my interview and interrogation and to write a supplemental report on the probable cause he had for the stop.
>
> Before I can say anything, M.S. is on the radio, "Central 429, 10-15 [prisoner] with one." Within seconds he has taken off my handcuffs and put his on the young man. I am dumbfounded! M.S. puts the young man back into his patrol car, turns to me and says, "Thanks for your help man. Can you cut me a 'sup' on the search and your interview?" "Sure, no problem," I mumble. M.S. jumps into his car and takes the prisoner to the county jail. I stand beside my car, shocked. I think to myself: I just spent twenty minutes getting people out of the vehicle, searching it, and doing an interview where *I* got a recorded confession of a felony crime. Why am I not going to CJ now! That's *my* 10-15!
>
> Back at the substation, I complain to two of my colleagues. Both agree with me. It was M.S.'s stop but I did all the work, it should have been *my* arrest. One deputy tells me how he was recently "burned" by M.S. on another case he was working.

According to one of the chief informants, there is "an unspoken understanding between coppers. You don't take another copper's arrest. If you want to, you ask, and if they say no, you walk away." Nonetheless, deputies may sometimes take an arrest away from another deputy who is involved in a case or the arrest situation. When such an incident occurs, an accusation of "stealing" may be made (11/06/2008, 242 PC, Arrest).

> Earlier in the night, G.F. and F.W. had investigated a simple battery: a local bartender had punched another man several times in the face for giving his ex-girlfriend a ride. The bartender then disappeared and neither G.F. nor F.W. could figure out where he lived or what his last name was. G.F. returned to the substation and spoke to T.D. and myself about the bartender. He said, "I got the 837 form [private persons arrest form] so if you guys can find this guy, hook him."
>
> T.D. and I do our homework and go through our contacts with the bartender to see if we can figure out the bartender's last name. We are unable to do so. We decide to head back to the town where the incident occurred and where we think the bartender lives. We talk to people in and around the bar where he works. No one talks. We go to a trailer park where the victim thought the bartender might live. We knock on a few doors but no one seems to know who I am talking about. I go back to the bar and talk to a female bartender. She calls me "cutie" and I talk to her about her co-worker. She gives me the name of a guy who lives in the trailer park we had just visited. I return to the park, find the trailer, and make contact with the bartender. I have the victim come down to the trailer to identify the suspected bartender. I arrest him and take him to the county jail.
>
> When I get to the Main Office to write the supplement to G.F.'s report, I call G.F. "Hey G.', it's your report and I see you got F.R.ie's and your name in the arrest page. You want the arrest or is it okay if I put my name in?" G.F. says, "Go ahead man, it's yours. You found the guy. But just remember… do the same for me someday. It isn't cool when people just go in and change shit in the report so they get the arrest." "Count on it," I promise.

Here, proper etiquette precluded any accusation of arrest stealing. The same cannot be said for the following incident, where a senior deputy clearly "stole" a junior deputy's arrest during a traffic stop:

> E.C. had made a traffic stop in a small town in the north county. M.M, a former sergeant, arrived to assist E.C. E.C. had a man and a woman standing on the side of the road. E.C. asked M.M. to run the driver's licenses of both occupants while he interviewed them.
>
> M.M. contacted Dispatch by radio and had them run the licenses. Dispatch told him that the male had a felony warrant and was one of the most wanted in a neighboring county. Before E.C. could react, M.M. had his cuff out, walked past E.C., threw cuffs on the man and, much to E.C.'s surprise, threw the guy in his car. M.M. took off for the County Jail before E.C. could put a word in edgewise. E.C. was furious. He later confronted M.M. about the "theft," and M.M. conceded that he had illegitimately taken E.C.'s arrest. He offered to "return" the arrest, at which point E.C. said he could keep it. E.C. said, "I didn't care so much about the arrest, fine, he needs the stat, but it was the principle. At least he apologized and offered to do the right thing."

If giving an arrest can solidify the relationships between deputies and commit them to reciprocating exchanges, then thefts can have a divisive effect on relationships. They generate discord, distrust, and questions about the integrity and credibility of co-workers. Sometimes it is possible to repair the damage done by thefts, and sometimes it is not. The consequences of a theft can be serious:

> In September, a man kidnapped his girlfriend at gunpoint in an isolated mountain community. F.R. and an older deputy spent two shifts investigating the kidnapping. They spent hours speaking to community members trying to identify the suspect's vehicle and location. After two days, F.R. and his partner identified a residence in the mountains where they believed that the suspect and victim were staying. They hid in the bushes for hours, giving updates to Dispatch about what they saw. Eventually they saw the suspect's vehicle pull into the driveway of the house. Several occupants crossed, in the dark, from the vehicle to the house. F.R. called for backup so that he and his partner could make contact.
>
> Another deputy named M.S. arrived relatively quickly. M.S., F.R., and F.R.'s partner stood in the dark waiting. They saw a figure come toward them out of the darkness. Initially, they thought that the figure was another deputy arriving to help set up a perimeter. F.R.'s partner flashed the figure for a split second. Instead of seeing a deputy, they saw the suspect wearing nothing but camouflage. The suspect took off running through the woods. M.S. was the closest of the three and he reached out and grabbed the suspect. M.S. threw his cuffs on the suspect and put him in the car. By then, other deputies (including me) had arrived on scene and surrounded the house. We made entry, arrested several accomplices, and interviewed the victim.
>
> F.R. went to the substation and completed a massive report. When he went into the arrest page he found M.S.'s name. When he looked online at the public booking page he saw that M.S.'s name in place of his name. F.R. was furious. He called the jail to have them change the booking page. He then called a Sergeant

> to have the report opened up and M.S.'s name removed from the arrest page. F. R. told me later, "The balls on that guy. He thinks because he put some bracelets on the guy that he made the arrest. That's not an arrest. He caught the guy and detained him, period, end of story. I made the arrest after I interviewed him, the accomplice and the victim. Plus I spent two fucking whole shifts working that case and he thinks he can come in at the last second and *by accident* be the closest guy. That isn't police work."
>
> F.R. told this story to deputies working in the south county. Soon, M.S. acquired the reputation of an arrest thief. If a proper arrest enhances the credibility of an officer, then an improperly stolen arrest performs the opposite function. Ridicule, rumors, and distrust stigmatize those who steal arrests. Stealing arrests carries a high cost once word spreads around the department.

The arrest as symbolic good

Arrests are valuable mediators of social relations among deputies. As an object of exchange, interaction, and struggle, arrests can be analyzed in the same way that economic exchanges and symbolic exchanges have been analyzed by Bourdieu [1984, 1992]. What is exchanged—or stolen—in an arrest is not something material with a clear use-value, but something symbolic [Godelier 1999: 102] that has value because it bears some sacred import, or because its possession affords a kind of power.[18] At BCSO, arrests were valued more highly than other capabilities or achievements like social skill in deflating conflicts, working good cases that led to convictions in court, or the prevention of crime through proactive police work.

Arrests function as a form of capital at Basin County Sheriff's Department because they are "appropriated on a private, i.e. exclusive, basis…[that] enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor" [Bourdieu 1986: 46]. This simply means that arrests, once made, belong to one deputy, and give that deputy efficacy in his or her social relations. In crime enforcement, making a "good hook" is the most rewarded act a deputy can engage in. While other models of policing (e.g. community policing, problem-oriented policing, etc.) reward community interactions and problemsolving, the crime enforcement model defines policing as largely about taking suspects into custody.[19] Law enforcement is tied to a "crime control" mythology [Manning 1997], where arrests become a visible sign of skillful crime-"fighting" activity.[20] Officers are expected to "produce" arrests, and their personal sense of authority and pride, as well as the respect and deference offered to them by others, is tied to their ability to make arrests. Thus, officers must work "to generate an often tacitly set number of arrests or tickets" [Manning 1997: 111].[21] Less valued are the more service-oriented practices of policing that make up the bulk of an officer's day (e.g., mediating conflicts, traffic control, etc.). These routine tasks "produce little self-esteem" and may pose "risks to the police officer's dignity" if they detract from the "real work" of policing [Manning 1997: 111, 28]—colloquially referred to as "kicking ass and taking names." Possessing arrests brings recognition, honor and prestige [Miller 1995; Gilmore 1990].[22]

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[18] An arrest is a complex process—at once bureaucratic, cognitive, and physical. It is not a mere juridical artifact. An arrest is a physical act of restraining someone and a symbolic act of "hooking" someone. It also requires cognitive acts among multiple parties (suspect, deputies on scene, records division, and jail staff) who must establish and recognize that a person is arrested and *who* is the arresting agent. Finally, it is a record or case for bureaucratic processing. For our purposes, what is important is the act of recognition that is required to complete an arrest, and not only the act of physically restraining someone in handcuffs, in a patrol car, or in a jail.

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[19] Chan [2004] has noted the same logic in the New South Wales police force in Australia, "In the crime-fighting vision of policing, officers who carry the most symbolic capital are those who bring in the 'good' arrests, those who can be trusted to protect others, and those who have experience or rank. New visions of policing such as community policing or problem-oriented policing seek to change this by introducing alternative sources of symbolic capital based on the ability to solve problems, work with members of the community and provide service" [p. 332].

[20] "The collective honor of the police, vested in badges, insignia, uniforms, weapons, and those role signs whereby group members are recognized, is problematic in a society where such attitudes are questioned […] The failure of the public to grant honor to the police is, in effect, a source of potential dishonor and shame. Pride, on the other hand, can be said to appear when claims to self-esteem are given credence, are honored" [Manning 1997: 111].

[21] It should be noted that Manning [1997] and many others have looked at the impact of pressure-to-arrest on the relationship between officers and certain segments of the population. The most advanced articulation of this thesis emphasizes deference, authority, and shame in police interactions. Alpert and Dunham [2004] describe this in their discussion of *authority maintenance rituals*. This is simply an elaboration of Goffman's [1959; 1961] point that interactions are regularly defined by rituals that allow interacting individuals to show respect and regard for another. The heavy emphasis among police officers on authority (which is really grounded on recognition) means that their need to control can easily be disrupted by exchanges or interactions with people who do not recognize their right to define the situation [Sykes and Brent 1983]. When an officer's expectations of deference are not met by other participants in an encounter, both parties are likely to experience the situation in terms of shame and disrespect. Few sociologists, if any, have looked at what the pressure-to-arrest means for relations among members of a law enforcement agency.

[22] This is simply to say that there is a status order that regulates law enforcement behaviors. Max Weber [1978: 300] defines social status as "the probability of certain social groups receiving positive or negative social honor." Honor implies a social ranking which ties persons to groups in relations of deference and where elements of appreciation or derogation obtain. Following Miller [1995], it is important to note that shame, humiliation, envy, resentment, revenge and even boredom are closely tied to honorific feelings such as pride and self-worth. Pride and self worth are the profits of the honorific economy that gives arrests their salience in managing relations between deputies. The dangers of not accruing this positive symbolic wealth include negative social emotions.

Conclusion

We have seen that the bureaucratic impetus to measure and evaluate deputies' performance vis-à-vis other deputies institutes a constant pressure for and competition around obtaining arrests. This, in itself, is not a new finding. Researchers in the United States [Manning 2009] and France [Fassin 2013] have pointed to the effect of accounting schemes on police behavior, and on the relationship between front line officers and supervisors [Reuss-Ianni 1993]. However, none have examined how such policies structure the very meaning of arrests and the economy of practices that load something as consequential as arrests with social meaning and value. Specifically, this study demonstrated that it is possible to invert the social meaning of the arrest from the target of the arrest (the suspect) to the relationship between officers. The bartering or giving of arrests is one strategy to manage bureaucratic imperatives and workplace relations. Arrest exchange allows deputies to relieve some of the pressure to "perform" by setting up an informal redistribution system for arrests. Arrests can then be distributed according to a non-economic and non value-rational logic that serves the deputies involved. At the same time, the practice of exchanging arrests drives a shadow system of evaluation based on honor and recognition by deputies themselves. The gift of an arrest can repair relations damaged by resentment (as some deputies envy the arrests of others) and can create commitments to positive future interactions. The act of generosity creates positive feelings among colleagues and generates rewarding social interactions between deputies.

To hand off an arrest is to lend another deputy one's credibility and to offer some potential for positive recognition. The transfer also creates debt obligation, and honor demands that it be repaid in some way. Because arrests are linked so closely to honor, to steal an arrest is not just to steal a "stat;" it is also to alienate a fellow deputy from the rewards of recognition that he had anticipated. By stealing an arrest, one deputy prevents another from receiving their recognition and due. The feelings of anger, frustration and resentment that follow the theft of an arrest show that arrests are closely connected to the deputies' sense of self-worth as well as their reputation in the department.

When we couple the arrest-based system of honor, prestige, pride, and recognition with the institutionalized system of formal evaluations, rewards, and recognition, we can see how and why arrests matter deeply to the deputies studied here. The arrest is directly connected to occupational success and monetary rewards, but it is also a public sign and a tangible good that a deputy must obtain in order to achieve esteem in the eyes of others. The trading and stealing of arrests points not only to the importance of honor in relationships among deputies, but also to the particular strategies that deputies employ to construct their relationships with each other and to their institutional context. This set of social relations must be described if we are to understand any particular arrest situation. Deputies are constantly embedded in interpersonal relations with one another and with their superiors as they engage in situated encounters with citizens. Arrests, as shown in this case, can be deeply implicated in and help to organize these encounters and the deputies' social world more broadly. The spirit and value of an arrest lies not in the arrest itself, but in the complex social relations that give professional and personal meaning to the arrest and make it consequential for each deputy's position and sense of self-worth.

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Résumé

La police a de multiples raisons de faire des arrestations : résoudre des problèmes, produire des statistiques, redresser des torts moraux ou faire respecter la loi. Les études consacrées au caractère discrétionnaire des arrestations ont étudié les déterminants situationnels et structurels de la décision d'arrêter. Le comportement des citoyens, la race, le genre et la nature du crime…, tous ces facteurs ont été examinés. A la différence de ces approches, cet article se focalise sur l'institution policière. En privilégiant l'étude des relations entre les policiers il s'agit d'expliquer qui fait une arrestation, particulièrement lorsque plusieurs policiers sont impliqués sur une même scène de crime. À partir des données recueillies lors d'une recherche ethnographique d'un an et demi comme « shérif adjoint » dans un comté rural de Californie, nous montrons que les arrestations sont une forme de capital symbolique. Elles sont données, prises et disputées dans la mesure même où les policiers doivent lutter pour travailler ensemble tout en rivalisant pour l'obtention de postes et de prestige au sein du bureau du shérif. Échangé, donné et volé comme un bien précieux, une arrestation a le pouvoir de consolider les relations existantes tout comme de produire des divisions. Porteuse de signification et de lien, l'arrestation constitue un bien social valorisé.

Mots-clés : Arrestations ; Officiers de police ; Californie.

Zusammenfassung

Sheriffs nehmen aus verschiedenen Gründen Verhaftungen vor: Probleme lösen, Statistiken erstellen, moralische Missstände abbauen oder das Gesetz respektieren helfen. Studien, die sich mit dem Ermessenscharakter von Verhaftungen auseinandersetzen, haben die situations- und strukturbedingten Verhaftungsentscheidenden untersucht. Bürgerverhalten, Rasse, Geschlecht und Verbrechensart wurden derart beleuchtet. Ganz anders dieser Aufsatz, der auf die Institution Polizei eingeht. Dank des besonderen Augenmerks, das auf die Beziehungen unter Polizisten geworfen wird, soll erklärt werden, wer die Verhaftung durchführt, insbesondere wenn mehrere Polizisten in die gleiche Verbrechensszene involviert sind. Aufbauend auf einer anderthalbjährigen ethnographischen Studie als "stellvertretender Sheriff" in einem ländlichen Bezirk Kaliforniens zeigen wir, dass Verhaftungen eine Art symbolisches Kapital darstellen. Sie werden auf die gleiche Art und Weise gegeben, genommen und erstritten wie Polizisten in der alltäglichen Zusammenarbeit kämpfen bzw. auf der Polizeiwache um Stellung und Ansehen rivalisieren müssen. Ausgetauscht, gegeben und gestohlen wie ein Wertgegenstand hat die Verhaftung die Kraft existierende Beziehungen zu stärken sowie Teilungen hervorzurufen. Die Verhaftung hat einen hohen sozialen Stellenwert und Gewicht, und wird als soziales Gut gewertet.

Schlüsselwörter : Verhaftungen; Polizisten; Kalifornien.

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