

Institution: The University of Edinburgh

Unit of Assessment: 23 Sociology

5: Impacts on Public Order Policing

1. Summary of the impact

The death of Ian Tomlinson during the 2009 G20 summit protests in London led to a crisis in British Public Order Policing. Gorrington and Rosie drew on their ethnographic work on policing before, during and after a number of protest events in the UK to contribute to ongoing public debates and devise ways to minimise the risk of violence in police-protestor interactions. They have been interviewed by, or their research has been reported in, newspapers, radio or TV in Australia, Brazil, Germany, Greece, India, Romania and the UK. They have achieved impact on police thinking and practices by:

- disseminating knowledge via contributions to police training, workshops for police officers, the practitioner magazine, *Police Professional*, and the practitioner-oriented journal, *Policing*;
- advising on policing operations in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Sheffield.

2. Underpinning research

Traditionally, research on public order policing has focussed upon collective- and individual-level psychological studies of the dynamics between and within protestors and police. More recently, research on police culture and knowledge has contributed to an emerging sociology of policing. Gorrington and Rosie's contributions to this field (see publications 3.1-3.5 in section 3) hinge on empirical, ethnographic analyses of event dynamics and the way in which institutional norms and discourses can shape political encounters. Much of their work has offered a rapid analysis of protest events to maximise the possibilities for dissemination and learning (see especially items 3.3, 3.5 & 3.6).

Gorrington and Rosie argue for a more localised understanding of protest policing and demonstrate that policing operations occur within particular local contexts that influence both protest and policing styles (see items 3.1, 3.3 & 3.5). They also highlight the move from forceful and aggressive policing styles, through negotiated management to more dialogue-based models (items 3.1, 3.3-3.6). Their research provides some of the first social-scientific analysis of current dialogue-based models in the United Kingdom (e.g., item 3.5 is a user-friendly paper on their 2009 research surrounding the NATO Assembly, commissioned by *Policing* due to its topicality and importance) and has contributed to ongoing debates about how to manage crowds peacefully through dialogue and negotiation (see items 3.4, 3.5 & 3.6).

Whilst much social-scientific research tends to focus on the immediate encounter between police and protestors (i.e. the protest 'event'), Gorrington and Rosie's work emphasises the wider and mediated context within which such encounters/events occur and are understood (e.g., items 3.1 & 3.2). They bring work on police culture, protest and media to bear in their analysis. Their focus on the media, for example, suggests that police commanders' emphasis on liaison and dialogue can be undermined by media scare stories (item 3.2). There is, therefore, a need for police to engage systematically with, and indeed seek to manage, both the media and broader public knowledge of protest events.

On the basis of this research, they were well placed to offer some of the first sociological analyses of the 'English Riots' of 2011. Their piece on the policing of the riots (item 3.3) featured in *Sociological Research Online's* rapid response issue on the disturbances, and they also had a paper in the first issue of *Scottish Affairs* after the events. Both were consulted by, and reported within, press and television coverage of and analysis after the disturbances.

The underpinning research was primarily conducted by Gorrington (University of Edinburgh since 2001) and Rosie (University of Edinburgh since 2002). David Waddington (Professor of Communication at Sheffield Hallam University) and Margarita Kominou (a part-time PhD student at the University of Edinburgh 2008-) were invited to collaborate on a project focussing on Edinburgh's NATO Parliamentary Assembly in 2009. Professor Clifford Stott (Visiting Professor at University of Leeds) subsequently invited us to participate in research on the policing of the protests at the Liberal Democrat conference in Sheffield in 2011.

3. References to the research

- 3.1 Gorringe, H & Rosie, M 2008: 'It's a long way to Auchterarder! "Negotiated Management" and Mismanagement in the Policing of G8 Protests,' *British Journal of Sociology* 59(2): 187-205, DOI: [10.1111/j.1468-4446.2008.00189.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2008.00189.x).
- 3.2 Rosie, M & Gorringe, H 2009: "'The Anarchists' World Cup": Respectable Protest and Media Panics', *Social Movement Studies* 8(1): 35-53, DOI: [10.1080/14742830802591135](https://doi.org/10.1080/14742830802591135). Reprinted in Zirakzadeh, E (ed.) 2010: *Social and Political Movements*. New Delhi: Sage
- 3.3 Gorringe, H & Rosie, M 2011. 'King Mob: Perceptions, Prescriptions and Presumptions about the Policing of England's Riots', *Sociological Research Online (Rapid Response)* 16(4)17, DOI: [10.5153/sro.2521](https://doi.org/10.5153/sro.2521)
- 3.4 Gorringe, H, Stott, C & Rosie, M 2012. 'Dialogue Police, Decision Making, and the Management of Public Order During Protest Crowd Events', *Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling* 9(2): 111-125, DOI: [10.1002/jip.1359](https://doi.org/10.1002/jip.1359).
- 3.5 Gorringe, H & Rosie, M. 2013: "'We will facilitate your protest": Experiments with Liaison Policing', *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*, DOI: [10.1093/police/pat001](https://doi.org/10.1093/police/pat001)
- 3.6 Stott, C & Gorringe, H. 2013. 'From Sir Robert Peel to PLTs: Adapting to Liaison Based Public Order Policing in England and Wales', in J. Brown (ed) *The Future of Policing*. London: Routledge. Available from HEI.

4. Details of the impact

We have prioritised reaching out to user groups and wider audiences in clear and accessible terms through short articles and web pieces (listed in Section 5) and at workshops, training sessions and CPD courses. The significance of, and value attached to, our work is seen in the invitation to write-up our research for the practitioner-focused *Policing* journal. The editors wrote: 'We believe that your article contained much that would be of direct value to senior public order commanders', and one of the reviewers noted: 'This is a very useful paper that may help USA police move beyond the current situation' (4 January 2013, on file at University of Edinburgh). Other examples include:

Public Order Policing workshop, May 2010 (corroboration sources: sections 5.1, 5.2 & 5.3)

Our research (item 5 in section 3) highlighted the desire for, but also a lack of awareness about, liaison-based policing styles. We therefore organised an academic and practitioner workshop discussing current trends in public order policing and identifying lessons to be learned from existing research. Over 50 delegates attended from eight police forces, the Scottish Police College, and nine UK universities, highlighting the reach of our research. Presentations from police officers – from command, public order and negotiator perspectives – and academics generated lively discussion on these issues and how best to implement the more 'facilitative' approaches. A workshop participant from Sweden's dialogue police was subsequently invited to Lothian & Borders Police's negotiator training course. The workshop was funded by University of Edinburgh's Public Policy Network (see REF3a) and the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR). SIPR collated feedback on the event, including the following comments on Gorringe & Rosie's presentation and the workshop as a whole: '*I would like to work with these individuals at our forthcoming events – clear overlap in our aims – we could assist with demonstrating practical issues in dealing with protest from a Policing perspective and allow them to draw independent conclusions.*' '*A thought provoking seminar on how we move forward in public order policing. Having a combination of academics, public order and negotiators brought healthy debate*' (see section 5.1 below).

Advising police operations before an event (corroboration sources: section 5.3)

The workshop facilitated greater access to policing operations, and its significance was clear when we were invited to advise Lothian & Borders Police during the preparation, planning and debriefing of a 'liaison operation' which helped facilitate a largely peaceful Climate Camp in 2010 (item 3.5 in section 3). We advised on the policing approach, the leaflet to be distributed to protestors and the clothing to be worn by liaison officers (in our earlier research, we encountered liaison officers wearing plain clothes, meaning protestors were unable to identify them and saw them as spies). We stressed that liaison officers should be clearly identifiable (recommending that they wear their

police uniforms, but also high-visibility vests with the words 'Liaison Officer' prominent on them) and maintain lines of communication with protestors and also be able to respond to demands: *'Safe to say your input has been hugely valuable not least the comments you make below - all of which we'll take on board. This is new and interesting ground we are all breaking together and I'll look forward to seeing how it all progresses in the future'* (Lothian & Borders Chief Inspector, August 2010, on file at University of Edinburgh). Afterward we provided feedback on the operation and suggested possible ways to improve for future events. Subsequently, in 2013, we were consulted by officers seeking to establish a liaison unit with student activists in South Edinburgh.

Debriefing commanders during and after an event (corroboration sources: section 5.3)

In 2009 we debriefed key police liaison officers after the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and provided feedback on dialogue-based models of policing; in 2010 we were invited to observe (and comment upon) key stages from planning to post-event briefing of Strathclyde Police's handling of the Papal Mass in Glasgow, submitting a formal report. In 2011 we studied the policing of protests at the Liberal Democrat Spring Conference in Sheffield, including the planning stages. We provided dynamic on-the-day discussion and briefing with both South Yorkshire's 'Police Liaison Team' and their Silver Commander (who has since co-authored an account of the event with Stott and Gorringe). On the day we drew Silver's attention to the dangers of relying on CCTV for information and discussed with him how to improve the safety of liaison officers in the crowds.

Contributing to police public order training (corroboration sources: sections 5.2 & 5.3)

In 2011 we provided several sessions to Public Order Commanders in Lothian & Borders Police and Strathclyde Police and to Lothian & Border's Police's newly formed Public Order Working Group. About 25 Public Order Bronze Commanders attended the session in Edinburgh, about 75% of relevant staff. In Strathclyde we addressed two training sessions totalling around 40 commanders, about 80% of relevant Strathclyde Police staff. In September 2011, the Assistant Chief Constable of Strathclyde Police wrote: *'The universal feedback from the Commanders was very positive, with much comment made of the engaging style of the presentations, which made the Commanders think about alternative viewpoints and the potential impacts of their actions upon protestors in various situations ... I look forward to further collaboration opportunities'* (On file at University of Edinburgh). The training course organiser has summarised our contribution as ranging from an overview of *'the latest crowd dynamics theories to demonstrating the practical application of them in a most pragmatic and objective manner. Such inputs have been imparted to Public Order Commanders in the past as valued updates in the field of working with crowds in Command refresher courses that I have run and I am very keen to continue with this relationship'* (On file at University of Edinburgh).

We also addressed rank and file public order officers in Lothian & Borders Police at their annual training refresher session attended by 80 officers, and contributed to a course aimed at police professionals run by the University of Liverpool. Around fourteen of the participants (almost all of whom were operational police officers) took the module as part of a degree and five police officers (mostly at or above Superintendent rank, and all with extensive operational experience) took the course as CPD. This session led to an invitation to observe and offer feedback on the policing of the Liberal Democrat Conference in Sheffield in 2011.

Contributing to wider debates (corroboration: articles cited in this paragraph and section 5.1; section 5.3)

Finally, our research has informed both practitioner and wider debates. In 2011 our analysis of the challenges to protest policing after the Millbank disturbances appeared in *Police Professional*, a key resource for senior officers across the UK. In 2013 Gorringe, Kominou and Rosie briefed the UN Special Rapporteur on rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. Item 3.5 in section 3, together with a paper by Stott, Scothern and Gorringe, appeared in a special 'liaison' issue of *Policing*, and item 3.6 featured in the companion volume to the Stevens Commission on the Future of Policing. We have also written for the British Sociological Association's blog, the Australian academic forum *The Conversation*, and the *SIPR Newsletter*. Routledge made item 3.2 freely available online from August 2011 in its "UK riot culture - what does research say" initiative. There have so far been 477 article views.

There has been significant media coverage of this research. Gorringe was interviewed on BBC Radio Wales 2010 following the student demonstrations and appeared on BBC Newsnight Scotland's riot coverage in 2011. We were interviewed by *I Avgi* (a major Greek daily) in November 2010 on protest policing in the UK and contributed to, or were cited within, reportage on the riots in *The Guardian*, *Revista 22*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Canberra Times*, *The Times*, *The Hindu*, and *O Estado de S.Paulo*.

Rosie has linked the above work on policing to his work on sectarianism (reported in the National Identity Case Study) in a November 2011 presentation to Lothian & Borders Police and especially in his role (outlined in the National Identity Case Study) on the Scottish Government's *Advisory Group on Tackling Sectarianism*, which involves, inter alia, discussing the policing of parades and marches with local councils, police forces and community representatives, and advising the Scottish Government on the topic.

Note re testimony: the quotations are from police officers whom we advised or who attended our workshops/training sessions.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

5.1 Accessible publications and workshop feedback

PDFs of all five items below are available at www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/REF2014REF3B/UoA+23

- a) Scottish Institute for Policing Research feedback from the May 2010 workshop: http://www.sipr.ac.uk/events/public_order_030510.php
- b) Gorringe, H; Rosie, M & Waddington, D 2010: 'Dialogue Policing in Edinburgh?' Research Note in *Scottish Institute for Policing Research Newsletter* 4.
- c) Stott, C; Gorringe, H & Rosie, M 2010. 'HMIC Goes to Millbank: Public Order Policing Following Student Disorder', *Police Professional* 232, November 25.
- d) Rosie and Gorringe co-authored piece on the English riots and policing for *The Conversation*. Published August 15, 2011: <http://theconversation.edu.au/police-anger-after-they-cop-the-blame-for-english-riots-2821>
- e) Gorringe & Rosie. 2011. 'Copping the Blame', *British Sociological Association Blog*: <http://sociologyandthecuts.wordpress.com/2011/08/15/copping-the-blame-by-hugo-gorringe-and-michael-rosie/>

5.2 Contribution to police public order training

Letter from Assistant Chief Constable, Strathclyde Police, 14 September 2011 (available from HEI)

5.3 Individual users/beneficiaries who could be contacted to corroborate claims:

- Superintendent of Police (formerly Liaison Silver for Climate Camp Protests 2010 and head of negotiator unit in Lothian and Borders Police): can speak to the usefulness of Gorringe and Rosie's advice surrounding the policing of Climate Camp protests in Edinburgh in 2010.
- Chief Inspector with responsibility for Public Order Training for Strathclyde Police (now Police Scotland): can speak to the usefulness of Gorringe and Rosie's advice and work for practitioners through their contributions to public order training in Strathclyde.
- Former Superintendent of Lothian and Borders Police (Public Order Commander), now with Police Scotland: can speak to the usefulness of Gorringe and Rosie's advice and work for practitioners, particularly around the training of public order officers.
- Superintendent of Police, South Yorkshire Police (Police Liaison Bronze Commander during protests at 2011 Liberal Democrat conference): can corroborate the usefulness of Gorringe and Rosie's advice on public order policing and training.
- The Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs, Scottish Government: can corroborate the usefulness of Rosie's advice on policy in respect to the policing of sectarian parades and marches.