

# An Garda Síochána: Culture, challenges, and change

This thesis was submitted to the School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**2020**

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## Declaration

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## Summary

An Garda Síochána: Culture, challenges, and change is an exploration and understanding of the organisational culture of An Garda Síochána – Ireland’s National Policing Organisation. While the Gardaí – or officers – are often in the news media, there has been very little academic research on who and what this organisation is.

On an abstract level, organisational culture provides the framework of the basic rules necessary to function, or survive, in an organisation. Police organisational culture provides an identity to officers that performs this same function. On a more specific scale, internationally, police culture has been understood to consist of masculinity, discrimination, exclusion, suspicion, isolation, solidarity/loyalty, moral and political conservatism, pragmatism, cynicism, aggression, negative views of supervision, selective enforcement of the law, and a prioritisation of the crime fighter role over service oriented role. However, this understanding has been gathered from countries with very different policing organisations to Ireland.

While the international research in police organisational culture is quite vast, there is relatively little to fill this area in Ireland, particularly when you exclude historical accounts of Irish policing and Northern Ireland. Of those studies that have been identified, very few specifically look at the organisation’s culture. Further to this, many of those studies are limited in numerical and geographic scope. While the relatively narrow field has limited a grounding for the findings of this study, they do provide a starting point for identifying what gap needs to be filled, namely an expansive study on the organisation’s culture that is not confined to a small number of Gardaí or one geographic region. This considered, the gap identified in the Irish literature is one facet of this research.

Naturally if there if the research in this area is underdeveloped in Ireland, then there is also a missing piece of where Ireland situates itself in the international policing literature. The Garda are a unique policing organisation, as such, this type of police culture has not been studied extensively internationally. One of the aims of this research is to understand where Ireland positions itself in the wider world of police organisational culture literature. However, in order for this to be done, and the primary aim of this research, you first need to gain a deeper understanding of what the culture of the Garda is and how this impacts relations within the organisation as well as their relationship with the communities in which they work. While the area of police organisational culture can be quite abstract, some of the more specific aspects of the culture this research aims to understand are in organisational relationships, accountability, and managing change. Though the aims listed thus far are wholly substantive, there is also remit for connecting these findings to a theoretical basis in social learning, social identity, and rotten apple theories to further understand how the culture of the Garda is transmitted throughout the organisation and over time.

While this research fills a theoretical and empirical gap, there is also a methodological innovation in how the data was obtained and analysed. Certainly underutilised in Ireland, document analysis in the area of police organisational culture is also underutilised internationally. The data used in this research was obtained from eight documents, consisting of several thousands of pages of text, and spanning a 30 year period. The data from the documents was thematically analysed and a story was

constructed based on the data to provide a deeper understanding of what the Garda culture is. While the documents of course contained the data necessary to provide an understanding of Garda culture, perhaps one of the more advantageous contributions of this methodology is the extended observation period provided that allowed for an analysis of the Garda culture over time, something not typically possible in other data collection methods due to their point in time collection nature.

This research has contributed many key findings to the understanding of Garda culture. The first approach was to look at the organisation's culture from a top down level and what the relationship between the organisation and its members is. The findings in this area included what type of policing organisation the Garda is and what resources the organisation provides to its members (these resources included both physical resources as well as services provided). From this discussion stemmed a reconceptualization of the traditional types of policing organisations (i.e. militaristic and community/service oriented) as the Garda does not wholly fit in to either. Beyond this, the resources were examined in relation to making do with what little they are given despite increased demand for their services as well as how Gardaí are then left to cope with the added burdens. In particular reference to mental health provisions, how the organisation facilitated, or rather did not, practical and beneficial mental health services was looked at.

Further to this organisational relationship from a top down perspective was an understanding of both internal and external organisational relationships and how these are influenced by the training Gardaí receive. These included how the Gardaí interact with each other on an individual level, encompassed within this is the idea that silence is necessary for survival in the organisation, as well as the Gardaí's relationship with and to the communities they work in. In terms of training, as well as in conjunction with the idea of socialisation and Social Learning Theory embedding these characteristics into the organisation's culture and its members, it was found that the Gardaí are separated from the community from the outset of their training. This strengthened the earlier proposed idea that the Garda do not truly fit into a community oriented policing style. Internally, the relationships among Gardaí were examined both in relation to how they reacted to external and internal threats and it was concluded that the Gardaí overwhelmingly value self-preservation over loyalty.

Chapter seven looked closer at accountability and blame within the organisation and how the lack of accountability on a wide scale coupled with the ever present blame culture impacts on Gardaí behaviour and actions. Though some of the examples given were seemingly indicative of individual level actions, it was argued that, stemming from Rotten Apple Theory, these behaviours are manifestations of organisational level behaviours that have been observed and learned by individual members and acted out based on this observation. In essence, even when behaviour was observed at an individual level, it was still reflective of organisational culture as rotten apples do not form in isolation but rather stem from rotten orchards.

The final chapter brought the findings together with an added theoretical lens and the previous Irish and international literature to more fully understand where the Garda, and Ireland, fit into a larger scope of police organisational culture. It was reflected that while Ireland has always been considered quite different to many other international policing organisations, the more recent literature, particularly from the UK, seems to be more in line with some of the Irish characteristics found in the Garda culture. However, what this means for police culture as a whole, has still not been fully explored.

## Acknowledgments

This research wouldn't have been possible without the men and women who dedicate their lives to their service. During the process of studying police organisations around the world I came to know a lot more about what these officers go through every day, and I would like to thank those of you who serve with dedication and integrity. Thank you also to my two examiners, Ivana Bacik and Sarah Charman for their interest and enthusiasm in the examination of my work.

I would also like to thank my overseas support in my friends in family back in the US, Tyler, Mikaela, and Kortney, you might not have always known what I was talking about here in Ireland, but you stayed consistently excited and supportive of me throughout this whole process, so thank you. To my parents, Richard and Marie, thank you for everything you've given me over the years. I would also like to dedicate this work to my mother Frankie, while you aren't here to see everything I've accomplished, I'd like to think you'd be very proud of the person I've become.

I would also like to extend a thank you to the staff in the School of Social Work and Social Policy for taking in interest in my success in helping me along the way with learning opportunities and encouragement. To the ladies (and Calvin) in TRiCC and of course Martijn, Shelli, and Mugzy, you have become my second family during this PhD. You listened to me complain and vent (a lot) and then put me right back on track with a new focus, and for that I, and my thesis, thank you. Particularly to those of you who have been around since Day 1 for me, Sarah, Natalie, Amy, and Danielle, I couldn't imagine a better group to have taken this journey with.

Of course, I wouldn't have made it through this PhD without the encouragement and direction from my supervisor, Eoin O'Sullivan. You kept me on a path of always moving forward and truly helped to make this research the best that it possibly could be. You were willing to take me on when others would've just said "good luck with that". Beyond this research though, you provided me with the opportunity to develop as an educator, researcher, and a person, and you really made me see what it is I enjoy doing in this hectic world we call academia. I am forever indebted to what you've given me during these years we've worked together and I haven't said it enough, so let it forever be in print that no one will probably ever read, thank you.

## Table of Contents

<b>Declaration .....</b>	<b><i>i</i></b>
<b>Summary .....</b>	<b><i>ii</i></b>
<b>Acknowledgments.....</b>	<b><i>iv</i></b>
<b>Chapter 1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Irish Policing .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Loyalty and Solidarity .....	7
Managing Change .....	11
Organisational Support.....	12
Cronyism/Nepotism .....	13
Accountability.....	13
The Power of the Media.....	19
<b>Irish Policing Conclusions.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Importance of Methodology Chosen .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Overview of Documents Used.....	23
<b>Structure of Thesis .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Chapter 2 History of An Garda Síochána .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Pre-Independence.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Post-Independence .....</b>	<b>33</b>
Cronyism.....	38
“The Civic Guard will succeed not by force of arms” .....	38
Enter: Women .....	40
<b>The Beginning of Change – the 1960s Onward.....</b>	<b>41</b>
The Heavy Gang.....	45
State Protection.....	46
A System of Blame .....	47
The Turning Tides – Drugs in Ireland.....	48
<b>Past to Present: Historical Reflections.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Chapter 3 The International Police Culture Landscape.....</b>	<b>53</b>

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>53</b>
<b>An Abstract Approach to Police Organisational Culture</b> .....	<b>56</b>
<b>Culture vs. Sub-Culture</b> .....	<b>58</b>
<b>Styles of Policing</b> .....	<b>60</b>
<b>Loyalty and Solidarity</b> .....	<b>64</b>
<b>Blame Culture</b> .....	<b>66</b>
<b>Managing Change</b> .....	<b>74</b>
<b>Organisational Support</b> .....	<b>78</b>
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>81</b>
<b><i>Chapter 4 Methodology</i></b> .....	<b><i>84</i></b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>84</b>
<b>Other Methods Considered</b> .....	<b>86</b>
<b>The Critical-Constructivist Approach</b> .....	<b>87</b>
Methodology .....	89
Method .....	93
Documents .....	94
<b>Process</b> .....	<b>96</b>
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>106</b>
<b><i>Chapter 5 Organisational Culture On An Organisational Level</i></b> .....	<b><i>108</i></b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>108</b>
<b>What Do You Expect? It's How We're Trained</b> .....	<b>109</b>
<b>Community Policing</b> .....	<b>116</b>
Use of "Force" .....	121
<b>Making Do With What You Have</b> .....	<b>122</b>
Overstretched.....	124
The Haves and the Have Nots .....	125
<b>Mental Health</b> .....	<b>128</b>
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>129</b>
<b><i>Chapter 6 The Bonds That Link Us</i></b> .....	<b><i>132</i></b>



<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Internal Relations.....</b>	<b>132</b>
Loyalty Among Us .....	135
“Silence Means Survival” .....	137
<b>External Relations .....</b>	<b>143</b>
Aggression .....	145
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>147</b>
<b><i>Chapter 7 Pass the Blame .....</i></b>	<b><i>150</i></b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Whose Job Is That? Not Mine .....</b>	<b>150</b>
Lack of oversight.....	152
<b>Accountability.....</b>	<b>158</b>
You Are Them and We Are Us – Your Rules Don’t Apply .....	162
Falsus In Uno, Falsus In Omnibus .....	165
Following the Letter of the Law .....	169
<b>Who You Gonna Blame? Blame Culture .....</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>Blame Anyone But Me.....</b>	<b>177</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>182</b>
<b><i>Chapter 8 Ireland’s Position in the World .....</i></b>	<b><i>184</i></b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>184</b>
<b>Methodological Contribution.....</b>	<b>185</b>
<b>Contribution to Knowledge.....</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>Theoretical Contribution .....</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>So, Where Does Ireland Fit?.....</b>	<b>199</b>
Change .....	202
<b>Final Conclusions.....</b>	<b>207</b>
<b><i>References .....</i></b>	<b><i>210</i></b>



## Chapter 1 Introduction

An organisation's culture provides the guidelines from which members learn the required behaviour for them to thrive and survive in an organisation. As such, understanding an organisation's culture is paramount to understanding why the members of any such organisation behave in the ways they do. Further, when evaluating organisational culture, Schein (1984) asserted that if the group has to face tough circumstances together, their sense of culture will be very strong. As will be discussed more in detail in chapter three, policing organisations set themselves apart from more traditional organisations because of the conditions in which they work. Facing tough circumstances, such as responding to dangerous situations or more precarious, and sensitive, mental health scenarios, happens very often in police organisations, taking on risks is very much part of the job. From this understanding, and interpreted by Schein's (1984) forementioned assertion, it would then be expected that police organisations have a strong culture.

In part, the culture that is set and adhered to by employees is thought to have come about because of external pressures; the resulting culture was then thought valid enough to be taught to future employees (Schein, 1984). To this end, culture becomes so embedded in the organisation that no one questions it (Schein 1984); in policing organisations in particular, officers are taught not only not to question it, but to have trust in it (Fry & Berkes, 1983). Organisational culture operates as a commanding structure created to offset any individual attributes of members in the organisation that may take away from the collective mission of the whole (Scott, 1961). Further, the dominating culture serves as a measure to limit the decisions an individual can make in order to increase predictability; something that allows organisations to be stable over time (Scott, 1961). Additionally, "shared perceptions of daily practices [are] the core of an organization's culture" ([Herbert, 1998, p. 311](#)).

The overarching goal of institutionalising something and creating a culture around any such thing is to instil value in it (Scott, 1987). This shared set of meanings among members of the organisation are what distinguish one organisation from another (Manetje & Martins, 2009). Culture includes the beliefs of any given organisation as well as the actions that substantiate those beliefs (Jermier et al., 1991). Further, culture can "enable and prevent behaviour," it is the very essence of what an organisation is and does (Nugent 2007, p. 8). It is in this reasoning that understanding the culture of the An Garda Síochána is so important.

This thesis contains a more nuanced understanding of the culture of the Irish police, An Garda Síochána<sup>1</sup>, than previously offered. While the title of this thesis broadly encompasses the research questions, culture, challenges, and change, more specifically, I am looking at the following:

To what extent can the organisation's culture(s) be identified in An Garda Síochána through an exploration of recent tribunals/reports of inquiry and how do these organisational features affect their policing practices?

While the reasoning for what organisational culture, and more specifically police culture, is and why it is important to understand have been given, it also important to outline how this research more generally came to be. Curiosity around the Garda's culture began with a casual observation of the Gardaí, the Irish term for police officers, when I moved to the country prior to the start of this PhD, which then turned into curiosity; what makes these people behave the way they do, and why, above all, do they not carry weapons<sup>2</sup>? I suppose the long-term journey to this PhD was more inherent than previously considered, because from this curiosity came a want to find research. However, a cursory review of Irish policing is very deceptive, what first seems like an overwhelming amount of research is quickly whittled down to very little when our friends from the North and historic Irish policing are taken out of the search parameters. Though understandable that Northern Ireland would come up when searching Ireland, as this country's history was and continues to be very important to Ireland's being, the two policing organisations are very different in structure and practice and the research on Northern Ireland just would not suffice for the Republic of Ireland. Interestingly, even in comparative analyses of English speaking countries, Ireland is often left out<sup>3</sup>. In one particular example from Newburn (1999), covering a strategic review of literature, the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia are all covered, but not Ireland. Thus, the idea for my MSc dissertation was presented to me. Fill the gap that I am interested in knowing; what guides the behaviour of the Gardaí and how do they perform these, perhaps unspoken, rules that govern what they do.

While the research for my PhD is separate to my MSc, naturally the work from my MSc, and subsequent publication, have been used for the development of the current research – this work is referenced as Marsh, 2017 and Marsh, 2019 throughout. The data from the MSc contributed to the supporting literature used to situate the findings from the

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<sup>1</sup> The organisation will henceforth be referred to as the Garda while the individual(s) will be referred to as Gardaí.

<sup>2</sup> I was born in the United States – Florida – and so this question was very natural for me.

<sup>3</sup> Canada also gets left out, but not as often.

current research on a broader Irish and international scale. In some cases, as with the appearance of cronyism and emotional supports, the themes had not, and arguably would not, have been identified for further research in the literature reviewed because they are often not covered explicitly, yet are an underlying component of many of the other studies on the Garda. However, the use of many is subjective as many in a small pool of data is still not a lot. As is the criticism with much of the other research on the Garda to date, the data for my MSc is also limited in scale, both numerically and geographically. The data consisted of 10 qualitative interviews with current and former Gardaí in the Leinster region (predominantly Dublin). This considered, what was done was methodologically sound and provided interesting findings that gave a direction for future research.

While my interest in what the Gardaí I interviewed had to say about their culture, and frustrations toward a lack of access facilitated by the organisation, piqued during the MSc, the research questions in this thesis are an evolution of the original question rather than a strict continuation. My approach during the MSc valued breadth over depth, the questions asked and answered were so far reaching that no one particular thing could be focused in on with any substantial clarity. That considered, the concept of organisational culture is quite abstract, so choosing a focal point took time and careful thought of what could realistically be achieved in a field where so little is known, and that time and thought is what became the guiding research question for this PhD.

From Maguire, Morgan, and Reiner (2012), “the business of sociology is to capture, understand, and reproduce those ideas; examine their interaction with one another; and analyse the processes and structures that generated them” (p. 65). Although approached from a criminological perspective, understanding organisational culture and its effects on an organisation involves many of the same elements, most importantly, understanding what processes and structures have generated such a culture. Though this will be followed by chapters on the theoretical applications of police culture and how traditional organisational cultures can manifest in policing organisations as well as an overview of the international policing literature, this chapter has been constructed to provide an overview of the research on the Garda and its culture. Notwithstanding, while it is important to note that policing does not necessarily equate to the police (Jones & Newburn, 1998), this research will use the term policing to refer to activities carried out by the police.

As a preface to chapter three on international police culture literature, the literature reviewed was collected by a strategic review of research identifying prominent studies in the field of police organisational culture. Upon reading, recurrent themes were identified and additional studies were sought regarding this level of specificity. From there, equivalent research was sought in an Irish context; that considered, any relevant literature identified containing research on the Garda was evaluated, with particular regard for the more recent

studies done involving the Gardaí directly. That research is what follows in the next section. A reverse search was then conducted to find equivalent international research to critically assess if there was a parallel to the data stemming from the Irish policing context, those findings are located in chapter three.

This chapter has been constructed to set out the basis for the need for specific research into Irish police organisational culture; namely due to the overall lack of research with a narrowed focus on organisational culture within the Garda conducted thus far. What is presented sets the stage for the gap in the literature this research intends to address as well as the initial justification for why this research was conducted in the way it was.

## Irish Policing

Although the international literature selected for chapter three is just that, a selection, the Irish literature used is more comprehensive, though not to say exhaustive, of what Ireland has in the field of modern police organisational culture. However, the key words before are modern and organisational culture, as research on the Garda with these parameters is narrow. Of those studies covered, there is an inordinately large number that discuss misconduct, transparency, and accountability in some way. The whistleblower phenomena that in some instances can contribute to the discovery of misconduct is something that will be studied, as part of the larger spectrum of organisational culture, for this thesis and the for mentioned literature will provide a basic groundwork from which to situate these findings.

When looking at research on the Garda, many take a historical and/or secondary approach; only a few have included the organisation in a capacity that directly involves the Gardaí (Barry, 2014; Brown, 2000; Charman & Corcoran, 2015; Conway, 2014; Geraghty, 2017; Marsh, 2017, 2019; Nally, 2009; O'Brien-Olinger, 2016; Sheridan, 2009; Williams, 2016). Of the researchers identified, very few did not identify as part of the organisation at the time of the study (Brown, O'Brien-Olinger, Marsh, Williams, Geraghty, Conway); however, these implications will be discussed further in the methodology chapter. Even fewer of these academic works have specifically researched police organisational culture within the Irish context (Charman & Corcoran, 2015; Conway, 2010; Marsh, 2017; Nally, 2009; Williams, 2016). Further, of the studies identified, many have been conducted by Gardaí actively in the organisation pursuing a master's level qualification, limiting the time available to do the research and thus, the scope<sup>4</sup> of the research able to be conducted.

Charman and Corcoran's (2015) study, which stems from Corcoran's (2012) doctoral thesis, into Garda organisational culture consisted of qualitative interviews

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<sup>4</sup> Scope in this instance references the substantive depth, geographic reach, and limited member rank.

conducted by Corcoran, a Gardaí, with street level Gardaí from the Dublin North Central area. Upon this researcher's meeting with him, being part of the organisation hindered some depth in questions due to the interviewed Gardaí's awareness of his position (as could be supposed for the other studies where the Gardaí took on the researcher's role); nonetheless, this study is one of the biggest stepping stones into research on organisational culture in the Garda and is really where this research truly began.

In the first, and only to date, study of its kind, O'Brien-Olinger (2016) created a dynamic ethnographic account of what day to day policing is like within the Garda. Although O'Brien-Olinger's (2016) research focuses on how the Gardaí are coping with an increasingly internationally diverse community, his work is the only research as of yet that provides insight into the everyday life of the ordinary member of the Garda. As such, his work is tremendously important in evaluating the theoretical and empirical findings ascertained from historic and/or interview-based research against how Gardaí actually act in the field. The in-depth studies of the Garda, as well as the overall purpose of this research, are intended to be the corner stones to future publicised<sup>5</sup> research on the organisation.

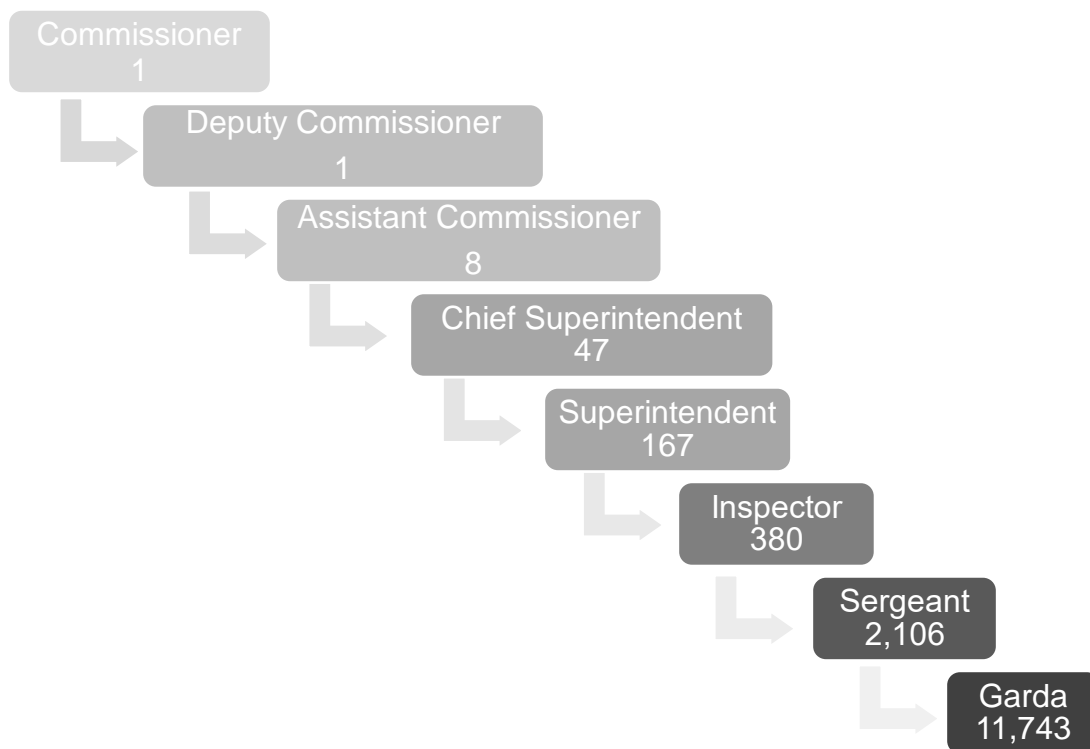
The following is what we know thus far about the landscape of Irish policing from the research conducted to date; what is presented is the themed groupings found throughout the literature<sup>6</sup>. First however, before delving into the research on the Garda, it is important to outline the structure of the organisation and the numbers at any given rank for context. As of Feb. 29, 2020 there are a total of 14,453 Gardaí<sup>7</sup> and those numbers are set out by rank below.

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<sup>5</sup> The organisation has conducted other research by its own research unit, but will not release these documents to the public.

<sup>6</sup> There are certain, purposeful omissions from this literature review based on a lack of data found during the research to discuss it. These areas (i.e. gender and diversity) were researched and initially present in the reviewed literature, but upon reassessment there were no findings to this level of specificity in the data and thus this literature was not included.

<sup>7</sup> This is strictly trained members of the organisation, this does not include civilian personal or Garda Reserve numbers.



Though the idea of cultures and sub-cultures within organisations contributing to differences in culture will be discussed in more detail in chapter three, the support for whether or not these groupings even exist in the Garda is mixed at best. Nugent (2007), a Garda Sergeant, asserted that sub-cultural groupings within the Garda are easily identifiable and consist of “rank, role, gender, location, and whether attached to uniform or detective branch” (p.8). However, Charman and Corcoran (2015) did not find any sub-groups among the Gardaí interviewed. This could be attributed to participation bias in which all of the members of the organisation chosen for interview were indeed from the same subgroup and therefore no subgroups were found among them. Because of the conflicting, and overall limited, evidence, conclusions cannot be drawn as to whether these sub-groups exist in the Garda.

Similarly ambivalent is the notion that there is a difference between the publicly stated, or formal, culture and the actual, or informal, culture found in the organisation. Charman and Corcoran (2015) concluded that the gap between formal and informal culture in the Garda was smaller, though still present, than previously reported. In partial agreement to this, Williams’ (2016) evaluation did find a gap between the formal and informal cultures within the Garda. Though not as directly conflicting as whether there are sub-groups among Gardaí, the research thus far does not provide a clear answer on how large the gap is between formal and informal culture; this is considering that the two identified studies which have evaluated it can be considered a consensus at all.



Further, even if it were determined that there are sub-group(s) that adhere to their own culture, it does not necessarily determine whether or not there is a presence of an informal culture in the organisation. It is entirely possible that the organisation as one whole operates under a sub-cultural directive whereby the entire organisation behaves differently to what the officially stated, formal, culture is. This particular facet of Garda sub-culture has yet to be explored explicitly and it is anticipated that the research questions in this study will contribute to that gap in the literature. This considered, the following understanding of the Garda will be based on an idea of one unified organisation rather than considering how different sub-groupings could influence what has been found in the research conducted thus far.

### Loyalty and Solidarity

As indicated by the literature, currently in the Garda an “every man for himself” mentality has taken over following the Morris Tribunal findings (Charman & Corcoran, 2015; Marsh, 2017; O’Brien-Olinger, 2016). The more traditional blue code of silence was overtaken by the “cover your ass” mentality whereby Gardaí were more concerned with their own wellbeing within the organisation over that of their colleagues (Marsh, 2017; O’Brien-Olinger, 2016). While it does not seem to be the case in Irish policing now, there is a prevalence in other police organisations, as well as in the Garda of previous generations, of a belief in the “blue code of silence”. The blue code of silence, although only a few words, encompasses the very essence of what police culture is; loyalty, integrity, solidarity, and community. Nugent (2007) found the Gardaí rank high in sociability and solidarity, both factors that can contribute to the blue wall. Although she did recognise that this solidarity can have negative ramifications, she argued that fairness outweighed any solidarity and those who do not follow the expected behaviour are not who represent the organisation (Nugent, 2007).

However, casting off these individuals as single occurrences is problematic as it overlooks where these individuals who “do not represent the organisation” have learned their behaviour. As will be argued further throughout this thesis, behaviour is learned by way of socialisation and larger systemic cultural emphasis on such behaviour and thus should not be written off as an isolated occurrence. With specific regard to socialisation, within the Garda it has been noted to start as early as in the training college, but socialisation is attributed as the mechanism for transmitting the culture regardless of when it is learned (Nally, 2009). So, though this behaviour may not be what is considered to represent the organisation, it is still part of it.

Further distancing themselves from the tradition of strict unity, although it is still noted as a very important feature of the policing community in Ireland, the lack of resources

available to them has diminished the amount of internal solidarity and loyalty among Gardaí (O'Brien-Olinger, 2016; Williams, 2016). This is not, however, out of line with what the wider research would indicate; less availability of resources causes tension among officers, in turn creating added stress that results in unnecessary competition and conflict; all of which can lead to bullying within the organisation (Tuckey et al. 2012).

The Gardaí interviewed were also not opposed to whistleblowing, as long as the fallout would not be too severe for them or if they believed it was justified, further distancing the Gardaí from the tradition of the blue code of silence (Charman & Corcoran, 2015), but linking them to the more recent studies, albeit less common, in the UK (Caveney et al., 2019; Charman, 2017; Westmarland, 2005). Although Charman and Corcoran's (2015) study concluded that Gardaí were not opposed to whistleblowing, there are still consequences for those that do. Members within the organisation are not allowed legal representation unless it is a serious breach of discipline, even then, representation must be brought in at the Gardaí's own expense (Kennedy, 2015). If a whistleblower did come forward, the decision of whether or not to investigate was up to the complete discretion of the Commissioner (Kennedy, 2015). There was a new procedure put in place to protect whistleblowers in 2014 following the troubles faced by Maurice McCabe (Kennedy, 2015), but how effective they have been remains to be seen and the Tribunal inquiry into this will form part of the basis for the data analysed in this research.

When considering loyalty to one another, it is also important to consider how this internal solidarity can affect external relations with the community. If culture is in part responsible for creating this distinction between officers and the public, and the Garda is known to have a very strong culture that has been in place for almost a century, of which will be discussed further in chapter two, the natural conclusion would then be that there is also a strong division between the Gardaí and the public. However, how this concept found in international police culture is manifested in a policing organisation with a strongly stated community policing ethos is conflicted. It would seem unlikely that a community policing model and a divide between the Gardaí and the public could work in harmony.

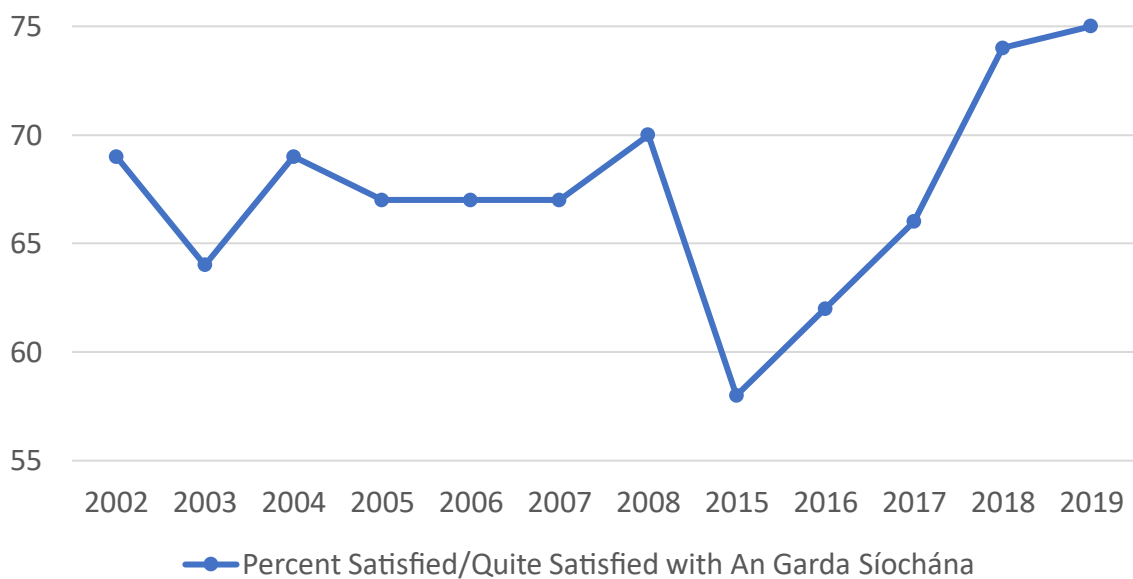
From a historical perspective, Irish policing was heavily linked to brutality and use of force, so much so that outside military forces would send their soldiers to Ireland to be trained (Sinclair, 2008). Though an essential component of establishing the Garda was trust by the public and accountability to it, and although the Garda still have a high community approval rating (comparatively<sup>8</sup>), there are still thoughts that the Gardaí abused powers and

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<sup>8</sup> In 2012 the Garda had the highest level of acceptance of Western European police organisations (Manning, 2012). However, up to 2014, the Irish National Election Study have found survey evidence to suggest that trust in the Garda has been on a downward trend (Brady, 2014), but still rarely dips below 80% (Conway, 2019).

were aggressive both physically and mentally (Mulcahy, 2006). Indeed, there is a “longstanding physical force tradition in Irish Policing” noted by Kennedy (2015) when speaking of the organisation of the past. Out of this tradition came what was to be known as “Heavy Gangs”, in which Irish policing was connected to the misuse of force to obtain confessions (Mulcahy, 2005). Though this will be discussed more in chapter two, it demonstrates a consistent strain between Gardaí and the public, even if this is not always reflected in public opinion polls (Conway, 2019).

## Percent Satisfied/Quite Satisfied with An Garda Síochána



An Garda Síochána Public Attitudes Survey

When looked at in reference to previous years, public satisfaction with the Garda has been relatively constant at the 60-70% range. Reasoning for why the Garda still hold a relatively high public satisfaction rating is unclear. It is possible that their approval remains higher because of their representation of and connection to the community, through, for example, historic values and sports. Or it is possible that the public is not quick to judge the Garda because the Gardaí are a reflection of them, and to judge them is to judge yourself. Both of these aspects will be discussed more in the following chapters, but the chart provides a good visual representation of the Garda’s standing with the public despite the continuous scandalised news surrounding the organisation.

Coming back to the relationship with the community, in terms of use of force, Charman and Corcoran (2015) did not find any overwhelming propensity for violence among the Gardaí. O’Brien-Olinger (2016) also found a lack of physical aggression among the current Gardaí, but it was generally perceived that the older generation of Gardaí policed

more aggressively. The generational divide in aggressiveness can be explained in part by the social and legal context toward violence in policing being drastically different in generations past<sup>9</sup>. As would be indicated from the literature and general data, use of physical force by Gardaí is not something that is a modern concern for the organisation. A finding that distinguishes this organisation from other modern police organisations, particularly those in the US.

Though this lack of force used by the Gardaí could more generally be seen as a sign that they can connect more with the community, there is also potential for negative ramifications (i.e. not being taken seriously as a police organisation). Because of this, sport has become an integral part of the Garda culture and is seen as an aggressive way for unarmed police to establish their dominance and command respect from the community in which they serve, something that is still done today (Mulcahy, 2006; Nugent, 2007; Conway, 2019). According to Manning (2012), in Ireland, because the Gardaí hold a certain level of authority, they are associated with a level of sacredness by the public. Indeed, the Gardaí who O'Brien-Olinger (2016) interviewed were proud of the high reputation they held in society, though they did acknowledge a certain lack of respect attributed to the lack of firearms carried by most Gardaí. There is a fine line between commanding respect from the public and committing to positive community relations in policing, previous studies would suggest this line is one the Garda are still confronted with today (Marsh, 2017; O'Brien-Olinger, 2016).

More generally, during Corcoran's interviews, there was an emphasis found on the Gardaí's value of the public and their commitment to serving the community, the public's overall wellbeing, and the relationship between the Gardaí and the public (Charman & Corcoran, 2015). Further, in Ireland, community policing has generally improved police morale and citizen's views of the Gardaí (Connolly, 1998). As the former Garda Commissioner Nóirín O'Sullivan emphasised in her speech, the impression the Gardaí give to the community is just as important as the job being done (O'Sullivan, 2015). However, the lack of interaction outside of a policing context noted by O'Brien-Olinger (2016) has only served to strengthen these thoughts of separation and further deteriorate any chance of a positive relationship between the two communities. Notwithstanding, yet again, there has been very little research done to evaluate this relationship between the Garda and the public, with most of it being drawn on the lack of physical force, and thus, conclusions are difficult to draw to any degree of confidence.

From a macro level, who the police are and how they behave can be influenced by what policing style the organisation adheres to. While the intricacies of what these policing

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<sup>9</sup> For generational comparisons see e.g. (D. P. J. Walsh, 1957).

styles consist of are discussed in detail in chapter three, there seems to be a consensus in Ireland that the Garda adhere to a community policing style; though what this means in actual practice is less clear. Connolly (1998) stated that policing had come to be known as something done to people rather than something done for them or with them; however, he also noted that community policing has the potential to combat this notion. Connolly (1998) further states the policing objectives should be to aid in maintaining community relations; something community policing has the ability to do. A central goal of community policing is to focus on the causes of crime and solutions to fix the problem rather than a crime-fighting approach that merely reacts to the crime itself (Connolly, 1998). By the early 1900s the shift from militaristic to civil training in Ireland was beginning to emerge (Sinclair, 2008). This shift in training is something still seen in the community policing style of the Garda today. However, in early implementations of community policing in Ireland, a lack of Gardaí physical presence was only remedied after assessments had been done following attacks on Gardaí by members of the public in lower socio economically developed areas (*Urban Crime and Disorder. Report of the Interdepartmental Group*, 1992); a solution that is more reactive than proactive and not within the standard of the community policing model.

The idea that “the police officer is not, and never has been, simply a law enforcement officer” was beginning to take hold in Ireland from the 1960s period of modernisation onward (Bowden, 2014; Carrabine et al., 2014, p. 349); however, whether this model would be implemented effectively was a matter of scepticism from early on (McCullagh, 1985). Indeed, even though a community policing model was proposed, only certain Gardaí were considered community police (*Urban Crime and Disorder. Report of the Interdepartmental Group*, 1992). There was an emphasis from the 1990s onward on community policing that focused particularly on increased visibility as it was thought that higher visibility meant more trust from the public and a reduced fear of crime (Bowden, 2014; *Urban Crime and Disorder. Report of the Interdepartmental Group*, 1992). However, Carrabine et al. (2014) has noted that there is a fine line between more visible police and an intrusion of privacy on the part of the public. This is something the Gardaí still struggle with; one particular example being public irritation with increased breathalyser tests, a practice intended to increase visibility, public awareness, and safety, yet has not been received well by the public.

## Managing Change

Strong organisational cultures provide more unity, a strong culture being something the Garda seems to have based on the evaluated literature, but this unity can create resistance to change (Nugent, 2007; O’Riordan, 2015). Formerly, the Garda had been regarded as an organisation resistant to change (Brady, 2014; Charman & Corcoran, 2015). Indeed, Connolly (1998) has characterised the Irish value system overall as resistant to new

ideas. Although rules and regulations have been enacted, they often failed to have any real impact on the organisation's culture (Charman & Corcoran, 2015). Further, in 1998 Connolly stated that the Garda is set for change, and needs it, but in the 20+ years since publication, the organisation is still very similar in key aspects to its earlier years despite outward attempts to change.

The Gardaí interviewed by Corcoran showed little resistance to change within the organisation (Charman & Corcoran, 2015); this being vitally important as it will be discussed that there is no potential for change within a policing organisation if the officers do not want or allow it to. O'Brien-Olinger (2016) also found that not only were the Gardaí capable of change, but that they adapted very well, and rather quickly, to necessary changes in the organisation. Geraghty (2017) further concluded that there was a very minute level of resistance from the Gardaí toward change; his respondents also recognised a need for change, although not too much of a change.

However, according to Geraghty (2017), though members of the Garda seem willing to change, a lack of resources and inability to effectively communicate such change is hindering progress. Although Nugent would attribute a culture change to a structural change in the organisation, research surveying Superintendents in the Garda saw themselves (the Superintendents) as the drivers of change (Geraghty, 2017; Nugent, 2007). Regardless of which approach is taken, all imply that members of the organisation believe the Garda is capable and accepting of change. These conclusions were based on both observational and survey collected research; however, how these findings reconcile with a noted lack of large-scale change over time is unclear. The fixed points in time have limited any long-term evaluation of change within the Garda, and this aspect will be analysed in this research.

## Organisational Support

Although it occurs and is in some cases created by the organisational culture, Williams (2016) found a lack of support provided from higher ranks for physical and emotional abuse suffered on the job. Additionally, he found an overall feeling of being undervalued by the organisation that led to a lower motivation for the job (Williams, 2016). Further, in the Garda there were very few support networks in place to deal with on the job stress (due to the overall nature of the work, lack of resources, mental health, etc.), and if they were offered, it was challenging to find and/or avail of them (Marsh, 2017; Williams, 2016). In order to cope with the stress and trauma of the job, the Gardaí would often turn to inappropriate or dark humour as a survival tactic (Williams, 2016). This is not uncommon as similar findings came about in UK studies by which officers were found to use humour to cope with the dark realities of the job (Charman, 2017; Loftus, 2010). However, how Pogrebin and Poole's (1988) notion that using humour to cope causing a repression of

emotions that make officers less likely to connect with the community and the Garda's community policing ethos that hinges on connecting with the community is, as of yet, unexplored. Accordingly, similar conclusions would be drawn for how the organisation manages mental health in an Irish context; not well and overall not conducive to a healthy and safe working environment. However, it should be noted that these conclusions are based on one, minor study.

### Cronyism/Nepotism

A topic that came up naturally both in my own research (Marsh, 2017) as well as others (Nugent, 2007; Sheridan, 2009; Williams, 2016) was the concept of nepotism/cronyism and bullying within the organisation. When speaking of getting the job or going for a promotion later on in their career, those interviewed would bring up the concept of cronyism/nepotism and emphasise that who you knew in the organisation was more important than who was qualified for a particular position (Marsh, 2017; Nugent, 2007; Williams, 2016). Further to this, Sheridan's (2009) study on gender inequality was constructed around a quantitative survey; however, criticisms were received from the surveyed Gardaí in the optional feedback section about her lack of addressing such issues as nepotism within the Garda. In the case of Sheridan (2009) and Marsh (2017), these answers were not prompted by any such questions about nepotism/cronyism, but rather a finding that came about organically indicating it is a pervasive issue. Nugent (2007) also found a high number of Gardaí who felt promotions were based on who you knew rather than who was most qualified for the job.

Interestingly, Nugent (2007) referred to the complaint as a "negative perception" (p.15) rather than acknowledging the complaint as legitimate. This suggests that this is not necessarily what is actually happening, but rather the Gardaí who complained were merely disappointed they did not get the promotion and wanted to blame it on something other than themselves. It has been documented that only about 2% of the organisation is above the rank of superintendent, and therefore there is little room for upward movement (Geraghty, 2017). Nonetheless, the suggestion from a Superintendent in the organisation that this is not happening and placing blame on to lower level Gardaí, or alternatively that Gardaí blame others for not getting what they want, are points of interest that lead to the next facet of the Garda culture as indicated by the literature, accountability.

### Accountability

An issue that nearly every organisation, and especially policing organisations, face is that of transparency and accountability. Transparency is one of the key components in instilling trust in the community, yet it is a major flaw common in policing organisations. The

Garda is not the exception in this regard. Walsh (2009B) stated that the Garda is characterised by a lack of transparency while Mulcahy (2006) corroborates that accountability for the Garda was not thought to be a priority. In one respect, increased lack of transparency and distrust with the Garda is created in part by a basic lack of information given to the public; information such as stop and search laws as one example (Conway & Walsh, 2011). However, there is also an onus on lack of supervisory control; “widespread police corruption, therefore, is not about a few rotten apples. It is representative of problems at management level and related to failure of disciplinary controls” (Conway, 2010, p. 127). Transparency is further diminished by how difficult the organisation makes it for anyone, in particular anyone outside of the organisation, to study the both the organisation and its members.

To this end, there are three separate organisations that have been created as (at least partial) oversight mechanisms for the Garda. However, it should be noted that there is on occasion overlap among the organisations and this in itself leads to more complications for the Garda. Notwithstanding, those organisations are: the Policing Authority<sup>10</sup>, the Garda Inspectorate<sup>11</sup>, and the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (GSOC). While GSOC is not the only regulatory body over the Garda, it will be the body that is focused on here.

GSOC was set up under the An Garda Síochána Act of 2005 to hear community complaints about the Garda and address such issues. Unlike the Northern Irish oversight committee for which GSOC was modelled after, the Irish Minister did not allow as much power as their Northern neighbours had, which led to the oversight board in Ireland criticising their own ability to effectively manage the Garda (Mulcahy, 2006). The lengthy process and inability to initiate their own investigations into the Garda, as well as the Gardaí conducting investigations into themselves, further limits the boards’ success (D. P. Walsh, 2009A).

The 2005 Act also established the Garda as a civilian police force as well as the State’s security service, but the Commissioner of the Garda was still under the direction of the Minister of Justice (Charman & Corcoran, 2015; Conway & Walsh, 2011). Revisions to the 2005 Act saw the organisation put under the sole direction of the Garda Commissioner, whereby he/she only reports to the Minister regarding national security concerns (O’Sullivan, 2015). However, in addition to being able to access confidential Garda

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<sup>10</sup> The Policing Authority is an oversight body that is responsible for the overseeing the performance of the Garda, and while it is important to the overall functioning of the Garda, it has no investigatory powers of its own and therefore it was decided to not include them in this section.

<sup>11</sup> The Garda Inspectorate is responsible for inspections and/or enquiries on particular aspects of the operation and administration of the Garda; though one of the Inspectorate’s reports will be used as a document for analysis, this oversight body will not be the one in focus in this section.



documents at any time and for any reason, the Government can use matters of state security as a way to hinder Garda investigations in certain circumstances as well as prohibit investigation of the Garda by their own discretion (Walsh 2009B). Further to this, the Garda would be unable to conduct any sensitive investigations into government bodies because the Minister has the authority to make them disclose both their search and any subsequent findings. Additionally, GSOC has no power to investigate the Commissioner; investigations can only be conducted into members of the organisation on lower levels (Brady, 2014).

The only way to file a complaint is from a citizen who has witnessed an event, leaving the board unable to initiate its own investigations (D. P. Walsh, 2009A). Further, many of the complaints that are submitted are rejected by the board every year with no reason given as to why (D. P. Walsh, 2009A). Of the cases accepted, the independent board only investigate offences deemed to be serious, yet there are no guidelines given as to what constitutes a serious offense (Kennedy, 2015). Complaints that are submitted and accepted within the six-month limitation and considered non-serious in nature are handed down to the Garda to be investigated by the very Gardaí and/or their colleagues whom the complaint is made against (Kennedy, 2015). At least half of the cases GSOC do pursue are investigated by the Gardaí themselves (Conway & Walsh, 2011). Because of this, many complaints are not handled effectively leading to a lack of transparency even by the independent board (D. P. Walsh, 2009A). GSOC's policy on only investigating the most serious offenses means that the smaller complaints fall through the cracks, but these smaller complaints are what tend to impact the public's perception of the Garda the most (Kennedy, 2015). It stands to reason that if the public feel negatively toward the Garda, and that their claims will not be dealt with appropriately, they will stop reporting, further hindering and future success of the oversight commission (Kennedy, 2015).

Although the reforms were put in place as a remedy for controversy surrounding the lack of oversight, as posited by Conway and Walsh (2011), what was implemented often did not address the core problems or ignored other flaws in the organisation. This was due in part to the organisation treating the issues brought to light as isolated incidents rather than an indication of wider systemic problems (Conway, 2010). Whistleblowing protocol set forth in the 2005 Act was also limited in its success as whistleblowers had to be publicly identified, which resulted in peer shaming, among other ramifications (Brady, 2014). Indeed, Charman and Corcoran (2015) have noted that "more needs to be done to encourage the cultural validation of whistleblowing in An Garda Síochána" (p. 18).

As discussed previously, the circumstances surrounding GSOC procedures, i.e. Gardaí investigating themselves for their own wrongdoing, also produces a lack of transparency that sows discord throughout the community (Kennedy, 2015). Kennedy (2015) states that if internal disciplinary procedures cannot be dealt with in a transparent

way that holds the Garda accountable for their actions, the public will lose confidence in the organisation. Although it was determined that GSOC needed to be held more accountable for their own actions, in regard to being fair, trustworthy, conducting investigations promptly and impartially, and giving sanctions that were proportionate to the complaint, the Gardaí interviewed did feel that GSOC made the organisation more accountable as a whole (Barry, 2014).

However, when interviewing Gardaí directly on their opinion of GSOC, Barry (2014) also found that they feared being subject to a GSOC complaint and that in turn impacted their ability to do the job. Further, although the creation of GSOC was intended as a positive mechanism, Corcoran's (2012) research has offered an alternate opinion in that GSOC has created a blame culture among Gardaí. Gardaí have cited a blame culture present in the organisation, in some cases present from supervisors implementing their own policy of self-preservation, which has led to Gardaí being afraid to take risks or make mistakes for fear of being blamed (Williams, 2016). Beyond what has been extracted from relevant findings in other research, the concept of a blame culture within the Garda has not been studied to any great extent but does tie in well with the notion of accountability and was a major point of focus for the research in this thesis.

Many cases of misconduct are reported to GSOC, but very little is typically done to hold anyone accountable for their actions (Conway, 2010). Further, although many incidents have occurred, there seems to be a historical trend of not assigning blame (deservedly or otherwise) to the organisation in any respect, but rather a trend of blaming the victim for Garda malpractice (Conway & Walsh, 2011). In many cases the organisation has agreed to settlements, but there has been no real effort in questioning what happened (Conway, 2010). On a wider scope, the Barr Tribunal<sup>12</sup> in 2006, a tribunal of inquiry into organisational wrongdoing, was very hesitant to even criticise the organisation nor did it evaluate if the Gardaí could have acted differently (Conway, 2010). This trend has historical roots as well. Other cases of misconduct (e.g. Damien Marsh<sup>13</sup>, 1994 and Vincent Connell, 1995)<sup>14</sup> were never properly investigated, but rather overturned in court (Conway, 2010). Although the cases being overturned may in fact indicate no Gardaí wrongdoing, a case of police misconduct being dismissed in court does not necessarily guarantee this and no

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<sup>12</sup> It is because of the limited scope of the investigation this particular tribunal was not used as a document for data analysis in this research.

<sup>13</sup> Of no known relation to this researcher.

<sup>14</sup> While the bigger focus with these two examples is on the lack of oversight and misuse of powers shown by the investigating Gardaí, briefly, Damien Marsh was convicted of murder but overturned in court when the confession could not be located and the investigating Gardaí gave contradictory evidence in court. Vincent Connell also had his murder conviction overturned in court after he was denied access to a solicitor in custody and was aggressively questioned. Both are characterized by similar circumstances to the Dean Lyons case, of which is discussed more from the data in the findings' chapters.

investigation into the circumstances would suggest a culture resistant to accountability and learning from past mistakes. Indeed, the Kerry Babies incident, which will be discussed more in chapter two, criticised the family involved more so than the Gardaí involved (Conway, 2010; McCafferty, 1984; Mulcahy, 2015).

The lack of accountability and transparency within the Garda has been influenced from cultural Irish practices and is set from an organisational level that has cemented its way into the culture. Indeed “successive governments proved reluctant to establish robust institutions of accountability and oversight. Thus, there developed a system of policing characterised by in formalism and discretion, violence, lack of accountability, and political interference. Perhaps paradoxically, this system also attracted widespread public support” (Mulcahy, 2015, p. 19). The condemning findings of the Morris Tribunal and creation of the overseeing GSOC are said to be in large part initiators for the reforms and the acceptance of change (Charman & Corcoran, 2015). Conway (2010) refers to Justice Morris’ willingness to honestly criticise the organisation as an important turning point for Garda reform. Further, the Morris Tribunal has been considered the epitome of the turning stone or a watershed moment for investigations into misconduct that have led to Garda reform (Conway & Walsh, 2011).

However, if this watershed reform was true, the questions asked in this research would seemingly be largely unnecessary. As it stands, the research questions are still valid and necessary. During an early evaluation of the impact of GSOC, Conway (2008) concluded,

As Mr Justice Morris said, the events of the Morris Tribunal could happen again. Perhaps if the Complaints Board had been better equipped, then events in Donegal could have elicited a much speedier response. Serious doubts exist as to whether the Commission is any better placed to handle such misconduct. (p.130)

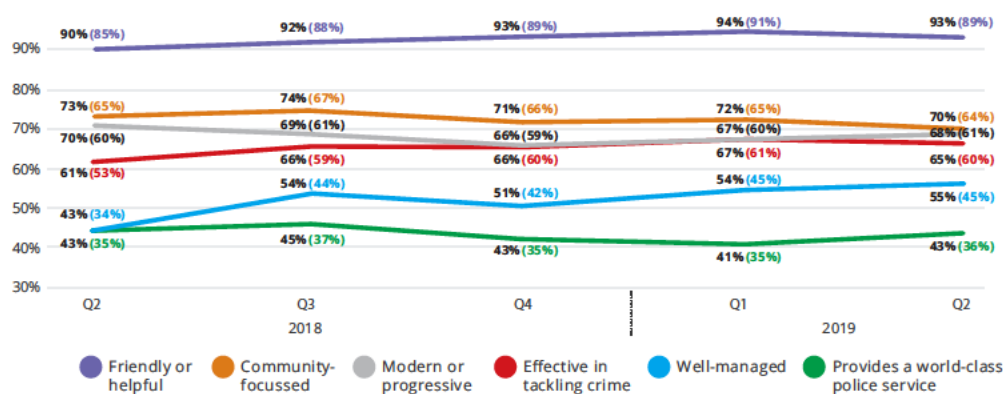
Indeed, as Mulcahy (2015) has further asserted, “if the 2005 Act was intended to provide a robust response to scandals in Donegal and elsewhere, particularly through a tightening up of internal and external controls, it is unclear what precise impact this has had on the cultural values and practices of Garda officers” (p. 23).

Although misconduct in Irish policing does happen, and has been criminally investigated by the legal system, it nonetheless is under researched in an academic capacity. As O’Brien-Olinger (2016) found during his ethnographic research, the Gardaí themselves thought the organisation to not be corrupt because of how well they were paid in comparison to other police organisations. However, there has been mixed support for

whether or not the Gardaí think they are adequately compensated (Marsh, 2017), and this could potentially be a contributing factor to the current challenges the organisation is facing. In part, the Charleton Tribunal is currently examining if the former Garda Commissioners endeavoured to run a smear campaign against a whistleblower to discredit him throughout the organisation. As supported by the international literature, supervisory and leadership positions often set the tone for how the organisation will act, if found guilty of this offence, implications could be drawn as to what this means for the culture of the organisation as the Commissioner is the leader.

Though there has been a large media outing/portrayal of Garda misconduct in Ireland, and little academically, implications can be drawn for what any findings therein may suggest as an outcome for the organisation. Police misconduct can cause the public to lose confidence in policing organisations, which then can undermine their ability to police effectively (Carrabine et al., 2014; Punch, 2000). Although conclusions cannot be drawn until the findings for this research are discussed, given similar circumstances, it would be reasonable to think that public confidence in the Garda would decline as a result of cases of Gardaí misconduct. When looking at recent public polls from the *An Garda Síochána Public Attitudes Survey (2019)*, it would seem that while the public find the Gardaí very friendly and relatively community focused, they do not see them as favourably when considering whether they provide a “world class” police service or are well managed. Further, as referenced earlier in this chapter, public approval for the Gardaí is still relatively, and consistently, high.

## Perceptions of the Garda Organisation



*An Garda Síochána Public Attitudes Survey (2019)*

Interestingly, although Garda misconduct is a problem that has been continuous and covered by the media, applications to join are still high (O'Donnell, 2011). As Charman (2020) has argued, underpinned by the tenets of Social Identity Theory, individuals will choose groups based on what they perceive as their being similar to themselves on an individual level. In a similar vein, what this means for the organisation in terms of the type

of person who is drawn to it can be linked to Manetje and Martins (2009) and English's (2008) findings on officers who are more likely to become corrupt are also officers who are more likely to be drawn to corrupt organisations. As Conway (2019) asserted, "without good governance bad practices developed and the past 15 years have seen An Garda Síochána...battered repeatedly by scandal after scandal" (p. 517). Considering the issues that continue to surround the organisation, a question to consider is not necessarily how has the organisation been able to function, but how has it been able to continue functioning for so long?

### The Power of the Media

The media itself plays a large part in how policing organisations are presented and portrayed. This then affects the public's perception of policing organisations. In relation to organisational culture and change, shaming plays a major role in society in terms of changing behaviour and/or policy, and the media has the ability to shame them (Cavender & Mulcahy, 1998). The media played a large part in framing what people knew about the Morris Tribunal in the mid 2000s, but the media portrayal was very selective in what they chose to showcase and led to an overall impression that what was happening was not as serious as the informed researcher would know it to be (Conway, 2010). Similar circumstances, although not necessarily as forgiving of the organisation, were present in the most recent Charleton Tribunal.

Although Charman (2017) has cited the media as a challenge to policing, in the Irish context the media has been the driving force in pressuring the Garda to be accountable for organisational misconduct in many cases. However, this use of the media could be considered a challenge to the organisation but overall beneficial to more transparent policing. As has been the case with many of the scandals that will be discussed in the following chapters (e.g. faking breathalyser tests, penalty points cancellations, the establishment of the Charleton Tribunal), the organisation was often times aware of organisational issues, but was not willing to address them until forced to do so because of public attention. Similarly, though the Morris Tribunal was not established until 2002, the Minister at the time stated that they had been aware of the issues since 1997 (Conway, 2010). Based on the historic trends presented, there is an argument to be made that the organisation only values accountability if/when it comes into the public domain. The Garda practice of not addressing a problem until forced is something mirrored from the governmental practice of the same regard. As has been argued previously and will continue to be so, the organisational culture of the Garda, and policing organisations in general, reflects that of the country's culture.

## Irish Policing Conclusions

For such a young organisation, just under 100 years, there have been numerous inquiries the Garda has faced (Manning, 2012). Of which include, but are not limited to, apparent widespread discrepancies in breath test results, investigations into treatment of whistleblowers, the formation/dismantling of the so called “Heavy Gang”, the Kerry babies’ investigation, allegations of financial mismanagement, commissioner resignations, and several tribunals. Most notably at this time, the Morris Tribunal and the Charleton Tribunal. Indeed, “the Morris Tribunal was ‘one of the longest and most thorough inquiries into any police force in modern times’” (Brady 2014, p. 239). The Tribunal led to the conclusions that the findings of misconduct, the presence of the “blue wall of silence”, and racial biases on the part of the Gardaí in Donegal could not be limited to just there; the conclusion that all members operated in similar manners all over the country was made because every member receives the same training (Charman & Corcoran, 2015; Conway & Walsh, 2011).

Though there have been numerous investigations into the organisation, in 1986, O’Reilly (1986) asserted that very little research on policing in Ireland had been done, something that is still true over three decades later. The Garda Inspectorate Report in 2015 also concluded that there was little research done on Garda culture (Williams, 2016). Identifying such research on the Garda is difficult, as many of the researchers who work directly with the Garda are Gardaí themselves, and in some cases the research is not released to the public at all. This researcher fully acknowledges that there are unquestioningly studies conducted that were not identified, but nonetheless, what is presented in this section is comprehensive and provides the preliminary basis for Garda culture to be understood. However, because of these limitations, carefully choosing the methodology used for this research was important.

## Importance of Methodology Chosen

According to Hale, Hayward, Wahidin, and Wincup (2013), the police are the most visible agency in the criminal justice system, despite their high visibility, in Ireland there is still a severe lack of research based understanding on who and what the Garda are and do. This is in part because of the difficulty in accessing the organisation and its members to conduct research; this access will be outlined in more depth in chapter four. Because of this difficulty, methodological innovations are necessary in order to do the research, which is where this research finds itself. In addition to the empirical and theoretical contributions of this research, and because of the for mentioned difficulty in access, it was necessary and inherent to also contribute methodologically to the field. Though covered in greater detail in chapter four, thematic document analysis, the chosen methodology for this research, has the following advantages:

- Longitudinal data (30 year observation period)
  - Understanding of behaviour and/or change over time
- Limited external control/biases influencing presentation of findings
- Added contextual data from documents
- Immediate access to data
- Lack of pressure to portray the organisation in any way not supported by the data

The research conducted to date has consisted of a relatively even mix of both qualitative and quantitative methods; though no mixed method approaches have been identified. This is, however, largely consistent with international policing research. The quantitative approaches are limited in depth and context, the qualitative approaches thus far have largely been limited in scope, both in time and geographic expanse. While document analysis is limited to documents that have been produced, the documents chosen provided contextual data that spanned over 30 years and included organisational members from various ranks and geographic locations. Though often overlooked, document analysis does provide insight into police organisational culture without the limitations some other methodologies present.

There will be reflections on the methodological approach throughout the thesis where they have been found relevant. However, on a larger scale there are certain overarching reflections to be made now that the research is complete, that is if research can ever be truly considered complete. The choice of this methodology, in all honesty, led to many insecurities in choice during the research process. Though I have confidence in the methodology upon completion, I would surmise the reason it is underutilised, particularly in the field of policing research, is because of the fear in regard to whether or not you are doing “real” research. Upon reflection however, the benefits of this research have become abundantly clear. Of course, there are certain limitations to this approach, but that could be said of any approach.

Particularly relevant for this research was the ability to capture a wider picture of the Garda culture, and further, how this culture has presented itself, adapted, and altered over the years; all things that could not have been understood if looking at a single point in time as other qualitative and/or quantitative methods (barring longitudinal studies) would. There was also an added benefit of a more objective view of the culture rather than as how an insider to the organisation would see it, though that is not to discredit this viewpoint either as it is important to policing research. However, for understanding what the organisational culture of the Garda is on a basic level, particularly given the current speculative climate the Garda finds itself in, document analysis was perfectly fitted to achieving the research goals.

Also, by choosing this method, and more importantly in the overall goal of producing ethical research, the analysis and results do not have to be presented in any particular way as determined by someone other than the researcher. In relation to the understanding of the Garda organisational culture, there were findings that would not have come about, or otherwise have been misleading, without the use of documents to observe patterns of behaviour over time. Document analysis was an invaluable methodology for understanding what the culture of the organisation is.

Studying misconduct in organisations is particularly difficult due to the secretive nature of the practice; employees are not willing to talk about misconduct for fear of becoming a whistleblower and being stigmatised by the organisation (Campbell & Göritz, 2014). Often the only way to study misconduct in organisations is through whistleblowers who have direct knowledge and are willing to speak against the organisation or from individuals who have knowledge of the subject but are not directly connected to the organisation being studied (Campbell & Göritz, 2014). The research for this thesis is in a unique position because of the methodology chosen, the member(s) of the organisation who have directly experienced the alleged misconduct are in a public trial that is reported on for the public to access. In this regard, I will have direct (by way of tribunal reports), objective (through unbiased tribunal reports based on the evidence presented) access to members who are central to the alleged misconduct in the organisation of which I am examining.

While this methodological approach is very practical in its goals and implementation there are still limitations. Although analysing documents can present data in an unbiased way, you are nonetheless still limited to analysing only what is present in the document(s). However, careful inclusion criteria for the documents selected can help curtail not achieving the research goals from lack of data. There is also the possibility of not including particular documents in the analysis either through deliberate action or because the researcher was not aware of it. Though this is a valid concern, it is much the same in application to qualitative interviews not interviewing every possible person and/or group who would be relevant to the research. Similar as well to other qualitative methods, if saturation is achieved, analysing every document of relevance is not a concern. This methodology, though with certain limitations, does have its merits and can aid in making a significant contribution to knowledge. It does require a new skill set that is unlike other qualitative (and quantitative) methodologies, but what is the purpose of research if not to learn something new?

It is also necessary to consider the researcher's role in the research. Reflexivity is an important aspect in qualitative research and the researcher's role in the process should be acknowledged. In certain cases, the researcher conducting the study may not always be



the best person to do so (Wetherell et al., 2001). Despite the fact that I am of Western origin, I am not Irish. Further, although I am studying the Garda, I am not a member of the organisation. I am inherently an outsider. Though the question of what my outside status to the organisation is posed, now that the research is complete, what impact this has had on the research is still unclear. Though this should not be compared to integrity and producing ethically sound research, I suppose the question was posed from a naïve perspective that I can now see as such from the years spent conducting this research. The only way to truly evaluate this question would involve some form of parallel universes where I conducted the research both as an insider and as an outsider to the organisation to compare any differences in findings. As that is obviously not possible, the only conclusions I can draw on being an outsider are based on what has been stated by previous, inside researchers. Namely that being an insider to the organisation did limit some explanations given by members of the organisation who were being interviewed (Charman & Corcoran, 2015; Corcoran, 2012), but as documents were used in the analysis the comparison here is not direct. Perhaps one further benefit of document analysis is a limit to an exclusion of information from the participants because of insider status, but this is only speculative.

#### Overview of Documents Used

Though inclusion criteria and justifications will be discussed in chapter four more extensively, for context, the documents that were used and a brief overview of their remits are included below. The year stated is the period of time the behaviour/scenario in the document occurred; however, this is not necessarily the same time the investigations for documents were conducted and/or published. Indeed, in some cases the gap between the incident that was investigated occurred and when it was actually investigated spanned several years. Also included in parentheses following the name of the documents are the code by which the documents are referred to in the findings chapters. The Tribunals included formed the original basis of analysis and broadly demonstrate the Gardaí attempting to adjust to the rather large changes, that in some cases have been forced upon them; however, this adjustment is something they are still in large part struggling with and will be reflected on further in the final chapter.

#### *Smithwick Tribunal – 1989 (ST)*

Broadly, this tribunal was established to investigate Gardaí misconduct and collusion in the late 1980s, though the actual tribunal/investigations were not conducted/published until 2013. More specifically, the terms of reference for this tribunal focused on to what extent, if any, Gardaí were involved and/or colluded in the deaths of two Northern Irish officers. There were parallel inquiries into whether or not, to what extent, and

knowingly or otherwise, Gardaí aided known Irish Republican Army (IRA) members at the time in illegal activities.

For context, which will be discussed more in regard to the findings, this inquiry followed several previous inquiries into the same incidents; however, the previous investigations found no operational issues while this one found many questions that were left unanswered. Though earlier investigations found no wrongdoing on the part of the Garda, in fact previous investigations had specifically stated they were not investigating the occurrence of misconduct, during the time of this investigation there was a change in willingness to criticise the Garda rather than a sole focus on preserving the good reputation of the organisation.

The ultimate conclusions of the tribunal are of little relevance to the core of this research, as the procedures, behaviour, and actions observed therein were the focus. That considered, while they did conclude that collusion did occur, there was no further investigations into who was involved in the collusion nor was there any sense of organisational wide accountability for what had happened. The inability to determine who exactly was involved in the collusion to aid the IRA in killing two Northern Irish officers can be explained, in part, by the amount of time that had passed between the occurrence and the investigation, but there is very little reasoning for any lack of accountability taken by the organisation.

### *Morris Tribunal – 1996 (MT)*

The Morris Tribunal is such an important part of Garda culture and subsequent research on the Garda that not including it would lead to a large gap of understanding. While the investigations stemmed from events in the late 1990s, this tribunal was not established until 2002 and lasted until 2007. Considering the breadth and depth of the investigation, the data stemming from this document was carefully considered so as not to form an argument based solely on this data. The data used supported a larger argument, not one in and of itself.

The investigation consisted of many small elements and incidents, but considering how long it lasted, the breadth is understandable. Broadly however, themes focused on Gardaí treatment of those in custody and how investigations were performed. In particular, it was concluded in the Tribunal that nearly every arrest made during this investigation, involving a particular extended family and their associations who were targeted by the Gardaí, was unlawful because the arrests were made on false confessions or fabricated evidence manufactured by the Gardaí. Further, oversight mechanisms and levels of accountability were of particular interest to the investigators. More specifically, why Gardaí felt they could perform the behaviours they did and how they were able to do so without any

questioning of their actions. Even to the time of the Tribunal there was very little questioning of the conditions that allowed what happened to do so without and questioning and why there was never any serious inquiry into those conditions or outcomes. One of the final lines of inquiry was into the bugging of interview rooms; however, there was no evidence found to support this and it was concluded a Gardaí fabricated this scenario to deflect attention from his own wrongdoing – another point of interest for this research that will be discussed in the findings chapters.

#### *Report of the Commission of Investigation (Dean Lyons Case) – 1997 (BI)*

This report, referred to as the Birmingham Inquiry in reference to the presiding judge and more in accordance with the previous tribunal names, was set up to investigate a man who was charged with murder in the Dublin region in 1997. Though, as has been seen with previous tribunals, this particular case was investigated previously, the Tribunal was not established until 2006, posthumously as Dean Lyons died in 2000 from drug overdose. Though the investigation had a large focus on the wrongful conviction of a man, the report contained invaluable data in the day to day operations of the Gardaí and in turn the values instilled by the organisation's culture that culminated in particular behaviour exhibited as well as organisational systems in place that allowed various activities to flourish. It was found during this investigation that the Gardaí continued to pursue their own line of inquiry even after alternative and contradicting facts came to light about the case, including an alternative suspect. Also investigated was the level of accurate detail contained in Dean Lyons' confession, taken after video/audio recording had been turned off, following previously incorrect details given during his confession.

#### *Charleton Tribunal – 2000s-2018+ (CT)*

The Charleton Tribunal is a public inquiry into allegations of misconduct within the Garda. The first part of the proceedings began on 17 February 2017 and the first set of reports were published in September 2018. This is an ongoing investigation; however, the end date for the second part of the inquiry is yet unknown and therefore only the report (consisting of four sections) from the first module of the Tribunal was used for this research. General lines of inquiry involved how whistleblowers within the organisation are managed and perceived by both upper and lower level members of the organisation. The primary person in question is Sergeant Maurice McCabe, a member of the organisation who has been facing hardships from the organisation for the last decade. Importantly, it was found that many of the allegations Maurice McCabe made in the previous years had merit, despite it being previously investigated by the organisation and determined they did not.

Although there is a subsequent module on wider cases of whistleblower allegations that has not yet begun and has no confirmed end date, the reports from the first module are indicative of wider systemic values that it is anticipated would also be reflected in the later released report(s). Also important to note, many of those who were investigated during this tribunal for misconduct continued to serve up to and during the investigation without consequence; however, in the year following the publication of the report some of the members have resigned and/or taken early retirement of their own volition. This is the most recent tribunal into the organisation and has the potential to be as impactful as the Morris Tribunal in the years to come.

### *Report of the Garda Síochána Inspectorate: Changing Policing in Ireland – 2015 (IR)*

This report came about as another recognition for the need for change within the organisation. Research was conducted as to what this change needed to be and why, as well as policy recommendations for how to make the suggested changes. This report is similar in nature to the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland Report of 2018, but predated three years. The dated context provided here allowed for a direct comparison to what was found in 2015 and 2018 in terms of culture and change, and whether or not the change prescribed in 2015 was acted upon, either successfully or at all, by 2018. The research team undertook qualitative methodologies in parts of the report to identify the culture of the Garda and any necessary changes therein. This report had a large focus on quantity, i.e. how many members there are and the Gardaí to supervisor ratio, but not on the quality of individuals and whether they are the right people to perform the job well.

### *Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland Report – 2018 (FP)*

The Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland was established in May 2017 and consists of an 11 person panel comprised of individuals with backgrounds in law, law enforcement, criminology, organisational change, and corporate business executives. The Commission has members from Ireland, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada. The Commission held public events across the country, held discussion groups, received submissions from the public, visited stations within the country, and conducted several study visits both in Ireland and abroad. The qualitative data contained in the report was carried out by academic researchers and the report was released in September 2018.

This report assessed the current cultural climate within the Garda as well as where the organisation thinks it should be making changes in addition to how they intend to implement these changes and in what time frame. As the title suggests, the report contained evaluations of current practices and recommendations for future practices in the Garda.

One of the acknowledgments made in this report is that there have been so many previous reports and conflicting recommendations made for the Garda to change that it is naturally difficult for them to keep up with all of it. This commission asserts their recommendations should supersede all others, even the ones the Garda is in the process of implementing as they are contradictory to new recommendations – in part perpetuating one of the issues around change in the organisation.

### *Cultural Audit of An Garda Síochána – 2018 (CA)*

This cultural audit of the Garda was conducted primarily by those in the business sector, thus providing a unique lens and aiding in bridging the gap between traditional and police organisational cultures, one of the aims of the current research. This report contained both quantitative and qualitative (referred to as “verbatim results” in the report) analysis as well as both higher and lower level Gardaí perspectives from various parts of the country; the data is based on over 6,000 Gardaí responses. The use of this report included many of the variables sought after when using mixed methods studies, namely numbers that give a quantifiable expression of the culture as well as interview responses that provide understanding behind the numbers. There are ratio numbers used in the following chapters that were taken from this report and based on survey responses from Gardaí; numbers are based on a 10-point scale. Large areas of focus in this report, both in the survey results and qualitative components, consisted of Gardaí views of the Code of Ethics, trust/accountability, cultural reinforcers involving speaking up and oversight, promotions processes, and civilianisation.

### *Modernisation and Renewal Program 2016-2021 (MR)*

As the title would suggest for this document, the goals set out therein are still ongoing and will be for the coming years; however, how the report from the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland, and some of their contradictory goals, will reconcile remains to be seen in the actual implementation from the organisation. Notwithstanding, this document was evaluative of the current procedures, practices, and resources in the Garda and prescriptive of how various elements should be remedied and/or overhauled to create a more efficient organisation into the future. Many of the discussion points and recommendations were taken as indicative of the current culture, either in what is there already contained in the discussion points or what is not and therefore should be contained in the future recommendations. As was common throughout this research, often what was stated as a goal in future indicated a lack of its presence at current; in essence what was not said was just as important as what was said in understanding the organisation’s current culture.

## Structure of Thesis

While this chapter was constructed to acknowledge the prior research on modern policing in Ireland, it was intended in large part to demonstrate the lack of robust, both in geographic scope and depth due to small sampling sizes, academic research in the field and the gap the current research intends to fill. Whereas this chapter consists of the modern understanding of policing in Ireland, the following gives an overview of historical policing in Ireland to provide the historical context that will be considered further in relation to the findings from this research in the final chapter. The history of the Garda in large part determined how the organisation formed, and many of those concepts can still be seen in the organisation of present.

Following this is the theoretical and internationally informed reviewed literature that will be used to situate where Ireland fits into the larger field of police culture globally. These ideas will ultimately be discussed in the final chapter in relation to the findings presented in chapters 5-7. The theories presented are not new to the field of policing research, but their use as applied to Irish policing as well as used in conjunction are as of yet unseen. The intersection of the social theories (social learning, social identity, socialisation, social exclusion) and Rotten Apple Theory formed to create a more robust theoretical understanding of the Garda's culture. Within this are parallels to the "traditional" organisational theories, predominantly the Hawthorne Studies and learning organisations, and how these can be applied to police organisational culture. The literature review then serves to ground the Irish findings in a larger body of research, thus bringing Ireland into the global sphere of police research.

The methodology chapter expands on the above mentioned struggles with research into the Garda and the advantages document analysis can provide. Further to this are the ontological and epistemological decisions made to contextualise the research and provide a lens from which the findings can be viewed. From here the findings of what the organisation's culture is are presented in the form of a story. Beginning from when the Gardaí choose to become members of the organisation and how they are initially received into the organisation and the training they receive, through to how they manage relationships once becoming full members of the organisation and leaving the Garda college, and finishing with how members behave when things go wrong. There are also several perspectives offered in these chapters. Starting with an organisational level view, the findings discuss how the organisation has set the culture from the top down and what impact this has on the bottom levels. Moving then to a bottom tier view of how the Gardaí interact with the organisation and its members and from where these interactions are learned. Finally, chapter seven explores the Garda and Gardaí's relationship with accountability and the presence of a blame culture within the organisation.

The final chapter, justly titled, looks at Ireland's position in the world and how Irish policing relates to a wider field of international police culture. While the intention of this research is to explore the Garda's culture(s) through an exploration of recent tribunals/reports of inquiry and to understand how these organisational features affect the Gardaí's policing practices, there is a wider aim of making this research accessible to a global audience, and thus, international contextualisation is necessary. In line with the findings chapters, as a whole, this thesis has been constructed as a story, and to begin this story we must first start with the history.

## Chapter 2 History of An Garda Síochána

### Introduction

While the overview of research on Irish police culture has been explored and the intricacies of international police culture will be discussed more in depth in chapter three, in order to truly comprehend what type of organisation the Garda is, it is also important to understand the context of the current organisation from its historical roots. The data analysed for the current research is an exploration of the organisation's culture in the last 30 years, but in order to situate the findings in a way that acknowledges both social and historical context, a more thorough understanding of the distant past is necessary. The information obtained for this chapter was taken from various books outlining the history of Irish policing organisations. These books contain both secondary data from history and museum reports as well as first-hand accounts from former members of the organisations – from memoirs, interviews, and personal experience. The range of sources vary from documented history to subjective accounts, in particular some of the authors cited in this chapter are former Gardaí themselves, and thus the information presented could be quite biased. In instances where this was considered relevant, it was noted in the text for full disclosure on reliability.

Irish policing is closely linked to the formation of the State, Ireland gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1922, and many of the troubles the State has faced both leading up to and beyond this formation have influenced Irish policing in some way. Before getting into each individually, a broad overview of the Irish policing state is given.



Preceding the Garda, Ireland was policed by the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) and the Dublin Metropolitan Police (DMP). The Treaty of 1922 saw the RIC almost immediately disbanded; however, the DMP was to continue as its own entity for the time being (McNiffe, 1997). Following the dismantling of the RIC, the Civic Guard was formed in 1921 and ultimately renamed An Garda Síochána in 1923 (An Garda Síochána, 2018). The Police



Forces Amalgamation Act of 1925 then brought all pre-existing policing organisations (the Garda and the DMP) in Ireland together under one organisation, An Garda Síochána (Allen, 1999; Vaughan, 2004).

Unlike many policing organisations internationally, the Garda has taken a different approach in many respects in structure and in culture and this approach has links in the State's previous policing organisations. Most notably, and recognisably, their public commitment to one, national community policing style that manifests itself in part by a predominantly unarmed and less forceful (comparatively) policing organisation. This chapter was constructed to give an overview of the history of the Garda, as well as policing in Ireland as a whole. Covering nearly two centuries of police culture, practice, and ethos, this chapter explores the links between the Garda of past and present. Policing in Ireland can be viewed in three distinct periods all characterised by shifts in the country as well as in the organisation: pre-independence, post-independence, and post 1960s until the observation period for this research beginning in 1989. As such, these three distinct periods are set out below with reflections given on how the organisation is currently mirroring past practices given in the final section.

## Pre-Independence

While the RIC was not the first policing organisation in Ireland, it is the one that has had the most historic impact. The RIC was established in 1836 and was the first national policing organisation to exist in Ireland; the RIC policed all of Ireland except Dublin, Belfast, and Derry (Malcolm, 2006; McNiffe, 1997). To bridge this gap in territory within Ireland was the DMP, which was modelled on the London Metropolitan Police, and only operated within Dublin (Malcolm, 2006; McNiffe, 1997). Both the RIC and the DMP were characterised by being heavily centralised and government controlled (Conway & Walsh, 2011). It is important to note that while the RIC are remembered in the public sentiment as an overwhelmingly violent and disliked policing organisation in Ireland, and though they were officially an armed force, most day time patrols were done unarmed and only half of the night time patrols were done carrying unloaded weapons during times of peace; accordingly, the DMP was also an unarmed organisation (Allen, 1999; Malcolm, 2006; McNiffe, 1997).

In the early years of the RIC<sup>15</sup>, a career as an officer was considered to be a smart move that provided the opportunity for upward social mobility and an alternative to manual work or migration (Conway, 2014; Malcolm, 2006). This, in addition to a guaranteed pension

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<sup>15</sup> At this point in time they were referred to only as the Irish Constabulary as they had not yet gained the title of "Royal", but for consistency, RIC will be used throughout.

on retirement, contributed to a consistently<sup>16</sup> overwhelming number of applicants to join (Conway, 2014; Malcolm, 2006). Catholic men were allowed to join and bear arms again in the 1790s, following this was a natural rise in Irish men who served; however, they predominantly stayed in the bottom ranks (Malcolm, 2006). From 1850 onward, most of the RIC officers were from the West of Ireland; initially most were from Connacht and under 21 years of age (Conway, 2014; Malcolm, 2006). From then, the RIC consisted mostly of Irish, Catholic men and the Protestants in Northern Ireland viewed them as a foreign force and did not like their presence (Malcolm, 2006). As will be seen, the community's acceptance of the police is a large factor in determining their overall organisational success.

The largest occupational group at this time were labourers followed by farmers; Irish, rural labourers were thought particularly suitable for service because they were physically fit and loyal to a cause (Conway, 2014; Malcolm, 2006). In addition to age, height, and chest measurement restrictions, the guiding principle for recruitment was that "the force was looking for healthy, young men from rural backgrounds, with an elementary education and no obvious political affiliations" (Malcolm 2006, p. 69). Accordingly, the DMP followed similar patterns among its members (McNiffe, 1997). The resounding message associated with these recruiting requirements were that the organisation wanted men to follow orders, not think for themselves.

The RIC had an "alphabet" they called out while in training. In this alphabet it was the uniform they cited for turning them into men; "U is the Uniform which makes men of us youngsters" (Malcolm, 2006, p. 68). Equating the uniform to a sense of manhood is very telling in the type of person a police *man* had to be; however, the impact of gender on policing in Ireland will be discussed in a later era. The collectivistic thinking and body that the RIC was intended to be is stated clearly by its own members, "like soldiers, Irish policemen were required to function as a group and to obey orders unquestioningly" (Mee Memoirs, p.11 cited in Malcolm, 2006, p. 93). RIC men very much encapsulated the essence of what it was to be part of a social identity, whereby individuality was stamped out to be part of a group; "his one ambition is to imitate his seniors and in doing so he loses his own individuality and becomes part of a highly efficient machine" (Mee Memoirs, p.11 cited in Malcolm, 2006, p. 73). Further, according to Malcolm (2006), "the force's own ethos also engrained in them a powerful sense of solidarity and loyalty" (p. 150) and "in the case of retirees, it was a matter of, once a policeman, always a policeman" (p. 212).

Coming back to pre-independent Irish police, although these men were loyal to a cause, the 1912 Home Rule Bill damaged morale for officers, and many RIC and DMP officers resigned due to the increasingly dangerous nature of their job and their overall lack

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<sup>16</sup> Until the time of the Troubles.

of belief in a future in policing (McNiffe, 1997). Toward the 1920s, RIC men realised that whether they chose the Irish or the English side, things would not end well for them (Malcolm, 2006). Constables in particular were not viewed favourably due in part to the roles they played during the 1916 uprising and famine (Malcolm, 2006). As mentioned previously, RIC officers were mostly unarmed during times of peace. However, in 1919, when the war for independence began, many IRA members began attacking and killing RIC officers (McNiffe, 1997). As a result, “Black and Tans” were sent in from England to aid the RIC, but were very much disliked for their behaviour, so much so that a general resigned so as not to be associated with them (McNiffe, 1997).

The DMP were not immune from the troubles either. Many DMP armed officers were killed by the IRA, and because of this, many civilian policing duties were not performed in Dublin from 1919-21 (McNiffe, 1997). Because, most predominantly the RIC, were the front-line men who were responsible for enforcing much of the hardship the Irish people had to endure during both periods, and they were the people the Irish were in direct contact with, they were the ones who received most of the blame. Though not directly responsible for the climate the country found itself in, they were the most visible link between the people and the Government, and from this, came a time of civil unrest and instability for Irish policing, of which led to post-independent reform both in the country and its policing organisations.

The principles espoused above further cemented the collectivist group the organisation wanted; one which does not question order and does not go against the group. While this was a characteristic of the RIC, and therefore supposedly a characteristic of the older policing organisations in Ireland, the similarities between the new and the old can be seen in what was to come next. Though the similarities will be discussed in more detail in the following section, it is important to note that the similarity in structure from the RIC to the initial Garda organisation is in part why there was so much struggle in coping with the monumental changes that affected the organisation in later decades, which will be discussed more in depth at the end of this chapter. This said, the links between the RIC and the policing organisations in the post-independent Ireland era explored below are most interesting in their similarities despite the stated intentions of being different.

## Post-Independence

After the tumult of Irish independence, it was decided that with the formation of a new state was the necessity of a new policing organisation to re-establish order in Ireland. Translated from Irish as “Guardians of the Peace”, An Garda Síochána is a policing authority, though initially called the Civic Guard<sup>17</sup>, that was created to depart from the

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<sup>17</sup> The Civic Guard and the Garda will be used interchangeably as the organisations did not undergo any change beyond the transfer of the name.

government controlled, militaristic policing authorities the people of Ireland had been oppressed by in the past (Conway & Walsh, 2011; Manning, 2012). There was a particular need to be distinguished from the organisations who had policed Ireland in the century prior, most notably the RIC, because of how unfavourably they were viewed by the Irish people at the time of its demise (Allen, 1999; Conway & Walsh, 2011; Manning, 2012). An important distinguishing trait to be made between the RIC and the Civic Guard was that they were not to be like soldiers, establishing a civilian police organisation was a priority.

Commissioner Staines<sup>18</sup> had parting words for men being sent out to the field in 1922, “the Civic Guard will succeed not by force of arms, or numbers, but on their moral authority as servants of the people” (McNiffe, 1997, p. 26). This ethos would bring the organisation forward for years to come; however, the actual implementation of this practice would not be seen as clearly because of the lack of actual structural change from the RIC to the Garda. This period was also characterised by intense challenges due to the lack of resources given to the Gardaí to serve the public and their commitment to protecting the state before the people, both of which inhibited adequate meaningful change.

Further to the lack of structural changes and outside factors inhibiting change, there were also factors that strengthened the new organisation’s ties to the old. Though the intentions to distinguish between the new and the old policing organisations were a top priority, many members of the old policing organisation (RIC) were brought into the new Civic Guard. When the decision was made (or perhaps forced) to form the Civic Guard, it was originally proposed to be an armed policing organisation who recruited from existing and former RIC and DMP officers; in particular in a time of such political tensions, new recruits were not allowed to be members of any political parties (McNiffe, 1997). To this end, RIC men were given first preference for joining and advancing (McNiffe, 1997).

With the guiding principle used previously to describe the RIC men, once a cop always a cop, it is no surprise that RIC men joined the new Civic Guard when given the opportunity. Their willingness to join considered, it seems nonsensical that the new organisation would choose to populate their ranks with the very people they were trying to disengage themselves from. Ironically, English and Australian policing organisations made a point of not hiring any former RIC men because of their highly militarised model, yet the Civic Guard incorporated them into the new organisation and put them in positions of power and authority (Malcolm, 2006). Although only a relatively small number of RIC men had joined the Civic Guard, less than 150, they nonetheless made an impact in establishing the structure of the Garda (Allen, 1999). Although the number of RIC men was relatively low,

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<sup>18</sup> The first commissioner of the Civic Guard.

nearly all advanced officer and training instructor positions were filled by them (Breathnach, 1974; Malcolm, 2006; McNiffe, 1997).

After formation, high ranking RIC men were appointed as instructors over the hundreds of new, though they were not supposed to have political affiliations, pro-treaty Irish Republican Army (IRA) recruits in the Civic Guard (McNiffe, 1997), which had, perhaps unsurprisingly, volatile consequences. The Kildare Mutiny of 1922, an uprising over the opposition of RIC leadership, led to many RIC men being promoted even higher up in the organisation; however, very few RIC men were recruited following the Mutiny (Allen, 1999; McNiffe, 1997). Rather than solving the problem, this solution merely shifted it elsewhere; a facet of the organisation that is still prevalent. Before the Kildare Mutiny, over 90% of recruits had some form of IRA background; although there was a drop post-mutiny, until 1932 over 70% of recruits had an IRA background in some form (McNiffe, 1997).

Because of this choice in leadership, whatever the initial intent of the Civic Guard, “the similarities between the two organisations are far more striking than the differences” (Malcolm, 2006, p. 216). Allen (1999) further suggests that the only real difference between the two organisations were the title and colour of uniform. Additionally, the name of the basic rank changed from constable to guard/Gardaí, but the overall functions and powers would not (Conway, 2014). Indeed, the framework used for the first 50 years in the Garda was heavily structured after the RIC code, and the Garda manual, used until 1942, was RIC’s manual (Malcolm, 2006; McNiffe, 1997). Further, though this may change in the foreseeable future, the structure of the Garda today is still what it was upon formation, a country divided into six regions, 28 divisions, and 96 districts with the Commissioner presiding over all and, as Conway (2019) has asserted, no consideration for the needs of local communities within this structure. Even though many of the similarities to the RIC have now been changed, there are still few that can be seen in the Garda organisation of present; one such similarity being that the RIC was often criticised for not making necessary changes within the organisation and remaining too static (Conway, 2014; Malcolm, 2006).

Although there were tensions with integrating RIC men into the new Civic Guard, the remaining DMP officers were automatically joined, and they did so relatively seamlessly (McNiffe, 1997). The transition of DMP officers was easier, as compared to the RIC men, for several reasons. Many of the officers who were part of the DMP upon transition only joined after 1922 as most of the men from before this time had already left, either by choice or by request, so the historic tensions were not as pronounced with newer members (McNiffe, 1997). Further to this, the officers from the DMP did not leave the Dublin area unless they requested to, as such, the members were already familiar with the area and the areas inhabitants familiar with them, a piece of the transition that made it easier for the local communities to accept. This unfamiliarity was an issue when sending new members of the

Civic Guard out to areas where the community did not know them and did not want them because of their foreignness (McNiffe, 1997). When the tensions from the community were felt, the new organisation learned from their mistakes and began to send, at least some, men from the local community back to police it (McNiffe, 1997). Local community integration was a large part of the tolerance for a new policing organisation; the ties with the community were paramount to success. These ties are in part why the DMP, who were already integrated in Dublin, were brought in more successfully than the country men who were supposed to be responsible for urban policing.

These struggles considered, there was still a (relative) welcoming of a new policing era in Ireland. Indeed, “while some individuals who intended to join were threatened, and a few even temporarily abducted, there does not appear to have been a widespread intimidation of prospective recruits” (McNiffe 1997, p. 14). Initial recruitment for the Civic Guard in the first two years was very high; almost 3,000 in 1922 and nearly 2,500 in 1923 (McNiffe, 1997). However, these numbers would not be sustained. From 1926-51, there were no more than 400 recruits per year (McNiffe, 1997). The reduction in physical numbers, the new Civic Guard was nearly half of what RIC had been, was a symbolic move to represent the new function of the organisation; maintaining strict order was no longer the top priority (Conway, 2014). Similar to the RIC, a majority of these men were from the West of Ireland, Catholic, and farmers/labourers (McNiffe, 1997). Due to the hundreds of thousands of applications for the relatively limited number of positions available in the organisation, and the predilection of men from the West, candidates from Dublin and Belfast were turned away if they did not fit every qualification exactly in 1923 (Allen, 1999; McNiffe, 1997).

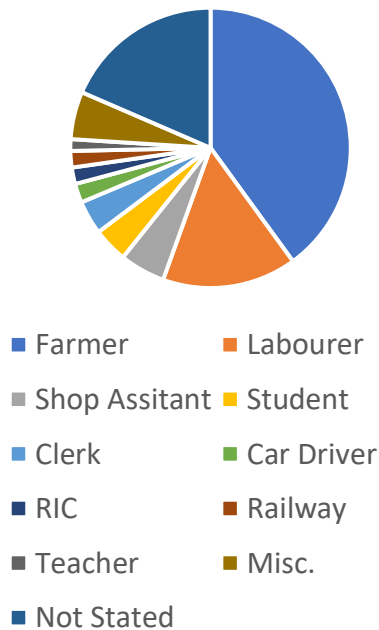
Following the initial recruitment wave of the Civic Guard, hundreds of men, predominantly from the country, showed up for training in the Royal Dublin Society (RDS) (McNiffe, 1997). Much as in the RIC that preceded it, until 1938, physical attributes were considered more important than educational standards; in 1937 the education requirement was raised to that of just below what would be expected from sixth class in primary school<sup>19</sup> and continued to rise in accordance with the country’s standards overall (McNiffe, 1997). Discipline and obedience were some of the most valued attributes of men coming into the Civic Guard (Allen, 1999). Similar to the initial recruitment waves, in the 1930s men were recruited more on the basis they would follow orders rather than have a decent standard of education (Allen, 1999; Breathnach, 1974). Further, the Gardaí were trained to follow orders given to them rather than make their own decisions in the field or otherwise (Allen, 1999). Similar to the divide in generations present in the Garda now, there was a division between

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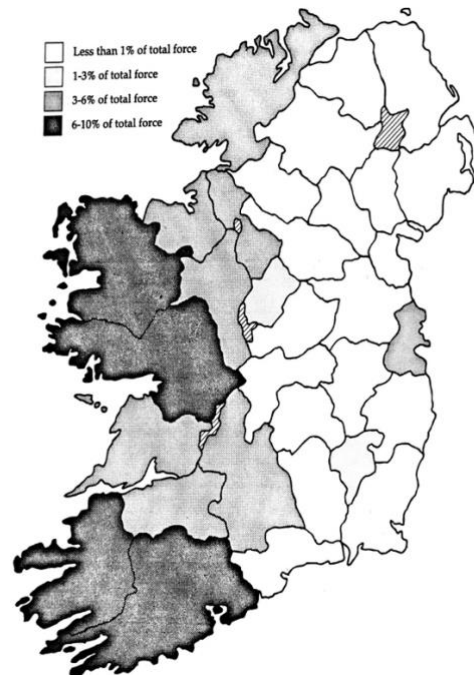
<sup>19</sup> This is roughly the education level of a 12-year-old.

pre-1932 recruits and recruits from 1932-35; the post '32 recruits were often under height, over age, non-farmers, who were from cities, and married (McNiffe, 1997). The recruits from the 1940s were still primarily farmers from the West, but they were more educated and had to have a background in the military (McNiffe, 1997).

Profession of Recruits 1922-32



County of Origin for Recruits 1922-52



McNiffe, 1997

As with much of the new organisation, training from 1922-52 was relatively unchanged from that of the RIC, it was militarised and strict, but the officers were not well trained overall; it was widely believed that once the officers were trained, the organisation had fulfilled its obligation and they were left to their own devices (McNiffe, 1997). Even back to the early roots of the RIC, who were trained militaristically, most policing skills were learned on the job (Malcolm, 2006). There was an extensive training manual put together for entering Gardaí in the 1950s; however, it was criticised for not preparing them for “real” police work (Allen, 1999).

While training in the early periods of the Garda was focused mainly on physical attributes, there was a push for learning the Irish language (Breathnach, 1974; McNiffe, 1997). There was a revival of the Irish language early on in the Garda, but Gardaí who could speak Irish were often reluctant to show it because they did not want to be sent to the

Gaeltacht areas<sup>20</sup> that were considered “backwards” and where there was little chance of being promoted (Allen, 1999). There was an attempt made to have a bilingual police organisation, but ultimately it was considered unnecessary to have this if the country itself was not truly bilingual (McNiffe, 1997). This considered, the provision of policing in the Irish language in Gaeltacht areas was better in the Garda than other government departments in Ireland (McNiffe, 1997).

## Cronyism

While the modern implications of cronyism within the Garda have already been discussed, it is important to understand that the current manifestations come from a rich history of cronyism within the RIC and the early years of the Garda. There were early accusations of cronyism within the RIC, both from connections to other people as well as religious preferences (Malcolm, 2006). A potential explanation for this selective choosing of promoted officers could be attributed to the idea that officers who were promoted from the rank and file within RIC were not as respected as appointed officers due to their preestablished affiliation and friendships with the lower constables/officers (Malcolm, 2006). As such, members of the RIC typically only advanced in position if they were of high social standing and/or highly educated (McNiffe, 1997).

This tradition continued into the Civic Guard. Due to the high competition for a limited number of places in the Garda, parents of applicants would attempt to influence the decision by their own (typically high) standing in society (McNiffe, 1997). Following the creation of the Guard, promotions were based on RIC (predominantly) or IRA status from 1922-24 (McNiffe, 1997). As discussed previously in relation to the Kildare Mutiny, the new members of the Civic Guard did not approve of being led by former RIC men. After 1924, promotions would be based on examinations; however, Superintendents already in the organisation had complete control over who could actually sit the exam, and although these selections were said to be done in a seemingly impartial manor, “the system was open to abuse” (McNiffe 1997, p. 71). Despite the fact that there was an emphasis on merit over rank, very few of those who were promoted came up through the ranks in the early years (McNiffe, 1997).

“The Civic Guard will succeed not by force of arms”

The recommendation that the Garda be unarmed was done to prioritise their commitment to the people rather than as a military body of the state (Vaughan, 2004). The RIC represented oppression of the Irish people, and as such, they did not want the Civic Guard to represent the same thing (Allen, 1999). This differentiation was achieved most

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<sup>20</sup> Predominantly if not strictly Irish speaking areas in Ireland.



notably by not routinely arming Gardaí while on patrol (Conway & Walsh, 2011; Manning, 2012). However, it is important to note that while the creators wanted this differentiation from the RIC, the Civic Guard did not start as an unarmed police organisation (Conway, 2014), nor was the RIC always armed, thus limiting the distinction between the two further. The Civic Guard did initially carry some weapons, however, the new policing organisation was behaving too militaristically, seeking out danger rather than reacting to it, so rifles were taken away from the officers, but they still kept their revolvers (McNiffe, 1997). After the Kildare Mutiny, and the resulting Mutiny Inquiry, the Civic Guard was informally disarmed (McNiffe, 1997). Commissioner O'Duffy then officially disarmed the organisation in January 1923, establishing the Garda as it was originally intended to be and the unarmed policing organisation it is known as today (Conway, 2014; McNiffe, 1997).

This considered, there were several calls for re-arming Gardaí over the years. Members of the Civic Guard were attacked in the first few years of operation, because of this increase in armed violence, and following the death of two Gardaí in 1926, there was a push from members to re-arm the Gardaí, but Commissioner O'Duffy refused (Allen, 1999). After Commissioner O'Duffy, there would be commissioners throughout the years that would call for a re-arming of the Gardaí, albeit unsuccessfully (McNiffe, 1997). When needed, a number of armed, typically plain clothed, Gardaí were trained and sent out, similar to a smaller scale of what is the Garda Armed Response Unit and plain clothes detectives in operation today (McNiffe, 1997). One such example were the "Broy Harriers" who were notable for maliciously using their weapons against the public in the 1930s (Conway, 2014). During World War II, the Garda was further reinforced as a non-combatant organisation in the case of war coming to Ireland (Allen, 1999). The period during World War II served as a further enhancement of the relationship of the Gardaí to the community because of their commitment to protecting the state and the people (Conway, 2014). There was a call for what is essentially the full Garda Armed Response Unit in the 1960-70s (Allen, 1999); however, this need was not fulfilled until several decades later.

Similar to the RIC officers who needed to be familiar with the area and were often relegated to desk duty filing paperwork for the Government (Malcolm, 2006), the Civic Guard were responsible for many governmental tasks that reinforced their civilian policing nature and kept them close to the community; most forms/applications had to be submitted to the Gardaí which further made them aware of what was happening in the community (McNiffe, 1997). However, even in the early years of the organisation, there was a dichotomous split between what "real" police work and "non" police work was that closely reflects ideas present in the modern day. Interestingly, the relegated government paperwork that kept the Gardaí connected to the community is also what was considered "non" police work. There was a cut in budget (and indeed several over the years) that Allen (1999)

believes led to the Gardaí doing less community work and inhibited the close connection the organisation had with the community in so doing. Because of this, there had to be another way to connect with the communities in which they served.

The Gardaí have long used sport as a way to connect to and be accepted by the community (Allen, 1999). There has been a heavy emphasis on the importance of sport within the Garda that stems back to the early days of the Civic Guard (McNiffe, 1997). Indeed, “independent Ireland from 1922 to 1952 supported Gaelic games, the Irish language and the Catholic Church. Both the Garda Síochána authorities and the men themselves tended to do likewise” (McNiffe 1997, p. 139). In particular in an environment where Gardaí may be looked down upon for not carrying weapons, sport has been a way to earn respect in a community where it may otherwise be lacking (Marsh, 2017; Mulcahy, 2006; Nugent, 2007). From the conception of the state to the modern day, sport has been part of the very fabric of Irish life and culture, and the Garda has incorporated that into their own culture as well.

#### Enter: Women

While the next section discusses the more measurable changes that started to occur in the organisation, women entering the organisation at the very end of this era is important to consider in their own impact on the organisation’s culture. In Ireland, women were not allowed to join the Garda until 1958; the first 10 women were recruited in 1959 and were labelled as “Ban Ghardai” a sub-unit (due to their marginalisation for being women) of the organisation (Brady, 2014). The primary task of these women was to “protect the morals of the young” (Conway, 2014, p. 82). It is interesting to note that up until this era it was never mentioned that only men could join the Garda because it was not even thought a possibility otherwise (McNiffe, 1997). Further, though they had made strides just by allowing women to join, the Garda did not value equality as such and was exempted from the Employment Equality Act of 1977 until it was obliged to comply by a European Commission directive (Brown, 2000; Sheridan, 2009). Additionally, women in the Garda received only 85% of the normal pay during their first year in the organisation (Sheridan, 2009).

Upon first reception into the Garda, it was remarked by a member of parliament, “while recruits should not actually be horse-faced, they should not be too good looking; they should just be plain women and not targets for marriage,” (Dail Debates 1958, cited in Kilcommins et al. 2004, p. 61). This sentiment represented a push for unattractive women so they would not be suitable targets for marriage and thus not need to be replaced in the organisation once married – this was until the 1970s when the marriage bar that required women to leave employment once married, was lifted. While not actually spoken by the organisation, the idea propagated women’s still marginalised nature in employed work, and

particularly in employed work that had a strong history of being performed solely by men. Currently, in an organisation of over 14,000, roughly 27% are female (The Department of Justice and Equality 2018). Although the former Garda Commissioner (top ranking official) was indeed a female, there are still arguments to be made that the glass ceiling exists within the Garda (see [Marsh, 2019](#)).

Although there is a serious lack of research in the area, women being subjected to the “less masculine” policing roles more often than men is a trend that is found in Irish policing (Marsh, 2019); which is in line with their historic reception into the organisation and similar to that of the international research on women in policing organisations. This differentiation is very similar to the pointed use of the term BanGarda as a way to distinguish between the normal (male) Gardaí and the female Gardaí. Overall, there have been three studies identified on the Garda where the research was specifically concentrated on gender dimensions within the Garda (Brown, 2000; Marsh, 2019; Sheridan, 2009). There are only a handful of other studies done on the Garda that include any aspect of gender in a policing context. Of the three studies identified that specifically addressed issues of gender inequality within the Garda, very broadly all three found instances of women being treated differently based on their gender (Brown, 2000; Marsh, 2019; Sheridan, 2009).

While the findings of these studies are meaningful, more important in this space is what impact women had on the Garda culture. It is important to point out that this impact is entirely speculative as there has been no research done specifically looking at this concept nor is it intended to be answered in this thesis. However, it is also important to acknowledge that it is more than likely women had some kind of an impact on the overall Garda culture. While it is difficult to assess what the exact impact may have been because of all of the other large societal factors that coincided with the reception of women into the Garda, it is also difficult to determine how the culture would have been different, if at all, had women entered at a different time.

What is more easily discernible is that roles changed. If women were responsible for the more feminine aspects of the job prior to their inclusion in the organisation, then logically one of two possibilities occurred before. Either men had to take up the more feminine duties or they simply were not done. This considered, either scenario requires a change from what happened after women joined, and thus, in even this seemingly small way, women did impact the organisation and its culture. However, as there is no research to support these assertions, it is again, just speculative.

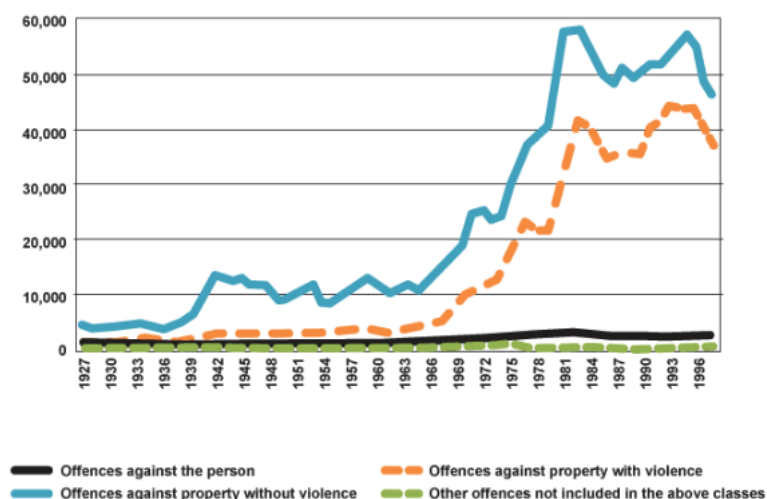
## The Beginning of Change – the 1960s Onward

This period in the organisation is where many of the rapid changes can be seen. However, it is important to understand that many of these changes were coping

mechanisms rather than wanted and/or accepted changes. The organisation was forced to confront many modern issues that its antiquated structure was just unable to adapt to. Though so little change had occurred up to this point, it is, partly, understandable that the Gardaí had not changed. How could the Gardaí be expected to change when the organisation’s structure and codes by which they live and operate had not changed from the organisation they were supposed to be moving away from and had been in operation for over a century prior? A vital aspect of this coping mechanism was how to reconcile what had largely been a rural policing structure, as the RIC only policed rural Ireland and that is what the Garda was based on, with new, urban policing needs.

While there is evidence shown to the contrary in the organisation’s earlier periods, Allen (1999) has noted that the Garda has reflected the way society has changed since its conception in the 1920s and accordingly, Brady (2014) found the Garda to be very quick to adapt to change in the 1960s. More generally, the 1960s brought about a lot of change for the Garda, many of the actions stemming from this decade onward brought about change that can still be seen in the organisation today. Of course, it is also necessary to reflect on the change that was occurring in the country at this time, particularly in reference to crime. Prior to the 1960s, Ireland had come to be known as a “policeman’s paradise” (Brady, 2014); however, this quickly changed from the 1960s onward and is reflected in various Irish crime statistics. Part of this change is attributed to the rise in drugs in Ireland from the 1970s, though this will be discussed more fully in a later section, this uptick in crime in Ireland is not limited to just drugs as can be observed in the chart below.

**Total number of indictable crimes by category, 1927–1996**



(O'Donnell et al., 2005)

The chart above shows a significant rise in crime beginning in the 1960s in Ireland. Accordingly, this shift in crime is also when we see one of the largest shifts and beginning

of change in the organisation. It has been discussed that the organisation struggled to cope with policing an urban population with a culture and guidelines that were intended to police a rural populace, and this was put into sharp focus when crime was on the rise. Of course, while the chart is a solid visual representation of the rise in crime in Ireland, it is still limited. The data set on the graph only charts the rise in crime until 1996, and this is because Ireland had a change in crime classifications that made precisely comparing crime before and after 1996 impractical. However, while the societal changes are of course important, more so is the impact this had on the organisation. As is the spirit of the story this thesis has constructed, before turning to the larger changes, we must first understand where the spark for these organisational changes began; in a ballroom.

The Macushla Ballroom Affair of 1961 was a large scale protest by the Gardaí, though this time it was concerned with pay conditions. Similar to the current situation for Gardaí, the members in 1961 were not allowed to strike or form unions to dispute organisational matters. There was a “secret” committee formed that planned to gather at the Macushla Ballroom in Dublin, but direct orders were given from the Commissioner that attendance was forbidden; even so, over 800 men showed up for the meeting (Allen, 1999; Conway, 2014). For going against the directives of the organisation, over 100 of the 800+ men who were identified at the meeting were given sanctions while 11 were removed from the organisation completely; however, this did not last as the 11 men were re-instated soon after (Allen, 1999). The affair was noted as a very serious turning point for the organisation as dissatisfaction among members, primarily newer members, was high and many were leaving to join the police in England and Northern Ireland (Conway, 2014).

Following the Macushla Ballroom affair, there were many short term developments implemented to improve Gardaí working conditions, but as the years passed and other external concerns came to the forefront, conditions for the Gardaí again became less than ideal. This resulted in, what is perhaps the most significant commission of the time, the Conroy Commission established in 1968 (Brady, 2014). Of the 52 recommendations made, the most pressing for Gardaí was the increased levels of pay originally set out in the Quinn Tribunal (Allen, 1999; Conway, 2014). Perhaps one of the larger successes of the affair, the Conroy Commission outlined the need for representative councils for members of the organisation that would serve in discussing matters raised by members to benefit the members (Department of Justice and Equality, 1979). Although they are still not able to form and/or join unions, the Conroy Commission gave a voice to members of the organisation to advocate for reasonable conditions on their behalf. The Conroy Commission was most significant in finally completely severing any structural and/or historical ties between the Garda and the RIC and beginning to improve conditions for the Gardaí

(Conway, 2014). Though some of the cultural ties can still be seen, this step was the beginning of major change during this era.

Eighteen years after the protest for change in the Macushla Ballroom, a formalised Report of Garda Síochána Committee of Inquiry was published with updated terms of service for members as it was felt the pay grades were not in line with the standards of the day (Department of Justice and Equality, 1979). This report outlined key recommendations of change for pay, allowances, accelerated tracks for promotion, civilianisation of departments, and entry qualifications for members in the organisation. However, the findings extended beyond this. While discussing increased levels of pay, lower members felt as if they were under-valued, if valued at all, by the organisation (Department of Justice and Equality, 1979). The report also condemned the lack of ongoing training given to Gardaí that ultimately weakened the organisation's ability to police effectively (Department of Justice and Equality, 1979). All of the recommendations given in 1979 mirror very closely ongoing issues the organisation faces now.

One further aspect of the report from 1979 was in regard to promotions. When discussing accelerated tracks for promotion, although there was no further detail sought by the Committee and the ultimate proposal was for a single-track system of promotion developed to increase transparency in the process, there was a sense of unfairness in relation to how promotions were awarded (Department of Justice and Equality, 1979). Preceding this, in the 1960s, there was a renewal of the advancement by merit protocol by the Minister for Justice (Allen, 1999). At this time, of the previous four Garda Commissioners, only one had experience as a police officer (Brady, 2014). Further, Commissioner Costigan was not accepted by other high-ranking Garda officials because they were anticipating the position to be filled from within – which in turn would lead to a series of other internal promotions (Brady, 2014). Following Commissioner Costigan, it became normal, if not standard, to promote from within the ranks (Brady, 2014). However, promotion patterns could still be seen in accordance with the political party that was in power at the time of appointment (Brady, 2014), solidifying the links between government and policing. Although Brady (2014) argues that promotions were made from the rank and file, with no fast track to promotion based on superior qualifications, Commissioner Garvey in the 1970s was accused (and in part replaced because of) his use of cronyism in relation to promotions.

Allen (1999) has asserted that the Garda had promotions, without exception, from within the ranks, as opposed to other policing organisations that could be promoted from the outside. However, this notion is now being directly challenged by the appointment of a new Garda Commissioner who previously worked for the Police Service of Northern Ireland, not the Garda. Allen (1999) also argues that the early allegations of nepotism during initial

recruitment, by which there was a favouritism toward sons of former police officers, was not allowed by the Governmental Minister. However, he may be reflecting on his own experience within the organisation, which conflicts with other accounts (i.e. McNiffe and Brady) as well as the need for the stipulation in the Governmental Report, and that may be where the contradiction lies. There is disagreement in the historic system of promotions that is not very different to the arguments around the fairness of promotions in the organisation currently. While this facet of the culture does not seem to have altered much, if at all, the next part is perhaps one of the most stark changes in the organisation.

### The Heavy Gang

This policing era also represented a marked shift from overt to covert use of aggression by the Gardaí. However, in order to understand this distinction it is necessary to look at the type of Gardaí that preceded this era. Perhaps the difference is best exemplified in former Gardaí Jim “Lugs” Branigan who served in the Garda in the 1950-60s. Various searches online return results ranging from him being a highly respected Gardaí who fairly policed the community to an over-zealous, heavy-handed Gardaí who used physical force as necessary to achieve his goals. Though Branigan himself was unique, he was from inner-city Dublin when it was still very common to have Gardaí from the countryside, Kearns (2015) regards him as Ireland’s most famed Garda, citing him as a tough, fearless guard, but also as a benevolent man who helped some of society’s most downtrodden women.

Sometimes both of these facets coincided as there was a certain onus on Gardaí to be violent while still being considered a good cop, it was a cultural expectation at the time that did not negate one from being the other. Branigan was known for not carrying his department issued baton, but rather instead chose to use his fists, as he was a boxer, to do his job (Kearns, 2015). Although his work with the community and figurehead of restoring order cannot be overlooked, the idea of the end justifies the means as a part of police culture is reflective of the social culture of the time; there was a near expectation of violence from the Gardaí as a response to the violence the Gardaí faced themselves. That considered, the end of Branigan’s career, which typified the idea of normalising the outwardly aggressive Gardaí, represented the end of this type of Gardaí and the start of a new policing era. This new era was characterised by less tolerance toward visibly aggressive policing and required a less detectable approach; from this came the Heavy Gang. This name was given to a group of Gardaí who allegedly assaulted and threatened people in question to procure confessions.

In regard to the Heavy Gang, accounts of what happened, including their severity as well as if it happened at all, still vary. In this time, nearly 80% of convictions for serious

crimes were based on confessions (Kilcommins et al., 2004). After allegations surfaced, and investigations were conducted, Garda management still did not acknowledge the Heavy Gang as real for at least the decade following the events (Brady, 2014). However, as was the case with earlier eras, this behaviour did not occur in isolation and was in part aided by a societal tolerance, if not acceptance, of heavy handed Gardaí as long as it was not too visible. The organisation denying such allegations outright, even past ones, could be argued implies an organisation unwilling to admit and/or rectify changes that may be necessary. The connection of change and culture to organisational challenges will be explored further in this research.

From the perspective of a Gardaí who would have been part of the organisation during this social climate, Allen (1999) refers to the Heavy Gang as “mythical” and that it was nothing more than a “media invention” (p. 196). However, from a more objective perspective, Conway (2014) argues not only that the Heavy Gang was real, but that it operated in a state of protection by the Criminal Justice System and acceptance by the Government. The support of heavy-handed tactics by such high-ranking officials was an indicator of the organisational climate the Gardaí operated under at the time. While the organisation’s protection by the Government will be discussed further below, in these circumstances it allowed the Garda to operate in a state of intense physical violence with little consequence and was a large facilitator in the organisation’s culture that developed in the post 1960s policing era.

### State Protection

There is an unwritten code within the Garda that “the Gardaí gave unswerving loyalty to the political authority and the political authority would back the Gardaí, right or wrong” (Brady 2014, p. 324). Because of this, McNiffe (1997) states that most historical research into the Garda has a political focus and very often only covers the organisation in relation to how it operates within and under governmental oversight (see Breathnach, 1974). This is particularly important because of the close links the organisation has to the Government, in one regard functionally as an organisation, but also in less official capacities; one such example being the wire-tapping incident in the 1980s, whereby the Garda tapped the phones at the request of the Minister; their defence for acting indecently was due to political pressures (Brady, 2014).

With a protection of these measures, it is uncertain how big of a pressure would be needed for a member of the organisation to change if he/she does not want to. Brady (2014) cites the examples of policing organisations in New York and Northern Ireland, whereby in order to change the culture, the organisation had to replace old officers with new ones who were willing to adopt the new culture. Accordingly, he also suggests that the only way for a



new culture to take over in the Garda is if the older generations of Gardaí are replaced (Brady, 2014).

The State providing some form of protection in defending Garda practices consequently also impacts Garda priorities. The Garda operates as a national policing organisation to Ireland, they are held accountable for protecting the State, and as such, even today are still held accountable to the Ministry of Justice; supervision by the Minister is almost absolute (Manning, 2012; D. P. Walsh, 2009B). Though there has been a more recent emphasis on a commitment to the people of Ireland, previously there has been a very clear distinction made of who the Garda is accountable to, and that accountability is to the State, not to the people of Ireland (Manning, 2012; O'Reilly, 1986; D. P. Walsh, 2009B). This ministerial oversight led to Commissioner Garvey in the 1970s prioritising the security of the State over all else (Brady, 2014). Previously, there had been an emphasis on government rather than a community focus and state security had been prioritised over community concerns (D. P. Walsh, 2009B). Values of the Garda remain so closely linked to the State in part because of how recently the State formed, but the organisation has emphasised working with the community in their 2010-2012 strategy statement, regardless of where their accountability lies (Manning, 2012). In this regard, the change in values that the Garda has exhibited in years past shows an ability and a willingness for the organisation to change.

## A System of Blame

The previously discussed Heavy Gang allegations, which teetered between this era of policing and the previous, were but one of the systemic issues within the organisation. There were also several cases of falsely matched fingerprints found by members of the Garda in the 1970s. To this end, the story only came out because one of the large national newspapers published it, similar to “scandal” cases being broken by news media outlets today. Although there was an act in 1923 that allowed members of the organisation to bring matters concerning their welfare and/or efficiency to the Commissioner and/or Minister, the Gardaí who helped identify the errors were nonetheless relocated to different units (Allen, 1999; Brady, 2014). Of the four, two were never promoted after the incident and one was promoted only after his friend became Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister) (Brady, 2014). The repercussions were very clear and “the message was not lost on the force: break ranks or challenge the system at your own peril” (Brady 2014, p. 116). This reckoning from the 1970s will set the stage for the current findings in this research seen in the findings’ chapters.

Following this came the Kerry Babies incident in 1984. While this is undoubtedly not the only case of this kind during this time period (see [McCafferty, 1984](#)), it is one of the most publicised ones. Although the details may seem astonishing looking back on what occurred

decades later, they did nonetheless unfold in a time of little bodily autonomy for women and severe punishments regarding reproductive rights. In brief, a woman, Joanne Hayes, and her entire family were charged with the murder/concealment of a baby found in Kerry by a passer-by after signing detailed confessions that they had committed the crime. Joanne was charged with murder because she had been pregnant previously, and initially could not explain why she no longer had a child. It was later revealed she had miscarried and hidden her own child at her family's farm. After discovering the second child, it was theorised that the woman must have had twins, but that was disproven by blood testing of the two children against the mother – the found baby was not a match. Further, the signed confessions of the brutal killing did not match what had happened to Joanne's baby and the baby on the beach was not a biological match to her. Following this, it was theorised that Joanne must have conceived twins fathered by two different men and thus resulted in two different blood types, a theory called superfecundation, that was not supported by medical evidence anywhere (Brady, 2014; Conway, 2014; McCafferty, 1984).

However, the details of this case, though incredible, are not as important as how the organisation chose to address what happened. Ultimately, the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act to investigate the proceedings of the case was established, and although it was questioned how such violently detailed, signed confessions were taken from the entire family after they voluntarily went to the Garda station, it was never concluded that it resulted from Garda misconduct (Brady, 2014; McCafferty, 1984). Rather, in circumstances similar to allegations stemming from that of the Heavy Gang, blame was shifted to the victim and the Gardaí were never held accountable for their actions nor questioned further on how such circumstances could have transpired (Conway, 2014; McCafferty, 1984). Brady (2014) has asserted that the Garda is “culturally resistant to accountability or transparency” (p. 319) and this is seen in early accounts of blame shifting such as the aforementioned example.

### The Turning Tides – Drugs in Ireland

As previously discussed, the 1970s brought about a turning point for dangerous crime in Ireland and for the organisation (Brady, 2014). As much as 10% of Gardaí were sent to border counties in Northern Ireland in the 1970s while crime rose in other parts of the country during that time (Brady, 2014). It is in this time period that drug usage and drug related crimes spiked around the country. However, Mulcahy (2005) has commented that this link is not necessarily causal, as it is uncertain whether this shift may have happened regardless of the Northern Troubles and Gardaí having an extra presence at the border. Although it cannot be proven that the drugs would not have increased if Garda presence was not redirected to the border territories, it is possible that the diverted attention of police and authoritarian bodies toward the North created an opportunity for such crimes to

flourish<sup>21</sup>. Additionally, the troubles between the North and South created an easier opportunity for evading detection and punishment after committing crimes by the lack of and clarity of communications between the two countries.

The 1980s was no less a controversial time for the Garda. As has been stated, the rural policing model was not equipped to handle urban policing needs. Part of these urban policing needs revolved around the newly emerging crime families from Dublin. Drug related crimes and crime families increased during this period and the Gardaí had to learn how to respond to such crimes (Brady, 2014). This increase in large scale drug/crime networks/families was indicative of the change in crime that the country would soon face, and still faces to this day. Due to the Gardaí's unfamiliarity with this type of crime, responses were reactive with each situation rather than proactive in crime prevention, an issue ongoing in the organisation today. The very nature of drug crimes was something Ireland was not prepared for. A book, 'Smack the Criminal Drugs Racket in Ireland', written by journalists Padraig Yeates and Sean Flynn, was published covering the drug scene and associated crimes in the 1980s, but was quickly pulled from shelves and never re-published due to the (then) shocking nature of what was presented. Because it was pulled from shelves so quickly, copies are scarce, but is emblematic of the climate the country was in during that time.

In response to the drug crisis, and lack of "acceptable" Garda response, community members marched by the thousands to demand increased prosecution of local drug dealers and to generally prevent drug dealing in their local communities (Connolly, 1998). Crime families and the rise in drug related crimes were but a few of the external issues plaguing the organisation<sup>22</sup>. However, there were internal controversies during this period that called into question Garda practices; such events included the death of a man in custody (in fact, 23 people died in custody between 1975 and 1983), wiretapping allegations, the Heavy Gang practices, and the Kerry Babies incident (Brady, 2014; Conway, 2014). Both the internal and external pressures the Garda faced threw into sharp contrast what kind of structure the organisation was working under, and it was not one that was ready for all of the changes to come. Because of this, and out of necessity, the culture of the organisation needed to change.

## Past to Present: Historical Reflections

Some of the most notable periods of change for Irish policing organisations have coincided with times of trouble for the country and/or organisation, which then begs the question of whether or not the current organisation is in a similar pattern of historic change

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<sup>21</sup> For further impact of the Troubles on criminal justice in Ireland see (O'Mahony, 2002).

<sup>22</sup> For more on drug related crime in Ireland see (O'Mahony, 1996).

seen from the 1980s. In the case of the RIC, and eventually the DMP, these policing organisations were disbanded in order to enact change. As Allen (1999) stated, “trouble was inevitable when the Civic Guard began to reflect the organisation of the RIC” (p. 32); interesting though as the Civic Guard reflected the RIC structure from its conception. In this case of change however, rather than creating an entirely new organisation, the organisation was given a new name – An Garda Síochána.

Though there was so much stress put on differentiating the two, as has been seen throughout this chapter, the similarities were striking. However, the term similarities may be deceptive, the organisations were not just similar, they were the same in nearly all aspects that were not artificial. From the 1960s era forward, it seems as if the organisation has undergone a lot of change, but that is in part because of just how little had changed up to that point. Indeed, this period could perhaps more accurately be characterised as an era of catch up and coping with struggles more than active change. Further yet, how could it have been expected of the Gardaí to change their practices if their structure and codes had not changed since the organisation’s inception decades prior? While there was a push toward modernisation beginning in the 1960s, it was heavily impacted by immediate needs that could not be overlooked any longer. Most starkly, the Garda’s rural policing structure was not prepared for urban policing needs, particularly when the country’s drug epidemic began.

Just as in its conception, the Garda today reflects the society in which it operates, one that is far different than its origins in rural, labouring, male-led Ireland. Although new recruits must pass a physical competency test, there is no longer a height requirement; further, the age limit has been raised to 35 (An Garda Síochána, 2018). The minimum education requirements are the Irish leaving certificate<sup>23</sup> (or equivalent) and competency in two languages – one of which must be English or Irish (An Garda Síochána, 2018). Perhaps the most notable change in training from its conception is the Bachelor of Arts degree received upon successfully completing the 34-week training program in the Garda Training College<sup>24</sup> in Templemore. Additionally, the Garda has substantially increased its numbers since the initial intake in 1922.

While there has been some progress, there is, to an extent, a mirroring of past problems in modern times. One of these is the trend within the Garda that they only start recruiting new members when it is necessary because of a shortage in already trained Gardaí (Brady, 2014). The push for recruitment only after the current rank has begun to age

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<sup>23</sup> Equivalent to the British A levels or American high school diploma.

<sup>24</sup> Garda Training College Modules: Foundations of Policing; Professional Competence 1-3; Crime and Incident Policing 1-2; Policing with Communities 1-3; Road Traffic Policing 1-2; Station Roles and Responsibilities 1-2; Officer and Public Safety; Law and Procedures; Other optional classes to be taken online as desired (An Garda Síochána).

out is a practice that is seen throughout periods of recruitment in the organisation's history. Recruiting was shut down in 2009 after the government ban on hiring in the public service and did not reopen until vitally necessary (Brady, 2014). Comparatively, Gardaí physical numbers have been low in relation to other policing organisations in Europe (Brady, 2014). Membership peaked in 2006 at 14,500 Gardaí (Brady, 2014). With a population of nearly five million in Ireland, Gardaí physical presence is severely under resourced with well over 300 residents per Gardaí, not accounting for additional tourist and undocumented migrants, even in peak membership times. Lacking resources, both in equipment and physical manpower, is a challenge the organisation still faces (Brady, 2014; Marsh, 2017) and is something that will be explored further in its impact on the Garda organisational culture in the findings chapters.

## Conclusion

When discussing policing organisations, it is particularly important to understand the historical and social contexts in which the organisations find themselves. Though Ireland is different in many regards from international policing organisations, this importance on context is the same. As will be discussed further throughout this thesis, a country's social climate and culture can be both reflective and an indicator of its police culture. This is also true for Ireland where much of the Irish culture can be found in the Garda culture. Yet it is difficult to fully grasp the social and historical connections if you are not familiar with the country or its culture. This chapter was designed to give a, though limited, overview of how Irish policing has evolved over the last two centuries and what came with the decisions and formation of each of the policing organisations that has existed in Ireland thus far.

One of the questions that has come up, particularly considering the previous section's discussion on the present mirroring of past problems, is not how has the organisation found itself in the current climate it is, but rather how has the organisation continued to function so long while consistently finding itself in the same situations time and again throughout its history? From the RIC to the Civic Guard, many of the same issues, which often stem from the organisation's culture, have presented themselves over and over, yet there is still an emphasis made in the organisation's history of very little changing from one organisation to the next. As will be explored more fully in the final chapter, the circumstances in which Irish policing has found itself in as described in this historical chapter are strikingly similar to where they find themselves now. However, in order to fully understand why, it is important to first acknowledge the historical context found in this chapter.

This chapter has been constructed in three parts, and so too is the thesis. This chapter reflects on three periods in historic Irish policing and the thesis reflects the historic,

modern previously researched, and current research on Irish policing, all of which are necessary to understand the full story of Garda culture as each stem from the previous in some way. While this chapter has set the foundation for the historical context of the current Garda, the next chapter looks to set the theoretical groundwork for the transmission of the organisation's culture from the organisations discussed in this chapter to the current organisation discussed in the final chapters as well as set the context for police organisational culture internationally.

## Chapter 3 The International Police Culture Landscape

### Introduction

When looking at the field of research done on police organisational culture conducted since the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, a general reckoning of what this police culture is has been observed at an international level. From an initial reading, general characteristics included: masculinity, discrimination, exclusion, suspicion, isolation, solidarity/loyalty, moral and political conservatism, pragmatism, cynicism, aggression, negative views of supervision, selective enforcement of the law, and a prioritisation of the crime fighter role over service oriented role (Bittner, 1970; Brown, 2000; Charman, 2017, 2019; Demirkol & Nalla, 2019; Goldsmith, 1990; Ingram et al., 2018; Manning, 1977; Miller, 2019; Punch, 1985; Reiner, 1992; Reuss-Ianni, 1983; Rubinstein, 1973; Skolnick, 1966; Van Maanen, 1975; Waddington, 1999; Westley, 1970; Worden, 1995). Even the informal rules passed on to new officers adhere to the general typology of the culture presented, namely, lay low, value the team, and make the law work (Charman, 2017). Paesen, Maesschalck, and Loyens (2019) created a, what they termed new, 15 point typology of police culture stemming from their research in Belgium and the Netherlands, but as the categories are relatively similar in overall concept to the above, their new framework has been amalgamated into the above characteristics.

While not each of these will be discussed explicitly by the above terms, they do interconnect into broader themes. These themes were idealised and formed based on an interaction with the literature upon secondary readings and are what are presented in this chapter. Broadly the themes explored encompassed the culture vs. sub-culture paradigm, of which explores many of the nuances between official and unofficial rules found in police culture; styles of policing, which informs police styling, and thus, culture; loyalty and solidarity, this point was a typology taken directly from the literature, but was considered so paramount to what police culture is in its many facets that it should be directly translated into a broader theme; organisational support, which included the emotional labours required of the job as well as how the organisation facilitates its members seeking help; managing change; and blame culture. This last theme was not one that initially came up upon first readings of the literature but was informed by the findings of this research and later found in the literature in a way that was not as blatant as the label may suggest. It was noted in the first chapter that certain aspects of what are typically included in the police organisational culture remit (i.e. gender and diversity) were not included because of their

lack of presence in the data. This is carried through to this chapter and the limits for what the culture includes are set out in the preceding thematic areas.

What was presented in the introductory chapter is a much more comprehensive analysis of the literature in the area of modern police organisational culture in Ireland due to its limited size. However, what is presented in the following chapter is a selection, formed from a systematic review of the literature<sup>25</sup>, of the international research on police organisational culture. As the field of research in this area is far more advanced, what is synthesised below is but a snapshot of the overall literature, but nonetheless gives a robust understanding of what police culture has come to be known internationally and how these findings have been theoretically contextualised. As stated, reviewing every international study on police culture would be an impossibility, therefore the international literature used was chosen through a systematic review as a representative sample of the culture of policing organisations.

Indicative of sheer size, a number of policing studies are done in the US, and therefore a similar proportion of the literature reviewed consists of US based research. However, because of this, there was an intentional limit to the number of US studies used, and therefore a conscious choice of using non-US based research, so as not to have an over representation of what police culture is in just one country. This research intends to understand where Ireland fits into a larger base of police organisational culture research, not just where Ireland is situated in relation to the US. Additional international literature outside of the US was identified on the basis of representativeness and inclusivity, however the (other) international literature was, for the most part, supportive of the research stemming from the US. Because of this similarity, though there are instances of the particular country a study was conducted in being referenced, the international literature was not divided into further sub-categories of US and non-US. The overall conformity of both the US and non-US police organisational literature provides a unified comparison to the Irish policing literature, of which will be explored more fully in the final chapter relating where the Garda fits into a wider police culture.

Of the international research identified on police organisational culture, countries evaluated included Scandinavia (specifically Norway and Denmark), Belgium (specifically Flanders), the Netherlands, Germany, Slovenia, the United Kingdom, Australia, India, Southern Africa (region not specified further in the research), Turkey, Canada, Mexico, and

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<sup>25</sup> This systematic review was based on key search terms i.e. “police culture”, “culture vs sub-culture”, “police style”, “solidarity”, “blue code”, “aggression”, etc. typically used in conjunction with Boolean terms and policing/police. A specific search example used in this research: (organisation OR institution) AND (culture OR policy OR code OR practice) AND (Garda OR guards OR police OR law enforcement).



the United States (in various regions throughout the US). Although there are undoubtedly countries not included in the analysis, one such reason including language barriers, the literature selected presented a common theme among police organisations that gave a steady understanding of what police organisational culture typically encompasses. For this research, culture, broadly as indicated by the sub-headings throughout this chapter, encompassed loyalty, solidarity, sub-culture, change, isolation, blame, and support.

In addition to exploring police organisational culture at an international level, this chapter intends to lay the groundwork for what theories contribute to the research on police organisational culture and how they function within policing organisations and within its culture. As with the international research on police organisational culture, not every theory will be discussed, as covering every possible theory that could relate to police organisational culture would be a separate thesis in and of itself. What is outlined below are the theories that have traditionally been used, as ascertained from the literature, in helping to understand police culture. As Ingram et al. (2018) have posited, culture cannot be understood from any one, individual person, but only from the collective group. Indeed sharing the culture among the group is an important component of the culture (Ingram et al., 2018). Accordingly, as will be argued in this chapter, culture is collective and the various theories presented can help to explain both why and how this has and continues to happen.

As such, the social theories (Social Identity Theory, Socialisation, Social Learning Theory, and Social Exclusion) and Rotten Apple Theory will be examined in their relevance to the criminological field of policing organisations. Much of the behaviour transmission can be explained from the interaction of perspectives of these theories. In so doing, they may then be explored in the following chapters in a more specific context among the various elements of police organisational culture both internationally and in Ireland. Indicative of the choice in using these theories and their relevance to police culture research, the theories laid out in this chapter can be applied to behaviour transmission and organisational behaviour in any one of the individual facets of police organisational culture presented; however, they have been integrated in the chapter where they most naturally fit in terms of comprehension and natural flow rather than isolated relevance.

As one final note before delving into the actual ideas represented by the term police culture, Kingshott, Bailey, and Wolfe (2004) have asserted that research on policing organisations needs to be current because organisational culture is a changing concept that is defined by society and as such changes rather frequently. While this is important to consider, and although more recent research will be incorporated, the use of dated research is justified because, as will be discussed later in this chapter, in addition to the social theories of behaviour transmission that will be discussed, police culture is resistant to change and has remained largely unchanged over time (Hale et al., 2013; Loftus, 2010). To

further strengthen this argument, what was found in the literature did not alter the perception of police organisational culture when taken from differing time periods except in few circumstances, and these were explicitly noted in the chapter. With this long term lack of change found in the literature, it can be generally concluded that policing organisations are at least partially<sup>26</sup> resistant to change. What follows are the basic tenets of what police culture consists of as derived from the literature from an international perspective. Integrated in this understanding of international police culture are the theoretical components that aid in comprehending how police culture forms and transmits over time.

## An Abstract Approach to Police Organisational Culture

Before getting further into the individual components that make up a police culture, it is first important to understand what is meant by the term, or what police culture on a more abstract level actually is. As a general principle, organisational culture is the underlying framework for how an employee should behave in an organisation; however, this understanding is rather vague and it can be hard to observe and define (Campbell & Göritz, 2014; O’Riordan, 2015). Determining what culture is, and further how to define it, is a research topic in its own right. According to Schein’s (1984) cultural triangle, culture (from top to bottom or shallower to deeper) consists of artefacts, espoused values, and finally, basic underlying assumptions. The approach taken in this research will be to define the basic tenets of police organisational culture by how it is described and framed in previous research.

There are two schools of thought when discussing organisational culture; the corporate approach looks at culture as something the organisation has, whereas the academic approach views culture as something the organisation is (Charman, 2017). The misconception between the two can be explained by Charman’s (2017) argument that organisational culture and organisational identity are actually two separate concepts, whereby identities are the easily defined aspects of an organisation, including the physical, concrete features like logos, speeches, and official documentation that are driven more by management. Indeed, “organisational identity represents what an organisation stands for and what it might be able to achieve in the future” (Charman, 2017, p. 18). As the antithesis, “organisational culture is expressed most powerfully not through ‘visions’ and ‘mission statements’, but through displayed behaviours which reflect expressed values” (Metcalf, 2017, p. 159).

Initially, organisations were interested in culture because it was something that could be altered to enhance productivity (Charman, 2017; Sonnenfeld, 1985). As one of the

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<sup>26</sup> At the very least, policing organisations have been characterised as resistant to change in the literature evaluated.

forerunners in researching employee performance and productivity in relation to organisational environment, the Hawthorne Studies also have an application to police organisational culture. Though not a succinct debate<sup>27</sup>, most relevant to policing organisations was the importance of supervisory-employee relationships. From this, it was concluded that changes to the physical environment were not the direct cause for increased productivity, but rather the link was found in workers feeling like someone cared about them enough to implement changes in their environment based on their requests (Wickström & Bendix, 2000). The improved employee-management relationship was the underlying factor for any increase in productivity (Sonnenfeld, 1985; Wickström & Bendix, 2000). In fact, Morrill and Arsiniega (2018) have asserted that the most effective way to influence member behaviour is by treating them with respect and dignity.

Similar results have been observed in policing organisations. When police organisations demonstrated that they valued their officers' efforts, the officers would then show an increase in their positive work-related behaviours; however, if an officer perceived the organisation as undervaluing them and/or minimising their contributions to the organisation, the officer would then be more likely to engage in self-protective behaviours (Helfers et al., 2018). Further, how the officer viewed fairness in the organisation also affected their work behaviour and use of self-protective behaviours (Helfers et al., 2018).

When considering the findings from the Hawthorne Studies, though they are grounded in observed practice, they would seemingly imply that changing the culture is easily done and produces immediate effects among the members of the organisation. As will be argued throughout this thesis, an organisation's culture is a concept that is difficult to define and also, when put into practice, difficult change; because of this it is therefore not the same as an organisation's identity. Consequently, because describing the essence of an organisation can be very abstract, defining what culture is exactly can be quite difficult.

To further complicate defining police organisational culture, there are arguments that there is no one, single police culture. Demirkol and Nalla (2019) have even argued whether police culture exists at all as they did not find relationships among various factors that contribute to the overall culture in their study on Turkish police officers. However, it could also be argued that the lack of relationships found between different factors does not negate the assertion that a culture exists. Corder (2017), although not arguing that a culture does not exist, has asserted that "if police culture was monolithic we would not expect to find this much variation in officer perspectives between police departments [surveys were administered to 89 police and sheriff departments in the US]" (p. 20).

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<sup>27</sup> For arguments against see (Carey, 1967; Wickström & Bendix, 2000).

Generally, differences in police cultures can be accounted for by different organisations, different locations within a specific area, different countries, as well as different cultures within the same organisation differentiated by roles and ranks (Charman, 2017). Although differences in culture can be expected, I would not propose that this then eliminates the possibility that police culture exists or that there is a general culture that most policing organisations would adhere to. Cordner (2017) found variations among the departments he surveyed in the US, yet, as the following chapter will demonstrate, so many of the characteristics are common among policing organisations in various countries that, although of course not everything will align exactly, this research will proceed on the basis that there is one, general police culture. A goal of this research is to see where Irish policing fits into a broader international police culture, of course variations are expected, but there are certain core elements that will be used to understand any convergences or divergences.

Understanding police culture at a more abstract level is paramount to being able to delve into the more nuanced understandings of what police culture is in more detail. As discussed in the introduction, the broader themes presented in this chapter were conceptualised based on an interaction with the literature beyond the general typology of what police culture is as presented in the works used to inform this research. However, before getting into the more specific thematic areas of the culture, it is first necessary to consider the idea that there is just one police culture that is representative of policing organisations.

## Culture vs. Sub-Culture

Put articulately by O'Brien-Olinger (2016), culture gives us the rules by which we govern our lives and act upon. Culture is how we understand our place in the world, how we make decisions, and how we defend our actions. While it has already been established that this research will proceed on the basis that there is one, collective police culture<sup>28</sup>, before attempting to look deeper into the divide between culture and sub-culture, it is first necessary to understand how an individual learns, and further embodies, the organisation's culture. Social Identity Theory links a person's self to their organisation; by this reasoning and supported by the evaluated literature regarding the pervasiveness of organisational culture, it would stand to reason that any person in an organisation would therefore be shaped by the organisation's culture because of this social identification with the organisation (Campbell & Göritz, 2014). Further, an individual can have multiple social identities from different groups and/or organisations they have been part of, what makes someone an individual is how these different social identities work together (Charman,

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<sup>28</sup> Meaning that police culture is able to be understood as sharing similar characteristics, as set out in p. 53, irrespective of individual policing organisations or geographic regions.

2017). However, social identity is relational and contextual, members will therefore emphasise the behaviours they perceive as important to the group (Charman, 2017). Individuals join organisations to be accepted and as such will observe the behaviour that is expected and often take on that personality in order to embody the organisation's culture (Ashforth and Mael 1989; Stets and Burke 2000). So, although each individual will have their own identity, the emphasis on what is viewed as important contributes to an overall collective identity that contributes to a broad organisational culture. It is because of this theoretical lens of behaviour transmission that we are able to look at culture collectively.

This considered, although organisational culture is often referred to collectively, and while this research has taken on the idea of one police culture, there is a burgeoning body of academic literature that continues to emphasise the important difference between the "official" culture and the "unofficial" sub-culture (Jermier et al. 1991; Paoline et al. 2000; Filstad and Gottschalk 2011; Jacobs et al. 2008; Waddington 1999; Williams 2016). The official culture in an organisation is what is presented to the public and expected of the employees; however, often to actually function within an organisation, there are also sub-cultures present that govern everyday life (Goffman, 1961). Although initially not at the forefront of the field, researchers began to study the divide between the expressed intention of the official culture and the observed behaviour found in the sub-culture (Ouchi & Wilkins, 1985). Indeed, "any social group which has permanence, a common pursuit, and, perhaps, common problems is likely to engender, inherit, or modify a subculture" (Maguire et al. 2012, p. 68).

Typically, the older the organisation, the more diverse sub-cultures will be present within (Schein, 1984). The debate on the effects of sub-cultures is not succinct; however, one side suggests sub-cultures undermine unity in an organisation negatively, while the other supposes the fragmentation created by sub-cultures can create positive change (Kujala et al., 2016). The unity that organisational culture creates is intended to curtail any potential conflict within the organisation; however, this unity is not always viewed positively and can lead to undermining progress and perpetuating negative attributes (Kujala et al. 2016). Further, there are different approaches to how sub-cultures can work with one another; either they can work harmoniously or be in conflict with each other (Schein, 1984). Change, unity, and conflict are all aspects of the sub-culture that will be explored further throughout this chapter.

According to Jermier et al. (1991), official culture is established by top management in the organisation and sub-culture is then created by the employees. In a policing context, official culture is created by top officials (i.e. government bodies, commissioners, high ranking officials) and sub-culture is created by the frontline members of the organisation (i.e. officers or Gardaí). According to Coch and French (1983), police organisations are one

of the most visible institutions. As such, official culture is presented to adhere to what society expects of such an organisation, even if the culture publicly presented is deceptive of what the real “unofficial” culture is (Jermier et al., 1991). The official culture given to the public presents a single goal, but each sub-culture within the organisation has its own goals (Jermier et al., 1991). Police culture in particular is regarded for rejecting the official culture and is instead governed by unspoken codes and rules that contribute to the sub-culture.

According to Jermier et al. (1991), sub-cultures and groups form within police organisations and it is possible for multiple sub-cultures to exist within an organisation without any tension. In Jermier et al.’s study (1991), these sub-cultural groups formed based on subunit assignment, rank, shift, physical danger, education, organisational tenure, organisational commitment, and work performance, among others. In particular, the sub-cultural groups found most to adhere to the official culture and policies were the least educated among officers and the officers who most departed from the official culture had higher degrees in criminology, sociology, or psychology (Jermier et al., 1991). This notion is particularly apt considering the early desire in the Garda to have less educated recruits.

Although the officers have an official code, or culture, to abide by, it is not flexible enough to adapt to every day policing and it is presumed that every officer knows both the official and unofficial cultural rules of the organisation and knows which ones to adhere to in any given situation (Carrabine et al., 2014; Jacobs et al., 2008). Inherently, I would propose, any research into police organisational culture, particularly if that is based on observation of performed actions, is naturally an exploration of the unofficial or sub-culture present within the organisation as the official culture is what can be found in official documentation and/or regulations and is not likely to perfectly represent actual officer behaviour. This considered, going forward throughout this thesis, when referring to police culture, this is representative of the unofficial culture that is enacted in officer behaviour/actions rather than the officially documented culture. While it has been concluded that there are differing cultures and sub-cultures present in policing organisations, with sub-cultures being the unofficial rules by which officers make their choices in day to day actions, and this being what is referred to by the stand alone term culture, so too is there a component of the organisation’s culture that helps to determine in what direction these cultures form; policing style.

## Styles of Policing

The style of policing an organisation adheres to can be indicative of their culture, and as such, space has been given to understanding the differences between the different policing styles. There are two broad typologies presented when theorising policing styles, and although each individual scholar may create and define their own unique typologies,

they tend to fall under a militaristic style and a community and/or service-oriented style (Paoline et al. 2000). As the names would suggest, the militaristic style lends to a more aggressive police organisation, while the community/service-oriented style would consist of a more approachable police organisation. Community policing, as will be discussed further later in this thesis, can be a rather vague concept that varies in implementation due to a fluctuating interpretation of what it actually means. On the whole however, community policing means that police should not just be enforcing the law, but also include maintenance and social service functions (Hale et al., 2013). An overarching goal in this model is promoting peace by resolving conflict without the need to enforce the law (Carrabine et al., 2014). Although policing styles can vary both along the overall spectrum and within each category, this researcher labels the more aggressive style “militaristic” and the service-oriented style “community policing”.

The militaristic policing style is the predominant style supported by police culture in the US, but elsewhere as well (Belur, 2009; Fry & Berkes, 1983; Grabiner, 2016; Jermier et al., 1991; Jermier & Berkes, 1979). Jermier et al. (1991) found in their study of a small police department in the southern US that the official culture of police organisations is designed with a militaristic style as the predominant function. Further to this, it was found that officers preferred a highly structured departmental model, something that aligns with the militaristic style of policing (Jermier & Berkes, 1979).

Although the culture of policing organisations has a tradition of being militaristic in style, police differ from the military in that they need to be able to use discretion in order to function properly (Fry & Berkes, 1983). Following the rules set by the official culture without any deviation does not allow for any discretion on the part of the officer; in certain instances, following the exact letter of the law can hurt more than help both the officer and the community (Fry & Berkes, 1983). Conversely, the autonomy officers have on patrol and their ability to enforce power in this way leaves room for misconduct to occur (Carrabine et al., 2014). Indeed, trust that law enforcement agents are doing what is expected of them is a major component of policing, but nonetheless whether or not they are acting how they should is difficult to evaluate directly (Manning, 2012).

Further, this favouring of aggression and the militaristic model creates a tension between the police and society (Paoline et al. 2000). The mentality of separation between the two creates an on edge, suspicious approach on the part of the police officer to those who they interact with that can often lead to an increase in aggression (Paoline et al. 2000); though these concepts will be discussed further later in this section. Fry and Berkes (1983) concluded that the military model creates an unnecessary aggression which is not suitable for an effective style of policing; further, a model with more discretion and little upward control would be more beneficial for police organisations. Though this has been concluded,

we are still seeing international examples of police organisational reform that is further limiting the use of discretion (Terpstra et al., 2019). Community policing styles give officers an opportunity to become more familiar with the area in which they patrol, which can in turn limit their apprehensions toward the public and recognise any suspicious behaviour and actively serve the community (Paoline et al. 2000; Loftus 2010). These two theoretical approaches could potentially explain why there are increased levels of documented police aggression in areas that adhere to more of the militaristic style of policing (i.e. the US) and less in communities with a community oriented policing style (i.e. Ireland). Nonetheless, the theoretical link between chosen policing style and aggression can be seen.

In addition to militaristic styles being supported by the official culture of police organisations, many departments set the standard for violence to such a level that there is very little ability to deviate from militarised policies (Grabiner, 2016). When considering what police work inherently is, officers interviewed typically describe the high action, crime fighting elements of the job; what was considered the “real” police work even though that is not what they did most often in their jobs (Belur, 2009; Loftus, 2010). The “war stories” passed down from generation to generation of police officers often glorified the more violent stories even though they may not have happened quite as often (Loftus, 2010). Accordingly, Waddington (1999), in his US study, examined the oral culture of police and found that how officers talked to each other was typically much more aggressive than their actions in the field. Further, evidence from the UK in the 1980s, as well as comparable research more recently, would suggest that the police did not like the community policing model because it inherently involved this more “boring” police work (Charman, 2017; McCullagh, 1985). However, while the nature of policing is beginning to change slightly, more significantly is the changing of the narrative around policing and more of an acceptance of the “boring” work as a major part of the job (Charman, 2018). That considered, as seems to be consistent with the more recent policing literature, there is still only small numbers of studies showing this changing nature.

Although police culture tends to favour the militaristic style, much of the research done on police organisations supports a community policing style because it is more valuable to the members of the organisation as well as members of the community (Jermier et al. 1991; Fry and Berkes 1983; Paoline et al. 2000; Loftus 2010). When researching levels of organisational commitment among police officers in the US, Jermier et al. (1991) found higher levels of organisational commitment from officers operating in a less militaristic modelled department. In addition, “police officers feel more motivated when they are empowered to implement community-oriented policing as they see fit” (Steinheider and Wuestewald 2008, p. 157). The broad consensus seems to be that even though the militaristic style of policing is considered to be more closely aligned with police culture, the



community policing style has been more beneficial both for the organisations and the communities in which they operate. However, as evidenced by McCullagh (1985), when officers were forced into the community policing model, to make their job more exciting, they would arrest people for very low level public order offences; a practice that can further target already vulnerable groups.

A study of the organisational changes in policing in Scotland found favourable opinions of a community policing style, both by the police and the community members. There was a major reform in the Scottish organisation that moved from a fragmented police organisation to one, unified one (Fyfe et al., 2018; Terpstra et al., 2019). Although it was noted that the intended outcome from the proposed legislation was markedly different from the reality of the reform, the strategic aims were to improve delivery of services, provide more access to specialist services, and enhance relations with communities (Fyfe et al., 2018). Although the intention was to enhance relations with communities, the reform weakened the ability of the organisation to have a community policing style due to an expectation at the national level of chief officers to focus more on response and enforcement of the law rather than engagement with the community (Fyfe et al., 2018). Because of this, and further observations of similar trends in the Netherlands, the term abstract policing, or the inherent separation forced between officers and the public, has come about (Terpstra et al., 2019). Although the practical intentions seemed positive in this shift, the implementation is vital in any success of organisational change as negative unintended consequences are always a possibility. The idea of a unified policing organisation impacting negatively on community policing abilities, and the Garda's unified structure in relation to their commitment to community policing, is something to be considered.

In addition to the community responding unfavourably to this centralised policing style shift in Scotland, there was a negative impact on local intelligence gathering and reporting of low-level crimes – particularly in rural areas (Fyfe et al., 2018). Important in this scenario, and indeed will be a recurring concept in subsequent chapters, is that even though an organisation may officially refer to themselves as a community policing organisation, whether or not it actually is depends on the implementation and everyday actions. Although the organisation's chosen policing style sets the tone, perhaps the most important determinant of how officers behave while on the job is related to how the officer understands their role in the organisation and in society as a whole (Carrabine et al., 2014; Loftus, 2010). While this particular study was conducted in Scotland, similar results (i.e. interpretation of community policing and the implementation varied) when a restructuring of policing organisations occurred were also found in Norway (Ryssdal & Rubecksen, 2018). This concept will be particularly relevant when looking at the Garda, an organisation that has very publicly identified itself as a community oriented policing organisation.

While the idea that militaristic policing styles align with more aggressive policing and community oriented policing styles less, this spectrum is, understandably, over simplified. However, how we have come to interpret this scale will be re-evaluated in relation to the findings in the final chapter. Of further note will be what impact this typology has on the current research and where the Garda fall in relation to the spectrum presented here given their public commitment to a community policing style as discussed in chapter one and their history of violent policing discussed in chapter two. This considered, where in the spectrum a policing organisation finds itself can impact the next facet of police culture; loyalty and solidarity.

## Loyalty and Solidarity

Loyalty and solidarity among officers is considered to be one of the most important aspects of the culture (Kingshott et al., 2004; Paoline et al., 2000; Westmarland, 2005). However, this extreme sense of loyalty can pit integrity against loyalty, as the two do not always coincide. In some instances, making loyalty the “good” part and integrity the “bad” part in a good vs. bad decision-making process (Kingshott et al., 2004). Further, this unending sense of loyalty to the organisation can hinder any personal growth and create challenges for officers in every day decision making (Kingshott et al., 2004). This strong sense of loyalty to one another and overall group identity can also lead to closing ranks during investigations (Hale et al., 2013). Particularly in the UK, there has been a recognised need for more transparent policing (Gash & Hobbs, 2018).

However, when considering the integrity vs loyalty paradigm, in Westmarland’s (2005) study on police integrity in the UK, she found that officers had no problem reporting other officers for more serious crimes, even if it led to termination of the officer. Charman (2017) also found limits to police solidarity in the UK, so much so that she has proposed a shift from the traditional blue code of silence to a blue code of self-protection. With this shift was also the idea that being a police officer was no longer as tied to their identity; policing was a job rather than a lifestyle (Charman, 2017, 2019). There is also some support for the “cover your ass” mentality in police organisations in the US (Herbert, 1996; Paoline, 2003). There is potential for this finding to be found further, but the idea of strict bonds of solidarity and loyalty are still pervasive and this loosening of ties has yet to be shown in a majority of the research published; however, Charman’s research, where this concept has been found most strongly by officers, is relatively recent and perhaps the tides are shifting now. Also to be considered though, is the idea that police officers are more conscious of how they are presented to the public and may want to distance themselves from the negative attributes of the job (Charman, 2017, 2019).

While the implications for what the emphasis on loyalty and solidarity in police culture means to the organisation internally have been discussed, there are also implications that this emphasis creates an adverse effect. The culture is designed in such a way to bind police officers that it creates a level of distinction between the two groups that inherently separates police from everyday people. As would be supported by Social Identity Theory, workers are expected to identify with their professions and this isolation from mainstream society further perpetuates that (Garduno, 2019). As a recurrent in the literature, researchers discussed a particular mentality officers hold distinguishing members of the organisation from the public; the us vs. them outlook whereby “us” are members of the policing organisation and “them” are members of the public (Kingshott, Bailey, and Wolfe 2004; Paoline et al. 2000; Campeau 2015; Herbert 1996; Paoline 2003; Filstad and Gottschalk 2011).

Officers have such demanding schedules that they often will not socialise outside of the department, increasing their sense of communal solidarity and further enhancing this us vs. them mentality (Campeau, 2015; Jacobs et al., 2008; Kingshott et al., 2004). Because of this divide, officers will cite a sense of suspiciousness on their part of the public (Paoline et al. 2000; Campeau 2015; Paoline 2003). This suspiciousness paired with a heightened sense of alertness can lead to an increase in aggression toward the public by the officer (Paoline et al., 2000). In this way, the organisation can increase levels of aggression toward the public just by adhering to the culture. Additionally, this alienation embedded in the culture has the potential to rationalise rule bending (Punch, 2003).

Although in a different context, Goffman’s *Asylums* (1961) created an ethnographic account of his study testing organisational and institutional theories. Though in need of slight adaptations, this divide is similar to the concept of us vs. them in policing. This concept has repercussions that extent two-fold. In one respect it can lead to increased aggression from the officers, as well as merit the belief that what they are doing is right. However, it can also lead to a lack of willingness for a civilian to come forward when such situations do occur, partly because they feel they have no power to stand against an officer who is supposed to be upholding the law, as typically would be the case the only person who could substantiate any allegation would be the officer who are either implicated or witnessed it (Reiss, 1992), but also because society has deemed what officers do as their moral obligation. However, this willingness to come forward needs to be reconciled with the increased use of body worn cameras and other video recording devices where members of the public can better prove what happened.

In regard to police use of aggression, there is an inconsistency in the literature over the younger vs. older divide. Paoline et al. (2000) found that more experienced (i.e. older) officers in the US tended to be less aggressive; however, this finding could have been

influenced by the fact that the older officer's experience meant they were assigned to less demanding patrol areas. Rabe-Hemp (2008) supported this, concluding that length of time on the job (i.e. more experience) resulted in higher levels of supporting behaviour or less aggression on the job. Accordingly, Loftus (2010) found that younger, less experienced officers would be more likely to react aggressively.

In contrast to this, Herbert (1996) found a disposition for violence by use of weapons from older officers because of the conditions in which they entered the job. Further, Ingram et al. (2018) found that more traditional cops were more likely to use force. This can in part be attributed to the notion that the legal context present while officers are training can determine how they behave on the job (Paoline et al., 2000). Cultural ideals also contribute to the tolerance or rejection of more physical policing practises. If societal pressures do not condemn excessive use of force, then officers will continue to act accordingly (Belur, 2009). In the research stemming from Eastern Europe, when considering rising crime rates and the need to combat them, abuse of rights by the police are supported by society (Punch, 2003).

Loyalty and solidarity have been noted as some of the most important aspects of police culture; this considered, the ways in which we see these concepts manifest in policing organisations are not always positive. Tight solidarity among officers can cause internal problems when matters of accountability arise, and so too can issues be created with the public in the name of loyalty. From an evaluation of the literature, and strengthened by the tenets of Social Identity Theory, officers seem to be in a no win situation. Either officers conform to the culture and remain loyal to their colleagues no matter what or face the consequences of being socially excluded; conversely, if these same officers remain loyal and do not hold their colleagues accountable, they create tensions with the communities in which they work. How to reconcile these two opposing issues seems quite difficult, and it has often been observed that members, and the organisation as a whole, will resort to the easiest way out, by blaming someone else.

## Blame Culture

When loyalty must be chosen above or instead of integrity, this creates a space for hostility among organisational members that can lead to a blame culture. In the UK, the College of Policing has recognised an organisational tendency to assign blame on an individual level rather than to create a culture that allows mistakes and learns from them (Charman, 2017). This known culture of blame then leads to officers afraid to take any risks (Charman, 2017; Gash & Hobbs, 2018; Kiely & Peek, 2002; Metcalfe, 2017; Owen, 2014), which then can impact on overall job performance and safety. Because of this, there has

been an attempt to move away from a blame culture and toward a learning organisational model that allows for mistakes (Chase, 2018; Metcalfe, 2017).

With regard to a learning organisational model, more generally there is an increasing emphasis on an organisational culture containing the necessary structures for a learning organisation. One important characteristic of a learning organisation is that learning is built into the culture rather than just reacting and changing based on mistakes and wrongdoings; learning requires more than just adapting to change (Filstad & Gottschalk, 2011). Other notable characteristics include an emphasis on shared values, continuously questioning and changing basic values, empowering employees to make decisions as a group, and a tolerance of mistakes to enhance creativity (Filstad & Gottschalk, 2011). Typically, however, police organisations are characterised by bureaucratic structures with a lack of emphasis on creativity and, above all, police organisations are characterised by a strong emphasis on tradition, something not necessarily conducive to change (Filstad & Gottschalk, 2011).

As this theory is under researched in a policing context, there is one study identified by this researcher that will be used as a case study for my own analysis; conveniently the Norwegian police are one of only three (including Ireland) routinely unarmed, national policing organisations. Per the findings, the only characteristics the Norwegian police organisation had in accordance with a learning organisation were preference for informal communication (over formal) and emphasis on equality and empowerment (over hierarchy and authority) (Filstad & Gottschalk, 2011). Characteristics of the organisation that did not align with that of a learning organisation included cooperation (over individual cooperation), preference for direct action (over planning), practicality (over philosophy), and an importance placed on security and integrity (over challenge and productivity) (Filstad & Gottschalk, 2011). Although perhaps not fully representative as only police managers were surveyed, the findings indicated that the Norwegian police are not a learning organisation (Filstad & Gottschalk, 2011). Perhaps more importantly for this research, this study found that managers may have lost touch with the day to day reality of policing which impacts on the ability to be a learning organisation (Filstad & Gottschalk, 2011).

Filstad and Gottschalk (2011) approach organisational culture as something that is socially constructed by the profession; by this approach, if learning organisational metrics were considered important, they could very well be incorporated into the organisation's culture. This considered, the emphasis on a need to shift to a learning organisation that tolerates mistakes has also been found in the US (Punch, 2000). There is a fear among officers of making mistakes, however well intentioned, because of the blame culture that is present (Heaton, 2011). In 2011, Heaton questioned how the balance can be struck between improved accountability and moving away from a blame culture as it had not been discussed at the time. It has now been asserted that a move toward a learning

organisational model could alleviate this persistent blame culture; however, what is important to note is how much the progression of both identifying, understanding, and devising a solution for the presence of a blame culture has advanced in less than a decade.

In particular reference to a blame culture, Belur (2009) has also noted its presence in Indian policing. He argues that this approach must be avoided as laying blame on an individual officer does not consider the overall systemic issues that have resulted in misconduct (Belur, 2009). This considered, the concept of assigning blame for an incident at an individual level is reinforced by news media as it makes it more newsworthy; this therefore creates a system whereby assigning blame is normalised (Cavender & Mulcahy, 1998). It is even possible that instituting a culture of blame can be justified in the name of accountability (Long & Silverman, 2005). Gash and Hobbs (2018) have further posited the idea that society's demand for accountability has contributed to police blame culture. Typically, the only way to process police organisational misconduct is by way of a government appointed commission, which relies largely on blaming individuals for the misconduct rather than creating systemic change within the organisation (Reiss, 1992). This has particular relevance to Ireland and its known reliance on tribunals/commissions to handle misconduct and accountability within the Garda.

Often, because corruption is such a broad term, it used to cover any kind of wrongdoing (Punch, 2000). In order to clarify levels of severity, Punch (2000) uses three categories to sort different types of wrongdoing; corruption, misconduct, and police crime<sup>29</sup>. He further states that police wrongdoing is like a ladder, an officer may start with one type and work up to the most severe at a gradual pace, but that each step up becomes more easy than the last (Punch, 2000). If this is the case, it is possible that early supervisory intervention could control (or better control) police misconduct. Mills (2003) concludes his argument by stating that leadership style and management is vital to upholding ethical practices; if the leaders of an organisation do not act ethically, it is not expected that the members would either. Particularly in the US, police corruption starts with low level officers, but it would not be able to continue without superior officers not investigating matters fully or taking the situation seriously (Punch, 2000). Punch (2000) further argues that lack of proper supervision is often to blame for low level officer deviance and proper leadership is vital for a healthy organisation. Officers in supervisory roles set a precedent for those they oversee and can either "promote the right behaviours or give permission for negative ones" (Metcalf, 2017, p. 159).

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<sup>29</sup> For clarity going forward, instances of police wrongdoing are not ranked into this hierarchy, but referred to generally as police misconduct.

This considered, there is still a certain onus on individual officers to hold themselves to account

When an institution aligns itself with a set of ethical guidelines, this does not guarantee that its employees will act accordingly. It requires individuals with sound ethical compasses to carry out the mandate pursuant to organizational standards. And, when institutions respond weakly to ethical breaches, it appears their codes are mere lip service and the behavior is implicitly condoned...Ultimately, accountability should begin with officers policing themselves. (Collins & Klahm IV, 2018, p. 271-2)

Morals, ethics, and integrity all contribute to misconduct; however, all are difficult to define concretely and therefore, so are the exact details of what misconduct can consist of (Westmarland, 2005). Further, there is a fine line between what is considered misconduct and what is not (Newburn, 1999), and this will also vary from person to person and country to country; therefore, studying police misconduct is also difficult. From the literature reviewed, there is an argument to be made that police culture breeds misconduct among police officers. This culture within the organisation can breed misconduct, whereby any officer who is seen to inform on another officer is socially excluded and therefore chooses a cover up or secret keeping approach so as to avoid conflict within the group (Campeau, 2015; Filstad & Gottschalk, 2011; Paoline, 2003; Westmarland, 2005). The very notion of discussing police deviance or expressing concerns about corruption has the potential to make officers appear “weak” or “soft” (Punch, 1985, p. 125).

Misconduct can in part be explained by what the job entails, the organisation, the organisational culture, opportunities available for misconduct to occur, and the measures an organisation will take to control misconduct that does occur (Newburn, 1999). Further, Punch (2000) states that,

Police officers have to be initiated into these practices, rationalisations have to be produced to accept them, supervisors have to collude or turn a blind eye, justifications have to be sought to continue them, and organisations have either in some way to condone or encourage these activities – or else fail to tackle them. (p. 304)

It is difficult to speak up when the organisation does not value correcting misconduct as a priority. While researching Flemish policing organisations, Dormaels (2015) concluded that “police resources are less available to investigate corruption when corruption is not

acknowledged as a priority” (p. 597). With the lack of resources put toward outing misconduct, it then becomes a private crime that is only discoverable upon admission from someone involved (Dormaels, 2015). In addition to this, when access is secured and researchers are able to study police misconduct from first hand sources, the data can be skewed because in order to get the data you would first need to find an officer who is not only willing to admit what they have done, but also talk about it (Punch, 2000). Fear of organisational retaliation, social exclusion, and/or the whistleblower effect would all impact an officer’s willingness to disclose such information. The denial of problems occurring and the whistleblower phenomena are things Ireland is very familiar with.

The idea of social exclusion influencing behaviour also has theoretical applications to police organisational culture. The base of identity in Social Identity Theory are structured in categories or groups (Stets & Burke, 2000). These particular social categorisations “create and define the individual’s place in society” (Tajfel & Turner, 1985, p. 40). Within organisations, in-groups and out-groups will form, whereby the out-group(s) does not adhere to the rest of the group and is categorised negatively (Stets & Burke, 2000). Although the out-group does not have to be explicitly defined in and of itself, “the mere awareness of the presence of an out-group is sufficient to provoke intergroup competitive or discriminatory responses on the part of the in-group” (Tajfel & Turner 1985, p. 38). Further, in a policing context, this scenario could arise if a whistleblower, who by the organisation’s standards is not adhering to the overall culture, could face discrimination and exclusion by speaking out against wrongdoing or corruption.

Social exclusion at its core refers to how individuals are cut off from wider society. As an adaptation to policing, social exclusion refers to the performed behaviours enacted by members of policing organisations that separates them or excludes them from the rest of the organisation. Social exclusion typically focuses on individuals in society being cut off from certain societal services and/or benefits; however, in a policing context social exclusion is contingent upon emotional disadvantages and personal harms to the officer rather than welfare related benefits. Expectancy Theory posits that a member of an organisation is more likely to behave corruptly if they associate positive rewards for their behaviour or likewise if they associate negative outcomes with not performing the behaviour (Campbell & Göritz, 2014). In this context, an organisation’s member will become corrupt if they believe the punishment for not doing so could lead to social exclusion from the other members of the organisation.

In accordance with the above theoretical framework, although it is still a common occurrence to portray a corrupt member of the organisation as a rotten apple rather than an inherently flawed system, there is research to indicate otherwise (Lobnikar & Meško, 2015). Although perhaps considered less of a theory and more of a phenomena, the rotten apple



approach has an established place in policing literature and police culture. Often explored in a context of corruption or wrongdoing, the rotten apple approach allows an organisation to alleviate blame from themselves and instead target an individual for problems that are generally more indicative of systemic failures; a theory that is closely tied to blame cultures in policing organisations discussed previously. This approach is an “easy” escape route for organisations to continue to ignore problems and accountability. As Punch (2003) has argued, “it is less a matter of bad people and more an issue of bad systems. When that happens it is more appropriate, I would maintain, to speak of ‘rotten orchards’ as a metaphor of wider ‘system failure’” (p. 194). From this it would seem that the entire tree is rotten, and this trickles down to the individual apples produced; in other words, the organisation displays behaviour of misconduct from the top down and members of the organisation are only following suit as that is how they are socialised into the organisation. In fact, Newburn (1999) found that police misconduct is pervasive and not confined to any one rank of officer; he concludes that “police corruption cannot simply be explained as the product of a few ‘bad apples’” (p. vi).

Although problems in an organisation can be attributed to individual employees, Campbell and Goritz (2014) have suggested there is a possibility that organisational culture can affect whether or not an employee is problematic. Jermier et al., (1991) proposed a model of organisational culture comprised of three components: underlying assumptions, values, and norms of behaviour. Accordingly, employees in corrupt organisations see the behaviour as normal because of the culture created (Campbell & Göritz, 2014). It would then stand to reason that if the culture of an organisation creates an atmosphere in which corruption is viewed as normal, if not expected, then employees are more likely to become corrupt themselves. Further, the organisation makes it easier to act corruptly through different mechanisms. Rationalisation allows the employee to create a reasonable argument that what they are doing is acceptable; socialisation creates an environment whereby the employee will be socially ostracised if they do not act corruptly; and institutionalisation creates an overall culture that allows if not encourages corrupt behaviour (Campbell & Göritz, 2014; Punch, 2003). Campbell and Goritz (2014) concluded that both the culture and any sub-cultures in an organisation can help to facilitate corruption through any of the above stated mechanisms.

Though human interaction in organisations make conflict nearly unavoidable, the culture of an organisation can either lessen or enhance the potential for conflict (Gelfand et al., 2012). The long-standing tradition of “the end justifies the means” or “I am upholding the law therefore I am ethical” is something learned from the culture of the organisation (Mills, 2003, p. 331). However, in the changing context of society and its implications for policing, this is no longer valid reasoning and only serves to produce unethical behaviour

among officers. Further, there was a large emphasis found on results, regardless of how they were achieved, by the managers that was then passed on to employees; an end justifies the means mentality (Campbell & Göritz, 2014). Culture is set from the top down; a reasonable conclusion would then be if managers value this behaviour, the employees will begin to value it as well so as to be accepted by the organisation. Accordingly, sergeants have been found to “pass down” aggression by the same means (Ingram et al., 2018). Within this framework, the problematic behaviour exhibited by street level officers have not manifested in their own right, but rather were transferred to them from how the organisation functions as reflective of systemic culture.

Further to this, and in accordance with the social theories, Hale et al. (2013) concluded that officer values and practises do not always align with one another. Seleim and Bontis (2009) hypothesised levels of corruption in relation to both values and practises of certain behaviour, but the anticipated relationship was only supported by the data for the practises. In accordance with Social Identity Theory, these findings further emphasise that although an individual may not personally agree with a custom of an organisation’s culture, they will still adhere to it in order to be accepted by the organisation. Further, the employees who did not behave in this manner still did nothing to attempt making change in the organisation because they felt any attempt would still result in no change (Campbell & Göritz, 2014). The findings fully support the preceding theories and strengthen the argument that organisational culture is a dominating force in employee-organisation relations.

Although Rotten Apple Theory would perhaps suggest that problems are more widespread among officers, a large number of officers do not have to display such behaviour in order for the issues to be systemic. As Harris (2016) has noted, problem officers tend to be the same few officers repeatedly. Even if this behaviour does not manifest outwardly in every single officer, there is still an argument to be made that those who are problematic have learned it from the organisation and it has been re-enforced by the organisation’s culture. The bad apple metaphor implies that removing one officer will solve the entire problem, but if that had merit, cases of police misconduct would be eradicated from every policing organisation in every country by the simple removal of a single officer. Punch (2000) has advanced this argument of systemic issues being the root of the problem,

If we scan these activities then it is plain that we are no longer dealing with individuals seeking solely personal gain (so-called ‘bad apples’) but with group behaviour rooted in established arrangements and/or extreme practices that have to be located within the structure and culture of police work and the police organisation. (p. 304)

Indeed, in the UK, officers would choose to not follow rules in order to secure what they needed to achieve organisational goals (Punch, 2003). In this case, officers were not bending rules, or completely disregarding them, for personal gain, but rather to advance an organisational goal that is reflective of what the culture instils into its members. Yet, it is important to note again that this may be beginning to shift and integrity in the UK is becoming more of a priority for both the organisation and the individual members (Charman, 2017, 2019). It is also important to note that this shift is still seen seldomly, so saying this is indicative of a wider, more expansive cultural shift would be premature here.

How committed an individual is to their organisation is dependent on the organisation's culture (Manetje & Martins, 2009). Perceived levels of misconduct and corrupt practises also contribute to the commitment a member has to the organisation. Overall, members who thought the organisation's values were closely aligned with their own would have a higher organisational commitment than those who did not (English, 2008). English (2008) found support for their hypothesis that officers who found their organisation to be corrupt had lower occupational and organisational commitment; similarly, his data supported that officers who felt their organisation had a high level of ethics had higher occupational and organisational commitment. However, within this relationship, it would be reasonable to conclude that officers more likely to exhibit signs of misconduct would feel a higher level of commitment if they felt their organisation was also acting in this way. Further, job dissatisfaction, positive differential reinforcement, and positive views on misconduct also lead to significantly increased levels of police misconduct (Garduno, 2019).

As will be discussed with organisations' responses to change, organisational culture is often reflective of societal culture. In line with this, Belgian and Dutch policing organisations often do not have many (comparatively) cases of serious police misconduct as this behaviour is not supported in the social culture (Punch, 2000, 2003). However, in instances of police misconduct in the Netherlands, many cases led to early retirement and relocation of supervisors to different departments/locations, and in Belgium, many were never held accountable for their actions when involved in scandal (Punch, 2000, 2003). Within this framework, police misconduct is not actually reprimanded in a meaningful way, but rather the problem is shifted elsewhere and no real progress is made to improve the organisation.

While this section was constructed based on one central theme, blame, it is nonetheless a multi-faceted concept. This considered, each area discussed in this section always came back to blaming others for what was done, and though it was argued that this could be combatted by implanting a learning organisational model, this has not been seen in any large scale throughout the literature. Something goes wrong at either an individual or organisational level and someone else is blamed lest they be the ones to receive the

blame. This is further compounded by the organisation's seeming inability, or perhaps inadvertency, to being accountable for what are wider systemic issues and laying blame onto an individual officer, or rotten apple, which is then coupled with society's demand for accountability that is made more poignant with an individual to focus in on. It was noted that strong leadership could also lessen the effects of a blame culture, but this again has not been observed in any large scale in the literature; rather poor leadership has exacerbated the issue and led to social exclusion when individuals do try to speak up about what has happened. In all, when the blame culture is looked at in isolation, a cyclical pattern can be observed that contributes to the wider trend of police culture being resistant to change, the next area of police organisational culture to be explored.

## Managing Change

Police culture, although the trend is slowly beginning to change itself, has a reputation for resistance to change and continuity over generations. Indeed, it has been noted that "police officers hate change and their environment is always changing" (Kalyal, Huey, Blaskovits, & Bennell, 2018, p. 1). Even if an organisation's culture is cited as the main issue within an organisation, organisations will attempt all other changes before addressing the culture (Johnson et al., 2008). These concepts are indicative of the deep-rooted cultural opposition to change as well as the persistent desire to overlook how vital the culture is in enacting such change.

On the part of the organisation, the culture is thought to not change because the roles of the officer remain almost unchanged from generation to generation (Filstad & Gottschalk, 2011; Loftus, 2010). History and past expectations are a strong determining factor in a culture's continuity (Filstad & Gottschalk, 2011; Loftus, 2010). Further, because of how quickly public perception and opinion can change, and how slowly culture changes within an organisation, police organisational cultures in particular are often inadequate to address current problems and demands the organisation has placed on it (Fry & Berkes, 1983). In Canada, it has been found that departments will abandon change initiatives if they did not produce immediate effects (Kalyal et al., 2018). There is also an added burden of policing organisations needing to keep up with changes that are necessary and specific to policing organisations, but also keeping up with wider societal changes that all organisations are expected to adhere to (Savage & Charman, 1996). This leads to a public perception that policing organisations are resistant to change when in reality it is possible that they are attempting change, they are just not fast enough to keep up with everything the public demands and halt initiatives too quickly.

On the part of the individual officers, the culture is thought to hold constant because of the socialisation that all new members receive during their initial introduction into the

organisation (Van Maanen, 1975); in this way resistance to change is very much built into the culture (Kalyal et al., 2018). Christensen et al. (2018) found that the “process of socialization and path-dependency, informal norms and values dating from the time the organization was established will heavily influence the path followed later on, i.e. the cultural ‘roots’ will be overrepresented in the current organization” (p. 255). Although this was determined from a Norwegian context, the idea of socialisation contributing to continuity in the organisation’s culture is reflective of the other international literature presented.

Socialisation produces social reproduction, the driving factor in what accounts for continuity over time (Giddens & Sutton, 2013). While this theoretical framework is indicative of the resistance to change in policing organisations, it should be noted that it can be applied to how culture more generally is also reproduced. Theoretically, our individual backgrounds influence how we interact with others (Giddens & Sutton, 2013). However, this ideology is in direct conflict with the controlling nature of police culture and speaks to the strength organisational culture has in dominating individuals’ lives. If we as humans are indeed socialised from birth and have no say in how we interact in later life, then the influencing nature of police organisations would seem unrealistic, yet there is a body of literature that supports the very concept (Herbert, 1998; Loftus, 2010; Van Maanen, 1975). Although there are different stages of socialisation, one being the de-socialisation from being a civilian (Charman, 2017), in this research understanding the individual stages are not as important as the overall effect on police culture.

Socialisation, as fitted within Social Learning Theory, has several core components. Although initially contextualised in a criminological framework, the components are relational to organisational culture learning as well. Behaviour is learned, behaviour is learned through interactions and communications with other people, learning happens within intimate groups, and the learned behaviour is relational to the frequency and reinforcement of the behaviour (Akers & Jennings, 2016; Sutherland, 1947). Although these were initially in a deviant and delinquent behaviour context, they are all highly conducive to how learning is done in policing organisations; perhaps the resemblance to deviancy is even indicative of the culture.

Under the framework that socialisation is not deterministic, but rather it requires active participation instead of passive recipients (Charman, 2017), we can then analyse how socialisation fits into police culture. Organisational socialisation is how members learn the required behaviours required of them to “survive” in the organisation; further, early organisational learning is the most influential determinant of later behaviour (Hale et al., 2013; Harris, 2016; Van Maanen, 1975). By the sixth month in the job, Van Maanen (1975) observed that officers had adopted most of the culture in the rest of the department, this adoption was vital in being accepted by the group and overall job satisfaction.

If socialisation was truly deterministic, it would be unlikely that changing behaviour learned and cemented in from birth could happen in such a relatively short amount of time. Further to this, if this framework that social interactions are determined by individual's personal backgrounds is used as a guiding theory, police culture would not be able to be grouped in such a way that is collectivist to the organisation rather than individualistic to each member of the organisation. Indeed, the influential powers the organisation has on individual personality are strong enough to supersede any other personality trait (Loftus, 2010; Van Maanen, 1975). If an officer has a distinct personality type, it would be a result of the inherited organisational culture of the department rather than their own individual characteristics (Jermier & Berkes, 1979). Theoretically, the organisation is a larger determinant in shaping behaviour and ideology than the officer's own personality (Jermier & Berkes, 1979). The dominant nature of the organisation's culture is particularly interesting considering the culture has to overtake already established personal values that are generally formed around the age of 10 (Herbert, 1998).

An additional determining factor of officer personality related to how long they had been in service (Paoline, 2003). Typically the longer an officer has served on the job, the lower their organisational commitment (Charman, 2017). As the older officers would be the ones who train the incoming officers, and therefore also socialise them into the organisation, this lower level of commitment may impact on the new officer. Although official aspects of the job, such as legal rights of power, are learned in the classroom, much of the practical information is learned during the initial socialisation that new members of the organisation undergo. Loftus (2010) found that police officers in England did not feel the official classroom training they received prepared them for the reality of the job. Accordingly, the officers Paoline (2003) interviewed in the US felt that much of the job is learned in the field from more experienced officers; a sentiment Van Maanen (1975) echoed in his own US ethnographic research. The Canadian research also indicates that training is emphasising reactive situations, situations that are not as easily learned in a classroom (Campeau, 2015).

With more specific regard to change in policing organisations, the people who are most necessary to change the culture (the officers/Gardaí) are usually the ones fighting most to keep it (Fry & Berkes, 1983; O'Riordan, 2015). If organisations have any hope for change, they must match their top down initiatives with the culture at the bottom (Fry & Berkes, 1983; O'Riordan, 2015). The disconnect between the top and bottom level members is an influential factor in overall organisational resistance to change (Kalyal et al., 2018). However, "in his reflections on major police reforms in the USA, Bayley (2008) observed that these [organisational changes] are almost always driven by external forces, are top down, and rarely involve consultation with rank and file officers" (Fyfe et al., 2018,

p. 1). This statement of the reality of reform is in direct conflict with what is needed for a reform to be effective.

As a testament to the power lower level officers have in organisational change, even if officers did not agree with a particular long-standing policy, they followed it because it increased the stability and tradition of the job (Jacobs et al., 2008). In Germany, officers resisted change because they viewed having to learn new rules and regulations as a waste of their valued time they felt could be better used in other pursuits (Jacobs et al., 2008). Changes to the organisation were interpreted as an attack on the very institution of policing, and the German officers felt as if their organisation's identity was being threatened under the new reforms (Jacobs et al., 2008); something echoed in O'Riordan's (2015) study of the Irish civil service, of which is an indicator of Irish culture that is then linked to Irish police culture. Further, any resistance to change will increase if it requires more work and the benefits are not immediately obvious (Kalyal et al., 2018).

In traditional organisations, when change is enacted there is always a re-learning phase. Not only does re-learning take longer than initial learning, Coch and French (1983) found that 62% (of employees in their study) quit during the re-learning phase. There are two major implications for these findings in a policing context. First, police officers do not have the time to re-learn – as the saying goes, crime doesn't stop. Second, a large proportion of employees quitting in this phase would be detrimental to a policing organisation as a police officer would not be as readily replaced as an employee in a traditional organisation. As would be the case in policing organisations, if officers do not have the easier (comparative to a traditional organisations) option of quitting, the frustrations that manifested in traditional organisation employees into aggression (Coch & French, 1983) could possibly be transferred to the public in their everyday policing duties. One potential alternative to curtailing these possible outcomes would then be to not change at all, further impacting policing organisations noted resistance to change.

Although there can be resistance to change from both the top and bottom levels of policing organisations, reform is possible; however, it needs to go beyond merely identifying the problem (Conway, 2010; Newburn, 1999). In order for this to happen, in addition to accounting for the organisation, reform must also consider and account for the surrounding environment (Newburn, 1999). How much reform is needed is dependent on how deep rooted the problems are, organisational change could go so far as to include the idea that the only way to reform police culture is to reform society (Punch, 2003; Reiner, 2016). If police culture reflects societal culture (Punch, 2003), then perhaps reforming police culture, both in Ireland as well as internationally, requires a wider cast net that also reforms the cultural values of a country. Ultimately however, how successful reform is can only be judged over time (Punch, 2003). Although traditional police research cannot typically

account for change because it only interviews and/or observes at one point in time (Charman, 2017), the understanding of change over time (a 30 year observation period) is what the current research aims to do.

As a final note, at both an organisational and individual level, changing the culture of an organisation is seen as difficult because, among other reasons, leaders of organisations tend to be promoted up from the bottom ranks (Van Maanen, 1975). Officers who come up from the bottom usually maintain the culture they operated within, it would be seen as hypocritical if an officer who themselves acted in one such way were then trying to reprimand someone for a similar behaviour (Van Maanen, 1975). Similarly, officers in Canada cited officers being chosen for the job not based on merit as an additional hinderance to successful change (Kalyal et al., 2018). With this as a guiding principal, it will be of high interest to see what the appointment of a new Garda Commissioner who was not previously part of the organisation brings about. If there is to be any chance for a positive move forward for the organisation, the culture, and subsequently the Gardaí, must be open and willing to undergo a change to the deeply embedded culture of the organisation and perhaps this is the mechanism for doing so.

When initially observed in the literature, the resistance to change was the most strongly observed characteristic of the culture. However, when further explored whether this response to change was actual resistance or just the inability to keep up with such rapid changes was less clear. This considered, even though the literature has been looked at more closely for this distinction, the answer is still not clear. It was noted that organisations tend to abandon change initiatives rather quickly if results are not immediate, and while we live in a world that craves instant gratification, this is very rarely the outcome and policing organisations are no different in that regard. So, what is observed is hard to distinguish between lack of motivation and lack of support to enact change. Though in a slightly different, though related, context, organisational support is the final theme to be explored as part of an overall police culture in this chapter.

## Organisational Support

As one final facet of police organisational culture, though often less discussed, is the support given to officers and the emotional labour required to do the job. Emotional labour is how an individual modifies their behaviour to fit the display rules that each individual job calls for (Grandey, 2000). The person performing the labour may feel alienated from the particular aspect of themselves that they give to their work, thus creating a distance between themselves and their emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). In its essence, emotional labour requires individuals to create a distance from themselves to act in a way that is expected from them by the organisation (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). If an



employee is committed to their organisation, they will identify with the organisation as an extension of themselves and will have a personal attachment and involvement in the organisation (Manetje & Martins, 2009). Further, individuals will try to achieve and maintain a positive social identity within the group (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). The identification with an organisation in this way is much stronger than the attachments forged by the obligation to remain with the organisation or the possible negative costs associated with leaving the organisation (Manetje & Martins, 2009). Inversely, socially identifying with your organisation increases an individual's commitment and reduces their desire to leave the group, even if the group's status is low (Stets & Burke, 2000).

Drawing on Goffman (1956), officers can at times produce emotions they do not feel, referred to as surface acting, but deep acting can also be employed to produce a more authentic interaction; the difference between the two being the effort required to produce the desired emotion (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Deep acting can lead to a distancing from one's own emotions to the extent that they are no longer able to identify with what they naturally feel or recognise their own or others' emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). To this end, emotional labour is more likely to be associated with higher emotional exhaustion (burnout), but emotional separation from the job is likely to lead to lower satisfaction with the job (Lennie et al., 2019; Morris & Feldman, 1996). Consequently, those that are more likely to identify on a personal level with their role, are the ones most likely to reach a high level of burnout in a shorter amount of time. Additionally, the stronger the association between the person and the job, the more likely they will be emotionally at risk because their personal sense of well-being is associated with the well-being of the job and/or organisation (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993).

Burnout, in particular for police organisations, is something to be avoided. Police officers are highly trained individuals who have to be willing to accept a certain degree of danger in their everyday lives. The risk-taking behaviour and amount of time it takes for training makes officers more difficult to replace in situations of burnout than it would be for a "standard" organisation. This close association police officers have between their personal being and their job leading to more risk is something that needs to be considered in relation to more recent findings from Charman (2017) in that newer officers in the UK are more likely to refer to what they do as a job rather than who they are. However, as of yet, there have not been any identified studies which have looked at this concept and its possible effects.

A study by Pogrebin and Poole (1988) found that police officers will manage their emotions of fear by using humour in difficult or threatening situations. Pogrebin and Poole (1988) also found that when officers have to repress their emotions to traumatic events, it makes them less able to connect and/or empathise with the community they interact with on a regular basis. The long-term effect of emotional labour is both mental and physical;

constantly presenting false emotions creates stress that leads to job dissatisfaction and the steps taken to regulate emotions can produce physiological responses that can cause health problems (Grandey, 2000). In addition, an overall lack of control over a situation, such as in the expectation of an employee's organisation to regulate their emotions, contributes to stress; whereas the support of a supervisor can lower stress and strengthen job satisfaction (Grandey, 2000).

Stemming from the emotional labour necessary to do the job is the care taken to address mental health concerns. Although how officers are able to access mental health services and the effects therein is an important subject in policing research, how the organisation chooses to facilitate (or not) providing support to their officers is indicative of the wider police culture. There are very few studies done on counselling of police officers necessitated by non-clinical disorders, which speaks to the very nature of police culture. Police culture creates an environment where asking for help is seen as a weakness, in turn causing them to avoid dealing with stressful actions which then causes more stress (He et al., 2002; Kingshott et al., 2004; Lennie et al., 2019). Wheeler et al. (2018) has noted that the connection between officers not reaching out for help because of the stigma attached to seeking help may start as early as the initial training.

Officers may experience a traumatising event but will not seek help because of the perceived stigmatisation from the organisation, fellow officers, and the public (Wheeler et al., 2018). Wheeler et al.'s (2018) study further showed that members of the public did stigmatise officers who sought mental health counselling; making the connection between perceived and actual mental health stigmatisation among police officers. There is a possibility that instituting policies of mandatory counselling after triggering events could alleviate such stigmatisations, but little research has been done in this area. Indeed, according to Gersons et al. (2000), policing is seen as one of the most stressful jobs, but very often the only time a study can be conducted on a such a topic is if the problem has become so severe it is medically diagnosed (i.e. PTSD). Further, it has been posited that the only way to institute a major shift in the stigmatisation around seeking help is by an overall change in police culture (Cohen et al., 2019); and as has been discussed previously, changing police culture can be quite difficult.

Generally, major sources of police stress identified by He et al. (2002) were stress from the work environment, availability of peer support and trust, social/family influence, bureaucratic characteristics of the organisation, and accessibility of coping mechanisms. Further to this, there is support to show that suppressing emotions caused by these triggers for police stress lead to a higher level of burnout (Lennie et al., 2019). In specific reference to non-work related stressors, work culture related support was particularly important for officers to continue performing their jobs well (Biggs et al., 2014). In the absence of

professional help, typically, the most socially acceptable response to trauma for officers is through the use of humour (Charman, 2017). The use of humour instils confidence in both the public and their work peers that they are capable of performing the job and is in line with how the culture projects the “right” way to handle stress and trauma. Generally, there is a disconnect in policing organisations between what has been shown to support officers’ well-being and what policies are in place to facilitate such help and this has an overall negative impact on officers.

## Conclusion

This chapter has given an oversight of the various theories that can be applied to policing organisations and the overall concept of police culture as indicated by the international literature. The theories presented in this chapter were applied in an integrated way to the concepts that make up what police culture is, but ultimately will be used to analyse how the Garda have transmitted their own culture over time. Although this research cannot assert to have made a new theoretical contribution to the wider field of policing research, there is novelty in their application to the field of Irish policing. There is also an additional contribution in their use in conjunction with each other as well as a bridge in the gap between traditional organisational culture theory and police organisational culture theory. This considered, it is still important to outline how various theoretical models can, and have, impacted the way in which knowledge in the area is constructed.

It was stated in the introduction of this chapter that the general characteristics of police culture internationally include: masculinity, discrimination, exclusion, suspicion, isolation, solidarity/loyalty, moral and political conservatism, pragmatism, cynicism, aggression, negative views of supervision, selective enforcement of the law, and a prioritisation of the crime fighter role over service oriented role (Bittner, 1970; Brown, 2000; Charman, 2017, 2019; Demirkol & Nalla, 2019; Goldsmith, 1990; Ingram et al., 2018; Manning, 1977; Miller, 2019; Punch, 1985; Reiner, 1992; Reuss-Ianni, 1983; Rubinstein, 1973; Skolnick, 1966; Van Maanen, 1975; Waddington, 1999; Westley, 1970; Worden, 1995); and these characteristics have been presented in the themes of policing styles, the culture vs. sub-culture paradigm, loyalty and solidarity, blame culture, managing change, and organisational support in this chapter. Further, these themed groupings have been explored in relation to the theories presented to provide an understanding of how this culture is created and transmitted to organisational members.

It is also important to reflect on where this culture stems from. Throughout this chapter, the importance of the bottom ranks has been emphasised. It has been noted that in order to enact change, this must be accepted by the bottom ranks; further, it was also discussed that the perpetuation of an organisation’s culture can be seen in the promotions

process (i.e. those from the bottom are promoted upward and are therefore more likely to keep the culture in which they operated under). This considered, it is necessary to reflect on where an organisation's culture stems from. However, this is not as simple as choosing either the top or the bottom of the organisation and I would propose is much akin to the old adage of "what comes first, the chicken or the egg?" Rather than an organisation's culture stemming from one particular area, I would suggest it is a cycle – it is hard to determine where something begins or ends, but rather all sides are necessary to make it what it is. In terms of change, and in deference to the literature discussed in this chapter, the bottom ranks have to be willing to accept and enact change in order for it to be successful. However, in order for change to be implemented or resourced so it is even possible, the top ranks also have to give support for it. Again, rather than a linear model of creating police culture there needs to be a reinterpretation of a cyclical model that perpetuates the culture. Of course this culture had to begin somewhere, but when looking back to the chicken and egg metaphor, where did the first chicken and egg come from?

While the concepts presented in this chapter will be explored further in relation to the Irish characteristics of police organisational culture in the final chapter, a brief overview of how the two (Irish and International) compare will be discussed here. Although there are similarities between and among certain policing organisations outside of Ireland, grasping the differences is key in understanding Garda culture. The solidarity among Gardaí is strikingly similar to other nations, indeed, "there was a sense of identification with fellow police officers that was almost always stronger" (Brady, 2014, p. 204). Yet as will be discussed more in depth in the next chapters, In Ireland, this sense of solidarity has dissipated since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Now, where loyalty and solidarity are highly valued in international organisations, the Garda value self-preservation over loyalty. Understanding change is an underlying component police culture, this willingness to change being something other policing organisations are not known for, nevertheless seems to be present in the Garda as understood from the research conducted thus far.

As a further area of divergence, particularly in the US where police aggression is a common occurrence, the Garda of present has been found to take a relatively lackadaisical approach to any physically aggressive policing; this being partially influenced by their official commitment to a community policing style where other international organisations have taken a more militaristic approach. Conversely, the Irish and international policing landscapes seem to converge in the areas of organisational support, or lack thereof. Interestingly, the presence of a blame culture is both the same and different in Ireland as compared to international organisations. Although there is a presence of blame being devolved down to an individual level, there is also a noted trend in the Garda of not

recognising wrongdoing at all within the organisation, but rather choosing to place blame on the victim.

Although there is an established body of literature internationally in these areas, creating a comparative analysis at this stage of the presence of subcultures, how the organisation manages change, and misconduct is not possible because there is simply no substantial frame of reference in Ireland from which to do so. According to Campeau (2015), the best time to observe culture is during times of unsettlement, and that is the very social climate the Garda have found themselves in during the 30 year observation period. Therefore, this research aims to not only add to the current body of literature, but also fill those gaps in which there is currently no data, or conflicting data from few studies. This research will analyse the implementation of recommendations and changes, not just the acceptance of them. In so doing, this research will provide a more complete picture of what police organisational culture is in the Garda.

This chapter was constructed with both an empirical and theoretical lens. Understanding what police culture typically encompasses lacks a depth if not paired with a theoretical understanding of how this behaviour and culture has formed and further been transmitted over time. The theories used provided a deeper understanding of how, and why, certain aspects of police culture have continued to be part of the culture even after they have been recognised as negative or hindering positive change. This reckoning, in part, has laid the groundwork for understanding how the facets of Irish police culture have endured for so long, and ultimately, will serve to bridge the gap between Irish and international police culture. However, before moving to the next part of the larger story constructed in this thesis, we must first look at the methodology behind how the data for the story was analysed.

## Chapter 4 Methodology

### Introduction

As discussed in chapter one, research on Garda organisational culture is limited, and this is in part because of methodological limitations. It is because of this that more innovative, out of the box, thinking in relation to methodological decisions had to be made. The methodology chosen for this research was a journey of learning, experience, and mostly, adaptation. As is expected with qualitative research, rather than a hypothesis, there are research questions that I want to answer. Beyond this, Wetherell, Taylor, and Yates (2001) have suggested starting with a social problem rather than a research question. As reflected on in the introductory chapter, this research stemmed from social observation, from this came the social problem, and thus the research presented in this thesis.

The central research question developed from this social issue, but upon a review of existing literature, the basics of the organisation's culture were not yet determined. Thus, it was necessary to take a step back from the initial research aims and focus on an understanding of what the organisation's culture is. From here, the research question became its current form: To what extent can the organisation's culture(s) be identified in An Garda Síochána through an exploration of recent tribunals/reports of inquiry and how do these organisational features affect their policing practices? Due to the chosen methodology and its 30 year time span, it was also possible to see how the organisation manages change over time, and moreover, how the organisation has continued to function for as long as it has without any critical failures.

In relation to determining research based on wider social problems, Wetherell et al. (2001) further questioned whether those who benefit from the current social situation have an interest in the problem not being solved (Wetherell et al., 2001) and thus perpetuated. In reference to the Garda, how those in the organisation who benefit from the current culture, and related social issues, and how this relates to the culture continuing to be the way it is, is something to consider further. Scotland (2012, p. 14) proposed that "critical research has an agenda of change"; accordingly, so does the research approach necessitated for these research questions.

Although the reasoning and process will be outlined in detail later in this chapter, studying documents was chosen because it has the ability to answer the research questions in a unique way that has not yet been done on this topic in Ireland and in a limited context

internationally<sup>30</sup> (Baylis & Matczak, 2019; Christensen et al., 2018). Analysing texts is becoming an increasingly popular method of research in the social sciences, in part because access to such documents has become much easier than it would have been previously (Goodwin, 2012; Wetherell et al., 2001); however, this methodology has not yet become quite as common in criminology. More specifically, document analysis in and of itself is not an often employed, nor identified, methodology in policing research, in particular in the area of police organisational culture. Often, when documents are used in the analysis of a research question in the area of police culture, they are utilised only in conjunction with other qualitative methodologies. This is not any less valid of a use, but just further demonstrates that document analysis is not yet a valued methodology for what it may contribute on its own in this area of research. There are an abundance of documents released for public consumption that are not being utilised to their full potential, if at all.

The definitions used in the data may not be the same in every piece of similar research (Vartanian, 2011). Because of this, defining how I have come to use such terms and the processes therein are paramount, and defining and explaining how I have come to use specific frameworks is a major focus in this chapter. Discourse analysis and thematic analysis, the chosen methodology and method, are two such concepts that are heavily shrouded in confusion but should be less so with the extensive guidelines. As for the data used, the documents were chosen because they are relevant and important to the research being conducted, a defining factor of what establishes the sources used as being data (Wetherell et al., 2001). Both the ways in which I have defined the methods used and why the particular documents were chosen will be discussed in this chapter.

Further to the above mentioned specificities, this chapter outlines the other methodologies considered before outlining in depth the methodology used for this research. Each section gives thoughtful consideration to why specific decisions were made as opposed to others and how these decisions work to fulfil the ultimate goal of answering the research questions. Further, in addition to the overarching paradigm adapted for this research being discussed, more specifically, how I as the researcher fit into the research is also examined. Following this, a detailed process of how the research was conducted is

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<sup>30</sup> Interestingly, although not a widely identified methodology in research conducted and/or distributed in English, the two examples provided were not based on research produced from English-speaking countries. Perhaps, there is more research utilising document analysis on police organisational culture, but it has not yet penetrated the English-speaking field of research and has therefore been left “undiscovered” by English-speaking researchers.

presented<sup>31</sup>. Document analysis was chosen because it was best suited for this project, both for successfully answering the research questions and significantly contributing to knowledge in the field. However, all of the above considered, it is important to understand that these decisions were not made in isolation, and there were several other options considered before making a conscious decision on which methodology would be the best suited to answer the research questions. Those considerations are presented below.

## Other Methods Considered

Although quantitative measures were contemplated, they were never considered feasible for achieving what this research sets out to do or answer the questions asked. Quantitative methods find significance in numbers; valuing broad data that has the ability to identify relationships, but with a restricted ability to address context or outside meaning, so understanding the meaning of these relationships is limited (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). As was established in chapter two, and will continue to be seen in the following chapters, understanding the social and historic context of the Garda is necessary to understand the organisation's culture. There are also limited, if not non-existent, quantitative data sets from which to draw from. Though there are public satisfaction surveys<sup>32</sup>, they are unable to answer the research questions set out as they assess public perception and satisfaction, not organisational culture.

Additionally, as has been set out in the previous chapters, defining organisational culture and the specific terms related to it is difficult because of how abstract the concepts can be. If the approach of administering quantitative surveys to Gardaí was chosen, there is no possibility to clarify the participants know what each term means to the research or to each other, thus there is potential that what is actually being measured will not be consistent. The lack of context and consistency limits the wider understanding of what Garda organisational culture is, and it is because of this quantitative methods were ultimately ruled out.

In the future, I believe quantitative methodologies could be utilised successfully when researching organisational culture within the Garda, but at the stage the research is at regarding the organisation and the culture therein, there needs to be a more thorough understanding of what the culture is and why the culture is the way it is before quantity can

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<sup>31</sup> Ethical approval was granted by Trinity College Dublin on 07/06/2018. Analysing documents that have been published for public consumption does not require any anonymisation of data beyond any that may have already been undertaken for the original research in the case of secondary data used. No photographs or audio/video recordings were obtained for this research, nor were there any associated risks for the researcher in obtaining the data.

<sup>32</sup> The Garda Public Attitudes Survey is done quarterly based on a sample of 1,500 people.



be used to strengthen any argument to be made. It is difficult to delve into connections with numbers if context and meaning for those connections are not made clear. More generally, with the view that knowledge and reality are reflexive (Pouliot, 2007), qualitative research was chosen because it can contribute to an understanding of the complex nature of knowledge and what is considered “true” in a way quantitative approaches cannot. Now that the reasoning for why what was not chosen has been set out, I am more able to fully justify the qualitatively-driven choices I did make.

## The Critical-Constructivist Approach

Guba and Lincoln (1994) have approached paradigms as basic belief systems, and as such, there is no way to prove the beliefs are true. With this in mind, of the paradigms that assert there is no one truth, there were two chosen for this thesis: critical and constructivist. Although Guba and Lincoln (1994) have argued that these two theoretical research perspectives are contradictory, I would propose otherwise. Guba and Lincoln (1994) have asserted that constructivists operate under the assumption that there is a “real” reality. However, if reality is socially constructed, then there is only a “real” reality for the researcher given their ontological position. Comparatively, researchers in the critical framework do not give an objective truth, rather they give their own interpretation of reality that is ultimately only part of the answer (Wetherell et al., 2001). Claiming that there is in fact one, single truth takes agency away from individuals, and therefore, claiming complete objectivity is just not possible (Wetherell et al., 2001). Within this paradigm there are multiple constructions of reality and therefore constructivist research is subjective by nature (Lee, 2012). Ultimately, “knowledge obtained by research is partial, situated and relative” (Wetherell et al., 2001, p. 12).

Similarly, constructivism is built on the premise that reality is socially constructed (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The basic aim of inquiry in constructivism is to understand (Guba & Lincoln, 1994); and so too is the aim of the research presented in this thesis. Further, constructivism emphasises that knowledge and understanding are highly social (Fosnot & Perry, 1996; Packer & Goicoechea, 2000; Perkins, 1999); this basic tenet is connected to the assumptions of how people learn in Social Learning Theory, further grounding itself in this research. Generally, constructivism should be inductive, interpretive, and historical (Pouliot, 2007). Similarly, critical methods also examine realities from a cultural and historical lens and should acknowledge context (Scotland, 2012). As demonstrated in chapter two, the historical context of the Garda is necessary to build on the understanding of the current organisation, which is why these paradigms were chosen.

Ontological positions question the nature of reality and what can really be known about it (Carter & Little, 2007; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Scotland, 2012). The researcher is

not objective, but immersed in the material and must negotiate their own world view with the data (Wetherell et al., 2001). The world can only be talked about in a way that is uniquely shaped by the researcher's values and knowledge of it; therefore, the "truth" given is the truth according to the researcher (Ratner, 2002), and this is not inherently problematic so long as it is supported by the data. So, even though what is presented in this thesis may not be perceived as "real" by others, the goal was to understand the socially constructed truth as supported by the data.

With the ontological suppositions that reality is socially constructed and under constant internal influence resulting in change that is shaped over time (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Pouliot, 2007; Scotland, 2012), it was necessary to set up this research with the ability to evaluate change over time, and this was done by the use of documents over a 30 year period. Both ontological positions are reliant on pre-established values, either historical or experience (which is in essence also historical as you must look retrospectively to have experience) based and consider reality to be socially constructed. The defining perspective of both paradigms is that people construct meaning based on their prior experience and world view meaning that reality is constructed and depends on society and human interpretation (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Mogashoa, 2014), and this is carried through to how I have constructed the view presented by the data.

Often criticised in qualitative research is the concept of objectivity and reliability. However, I firmly believe the ability to be both subjective and identify yourself, as the researcher, in your data in qualitative research is a strengthening factor. In particular for qualitative research, denying that the researcher has in some way, no matter how small, influenced the research is futile; it would be nearly impossible to claim such a statement. As long as the subjectivity is accounted for, controlled, and a strict methodological process is followed, the research is still meaningful. As such, exact replicability is not a priority in this research, but extensive guidelines for methodology will be outlined so the process for collection and analysis of the data could be replicated.

While the ontological positions have been clarified, it is also important to understand the epistemological position taken for the purpose of this thesis. However, it is important to note that although the researcher's ontological position affects their epistemological position, it does not necessarily determine it (Bates & Jenkins, 2007). Further, the epistemological position modifies the methodology used and justifies and evaluates the knowledge obtained (Carter & Little, 2007). Constructivists assert that knowledge is socially constructed (Pouliot, 2007). Accordingly, epistemology in the critical paradigm operates under the premise that "knowledge is both socially constructed and influenced by power relations from within society" (Scotland, 2012, p. 13). This relates to police organisations and the Garda specifically in several ways. The basic premises of the social theories

presented in chapter three involve a socialised process of learning how to become someone who will fit into the organisation. Further, this is also influenced by the power dynamics present within the organisation and between the organisation and society, as will be discussed further in depth in the following chapters.

## Methodology

Methodology provides the strategy for making decisions (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Scotland, 2012). It justifies, guides, and evaluates the method chosen (Carter & Little, 2007) and it determines how the researcher can find out about what they believe can be known (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Broadly, there was value placed in qualitative methodologies due to the emphasis on words as a data source that leads to a rich data pool, albeit a smaller data pool (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Further, rather than merely identifying relationships, qualitative methodologies seek to understand what causes relationships and emphasises that there is no single answer to be found (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Perhaps most importantly for research on the Garda is the importance placed on context and the acknowledgement of the differences found in the data as meaningful rather than as a statistical variance that determines significance (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). From this, it is possible to analyse certain data that is unique in its own right, but relevant to a wider context (Wetherell et al., 2001). Braun and Clarke (2013) refer to the term saliency analysis meaning that something in the data can be important without appearing very frequently. As such, the underlying principles in content analysis, of which was an initial consideration for the method of analysis, of measuring the pervasiveness of a term in the text would undermine this concept (Kothari, 2004). Accordingly, Kothari (2004) states that the amount a particular concept appears does not inherently mean it is significant while other, less frequent concepts are not; something that does not align with quantitative approaches. Though explored more later in this chapter, the importance of saliency analysis is why thematic analysis was chosen as the method to analyse the documents for this research.

Although certain ontological and epistemological frameworks can influence the methodology, it is important to evaluate whether the chosen methodology will ultimately help you achieve what you want to get from any research question. This evaluation of methodological options, in relation to quantitative measures, is what was presented at the beginning of this chapter. What follows are the reasonings for specific choices made within the qualitative paradigm.

While a qualitative methodology was chosen, there were several different approaches considered. Though the chosen methodology, document analysis, will be discussed in depth later in this chapter, it is important to understand why it was chosen as

opposed to other, more prominent, qualitative methodologies. As discussed in the first chapter, I have cited the research done on the Garda from my MSc. This study consisted of qualitative semi-structured interviews of current and former Gardaí in the Leinster region. Because of this experience, initial considerations were given to qualitative interviewing because of the ability to probe further on key points of information. In addition to interviews, focus groups and ethnographic research were considered as potentially viable methodological approaches. However, there were potential characteristics of these methodologies that could have hindered the overall success of the research. One such limit specific to policing research under more traditional qualitative approaches is the inability to evaluate change over time as most research into police culture is static and limited to one time period (Charman, 2017). Other concerns under these frameworks were the highly subjective nature of the answers leading to a skewed data set, pressure from the organisation to be viewed favourably, ethical, and accessibility considerations.

Although qualitative methodologies do value subjectivity in the research (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lee, 2012; Ratner, 2002; Wetherell et al., 2001), there is an extent of subjectivity that can be acknowledged before it can impact the quality of the research. Beyond this, difficulty gaining general access to the organisation and its members, as well as issues related to this, have been documented in the previous studies on the Garda. Most notably, O'Brien-Olinger (2016), the first and only researcher to conduct a modern ethnographic account of the Garda, cited difficulties around a resistance to obtaining access to the Gardaí as well as an overall lack of procedures in place for any outside research. Perhaps more importantly, O'Brien-Olinger (2016) noted an underlying pressure put on him to show the Gardaí favourably. Further, in the studies conducted involving members of the organisation, very often the participants were given to them by higher members within the organisation. This can then lead to questions about the validity and generalisability of the sample; something acknowledged by O'Brien-Olinger (2016) in his own research.

Further to the above concerns, it has been noted that gaining access to current members of the organisation in a research related capacity is very difficult (Conway, 2014; Williams, 2016). Williams (2016), who conducted interviews with serving Gardaí, detailed his recruitment procedure, stating that in the same day he submitted his paperwork and was granted access. Both circumstances indicate that although the researcher was not a member of the organisation, he had access in some capacity to it. In recent proceedings of the Charleton Tribunal, an established working relationship between Williams and the then serving commissioner Nóirín O'Sullivan was documented; this is a potential explanation for the ease of access he obtained. I have previously submitted a request to the Garda Research Unit and the initial reply took longer than one day. Further, it was accompanied

with several forms that needed to be filled out before any approval could be considered and/or reviewed or granted. Additionally, Corcoran's (2012) thesis references documents in relation to the organisation's culture from the Garda Research Unit, documents that were not released to this researcher. The examples presented serve to show that access to the organisation, particularly if you are an outsider, is challenging.

Further to this, during procedures for ethical approval during my MSc research on the Garda, the ethics committee granted approval on the basis that the questions asked would not be "controversial". Controversy, in addition to being a rather subjective term, often works its way into this type of research, and this seemingly arbitrary ethical limitation potentially hindering depth in the research was not considered conducive. Further, it is a standard courtesy that ethical approval be granted by the Garda itself if participants were to be acquired through the organisation which could lead to further limitations discussed previously.

The ethics approval process, for both governing bodies (Trinity College Dublin's School of Social Work and Social Policy and An Garda Síochána), delays in initial access to participants, and re-negotiating access once obtained on site, a difficulty faced by O'Brien-Olinger (2016), all were cited for a potential risks to overall completion of the research proposed. Though difficulty getting initial ethical approval, gaining access, managing gatekeepers, and added time constraints are a natural, if not expected, consideration particularly in this type of research, the outside pressure to show the Gardaí favourably was a serious concern, as it is unethical to not report the findings as they are deemed true by the data. For this reason, above all, working directly with the Garda was determined ill-suited for the research goals. Ultimately, document analysis was chosen for what it could contribute that the aforementioned approaches could not; an ability to observe change over time, limited external control and/or biases influencing the presentation of the findings, additional contextual data from the documents, immediate access to the data, and controlled external ethical interferences.

An added benefit of this methodology was the ability to construct a story with the findings. From inception into the organisation through to what happens when things go wrong, the story presented in the following findings chapters is both comprehensive in the journey from beginning to end as well as comprehensive in representativeness. While this constructed narrative could have been built around more traditional qualitative approaches, document analysis provided a unique lens for the story that was constructed. Rather than following one recruit, or potentially several recruits, from the beginning stages of training through their careers in the organisation, choosing document analysis allowed me to follow the general path of Gardaí through the organisation as viewed over a 30 year period, thus

covering many recruits and careers over many years rather than a limited number within a narrow scope of time.

When collecting the data necessary to construct the story, there are four possible observation methods: person centred, instrument centred, treatment centred, and document centred (Goodwin, 2012), I have chosen the document centred approach, but within the documents themselves there is also a person centred approach. When looking more specifically at document analysis, this methodology can be daunting to take on for researchers because there is no agreed upon definition of how to study discourse within documents (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000). To this end, I have used documents and discourse interchangeably because to study documents is inherently studying discourse.

Further, the general lack of explicit techniques of how “to do” discourse analysis has been cited as a disadvantage (Mogashoa, 2014). Simply stating that you are doing this method does not imply clarity, as there are many different types of discourse analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Braun and Clarke (2013) further stated the importance of defining how a researcher is using and implementing discourse analysis because of how ambiguous it can be. However, I have taken this ambiguity as an advantage rather than a challenge. Drawing on literature about discourse analysis, I am able to use broad interpretations to define how I have used discourse analysis in a way that will help me best achieve the research goals and answer my research questions. The importance here is emphasised in defining my own method.

While documents are what serve as the data, the ability to analyse is through the discourse present. As such, discourse analysis views language as productive rather than reflective; meaning is created from the text (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Wetherell et al., 2001). Discourse analysis is the study of language in use and searches for patterns through the way things are talked about and/or the use of language (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Wetherell et al., 2001). Discourse analysis is not primarily interested in why things happen, but rather how social processes influence the outcomes, and this is analysed by how language use is related to social situations (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Wetherell et al., 2001). Further, language can be used as a resource to study something else; it can create categories of distinction between us and them (Wetherell et al., 2001). Indeed, “the meaning we produce through language is treated as ‘real’ and as the end-point of explanation” (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 188). For this research, how the culture of the Garda is talked about is important in not just what the culture of the organisation is, but how members and other individuals have come to understand the culture because it is their understanding that is socialised into new members and what manifests into the observed behaviours.

There are five core traditions in discourse research: conversation analysis, sociolinguistics, discursive psychology, critical discourse analysis, and Foucauldian

analysis (Wetherell et al., 2001); of the five, two can be implemented in the type of documents used for this analysis. Foucauldian discourse analysis asserts that texts are infused with power and knowledge, and although this is by no means considered untrue in this research, critical discourse analysis was chosen as a better fit because it attempts to understand the pressing social issues by critically analysing written texts (Mogashoa, 2014). Wetherell et al. (2001) claim the aim of the analyst following critical discourse analysis is to

Identify patterns of language and related practices and to show how these constitute aspects of society and the people within it. Ultimately such an analysis draws attention to the social nature and historical origins of the world 'out there' which is generally taken for granted. Controversy<sup>33</sup> is basic to this form of discourse analysis because it involves the study of power and resistance, contests and struggles. (p. 9)

Although critical discourse analysis aims to critically interrogate the data, the analysis should be confined to the discourse present rather than who produced the documents (Wetherell et al., 2001). The researcher should not analyse the meanings or beliefs of the writers, should not see through the words, and should not attempt to uncover attitudes or beliefs the writers may have (Wetherell et al., 2001). The authors of the documents were never considered in relation to what the documents, and the data therein, mean when evaluating and understanding what the Garda culture is. Further, the authors beliefs and/or attitudes toward the organisation were not evaluated in relation to the discourse present in the documents when analysing what the data indicated was the culture of the organisation. The sole exception being of the authors' use of the term "force" when referencing the organisation; however, this exception is not evaluating the authors' attitudes and/or beliefs, but rather choice of discourse of which will be explored in the following chapters.

## Method

While methodology is the strategy used, methods are the specific techniques used to actually obtain the data (Scotland, 2012). As an important distinguishing factor, thematic analysis only provides a method for data analysis and nothing else; it is not a methodology (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Because its strict adherence to solely being a method and the lack of theoretical assumptions associated with it, thematic analysis is very flexible and can be

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<sup>33</sup> As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the methodological choice was made in part because of the limitations placed on this research which can often be inherently controversial.

used in a variety of methodological and analytical frameworks (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Moira Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

Broadly, “thematic analysis is a search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon” and they are a “form of pattern recognition within the data, where themes become categories for analysis” (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006, p. 3-4). The predominant analytic activity under thematic analysis is interpretation (Wetherell et al., 2001) and the coding associated with thematic analysis (of which will be described in detail in the next section of this chapter), as well as discourse analysis, thoroughly familiarises the researcher with the data and as such, is an essential part of thematic analysis (Mogashoa, 2014; Saldaña, 2013). This in depth familiarisation allows the researcher to identify meaningful themes and/or patterns in a body of data that may otherwise be overlooked by a casual reader (Mogashoa, 2014). This rigorous process distinguishes thematic analysis as a method for the research rather than an alternative process for simply reading a document. Similar to discourse analysis, there is no clear agreement on what thematic analysis is, as such thematic analysis as a method is not often explicitly stated, but rather grouped under qualitative analysis or content analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

## Documents

The documents chosen were done so selectively according to criteria set out prior to the research being conducted. The data contained in the documents were sought to a specific end, and in order for a particular document to be included for analysis, it needed to fulfil these criteria. Not every document that contains some aspect of understanding the organisation’s culture was included, nor was every document initially identified and read for this research used<sup>34</sup>. However, saturation was met in the documents that were ultimately used as data in this research. The documents used in this research<sup>35</sup> were selected because they contain the data necessary to understand the Garda’s culture. The documents contain thousands of pages of data and were selected primarily for their content and potential insight into the organisation’s culture and span a 30-year range (1989<sup>36</sup>-2019).

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<sup>34</sup> For example, there were several documents (i.e. Inspectorate Reports, Ministerial Reports, Garda Audits, etc.) that were read and not used. Two such were the *Report of the steering group on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Garda Síochána* (1997) and the Guerin Report. Neither were used because they did not fulfil the inclusion criteria set out below.

<sup>35</sup> Morris Tribunal (1996); Smithwick Tribunal (1989); Charleton Tribunal (2000s-2018+); Modernisation and Renewal Program 2016-2021; Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland Report (2018); Cultural Audit of An Garda Síochána (2018); Report of the Garda Síochána Inspectorate: Changing Policing in Ireland (2015); Report of the Commission of Investigation (Dean Lyons Case) (1997).

<sup>36</sup> The year 1989 was chosen as the outer time limit because of a change in legislation following Garda malpractice in relation to use of force.



Additionally, the members included in the documents analysed ranged from street level Gardaí to upper management and included members from various locations/districts throughout the country allowing for a wide array of viewpoints to be included in the analysis. In order for the documents to be included, they must firstly speak to the characteristics that make up an organisation's culture. Therein, they must include insight into how the organisation operates, how members behave, and patterns that make up this behaviour. They must have, in some way, interacted with the organisation and its members, or more plainly, gone beyond just a theoretical appraisal of the organisation and what could be improved. In policy terms, the recommendations must be evidence based and thus, based on some interaction with the Garda and the Gardaí.

For example, the Guerin Report, which investigated Garda claims of misconduct, was read but not used because its remit focused more on an inquiry with GSOC rather than a robust dialogue with Gardaí nor was it within the Report's remit to make determinations, rather only recommend further inquiry. In this way, the inclusion criteria was not satisfied because of the lack of dialogue with the Gardaí that limited an observation of Garda conduct/practice. These limitations were much the same for why other documents (i.e. the *Report of the steering group on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Garda Síochána* (1997)) that fit the timeframe of the observation period, but ultimately were not used for data analysis. However, considering the importance of particular documents, just because the actual document was not used does not mean it did not have an impact on the data. With reference to the Guerin Report, many of the findings and determinations from this report were also discussed, and thus analysed, within the documents that were used, in this case the Charleton Tribunal.

Initially, the tribunal reports formed the basis for which documents would form the data used in this research. From this, other documents were identified, though as mentioned not all were ultimately used, if they fit the inclusion criteria. In this way, document selection is much akin to inclusion criteria used for participants in other qualitative research methods. Also similar in this manner is the reliance on others to tell the truth. Much as in relying on individuals being interviewed or being participating in survey data being honest in their responses, so too must you have trust in those who conducted the research and input for the documents used in document analysis. However, this considered, the theoretical paradigm also explicitly states that the findings from this research are based on a socially constructed viewpoint. What is found in this thesis is based on an interpretation of the data used; it may not necessarily be the objective truth as found in the positivist paradigm, but it is the truth according to the data and can be supported, and thus, is valid.

In total, there were eight documents relied upon for data analysis. These eight documents varied in their research approach and were created for differing reasons;

however, they all fit the inclusion criteria and in this way they shared similar characteristics. Culture, as already outlined in the first chapters of this thesis, is a difficult concept to define concretely, but understanding is based most importantly on observation. Having these eight documents that have investigated different occurrences in different ways, yet nonetheless provide clear documentation of observed Gardaí behaviour, gives a robust point of view from which to observe the culture of the Garda. It is for this reason that the documents varying so widely among each other is not a concern to the overall cohesive analysis of the organisation's culture. Though the eight documents used for data analysis were all publicly available, there were considerations given to other documents and/or sources<sup>37</sup>.

The organisation itself was initially contacted to gain access to documents that have previously been on display in the Garda Museum (but have since been removed after a relocation to a smaller building). However, from this stemmed a requirement, on the part of the organisation, to obtain ethical approval before they would even begin to discuss if such documents were available<sup>38</sup>. After this process was completed, the organisation then asked what documents I was looking for yet would not provide a list of what documents were available and thus I was unable to give an indication of what was sought after without first knowing what was specifically available. Because of this, a general description of the research area was given and one document was provided; however, this particular document, the Ionann Report, had already been obtained prior to this exchange as it was publicly available, and further, already considered not relevant to the research question as it was a human rights audit and not relevant to the organisation's culture in a way that satisfied the inclusion criteria. There was one further document stated as relevant by the organisation but was not made available for release. Thus, no documents were provided directly from the organisation. There is space to argue that the organisation being made largely inaccessible and non-transparent speaks to the culture of the organisation.

## Process

Though they will be outlined in more detail below, the general steps of analysis in this research give a summary of the data, explain the findings and conclusions, and justify them through a constructed argument with a repetitive movement between theory and empirical data. Though both discourse and thematic analysis are very similar in process, there was one specific technique in discourse analysis that was not used. Selective coding, used in discourse analysis, pulls out instances of information that are looked for in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In so doing, there is a faster, more narrowed approach to analysis, but

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<sup>37</sup> Other avenues considered were the Garda Museum and the National Archives of Ireland, but neither returned any usable data.

<sup>38</sup> This ethical approval process was insisted on even though the documents were publicly available at one time and the other documents being utilised were still publicly available.

there is also a risk of missing significant information in the text when done this way. It is for this reason this technique was not used while analysing the data.

As previously stated, discourse analysis and thematic analysis pair well together and both contain similar steps in an overall process; it is because of this similarity that only the process for thematic analysis is outlined below. One of the benefits of thematic analysis is its flexibility, but because of this it is especially important that the analytic process is defined and consistent throughout (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis consists of a seven step process (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013):

1. Transcription (if taken from audio)
2. Reading and familiarisation
3. Generate initial codes
4. Searching for themes
5. Reviewing themes
6. Defining and naming themes
7. Writing up

### *Reading and Familiarisation*

For the research in this thesis, the first step in the process is unnecessary as there are no audio files to be transcribed before coding can begin. Continuing into the second step, reading and familiarisation of the data are essential in beginning the analytic process. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), becoming familiar with the data allows the researcher to understand what story the data could tell and generate potential themes that could tell that story. It is important to note that ideas and concepts should not be pre-determined before the initial reading of the data; these should be developed after becoming familiar with the data in what is referred to as “open coding” (Moir Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

Maguire and Delahunt (2017) have asserted that familiarity with all of the data before beginning any initial analysis is necessary; however, for the purpose of this thesis, each document was read and coded (steps two and three) individually before all concepts were evaluated and aggregated to create themes across the data set. Reading each document in full before generating any codes would have unnecessarily exacerbated the timeline of the research. However, more importantly, choosing concepts based only on what is present in every document would belittle the value of data that is present in some documents but not others as well as limit the evaluation of change in the organisation over the 30 year period.

### *Generate Initial Codes*

Coding in thematic analysis reduces chunks of data into specific ideas. For example, a sentence in a document may represent a thought (i.e. alienation or “acting out”) and marking it in this way creates a comprehensive document that contains data representing the same idea; these are what are referred to as codes. It is important that codes are precise and descriptive; they should capture what is truly being talked about as “codes provide the building blocks for analysis” (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 207). Codes were kept as consistent as possible for related ideas throughout the entire coding process so as not to have multiple codes that are essentially the same idea coded differently. This was done by creating detailed definitions associated with each code of what precisely should be coded into it. The overarching goal being that “coding reduces lots of data into small chunks of meaning” and makes the data more manageable (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017, p. 3355).

Steps two and three were performed for each document analysed with like concepts being assigned codes and carried through to subsequent documents where they were deemed appropriate. To clarify, the codes were not pre-determined for documents analysed later in the process and indeed new codes were created for particular documents that were not present in the preceding ones. Additionally, upon initial reading of the documents, the relevant sections for analysis were identified and those alone were coded. In particular for the larger documents and tribunal reports, the scope of inquiry was much larger than the current research and were not analysed if deemed irrelevant during this stage. Only sections relevant to the research questions were coded, but these sections were only identified after reading the document in full initially. With the guiding principle that the quality of the data should be chosen over quantity, a stamp of qualitative research, this is how I proceeded with the data analysis.

As stated, open coding was adhered to whereby codes were not created before familiarisation of the data. Whereas selective coding described under discourse analysis pulls out instances of information that are looked for in the data, complete coding in thematic analysis categorises anything relevant to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2013). For example, if the research question were specifically focused on physical abuse within the Garda, only lines relevant to this in some capacity would be coded in line with selective coding; however, because this research question is broader to that of the organisation’s culture, selective coding was not possible and complete coding was used.

Further, inductive coding in thematic analysis calls for line by line coding whereby every line should be coded without exception (Moira Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). However, with specific regard to document analysis, due to the size of the data being analysed in this thesis, theoretical thematic analysis was used and the data coded was only done so if it

was relevant to the research question. Additionally, only relevant sections of the documents (in particular in the larger tribunal reports that cover several different, and tangentially and/or unrelated, topics to this research) were analysed. Creating a structure whereby every line must be coded, for the purpose of this research, would devalue what is present in the documents by coding lines just for the sake of procedure.

There are also differences in how codes are created. Data derived codes come directly from the data, what is said is what is coded, whereas researcher derived codes have implicit meaning attached to them based on theoretical knowledge and frameworks the researcher is familiar with (Braun & Clarke, 2013). A combination of these codes were used, but implicit meaning was limited so as not to “give” the text more meaning than intended from my own bias. For example, a line coded as physical aggression was only done so if there was documented evidence to support it happened, not if I thought that it possibly could have. Once the initial codes were given, a code book that aggregated all assigned codes was created to organise the analytic process. Indeed, codebooks were generated several times throughout the coding process to begin mapping out what the data had to say. Additionally, after all coding was complete, the codebooks were reviewed for any erroneous coding or recoding that may have been necessary.

Braun and Clarke (2006) have been careful to note that when codes are separated in the code book, and text is pulled from the original documents, context should be kept so it is still abundantly clear what idea the code is conveying. This, along with the entire coding process, was done with the aid of NVivo. Though used as an aid, it is important to note that NVivo was not used for any form of automated coding or analysis. Indeed, the use of qualitative data software being useful for large data sets has been noted by Maguire and Delahunt (2017). The documents analysed for this research range from 100 to 1,200 pages and nearly 3,000 pages were analysed in total. The software allowed selections of text to be coded (multiple times if necessary) and automatically aggregated into a document of the same codes. This organised the coding process and ensured that data pieces were not lost as could be the case with printed documents and manual coding. The process of coding in and of itself is not an analysis, it is an organisation of the data. As such, the technology is not capable of performing a quality analysis, but rather to aid in the organisation of the analytic process, and that is the function it served in this research.

Name	Description
Acting on trust	Doing something without checking on it themselves
Acting out	Alleging wrongdoing or corruption on behalf of the organisation when being held accountable for personal wrongdoing
Acting outside the law	Abuse of power
Advancing Garda agenda	Doing what they have to in order to get the result they want
End justifies the means	
Alienation	Lack of communication - trust Org leaving guard to their own devices
Blaming others	Distancing oneself from the problem in question
Change	

The above chart is a visual representation of generating and defining initial codes from the data. The left are the names given to the generated codes from the initial reading of the data. The right are the detailed definitions of the codes so they would not be confused from one document to the next. For example, with acting out, what this word means could change drastically depending on the context or day. Acting out could represent emotional self-harming, physical aggression to others, or irrational public displays of emotion. For this reasoning, it was important early on to define exactly what I meant when I coded data as acting out, and the above definition is how I kept it consistent throughout the thousands of pieces of data.

### *Searching for Themes*

Similar to individual codes given, producing themes can cause data reduction that allows for a more manageable grasp on the data for analysis (Tuckett, 2005). An important differentiation stressed by Braun and Clarke (2013) is that themes do not emerge from the data nor does the data reveal any themes as this implies a passive procedure in the research process. Rather, codes are actively created from the data and themes are developed from the codes by the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Implying that themes have emerged from the data devalues the work put in by the researcher. As demonstrated from this process, there is rigour in thematic document analysis that requires more than just reading words on a page and having the findings emerge for your results. Previous direct quotes were used with the term emerge present but were kept for the overarching idea being conveyed.

One such problem associated with thematic analysis is the possibility of the literature review influencing the themes the researcher creates (Tuckett, 2005). Although this is a potential outcome, I was aware of this bias and attempted to counteract any instances of selective thematic analysis even though the literature had already been reviewed. I took the approach of using the literature review as a theme guiding factor rather than a theme defining factor. It is for this reason that the presentation of the findings do not follow the same organisational pattern as the reviewed literature chapters; the data did not follow the

same patterns exactly, and so, the findings were presented as they were found and interpreted in the data<sup>39</sup>.

Although the same piece of data can be coded multiple times, codes should not overlap in separate themes. A good code captures a single idea; a theme has a central organising concept, but many different ideas (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Although it is important that themes are distinct from each other, they should be cohesive enough to form an overarching analysis that can be used to address the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Moira Maguire & Delahunt, 2017; Tuckett, 2005). Further, the data within each theme should be coherent, but distinct from other themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Moira Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Ultimately, themes bring together data that can seem meaningless if on its own (Aronson, 1995). After the themes were generated, a theme document was created to organise the grouped codes and themes.

In thematic analysis, as discussed previously with saliency analysis, “a theme is characterised by its significance”, not its quantifiable presence in the text (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017, p. 3356; Wetherell et al., 2001). Indeed a theme does not necessarily have to be the most emphasised concept discussed in the text, but rather something that covers the essence of what is being researched (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Further, “a theme might be given considerable space in some data items, and little or none in others” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). There is no need to record how often a code is recorded individually or within each theme because in thematic analysis, frequency does not determine significance (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This attempt at establishing your findings as something to be generalised allows for the possibility to miss less numerically common, but still significant, data (Wetherell et al., 2001).

With reference to not recording how often a particular code was recorded, in the findings there was no specification of how often a particular code may have appeared within a theme nor how many of the documents a particular code was found in. This said however, there were particular codes that were ultimately not carried through to be placed into thematic groupings because there was not enough data to support it as a significant feature of Garda culture as ascertained in the documents (e.g. gender). Though concepts do not need to be the most invasive to be considered significant, there does need to be data to support the findings, and if there was not, the code was not brought forward in the analytic process.

A further consideration during this process that was not explicitly discussed in the literature on conducting thematic analysis, as it was very specific to this type of research,

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<sup>39</sup> One example of this is the presence of gender relations in the literature but not included in the findings simply because gender did not factor into the data analysed as already discussed in the previous chapters.

was that of differentiating the themes between individual and organisational level behaviour, meaning the codes would be split and there would be separate themes for manifestations of behaviour specific to that of individual or grouped Gardaí and organisational level behaviour. However, the choice was made to group all like themes together as one as it has been argued previously, and will continue to be in the following chapters, individual level behaviour is often reflective of organisational and systemic behaviour. The Rotten Apple Theory of behaviour will be discussed more in depth in relation to the findings in the following chapters, but it is for this reasoning that the data was not separated in this way<sup>40</sup>. There was also consideration given to splitting the findings by geographic region; however, this was not done purposefully for the notion that there is only one culture within the Garda, to be discussed later, and also more importantly, because what was found and presented in the findings was applicable to various different locations and splitting them in this way would not have any added value in understanding the culture of the Garda.

Name	Description
<b>Accountability</b>	
Lack of Oversight	Gardai are not being supervised properly - usually leads to misconduct
Letting behaviour happen	Knowing someone is doing something they shouldn't be, but doing nothing to stop it or report it
No consequences for actions	
Recognising bad behaviour, but not taking responsibility	
Referring to past to assert innocence	
Using logic to deny wrongdoing	Possibly - using logic to corroborate their side of the story
Acting on trust	Doing something without checking on it themselves
<b>Blame Culture</b>	
Acting out	Alleging wrongdoing or corruption on behalf of the organisation when being held accountable for personal wrongdoing
Blaming others	Distancing oneself from the problem in question
Diverting attention away from org wrongdoing	
Following orders	Doing something just because they were told to, usually to not take responsibility

The above is a visual representation of the initial thematic groupings from the data. While these changed from this step of the process to the next, this is how the data began to form its story. While searching for the initial thematic groupings, the codes were sorted based on what their definitions had in common; what pieces of the puzzle worked together to create a larger picture (or in this case story). For example, with blame culture, there was a noticeable trend of using blame in the organisation, but what facets of the organisation's culture, represented by the codes, contributed to this wider phenomena present in the organisation? These are the types of questions that created the basis for forming the initial themes; however, they were ultimately revised and that is where the next step of the process began.

<sup>40</sup> It should be noted however, that the findings were initially split in this way. When done in this way, the findings read to the effect of this behaviour occurred at an individual level and this behaviour also occurred at an organisational level. It is because of this, rather than becoming redundant and continuously stating that the behaviour was the same for both groups, they were kept together.



### *Reviewing Themes/Defining and Naming Themes*

For my own research I have combined steps five and six as I believe the two coincide with each other and do not require separate actions. In defining the themes and subsequently naming them, the themes are inherently reviewed to determine what each theme encompasses and is refined to. Naming the theme also helped narrow what each theme is comprised of, thus defining and reviewing what codes belong in each theme. During this combined step in the process it was necessary to revise, combine, and/or split themes so that each theme is clear and distinct from other themes, but still all come together in a harmonious fashion to answer the overarching research question.

While developing themes, theme hierarchies can be formed whereby there are a set number of over-arching themes and underlying sub-themes or there can be several themes all of equal weight among each other. The approach taken in this research consisted of a multi-tiered thematic approach. Of course, the overarching research question, and thus in this case theme, was that of police organisational culture. From that stemmed three sub-themes that then became the chapter titles. Though contained neatly into each of the three following chapters, the themes were reviewed and re-configured until they were all adequately homogenous within and heterogeneous among themes. Indeed, the thematic and sub-thematic groupings present in this thesis went through several variations before the final ones presented in the following chapters were chosen. What was ultimately chosen made the most sense in advancing the argument, with aid of supporting evidence, to answer the research questions.

Although thematic analysis is a structured process, the analysis is also a reflexive process that requires movement back and forth between the different steps of the process (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). During this process it became necessary to not use certain codes as they did not contribute to any of the themes created. In line with the theoretical process of thematic analysis, though it was difficult to leave a code behind, as is only natural after putting in the work throughout the entire process, if a code did not enhance a theme, it was not included. This does not indicate that the code was not important, but for clarity and precision, only codes that advance the research and question directly were carried through the entire process. However, in some instances, particular codes were brought back in the final discussion chapter as a way of reflecting on and assessing change in the organisation's culture throughout the 30 year observation period. As has been stated previously, there is sometimes a significance in what is not said as much as what is said, and it was for this purpose these codes were brought back in the final chapter.



The previous visual representations were generated within the software NVivo, but for the above visual, of reviewing/redefining thematic groupings from the data, it was necessary to step outside of NVivo to understand the hierarchical nature of how the story needed to be told. While the true depiction of the data analysis process is only really accurately illustrated by reading the next three chapters, the above visual shows the abstracted version. The entirety of the data analysis was done with the concept of culture borne in mind, which is why culture is shown at the top. Everything below it is a representation of the Garda culture, broken down into themes, and then broken down further into the codes that created these themes. Finally, as discussed in the final chapter, how these themes, which have helped to understand what the Garda culture is, have changed over time. However, none of this could have been transmitted to you as the reader, without the final step of the data analysis process; writing up.

### *Writing Up*

Braun and Clarke (2013) have named the final step in the thematic analysis process writing up. Because analysis is ongoing throughout the entire process, there is no specific step for analysis. As such, I will discuss analysis related procedures in this step so as to concentrate the information in one area rather than spread throughout the chapter. However, it is important to note that although it appears in the final step here, it was not limited to just this step. On a very basic level, the analysis should go beyond just summarising the data; good thematic analysis interprets and makes sense of the data (Moira Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Analysis involves explaining what is interesting about

the data and why; moving beyond what is exclusively in the data and makes an argument in relation to your research question (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This latent level analysis looks beyond what has been explicitly stated and examines any “underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptions – and ideologies – that are theorised as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data” (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 84). The analysis of the data should then be located in the literature that already exists and how your findings contribute to or challenge the field (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The implementation of these steps can be found in the following chapters.

When writing, using extracts can be implemented in two different ways. Using extracts illustratively enhances the analysis with examples; using extracts analytically relies on the extract exclusively and the analysis would not make sense without the use of the extract (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Regardless of which approach is taken, there should be a balance between the extracts and the narrative given. In certain instances, illustrative charts can be used to serve the same purpose as block text may not have the same impact as a visual would. I chose to use extracts illustratively to enhance the overarching argument the themes form. This technique allowed for more qualitative data to be analysed without fully being present in the text (Wetherell et al., 2001).

The illustrative extracts used were done in a way that mimics the use of text extracts in other qualitative methods. Text was used within quotation marks if taken directly and attributed to a document with the use of initials, much like what might be done for the initials of an anonymised name in qualitative interviews and/or focus groups. This was done purposefully for various reasons. The first being that constructing the narrative in this way likens the process to more standard qualitative research methods, thus creating a more relatable presentation of findings to researchers who are not as familiar with qualitative document analysis. The second reason the initials were used was to detach particular quoted findings from any one document. Though, as discussed previously, codes did not need to be present in every document to be considered significant, this decision was consciously made so as not to link any one finding to one document specifically as the themes presented were relevant to the findings and understanding of the organisational culture of the Garda as a whole, not just to one document. Using the initials rather than full statement of the name was done with the view of keeping the focus off of the document’s name and toward the overall understanding of the culture.

Further to this, the years of the documents were not used when referencing the data because this research was an analysis of the organisation’s culture over the 30 year period, and as such, the culture was representative of the organisation rather than the organisation during a particular year within this time frame. In order for the data to be included in the analysis for the findings chapters, it needed to be representative of the organisation’s

culture as a whole rather than just a particular time period. Of course, where there was a significant shift in the culture over the 30 year period, this was noted specifically. However, the lack of use of the specific years is justified in the representativeness of the culture over the 30 year period.

The final reason was due to the necessity of distinguishing the findings from the data from the review of literature. Attributing the findings to names of documents, visually, can present the data in a way that looks more like an additional review of literature rather than a rigorous analytic process. This was particularly important in the discussion chapter where the findings and evaluated literature were discussed together. For all of the above reasons, as well as a limitation of NVivo, page numbers were not used with the text extracts from the data. During the coding process of NVivo, text extracts are put into their respective codebooks, and while it is possible to keep the outside context of where the text was taken from, the page number is not included automatically with the selected extract.

Ultimately, “writing is the process through which the analysis develops into its final form” (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 249). In conjunction with the critical/constructivist approach, the fundamental element of writing is that the data supports the story you as the researcher are trying to tell, not necessarily the “right” story, but your story. “When the literature is interwoven with the findings, the story that the interviewer [researcher] constructs is one that stands with merit” (Aronson, 1995, p. 3). If the story you are telling can be supported by the data, then you have been successful. Further, when assessing when the analysis is done, Richards (2015) (and reinterpreted by Bazeley, 2009) suggests five signs of sufficiency: simplicity, coherence, completeness, robustness, and making sense to relevant audiences. The remainder of this thesis meets those demands.

## Conclusion

One of the most significant reasons for choosing this particular methodology was the ability to analyse documents from different time periods that allowed for a direct analysis of whether or not there was any meaningful change over the 30 year observation period as compared to mere stated/commitment to change. One of the benefits of this approach specific to policing research is the ability to evaluate change over time as most research into police culture is not able to do this due to the static collection of data being limited to one time period (Charman, 2017). A further benefit of this methodology is the inclusion of several different types of data (i.e. quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, focus groups, quasi ethnographic research) within the documents that can all be analysed at the same time.

Additionally, utilising documents provides immediate access to data that does not have to go through an approval process to be obtained, limiting any ethical interferences

further. However, this did not prevent the Garda from attempting to require that I receive approval from them directly in order to conduct my research on publicly available documents. Also, another significant reason for choosing this method, and more importantly in the overall goal of producing ethical research, is that the analysis and results do not have to be presented in any particular way as determined by someone other than the researcher; there is no outside pressure to present the organisation in a way the data do not support. As this research is tasked in understanding what the organisation's culture is, being unburdened by this outside pressure allowed for a more robust understanding of the culture without censorship.

This methodological approach is very practical in its goals and implementation; however, there are limitations that nonetheless need to be acknowledged. Although analysing documents can present data in an unbiased way, you are naturally still limited to analysing only what is present in the document(s). For example, as ascertained from the literature in the initial chapters, gender in the Garda is a point of interest and women have had their impact on the organisation, but this data was not present in the documents analysed and therefore could not be a feature of the organisation's culture for this research and this is a clear limitation. Also to consider is how the documents being produced, in some cases, several years after the period in question have impacted the conclusions made. It is possible that the benefit of hindsight have altered our perception of Garda culture. Though this is reflected on further in the final chapter, it is nonetheless a limitation of document analysis being confined solely to what is present in the documents. However, these limitations considered, the preceding benefits of using document analysis were judged to outweigh the limitations.

Overall, the careful inclusion criteria for the documents used set out in this chapter ensured the data necessary was available for analysis so that the research questions could be answered. As discussed, there is the possibility of not including particular documents in the analysis either through deliberate action or because the researcher was not aware of it, but, though this is a valid concern, it is much the same in application to qualitative interviews not interviewing every possible person and/or group who would be relevant to the research. Much the same in other qualitative methods, if saturation is achieved, analysing every document of relevance is not a concern.

Discourse analysis does not provide definite answers (Mogashoa, 2014), but neither will any qualitative research. Rather, the researcher is telling one possible story about the data of many different stories that could be told. The importance lies in presenting an answer that is true to the data, regardless of whether that one particular truth is true for every researcher. The following chapters are the story this research has to tell.

## Chapter 5 Organisational Culture On An Organisational Level

### Introduction

This research set out to understand the organisational culture of the Garda, and what was found must first be made sense of. Though the previous chapters, particularly the evaluation of international and previous Irish policing literature and the history of Irish policing, play a vital role in understanding the current Garda culture, so too does the construction and presentation of the findings. In order to more fully understand the various aspects of the organisation's culture that are manifested in the organisation's members, it is important to understand the organisation's structural role in the culture. By beginning with the organisational climate, in essence how the organisation treats its members, there is an understanding on a structural level of how the organisation is set up. This then entails what the infrastructure is that creates and enables the characteristics of the culture that are discussed in the following two chapters.

As a natural testament to the fluidity of organisational culture from one facet to the next, and the necessity of each of these facets to work together in order to become one overall culture that represents an organisation, what is presented in the following three chapters are both interrelated and interconnected. As such, there are small overlaps in the content of the findings, but rather than presenting them in a repetitive way, a path of cohesiveness was chosen so that the findings support and build on each other from one chapter to the next.

In order to understand the later findings, particularly those in chapter seven, we must first explore what enables and allows them to even exist in the first place, and that is what is discussed in the findings in chapters five and six. Keeping with this, the following findings chapters were constructed as a story within a story. The overall story follows the path Gardaí take upon entering the organisation, or at least my interpretation of their journey. Chapter five begins with understanding who and what the organisation is, then moves into how they are trained, and then into their first experiences of how the organisation treats the Gardaí and what resources are provided to them. From here, chapter six explores the bonds and relationships the Gardaí have both within and outside of the organisation. Finally, chapter seven explores the more advanced stages of the Gardaí experience in the organisation and the cycles of blame and accountability within the Garda.

This chapter is titled as such because the initial step in understanding the organisation's culture, and thus the Gardaís' journey through the organisation, requires an understanding of the organisation treats its members; and this is seen by what organisational resources are provided to the Gardaí. The beginning of this chapter first looks at who the Garda are, not in the organisational makeup as was seen in the chapter

on Garda history, but in what position the Garda see themselves as having in the organisation and in the community and how these relate to the various limitations the organisation, and more so its members, are faced with. Embedded in this understanding of how the Gardaí view themselves is how they are trained and their initial entry into the organisation, as facilitated at an organisational level. Further to this is the exploration of community policing in Ireland. The initial use of the term community policing in this chapter is in line with the definition given in the reviewed literature; however, whether the Garda follows one, and ultimately what this means for the organisation's culture, is a different avenue of analysis that will be discussed. It then turns to how the organisation has treated its members by way of structurally embedded policies and conditions and how this affects the Gardaí, both in outward behavioural manifestations and impact on personal well-being. While the findings in this chapter are part of the overall Garda culture, there is also a focus on laying the groundwork for the social and structural contexts that have made the findings in the next two chapters materialise in the data.

Though this will be touched on further throughout the following chapters, the situation of the following findings, and the overall research, are positioned in the constructivist and critical paradigms whereby knowledge is situated and relative. As such, whether the findings are real or perceived on behalf of the research participants, or in this case those who were involved in the documents that were analysed, is not the focus. What is important, and thus will be discussed further throughout, is how these findings have impacted Gardaí behaviour and what this means for the overall understanding of the Garda culture.

### What Do You Expect? It's How We're Trained

From the initial inception of the new recruits, the training they receive from the outset in the Garda College in Templemore begins to set the culture for which they will become part of. The following extracts, while having changed slightly, still provide the comprehensive reception and timeline of a new Gardaí during their first years in the organisation.

In phase three of the training programme conducted back at the Garda college over a twelve week period, students receive an introduction to interviewing including the analysis of victim statements and how to properly interview witnesses, and the analysis of suspect statements. They receive theoretically based lectures on interview skills, including the legal requirements of the audio visual regulations and best practice in interviewing skills including issues around false confessions and oppressive questioning. Following this phase, the student Garda moves to the probationer stage for a period of two years. The Probationer Garda is

assigned to a Garda station, which is a designated training station where module two of the “phase three programme” is conducted. This is of four weeks’ duration and is conducted at the station. Each probationer is required to achieve four days of classroom activity during this period. The course covers the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act, 1984, discussion on the recording of interviews, advice and guidance on the practical implementation of the custody regulations, and instruction on the PEACE model. A lecture is delivered by a local interviewer, selected on the basis of his expertise and ability in the area of interviewing. They prepare for practical interviewing exercises, which are conducted with them during the four day period. They practice procedures necessary to comply with the regulations concerning the electronic recording of interviews and the operation of the equipment. They then have practical interviews involving role play exercises and receive feedback including discussion on their performance during that particular period. (MT)

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Everyone who joins An Garda Síochána in future will study for a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Applied Policing. This course, delivered in conjunction with the University of Limerick, is focused on problem-based learning with a strong focus on empathy. Then, when they leave the Garda College as probationers for on-the-job training in stations, they will learn first-hand from experienced and knowledgeable Gardaí about the practicalities of day-to-day policing. (MR)

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From the time of recruitment, police education should not only teach the duties and responsibilities of police officers, and the skills and competencies needed to carry out those duties and responsibilities. It should also instil in members of the police service the cultural values we expect to see in our police - high ethical and professional standards, respect for human rights, partnership with and openness to communities, a problem-solving and innovative approach, and a culture of continuous learning and improvement. These values should be instilled at the time of recruitment and reinforced and refreshed in education and training programmes for those in service. (FP)

The process of joining the organisation set out above seems fairly comprehensive and procedural and the stated intentions of the organisation seem to focus on practicality and best practice. However, the stated intentions of what the initial training sets out to do, do not reconcile with the data when looking at the training in actuality. With regard to



training, who is chosen is as important as what they are taught, but within the Garda neither pillar is adequately addressed in reality. Though the need for additional Gardaí is necessary after the several year hiring freeze, the lack of appropriate care taken to ensure those who do join now is indicative of an organisational culture that does not value its members, and to an extent, the community. As the Hawthorne Studies and Performance Theory would suggest, an organisation that does not invest in its employees will see a marked shift in output. In the context of a policing organisation, this impacts policing capabilities and ultimately, interactions with society whom the organisation is supposed to be part of; particularly under a community policing model.

Nothing should be more important to a police service than recruiting the right people. Following the financial crash of 2009 there was no recruitment into An Garda Síochána for nearly six years. Now the organisation is recruiting at a rate of 800 Gardaí per year, which is stretching its capacity to train, supervise and absorb. (FP)

The lack of supervisory availability “has severely impacted on their ability to coach and guide their units and less experienced personnel on the ground in terms of their core policing duties” and “this potentially has a significant impact on the future success of the new probationers. Acquiring bad habits or adopting incorrect procedures and processes by the probationer, due to lack of guidance, are seen as a critical operational risk” (CA). Further, it was noted that once in the organisation, probationer Gardaí are not adequately supervised as an extension of their initial training.

The role of supervision was also raised in the focus groups. Similarly, with the role of leadership, it was felt that there is a lack of supervision, particularly for newer members. Due to the volume and speed of recent recruitment it is felt that the new probationers have less support than ever. (CA)

It has been noted that this added strain on training capacity “is unfair on Probationers that these low standards are being accepted, are not being dealt with, and that they are being trained into this system of low standards” (CT). Though in some instances this socialisation leads to the very perpetuation of culturally embedded misconduct discussed more in the following sections, the complete absence of it also does not allow for a new member to learn the realities of the job and the practicalities of what they should be doing; thus, impacting the services delivered to the public.

This impact was documented very clearly in the data. As an example, “the report identifie[d] probationer gardaí as being the lead investigators in seven out of eight of the poorly conducted garda investigations and stresses that probationer gardaí because they’re at the early stages of their careers are in need of constant supervision and management” (CT). This supervision being something the organisation is at capacity to provide.

This lack of availability has negatively impacted the more junior ranks. In particular, there was heightened concern in relation to the support a new probationer can expect to receive. Instead of having time to learn and shadow experienced colleagues, the probationers ‘are just seen as gardas, no time for adjustment, they are resources’. (CA)

While there was some attention paid, particularly in the above extract from the data, to the lack of support given to new Gardaí, there overall focus was on who was doing the investigations, and the reason that they were poorly conducted being they were done by probationer Gardaí, rather than an acknowledgement that the reason they were poorly done is because the organisation failed to train the probationers properly. This shifting blame away from the organisation’s own wrongdoing onto individuals, particularly lower level members, is a major facet of the organisation’s culture that will be discussed further in the next chapters, but it is important to demonstrate just how early this shifting of blame begins in the organisation. This considered, the initial training is but one facet of the issues concerning training within the Garda.

There were also instances of Gardaí performing duties/assignments they were never trained for or equipped to do. The Garda Inspectorate’s Crime Investigation report of October 2014 estimated that there were approximately 700 “untrained” detectives. This lack of training has become problematic in circumstances such as during investigations into the wrongful pursuit of a suspect.

Garda O’Connor, while not formally appointed as a detective, had been working with the detective unit in the Bridewell. He was at the time what is known within the Garda force as a ‘buckshee detective’ i.e. a Garda who, while not formally appointed as a detective was working on a temporary basis with a detective unit. (BI)

While reviewing interview transcripts during the same investigation, “he [a Detective Superintendent reviewing the case] was prompted to ask if the present and future interviewers had received the appropriate training for conducting interviews which are video recorded, and the same section also seems to have made an impression on [another

Detective Garda]” (BI); yet nothing was done about it. As a specific example representative of a larger trend throughout the data, poor policing practices were identified, and in this case gone so far as to comment on them, yet no reassessment of training or concern over this practice was evident in the data.

There must be constant vigilance on the part of Garda management at the highest levels to ensure that the Garda force observes the law, and that proper investigative and interviewing standards are taught and adhered to at all levels throughout the force and are in a constant state of review and if necessary, renewal. (MT)

However, this sentiment means very little when there are supervisory Gardaí who recognise issues occurring but do nothing to keep the problem from happening again, as demonstrated earlier. Further, some detectives were working on crimes such as fraud, without the specialist training required for such complex cases (IR). As an indication of change (or lack thereof) within the organisation, one of the most recently published documents analysed provided data to confirm that “deficiencies in training detectives” (FP) was still an ongoing issue in the organisation.

Gardaí are also expected to continue in a role with very little opportunity for professional development, if any were given, due to budget constraints and prioritisation of other aspects of the organisation being higher than training. Continuous training and development are severely lacking; a hallmark of the organisation throughout the 30-year period. As such, “people do not believe they have the opportunity to learn and develop – in particular, employees do not believe they receive adequate support and guidance to help them improve their performance” and “continuous professional development was not supported” (CA). Though there has been mixed support for this in the data.

There was some variance within this theme; some specialist staff believe they have and continue to receive adequate training for their role. However for the majority of focus group participants this was not the case. Participants spoke anecdotally that training is not targeted based on specific individual need nor is it allocated fairly. (CA)

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Individual garda superintendents are usually allocated a travel and subsistence budget from which training expenses are met. Sending people long distances to Templemore can be an expensive option. As a result, local supervisors often have to make a difficult choice between sending a member

of staff on a training course and incurring costs, or retaining that money for operational policing activity. (IR)

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The Garda Inspectorate observed in its 2015 report that there was no training strategy in place and no dedicated training budget. That report observed that in-service training opportunities were frequently hampered by supervisors who felt they could spare neither the members nor the funds to send them to the police college at Templemore. (FP)

Because of the strain on training opportunities, other solutions must be created. In some cases, those who were assigned to perform the training for others received only a one-week training course prior to being given the responsibility to train the rest of the members to an acceptable standard. Further, “successive Policing Authority reports have highlighted training gaps in key areas such as driver training and...a lack of planning for the training necessary to support reform across the organisation as a critical concern” (FP). Once initiated into the organisation much of the literature and theory as applied to police organisational culture and police training would suggest that continuous learning is the best approach for a well-functioning policing organisation. Despite this, continuous training is still not a priority; indeed, “training is often the first internal process to be reduced in times of austerity” (IR).

Structurally, the organisation has made it difficult to access training records which makes it difficult to not only keep track of training, but also institute any type of structure to assure those who need the training can be identified and receive it; further, the 2015 data stated that there were no formal assessments of training needs happening at all. “The complete training records of garda personnel are not accessible at the Garda College, but rather are recorded in a variety of locations, including the College, on the Garda Regional Integrated Personnel System (GRIPS) and in local units” (IR). Unqualified officers are performing tasks out of their depth to the detriment of the community in which they serve as well as the possibility of their own mental and physical wellbeing. Further, “non-sworn personnel of An Garda Síochána are currently recruited by the Public Appointments Service into the general civil service and then assigned to police work. They remain members of the general civil service, and receive no tailored training for work in a policing organisation” (FP).

In addition to initial and ongoing training, when Gardaí are promoted, deserved or otherwise, training for the roles are often not adequate and create other tangentially related issues. Further, it was noted that “there is a need to train people before promoting them” (IR) which indicates this is not the current operational standard.

These individuals may have entered Headquarters as a garda or a sergeant and are leaving as an inspector or a superintendent to take on operational roles with high leadership expectations. Where this situation occurs, a formal review of that person's operational skills and experience needs to be conducted as they may well have significant re-training or development needs. (IR)

Indeed, the organisation "has had a poor record of facilitating, much less encouraging in-service training" (FP). However, all considered, facilitating better training opportunities would have very little impact when the official policies/documents the Gardaí are governed by are out of date. Many of the codes the Gardaí abide by, though some have been updated more recently than others, stem from a time when the population of the country was not as large as it is today and resident needs were not as diverse and complex as they now are. There is a particular emphasis on the increased diversity of needs not being addressed by the use of outdated documents. Further, as the initial training is in large part responsible for reinforcing the organisation's culture into the new recruits, the use of outdated documents sets a precedent for how things should be done that does not fully prepare them for the realities. The outdated documents used do not, and arguably could not, have anticipated some of the needs current Gardaí have.

During field visits, the Inspectorate was informed that some parts of the Code are now very dated, such as student training and firearms licensing. The Code does not contain details of the date that a particular section was last refreshed or when a section is due to be reviewed. The Inspectorate was unclear as to the value added of retaining the Garda Code, without maintaining an up-to-date version. (IR)

While the process of training in the Garda does serve as an introduction and initial socialisation into the organisation and its culture, the next step of the journey, whereupon they are truly entering the organisation as full members for the first time, is where they come to learn what type of organisation the Garda is and what this means for their daily interactions with the community as experienced by a member of the organisation rather than a civilian. The next phase of the journey involves what it means to be a member of the Garda and how their lives will be governed going forward as dictated by how the organisation interacts with and treats its members.

## Community Policing

As this research studies the use of discourse and its application to what the culture of the Garda is, the following statement serves as a starting point for understanding the organisation's culture from a structural perspective.

The Garda Síochána Act 2005 defines the objectives of the policing and security services as – (a) preserving the peace and public order, (b) protecting life and property, (c) vindicating the human rights of each individual, (d) protecting the security of the State, (e) preventing crime, (f) bringing criminals to justice, including detecting and investigating crime, (g) regulating and controlling road traffic and improving safety. (FP)

At no point is a relationship to or with the community ever stated. If an organisation is to have a commitment to a community policing model, there should be a stated objective in such a manifesto, particularly when something as specific as road traffic policing is mentioned. Another point to note within this statement is the line equating life and property. It would be anticipated in a policing organisation, but particularly in an organisation that emphasises community policing, that the protection of life and protection of property should not carry the same weight. Though an argument can be made for saving space, words matter, and this discourse implies more than just what is on the paper. Though an organisation's culture is observed through expressed behaviours and actions, it can be driven by stated objectives. As such, the stated objectives place no emphasis on transparency, accountability, or the community; a message that has been transmitted to the culture and as indicated by the data, member behaviour. With this framework as a starting point, we can now move into more specific aspects of the Garda culture.

Policing style is both informed by and created from the organisation's culture, reciprocally the culture is also influenced by the policing style. However, neither have been studied to any significant extent within the Irish context. As the literature has indicated, just saying that an organisation is any such thing is not enough for it to become that. Action and implementation are paramount to delivering stated objectives. Though the overarching research question in this thesis is to gain a deeper understanding of what the culture of the Garda is, there has been attention paid to what type of policing model they follow as this is a contributing factor to the overall culture. Up to now the references to the Garda being (or not) a community policing organisation have been based on how the literature has defined who, and what, a community policing organisation is. However, the following looks deeper into in what ways the Garda does or does not fit into the literature defined model, and further, what community policing more generally looks like for the Garda and for the people of Ireland.

The data makes a prima facie case for a community policing model; however, when fleshed out in the analysis phase of coding the data, in practice this reality is less determinant, particularly considering the organisation's lack of resources provided to achieve community policing goals, as discussed further below. To support this, in one of the most recently produced documents, it was stated that, "within any police or military unit there will be camaraderie and mutual support" (CT). The comparison of the two as one in the same, particularly within the Irish context when they are supposed to be two completely separate entities, is an interesting study of discourse. Even if unconscious, the lack of distinction between police and military, especially after investigating the Garda for a length of time, notes a lack of adherence to community oriented model. How the Garda reconcile their stated goals with observed implementation is a facet of the organisation that will be explored further below.

On a large scale there is a lack of clarity of who and what a community police officer is and what they should be doing.

The significant percentage of gardaí engaged in administrative and non-operational duties is noteworthy, with more gardaí in some administrative/non-operational posts than in community policing units. Some districts reduced the numbers of garda on community policing and some removed all full-time community gardaí. Some community gardaí see their role as community engagement, not enforcement, while others are investigating the full range of criminal offences, suggesting a lack of clarity of the role of community gardaí. (IR)

Though "the Garda Síochána's mission statement indicates that the community is central to its function" (IR) and the organisation speaks of itself as a community policing organisation, often stating that it is or should move in that direction, less often is there any tangible idea of what community policing is or how it is actually implemented. Further to this, the data has implied that perhaps community policing is less embedded in the organisation and more on an individual level; "An Garda Síochána is a very community-based organisation. There are a lot of things which gardaí are involved at a local level on their own time, such as charity fundraisers, for which they never get the acknowledgement" (IR). In this way, community policing and/or engagement is less part of the organisation directly, and more part of the organisation by association of the involvement of its members when not working.

As a whole, when spoken of, the data would suggest the following attributes as integral to being a community policing organisation: visibility, accountability, proactive policing, and identifiability; all of which ultimately culminates in a framework of "policing with

rather than policing of the community” (IR). Though there is still ambiguity in the details of what the practice entails, there have been some attempts to define what community policing is.

Police officers on patrol need to engage the public, as this will influence perceptions of visibility and have a far greater impact on reassurance levels over simply seeing a unit on patrol. Foot patrols in a particular area should make contact with residents or businesses to explain the activity of the day and to ensure that people are aware that officers are patrolling in their area.  
(IR)

To further support the lacking emphasis on a community policing model, it was asked, “what exactly do we want police to do? The obvious answer is to investigate crime, protect lives and property, and keep order” (FP). This statement very notably lacks a commitment, or even reference, to a community relationship that fosters trust and accountability to society. Though many of the Gardaí interviewed throughout the various documents analysed spoke of the “community policing ethos...as being at the heart of the organisation and what it stands for” (CA), there is a confusion among what is publicly stated about the organisation, the structural components embedded in the culture that dictate policing style, and how the Gardaí often behave in the field. The data would suggest the Gardaí who do value the community relationship are acting against what the organisation has set in place. Specifically, the Garda prioritises cutting community police when budgets are tight which has led to community policing being thought of as a “specialist activity, with perhaps 10% of Gardaí in a district” (FP) actually being assigned as community police and “over one-third of all garda districts hav[ing] no full-time community policing officers assigned” (IR). Further, the organisation’s stated objectives are acting against the structures in place to dictate how the Gardaí should be behaving in the field.

Though the “community policing ethos was seen as the soul of the organisation” (FP), there is a disconnect there that is often unobserved but nonetheless still present. The Gardaí see themselves as community police, but the frontline is not prioritised in the organisation making community policing a difficult task to achieve. Though it will be discussed more in depth in a later section, this sentiment paired with the additional expectations from the public and the disconnect between upper management and front-line Gardaí, whereby the supervisory Gardaí are out of touch with the reality of policing and expect too much, particularly with so little resources given, makes following a community policing model that much harder. Keeping up with ongoing issues is made difficult by how the organisation prioritises community policing; indeed, “the organisation works primarily in a reactive way, responding to the issues of the day” (FP). When resources are cut, it



inevitably means that fewer Gardaí are then responsible for doing more work with less time and resources. Indeed, “their numbers have been depleted and they are often pulled away from front line policing for other duties, including even serious crime investigations that should be carried out by specialists” (FP). Often the first areas cut are those of community Gardaí. Whether these cuts and/or redirections of Gardaí are even necessary is another avenue of exploration.

In terms of further structural issues, it was documented that the Garda upper management sends out hundreds of directives per year but is “out of touch and unresponsive, sending down directives but not providing strong support” (FP) at supervisory or ground level to actually implement them. Even if given basic support, within this structure it would be nearly impossible for any organisation to implement every directive, and if so, it would be to the detriment of the quality of services provided. These changes coupled with the already disproportionate amount of responsibilities found in the data both Gardaí and supervisors are given and lack of resources, both equipment/technology and people, set the organisation up to fail. Though there have been calls to cut back on some of the social services provided and reprioritise only core functions throughout the 30-year observation period, this is still not being done.

Further, when looking at the basic tenets of community policing, identifiability is reduced by something as simple as not placing name tags on uniforms, a practice adopted by other international policing organisations.

Members of the Garda Síochána are not identifiable by name on their uniforms. Unlike most police services, there is no requirement to wear a name badge. Rather, the members’ number, rank insignia and district abbreviation are the only source of identification on the Garda Síochána uniform. For some, this reflects a security policing approach to police services in Ireland. (IR)

This security policing approach, typically aligned with a militaristic policing model, mentioned limits their ability to interact with the community in a meaningful way that truly makes the Garda a community policing organisation.

Community policing requires the support of positive relationships with members of the community, both personally and at the organisational level. Failure to provide for easy identification of members creates trust issues and also limits the community’s ability to interact with officers in a positive and meaningful manner. The community’s ability to identify members also aligns with the key principles of police legitimacy, in that the actions of individual officers reflect and represent the Garda Síochána. (IR)

Though name tags are but one part of a wider issue stemming from the organisation's culture, "the term 'community policing' has been used to mean many things, but it is really all about front line police knowing their communities well, being visible and engaged in those communities and developing mutually respectful partnerships to solve problems and achieve community safety" (FP); this being something that is not currently happening in the organisation.

There are many excellent Gardaí who know their communities well and perform an exemplary service, but it is clear that the community policing system as a whole is under strain... Neither the structure of the police organisation nor its practices support the image it has of itself as a community police service. Front line Gardaí in many parts of the country complain of a lack of support... a large part of the problem is that the front line is not prioritised as it should be within An Garda Síochána. (FP)

When looking at either the structure or practices of the Garda, as mentioned above, Gardaí are still not delivering the service the organisation expects of its members. This is not, however, a direct reflection of any individual Gardaí, but rather reflective of the organisation's culture as set by the structural framework put in place. One such example being the prioritisation of numbers.

There are strong beliefs that the organisation is focused on measuring the wrong things and is preoccupied with outputs rather than outcomes. For example, it was felt that it might be more beneficial and reflective of the work being conducted to place metrics on the number of convictions or the preventative measures being undertaken, rather than the number of Fixed Charge Notices issued or breath tests undertaken. (CA)

A focus on numbers impacts quality and this result leads to a, rightly, questioning public about the reliability of their police organisation as demonstrated by, among others, the breath test inflation scandal. This questioning then impacts the relationship with the community and thus calls into question whether the Garda truly adheres to, or even has the potential to foster, a community policing style. Though the reckoning of what type of organisational model the Garda follow is in some ways an isolated concept, how Gardaí are trained into the organisation can also impact it. As such, the next step of the Gardaís' journey into the organisation is the next part of the story constructed for this thesis.

## Use of “Force”

How an organisation speaks of itself is an important factor in determining organisational culture. However, an additional, yet lesser discussed, point of determining policing styles is also in how the organisation is spoken about by others. Many policing organisations are referred to as “forces”; a connotation that evokes aggression. There has been a concerted effort in this thesis to always refer to the Garda as an organisation rather than a force, and this shift is also seen in the documents over time; “force” being a term used more often in the earlier documents analysed. The Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland made a very distinct effort to move away from the term force; with further commentary that “there is a need to move to a service not a force” (IR). This commitment to wording, though perhaps not as integral as implementation, is still an important distinction from a militaristic policing style. There is however one noted exception from the most recent document analysed in which the Garda was described as a military force.

An Garda Síochána is losing its character as a disciplined force. This is detrimental to the morale of members who wish to serve within the context of a police force that has a proud record. It is undermining respect for authority both within the force, and in relation to those who have to interact with it, on whatever basis. Ultimately, the gradual erosion of discipline within An Garda Síochána is a developing situation that will, sooner or later, lead to disaster. (CT)

Though there is criticism of the organisation, there is still a, perhaps unrecognised, referral to the organisation as a force. Rhetoric may seem simple, but again, it does matter. If unconscious thought leads to the word force, it indicates that the observed actions of the Gardaí are more in line with forceful action than service oriented. In comparison to an earlier document, stemming from events in the 1990s, but written in the mid-2000s, Justice Charleton refers back to Justice Morris’ reports referring to the Garda as a “military organisation” and states that the evaluation is correct. But nuanced in the statement from Justice Charleton is, though he acknowledges Justice Morris’ reference to an organisation, continued reference to the Garda as a “uniformed force” that “should be a disciplined force” (CT). Again, although this is but a small change in phraseology, it does indicate that the organisation has not yet espoused behaviour that associates it more with a service and/or organisation than a force.

It has been further noted that “to move a ‘police force’ towards becoming a ‘police service’ requires a different approach, a different culture and very different skill sets” (IR). If a different set of skills are necessary to move away from this approach, and the organisation is still referred to as a force, there is an implication that these new skills have not yet been

obtained and the culture still values force over service; a choice more associated with a militaristic style of policing than community service oriented. Indeed, “in several workshops and focus groups with garda employees, some staff expressed the view that the organisation is beginning to lose its traditional community focus” (IR). Though the use of the word force is but one, small component of the larger makeup of the Garda culture, it does nonetheless contribute to the overall culture in terms of how the organisation’s members, and those around it, have come to view the Garda. It also demonstrates a persistence in behaviour that indicates a culture that has remained indifferent to change and socialised this behaviour into new members.

## Making Do With What You Have

In defining what a community policing organisation is, as set out in the previous section, there are also possible exclusions to what it is not. Though the obvious principles espoused by the militaristic policing style can be excluded (i.e. aggression, militarisation, weaponry, etc.), there are certain social services that must also not be confused with what a policing organisation should be responsible for. This differentiation is something the Garda has dealt with in the past and continues to do today. This misconception, in part, is caused by the public having a limited understanding of what Gardaí should be doing. Though this is understandable given the stated lack of a concrete conception of what community policing is, this added pressure keeps Gardaí overburdened and the organisation perpetually understaffed. While this may seem, at first, unrelated to the organisation’s culture, how the organisation has managed this burden and supported its members in relation to its managing of resources, is.

There is an urgent need for more Gardaí on the front line now. This is clear to us from all our station visits, and all our public meetings. Yet a large part of the answer is already available to the organisation. The time for deploying sworn Garda resources on duties that do not require police powers should now come to an end. (FP)

Within the data, when speaking of what the Gardaí should be responsible for, there is an obvious focus on criminal activity, but during public consultations documented in the data, it was recognised that the public believes the Gardaí should be responsible for far more.

During some of our public consultations, we encountered a misperception that An Garda Síochána should be policing routine parking violations. This should not be a function of police, but rather of parking wardens employed by local authorities. Police should only need to deal with illegally parked vehicles if they

constitute a risk to public safety...The non-core duties currently performed by Gardaí include some aspects of security at courts, transporting all remand prisoners, serving summonses, prosecutions at district courts, attending minor road traffic accidents, as mentioned above, and safeguarding examination papers for schools...Another duty currently performed by Gardaí is the verification of identities for the purposes of new passport applications, and even for the opening of bank accounts. (FP)

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The involvement of Gardaí in prosecutions and the amount of time they spend in court or preparing for court is enormously wasteful of police resources that should be deployed on core police duties. This is a secondary but important reason for taking responsibility for prosecutions away from police...They perform a wide range of functions relating to the reporting of deaths, exhumations, acting as the Coroner's Officer, convening juries, presenting evidence, seeking adjournments, and identifying alternative coroners. These can create an overlap between criminal investigations and inquests. Moreover, they are time-consuming tasks for Gardaí, taking them away from core duties. Gardaí are not properly trained for these duties, nor should they be. It should not be their job. We support calls to reform the coroner system so that Gardaí no longer perform these functions. (FP)

Although the principles espoused by a community policing model would indicate that Gardaí should be available for routine interactions with public, defining the extent of these interactions is paramount in supporting its members. For example, recommendations to mental health services should be given when necessary, but Gardaí are not trained mental health specialists and should not be responsible for administering such help; though part of this reform would need to be better referral practices for mental health agencies before critical periods. Indeed, provision for attending to individuals with mental health conditions or other vulnerable populations is an increasing issue the Garda faces when it comes to allocating their resources.

While all the items listed in the Garda Síochána Act quoted in the preceding chapter are indeed duties of An Garda Síochána, the list does not adequately cover the full range of functions the service performs. Most notable is the absence of an explicit reference to the prevention of harm. Police increasingly find themselves dealing with the most vulnerable members of society – those who are unable to protect themselves from coming to harm or suffering exploitation. They include, among others, children or elderly people at risk,

homeless people, and those suffering from mental health conditions and substance misuse problems. A joint 2009 report by the Mental Health Commission and An Garda Síochána, noted that the police were the only agency available day and night to respond to emergencies and were therefore “unfairly” left to deal with mental health and other social crises. (FP)

## Overstretched

The squeeze on physical resources with increases in expected deliverables, however, creates an additional issue with time management. This time constraint also impacted quality of services provided. Indeed, it was noted that “it is important to always bear in mind that the Gardaí were operating under a very strict time table, which imposed its own constraints on the extent of investigation that was possible” (BI). One specific example of an imposed policy that consumes time that could be better used elsewhere is in the handling of paperwork; Gardaí “are also often required to keep duplicate paper records. This is slow and inefficient, it consumes time that should be spent on the front line and most importantly it compromises the potential effectiveness of their service to the public” (FP).

Of particular note during the Smithwick Tribunal, which followed two previous inquiries into the same matter, was the idea that had the previous investigators been given the appropriate time to conduct their investigations then the third and final, and most expensive, investigation would not have been necessary. Similar circumstances were evident in the other two tribunals studied for this research, both of which cost extreme amounts of money to the state for conducting<sup>41</sup>. Though time is one resource associated with perhaps the unnecessary need for further tribunals, there is also the notion that the subpar investigation during the initial inquiries into wrongdoing were purposefully done as dictated by the culture in prioritising the good reputation of the organisation over accountability; a facet of the culture that will be explored more in depth in a later section.

On a 10-point survey scale stating “At An Garda Síochána I have access to the right resources to help me do my job”, received a score of only 3.8 (CA). While acknowledged that there are “common challenges also faced by the Garda Síochána that may impact on the ability to deliver effective services. [Of which] include reduced budgets, decreased staffing levels and increased public demand for services” it was also noted that “additional resources to support a new policy are not always provided” (IR).

There is currently a shortage of available sergeants and this will need to be rectified. The sergeant level is a critical element in any police service, even more so where the front line is to be the primary focus for policing. It is also

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<sup>41</sup> The economic burden the culture creates could be a substantial piece of research in its own right, and as such, will not be discussed in any depth in this thesis.

critical to performance management. The same applies to the inspector rank, where there also appears to be a shortage, or at least a shortage of inspectors in the right places. (FP)

This re-assessment would have residual morale, economic, and community relation benefits for the organisation. However, it would seem that over the 30-year period, not only have the issues not been dealt with in an appropriate manner, they have also been exacerbated by increased strains and responsibilities that come with an ever-increasing population and advancement of technology that brings with it new crimes to be monitor and be responsible for.

### The Haves and the Have Nots

In addition to there being a general lack of resources, or outdated resources, available to the Gardaí, there is also favouritism shown throughout the organisation of who gets what resources and from this who can access certain training, and ultimately, promotions. “Nepotism and having the right sponsor are seen as integral to promotion, access to training, access to transfers etc.” (CA). Further, “the Inspectorate observed that in some units, one person was allocated a vehicle, as opposed to it being pooled for use by other members in the same unit” (IR). As was demonstrated in the history chapter, Gardaí had a historical aversion to the Gaeltacht areas that would have been primarily if not predominantly in the non-metropolitan areas of the country in Ireland. This was in part because of the perception that these areas were the less desired areas that led to less interesting police work and less chance of future promotions. Though Ireland has modernised in the decades since this observation, there is still a link between under resourcing rural areas leading to less people wanting to be assigned in those areas.

As observed in the data, though not necessarily dictated by it being a Gaeltacht area, these “down the country” areas are now known as areas of even less resources than the larger cities, such as Dublin, would have. Though it is understandable that less resources might be necessary, based on sheer necessity, there are cases where there are no systems in place for Gardaí to perform their jobs effectively; systems which are available elsewhere in the country. “In Dublin, Cork, Galway, Waterford and Limerick, when a call is received it is recorded on our Call Aided Dispatch (CAD) system which enables us to track each call to a conclusion. CAD is not currently available to the entire organisation” (MR). Also, many “national” response units (e.g. the Emergency Response Unit) and/or teams are headquartered, if not solely operated, within Dublin. If the organisation chooses where Gardaí are sent upon graduating from the Garda College in Templemore, the message sent to the Gardaí placed in an area the organisation will not even provide with basic resources to is that they do not matter, or at the very least, have less inherent value than those sent to well-resourced areas.

This structurally created valuation of the members of the organisation can then impact how they perform their jobs and how they themselves value members of the community. In this regard, both outward manifestations of behaviour stem from the organisation's culture set by structurally instituted policies of member assignment and mismanagement of resources. The lack of scarce resources can prevent Gardaí from performing their duties to the best of their ability which can then impact the services the public receive from the organisation. Indeed, "police responding to calls have to use radio communications to receive information from dispatchers because they have no in-vehicle or mobile devices to access, or record data" (FP). If the Gardaí are unable to do their jobs well with the lack of resources they have to operate with, it is understandable that the public would have less trust in their ability to do their jobs.

As a further understanding of how the organisation values its members, or rather how the organisation has continued to disregard its members concerns over an extended period that has impacted on their morale, something as seemingly simple as a uniform change, though no doubt impactful economically, has been a point of contention within the organisation for many years. While there are physical health related issues associated with this practice, the organisations structural policies that continue to regulate such practices, despite repeated concerns voiced by members over the observation period, imply an inherent disregard for their members wellbeing, in this sense physically, but also mentally as will be discussed further in a later section.

Though changing every members' uniform overnight would be a near impossibility and is acknowledged as logistically nonsensical, there has been no attempt of change or acceptance of member recommendations surrounding them for many years. The uniform has been considered not fit for purpose; particularly boots that are not suitable for extended wear and a concentration of weight around the waist. Indeed, "the boots aren't fit for walking - people have problem with their physical health from the uniforms and the belts" (CA). Additionally, throughout the documents analysed there was an emphasis on uniforms being a long-standing issue, yet in no time during the observation period have they been changed. Providing your organisation's members with adequate footwear when they are required to be on their feet for extended periods would seem to be a non-issue, yet the Garda finds themselves in this very situation.

However, as with vehicles, the uniform continues to be a challenge for many members. Members consistently expressed concerns over what they feel is the uniform's lack of comfort and practicality in the field. They cited issues as simple as stab/ballistic and protective vests that did not have pockets or a holder for equipment, such as pepper spray, radios or notebooks. There were



also issues raised about the need for improved uniforms that keep members comfortable in all weather conditions. (IR)

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The basics of a fit for purpose uniform was brought forward unprompted in the focus groups (it was not one of the themes explicitly explored). This is seen as something that could quickly have a positive impact on morale whilst also addressing operational effectiveness and health and safety concerns. The uniform today is being perceived as a real life example of how the organisation and senior leadership do not care about the wellbeing of the members of An Garda Síochána operating on the ground in very difficult circumstances. (CA)

Uniforms were but one of the issues brought up repeatedly in the data; another continuous issue was in relation to patrol vehicles. In reference to patrol vehicles, both quantity and quality, but more so safety of the Gardaí and the ability to effectively engage with the community, were discussed.

There was an acute shortage of front line police...an issue that arose in every one of our public meetings and in many submissions from the public [was that] people want a more visible police presence on the streets and in communities...[however] it was not the number of police stations that mattered so much as having enough police and vehicles to cover the district. (FP)

Further, there were questions of “vehicle allocation decisions and concerns over whether some vehicles are fit for purpose” (IR). While “previous Inspectorate reports have addressed vehicle issues and recommendations have been made for improvements to the fleet from an efficiency and effectiveness perspective” (IR), the lack of response and/or change seen surrounding this issue would indicate it has not been made a priority by the organisation. These two aspects, among others, demonstrate a sustained organisational disregard for its members and this in turn can affect their ability to perform the job to the degree that is required and affect overall member morale.

‘[There is a] total lack of resources...All patrol vehicles are very poor, they are essentially family cars with a yellow stripe and a blue light. (We need proper made patrol cars, vans, etc.). Tasers are vital. Pepper spray is outdated.’ ‘The IT system is antiquated and out of date ... improving our IT, our systems, and channels of communication needs to become a priority for the government.’ ‘General comments on stab vests – haven’t been fitted since when first given

in Templemore, the boots aren't fit for walking - people have problem with their physical health from the uniforms and the belts.' (CA)

## Mental Health

The Garda Síochána has a mental health well-being programme in place known as the Garda Employee Assistance Service (GEAS). The GEAS is staffed by thirteen employees. Three employees are based at Garda Headquarters and the others are assigned within the regions. While not counsellors, they are trained in supportive practices and can facilitate connection to further support if needed. Supervisors cannot directly refer personnel to the service, but may make contact with it to advise of their concerns for a certain individual. If the GEAS deems it appropriate, they will contact the person concerned. There is no mandatory requirement to engage with the service and a contacted member can refuse assistance. (IR)

Within the data the reception and provisions for mental health supports seem bleak at best. As already discussed, Gardaí are under immense pressure with added responsibilities and less resources to achieve them. This pressure often goes unrecognised by the organisation with ever more responsibilities being devolved down to the street level Gardaí and no added supports to cope with whatever may happen in the course of their jobs.

The uniformed or regular Gardaí and other colleagues in specialist units feel that uniformed units have been 'forgotten' or left behind by the organisation. Strong sentiments were expressed that the work of regular units is not valued or recognised, the units are under resourced and are operating under high levels of pressure. (CA)

Though there is peer support provided to the members of the Garda, it is just that, peer support. Support given by "trained" Gardaí, not mental health professionals. With the known attached stigma of seeking mental health support within policing organisations, it does not make sense that Gardaí would then have to seek out their own to get help. If seeking help can be seen as a detriment to advancing your career, then it is only natural officers would not seek out someone within their own organisation to get help. Though peer support is helpful, it should not be the relied upon option for mental health related issues as it has become in the Garda.

Leaders and supervisors have a key role to play in supporting members of staff who deal with a traumatic incident and to ensure that the person receives immediate and suitable support. The Inspectorate was informed that many members have dealt with incidents that have had a profound effect on them and have been sent home without a supervisor checking that they are in receipt of the necessary assistance. (IR)

There were several recommendations throughout the observation period of increasing what supports are already available as well as creating new ones. Though the recommendations go back several years, there are still improvements to be made.

2016 will see the establishment of an Independent 24-7 Counselling Service for all members of An Garda Síochána including reserves and staff. The counselling will include a telephone and referral service which will allow for six face-to-face counselling sessions for each person. The service will provide counselling on a wide range of work and personal related issues including, but not limited to, critical incidents, trauma, financial, relationship, addiction, bereavement, stress, conflict, and health issues. (MR)

As a reflective approach to the type of methodology chosen, considering the claims made from the earlier reports, and the above mentioned target of a 2016 counselling service being implemented, a later document has noted the contrary.

Wellness also [still] appears to be an area of comparative neglect in An Garda Síochána. Good employers everywhere, including police services, have been paying increasing attention to wellness for some years. While An Garda Síochána has a welfare office, it currently lacks a proactive wellness programme, although we understand one is in development. (FP)

Mental health provisions within the Garda still need to be improved, but this will most likely not happen even with provision of more mental health services as members will still avoid seeking help until there is a cultural shift that does not stigmatise seeking such help.

## Conclusion

This chapter has been just the beginning in the story constructed to better understand the organisational culture of the Garda. As such, this chapter outlined the initial entry and early years of Gardaí and their reception and adjustment into the organisation and its culture. Giving this perspective, containing the structurally embedded policies and actions that dictate how organisational members are treated within the organisation,

provides an understanding of how and why Gardaí feel and behave the way they do in the organisation. These behaviours are directly influenced by the organisation's structures, and thus constitute the culture of the organisation both in what causes the behaviour as well as how the behaviour is perpetuated, by way of unchanging policies and structures at a top level, from older to newer members.

The Garda have long since held a public commitment to a community policing style, but as explored in this chapter, when looking at actual implementation, particularly over the 30 year observation period, this public commitment does not manifest into actual behaviour and this behaviour is driven by an organisational drive away from community policing as well as how they are trained into the organisation. How the members have been brought into the organisation is significant in the priming of their knowledge of the culture as well as in how they enact that culture once fully brought into the organisation. Not only this, but there is still an unconscious push toward the use of the term force when referring to the organisation. As discussed in this chapter, the use of this term goes beyond just a word choice to look at a more inherent understanding of who and what the organisation represent.

Further to this understanding, the resources provided to the Garda, or really the poor management of these resources, have impacted the way in which the ground level Gardaí view the organisation. The various ways in which the organisation has managed both its resources and its members have led to a perceived feeling of being undervalued which is compounded by an increased expectation in responsibilities with no increased levels of support or resources. While some of the aspects discussed may seem trivial or rather small in nature when compared to some of the larger systemic issues presented in this thesis, such as the issues around uniforms or patrol cars, they serve to show a continued disregard for Gardaí input and an under appreciation of the organisation's best resource, the people. All of this is then paired with a hazy and shifting idea of what it is Gardaí should be doing, both on the part of the Gardaí not knowing what they should be doing as well as the community expecting too much from the Gardaí, leads to more work related complications.

When discussing the Garda's orientation toward community policing, it is possible to look at it from a comparative perspective. The Garda do seem to be closer to their communities than perhaps other policing organisations internationally, and this could possibly be construed as a positive thing. However, when considering this close (or at least closer comparatively) relationship it is also important to consider the organisation's involvement and in what ways it facilitates this closeness. In the case of the Garda, the organisation, as outlined in this chapter, has not fully supported the Gardaí in their community policing tasks, and this leaves the Gardaí under resourced, overwhelmed, and ultimately unable to cope properly. While the idea of community, discussed both in this chapter as well as the previous chapters, typically is associated with positive aspects of policing, there is an argument to be made that this is not the case for the Garda. In the Irish

context, having this close relationship with the community has caused more issues for the Gardaí because of the lack of resources provided at an organisational level to adequately provide community resources. This overburdening is then met with a lack of structural provision for coping with the added stresses of the job, compounding the negative aspects of this close relationship with the community further. These complications are compounded by the findings presented in the next chapters, and from this, the contextual background for how the following findings have manifested are borne.

However, while all of the findings presented in this chapter are important, they also matter in setting up the following chapters. What has been presented in this chapter begins to pave the way for understanding how the facets of the culture, as discussed in the following two chapters, have been allowed to flourish. What was presented in this chapter provides the organisational climate, and structure for the organisation's culture, to better understand the rest of the organisation's culture as presented next. As part of the overall story, we have looked at the Gardaí's initial reception into the organisation, and now we turn to their intermediary time in the organisation in how they navigate the internal and external relationships that are unique to policing organisations and the Garda more particularly.

## Chapter 6 The Bonds That Link Us

### Introduction

Much as in the previous chapter, every section in this chapter was created to tell a piece of the story. As such, each piece of the story is necessary in order to both understand what came previously and to more fully understand what comes next. From the previous chapter, it was imparted that the structural processes and components of the organisation, including the initial training and socialisation the Gardaí receive, mediate Gardaí behaviour and thus impact the organisation's culture. The previous chapter discussed how the Gardaí are brought in to the organisation and the lasting impact this has on the culture. The story brought you through the initial steps of becoming a member of the Garda, and what this means for the organisation's culture as the members are the carriers and passers on of that culture.

From there, this chapter picks up the story with both the type of relationships the Gardaí are expected to navigate as well as how these relationships function. From these relationships stem a sense of alienation on the part of the Gardaí. The sense of alienation within the organisation's culture is present on two fronts and can be divided by the general directions in which the alienation is directed from the Gardaí perspective; internally and externally. The combination of these two facets of the organisation leads to a unique position of street level Gardaí being precariously doubly alienated as individuals. The Gardaí face alienation from the public by the inherent separation between the two; however, they also face internal alienation within the organisation when they do not conform to the normal behaviour as dictated by the culture. Both the internal and external relations will be discussed in this chapter in their own right, but how these two together impact Gardaí, the forementioned double alienation, will be discussed further in the conclusions.

### Internal Relations

There is an internal divide present in the Garda that has emerged, if not entirely at least more dominantly, in more recent years as indicated by the data. This internal divide is present on two fronts. In one respect it is present between the sworn and non-sworn members, a trend that has emerged in more recent international research specifically looking at the increased civilianisation of modern police forces, and the other between upper and lower level members of the organisation; however, this research will focus only on the divide between sworn members. From within the sworn members, "a silo culture has also emerged. While not unique to An Garda Síochána it was felt that there is a 'them and us' feeling across the organisation. The Garda ranks feel siloed from the senior ranks as do the Sergeants also" (CA). Very simply, as demonstrated by the data, the street level Gardaí feel

separated from the upper levels and office-based members of the organisation. Further, “the top heaviness of an organisation is a key determinant of culture, leading as it does to a ‘them and us’ mentality rather than a team one” (FP). In this way, the organisation prioritising those higher up has also led to a feeling of separation between the two levels; and this is further demonstrated in the below extract from the data.

Non office based Gardaí tend to view the senior leadership and the wider management in Garda HQ, as more disconnected from the organisation and the realities on the ground. They typically have a more negative view than those who work in offices. This may be attributed to the fact that they are more geographically remote in many instances, from senior management. Gardaí who work on the regular units, in particular, felt that they are disconnected from leadership and that leadership need to spend more time understanding and appreciating the complexities and realities of front line roles. This disconnection and limited visibility is being interpreted as a lack of regard for front line staff members. (CA)

This disconnect between management and front line officers was discussed in chapter three, whereby it was felt management had been too far removed from the job to understand the current day to day realities officers face; this concept being reflected in the Garda from the data above. Further to this, not only is there a distinct absence of supervisory Gardaí to oversee the lower level Gardaí, particularly in the more remote regions, there is also a feeling of little upward communication regarding upper level management taking on board recommendations and/or suggestions given from the ground. From this stems a feeling of distrust between the two groups, as demonstrated below.

Lack of two way trust – from the focus groups there was an underlying sense of people not feeling valued by the organisation and recognised for the difficult jobs they do under very challenging circumstances. Members of the organisation feel they have limited visibility of their leadership, nor do they have the means to communicate with them. (CA)

Further, “there is also a perception from many staff that they only see a senior manager if a problem arises” (IR) which “is all the more extraordinary, given the high ratio of senior management in An Garda Síochána, that we were told many times on our station visits that senior officers were distant and rarely seen” (FP). Because of this, there is a feeling of disconnect between both levels in that the upper level management do not understand the day to day realities of policing. This is in part because in order for a Gardaí

to be promoted, they must move away from the front line and by that very step remove themselves from the realities of day to day policing as discussed previously. When members are asked directly their thoughts on this separation, there was a very clear understanding of being separated from the top levels; “I feel that senior leadership in HQ have forgotten what it’s like to be on the streets, more interested in dealing with stakeholders, media. Regional leadership is a bit more in touch but still expecting too much of members on the frontline” and further, “everybody from Inspector up should spend at least two Saturday nights on patrol, answering calls, each year! They might then partially realize the difficulties faced!” (CA). In sum, “there was an overall perception as to a lack of visibility and a sense of disconnection” (CA) between the two groups within the organisation.

From this disconnect stems a feeling, as taken from the Gardaí who participated in the various collections of data throughout the documents, of overwhelmingly feeling a sense of being undervalued by the organisation. This feeling of being undervalued also has a negative impact on morale. Indeed, “every organisational culture is affected by how well the organisation treats its own people. An Garda Síochána leaves much to be desired in that regard...morale is commonly described as being ‘on the floor’” (FP). There are very clear statements from the data of organisational members feeling undervalued, as exemplified in the extract below.

Time and again we found that front line Gardaí felt themselves to be at the bottom of a hierarchical, overly bureaucratic organisation that did not listen to them. One Garda told us he felt he should be wearing a school uniform rather than a police one as the organisation treated him like a child. (FP)

The general disconnect between the two levels can also be an explanation of many of the odd juxtapositions in the organisation. Gardaí feel they are being watched over more because there is a lack of trust in them; indeed, “the sense we are getting from members is that they are under real pressure to document and demonstrate compliance and they believe that this is based on a fundamental lack of trust by management in them” (CA). However, they also feel like there is an absence of supervisory Gardaí, as demonstrated above, and yet again there is a lack of accountability seen on a large scale within the Garda, as analysed further in the next chapter; all of which would seem to contradict one another in principle and practice. The Gardaí both feel as if they are alienated by the organisation while also facing, at least perceived, levels of increased monitoring. The upper part of the organisation do not communicate well with the ground level Gardaí, yet those same Gardaí feel as if their discretion is being taken away from them and there is increased intense scrutiny into what they do.



The most reasonable explanation derived from the data then is a complete lack of connection between the upper and lower levels of the organisation that allow for such a stark contrast in viewpoint. Indeed, it was noted that “there is a gulf between Gardaí and senior managers” (IR) indicating that the divide is felt in the organisation. Though this research is not interested in understanding the “true” reality of the situation, but rather how it is manifested in the social context in which it is situated, what is “true” or perhaps more true in this situation is not as important as the overall disconnect found between the two and the effects this disconnect has as demonstrated from the data.

### Loyalty Among Us

There was a solidarity among Gardaí if it was against the public, but not if the struggle was internal to the organisation, though the latter will be discussed further in the following section. Where, exactly, the line is drawn within the organisation, the data would suggest, lies between those who act ethically and those who do not. Though it is possible this sample is skewed as those who would have been involved in these investigations that led to the documents in the first place would have been included for a reason; namely that something had gone wrong and they were somehow involved. Nonetheless, this is what the data indicates. Indeed, “there is always a temptation in organisations which operate on the basis of a shared uniform and identity to treat the public as other, and consequently not to be seen as being entitled to honesty when one of their number is called to account” (CT); however, this considered, personal loyalty still outweighs organisational loyalty; “there is a closed culture, a culture of personal loyalty as opposed to organisational loyalty” (IR).

The integrity of and confidence in An Garda Síochána can properly be maintained only if suggestions of inappropriate or illegal conduct by members are taken seriously, transparently and thoroughly investigated and, above all, not tolerated or ignored on the basis of some misguided sense of loyalty to the force or to its members. (ST)

There is a loyalty in the organisation shown by the Gardaí, but to whom is not as clear until further analysis. There is less of a loyalty to the organisation or colleagues and more so to yourself. As found in the data, self-preservation was ranked above organisational loyalty and this is in part because of the blame culture present in the organisation. Indeed, “other focus groups at various ranks echoed this view that due to their perception of a blame culture, people focused on ‘self-preservation’ rather than acting as befitting their rank and responsibility” (IR).

The notion of acting on trust is predicated on the idea that the person they are placing their trust in is acting in good faith, though in some instances perhaps they do not believe this nor care about it. “This friendship and camaraderie is rooted in a great sense of

trust that colleagues will carry out their duties and responsibility” (CA). There was also a near expectation of fellow Gardaí being taken for their word and doing what was asked of them without question, in certain instances Gardaí would take advantage of this and lie about their purposes knowing no questions would be asked of them. This “misguided sense of loyalty” (IR) led to many instances of misconduct documented throughout the data.

A specific example that was indicative of other common scenarios in the organisation was presented in the data.

However, when the four Gardaí arrived from the NBCI to assist in the investigation in December 1996, they did not know that Robert Noel McBride’s statement was a lie. It was presented to them by senior officers leading the investigation as an important statement which had been furnished by a reliable witness. They were entitled to rely on what they were told by the officers. (MT)

There was also a nearly blind faith in supervisors that was seemingly unmerited, most notably “it’s not for me to question the Garda Commissioner” (CT). Especially given that, as discussed in this chapter, supervisory officers are also performing negative behaviour; as would be expected since it is systemic and propagated by the organisation’s culture.

Ultimately, however, while observing when using trust as a reason for lack of action, it was often as an excuse for not performing their jobs to the level expected. In actuality, the Gardaí were not “acting on trust” because they truly believed what their colleague was doing merited the action based on trust, but rather because they did not want to perform their jobs properly. “Question[:] What did Leo Colton tell you the passports were for? Answer[:] I suspected there was something wrong with them but I never challenged him about it. I knew they were funny but I definitely did not challenge him about it. I do not know why” (ST). In this way, loyalty was used as an excuse for not taking responsibility for their actions and laziness prevailed over loyalty. This observation was possible because of the background context as well as the scenarios that were present in the documents that allowed this wider inference to be made. From analysing the data in this way, the misconstrued excuse of loyalty was found and the reasoning behind it stemmed from a different facet of the culture than initially perceived or presented in the documents. Not accepting responsibility or accountability, or laziness around doing their duties properly, was the underlying reason for what was ultimately labelled as loyalty. Though ultimately mislabelled, the illusion of loyalty would not extend to even surface levels if the conflict was between and/or among the Gardaí rather than outside of the organisation, which is where the next section picks up.

## “Silence Means Survival<sup>42</sup>”

In addition to ground level Gardaí feeling alienated from the upper ranks, as discussed previously, an added layer of ostracization that may occur, per Social Identity Theory, if an individual Gardaí does not conform to the social norms of the organisation is that they are then left on their own even within their own rank. As such, as ascertained from the data, Gardaí who chose not to act unethically were singled out as an “other” which is reflective of what the culture as a collective value. This was seen most clearly in the nearly organisation wide alienation of Maurice McCabe throughout the events leading up to the Charleton Tribunal; his persistence in calling out organisational issues labelled him as a trouble maker that tainted him in the eyes of fellow Gardaí. Maurice McCabe, a Sergeant (at the time of the Tribunal) in the Garda and the Charleton Tribunal will be referenced quite often in the following section in relation to how the organisation manages whistleblowers as well as how this impacts the already present internal divide within the organisation; as such, it is important to first outline the allegations Maurice McCabe made so that it is understood what exactly the organisation and its members were reacting to.

In addition to this, Maurice McCabe complained of a failure to correctly use the PULSE computer system by gardaí. He complained of offences being detected but not prosecuted within the statutory time limit or at all; of summonses or charges not issuing despite offenders admitting their guilt; of incidents being mis-described as criminal when they were not; of the mis-description of individuals as suspects when there was no evidence to support that categorisation; of negative drug searches being entered on the system as if positive; of the wrongful inflation of crime figures through the manipulation of the system; of incorrect narrative entries; of incorrect updates; of corruptly updating the system in order to cover up wrongdoing; and of a failure to independently investigate his complaints.

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During that year and in subsequent years, Maurice McCabe became disturbed as to the level of inefficiency and lack of application by gardaí within the district in which he served. The particular issues have been summarised above in the context of the O’Higgins Commission and essentially involve a range of investigations into offences which occurred between February and December 2007. His official complaints started in January 2008 with a meeting with Superintendent Michael Clancy to discuss issues as to poor investigations, files not being completed, lack of supervision, PULSE records failing to be created for incidents, calls not being attended to, gardaí reading newspapers

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<sup>42</sup> (CA).

and watching television rather than attending to the public office, and inadequate investigation of reported incidents. (CT)

Though the idea of loyalty to one another discussed above has elements that are supported by the data, what the data presented on a deeper level was a slightly different picture. It was not perceived that the Gardaí were remaining silent because of a loyalty to their fellow members or to their organisation, but because of a system that makes it difficult to speak up and the path of least resistance involves staying quiet, as demonstrated by the trials faced by Maurice McCabe. To this end, why members choose silence over speaking up is seen in the structures set up for reporting and/or reprimanding poor behaviour that cause unnecessary delays. The issues around the process, and what effects the process has on members, while lengthy, is laid out below.

It is important that all complaints should be followed up in a timely fashion, not only as a service to the complainant but also to the police service members who are the object of complaints. An investigation is less likely to get to the truth if delayed. It is also unfair to keep someone waiting who may be innocent of blame, or responsible for a genuine error calling for guidance rather than punishment. (FP)

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Those gardaí accused of ill-discipline should be subject to correction by senior officers without the need to resort to the elaborate structures set up that constitute what is in effect a private trial using procedures akin to our criminal courts. A simplified structure is called for. Private industry uses a system of simply taking a statement of what is wrong, passing it to the employee and considering any response offered. As Mr Justice Morris recommended, that could be used together with an appeal system within police structures. (CT)

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The discipline process as it currently exists is far too technical. Garda discipline rules should be supplemented with open-ended obligations and breach of these should invoke a simplified disciplinary code. Currently, it is far too easily impeded by court applications. The evidence is in this report. It is obvious. Citizens have a right to access the courts and gardaí are no different. They are different, however, in the elaborate nature of the disciplinary code and in the consequent invitation that it poses to resort to legal challenges in what should primarily be a disciplinary structure. Such challenges are far too easily commenced under our system. Once commenced, years of delay result. As to judicial reviews to challenge garda discipline, these should be subject to the

same strictures as planning reviews. The G test, which allows a judicial review to be taken simply on the presentation of a barely arguable case, should be replaced by a test which requires substantial grounds to be shown before any notice of motion seeking judicial review can be issued. (CT)

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Unconsciously, an internal police inquiry may fail to come to an entirely appropriate conclusion. This may be because of unconscious protection of each other by those under investigation. They should not stand up for each other. The attitude of our police force, of all of our public service, has to be that of duty to the public, to victims of crime, and to the taxpayer. Duty to Ireland is above group loyalty. That lesson badly needs to be learned by our police force. (CT)

From the above extracts from the data, it becomes more clear why someone may choose to stay silent rather than facing the process<sup>43</sup>, and possible repercussions, of speaking up.

'Don't speak up, don't rock the boat, don't be different, don't look to change things, don't be controversial - if you do any of these...you'll get nothing only grief.' (CA)

On a more concrete level, as with the organisation's reaction to whistleblowers, there is an observed practice of alienating Gardaí from the organisation if they speak out against it. Whistleblowing is an interesting phenomenon in policing organisations, but particularly within the Garda. Intimidation was spoken of previously from an external point of view, but when perpetrated by the organisation, intimidation was employed to keep a Gardaí from speaking up about wrongdoing that has occurred for fear of negative repercussions for them within the organisation. Accordingly, "participants [Gardaí] of the focus groups felt that they were willing to speak up, but that generally those who do are perceived as a 'nuisance' or 'problem person' when they do" and junior members in particular, "do not wish to highlight issues, problems because they feel it will effect (sic.) their careers and (be) looked negatively at" (CA).

As seen in specific reference to the data, many members perceive that speaking up within the organisation against wrongdoing would lead to negative repercussions for them later in their careers. Though this specific phenomenon will be explored in depth in the next chapter, the intimidation felt from the organisation in this context serves to show the organisation's members that this behaviour is tolerated if not expected. The word perceived was used previously, done purposefully, this word aims to show that whether this threat is

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<sup>43</sup> A more thorough understanding of the disciplinary procedures process can be seen in (D. P. J. Walsh, 1998).

real or imagined, it still serves its purpose of keeping Gardaí concerned enough about their future in the organisation that they will choose to not speak up. The organisation intimidating its members is transmitted downward, and as such, placing blame on one “rotten apple” for something done is no longer valid.

Further to the structural issues around speaking up, the organisation doing what it can to keep credible members from speaking out against the organisation is a facet of the culture that has not changed over time. Reflecting on the events of 1989, when evidence was withheld, or Gardaí chose to not speak out about wrongdoing, in order to maintain the reputation of the organisation, “this suggests that there is an ingrained culture of prioritising loyalty to the good name of the force over the legal, moral and ethical obligation owed to give truthful evidence to the Tribunal” (ST). The data would suggest this behaviour was present during the initial investigations in 1989, in the mid-late 2000s when the Smithwick Tribunal investigations were conducted, and still now with the latest findings of the Charleton Tribunal. Though more recent documents have acknowledged a need for change in the organisation’s culture that would actually be beneficial to the organisation, in reality, meaningful change in this regard has not occurred during the 30 year period.

Much of this lack of change can be attributed to a fear of speaking out, or whistleblowing, about wrongdoing, thus inhibiting any change therein. The very wording of the term whistleblowing implies that something wrong is happening. Yet, often, whistleblowing in a policing context is nothing more than speaking out about organisational wrongdoing; something that should not be considered inherently scandalous or sensationalised if the organisation treats the claims appropriately and reacts in a timely manner. However, within the Garda this is the very climate they find themselves in.

People feel they are encouraged, at a team/local level, to speak up (6.5) but that there is not necessarily the required support for colleagues when they do so (5.3) nor are colleagues treated fairly when they do (4.8). This may indicate that while people feel they can speak up personally if they really had to, they would choose not to, because of the lack of a supportive environment within An Garda Síochána. (CA)

The concept of staying silent, at first, did not make sense within the data. Why would the Gardaí not speak up? However, throughout the observation period, there is a fear of retaliatory measures, namely alienation, when it comes to speaking out against wrongdoing within the Garda which was instituted through intimidation from the organisation. The culture does not encourage speaking out, nor does it support Gardaí if what they say, however true, makes the organisation look bad or taint the good name of the Garda. There were repeated documented instances throughout the 30-year period where Gardaí were left fully

unsupported, if not attacked, by the organisation if they chose to speak against it. The organisational and member reaction to whistleblowing is well exemplified in the following, “the fact that the person calling the police to account, thus involving a direct criticism of other serving police officers...generated considerable animosity towards him” (CT). Further, “this suggests to me that there prevails in An Garda Síochána today a prioritisation of the protection of the good name of the force over the protection of those who seek to tell the truth. Loyalty is prized above honesty” (ST).

Indicative of how the organisation has in the past, and continues to, treat Gardaí who speak against the organisation, Justice Smithwick noted, “I would have thought he is as deserving of the support of the Garda Commissioner as any other former officer. However, it seems to me that because he was giving evidence of which An Garda Síochána did not approve, such support was not forthcoming” (ST). Further, “the vile stories that circulated about [Sergeant] McCabe, which were promoted by senior officers in the Garda, were absolutely appalling. Because they attempted to discredit him, he had to bring forward various pieces of strong, firm evidence to protect his integrity” (CT). The message sent by this practice is very clear, do not speak against the organisation or you will be cast out. This then creates a culturally transmitted value of silence for survival. With the value placed on silence, misconduct can continue in the organisation. Though this structurally stems from the whistleblower phenomena in the Garda, its effects will be discussed more in depth below.

The culture creates an environment where only the most egregious accounts of wrongdoing would have to occur for Gardaí to even consider coming forward. This, of course, creates a toxic environment that breeds potential for further wrongdoing to continue and/or escalate. Superior officers have even recognised a culture of discouraging speaking up within the organisation, yet they are the ones who in part contribute to this. In essence, “we can condense the unwillingness to speak up to two main drivers, futility and fear” (CA). Gardaí feel as if even if they were to speak out, nothing would be done, and in this same process it can also prove detrimental to their career progression. If Gardaí fear repercussions that can affect their careers for doing something that will most likely make no change anyway, there is no question as to why they would choose not to do so.

Organisational retaliation against Gardaí who do speak out has been documented and is more than just a perception within the organisation. This observation goes beyond just the Charleton Tribunal which has already been discussed, thus cementing as an element of the organisation’s culture. “Without it ever having been put to Mr Curran on behalf of the Garda Commissioner that he was lying or mistaken, questions were asked of both him and other witnesses which, in my view, were clearly designed to cast doubt over his evidence” (ST). An added benefit of document analysis, though already outlined in the methodology chapter, are the included quoted dialogue in tribunal reports. In this way there

is an objective observation of events that can be studied over a larger time period while also including what are essentially interview transcripts. The interview transcripts contributed an added value of essentially experiencing first-hand how the organisation reacted to whistleblowers. As exemplified above, the character and credibility of any Gardaí speaking against the Garda were questioned in an attempt to alleviate pressure from the organisation for any wrongdoing it had committed. This will be looked at more in depth in the next chapter but nonetheless implies a culturally structural approach to how the Garda treat their members and how they value Gardaí.

One of the subsequent issues regarding this alienation toward Gardaí if they do speak out is in relation to how promotions have previously been done in the organisation. Transparency regarding promotions within the Garda has been a process of contention throughout the observation period. Though it changed slightly in 2017, with the Policing Authority taking over the promotions process, there is still a prevalence of who you know being more important than merit or truth when it comes to who is promoted in the organisation. Indeed, “a cultural shift requiring respect for the truth is needed. The system of promotions within An Garda Síochána is also thereby thrown into sharp, and not always complimentary, focus” (CT).

As has been stated before, whether this promotions process is real or perceived by organisational members is irrelevant; the mere perception of this lack of transparency can affect Gardaí performance and mentality toward the job and their responsibilities. Indeed, when speaking of the perception vs reality paradox, “real or not, this view has created disillusionment and resentment across the organisation” (CA). This phenomenon, if even only a perception, leads to Gardaí being unwilling to speak out against wrongdoing for fear of it impacting their ability to be promoted later in their career. Further, the lack of transparency in the promotions process and choosing candidates based on connection rather than appropriateness for the role can promote the wrong people into oversight positions which both sustains and increases the problems already experienced.

Particularly relevant for the transmission of this behaviour throughout the organisation is that those who display such behaviour may later be promoted, and thus show other Gardaí as well as new Gardaí that not only is this behaviour tolerated but can lead to promotions as well. Indeed, “breaches of the law and of regulations may be tolerated generally, giving rise to those promoted lacking the authority of their status as commanders due to being seen to be not necessarily fit for command” (CT). It would be perfectly reasonable for an incoming Gardaí to observe such behaviour and think that it is appropriate and acceptable for them to follow as well. This message is even further cemented into the working culture of incoming Gardaí if they see colleagues who have displayed such behaviour in the past be promoted. In fact, it may even be perceived that in order to be promoted, this type of behaviour is necessary.



There was a specific statement that “dissent shall not be seen as disloyalty” (MR). This discourse would indicate that in the current climate of the Garda, dissent is very much seen as disloyalty and those who speak against the organisation should be treated as such and ostracised; this very scenario being what happened in the events surrounding the Charleton Tribunal even though these recommendations should have, in theory, been at least partially implemented by the time of the Tribunal. Indeed, stated plainly, “animosity continued against [Maurice McCabe], however, from the time when [Maurice McCabe] first made his revelations and over several years. While many individual witnesses have sworn to this tribunal that they had no problem with him, or similar expressions, this background must nonetheless be always borne in mind” (CT). Further back, there was a three-tier recommendation, “people who come forward their promotional prospects will not be jeopardised. 2. Will not be subject to disciplinary action as a result. 3. Won't be discriminated against” (MT). Again, here the discourse would indicate that this was very much the cultural climate the organisation created during this time, and also again, these recommendations should have, in theory, been implemented by the time of the most recent document studied, which they were not.

## External Relations

Within the literature on policing organisations there is a documented isolation of police officers from members of the public. Within a community policing structure, as the Garda officially commit to having, this strict divide between officers and members of the community should not be present, or at least as apparent. However, as discussed previously, the data would suggest otherwise. Historically, the predecessors of the Garda maintained a very distinct separation between themselves and society, though they may have been integrated physically in it, there was still a distinction between who was a guard and who was an ordinary person. This distinction between the two has been noted in the most recent document analysed, calling to account the divide between the two as well as the accountability necessary to the public even if they view themselves separately.

The organisation must treat their obligation to the public as superior to any false sense that individual policemen and policewomen should stick up for each other. An Garda Síochána must become a place where incompetence is not covered up, where laziness is called to account and where people respect their senior officers. There is always a temptation in organisations which operate on the basis of a shared uniform and identity to treat the public as other, and consequently not to be seen as being entitled to honesty when one of their number is called to account. That attitude has to change. (CT)

In this way, it can be argued that the behaviour demonstrated is linked to structural regimes created by the organisation that then impact officer behaviour. The very separation between sworn members and civilians is created by the organisation. From the training onward the Gardaí are separate to the community. Though the following abstract from the data also speaks to the nature of the impracticalities of the training the Gardaí receive discussed in the previous chapter, it also demonstrates how the Gardaí are separated from the public from the very first stages of their training, both in physical location and who is surrounding them; a facet of the culture that is then carried into everyday practices once the Gardaí have entered the community officially.

The initial 32 week residential phase is long compared with other police services. Both its length and the fact that it is a residential course make it an expensive way to train recruits. The classes there consist entirely of police recruits and the teaching staff are almost all sworn police. From the outset therefore, Garda recruits are set apart from their nonsworn colleagues and other civilians, and a closed culture of separateness begins to develop from that point onwards. (FP)

Though “the community-focused nature of the garda culture has been encouraged since the inception of the organisation [and] its members have a tradition of participation and integration with the life of the communities in which they serve” (IR), from its inception, as discussed in chapter two, they prepared themselves for an uphill battle to forge ties between the community and the organisation. Though many Gardaí have been documented in official transcripts as enjoying their close ties and/or relationships with the communities in which they serve, there is still a noted separation between the two groups that in some instances stems from a lack of trust of the public on the part of the Gardaí. Indeed, “there is a different culture between civilians and members. There is a mistrust of civilians” (IR). Further to this, “An Garda Síochána enjoys respect and affection in communities throughout the country, yet there is also a perceived attitude within the police of being in some way apart from the community rather than a part of it” (FP).

The values espoused in the below text further demonstrate the various ways in which the Gardaí are alienated from the public.

Paradoxically, Gardaí who see themselves as primarily a community policing service at the same time feel alienated from the community. Partly this is the result of the many negative stories about policing that have dominated the media in recent years, leading to tribunals and inquiries (and in part to the establishment of this Commission). Partly it has been exacerbated by the

strain on front line resources and the inability to meet public expectations of their police. These factors have contributed to defensiveness and low morale. (FP)

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Some police can come to believe that they alone understand what their job entails, that the public does not understand or support them, that the only people they can trust are other police, that human rights are an inconvenience that favours wrongdoers, and that loyalty to colleagues should override all other considerations. (FP)

The effect of the Gardaí's mistrust of civilians also extends to a reciprocal feeling of public mistrust of the Garda based on prior interactions. Gardaí would choose to help people if it benefited them to do so. For example, "[Community members when reporting] sometimes receive a very poor or disinterested response when they do so. This discouraged many of them from calling again" (IR). Although there is an emphasis placed on community policing, however ambiguous its practice may be, stories such as the above as well as negative press that surround the organisation has led to a distancing of the organisation from the public; a phenomena that is not curtailed by the unwillingness of the Garda to be transparent in their wrongdoings before a scandal has occurred.

## Aggression

Policing, as understood from the international literature, is characterised by a militaristic, and aggressive, policing style. Conversely, the Garda has a publicly stated identification to a community policing style. In theory, this would indicate a less aggressive policing approach that values community interaction over law enforcement and control. Policing with the people rather than policing of the people. Interestingly, many of the documents selected for analysis were produced, in part, because of circumstances involving misconduct toward and/or against members of the public. A problem that does not reconcile with a community policing ethos. Though this section will have a sole focus on the use of aggression within the Garda, the link between aggression and militaristic policing styles further demonstrates the departure from a community policing model the Garda has taken discussed previously.

Although in the literature evaluating the use of aggression in chapters one and three was concentrated in a physical manner, there are different manifestations of aggression found in the current data that did not conform to an only physical manner; mainly, physical, verbal, and psychological. There were factors for why this research chose the specific time frame for which the documents would span (that time frame being 1989-2019). Primarily due to the legislation change affecting An Garda Síochána's detention practices stemming from the Heavy Gang allegations discussed in chapter two. As also discussed in chapter

two, the Garda has a historical reputation linked to previous policing organisations in Ireland that espoused principles of violent and physically aggressive policing. Though the historic literature was seemingly in line with the international literature, how the Garda has conducted itself from 1989-2019 has shown a divergence in physically aggressive policing; particularly in the last two decades.

This lack of physical aggression was concluded from a lack of data to support any such assertion. Physical violence among Gardaí both toward the public and/or other sworn members was present in the data only scarcely and only in a document stemming from events in the 1990s. That is of course not to say that any unjustified and/or disproportionate acts of physical aggression against members of the public are to be tolerated, but it does demonstrate a shift away from physically aggressive policing within the Garda. Also, not to be overlooked is the possibility that physical aggression does occur but is well hidden within the organisation; however, the notion of continued physical aggression is nonetheless not supported by the data used in this research.

Although coded as abuse in the data and can very much so still be considered as such, for consistency the term psychological aggression will be used going forward. Within this is also including intimidation. This was an offense that was perpetrated by both individual Gardaí and by the organisation; however, only an example from Gardaí toward the public will be given as this behaviour transmitted from the organisation toward a Gardaí will be reserved for the next section. Notwithstanding, the behaviour as manifested by the Gardaí can and will be argued stem from the organisation's behaviour and culture that is transmitted to the members. When perpetrated by an individual, intimidation was used to keep a member of society from speaking up about what could contradict or implicate the Gardaí involved and this in turn can impact on the Garda's relationship with the community. One such example is presented below.

Ultimately, for some reason, a garda officer persuaded the victim to withdraw the complaint of assault and, again, the statement of withdrawal was pre-prepared. Mr Justice O'Higgins found that the gardaí had let down the public so that the trust of the victim and his family in the gardaí was not justified. (CT)

This scenario represents a way to assert power over a "lesser" individual. In this way an individual member of society is subject to the power of the Gardaí and the Gardaí is subject to the power of the organisation. Both would imply that police and policing organisations are above the height of the law and can do, in essence, whatever they want without fear of repercussion. This lack of accountability on both levels that result in psychological aggression is created and embedded into the culture from the top, as will be

shown by the organisation displaying such behaviour, and transmitted downward and socialised into Gardaí as being ok, thus they perform the very same behaviours to who they can assert power over, members of the public.

Although there is no data to support that these acts of psychological aggression are used by all of the approximately 14,000 Gardaí, this is not to suggest that the problem is not cultural. As Rotten Apple Theory would suggest, blaming behaviour such as this on an individual, or small group of individuals, belittles the behaviour being learned from the organisation's culture. The behaviour is systemic and learned by the individuals which then transmits to some members outwardly manifesting the behaviour. Perhaps the shift away from physical aggression toward psychological aggression is a learned tactic for its benefits of being hard to prove; this idea being represented in the below data.

He denied that he kicked Mr. McBrearty Junior at all. He said that he was aware by that time that the interview was being videoed and he would not have kicked the prisoner knowing that the proceedings were being recorded. (MT)

Whether this shift was intentional or not is uncertain, but it does demonstrate the ability to change within the Garda. Whether this change is positive is also debateable, but one of the purposes of this research is to understand the culture and change, not necessarily its positive or negative outcomes. Also, of interest is whether or not the use of aggression, psychological or otherwise, fits within a community policing ethos. There has been many contradictions found in the data between stated commitments to a community policing ethos and observed behaviour, the use of aggressive tactics being but one of them, and it would indicate that the Garda does not, in fact, create a culture that includes a community policing model. That is not to say that there are not Gardaí who do value their relationship with the community, but rather that this value is not cultural and is not inherently transmitted to every member in the organisation.

## Conclusion

This chapter explored the relationships and bonds that both connect and disengage members from each other as well as the communities they serve. Initially looking at the internal relationships, it was found that a systematic approach of silence equating to safety, or survival, within the organisation has become necessary in the Garda and this system was enforced through intimidating tactics used by the organisation toward the Gardaí as well as laterally among lower level Gardaí. The intimidation tactics used at both levels were seen by way of social exclusion of members who chose to speak out as well as organisational barriers to promotions when someone did speak out.

As a variant of staying silent, keeping your head down is an important survival tactic in the organisation, and to do this, one must simply keep quiet about what they see no

matter the consequences. The culture does not allow for speaking up in a safe way; therefore, Gardaí do not, and the problems continue, which will also continue until there is a cultural shift in how speaking out, and accountability in general, are viewed within the Garda. When asked about his experience following the public support and organisationally condemning findings of the Charleton Tribunal, Maurice McCabe said: "If I had known then what was facing me, I would never have done it. Never." Even though Maurice McCabe was ultimately vindicated, this statement would naturally discourage others from coming forward at all in future.

Though coming forward against wrongdoing was a concern prior to the most recent document, the Charleton Tribunal, one of the most concerning implications stems from the findings of this tribunal. Particularly due to the very public nature of the inquiry, the events surrounding the need for the establishment of the Tribunal and the proceedings during the Tribunal served to send a very clear message to Gardaí in how the organisation will manage those who choose to speak out against wrongdoing in the organisation. There is also evidence to suggest that others who were held accountable for their actions, either through direct or indirect connections to allegations from Maurice McCabe, showed increased animosity toward him.

Any Gardaí who sees what has happened to this whistleblower, by both individual Gardaí and by the organisation, would be considered perfectly reasonable for not wanting the same thing to happen to them. This then causes further lapses of accountability and a fear of coming forward to protest such actions. It also important to distinguish that even though individual Gardaí reacted with animosity toward the whistleblower, this is still a learned behaviour from the organisation's culture. If the organisation chooses to discredit and delegitimise whistleblowers who try to hold the organisation accountable, then it would only stand to reason that organisational members will observe and reflect this very behaviour in their own actions by not coming forward and attacking those who do, thus perpetuating problems further.

In an organisation where silence means survival, fear of speaking up keeps both the members and the organisation from being accountable for their own actions if they are not willing to admit to what was done; a facet of the organisation the data would suggest is true. Gardaí are unwilling to admit to their mistakes because there is a perceived fear that it will impact on their career progression; indeed, it was suggested that only Gardaí who no longer aim to be promoted will have the wherewithal to speak out against wrongdoing. This idea is supported within the data whereby only those who had already been promoted went against the collective group agenda when the collective group agenda refused to acknowledge alternative facts that did not support their formed plan of action (BI). Because of this, issues may occur, malicious or accidental, but Gardaí will choose to not admit it and wait to see if

anyone notices. Typically, this makes the problems worse, as the more time that goes by, the more potential for what could have been an honest mistake to spiral and worsen.

Conversely however, this practice of the Garda alienating individual Gardaí, or whistleblowing phenomena, was not observed if what the Gardaí had to say implicated another Gardaí in a negative way, but only if it reflected negatively on the organisation directly. Though this split may seem nonsensical because it has been argued that individual practices are reflective of systemic issues within the organisation, the organisation has not taken this approach and tends to lay blame on individuals where possible to alleviate blame and accountability from the organisation as a whole. In this scenario, alienation goes beyond just ostracising the individual and moves more toward an attack on the person to discredit them and therefore remove pressure from the organisation from taking responsibility for this individual's actions; of which is explored further in the next chapter.

As the natural counter point to the internal alienation found in the organisation, there was also an external alienation present. These conclusions have natural connections to the section discussing community policing found in chapter five, but this focused more on the tangible relationships the Gardaí have with the community rather than an abstracted idea of what community policing entails and whether or not the Garda follow it. While this topic predominantly focuses on the relationships between the Gardaí and the community, the factors impacting these relationships were also explored. In addition to the lack of community orientation, there was also a practice of selective policing found in the data. Additionally, there were instances of cases being entered as more/less severe at the Gardaí's discretion depending on the person involved; the most notable of these examples stemming from the cancellation of mass numbers of penalty points by senior Gardaí based on personal relationships. To further the argument made in chapter five, these practices would support the Garda not following a community policing model. Notwithstanding, there is an argument to be made that the Gardaí do follow a community policing model; however, who the community the Gardaí serve consists of, is defined selectively to the Gardaí. Within this was how different concepts of aggression, particularly the non-physical forms of aggression, have manifested in the organisation and how this behaviour is supported and enabled by the organisation's culture.

This chapter has been a collection of findings in its own right as well as an extension of and prequel to the surrounding chapters as any well-constructed story should be. The unique position of being doubly alienated within the organisation leads into the precarious position in which Gardaí find themselves. Namely learning how to exist in an organisation with little outside support or connections, as demonstrated in both this chapter and chapter five, while also finding it difficult to speak out because of such a heavy reliance on a blame culture, of which is explored more fully in the next chapter.

## Chapter 7 Pass the Blame

### Introduction

Throughout this thesis there has been an emphasis placed on the outcomes and impact of the findings on the organisation and its members over any “real” reality to the findings. As such, it is necessary to restate though what happened was important, it is not as important as why it happened and that the issues that allow it to happen are systemic and indicative of the culture, and thus, destined to be repeated. This being something that has been shown in the continuation of such behaviour throughout the observation period. The previous chapters were impactful in their own right, but have also set the stage for what is to come; the organisations valuation of a culture that uses blame as a first, last, and sometimes only resort of accountability, as well as an overall lack of accountability across and throughout the organisation.

### Whose Job Is That? Not Mine

Much of the behaviour observed in the data can be attributed to a lack of accountability at many different levels within the organisation. Added to the ambiguity of what community policing is and the added expectations from the public, is the concern from supervisors that Gardaí may be less willing to engage with the public because “the less interaction, the less confrontation, the better” (IR). There is a perceived fear of doing something wrong that keeps Gardaí from exercising their discretion as they should be; a fear of blame and repercussion embedded in the organisation’s culture – of which will be discussed in depth in a later section. There is, of course, an obligation for supervisors to hold Gardaí under their remit accountable for their actions, which ultimately was not present in many instances. As far as supervisory implementation of accountability, the current culture has made it difficult to enact. Accordingly, “some supervisors reported that when they tackled underperformance, they were accused of bullying and this made them reluctant to tackling this sort of behaviour in the future” (IR).

The for mentioned fear of being blamed also leads to a fear of making mistakes. Because of this, there is also an apprehension when using discretionary powers by both ground and a supervisory level Gardaí. Discretion is a vital aspect of policing. Though this was recognised, there was an inherently contradictory dichotomy between Gardaí feeling their discretion was being taken away and being afraid to make their own decisions.

[The Commission] did not meet any Gardaí who wanted to be told they should not have the discretion to be helpful to members of the communities they serve, [they] met many who felt they were being pulled in too many directions



and would welcome clear guidance as to what exactly they were expected to do as members of An Garda Síochána. (FP)

This concern is also present in the upper levels of the organisation, whereby supervisors are also afraid of making mistakes while using their discretion that could later cause trouble for them. “Where there is an environment of fear in making a wrong decision, supervisors can sometimes abdicate their responsibility for decision-making and refer decisions to the next line manager. A slow decision making process often leads to an inefficient and ineffective outcome” (IR).

Because of this fear of using discretion, “probationers are afraid to make a decision...they will call a sergeant before making a call” (CA), and this trend holds constant in upper levels as well.

There is a general perception that supervisors are often risk averse to making decisions and will often refer to a higher level or seek advice from a national unit. Members explained that files submitted for advice or with suggestions for work improvements are often returned on multiple occasions with additional questions or clarifications and decisions are sometimes never made. (IR)

From this observed trend, every decision that gets devolved upward at which point superior level officers are responsible for making, what should be, ground level Gardaí decisions. This fear in part stems from the blame culture present in the organisation that leaves Gardaí afraid to make decisions on their own lest a mistake occur. If this happens, often the individual is solely blamed and there is no room for error or learning behaviours. This process then creates an unnecessarily complicated system that causes undue stress in an error intolerant culture.

Considering past events, particularly those that have led to the documents that were analysed for this research, there is an understandable push away from increased discretion toward a more dominating set of directives and command structures that govern the everyday field actions of the Gardaí. However, with these more rigid structures in place it then leaves little chance for compassionate policing, a feature of a community policing model.

There is now less opportunity to apply discretion than would have historically been the case. As articulated in the focus groups, traditionally Gardaí were encouraged to act within ‘the spirit of the law’ but now they feel they must follow ‘the letter of the law’ and apply a policy of zero tolerance. This shift in emphasis is most likely linked to instances of poor behaviour in the past,

however among focus group participants there were concerns that this could ultimately damage the relationship with local community. (CA)

Gardaí feel the waning levels of discretion they now possess impact negatively on their ability to police and relationship with the communities in which they serve. Though this new structure is predicated on necessity from past behaviour, there has to be a balance where structure is adhered to but community policing is still prioritised. This balance would most likely come in the form of an organisation that values the principle of learning organisations, and this value must be instilled in the organisation's culture, though as the data would indicate, it is currently not.

This has two stemmed cultural elements. Firstly, the accusation of bullying keeps supervisors from holding this behaviour accountable in future, thus making the behaviour more likely to occur again and perpetuating the culture forward. Secondly, the bullying and blame elements in the culture, of which will be discussed in the following sections also make these accusations hold more weight. If the culture did not value a blame system, there would be less credence given to the counter accusations of bullying when supervisors are trying to perform their duties the best they are able. As with many of the facets of the Garda culture, as well as organisational culture or even policy change in general, one cannot be fixed in isolation and there must be a radical overhaul to enact a positive change within the organisation's culture.

### Lack of oversight

The lack of oversight present throughout the organisation is perhaps the single most enabling facet of the culture. Within the Garda, a lack of oversight has been a serious problem that is so pervasive throughout the observation period that it is one of the few facets of the culture that was explicitly discussed in every document analysed for this research. Though that is not to say that other cultural aspects are less important, it stands to demonstrate how vital strong supervision is in organisations, and particularly in policing organisations, and that this aspect is largely missing in the Garda. When making complaints, Maurice McCabe "claimed not just inattention to duty by gardaí on the ground, but corruption under the direction of garda management...insofar as serious malpractice is concerned, [it] was held against the rank of middle management, including sergeant and sergeant in charge" (CT). This lack of oversight allowing behaviour to happen has even impacted the integrity of investigations.

So far as this period is concerned, it is my view that while the Gardaí made diligent and energetic efforts to authenticate the statement, they did so from a vantage point of accepting the admissions at face value. I have no sense that

anyone in a position of authority within the investigation stood back from the admissions and subjected them to any critical analysis. (BI)<sup>44</sup>

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When the connection between Garda Keith Harrison and Marisa Simms was discovered, the context of the homicide perpetrated by her brother assumed importance. Garda Harrison could and should have been transferred away from the Donegal Division but, regrettably, he was not. (CT)<sup>45</sup>

Though the idea that “delegation downwards through the organisation should be matched with accountability upwards, that there should be performance measurement and appraisal at all levels, and that proper arrangements should be made for training and staff development to prepare them for their new or changed roles” (MR) has been stated, this is not the reality for the organisation. One of the underlying problems with having a lack of supervision in the Garda is that the blame for misconduct performed by lower level Gardaí is sent up further and further within the organisational structure, but then no one is held accountable because the responsibility for holding someone accountable has been too far removed from the person in question.

From the earliest years of the observation period there have been calls for a more structured process of accountability, structures that could curtail issues from becoming larger over time.

The Tribunal believes that this is a classic example of an instance where, had there been an independent complaints procedure in place, the concerns of Garda Fowley, which amounted to a series of allegations against senior officers, would have been best addressed by referring her to that body, rather than referring her to her divisional officer. In the absence of such a facility at that time, however, the Tribunal does not believe that the direction transmitted through Inspector Coll, though unfortunate, was inappropriate.

She was astonished that she was told to take her concerns to Chief Superintendent Fitzpatrick, who was the divisional commander at the time of the first investigation. Garda Fowley did not make a statement about the matter until some three years later. (MT)

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<sup>44</sup> During the Birmingham Inquiry it was ultimately found that the person in question whom the Gardaí pursued as a suspect was not guilty and his confession was due in large part to the details given to him by the interviewing Gardaí.

<sup>45</sup> The Gardaí mentioned, Keith Harrison, was transferred into an area where he could potentially influence an investigation into a homicide suspect due to his personal relationship with the suspect's sister. Supervisors never transferred him from the area despite ethical obligations to do so.

However, this process has only become increasingly more difficult over the years with less physical presence of Gardaí in supervisory roles and more difficulty reporting wrongdoing noted previously.

He said that the reason he did not convey his suspicions to any superior officer was lack of proof: I suppose proof and you would need a certain amount of proof to go to a superintendent or a chief superintendent and say these are my reasons why I'm not happy with all of this. (MT)

The burden is put on to the individual Gardaí to prove their claims; something that would not be necessary if complete structures of supervisory accountability were in place. In several instances, when Gardaí were accused of wrongdoing (this is only in evaluation of when the accusations proved factual) it was reasoned away as others wanting them to look bad.

It also gives the impression that he was the victim of an unfortunate series of events that occurred to him, rather than the prime mover behind a conspiracy [that] implicated two other Gardaí in wrongdoing, while undermining the legitimate attempts of another member to shine a light on that wrongdoing. (MT)

No personal responsibility was taken; things were done to them rather than them being the ones to own up to their actions. This behaviour then makes it hard to distinguish between genuine reactions to false accusations and the acting out that occurs for not wanting to be accountable for actions that did happen. This also makes it difficult for the organisation to differentiate between who is honestly performing their duties and who is not. The data would indicate this behaviour is instilled in the culture and has been allowed to continue for many decades and is a reflective of a routine that does not value an insistence on accountability and tolerates this behaviour when it does happen.

“Part of the answer is in restoring accountability and, most importantly, in restoring the structure of command. Failure to address these by the immediate reimposition of a strong command structure and appropriate structures of discipline will do Ireland no service” (CT). Interestingly however, earlier calls for more accountability were focused on street level Gardaí with little mention to increased accountability upward. The need for more accountability throughout the organisation in later years is a marked shift from earlier viewpoints.

Though lack of people to fill supervisory roles has been a problem for the Garda, even in situations where a supervisor was available there was still a lack of regard for

holding Gardaí exhibiting signs of misconduct accountable, either for want of accusations of bullying discussed previously or for lack of importance placed on accountability for actions.

They were not included in the Lennon report because they were not available. No one in authority made any inquiry about this or sought to make either of the two interviewers accountable in respect of the non-taking of notes or, if they were taken, the loss of these notes for which they may have been culpable or for which members of the incident room staff may have been culpable. This was a further systems and management failure on the part of those leading the investigation. The absence of notes may also be viewed in a more sinister way in the light of allegations made by Mark Quinn in respect of the events which occurred in the course of his detention. (MT)

Based on what was observed in the data of how Gardaí who were found to engage in misconduct, namely that they never were held accountable, it is unclear whether anyone ever would have been held accountable had the situation not become so severe that a tribunal and/or other major investigation had not been considered necessary. “Though [being held accountable] was done successfully after ten or eleven years in some of these cases, the behaviour of the Gardaí involved passed without effective scrutiny or, where appropriate, censure, even when civil proceedings were belatedly settled in favour of the detainees” (MT).

Surveyed Gardaí felt as if senior leadership did not set a good example for behaviour, and when incoming Gardaí view this behaviour this is what they determine as important and so reflect, thus creating similar patterns of observed behaviour at an organisational level. When a disregard for rules and accountability is very visible, as it has been shown in the data, this same behaviour is then expected, and has been shown to be, passed on to new members. Indeed, it is “unfair on Probationers that these low standards are being accepted, are not being dealt with, and that they are being trained into this system of low standards” (CT).

Supervision is a necessity of policing organisations, but so too is training for supervisors. Indeed, “properly trained and adequately resourced supervisory management are critical to providing the level of oversight necessary to achieve key organisational goals and delivery of an effective service to the public” (MR). This considered, several years after that statement was made “there is currently a shortage of adequately trained sergeants and inspectors visible in the districts and we recommend that sufficient numbers of sergeants and inspectors should be deployed to address this gap in supervision of front line policing” (FP). Notwithstanding the need for training or the lack of supervisors, it is still unreasonable

to expect Gardaí to step into supervisory roles, and do well, without proper training. This proper training, or lack thereof, has already been discussed in a previous chapter.

In this way, the organisation is perpetuating this culture by not adequately preparing supervisors within the organisation which then allows this behaviour to flourish unchecked. That is however, not to say that better training and more provision of supervisors would be an ultimate solution, but it is a necessary step to change the culture that teaches and allows this behaviour to occur in the first place. Further, from an organisational capacity, there are some good policies that have been attempted to be put in place that are not supported by the organisation in terms of being adequately resourced and monitored. One such example is in reference to legislation.

Typically it appears that new legislation is emailed to all Gardaí without explanation or guidance in terms of how to interpret and apply it in practice. This is viewed as a 'tick box' exercise rather than a meaningful training intervention. There is a need for greater guidance to be provided centrally as to how the change in legislation is to be interpreted and applied rather than this being determined at a local level (leading to inconsistencies in interpretation and application). (CA)

It was proposed that "those in the police should be accountable to senior officers and senior officers should be tasked with ensuring that those under their command should do a day of honest work on behalf of the taxpayer on every working day" (CT), but how this prospect functions in an organisation when the highest levels have been found to not act responsibly is in question. It is further in question when "trust in senior leadership to provide the right direction for the organisation scores low" (CA). Therefore, in addition to supervisory oversight, there is also a need for lateral levelled Gardaí to hold not only themselves, but each other accountable. Though it is a fine level between what is proposed here and an overbearing, omnipresent, watching eye, there should be a level of accountability enforced among Gardaí that stems from accountability being valued in the culture, of which it is not. The data has suggested that strong supervisory commitment to holding members accountable is of paramount importance, yet consistently over the 30 year period, and still currently, there is a gap between stated objectives and reality.

There is currently a shortage of available sergeants and this will need to be rectified. The sergeant level is a critical element in any police service, even more so where the front line is to be the primary focus for policing. It is also critical to performance management. The same applies to the inspector rank,

where there also appears to be a shortage, or at least a shortage of inspectors in the right places. (FP)

A further demonstration of the lack of value placed in improving oversight mechanisms is the absence of any meaningful change to combat the issues over time.

The Front-Line Supervision (FLS) Report published in April 2012 contained a total of 11 recommendations to improve operational supervision on the front line. By June 2015, two of those recommendations had been rejected, two were shown as implemented and the other seven awaited further action. The crime investigation inspection identified that many of the supervision issues raised in FLS still existed and this has resulted in the restating of previous findings and the inclusion of a number of additional recommendations to improve leadership and supervision. (IR)

Though a lack of oversight is not an excuse for the performed behaviour, it has aided in allowing it to continue. Further, a lack of supervisory oversight should not be reason that the behaviour began in the first place; i.e. in this context just because no one is saying you should not be doing something is not a valid excuse to do it. The behaviour that occurred should not have been left unchecked, but there seemed to be a reasoning of I didn't do it, so I shouldn't be accountable. Throughout the data there was a tendency to avoid taking responsibility by saying they are aware of what happened, but it was not them personally who did the action, that it was a common thing to do, and/or they thought they were doing the right thing all as mechanisms justifying the behaviour and for avoiding taking responsibility for the misconduct that occurred. When explaining why serious allegations of child abuse, and the ultimate finding that they were false, were not communicated upward, there was a reasoning of further inquiry being necessary that was ultimately not.

Now, why, at that stage, didn't you tell the assistant commissioner that the allegations contained in the attached referral had actually never been made by Ms. D? Answer: Well, perhaps I should have, but I was trying to establish how the actual error occurred, and Superintendent McGinn was to communicate with the HSE in that regard. And, in hindsight, perhaps I should have put it in. (CT)

Perhaps one of the most indicative examples of avoiding responsibility: "I know what I had done was wrong but still I thought that I was only a facilitator...So I didn't particularly think, incorrectly, that I had done anything really wrong...I would have felt that it's between

the two of them...” (MT). Further, in terms of the organisation allowing this to happen by lack of oversight, when “asked by counsel as to whether she had ever received an apology on behalf of the Garda Commissioner, on behalf of the Minister for Justice or on behalf of the State, Mrs. McConnell stated: ‘None to this day ... I still haven’t got one, no” (MT). Though this could be argued as an individual case(s), the organisation has acknowledged such problems and yet still chooses to be slow in implementing any change.

These occurrences were not isolated in the data, as seen by the data for the following examples stemming from multiple sources, and the organisation choosing to do very little if anything about what was happening, reflects a culture that is tolerant if not expectant of this behaviour. Further, there were instances throughout the time scope of the observed period of Gardaí using their past record, or lack thereof, to assert their current innocence in any allegations of misconduct.

I have been a member of An Garda Síochána for sixteen years now and this is the first time that a complaint has been made against me...Well, Mr. Chairman, I have twenty three years’ service, twenty in Detective Branch, and have interviewed numerous amounts of people, hundreds, and taken numerous amounts of statements, I have never ever asked anybody to swear on any book or any Bible, ever...I certainly wouldn’t lose my temper, lose my head over it. I have done thousands of interviews, Mr. Charleton, at this stage, thousands, you know, with people who are really a lot harder than Mr. Crossan. (MT)

The dominating ideology in this reasoning being that if someone has never done anything in the past, they are then incapable of doing anything in the present. Though a clean record can be an indicator of honest policing, when instances of widespread misconduct have been documented and the subsequent cover ups and deception around such misconduct have also been documented in the data, this reasoning does not resonate quite as strongly as the Gardaí may have intended. One of the core features of this organisation’s culture seems to revolve around avoiding accountability and blaming others to do so. This reasoning, though perfectly fitted into the culture, does nothing to assert innocence but rather serve as one further tool to not take responsibility for their own actions and avoid accountability.

## Accountability

It can’t be personal, you were about your duties as a member of An Garda Síochána, that’s the Irish flag behind you. You are accountable, I am accountable, you are accountable. (MT)



Though labelled accountability, the culture of the Garda throughout the observation period is more accurately characterised as one lacking accountability. A lack of accountability among Gardaí, from the top of the organisation to the bottom and conversely from bottom to top, as well as from the Gardaí to the public. As seems to be the experience in all of the documents containing investigations into major cases of misconduct, none of the Gardaí involved were ever held accountable in the years that passed between the events that occurred and the establishment of the Tribunals, some were not held accountable even following the investigations; even the Gardaí who were particularly well-known within the organisation for their misconduct were allowed to remain as such. Further to this, there is data to support that this is a continued trend from one of the earliest and one of the most recent tribunal investigations.

What can be said, however, is that there are no documentary records to indicate that any action was taken by An Garda Síochána to enquire into the suggestion that Detective Sergeant Corrigan was inappropriately associating with the Provisional IRA. Given that I have found as a fact that an Assistant Commissioner of An Garda Síochána was informed in 1987 that the RUC had such concerns about Mr Corrigan, the absence of evidence demonstrating that this information was in any way acted upon is, in my view, indicative of a very serious omission on the part of An Garda Síochána. (ST)

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Notwithstanding having admitted leaking information wholesale in breach of garda discipline, with the exception of the Roma child case which he contests, and notwithstanding that he presented a false affidavit to the High Court, Superintendent David Taylor continues as of writing this to be superintendent in the traffic division for Dublin. (CT)

The following blocks of text taken from the data are long, but in their length, they encapsulate perfectly the full cycle of avoiding accountability found in the Garda. Though taken from one document, they exemplify the repeated observed misconduct, lack of response from supervisors in disciplinary action, and when the behaviour did come to such a point that a supervisor would report it, the organisation doing very little, if anything, to hold the actions accountable at any level, thus allowing the cycle to continue and becoming further enmeshed in the organisation's culture.

It was put to Mr Connolly by Counsel for the Garda Commissioner that when he heard these rumours in Garda HQ surely he, or other persons with him at the time, would have taken some action in respect of what was a 'shattering and

stunning suggestion.’ Mr Connolly replied that it was ‘fairly well known’ that Owen Corrigan was ‘being talked about as possibly or maybe or suspected of being at some type of smuggling or in cahoots with the IRA in some way.’ When asked why he had not taken action immediately when he arrived in Dundalk he replied that: ‘As far as I was concerned the Chief Superintendent in Dundalk knew it when I went there, the Superintendent, the District Officer knew it before I went to Dundalk, the Detective Inspector knew it before I went to Dundalk and they passed the information on to me.’

His answer to that, in short, was that he did not need to tell anyone, because everyone already knew.

As noted earlier in the Report, on 21st January 1989, Detective Superintendent Connolly wrote a report relating to an allegation of smuggling against Owen Corrigan, two unauthorised uses of official cars, the alteration of official records, and the failure to report damage to cars. This report was sent by Chief Superintendent John Nolan to Assistant Commissioner O’Dea on 24th February 1989, with a recommendation that Owen Corrigan be transferred away from the border area. A decision was subsequently taken by Headquarters to transfer him to the Special Detective Unit in Harcourt Square in Dublin.

I believe that there were sufficient warning signs such that senior Garda officers should have taken steps to have Detective Sergeant Corrigan transferred away from the border area earlier than this in fact occurred. I have found that Detective Superintendent Tom Curran relayed concerns which the RUC had in relation to Detective Sergeant Corrigan to the Assistant Commissioner, Crime and Security in 1987, but there is no evidence of any action having been taken on foot of this information. (ST)

To reiterate what has already been stated, members were well known, yet nothing was ever done to change the behaviour or hold them accountable. The following is a similar scenario depicting the accountability cycle in the Garda, but of which occurred decades later.

This was a worrying breach of discipline, which should have been treated in that way by the superior officers of Garda Keith Harrison. Instead, and out of a sense of kindness, Chief Superintendent Sheridan regarded it as a minor infraction. Even if it was a minor infraction, it should have had consequences which were not necessarily of a formal variety but which perhaps might have re-established discipline over an individual who showed a complete lack of respect for the privacy of citizens. Chief Superintendent Sheridan, however, is not to be

criticised in this respect for taking a generous view and excusing an infraction in the interest of sustaining the career of Garda Keith Harrison.

Chief Superintendent Terry McGinn took a strong view from the time of reading a statement made to gardaí by Marisa Simms that while the matter should be independently investigated, she had a responsibility to the public and to the organisation which she served. The continued employment of Garda Keith Harrison was not compatible with those responsibilities. It was her duty to take a serious view of these matters and, in the context in which that responsibility arose, her opinion emerges as being far from unreasonable. On 10 October 2013, she wrote a lengthy submission to Garda Headquarters, copying same to Assistant Commissioner Kenny of the Northern Region. That report is a comprehensive document and, notwithstanding a lengthy cross-examination by counsel for Garda Keith Harrison, the analysis in it withstands any criticism proffered. She recommended that Garda Keith Harrison “be suspended from duty in accordance with Regulation 7 of the Garda Síochána (Discipline) Regulations, 2007, as amended.” Her primary considerations were listed as the strength of the evidence as disclosed in ‘a detailed statement of complaint outlining several incidents of harassment, assault and threats to kill.’

She described the allegations made by Marisa Simms as extremely serious and noted that Ms Simms had ‘expressed fear and described herself as being terrified of Garda Harrison.’ She is also noted as having said that he had a problem with drinking and ‘had difficulty controlling his anger.’ Chief Superintendent McGinn’s view was that ‘members of the public could be at risk should Garda Harrison continue in policing duties.’ She did not feel that he would be ‘a risk to... colleagues.’ Presciently she stated that she had ‘no doubt that in the event that Garda Harrison discovers that Ms. Simms made a statement of complaint that he will lean on her, putting pressure on her to withdraw her statement.’ Analysing the threat to the life of Garda Keith Harrison, she describes her assessment of the threat as being substantial and noted that there were two suspects, each of whom was known to be associated with the other. While no such threat had been carried out in the past she was of the opinion that ‘the possibility of doing so cannot be ruled out.’ She regarded it as ‘unsafe’ for Garda Keith Harrison ‘to continue to be deployed in Donegal Division.’ She could not be confident in Garda Keith Harrison’s ‘continued deployment on regular policing duties given the nature of the complaints made against him.’ She noted a very long sick leave absence and the matter of the driving with no insurance. His continued service would have an impact on

morale since his 'behaviour is not compatible with the values and principles of the organisation.' She noted concern in relation to his 'mental health as there appears to be anger management issues evident.' The response from Garda Headquarters was to place Garda Keith Harrison on indoor duties in Donegal town garda station. Chief Superintendent McGinn had recommended that he be transferred out of the division as an alternative to being suspended pending the outcome of the disciplinary investigation.

I didn't have any confidence in Garda Harrison's ability to carry out his functions as a member of An Garda Síochána, and I felt that at that stage I was going to look for a suspension... I was of the view myself, I possibly would have talked to Superintendent McGovern about it, but it wasn't discussed in the meeting with all of the other participants that I am going to look for suspension. The recommendation was not accepted in Garda Headquarters. (CT)

As these two blocks of text taken from the data demonstrate as an example of the larger organisational culture, continuing the cycle of performing bad behaviour and not expecting to be held accountable is part of the culture of the Garda over the 30 year observation period. Further, this expectation was only solidified by the repeated inaction of the organisation to hold anyone accountable, thus taking the expectation into reality and perpetuating an organisation characterised by a lack of accountability to each other and to the public.

### You Are Them and We Are Us – Your Rules Don't Apply

The divide present between the members of the organisation and the public has been linked to more structural and physical barriers between the two in the previous chapter. However, there was also behavioural components that contribute to it to be discussed in this section. One such example is that of rule breaking or otherwise not following set regulations. The following looks at the behavioural issues associated with this divide and how they have served to create tensions and trust issues between the organisation and the community. As one such example of a less than strict approach to adhering to the rules and/or regulations, "once you have ticked all the boxes, solving the actual crime isn't as important. Covering your back is the most important" (CA).

In deference to the value placed on rule-breaking and the systemic nature of it, there is a "culture of indifference to the proper application of the custody regulations, which can only exist if it has been allowed to develop by those in leadership roles from the rank of sergeant to chief superintendent locally and further up the ranks of An Garda Síochána," and the "breaches of the regulations appear to be regarded within An Garda Síochána as matters of little importance" (MT). How a remark such as this can be made and the same

problems remain over a decade later is reflective of deeply engrained organisational culture that is resistant to change.

From the earliest document in 1989 to the most recent in 2018, Gardaí doing what is necessary, by any means necessary, to advance the narrative they had so chosen has occurred in the organisation. In theory, discovering the truth should be of the upmost priority within policing organisations; however, the Garda, as indicated by the data, does not seem to share this value or mission. Even in instances of alternative facts that disproved the agenda did not seem to deter the investigating Gardaí from their line of inquiry; one such example of this that is representative of a larger trend is encapsulated in the following, “the fact that, even after the emergence of the second suspect, the original investigation team were recommending to the DPP that charges should proceed against Dean Lyons is suggestive of a fixed view having been formed and minds that were not open to the significance of what was emerging” (BI). In some cases, this thought was progressed as acceptable because Gardaí felt the person in question, at the time, was guilty. However, truth should be valued regardless of perceived guilt and when the lines are blurred in this situation it is difficult to distinguish where the line ends, a struggle that was evident for the Garda in the data.

In principle, fabricating evidence to advance a line of inquiry serves a very similar purpose to the overall organisational goals and what this then reflects of the Garda culture. Rather than conducting proper investigations, Gardaí created their own narratives, often based on scant real evidence, and produced their own in order to advance the investigation; emphasis on finding the truth was of little concern. As one example of fabricating evidence that had knock on effects, “since the authorship of that document was, in truth, a result of concoction by the Gardaí, its unlawful nature could not found a valid arrest” (MT). Evidence was created, but more importantly, there was no oversight that questioned what was happening, even when other Gardaí knew what was happening.

A collective culture of acceptance of this type of behaviour prevailed in the Garda during the 1990s as indicated from the data stemming from the Morris Tribunal. Perhaps, had this been the only instance in the data of this finding it would be less significant for current practices; however, wide scale instances of Gardaí fabricating evidence and continuing to knowingly propagate false narratives was also present in the most recent documents analysed. As one example, the Garda gained national media attention due to its sheer size of impact. Over one million false breath tests were recorded into the official Garda system; roughly enough to cover one quarter of Ireland’s entire population. The more prominent implication from the data however is that the organisation knew about this yet did nothing to hold those accountable nor even acknowledged it as a problem when the whistle was blown on it. Indeed, the organisation went so far as to accuse the whistleblower of providing false allegations to not have to take responsibility for such widespread systemic

abuse of policing powers. In addition to fabricating evidence, there were also instances of missing evidence.

On 11 September 2007, a complaint was made by a man that his son had been sexually abused by a cleric. In July 2009, the priest pleaded guilty to one count of defilement of a child under the age of 15 years, one count of defilement of a child under the age of 17 years and one count of possession of child pornography on a computer. The computer in question was apparently a parish computer and the priest's bishop sought the return of it in September 2010. It contained parish records, presumably. By then, despite the fact that it was officially a garda exhibit, it had disappeared. (CT)

The resolution of this matter came by blaming someone unrelated to this investigation for taking it, so as to discredit him for another matter of which he was complaining about, and when this allegation was dropped, no apparent further action was taken to locate the missing device.

As is the overarching theme throughout this chapter, the missing evidence in and of itself is not as important (though not to say it is not) as the lack of accountability Gardaí faced when evidence went missing. Nor as significant is whether or not the missing evidence was intentional or accidental. If accidental, there should be a tolerance of mistakes within policing organisations, but more concerning is that nothing happened. The lack of action, either positive or negative, instils in the culture that things gone missing that could be integral to an investigation is not considered important or worth investigation itself. If missing evidence was done purposefully for deceitful means, this action, or really lack thereof, observed by Gardaí implies that doing so for their own gain is permitted and tolerated by the organisation.

In each of the major tribunals of inquiry throughout the investigation period, missing evidence was not questioned as to where it went, or in some cases noticed and/or admitted to until the tribunal, and there was a noted lack of concern as to where such evidence ultimately ended up. The message then sent to Gardaí is that if something does not advance your line of inquiry, it can go missing and no one will question it.

The primary duty to keep good records and notes of what happens in the course of any detention lies with An Garda Síochána. The failure by Detective Sergeant Leheny and Detective Garda O'Malley to comply with basic procedures in relation to the taking and the preservation of notes during the course of these important interviews with one of the main suspects in a murder case tends to support the case put forward by Mr. McConnell that he was verbally abused and

aggressively questioned during the course of these interviews. Furthermore, a curious conflict between Mr. McGinley's evidence that he furnished the originals of the notes of the second segment of the interview in mid-December 1996, and the clear absence from the investigation records of the originals of these notes, up to the furnishing of the report on the investigation to the Director of Public Prosecutions in 1998, together with the assignment of the number 25(f) to the notes by some unknown hand after that date, creates a mystery that should not exist in an investigation of this kind. It is for An Garda Síochána to maintain clear and accurate records of notes in respect of interviews. It is regrettable that it is a repeated feature of these detentions that when notes became unavailable or 'lost', there was no explanation required of the person whose responsibility it was to make and preserve the notes. For example, it is clear from the Lennon report that numerous sets of notes were unavailable in this detention and others but, for the most part, explanations were not sought of those who were at fault. (MT)

Integrity is then questioned, rightfully so, and this can ultimately impact the confidence society has in what is supposed to be a truth-seeking policing organisation. Particularly how this reconciles with a community policing ethos when this type of behaviour would understandably impact on the community's trust in the Garda is called into question. It would be difficult to maintain a relationship with the community if they do not have trust in the Garda. This lack of trust also can create a further divide between the Gardaí and the community.

The conclusions for what this reflects on Garda culture could be dramatically different if the organisation had held itself accountable for what was done, but as of yet, the data has not supported the organisation enacting such a line of action. It is a question of concern whether the public would even know about it if the media had not brought widespread attention to it. This endemic lack of accountability is reflective of the organisation's culture and only serves to perpetuate this type of behaviour. If the organisation views rule breaking as non-problematic, individual Gardaí would observe the same and continue with such behaviour.

#### Falsus In Uno, Falsus In Omnibus<sup>46</sup>

Further to a blatant disregard for following set rules, within the Garda, and throughout the documents studied, there was a persistent use of secret keeping that often worked to the detriment of timely information gathering and the ultimate discovery of truth. Further, "part of the problem is that An Garda Síochána has not been forthcoming with

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<sup>46</sup> Interpreted as: If you lie once, how can we believe you won't do it again.

information about itself" (FP). In part, this secret keeping is done in order to advance whichever Garda agenda is being pushed at the time. Gardaí would be left out of the loop of current information, or be given false information, and documentation would be purposefully brief in order to continue on their desired investigation trajectory. Though this is what happened, why is more important to the understanding of Garda culture. The secret keeping was large enough in scale that there had to be planning and an acceptance by more than one person for it to be successful and it would be quite difficult for this coordination to happen with the cooperation of complicit Gardaí if this behaviour were not ingrained in the culture. Indeed, "a cultural shift requiring respect for the truth is needed" (CT).

There was some explaining away of the problem as poor communication, and though this is also a facet of Garda culture, it is separate to the lack of transparency present in this regard. Though it was noted that the organisation does not communicate well with the Gardaí, lower level members often hearing about organisational news via the media, and transparency and communication was rated at 5.7 (CA), this lack of communication does not account for the level of deception and wilful secret keeping that occurs in the organisation. This particularly does not hold up when examining the intended purpose of keeping those secrets; namely an aversion to performing the job as expected and advancing their own agenda without regard for truth or process. Trying to reconcile the lack of communication with the widespread use of secret keeping shifts the focus from a wider culture that values a lack of transparency in policing practices; a cultural value that was present throughout the observation period.

As with other trends in the organisation, using logic to deny wrongdoing was mainly utilised to avoid taking responsibility. More telling of the culture is that the organisation allowed these mechanisms to not only succeed but thrive among the Gardaí. In specific reference to this facet, the lies told, and they were found to be lies and established as such in the data, were based in partial truths so as to make them more realistic. For example, "I mean, if there were no notes taken, it's not half as serious to have no notes taken as some of the things we did. Of course, I wouldn't lie about that" (MT). Perhaps this aspect of the culture was more encouraged by the organisation so as to make plausible deniability stronger than it would be without any factual backings. Indeed, it is possible this behaviour manifested in the data because in the past the details gave credence to their own false narratives and it is possible this thin veil had been enough for the organisation to not want to look further, so the Gardaí used the same logic in the tribunals as well. Further, this reasoning and denying would go on until Gardaí were forced to take accountability in the tribunals/investigations, something that would more than likely not occur if it was not a deeply embedded aspect of the culture.



Of course, one of the arguably easiest, short term tactics used to avoid accountability would be to lie about their actions. Policing organisations should be accountable and transparent, but these abilities are severely impacted if the organisation in question is deceitful in their everyday practices. Throughout the observation period there were instances of wilful, though not always necessarily malicious, deception from the Gardaí that were self-serving and fell under the commonly referred to in policing literature “cover your ass” paradigm. Interestingly however, in the Cultural Audit Gardaí rated honesty and integrity an 8.2. Though not a perfect 10, this rating is quite high for the observed levels of deception within the organisation both at an individual level as well as an organisational level. Examples from the data directly are difficult to source because, as is one of the advantages of document analysis, they stem from not just one sentence or block of text and were only brought about because of the ability to include multiple time periods over prolonged investigations rather than just one interview with a single Gardaí. However, abstracted examples include individual members later confirming their previous deceit as well as, particularly within the Morris Tribunal documents, higher level organisational members knowing of certain circumstances surrounding the events that eventually led to the establishment of the Tribunal, but never acknowledging them to a level that would indicate an honest or integral level of accountability. Accountability has even been suggested to be against the culture of the Garda.

Further, “the areas in which An Garda Síochána’s culture was weakest included transparency, communication, and ‘speaking up and reporting wrongdoing’” (FP) thus indicating all need to be improved. This also indicates they are not currently present in the organisation, and none of which reconcile with a rather highly rated sense of honesty and integrity by the Gardaí. It is this discrepancy in talk and action, and overall lack of meaningful positive change over time, that makes document analysis well suited for the questions in this research. If, for example, only quantitative surveys or qualitative interviews were used, this level of nuance would have been lost and there would be a much different finding in this particular aspect of the organisation’s culture; namely that there are high levels of deception within the organisation that can impact on their integrity and transparency. Indeed, there has been “a deficit of accountability throughout the whole organisation” (FP). This factors then particularly impact community relations and trust in the organisation from the public. Factors that do not bode well within a community policing model.

As is the overarching principle in this research, Gardaí not following established, or legal, procedures is not as significant as why they felt this behaviour was ok enough to do it and also why they were never held accountable for doing it. Throughout the data there was a blatant disregard for following the rules that left unchecked by supervisory Gardaí and often, if not exclusively, those involved were not held accountable for their actions without a larger catalyst, i.e. tribunal/report investigations, requiring action. Following

procedures was seen as not important and those who did call attention to what was happening were viewed negatively by their peers. In some instances, they would even be blamed for other issues that had or were occurring in order to deflect attention from their allegations; as previously discussed in the section on blame culture.

There is evidence in the data to suggest organisational support for tolerating the above behaviour because it achieved the results the organisation wanted.

I recall being instructed or directed to contact the media to brief them on the particular line the Commissioner had instructed, namely, to brief negatively against Sgt. McCabe. In particular I recall that I was to brief the media that Sgt. McCabe was motivated by maliciousness and revenge. I was also to encourage media to write negatively about Sgt. McCabe, that his complaints had no substance and that the Garda had fully investigated his complaints and found no substance to his allegations. In essence I was to brief that Sgt. McCabe was driven by agendas. I was also directed to draw journalists attention to the complaint of sexual assault made against Sgt. McCabe, and that this was the root cause of his agenda – revenge against the Gardaí. (CT)

David Taylor, though proven to have engaged in these actions, was never removed from office or meaningfully held accountable until the establishment of the investigative tribunal. Subsequently, the organisation supporting this behaviour allows it to become enmeshed in the culture and become a part of it that is then transmitted to new members over time – as shown by the presence of this practice throughout the 30 year period. The disregard for following established procedures has not meaningfully changed, if at all, throughout the observation period; however, nearing the end of the period there was a shift in where this culture stems from. The Report on the Future of Policing acknowledged that the culture around not following procedures is systemic, and this finding can in part be attributed to the previous discussion around transmitting behaviour through promotions of those who performed the behaviour.

In many cases, as demonstrated by the previous singular aspects that all contribute to this phenomena, the process involved with not following procedures and the resulting need to cover up what happened and/or fabricate evidence to advance the Garda agenda required the effort of many people at various levels to let the behaviour continue and not question what was happening or hold anyone accountable which further serves to demonstrate the systemic nature of this aspect of the culture. The fact that they behaved in such a way and chose to cover it up, and often did not face any scrutiny around the cover up until the investigations that resulted in the examined documents, is reflective of the culture.

Many of the actions taken to cover up wrongdoing within the organisation found in the data were both intentional and malicious in nature. Questions asked that ultimately led to, false, confessions were not included in transcripts; indeed, “the written record of this vital session is confined to the cautioned statement signed by Mr Lyons, and there is no record of what questions may have been asked. The evidence before the Commission establishes clearly that questions were asked” (BI). Electronic traces of wrongdoing were deleted systematically, when investigating actions toward discrediting a Gardaí so his assertions that there were systemic issues within the organisation would not stand up, it was found that:

On 23 January 2015, Inspector David Gallagher obtained and executed a warrant which gave him access to Superintendent Taylor’s personal email account. Only a small number of emails remained: there was a pattern of immediate deletion. Those emails that remained were of no value to the particular investigation. There was also a pattern of Superintendent Taylor deleting text messages on his phone on a systematic basis. (CT)

Finally, withholding information from other Gardaí to advance a deceitful line of inquiry is but just another tactic added to those found at various times throughout the observation period.

If An Garda Síochána in Donegal had behaved properly and kept their colleagues in Sligo fully informed of what had transpired with Bernard Conlon in Donegal, and if the Sligo Gardaí had been more alive to the flawed nature of the complainant Bernard Conlon, Mr. Peoples and his family would not have been put through this further ordeal. It cannot be thought that the deliberate withholding of such information by the Gardaí in Donegal could give rise to a fair or lawful arrest. (MT)

However, there was a distinction made regarding who the cover up benefited; cover ups were perpetrated predominantly by Gardaí on an individual level to protect themselves as opposed to covering for the organisation. Self-preservation won out over loyalty to the organisation.

### Following the Letter of the Law

Though accountability is an inherent expectation in policing organisations, it is nonetheless less explicitly spoken of when discussing police and/or policing. However, a key trademark of policing organisations that is often explicitly stated both in public rhetoric and within the data analysed is upholding the law. Though the exact wording of this notion

can vary depending on the policing model, the general principle that police officers should be maintaining the law is constant. It would then be natural to presume that police officers should also be acting within the law they are expected to uphold. However, there was a presence of the very opposite of this notion found in the data that has persisted over time. Not only were instances of Gardaí violating regulations, and at times the rights of individuals, there were outside factors that helped this lack of accountability flourish within the Garda.

Mr Gallagher gave evidence that the insurance officials were of the view that as Owen Corrigan was a Detective Sergeant in An Garda Síochána, his version of events was likely to be accepted by a Court in preference to that of Mr Gallagher. On this basis, the insurance company settled the claim. (ST)

In this instance, the culture of the Garda has allowed this to continue, but outside organisations have also helped in perpetuating the behaviour.

Within the organisation, Gardaí rated duty to uphold the law at 7.9 (CA). One of the basic tenets of policing organisations being rated in this way by the organisation's members is indicative of the culture created and the value placed on and allowance of misconduct. When looking deeper into where this behaviour stems from, there was no distinction between top and bottom levels of the organisation. Additionally, not only were superior officers in some cases the perpetrators of these acts, they were also the abettors and allowed Gardaí under their supervision to behave in such a way. Indeed, "there is a perception that accountability has been 'pushed down' to the lowest levels in the organisation but that senior leadership have not been held to account for significant mistakes made by the organisation in the past" (CA).

In reference to a higher levels devolving blame for their own actions downward, even in these situations, there was a lack of accountability even then.

He's saying if that be the case, there were two people whom you should have criticised, one is the person who allowed you to sign the letter of acknowledgement in your office without drawing it to your attention that there was a serious matter for you to consider and the second is then Inspector McGinley for not telling you about it before you started the interview. Now he points out that in fact you took no action against either of those people and he suggests to you that that is not inconsistent with what one would expect if what you tell us is correct. (MT)

"The gardaí offered no criticism of themselves. They need a complete turn-around

in their attitude. This has to be led from senior management. Fundamental to that is to acknowledge what the mentality of the organisation lacks. That also involves acknowledging the strengths which our national police force has" (CT). It would be unreasonable to suggest that superior Gardaí should, or even could, check up on every individual action, but it speaks to the culture of the organisation that Gardaí know they can do these things and either get away with it or not be held accountable when it is uncovered. It also speaks to the systemic nature of this behaviour that superior officers in some cases are the ones displaying such behaviour. In specific reference to the mass cancellation of penalty points, superior officers specifically chose to cancel penalty points street level Gardaí had entered into the system. In this way, supervisory Gardaí were undermining the work of Gardaí under them, showing a lack of regard for both the honest work of Gardaí and systems of accountability within the organisation.

Indicative of the lack of prioritisation of holding Gardaí accountable, there were wrongdoings brought forward that were never scrutinised previously even though it had been widespread and sustained. There were even cases of going to court, the guard being found in the wrong, and still no accountability for the actions. "Though this was done successfully after ten or eleven years in some of these cases, the behaviour of the Gardaí involved passed without effective scrutiny or, where appropriate, censure, even when civil proceedings were belatedly settled in favour of the detainees" (MT). Also found in several instances throughout the data was that knowing misconduct, either committed by certain individuals or generally, was occurring and yet nothing was done to hold anyone accountable, did not seem unusual. Naturally then, you must question what else has happened that is still unknown and/or undocumented as has been the case with much of what was present within these documents. Further, there were cases of witness intimidation for relatively minor accusations against Gardaí, so it naturally begs the question of what might have occurred for more serious events.

A pattern that was present in the data was that of the final documents/reports that were analysed were often times not the initial investigation into the same incident. In specific reference to the larger, more time and cost consuming, tribunal investigations, there had often been more than one prior investigation into the same issues, yet nothing was found to be wrong when the investigation was internal to the organisation. In some cases, the organisation had gone so far as to say that what was being alleged did not happen at all as demonstrated by the below list of allegations made years prior to the establishment of the Charleton Tribunal and, in some instances as shown by the extract taken from the data, what was listed in the complaint was asserted to be a non-issue even though later investigations found them to be of merit.

Members not turning up for duty at all. • Members not signing on or off in diary.

- Members not doing foot patrol.
- Investigation files not being done.
- Investigation files very poor.
- Incidents not being investigated.
- Members constantly hanging around the station.
- Public Officers reading paper and watching television on duty.
- Calls not attended to.
- Garda members making out duty detail.
- Members not performing the duty they are detailed for.
- Summonses not being followed up.
- Warrants not being executed.
- No briefings.
- No supervision on 24 hour basis.
- Crime Unit not performing public order duty at weekends.
- No guidance to junior members.
- Member's non-performance.
- Clique forming.
- Coffee/Tea breaks constantly,
- Very unprofessional approach to incidents by P/Gardai.
- Reported incidents to Gardai not created on Pulse.

The above are some of the issues and are quite serious and I can stand by anything I have mentioned. I have tried and attempted to address all the issues but I am failing, through no fault of my own. The above seems to be the acceptable standard in Bailieboro and I am receiving no help addressing same. Maurice McCabe met Assistant Commissioner Byrne and Chief Superintendent McGinn in a hotel in County Monaghan. They told him that out of 42 complaints which he had made, eleven were being upheld. He produced a box of PULSE records by way of further complaint about alleged misuse of the PULSE system. On 2 November 2010, Assistant Commissioner Nacie Rice was appointed to do a desk study of the Byrne/McGinn investigation. On 8 March 2011, Assistant Commissioner Rice found no fault with the Byrne/McGinn investigation. A subsequent meeting planned for 25 March 2011 between Assistant Commissioner Rice and Maurice McCabe on issues concerning PULSE records did not take place. (CT)

In particular reference to the investigations during the Smithwick Tribunal, though other findings emerged, much of the investigation was involved in determining if members of the Garda colluded in the assassination of two officers from Northern Ireland. Though it is still legally unclear if this is true, they were so heavily suspected, so much so that several investigations were necessary that culminated in the Smithwick Tribunal, that it is still concerning this was even necessary. Certainly, just the accusations would shake public confidence in the organisation. But looking deeper, the multiple investigations necessary to discover the truth, something the organisation should always prioritise but the data would suggest otherwise, indicates a culture at an organisational level that does not value truth over the organisation's good name or any level of accountability for their actions. There was a systematic approach found in the data to overlooking particular behaviour at the behest of the organisation's reputation of which was also discussed in the previous chapter.

In some cases, investigators were sent to investigate particular aspects of an issue that would not ultimately reflect poorly or turn up incriminating details against the organisation's wrongdoing.

In circumstances where the Irish and British Governments, An Garda Síochána and the RUC had expressed the firm view that there had been no leak before Assistant Commissioner O'Dea had properly started, never mind completed, his investigation, I believe that only one outcome from the Assistant Commissioner's investigation was being contemplated. That undoubtedly placed him in a difficult position. (ST)

This of course was later found to be false when impartial investigations were conducted and there was evidence to support the wrongdoing had occurred. In cases where individual Gardaí were the ones to speak out against the organisation about the wrongdoing, support from the organisation, directed from Commissioner level, was withheld. The examples used previously to demonstrate this were from various time periods indicative of a culture that has made this part of organisational operations throughout the 30 year observation period.

"What has been missing in the past is the command structure of An Garda Síochána calling itself to account" (CT). Though this is referenced as a past issue, it is still a problem the organisation faces now. Accountability first and foremost for what has been done on either an organisational level or an individual level, as both reflect systemic cultural values, is lacking. As previously discussed, there is a value of quantity over quality of policing that affects behaviour negatively in the organisation. The biggest ramification of this came in the form of millions of fake breathalyser tests being recorded. Perhaps more indicative of the culture is that these practices were not uncovered and admitted to the public in an open and transparent way. Rather, as the data has shown, the organisation chose to ignore them initially, then deny the problem, and only after media attention forced the Garda into action, admit what happened. "During the time when Maurice McCabe was seeking a better level of policing standards, there were plenty of people who said nothing was wrong. There is ample evidence that we have these problems" (CT). Following the eventual forced admittance of the issue, there was still very little action taken to hold anyone accountable at an individual or organisational level. Such a large breach of misconduct with very little accountability for the actions leads to an understanding of the Garda culture as one of little accountability and transparency. There was also a notion to blame younger members for lack of discipline, yet the younger members are brought into the organisation and socialised by older members and therefore would have been taught which values to exhibit by them.

The Gardaí surveyed felt as if there was “one rule for me, another rule for others I am held to account for my decisions and actions, but I don’t feel everyone else is” and further, “there is a sense across the organisation that individually everyone feels they are accountable for their own actions, but they don’t see other people being held to account” (CA). As the data has indicated, very few are ever held accountable for their actions, even in cases of egregious misconduct. Additionally, “it is also felt that people are only held to account at lower levels which has resulted in a culture of fear and unwillingness to take decisions. This has impacted the quality and efficiency of policing but it exists due to a ‘cover your back’ mentality across the organisation” (CA).

The only reasonable explanations for this perception would then be either people are being held accountable for rather trivial matters rather than larger, systemic ones, blame has been shifted toward them so that they are held accountable when they are not actually responsible, or they are being held accountable for their own wrongdoing but as is the case, are acting out by saying only they are held accountable because they do not feel they should be. Each of these possibilities will be explored in deference to the data analysed throughout this chapter. Accountability, or lack thereof, is a major component of the Garda’s culture. As such, though the rest of this chapter is divided into different pillars of the organisations culture, it is not to imply that each are separate to accountability within the organisation. Rather, they are mere facets of a larger culture that works in a multi directional process and the culture may only be understood when looking at each piece as one part of a larger whole that is the culture of the Garda.

## Who You Gonna Blame? Blame Culture

The story of this thesis culminates here. Everything leading up to this point is no less part of the organisation’s culture, but also would not exist and/or function in the same way without the presence of a blame culture. The blame culture as part of the Garda culture was perhaps the single most infiltrating trait that spanned throughout the observation period. This cultural feature is one of the most influencing behavioural attributes that either directly or indirectly influenced nearly all of the other cultural values in the organisation. Consequently, this behaviour, when performed by the Gardaí, is a direct reflection of what the organisation’s approach to members has been. Namely, avoid all accountability by deflecting blame wherever possible. Further, this behaviour was seen throughout the observation period and has not changed despite the increasing recognition of its detrimental effect on Gardaí and organisational performance.

Given its dominating feature in Garda culture, it is very important to understand both how the blame culture manifests itself in individual Gardaí’s actions as well as in the organisation’s actions. Though it has, and will continue to be, argued that any individual action taken by a Gardaí is still reflective of the organisation’s culture and more than likely would not occur if the culture did not allow and/or support it to, it is still important to see how



individual actions reflect the scenarios in which they were learned. Often times, due to the overall similarity in expressed performance, this reflection is further documentation that it is a systemically learned cultural trait. Even though the manifestation of the blame culture from the organisation often times impacts organisational members more so than community members, this learned behaviour as performed by the Gardaí does impact community members, not least in their ability to trust the Gardaí working in their communities. Further, the actions taken upon the Gardaí by the organisation further affect their own mental and/or physical health and job performance, which then has contributively effects on the community. How the organisation treats the Gardaí directly correlates to how the Gardaí treat the community.

You must remember ... that decent people are not ending up in Garda stations ... it's unfortunately people, you know, who have problems etc. you know we're dealing with that, people of a lesser ... what's the word you know they have their own problems. We're not dealing with the likes of upper classes. So they ... allege assaults against us. You find it unusual? Most prisoners allege assaults against Gardaí. It's par for the course. (MT)

Diverting attention away from organisational wrongdoing by shifting the blame elsewhere is one of the most clear examples of this culture manifested on behalf of the organisation presented in the data. Further, this behaviour was present throughout the observation period, and as such, cannot be merely described as a past or short lived problem; particularly since the most recent document analysed was in part to investigate an organisation led attack against a member for speaking out against wrongdoing. Though investigatory probes do not always indicate actual wrongdoing, the data would suggest that the Garda did take measures to keep attention off of the organisation by discrediting members and shifting blame away from systemic issues onto individuals.

On 12 January 2012, Maurice McCabe made a confidential communication accusing Commissioner Callinan of corruption because a particular officer from his division, whom he considered less than excellent, had been put on a promotions list. On 10 February 2012, disciplinary proceedings were commenced against Maurice McCabe in relation to the disappearance of a computer in the defilement and child pornography prosecution brought against a priest. On 4 September 2012, Maurice McCabe wrote to the Minister for Justice and Equality seeking a statutory inquiry under the garda legislation. In early December 2012, Maurice McCabe's access to the PULSE system was restricted. (CA)

As was observed several times throughout the data, the drive to discredit Gardaí within the organisation came from the very highest levels.

While it was never put to Mr Curran on behalf of the Garda Commissioner that the meeting with Eugene Crowley did not take place, or that he did not submit an intelligence report about the threat to the life of Superintendent Buchanan, this was, I feel, hinted at in questions put to other witnesses on the Garda Commissioner's behalf. To take one example, a series of witnesses were invited to offer their views as to whether they would expect the RUC to communicate concerns about a Garda member in the manner that had been suggested. Witnesses questioned in this manner included retired Commissioner Lawrence Wren and retired Assistant Commissioner Dermot Jennings. I have already dealt with this line of argument in discussing the evidence of Michael Diffley above. To take another example, counsel for the Commissioner appeared to me to be seeking subtly to undermine Mr Curran's evidence by suggesting to former Chief Superintendent King of Monaghan that if Bob Buchanan had expressed a concern to Mr Curran, one might assume that Mr Curran would have shared that with his Chief Superintendent. (ST)

There is also data to suggest that the organisation has failed to lead by example and the blame culture the Gardaí have adopted is a direct reflection of the observed blame culture coming directly from the organisation. "It's a tale of do what I say (for management) not as management does, little accountability for management and all investigations or issues look for lower ranks and blame Gardaí and Sergeants not management" (CA). Further, "investigations have focused on the individuals against whom a complaint has been made rather than on the incident concerned to determine where the fault lies, for instance with an individual, or with a policy or wider organisational issues, such as inadequate training" (FP). Complaints involving several officers could be reflective of systemic problems; however, this could also be the case with single individuals as well, though not necessarily or always. Notwithstanding, "similar complaints involving several police members may indicate systemic problems that need to be addressed" (FP). Further, the following practice would be more closely aligned to a learning organisation and possibly indicative of a changing mentality in how the organisation operates if taken on.

An underlying principle of the work of IOPO should be that it investigates incidents rather than individuals, so as to find fault where appropriate, identify what needs to be learned, and make recommendations for change as required.

Whether or not an individual Garda can be considered to have breached the technicalities of the Disciplinary Regulations should not be the determining factor. Instead the investigation should examine whether policing occurred in accordance with accepted standards. The process for IOPO investigations should be clear and simple, to enhance both swiftness and transparency. (FP)

Though adapted from the organisation's behaviours and the culture set forth, there are still several possibilities for why an individual Gardaí may choose the blaming approach. Assigning blame elsewhere may come from a fear of making a mistake and the organisation assigning sole blame to the individual, from an immaturity in regard to taking responsibility, or simply from mimicking the behaviour observed from the organisation. There was an observed trend of individuals blaming others for putting them in the situation that would make them act in such a way rather than taking responsibility for what they had done.

### Blame Anyone But Me

In the following example, the Gardaí blamed the victim for providing false details (that it was determined he was ultimately given by the Gardaí investigating) and that is why they continued along with the narrative that suited their agenda instead of performing their duties as required and searching for the truth. Accordingly, Gardaí would blame others for not making statements/requests in such a way that would make them be concerned, or concerned enough, rather than taking the responsibility for not doing their jobs properly in the first place.

'The conflict may have arisen because of the interpretation of this question [number 4] and Officers were not aware at the time they completed the Questionnaire what Detective Garda Cox had said.' The letter further stated 'At the end of the day we were in a situation where Dean Lyons made a number of admissions and written statements which contained accurate details on many aspects of the double murder at Grangegorman and in particular about the injuries inflicted on the two women and the weapons used. This was a matter which never got into the public domain and as far as we were concerned was compelling evidence. We felt that the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions should be consulted on the matter and this was done on the 27th July, 1997 by Detective Superintendent Gordon, who was accompanied by Detective Chief Superintendent Camon.'

This letter, which might be seen as something of an attempt to bridge the gap, did not satisfy Asst Commissioner McHugh, who wrote to the Deputy Commissioner of Operations saying

'The report furnished by Asst Commissioner Kelly dated the 29th of August 2000 doesn't provide any solution or explanation in terms of resolving this conflict. It seems to me that the position still remains that he and the other senior officers are disputing that Detective Garda Cox ever expressed any reservation in their presence as to the credibility of admissions made by Dean Lyons. It is my intention to have a copy of my probative enquiry with the DPP within ten days.'

(BI)

As an example of shifting blame from the data within the organisation, an easy target would be chosen (i.e. a new Gardaí) and they would be blamed for what happened as has been demonstrated previously in the data citing a large majority of poorly conducted investigations on being conducted by new or probationary Gardaí. Similarly, others within the organisation would be blamed for not doing their jobs properly when the Gardaí in question had egregiously violated the law. Further, even if the Gardaí were eventually forced to be accountable for their actions, it would still be reasoned away as actions done because someone else told them to and/or instigated the behaviour. "I think it's terrible, like, what has happened. I think it's terrible because these are colleagues that put me in this position" (MT). Accordingly, had x event not happened, they would not have performed the behaviour.

There is an expectation of entitlement by the Gardaí that was found throughout the data and when this expectation was challenged, though this did not happen frequently, the response was for the Gardaí to act out against their perceived wrongful treatment. Often stemmed from not taking responsibility for what they were being held accountable for, the Gardaí in question would deflect blame elsewhere and fabricate stories and/or events that made them appear innocent.

The clear implication of Mr. McGinley's denial that the incident with Garda Fowley occurred at all is that Garda Fowley has deliberately invented the account to do down Mr. McGinley. When asked to comment on what motivation Garda Fowley would have to invent the story, Mr. McGinley indicated that he believed that Garda Fowley has been manipulated by other parties hostile to him. (MT)

As well as more individualised examples, extensive cover ups were used during the tribunals to appear innocent and avoid accountability by blaming others.

The Tribunal is satisfied that Detective Sergeant McEntee's evidence in relation to this meeting is deliberately evasive. It is simply incredible to believe that he

has no recollection of what was discussed at the meeting in question, given that he remained in the car for its duration and the matters under discussion were clearly of great significance. Not only were Detective Superintendent McGinley and Garda Harkin discussing a scheme to frustrate the Carty investigation in its investigation of the discrepancies issue, but the clear implication of their scheme was that Garda Fowley would be discredited in the context of an allegation that they all knew to be substantially correct. The Tribunal is satisfied that Detective Garda McEntee knew more at that time than he is prepared to admit now and that he appeared at the meeting in question to impress upon Garda Harkin the notion that now was not the time to break ranks. The corollary of that was that Garda Fowley was to be left out on a limb. Sergeant McEntee gave the Tribunal no rational explanation for why he was prepared to go along with this continuing cover-up. As mentioned earlier in this report, the Tribunal is satisfied that Sergeant McEntee has not been completely truthful at the Tribunal as to his actual involvement in the events of September 1997, and his further involvement in the cover-up in the course of the Carty investigation must be seen in this light. (MT)

The following are examples that are representative of a wider trend. “So much of the attitude before the tribunal of Garda Keith Harrison to reports as to his conduct, which came from other people, show him as thinking of himself as being victimised, no matter how serious his conduct was said to be;” further, “according to Garda Keith Harrison, the gardaí should not have taken any action on foot of the steadily rising tide of complaints” (CT). More importantly stemming from this behaviour is the apparent acceptance of the organisation to allow it to continue without further reprimand or increased accountability. It is then only natural Gardaí would continue this behaviour throughout the observation period. Indeed, “accountability cannot work without responsibility” (FP).

There was also a pattern of Gardaí accusing others of blaming them for particular behaviours in order to deflect the attention away from what they had actually done. In this scenario, Gardaí accuse others of blaming them to detract from their alleged mistakes when really, they were blaming others so investigators would not notice their own mistakes. “Unfortunately, all of Garda Fowley’s allegations were contested at the time, and Detective Inspector McGinley, in particular, made a deliberate attempt to question her motivation for making them, as a means of deflecting attention away from his own wrongdoing” (MT). In a situation such as this, it is naturally very confusing and creates a perpetual cycle of falsehoods and blame that is hard to determine where the truth lies and where the cycle ends; in this way it makes it very difficult to know truth and hold anyone accountable, thus perpetuating the already occurring problem. This blame cycle is enmeshed into the culture

and creates more confusion that then impacts on accountability and transparency and then the Gardaí's relationship with the community and their ability to effectively police.

When examining actions taken at the (at least claimed) behest of following a superior Gardaí's orders, "Superintendent Taylor attests to having no insight that he was doing anything wrong. He saw no reason why private matters should not be made public. He also demonstrated no appreciation that certain police investigations need to keep certain facts from becoming public" (CT). Regardless of what reasoning was used to perform this behaviour, it ultimately results in a direct impact on the relationship the Garda maintains with the community and trust they would have in Gardaí to keep sensitive matters private. As concluded from the literature reviewed, a lack of trust in the police could lead to individuals being less likely to come forward and report crime and/or cooperate with the police in future thus impacting the community and organisation further.

Yet another way to pass blame was by giving the reason that they were just following orders.

He quickly ensured that his supposedly confidential disclosure was made as public as possible. He met press people. He interacted with concerned public representatives. He claimed that he had been tasked by Commissioner Martin Callinan to use every opportunity possible to brief the media negatively about Maurice McCabe. He also claimed that Deputy Commissioner Nóirín O'Sullivan had, tacitly or otherwise, acceded to this strategy. The allegation to be spread, according to Superintendent David Taylor, was that Maurice McCabe was a child sex abuser, had been investigated by fellow gardaí and was thus motivated by revenge against the gardaí in making complaints about garda corruption, misconduct or malpractice. (CT)

The idea of following orders of a superior officer, though in some cases understandable, leads to further questions when examined more closely. In some instances, claiming to be following orders was used to evade responsibility when in the wrong, but how this can be distinguished from the truth when superior officers are also acting unethically is not always clear.

Although he has accepted that he acted in the way that he did, both during those interviews and in making the subsequent false statement to Chief Superintendent Carey, he has attempted to avoid any moral blame by variously suggesting that it was common practice within the Gardaí to act in the way that he did during the relevant interviews, or that, in doing the things

that he did, he was acting under the orders, or at the very least the suggestions, of his superior officers. (MT)

There is a chain of command that should be followed, but this chain only becomes clouded in more issues when neither end of the chain are acting responsibly or taking responsibility for their actions. In this circumstance, the behaviour that is manifested by upper and lower level Gardaí, both in being involved in the misconduct and avoiding accountability, can only be learned if it is instituted in the culture for everyone to observe and perform.

Though Mr. Leheny states in his statement and in his evidence that he did not wish to attribute any blame to Garda Fowley for the loss of these notes, the clear implication was that she had dealings with him about notes which he submitted on the 4th of December to the incident room and that they had been so mishandled by her as to become mislaid within twenty-four hours of their receipt. Certainly the innuendo that Garda Fowley had been somehow negligent in the matter and was aware of this difficulty from the 5th of December 1996 was developed in the account provided by Mr. Leheny concerning his dealings with Garda Fowley on the 5th of December 1996. The Tribunal is satisfied from the evidence that Detective Sergeant Leheny did not by telephone on the 5th of December 1996 request that he be faxed the notes of the third and fifth interviews by Garda Fowley and that Garda Fowley was unable to do so because they had been mislaid. The Tribunal accepts Garda Fowley's account that she was asked for a copy of the custody record which she provided. (MT)

Though Gardaí seem to be more accepting of necessary changes in recent times, the earlier period of observation demonstrated Gardaí opting out of their responsibilities if a change occurred, they did not agree with, essentially ceasing any chance for change within the organisation from the bottom ranks.

‘Since the incidents referred to [in which the organisation was attempting to hold him accountable for breaching protocol], Sergeant Corrigan has literally opted out of all involvement in ordinary police duties. He is not on speaking terms with most of his superiors and he communicates only with a few close colleagues while ignoring all others’. (ST)

In this example, lower level Gardaí were the true implementers of change and the most powerful in the organisation when it came to accepting/rejecting change. There must

be an extensive change in the organisation's culture, particularly that which favours blame, if the organisation is to move forward. Indeed, "The situation we see now, where everyone is blaming everyone else and senior people resign yet nothing changes, will persist" (FP). This paired with an observed willingness for supervisors to drop new policy changes if it did not suit them creates an even more difficult process to enact change in the organisation. Indeed, "if a new idea doesn't suit a supervisor or management they will stop it" (CA).

## Conclusion

This chapter has looked at one of the most pervasive elements of the Garda culture, blame. It is the start and end point for nearly every interaction in the organisation as observed in the data. If the Gardaí are not trained fully, blame the supervisor for not doing their job, but do not acknowledge the fact that the organisation has not provided the resources necessary to do this. When poor behaviour has been found to continue without reprimand, blame the Gardaí for not speaking up, but do not consider the factors the organisation has put in place that make the Gardaí fear speaking up. If an individual tries to hold someone to account, blame them for tarnishing the reputation of the organisation, but do not recognise what organisational structures allowed the behaviour to happen and further made it difficult to hold them to account. The obvious and natural conclusion here being always pass the blame to the next person, the community member, the new Gardaí, or the supervisor, whoever can be an ideal target.

Overall, the purpose of this research was to understand the culture of the Garda, and this overwhelming sense of blame being passed around is one of the reasons, in addition to the facets discussed in the previous two chapters, for the behaviour that constitutes the observable culture. The blame culture found in the organisation is both the beginning and end point of the behaviour analysed throughout the data. It both explains why very little has been done to rectify any poor behaviour identified and why the behaviour continues on; blame culture is embedded into the organisation's culture and dictates much of the everyday actions of the Gardaí. Ultimately however, for the purpose of this research, what happened is not as important as understanding why it happened. As conveyed by the data, the argument made is that the behaviours, even of just individuals, is stemmed from a wider behaviour that is learned from the organisation and perpetuated by it being instilled in the culture. This culture is set both by lower level members continuing the behaviour as well as upper level organisational members exhibiting the behaviour which is then transferred through the tenets of the social theories. Indeed, one behests the other and could not work inharmoniously.

Much the same, with the construction of these findings chapters, they must build upon one another and work in conjunction with each other in order to fully understand the organisation's culture. As such, the previous chapters have delved into the inner workings of the Garda and have resulted in a more thorough understanding of what the culture of the



organisation is. From structural components of the culture that allow or perpetuate certain behaviour to how the organisation has come to hold itself accountable, there has been many findings that have not previously been discussed in an Irish policing landscape. From here these findings, both new and supportive of what was discussed in the chapter reviewing the previous literature, the next chapter will look at how Ireland fits into a larger piece of policing research internationally. Understanding the Irish police is important, but so too is Ireland's position in a larger world of police culture research.

## Chapter 8 Ireland's Position in the World

### Introduction

This research has been a substantial, yet still only cursory, step to contributing to the gap in knowledge in the area of Irish police organisational culture. While this in its own right is a contribution, it goes beyond this, relatively, small area of the field to contribute to a wider understanding of police culture internationally and where Ireland finds itself situated in the world. Further, it links police organisational culture to research on the traditional organisational culture where applicable, as this link is often left unexplored in police culture research. It is also vitally important to understand that though this has been a substantial endeavour into understanding police culture in Ireland, there is still so relatively little known that this research is but a drop of water into what will hopefully one day be a pool of knowledge in the area. Because of this, on a larger scale, this research is still limited in what can be known, but methodologically and substantively I have made progress in understanding police culture in Ireland. This research has contributed to the gap in knowledge by providing an understanding of the cross roads to be found in An Garda Síochána; the culture, challenges, and change.

This chapter is constructed with several goals. The overarching goal of this thesis has been to gain a deeper understanding of the organisational culture of the Garda as observed over the 30 year period, and while this will be explored in this chapter, it is first important to outline how the methodological contribution this research has made with document analysis and how this has aided the empirical contributions. After discussing methodology, conclusions will be given that encompass the main points of this research discussed in the previous three chapters as well as what this research has contributed to the field. From here is an exploration of how the theories chosen for this research fit into, and interact with, the findings. While the methodological decisions contributed to the collection of data, which support a substantive understanding of what the culture is, the theoretical lenses provide an understanding of how the culture has come to be. To this end, all four of the social theories can be seen in conjunction with one another when looked at in relation to the data. When members join a group, they are *socialised* into it. They observe what they perceive as being important to the group and will *learn* and perform that behaviour in order to *identify* with the group; if they do not do this, they will be socially *excluded*. Once this behaviour is indoctrinated into the group it becomes part of the culture, and thus is perpetuated until a time when outside pressures force change.

Building on this base, the focus will then turn to the discussion of where Ireland positions itself in a wider context of policing literature and theoretical positions so that, in future, Ireland may become a more prominent figure in international policing research.

Additionally, a more thorough analysis of the Garda's capacity to change, as examined over the 30 year observation period, is discussed. Finally, the overarching conclusions and reflections of the research will be explored before completing the story that has been presented throughout this thesis. However, the following chapter should be borne in mind with Manning's (2010) observations about the goals of research on the police. This research has never been about fixing the Garda, but rather about understanding them. Research into policing organisations should emphasise understanding the context and culture of policing, this in part includes the social climate in which the policing organisation finds itself, and that is what has been presented so far in this thesis and will continue to be presented in the rest of this final chapter.

### Methodological Contribution

Both the first and fourth chapters have outlined the methodological contributions made during this research, but it is important to conclude with their importance as well. This research would not have been possible without the use of document analysis; not least because the time period researched far exceeding the time allowed for such research (as well as my life span). The ability to analyse data over a 30 year period, as this research did, contributed not only a better understanding of the organisation's culture, but also a more accurate depiction of the culture. The documents analysed added context that made it possible to see patterns over time, this in combination with a limit to external controls/biases in how the information was presented made it possible to see that the behaviour associated with what was happening in the organisation, as dictated by the organisation's culture, was not isolated nor once off. The behaviour was, and still is, systemic and culturally dictated, and this was further exemplified by the repeated behaviour observed over the 30 year period.

Further, the methodology used allowed the research to tell a story that was comprehensive and well-encompassed. It has already been said that the documents ranged 30 years, but they also ranged geographically as well as in rank throughout the organisation. Those represented in the data came from different areas in Ireland as well as different positions in the organisation, from one end of the organisation to the other and from one side of the country to the next. The story that was constructed immersed you in the life of the Gardaí, and while this could have equally been achieved with other qualitative methodologies, it would have come at the expense of something this methodology added. Document analysis added the detail of the story constructed without compromising the expanse of geographic range, organisational rank, or time span. Document analysis is not yet widely used on its own accord in research on police organisational culture, but this research shows the potential of what can be offered. That considered, the next section sets out exactly what knowledge was contributed to the field by using this methodology.

## Contribution to Knowledge

Substantively this research has contributed to a deeper understanding of what the organisational culture of the Garda is as told through the journey of the Gardaí in the organisation. Beginning with their initial indoctrination into the organisation during training, the story then moved to their reception into the Garda as fully fledged members and what this means for their interactions both with those in the organisation as well as outside of it, and finally ends with what happens when things go wrong. Of course there are many components necessary to fully understand the culture of the Garda; however, much of the findings hinge on an understanding of the blame culture and need for self-preservation in the organisation. While the understanding of what a blame culture is can be summarised in part by the actual wording, the components of the blame culture found in the data in how it manifests in the Garda are three fold. While it in essence relies on blaming, the three aspects are responsibility, accountability, and avoiding. Pass off responsibility to someone else so you do not get blamed, deny accountability so you do not get blamed, and avoid problems that arise so you do not get blamed; the end goal here of course being simply, do not get blamed.

This considered, the following summary of the findings should be viewed with this blame culture in mind. Everything present in the documents is understood with the benefit of hindsight. It is worth considering whether the organisation would have been as heavily criticised, or indeed if the investigations resulting in these documents would have even happened, if the situations in question had turned out for the better. The culture of the organisation comes into question more frequently when bad things happen and it is a curious phenomenon to study whether this would be the case if the organisation were not as shrouded in negative attention.

The methodology for this research was chosen in part for its emphasis on context. As was seen with the chapter dedicated to the history of the Garda and its importance in understanding the origins of the organisation in relation to where it currently is, as well as the previously discussed structural significance of the organisation's culture, so too is importance placed on Garda training. On an individual level, the initial training received is paramount in how a member will begin their career within the organisation and how Gardaí are first introduced to the culture of the Garda. The training the Gardaí initially receive in the Garda training college places a larger emphasis on classroom-based learning, a noted shift from the initial training process of other international policing organisations where operational based knowledge is more heavily emphasised over the academic training. Even considering that much of what is learned happens on the job, coming in under these training conditions makes the possibility of starting within the organisation on a positive note severely limited as they simply are not prepared with a quality understanding of the basic necessities of what the job entails.

This considered, while the training has a heavy focus on classroom based learning, the lessons that are taught from early on in the training academy set the stage for how the Gardaí should behave when they enter the organisation. However, what is taught in the training academy is not always adequate for the skills they need to develop while in the field. Even looking back to the 1980s, training in the Garda emphasised what was done now rather than how things could be changed for the better (Brady, 2014). From the literature, the Garda today have indicated that a majority of what they learn is done while on the job and that the Garda training college did not fully prepare them for the field, a sentiment echoed in international research on police training. What was learned in the classroom was considered unrealistic and not practical for real world situations, although it was noted that there was not much that could be done in a classroom to truly prepare the Gardaí for the demands of the job (Marsh, 2017; O'Brien-Olinger, 2016). This idea then begs the question, if both Irish and international policing organisations, who have taken different approaches to training, find they are unprepared for the realities of the job when they begin, is there an appropriate way to train incoming police officers that will fully prepare them for everything the job entails? While this is not an answer specifically answered from this research, it is an avenue for future research based on the findings presented here.

As discussed in chapter five, there was an explicitly stated and concerted effort in the writing to not use the word force, both by myself and in some of the documents analysed. However, this distinction in discourse did not necessarily translate into a different policing style as might have been anticipated given the reasoning in chapter five that to move from a force to an organisation requires a different type of skill set. While the earlier documents did use the word force with no apparent thought considered in what its application may indicate, there were some documents that recognised the impact of the word but did not fully align this impact with other rhetoric used to describe the organisation. From this reasoning, there was also a contribution of a new understanding of what type of policing organisation the Garda is. While not fully in line with the generalised models given in the reviewed literature (i.e. community and militaristic), the Garda did have some attributes of a community policing organisation. This considered, while they do outwardly state a community orientation, this was not always observed in practice, nor was this an aspect of the culture that had any significant change over the 30 year period.

The term community policing seems to be the popularised phrase for policing organisations to adopt, and is indeed observed in many policing organisations internationally, but what this means in concrete terms is less clear and this is where the Garda has struggled in implementation. Though there were instances of individual Gardaí discussing their value of their relationship with the community, which would indicate a community policing style, this talk did not reconcile with the observed actions in the documents nor with the structural regimes put in place by the organisation. More

specifically, visibility is diminished by repeated cuts to community policing Gardaí with a re-prioritisation to other areas; accountability to the public is severely lacking, as demonstrated by repeated necessity of tribunals of inquiry and refusal to publicly acknowledge wrongdoing until pressured by the media; and finally, proactive policing is diminished when it has been stated that the organisation only reacts to problems.

While physical aggression was not observed frequently in the data, a hallmark of militaristic policing, there were specific instances of the Gardaí using intimidation and other mentally aggressive actions toward the public found in the data and discussed in chapter six. As it has been argued, policing style can influence (and vice versa) aggressive behaviour; typically, the militaristic style is associated with more aggressive policing. As is the case with the Garda, though they claimed to have a community policing style, the data ultimately indicated they do not. There are apparent contradictions inherent in these conclusions. If the Garda do not have cultural values placed in physical aggression, they then would (theoretically) fall into the community policing style. However, the data suggests they do not in practice, so where does that leave the Garda?

As discussed in chapter five, there is perhaps a need to re-evaluate the types of policing categories traditionally used for an expanded spectrum on policing styles because neither of the current classifications accommodate the characteristics the Garda has shown stemming from the data. As such, the Garda would fall into a quasi-community policing style, or perhaps quasi-militaristic depending on viewpoint, that was not accounted for in the evaluated literature. Of course, it is to be expected that when using two very broad terms to define a policing style there will be some variation along each spectrum. Perhaps, however, there is an element lacking from the community policing style and aggression is unavoidable in policing organisations. It is possible that rather than one style containing aggressive characteristics, that the dividing line between the two can be in the type of aggression used rather than a lack of aggression outright in one. If such a point were to be conceptualised, I would assert this is where the chosen and displayed policing style for the Garda would fall based on the data.

Chapter seven looked at the precedent in the organisation for Gardaí to shift the blame onto whomever or whatever is available so they did not have to take responsibility for their own actions or face accountability from the organisation. However, though this was done as a way to introduce the blame culture present within the Garda, it also speaks to the type of policing model the Garda follow. In the scenario given in chapter six, the explanation given for allegations of assault was to shift blame on to the “typical” type of person the Gardaí would come in contact with rather than to account for the possibility that assault on those in custody does happen and what organisational systems allow this to happen and/or how to keep it from happening in the future. How this blaming of the public for their inherent state of being in order to shift the focus from their own wrongdoing does not reconcile with

a strong relationship with the community, as a community policing model would call for. One possibility, however, is that the Garda does follow a community policing model, but the community is limited to those whom the Gardaí choose to help. Notwithstanding, this further suggests that the Garda does not truly fit into a community policing model, as discussed in the chapter five.

One of the larger conceptual findings in relation to systemic aspects of the Garda's culture was in relation to how Gardaí are treated at an organisational level. This was encompassed in two key areas: provisions for Gardaí mental health and how resources are allocated, and further how Gardaí are expected to deal with this. Per the findings, provisions for the care of mental health within the Garda are changing slightly, but still problematic and can affect the performance of Gardaí. There are peer support networks in place, but with an attached stigmatisation enforced by fellow Gardaí, offering peer support within the organisation is little more than offering no support as Gardaí are less likely to avail of such help if they feel it will impact them further in their career. This then leaves Gardaí to deal with their problems largely on their own, creating the potential to further exacerbate the problem. This lack of provision on the part of the organisation implies little value placed in giving support to the Gardaí, and in turn little value placed on Gardaí more generally. There was a documented feeling of being under valued in the Irish literature, and this notion was further supported by the findings in the data. Though it would be an overstatement to pin this entire sense of being undervalued by the organisation on mental health provisions within the organisation, it is nonetheless concluded to be a contributing factor.

Though some structural changes to mental health provisions in the Garda were discussed in chapter five, as understood from the data, there is still a stigma attached to seeking help. This stigma is, of course, not solely the responsibility of the organisation, as societal perceptions of police officers seeking help for mental health has been seen in the literature, the inner organisational response is still a factor that prevents members from seeking help when they need it. Currently, it was found, the Gardaí are not required to go to mental health counselling, even following traumatic incidents, but making such processes mandatory could alleviate the fear of seeking help and help lessen the stigma attached to mental health illnesses within the Garda. The organisation's approach to mental health devalues the Gardaí's own well-being by not providing adequate mental health supports and is indicative of the cultural values in the way the organisation views and values its own members.

With reference to how resources are allocated, broadly, the data suggests that the organisation has little regard for the Gardaí at ground level, as evidenced by little upward communication and a lack of resources burdened with an expectation to do and be responsible for an ever increasing demand and lack of structures in place for members to cope with these extra burdens. The data indicated a possibility that increasing resources

and allocating them appropriately could result in a better policing service, and while this has the potential to help improve organisation and burden, it would not achieve the desired effect in and of itself. This concept was seen in the data stemming from later documents where some resources had been increased but issues still remained. As this behaviour is systemic and embedded in the culture, simply providing more and/or enhanced resources would not shift the culture from believing this behaviour is acceptable.

The organisation has been left under resourced for many years, these circumstances being very similar to what was discussed in chapter two during the overwhelming changes the organisation faced in the 1960s, and whether this will impact the organisation in the same way discussed in chapter two is something to consider. Though the Garda have publicly claimed to have a community policing style, and do indeed retain many social service functions, as the data has indicated, these social service functions are in part a point of contention for the organisation. The data supported the notion that there is an added burden placed on Gardaí because of the community's expectation of them to perform certain social services beyond what they are capable of providing, both for lack of resources and training. Part of the issue in this regard was public expectation of Gardaí, seen in chapter five, but also necessary to consider is what little has been done on an organisational level to alter the public's perception of what the Gardaí should be responsible for, thus lessening the burden the Gardaí are faced with in their day to day lives.

Moving beyond what the initial training instils in the Gardaí and how they are first received into the organisation, how the Gardaí manage internal and external relationships was an important indicator of the organisation's culture. The bonds that are created were split into two directions, internal and external. The external relations were slightly more simplistic in nature, meaning that there was really only one direction of this divide between the members of the organisation and the public; however, this simplicity is also due to the limited view taken. The relationship was more simplistic because only one direction was analysed, from the Gardaí to the public. From this perspective, the two were purposefully and structurally kept separated and bonds between members of the organisation would strengthen if opposition was faced from a force external to the organisation. However, this is not unique to Irish policing and has been found in more traditional research on police organisational culture internationally. Further to this, and as a testament to the pervasiveness of it in the Garda culture, as discussed above, the blame culture present within the organisation was also present in these external relationships.

While the external divide was more straightforward, the internal divide was slightly more complex. As mentioned above, the bonds among members of the organisation would strengthen if the threat was external; however, this would not be the same if the perceived threat came from within the organisation or another member of the organisation. The need for self-preservation stemming from the blame culture prevailed and loyalty between Gardaí



only extended so far as it did not compromise their own self-protection. Self-protection always overrode group loyalty, unless group loyalty was used as a means for covering up their own wrongdoing and thus ultimately used as a mechanism for self-protection. This finding leads into the next, and last, substantive theme of the Garda culture found in chapter seven, blame.

One of the most important aspects of police culture from the international literature was the importance of loyalty and solidarity. This considered, Charman (2017) proposed a shift in understanding police culture from one attached to the blue code of silence to a more apt, blue code of self-protection; based on the data presented in the previous chapters, I would propose this is a model the Garda follow as well. As seen from chapter two, the Garda was previously characterised as a highly loyal group; however the shift to an every person for themselves mentality can be seen most clearly when discussing the large prevalence of a blame culture in the organisation in chapter seven. The Cultural Audit reported that Gardaí felt comfortable speaking up at a 6.1 and reporting wrongdoing at just 5.5 and from this stems a need for self-protection that manifests in staying silent or otherwise not expecting levels of accountability. The fear of speaking up leading them to stay silent found in the data was also found in traditional organisations (Wynen et al., 2019), further bridging the gap between traditional organisational culture and police organisational culture.

As already stated, while everything concluded to this point is no less part of the Garda culture, this aspect was one of the most pervasive components of it as most other pieces were contingent on the blame culture being present. In order for much of the previously stated components of the Garda culture to thrive, the blame culture must be present because of its intrinsic linking to every other aspect. Because of this blame culture, as the data has suggested, the Garda does not possess some of the core qualities of learning organisations. One of the key elements of a learning organisation is that learning is built into the culture rather than just as a reaction to misconduct or a side effect of adaptations to change, and it can be argued the Garda does not possess this due to their emphasis on a blame culture, at both individual and organisational levels, and an intolerance of mistakes, honest or otherwise that places blame on individuals rather than actively learning from past mistakes and incorporating this learning curve into the established culture.

As presented in chapter seven, the presence of the blame culture is so widespread throughout the Garda, that this facet of the already established culture would make it very difficult to implement any learning organisational aspects without some catalyst or major overhaul in the organisation. Indeed, the presence of a learning organisation within the Garda would indicate the presence of many qualities that are averse to the current organisation's cultural features. The presence of a blame culture, and the associated fear

of speaking up, or silence for survival discussed in chapter seven, has been a major contributor to the perpetuation of the aspects of the organisation's culture that have been working negatively against the organisation, namely the continuation of flouting rules and overall misconduct without accountability. Although the documents analysed were produced because of cases of wrongdoing and thus were specifically intended to investigate what went wrong, there were still so few cited instances of Gardaí intervening in the situations that the very lack of data serves to fill in a piece of the organisation's culture. Speaking up is not to be tolerated and therefore does not happen and misconduct is allowed to continue.

A further question that must be asked is if a member knows what they are doing is wrong, but choose to do it anyway, why should following the orders of a superior officer be considered a valid excuse? In this context, the phrase valid excuse being the chosen wording as often times neither individual was held accountable for giving the order or performing the action. If this behaviour were not part of the organisation's culture, the Gardaí should question and/or scrutinise the requested behaviour rather than just doing it. Also reflective of the culture is the perceived feeling of not being able to challenge a superior officer or report such requests, as would be understood as the case in the data because no Gardaí really questioned their orders, they only performed them. However, most often following orders was used as an afterthought excuse to evade responsibility for their own actions. In this way, there is not as much emphasis placed on Gardaí blindly following orders or perhaps not understanding right from wrong, but rather a focus on performing such behaviour and choosing to not take responsibility for it after being caught by saying they were following orders from someone else. This manifestation of behaviour found in the data is less representative of rigid command structures that must be followed at all times and more indicative of the prevalence of a blame culture within the organisation.

As discussed in the findings, the organisation reverted to blaming the nearly five year Irish governmental hiring freeze and economic factors for the poor practices displayed by Gardaí. This avoidance attempts to displace responsibility for the actions stemming from the organisation's culture to outside factors that the organisation has no control over. By so doing, the organisation can simply avoid accountability by describing the situation as something of which they have no control over; something that is not true. The organisation's culture sets out the framework which the organisational members will operate and their behaviours that were observed in the data are a direct reflection of the organisation's culture, of which they do have control over and can change, but only if approached in the right manner. Ultimately, what was observed was a further perpetuation of the organisation's blame culture from a top level.

It was discussed in chapter three that strong supervision and strict adherence to keeping officers accountable is vital to preventing and curtailing misconduct in policing

organisations. Of course, this argument stemmed from the international literature as this area of policing has been largely left under researched in Ireland, due in part to the formerly discussed concept of the reluctance to criticise the Garda in any way. However, the findings from the data are able to contribute to an understanding of this concept from an Irish perspective. In one respect, it was acknowledged in the documents that strong leadership and a need to hold people accountable in order to prevent this type of behaviour is necessary; however, this trait was not observed in the data. A lack of accountability was pervasive throughout the data, both in supervisors holding those they are responsible for accountable and for supervisory Gardaí to hold themselves accountable. In this way, as the reviewed literature has suggested, there is very little possibility for this behaviour to cease if the leaders of an organisation do not act in the way in which they expect lower level officers to. From the literature it was understood that police corruption starts with low level officers, but it would not be able to continue without superior officers not investigating matters fully or taking the situation seriously. Officers in supervisory roles set a precedent for those they oversee and can either “promote the right behaviours or give permission for negative ones” (Metcalf, 2017, p. 159). This permission given so to speak was observed in the data.

Though the data did support particular instances of supervisory Gardaí attempting to hold other Gardaí accountable, there have been difficulties involving accusations of bullying or ineffective upper management that have severely limited their ability to do so and so they are hesitant to even try. The idea that police culture breeds misconduct among its officers has been made previously; this idea stems from the concept that if an officer were to speak up about wrongdoing, they would be socially excluded from the group and so choose a cover up or secret keeping approach in order to avoid negative personal repercussions. This social exclusion approach was seen in the data very clearly in chapter seven. However, this behavioural approach was adopted at both a lower level and an organisational level, something not discussed in the reviewed literature.

When considering the blame culture present in the organisation and what roles supervisors have to play, it is also necessary to understand how systems of investigating misconduct contribute. As explored in the data, the process for investigating a member of the organisation is purposefully designed to be long and arduous. One of the cited reasons for not coming forward is lack of proof, but coming forward should not require such a burden on the individual. However, this need for proof that makes reporting wrongdoing more difficult, and can contribute further to a blame culture. Why then, would an organisation create such a structure that purposefully creates delays in investigations? The data would suggest that these structures are created to allow for an easy ability to ignore any such problems and continue without taking responsibility at an organisational level for Gardaí wrongdoing. The long process also serves to dissuade supervisory members from

beginning any such proceedings because of what is known to be involved; further exacerbating the problem. Where these delays stem from however are more indicative of the organisation's structural culture than the actual delay.

Of course, it is important to acknowledge those who are being questioned in an investigation and their attempts to delay investigations via telling lies, blocking key witnesses from speaking against them, and/or not performing their jobs as they should, but structurally, the organisation has embedded a culture of covering up the truth through curtailing investigations by creating a process that causes unnecessary delays. Consequently, the truth is less likely to come out if there are delays in investigations that leads to proof degrading. All considered, it would be reasonable to conclude that the Gardaí and the Garda purposefully delaying investigations into matters concerning their own discipline demonstrates a commitment to keeping the truth uncovered. As the data has shown, delaying investigations is a common enough occurrence to be considered systemic and part of the culture.

From this investigatory procedure has stemmed, at least in part, the need for self-preservation. Self-preservation was discussed as an important factor in the Garda in various ranks, and this blame culture is a staple tactic used in order for the Gardaí to "cover their own ass" in the organisation. However, this behaviour would not necessarily be needed if the organisation did not also employ a blame culture and target single Gardaí to place blame on for behaviour that is culturally learned from the organisation. Though the move away from a reliance on a blame culture, stemming from both organisational and societal pressures of enforced individual accountability, has been noted in the international literature as necessary, whether an actual move away from a blame culture in international policing organisations has been implemented is not clear from the literature reviewed. As the data in this thesis has shown, public statements and actual implementation can vary greatly. The previous Irish literature in this area has indicated that, while accountability for actions in general has been quite low, there tended to be a prevalence of blaming the public for what was done. Though this was in some cases observed in the data, there was a higher tendency to blame fellow Gardaí for personal behaviour or for the organisation to blame lower level Gardaí for performing behaviour instilled by the organisation's culture.

One point taken from the previous Irish literature in chapter one was that the overseeing GSOC was intended to increase levels of accountability; however, in reality Corcoran (2012) found GSOC created, or perhaps more so enhanced the already existing, blame culture in the Garda. GSOC increased apprehension around their use of discretion for fear of doing something wrong and being blamed; a similar pattern, though not directly linked to GSOC, was found in the data. Gardaí feared making mistakes because of what could happen to them after, namely taking sole blame for the mistake, and because of this, there were instances of Gardaí not performing their jobs as well as they could. Though this

move away from a blame culture has been recognised as necessary both in the literature and in the later documents analysed for this research, there is still a heavy prevalence of instituting such a blame assigning approach in the Garda that was found in the data.

Though the literature often suggests cultural change must be driven from the bottom, in this particular aspect of Garda culture it would stand to reason that until the culture is shifted at the top, the street level Gardaí will not feel safe enough to own up to their own mistakes as they happen rather than place blame elsewhere to deflect attention from them. The bottom level continues this behaviour because it is observed from the top, but even though it is cyclical, I would assert that this behaviour will not be stopped at the bottom levels until the top level has enacted change and made a culture that is more accepting of mistakes and did not place blame so singularly on an individual. In this specific instance, change must be top down. However, there is still immense power to either implement or reject change from the bottom levels of the organisation. In this way, holding those performing the behaviour accountable establishes to the organisation that this behaviour is not tolerated and thus not a facet of the culture, and this then leads to cultural reform at an organisational level that recognises the systemic nature of the behaviour and enacts change from a top level rather than just placing blame on a single individual hoping to solve the entirety of the issue. Because this facet of the culture affects almost every other aspect as well, how this will affect top-bottom level, and vice versa, change will be interesting to understand.

## Theoretical Contribution

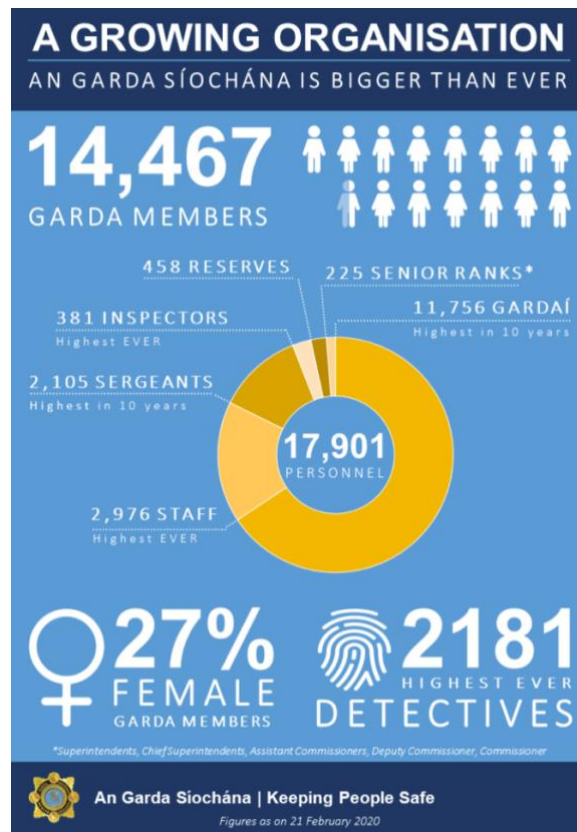
It has stated already that the theoretical contributions in this research are novel to Ireland, but not necessarily to the international field of police organisational culture. The theories chosen have all been used to understand police organisational culture, and they were chosen for this research based on this applicability, but they have not necessarily been used in conjunction with each other previously, as often research in this area tends to choose one theory and move forward with it as the sole guiding theoretical lens. Nor have they been linked to more traditional organisational culture theoretical positions as was the case with police culture and performance theory in this thesis. Particularly in Ireland, there has been a gap in understanding Garda culture from a theoretical viewpoint; how the culture has formed and been transmitted over time was underexplored in the few published studies that have looked at the Garda's organisational culture. Of course, the empirical contributions have led to an understanding of Garda culture, but the theoretical contribution, as outlined in more detail below, has developed this understanding further.

While there was no emphasis on one particular theory throughout this research, the social theories (social learning, social identity, socialisation, social exclusion) were viewed as the crux of behaviour transmission throughout. In the literature discussed in chapters three, these social theories were attributed as the reason why police culture can be

singularised as being just one, representative culture that has been transmitted over time. This transmission of behaviour through the social theory mechanisms was also present in the Garda. The historical context of the Garda presented in chapter two not only served to better understand the organisations that preceded, but it also provided an understanding of the current structure of the Garda, and this is in large part because of the theoretical associations of the social theories.

Part of the reason the organisations were so similar was due to the fact that they shared the same codes and manuals, but also equally, if not I would argue more, important is because of the socialisation into the organisation. When the Garda was created in the 1920s, many of the men who joined, and particularly those who had supervisory and training positions, came from the previous organisation. That considered, the external pressure that preceded the formation of the Garda only resulted in superficial change; as discussed in chapter two the differences between the Garda and the RIC were not substantial. So, though we saw a new organisation form, it is debateable whether or not a new organisation actually formed or an older organisation was given a new name with the internal structures, and culture, staying largely the same. Then came the 1960s when actual, meaningful change was forced onto the organisation. This was driven both by internal and external factors. Though these pressures did force change into the organisation, the social theories as described above are in large part why we have not observed any further meaningful change in the organisation's culture since then. This change, or lack thereof, is discussed further in the next section.

The socialisation members receive even in the initial training phases, as discussed in chapter five, is what really cements the culture into being in an organisation. Socialisation is an important aspect of officer integration and sets the tone for how members will behave in future. Social Learning Theory would suggest that members are socialised into a group and will reflect the values they view as most important to the group. However, as was seen in the data, the influx of Garda recruits, and the lack of supervisors to socialise the new recruits into the organisation, leads to a deficit in the practical knowledge of how to operate within the organisation, and from this, low standards are allowed to flourish. At the current period in the organisation (as of February 2020), the Garda have continued to recruit at an unprecedented rate. They have recruited and promoted members at the highest rates the organisation has seen in 10 years, if not ever, in the Inspector, Sergeant, and Gardaí levels. While this influx after the hiring freeze was necessary, the strain on socialisation and training seen in the data will only be exacerbated, and with it, a compounding of the issues that surrounds this overstretched capacity as suggested in the data.



Though this research was initially pinned on the for mentioned social theories, Rotten Apple Theory came about in an organic way. Upon familiarisation with the data, patterns became apparent that many of the issues found in the data were not of an individualistic nature nor were they going to be solved by removing one person, the rotten apple, from the organisation. That considered, the application of Rotten Apple Theory could also not work in isolation in any way that would satisfactorily explain the behaviour that is representative of the Garda culture. Rotten apples are but one piece of understanding organisational culture in a policing context, and in order for this to provide a more complete understanding, the social theories needed to be used in conjunction. As understood from the literature, rotten apples are not created in isolation, they stem from a rotten orchard, and this rotten orchard is created by systemic mechanisms dictated by the culture of the organisation and cemented in processes of social learning and socialisation. What was found represented wider systemic issues that had long since been explained away on an organisational level as individual issues; the avoidance of responsibility being a key facet of the Garda's culture. Upon this finding, the established place of Rotten Apple Theory in policing literature was sought and found and its application to the Garda particularly became even more evident.

As previously argued, per Rotten Apple Theory, a large number of officers do not have to display such behaviour in order for the issues to be systemic and this is still the approach taken when understanding the Irish data and how the observed behaviour of relatively few Gardaí (considering there are 14,000+ Gardaí) still reflects a wider systemic

culture that values and allows this behaviour to continue. If it truly were down to a few single individuals being the catalyst for this behaviour, cases of police misconduct would be eradicated from every policing organisation in every country by the simple removal of a single officer. Accordingly, if this were the case in the Garda, you would not expect there to be a need for additional tribunals of inquiry after the first one, yet more than one tribunal was used for the data analysis and there are more yet that have preceded the observation period as well as one that is ongoing. As the data over the 30 year period has shown, even though there were often few Gardaí held accountable for their actions, though indeed this very notion is also part of the perpetuation of the problem as it instils this behaviour in the culture further, removal of one problem individual has not solved the problem. It was questioned throughout this thesis how this behaviour has continued for so long, and the contribution of this theory does provide an adequate reasoning for that. You cannot solve a problem if you do not address the actual problem.

Performance Theory, as evaluated in chapter three, relied heavily on the findings and implications from the Hawthorne Studies. Though it was documented that there were criticisms of this study, most importantly for policing organisations was the importance of supervisory-employee relationships. More specifically, a relationship whereby organisational members were valued at an organisational level. Workers feeling as if a superior level member cared enough about them that they would not only listen to, but also implement, organisational changes they have requested was a key finding and also linked to increased productivity. In a policing context, the literature evaluated indicated that officers who felt they were valued by their organisation would exhibit more positive work-related behaviours, while those who felt they were under-valued would engage in more self-protective behaviours. Accordingly, the Gardaí were found to both feel undervalued by the organisation and engage in self-protective behaviour.

One of the clearest, direct links to the findings of the Hawthorne Studies lies in the contention around the long-standing issues of uniforms with the Garda. As discussed previously, the problems around the uniforms have been around for many years and yet nothing has been done to change them, nor do the Gardaí feel as if they are being listened to in regard to their opinions and concerns on them. As already stated, the matter of changing uniforms for the entire organisation is not something that can feasibly be done in the short term, but, as the data has indicated, this is an issue that has been around for quite some time. When the Gardaí are disregarded in relation to their opinions, and in some cases legitimate physical wellbeing concerns, it results in a morale that is nearly non-existent. The organisation's structural policies that regulate such practices imply an inherent disregard for their members physical wellbeing.

Though there are other resources that are lacking, the seemingly innocuous area of uniforms demonstrate a sustained organisational disregard for its members and this in turn



can affect their ability to perform the job to the degree that is required. Underpinned by performance theory, and more specifically the Hawthorne Studies, the implications for Gardaí feeling like they are not being listened to result in lower morale, something supported in the data. There is a general lack and mismanagement of resources within the Garda that has impacted on Garda morale and policing ability, but uniforms are perhaps the most clear, concrete example of how this theoretical concept can manifest itself in the real life day to day realities of policing.

Outlined thus far have been the ways in which this thesis has contributed to the theoretical development of policing literature in Ireland; however, there is also a unique contribution to the wider scope of police organisational culture literature as well. As discussed previously, the theories used in and of themselves are not new to the field of police organisational culture, but their contribution lies in their use together. Though this is not to say that all of the preceding research is any less impactful, there is room to argue that in using the theories together, a more robust explanation for culture transmission can be achieved. Any aspect of the evaluated police culture, as set out in previous chapters, can in part be understood from the view point of any one of the forementioned theories; however, when used together a more complete picture of the cyclical nature of how the culture has come to be and been perpetuated over time is apparent.

It has already been discussed in chapter three that rather than looking at organisational culture from top-bottom or vice versa, the concept needs to be reimaged in a cyclical fashion whereby there is no beginning or end, just a recurring concept. The members of the organisation are socialised into a group, in essence they must learn what behaviour is necessary to become part of, and identify with, the organisation, else they face social exclusion. Further to this, it can be understood that behaviour is moderated by performance theory and how members' actions are received within the organisation. This then contributes to the understanding of why the rotten apple explanation is not valid, because of the patterns of behaviour transmission through the social theories, behaviour being attributed to just one member, or rotten apple, does not make sense as this must stem from the organisation's culture that is perpetually transmitted in a circular fashion. In order to make it in the organisation members must learn the behaviour, these members are then promoted thus reinforcing the behaviour from the type while it is still being transmitted from the bottom ranks. With the methodological, empirical, and theoretical contributions considered, it is now possible to position Ireland into the larger spectrum of police organisational culture research internationally.

### So, Where Does Ireland Fit?

The Garda has set itself apart from other policing organisations with its unique policing style that emphasises its relationship with the community through a unified and routinely unarmed policing approach. In this instance, unified is used to refer to the structure

of the Garda and that there is only one policing organisation responsible for policing the entire country rather than several different policing organisations responsible for various areas of the country. Further, though the Garda does have an armed Emergency Response Unit and armed detectives, special training is required to carry firearms and is not taught as a basic necessity in the training academy, and thus, only a limited number of Gardaí carry firearms regularly. This model in and of itself is not completely unique as there are other countries who follow this model, indeed there are 13 countries in total with structured and documented national police organisations, but there are only two countries, in addition to Ireland, who follow this model and are routinely unarmed; New Zealand and Norway. However, one factor that sets Ireland apart even from these two countries is its additional responsibility for the security of the State. In this way, Ireland's policing organisation is really one of a kind.

Because Ireland is quite unique in this regard, it is necessary to consider whether the findings from this research are generalisable more widely across other jurisdictions and policing organisations. Even within the Garda there are some regional differences, i.e. certain systems being available in some parts of the country and not others as discussed in chapter five, but the findings presented in this thesis had to be thematically relevant to the organisation as a whole, and thus, representative to the entirety of the organisation. While the way in which the data was analysed provides a clear justification for this conclusion, still to be considered is whether the findings can be applied to policing organisations outside of Ireland. While of course not everything will align exactly, as already outlined in the beginning chapters of this thesis, there are enough similarities between the data analysed for this research and the evaluated international literature to conclude that there is some generalisability among Irish and international police organisational cultures, and these are outlined further below.

There were initial reflections on how Ireland fits into a larger idea of police culture in the conclusion of chapter three, as such, what is discussed below is a conceptual understanding of where Ireland fits in relation to international policing organisations based on what was considered important aspects of police organisational culture in the literature, as set out and justified in chapter three, and the larger themes presented in the findings chapters. That considered, what is presented below is not a true comparative analysis, as to create such a comparison would require far more space and is not the true intention of this research. Though one of the aims of this research is to bring Ireland into the international police culture debate, this is done more so from the contribution of findings and less through an exhaustive direct comparison. As such, the chart below gives a broad overview of where Ireland finds itself positioned in the larger scope of police organisational culture, in relation to the international and Irish literature discussed in chapters one and two. Though simplified through the use of symbols, the generalised concepts below were

surmised from the evaluation of the literature in the first three chapters as juxtaposed with the findings in chapters 5-7. Though generalised, as any amalgamation of literature often is, the chart below gives a broad overview of where Ireland positions itself in the world of police culture (as ascertained from the literature) both in relation to the previous Irish literature and the current findings from this thesis.

<i>Area of Culture</i>	<i>Irish literature similarity to International Literature</i>	<i>Irish literature similarity to Irish research findings</i>	<i>Conclusions drawn for similarities of Irish research to international literature</i>
<i>Loyalty and Solidarity</i>	-	+-	+-
<i>Aggression</i>	-	+	-
<i>Styles of Policing</i>	-	+-	?
<i>Organisational Support</i>	+	+	+
<i>Misconduct</i>	?	+	+
<i>Cronyism/Nepotism</i>	+	+	+
<i>Blame Culture</i>	+-	+	?
<i>Managing Change</i>	-?	-	+
<i>Legend:</i>	- Different	+ Similar	? Too many variables

Where the international literature has suggested a highly loyal group and the Irish literature has suggested a more fragmented approach, the data, as discussed in chapter six, viewed both approaches dependent on where the perceived threat stemmed. While international police culture is characterised in the literature as physically aggressive, the findings did not support this notion. Finally, police culture internationally is characterised as being highly resistant to change, but the previous literature on Irish police culture was not in tune with this. In fact, the previous research suggested the Garda was quite open to change, and further, adapted both quickly and well. However, the conclusions about the acceptance of change in the organisation can potentially be explained by the static nature of the data collection. Aided by the chosen methodology, the observation over the 30 year period allowed for a wider scope of analysis that would indicate change has not been widespread nor meaningful in this time frame.

As previously stated, there is a focus on physical aggression in the literature and this is perhaps because this particular type of aggression is the easiest to define and identify. Though it has been noted that Ireland has taken a departure from the evaluations of many international policing organisations in their lack of physical aggression, one further distinction in the use of force came in who were more likely to use it. The international

literature indicated that older officers were *less* likely to use force while the Irish literature indicated that use of force was something only present in the older generations/Gardaí. Though at face value it would seem as if this also indicates that older officers are more likely to use force in the Garda, but the use of physical force was not seen to any large extent at all. What this then indicates is that there is not necessarily a generational divide in use of force in the present Garda, but rather that there is a divide between former Gardaí and those currently part of the organisation. As discussed in chapter two, the 1960s was a major turning point for change in the Garda, and use of force was one of those changes discussed. This of course all must be reconciled with the notion that it is still entirely possible physical force is used in the Garda, we just do not know about it.

The move away from physical aggression considered, verbal and psychological aggression fall into a much greyer area that is far more open to interpretation as well as more difficult to prove outright; I have also included various forms of intimidation within the scope of psychological aggression. The terms of defining such aggression may also vary based on whether the person toward whom the aggression was directed “deserved it” or was ultimately guilty of the accusation. As with the physical aggression, verbal aggression was only observed scarcely from events in the 1990s. Again, this does not necessarily mean it never occurred or still may occur, but there are influential societal factors that may make us less attuned to what could be considered verbal aggression and thus less likely to be explicitly documented to such an extent that writing it in official documentation was considered necessary. While the preceding facets have been considered in relation to differences in both past eras of the Garda as well as international policing organisations, not yet to be fully considered is how the current organisation has changed during the observation period.

## Change

When looking more specifically at how the organisation has managed change over the 30 year observation period and how a blame culture has impacted this, first a theoretical approach is necessary. The theoretical underpinnings of a social identity being collectivistic to an entire group is aided by the other theoretical lens of this research; Social Learning Theory. How the Gardaí are socialised into the group is paramount to how they will behave and learn/conform to the group identity. In essence, the entirety of this research is a testament to the influence of Social Learning Theory as there were no observations of any meaningful change over the 30 year period. In order for this to be the case, newer members must be performing the same behaviours as previous members, and this is due to how they are socialised into the organisation. Further, how they are socialised into the organisation is reflective of the behaviours that are considered important that is embedded into the older members who serve as mentors to newer members, and thus reflective of the organisation’s culture.

The concept of managing change within the Garda was not necessarily something considered during the coding process of data analysis, but rather something that was examined after the analysis for understanding the culture was done. The understanding of change over time, as stated previously, is not typically possible in policing research because of the static nature of data collection. However, with the chosen research method, evaluating the results of the data analysis after conclusions were drawn on what the culture of the Garda was, it was then possible to analyse if change, and meaningful change at that, had occurred throughout the observation period.

A hallmark of police culture as ascertained in the literature was that policing organisations are, on the whole, very resistant to change, particularly if officers could not immediately see the value in the change. Further, often in order to truly enact any meaningful change in the culture of policing organisations, wider societal cultural values must also change. In this way, it is then more clear why there was a large scale resistance of criticising the Garda previously; to do so would be to directly criticise wider society. Criticising an organisation for which one is not part of is much easier than to indirectly criticise yourself as part of the society. This considered, there was an observed willingness of criticising the Garda during the observation period when compared to the earlier, historical literature on the Garda seen in chapter two. This shift in societal levels of accountability has the potential to enact meaningful change on to the Garda, but as of yet has yet to be seen in any substantial way in the data.

When considering organisational culture as a reflection of societal culture, Ireland has further linked itself to international policing organisations. Belgian and Dutch policing organisations often do not have many (comparatively) cases of serious police misconduct as this behaviour is not supported in the social culture (Punch, 2000, 2003). However, in instances of police misconduct in the Netherlands, many cases led to early retirement and relocation of supervisors to different departments/locations and in Belgium many are never held accountable for their actions when involved in scandal (Punch, 2000, 2003). Within this framework, police misconduct is not actually reprimanded in a meaningful way, but rather the problem is shifted elsewhere and no real progress is made to improve the organisation, thus hindering change. The findings in this research mirror these international findings and further serve to connect Ireland to an international body of policing literature.

The evaluated Irish literature indicated that the Garda were willing to change, but that overall a lack of resources and management often hindered any successful long-term change. As noted in the *Report of the steering group on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Garda Síochána* (1997), “a number of existing roles should be eliminated, transferred to other organisations or scaled down. The central objective is to allow the Garda Síochána to concentrate on core roles and functions and to free up resources for operational duties”

(p. 32); yet this has not been shown to be the case from the analysed data, and is in fact a recommendation that was given in the data itself.

The Morris Tribunal has been cited as the capstone of investigations into policing, both in Ireland and abroad. According to Conway and Walsh (2011), the Morris Tribunal was the epitome of change for investigations into allegations of corruption that lead to Garda reform and has been referred to as “one of the longest and most thorough inquiries into any police force in modern times” (Brady, 2014, p. 239). This tribunal was noted as a turning point for many members of the organisation and for the organisation itself, though this in itself has already been contested, nor were the wide sweeping changes said to have stemmed from this tribunal seen in any concrete manner in this research.

As one such example, in the case of the Morris Tribunal, Gardaí were confident in their ability to alter notes so that they were officially seen to behave appropriately and abide by the law and rights of those in custody. With the large scale occurrence of altering notes during this period of investigation, this confidence did not stem from individual courage. Though not outrightly encouraged by the organisation, there was a subtle approval of this type of behaviour, as seen from the lack of discipline handed down from the organisation for those involved both before and after the Tribunal. Perhaps if the organisation had held those responsible accountable, it could be argued otherwise; however, the actions on behalf of the organisation indicate a complicity in this behaviour that is embedded in the culture and allows this behaviour to continue as suggested in the data by similar circumstances in an entirely separate Garda division. Though this particular action did not appear in later documents, indicating change on this level, there are still widespread issues with accountability, in which this scenario is intrinsically linked. Also necessary for consideration is the idea that this did in fact happen in other situations, but the outcome worked favourably for the Gardaí and an investigation was never established to uncover it. This links more directly with the previous consideration about whether the Garda only considers being accountable when they have to be (i.e. through media outing issues or them becoming generally uncovered in the public domain).

As another example of the evaluation of change being limited previously by research method limitations is in regard to omitting key pieces of information from official notes when conducting investigations. This behaviour was observed in the earlier documents, but seemingly ceased as a used tactic in the later documents. It should be noted however, that though details omitted from official notes were not observed, there were still instances of digital trails of evidence being erased in later documents. So, while the act seemed to have changed, in actuality what was happening was a modernisation of the same behaviour to be in line with technological standards. Moreover, still concerning is the degree to which it happened in the earlier instances and the idea that there were supervisors who had a willingness to overlook the situation in order to proceed with their line of inquiry and how

this behaviour had not changed in the later documents analysed. In fact, what happened was not considered a real problem, as shown by the lack of discipline resulting from the acts even though supervisors were aware and were only considered problematic during the eventual establishment of inquiries which further supports the lack of change in regard to organisational accountability.

Though there was not any large scale changes in the Garda that created any meaningful change<sup>47</sup> in the culture over the 30 year period, as concluded from the evidence in the data discussed in the previous three chapters, there does seem to be a move in that direction under the new Garda Commissioner Drew Harris (appointed in September 2018). The predominant indicator of the new commissioner embracing a change to the organisation's culture involves him publicly calling the organisation to account for things they have not done well before it has become scandalised as has been the case resulting in many of the tribunals/documents that were analysed for this research. However, this speculation is purely that, speculation, predominantly based on media coverage and thus is difficult to assess objectively. It is still too early to truly assess if any meaningful change will occur in the Garda culture; fully implemented change rather than just a publicly stated commitment to change as was the case in the data. A key trademark of the Garda culture is a lack of accountability, and further, timely accountability, and if these shifts do continue, the culture could be dramatically altered. However, though there has been an increase in media coverage of Gardaí being called to account, it seems as if, while the behaviour is now more likely to be made public, there has not been an actual shift in the culture that prevents the behaviour from occurring at all<sup>48</sup> as demonstrated below.

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<sup>47</sup> It is important to note here the term meaningful change as opposed to just proposed changes, of which were discussed in chapters 5-7. Particularly in relation to the rapidness with which the organisation expects the members to adapt (without providing adequate support) or the tendency to propose new changes that are in direct conflict with previously proposed changes.

<sup>48</sup> The graphic is a depiction of a sample of Irish national news outlet headlines collected during the years of the thesis.



The idea of this shift occurring under the direction of a new commissioner, who is an outsider to the organisation (being previously employed by the PSNI in Northern Ireland and never previously a member of the Garda), has interesting implications when considered with the previous literature on outsiders in the organisation and the promotions processes. Per the literature, members from outside the organisation have not received the same respect someone from within might have. Paradoxically, this outside force is also sometimes necessary to enact change as those promoted from within tend to uphold the culture in which they were socialised and operated in. As seen in the data, there were instances of little respect given for those in new positions trying to enforce levels of accountability, and how this will reconcile with the current climate of the Garda and the new commissioner should be an area for future research.

An additional consideration is given to the link between accepting change and organisational policing style. As evaluated in the literature, many international policing organisations were resistant to change because it meant leaving behind the militaristic policing style that encapsulates much of the high adrenaline, "real" police work. Initial points of interest in this regard involved the idea that the Gardaí were not resistant to change, as understood from the previous Irish literature in this area, because they are already publicly committed to being a community policing organisation and did not have to leave the action filled work behind. However, this did not reconcile with the findings in this research. In addition to the Garda resisting change, as concluded from the understanding of change over the 30 year observation period, it was also found that they do not truly adhere to a community policing style, as concluded from their observed practices rather than stated behaviour. It was questioned initially how the organisation could already have a community policing style and still resist change, if basing resistance to change on the premise that the



resistance is from moving away from a militaristic policing style, but since they were found to have neither a true community policing style or acceptance of change, the conclusions as a whole make sense.

## Final Conclusions

The data analysed for this research spanned a time period of 30 years and represented the various ranks in the organisation as well as Gardaí from different areas throughout the country. Based on this, there is a generalisability, though that is not to say it is absolute, to the organisation as a whole; there are no apparent differences in organisational culture when compared from one location to the next. However, while generalisable, it is important to note once again that this research, while substantial in its own right, is cursory. Much as this research has stood on the shoulders of the previous giants in the field, this research is also intended to be the giant future work stands on. That is not to say that the story presented here is not its own contribution or methodologically solid, but rather to indicate that there really needs to be more done considering how little has come before.

While acknowledging that this research is closer to the beginning rather than end point of discussion on Garda organisational culture, it is also important to acknowledge the limitations to the methodology used. Considering the necessity of the methodological innovations, it is still essential to discuss the limitations of the methodology. Of course, as is one of the most significant limitations of document analysis, the data analysed is limited to what is present in the documents. There is no chance to follow up on further topics of analysis with the already written word, which is why the research question was carefully crafted to gain an understanding the Garda organisational culture as ascertained from the documents available. As discussed in chapter four with the limitation of analysing the position of gender in the Garda culture (as well as concepts like racial/ethnic diversity), it was not possible to include these concepts because they were not present in the documents and therefore there was no data to support any argument to this end. This considered however, what was present in the documents, and therefore analysed and presented in this thesis, gives a solid empirical understanding of the organisation's culture and this is attributed to the methodology chosen.

Empirically, this research provided an understanding of the Garda culture from top down, bottom up, and lateral level perspectives; both how the members interact with the organisation and how members interact with one another from the beginning of their careers through to when times get tough. Theoretically, the utilisation of the theories used had novelty in their application to Ireland, but the intersection of the theories were also unique to what has been found in international research in the field. Finally, the contribution of Ireland in a comparative perspective to international literature stepped outside of the Irish

research we typically find in isolation, providing a wider lens and applicability of the research to others outside of Ireland.

The introductory chapter of this thesis questioned not how the organisation has been able to function when it has been shrouded in controversy recently, but rather how it has continued to function for so long considering the sustained cultural elements of blame and persistent lack of accountability. While this answer was not necessarily provided, nor was it intended to be, now there is a better understanding of why the organisation has stayed the way it has, and this primarily links back to the theoretical underpinnings of behaviour transmission utilised in this research. The use of the social theories and Rotten Apple Theory also help to further explain how the elements of member relationships, blame, and resisting accountability have become so embedded in the organisation's culture.

This research was largely based on the documents from the various larger tribunals of inquiry the Garda have been required to undergo. However, an interesting thing to consider is that perhaps many of the problems that occurred that later needed to be covered up, and led to the very documents used in this research, could have been curtailed if interactions between Gardaí and members of the public had been audio and/or video recorded. While I would argue that should not be necessary to enforce a standard of accountability among Gardaí, nonetheless, it has been recommended, and recently approved (as of July 2019), that the Gardaí wear body cameras. What impact this will have, if any, on Garda culture remains to be seen.

As understood from the international literature in a comparative context to Ireland, Ireland, and Irish policing, has always been considered quite different to many other international policing organisations. However, the more recent literature, particularly from the UK, seems to be more in line with some of the Irish characteristics found in the Garda culture. What this means on a wider level could mean one of any number of things. Perhaps Ireland is ahead of the curve and other countries are starting to have police who behave more like them; or, perhaps, the countries from which these new, and different, findings are emerging are setting themselves up to face the same issues the Garda has dealt with since its conception in the 1920s, and really even before then. However, these are merely postulations based on what the data from this research has indicated about Irish police culture and the newly emerging studies that show similar patterns, so what this means for police culture as a whole, has still not been fully explored.

The findings presented in this chapter were such as they were present in the data, and in order for them to be discussed they needed to be present on a level that reflected systemic cultural values, not individualistic ones that could be argued only apply to certain members and/or areas of the organisation. As is part of the social research landscape, everything is in flux. What has been presented in this thesis could in all probability change dramatically very soon, but this considered, things are always changing, and even if every

single one of the facets of the organisation's culture identified in this thesis changed tomorrow, it does not impact the culture the organisation has sustained over the last 30 years.

Coming back to the initial research aims of using the documents to explore to what extent the Garda culture could be understood, what has been presented in this chapter and beyond provides a well encompassed, though with natural limitations, understanding of what the Garda culture is. Research on the Garda is sparse, and this is in part because of issues concerning access to the organisation, and thus, the research population. Because of this it was necessary to become methodologically innovative and find another way to achieve the research aims. By thematically analysing documents over a 30 year observation period, I was able to provide an understanding of Garda culture over time and its continuity therein. A culture characterised by a resistance to, or hindering of, large scale change; one that focuses on self-preservation above all else with little tolerance for those who choose to speak out; and above all, a culture characterised by consistent issues with accountability and a heavy reliance on a blame culture that dictates most interactions in Garda life.

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