

Chapter 1 : The History of Policing in the United States, Part 1 | Police Studies Online

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Gary Potter The development of policing in the United States closely followed the development of policing in England. In the early colonies policing took two forms. The watch system was composed of community volunteers whose primary duty was to warn of impending danger. Boston created a night watch in 1630, New York in 1644 and Philadelphia in 1651. The night watch was not a particularly effective crime control device. Watchmen often slept or drank on duty. While the watch was theoretically voluntary, many "volunteers" were simply attempting to evade military service, were conscript forced into service by their town, or were performing watch duties as a form of punishment. Philadelphia created the first day watch in 1682 and New York instituted a day watch in 1697 as a supplement to its new municipal police force. Gains, Kappeler, and Vaughn Augmenting the watch system was a system of constables, official law enforcement officers, usually paid by the fee system for warrants they served. Constables had a variety of non-law enforcement functions to perform as well, including serving as land surveyors and verifying the accuracy of weights and measures. In many cities constables were given the responsibility of supervising the activities of the night watch. These informal modalities of policing continued well after the American Revolution. It was not until the 1830s that the idea of a centralized municipal police department first emerged in the United States. By the 1850s all major U.S. cities had "modern police" organizations. These organizations shared similar characteristics: In the Southern states the development of American policing followed a different path. The genesis of the modern police organization in the South is the "Slave Patrol" Platt The first formal slave patrol was created in the Carolina colonies in 1704. Slave patrols had three primary functions: Following the Civil War, these vigilante-style organizations evolved in modern Southern police departments primarily as a means of controlling freed slaves who were now laborers working in an agricultural caste system, and enforcing "Jim Crow" segregation laws, designed to deny freed slaves equal rights and access to the political system. The key question, of course, is what was it about the United States in the 1830s that necessitated the development of local, centralized, bureaucratic police forces? One answer is that cities were growing. The United States was no longer a collection of small cities and rural hamlets. Urbanization was occurring at an ever-quickening pace and old informal watch and constable system was no longer adequate to control disorder. Anecdotal accounts suggest increasing crime and vice in urban centers. Mob violence, particularly violence directed at immigrants and African Americans by white youths, occurred with some frequency. Public disorder, mostly public drunkenness and sometimes prostitution, was more visible and less easily controlled in growing urban centers than it had been rural villages Walker But evidence of an actual crime wave is lacking. So, if the modern American police force was not a direct response to crime, then what was it a response to? More than crime, modern police forces in the United States emerged as a response to "disorder. These economic interests had a greater interest in social control than crime control. Private and for profit policing was too disorganized and too crime-specific in form to fulfill these needs. The emerging commercial elites needed a mechanism to insure a stable and orderly work force, a stable and orderly environment for the conduct of business, and the maintenance of what they referred to as the "collective good" Spitzer and Scull These mercantile interests also wanted to divest themselves of the cost of protecting their own enterprises, transferring those costs from the private sector to the state.

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The American Society for Legal History was founded in to foster interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching in the broad field of legal history. Although based in the United States, its purview and membership are international in scope.

The first concerted calls to break from disciplinary foci that ignored the culture and background of black people came during the 1960s at the annual meetings of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History now the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. Building on the efforts of W. Du Bois and Carter G. Woodson, Joseph Rhoads and Lawrence D. Reddick called for black colleges to expand traditional departments. By the 1970s historically black institutions such as Howard University were offering courses within the traditional disciplines that addressed issues of black concern. Schomburg joined the efforts of these early proponents of black studies with his enormous collection of materials documenting the black experience. Cornell, Howard, Michigan, Rutgers, and San Francisco State are a few of the institutions where students demanded that black studies curricula be instituted and black faculty be hired. This black studies movement led to the formation of programs, departments, institutes, and centers at numerous colleges and universities, thus marking the period as a moment of radical rupture in the evolutionary history of the discipline. The establishment of the first department of black studies occurred under the duress of a student strike. San Francisco State responded to the demands with the appointment of Nathan Hare as the acting chair of the Department of Black Studies in 1968. The establishment of black studies as a legitimate academic discipline required intense discussions over the direction the course of study should take. Although the application of knowledge from a non-Eurocentric perspective is essential to the diverse intellectual frameworks that constitute the field, Africology, an Afrocentric perspective, was principally established in the work of Molefi Asante. Other often competing perspectives—such as Black British cultural studies in the work of Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy generate new flows of ideas of a decentered cultural region and add to the discourse on intellectual frameworks for studying the black experience. Key to the mission of black studies throughout its evolutionary stages is the application of knowledge to promote social change, and it is at the core of the diverse intellectual and methodological approaches to the field. As with most social science disciplines, black studies scholars continue to reexamine the field. The differences within African American studies, though important to each proponent, are far less destructive than many detractors suggest and provide evidence of the vibrancy and necessity of the discipline. Rather than leading to the demise of the field, diversity broadens and strengthens it as the research and scholarship of various practitioners contribute to a growing literature examining the complexity of the historical, social, and cultural phenomena that influence black lives in an increasingly globalized world. A holistic view of black studies whether under the formation of African American studies, Africana studies, Afrikan studies, etc. Institutional structure whether a department, program, center, or institute and the extent of institutional support determine the strength of the degree programs in African American studies offered by more than three hundred American universities. While many of the programs in this field embrace similar objectives, what they are named is different. The value and success of African American studies can be determined by its contribution to the transformation of higher education. The commitment to blending scholarship and activism instituted by most programs of study is reflected in different ways in other disciplines. The conditions under which feminist studies, ethnic studies, postcolonial studies, gay and lesbian studies, and cultural studies could articulate their positions were established by the introduction of African American studies into the academy. Important to the continued development of the field are the many organizations and institutions that support African American studies. Through their meetings, journals, and public programs, these organizations along with myriads of local community organizations and dedicated scholars continue to address the diverse challenges facing black studies and the social sciences in the twenty-first century. Africana Studies in the U.S. Alkalimat, Abdul, et al. Introduction to Afro-American Studies: A Peoples College Primer. Paradigms in Black Studies. In Out of the Revolution: The Development of Africana Studies, eds. Aldridge and Carlene Young, Introduction to Black Studies. University of Sankore Press. Dispatches from the Ebony Tower: Intellectuals Confront the African American

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