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Predatory police: the roles of ethics and networks as mediating factors

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Predatory Police: The Role of Ethics and Networks as Mediating Factors

The institution the police force has been established to protect citizens and their property from harm and predatory opportunism. However, there have been occasions when the very people assigned to protect become part of the predatory force against society. Predatory policing occurs when the police use their powers to extort money in the form of bribes. While, the concept is receiving attention in Europe but there have not been any direct studies in Australia. To overcome this research deficit and determine the extent, if any, of predatory policing in Australia data is interrogated from four police corruption inquiries in the Australian states of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. In addition, it examines the role of the type of networks used by corrupt police officers. The synthesis and application of public corruption and network literatures to the predatory policing domain provides new and relevant insights to assist those responsible for the administration of our institutions of justice. The paper concludes with a framework, drawn from the first stage of the project, to assist in the conceptualisation and monitoring of this public problem.

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PREDATORY POLICE: THE ROLE OF ETHICS AND NETWORKS AS MEDIATING FACTORS

BACKGROUND

Public officials who place their own interests before those of the public have corrupted a system in which they are supposed to act as agents of the public will (Lauchs, 2007). Police are an essential part of the Australian justice system and are the frontline actors in keeping the peace and social stability and cohesion. Thus good governance relies on honest policing. However, there will always be at least a small group of corrupt police officers, even though Australians are culturally averse to corruption (Khatri et al., 2006). Police officers attract corruption because of their ability to enforce or ignore the law and police who are unethical or in financial stress are vulnerable to offers of illicit payments. Organised police corruption, which is a subset of organised crime, aggravates the situation because it threatens the community by undermining good governance. Organised police corruption constitutes “*social behaviour*, conducted in groups within organisations, that is powerful enough to override the officer’s oath of office, personal conscience, departmental regulations and criminal laws.” (Punch, 2000)

Police corruption can occur in two ways: passively, where a police officer could be approached by a person wishing to ensure the continuance of their illicit activity by bribing police; or proactively through *predatory policing* where police approach the criminals to extort money by providing protection (Gerber & Mendelson, 2008). Organised predatory policing is more dangerous than individual actions because collaboration between offenders can multiply their income; the income of the group is greater than the sum of the income of individuals acting apart (Morselli & Tremblay, 2004). There are many historical examples of powerful organised crime syndicates of predatory police establishing themselves within the Australian police services. A corrupt police network can even extend beyond serving police officers. In Queensland the Fitzgerald Inquiry demonstrated that police corruption could reach a sufficient level that it extended its power beyond immediate, internal police networks into Cabinet and also effectively ran the organised crime that it was bound to prevent, detect and end (Fitzgerald, 1989).

Policing bodies need to understand the nature and structure of these networks to be able to better identify and apprehend the targets of their investigations. As Warr has said in relation to the policing of delinquents: “...it is difficult to imagine how investigators can develop, defend, or test general theories of delinquency without some knowledge of the organization and operation of delinquent groups” (Warr, 1996). This paper examines networks of organised crime within police agencies. The study will use the UN definition of organised crime:

...an organized criminal group is a “structured group of three or more persons existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit.” By “serious crime” is meant “conduct constituting a criminal offence punishable by a maximum deprivation of liberty of at least four years or a more serious penalty”. (United Nations, 2002)

The necessity of studying criminal networks is well established but has not received much attention from social network theories (Morselli & Tremblay, 2004). The main contribution of this paper is that in uncovering hidden (or confirming) bribe and other corrupt exchanges and their associated influence tentacles it provides a better understanding of the nature, structure and socialisation processes of these embedded networks. Understanding how corrupt police networks are structured and their dynamics affords better opportunities for strategies to be developed to interrupt dark networks and re-enforce positive policing practices. This study is a departure from current studies of criminal networks in that it draws on social network analysis to provide rigorous data to verify the characteristics of networks and particularly to uncover the hidden relationships that support them.

Although focused on the Queensland context, this paper is part of a larger study that will interrogate predatory police network across Australian jurisdictions. The paper outlines and focuses on the first stage of the project being the corrupt police network in Queensland (Australia) called 'the Joke' that ran from the 1950s to the 1980s.

Corrupt Networks

Social networks form when people interact. Networks are a type of social organisation that rely on relationships of trust, mutuality and reciprocity, coupled with a set of common norms established and maintained through peer pressure, social approval and sanction (stigma), to bind individuals to a collective unit. The characteristic ability of networks to be inclusive, flexible in their operation and quick to respond networks can be leveraged to benefit individuals, groups or businesses or society at large.

However, as Raab and Milward (2003) have noted networks can also have a dark side, where the network achievements come at the cost of other individuals, groups or societies. It has been argued that the *particularism* of networks, that is, the banding together to pursue particular or common interests, is a key element of network disadvantage since it can lead to exclusivity rather than an inclusive approach (Taylor and Hoggett, 1994). Such inclusivity renders networks as essentially private rather than public entities and therefore not exposed to wider levels of scrutiny or subject to external accountability regimes. Because of this, networks can be quite secret and invisible in their operation and endeavours.

This opaque nature of networks and their lack of transparency, coupled with values and norms that support clandestine actions and goals, can provide a basis for corruption. Granovetter (1992: 45) points out "networks can create their own norms at odds with the outside world to the point where they become a 'law unto themselves'". In such a context, illegal activities can take on the aura of normality and members protect each other from the sanctions of the outside world.

This project will fill the gap by providing the information on corrupt police networks in Australia. It will be the first to study each of the separate inquiries into Australian police corruption and convert information from the inquiries into useful data for corruption prevention, detection or investigation; turn the unanalysed information and into actionable intelligence (Dean and Gottschalk, 2007). The project will provide insights into the structure and dynamics of their operation by unpacking the topology of their interconnections and increase understanding of points of intervention and strategies to sure up or insulate 'good networks' and stop them tipping over the edge and to the 'dark side'.

Methodology

The project will take place in three stages. First, data will be extracted from police inquiries into corruption and the corrupt networks plotted as network maps. Then organised crime theory will be used to examine the networks. Network analysis theories will be used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the police networks to target strategies for detection, investigation and prevention.

Social Network Analysis: Network analysis is an empirical tool which can be used to identify, measure, visualise (map) and analyse the ties between people, groups and organisations (Scott, 1991: 113). It plots relationships between individuals or entities by representing them as nodes and showing their relationships by linking nodes with lines. Lines can have different depictions to indicate characteristics of links including frequency and method of contact. The nodes and lines form a network map that reveals relationships between members of the network such as gate keeping (controlling the network), liaisons and core and periphery members' (Keast and Brown, 2005). In doing so, it uncovers the often hidden or opaque patterns of interaction and enables the underlying structure of relationships to become more apparent (Cross, Borgatti and Parker, 2002).

Network metrics, mathematical calculations or measures, make it possible to gain deeper insights into the actual texture and operation of the networks. The metrics applied to this study include:

Density – In simple terms, is a measure of the number of actual connections compared to the total number of possible connections. The higher the density ratio - the higher the level of cohesion within a network. Density values range from 0 to 1: the closer the score to 1 the higher the level of connection.

Centrality - gives an indication of how concentrated a network is – do a small number of people control the flow of resources, or is it distributed more widely through a number people. This measure provides useful insights into where influence and power maybe concentrated, or to the location of blockages or key flow points. The centralisation score is expressed as a percentage and can vary for 0 (every member is connected to every other member) to 100 (all members are connected to only one member). A high centralisation score indicates that some network actors have many more connections than others.

Average Path Distance – is an indication of how easy it is to navigate around the network. This measure provides insights into how close or removed certain actors are and as a consequence their level of knowledge of flows.

There are limitations to this study. First, the data sources are imperfect and rely on evidence produced at police inquiries and reminiscences of participants. Neither source of data is complete. Moreover, the latter can be highly unreliable. However, these are the best sources available. Secondly, network maps may plot relationships that have been identified by a third party without the benefit of confirmation. Thus the appearance of a name on a map may imply a type of relationship that never existed. In view of this, network maps should be read cautiously and only in connection with the accompanying commentary in which the details of relationships can be expanded. In this way, as Rogers (1985) contends network analysis can serve to 'turbo charge' case study information.

Data Source

Data for networks should include as much as possible of the data set, in this case the corrupt network. It is difficult to obtain information on criminal networks and most information available is unreliable. Data gathered from informers and incarcerated gang members cannot be checked because researchers cannot know the true size of the people involved. The nature of modern criminal enterprises means that membership and relationships are temporary and constantly in flux. For example, a core group of criminals may deal with different specialists for each job. These problems are reduced in an examination of police corruption such as this as the raw data utilised has been compiled through the comprehensive investigatory and coercive powers of formal Commissions of Inquiry. Corruption is a routine operation as opposed to the varied operation of a criminal network. Payments are made regularly by the same people to the same people. Natarajan notes that often researchers try to establish these factors through interviews with participants. Obviously, there is limited scope for this option and he has demonstrated that network analysis can reveal a great deal about these relationships without relying on interviews (Natarajan, 2006). Thus there is much greater certainty when studying the network or more qualitative data on the nature of members of the network. In this project the data is pre-packaged in the inquiry reports.

The principle data source for this project consists of reports from the Fitzgerald (1989), Wood (1997) and Kennedy (2004) Inquiries, as well as the Victorian Ombudsman's Report on the Ceja Taskforce (Ombudsman Victoria 2003). Given this paper's specific focus on the Queensland policy corruption networks a content analysis of the Fitzgerald Inquiry (1989) report has been undertaken to distil three key variables of bribes, corrupt support which are central to police

corruption: bribes, transference of bribes and corrupt support. The data used in the network maps in this paper were specifically derived from Fitzgerald (1989) and Herbert and Gilling (2004).

The relational data derived from the content analysis were collated and arrayed into matrices for each of the key variables identified above. From this starting point, network maps were constructed using UCINET6.

The resulting network maps were used to provide visual representations, of the nature and patterns of exchanges occurring within corrupt networks as well as the overall architecture/topology of the network. Associated network metric measures will provide additional and deeper insights into the structure and operation of the networks.

Analysis and Discussion: Uncovering Patterns, Structures and Roles of a Corrupt Police Network

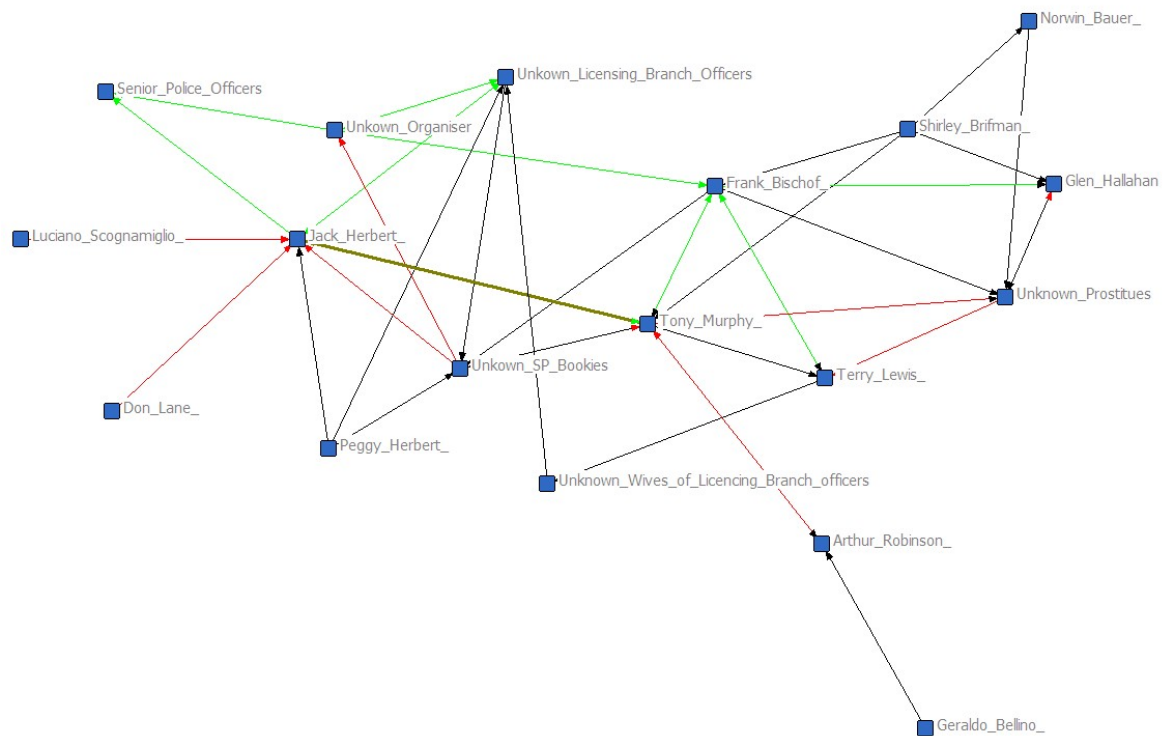
The Corruption Network

No one knows when police corruption commenced in the Queensland Licensing Branch (QLB) within the Queensland Police Force (QPF). It is known however, that the corrupt network, or Joke, as it was known, was endemic by the 1950s. The corruption took the form of payments being made from bookmakers, prostitutes and operators of illegal gambling games to officers from the QLB in return for protection. The protection was reciprocal: payers would be warned of raids by non-corrupt officers and the payers would provide low level employees for token arrests for the payees so that they could record a satisfactory 'clean up rates' for vice in Queensland. If the Wood Commission definitions are applied the corruption was both *systemic*, in so far as it was self-perpetuating within the QLB and *entrenched*, because the corrupt officers had alliances in place to defend their corrupt network from inquiries or interference (Wood 1977, para.2.4). In network terms the Joke was an exclusive network that maintained a legitimate public face, concealing an invisible web of corrupt relationships. These relationships had developed to a strategic level to protect the inner web from external examination or attack.

Network Map 1 has been created using the variables of bribe payments (bribe), distribution of bribes amongst police officers (Joke Payment), and support via illegal actions to ensure that the Joke is maintained and continued (corrupt support). Aggregating the links (bribes, joke payments and corrupt support) provides an overview of the structure, composition and flow of the predatory police network in Queensland. For ease of reading and analysis the links have been coloured coded such that green = , red, and blue = corrupt support.

The network appears fairly convoluted because of the ad hoc nature of its creation. The network centres on four key players: the organiser, Jack Herbert who took over the organiser role, the former commissioner Frank Bischof and Tony Murphy, who had formed strategic relationships supporting the Joke. On the periphery are the bribers (SP bookies, prostitutes including Shirley Brifman, politicians such as Don Lane and illegal gaming operators like Robinson, Scognamiglio and Bellino), the police officers and their wives.

Network Map 1: Aggregate Linkages



—	Bribe
—	Joke Payment
—	Corrupt Support

The data used to produce this map also generated a suite of network metrics that afford deeper insights into the structural properties of the network. The first metric – density – provides an indication of the degree of cohesion evident. Table 1 sets out the density measures for Network Map 1 (aggregate ties). It is interesting to note that for each of the three relationship types or links – Bribe, Joke Payment and Corrupt Support – there is an escalating level of density.

Table 1: Density of Network Ties

	Density	No. of Ties
Bribe	0.0144	9
Joke Payment	0.0192	12
Corrupt Support	0.0368	23

Density represents how close knit the network is, and is an indicator of the strength of the network.¹ As the table shows with nine (9) ties the Bribe sub net is comprised of a small group of actors with relatively few interactions beyond the basic bribe exchange. This small size, coupled with a low density measure of 0.0144, indicates that the Bribe sub network is loose in its structure and exhibits a low level of cohesion. This means that this network is small, contained and loosely coupled involving those people immediately involved in the bribe exchange. The Joke Payment is comprised of both a slightly higher number of ties (12) and density level (0.0192). This result makes sense as the participants are all Queensland police officers and most belong to the Licensing Branch. Alternatively, the bribe sub net group members are unconnected individuals who deal with the police and do not interact with each other.

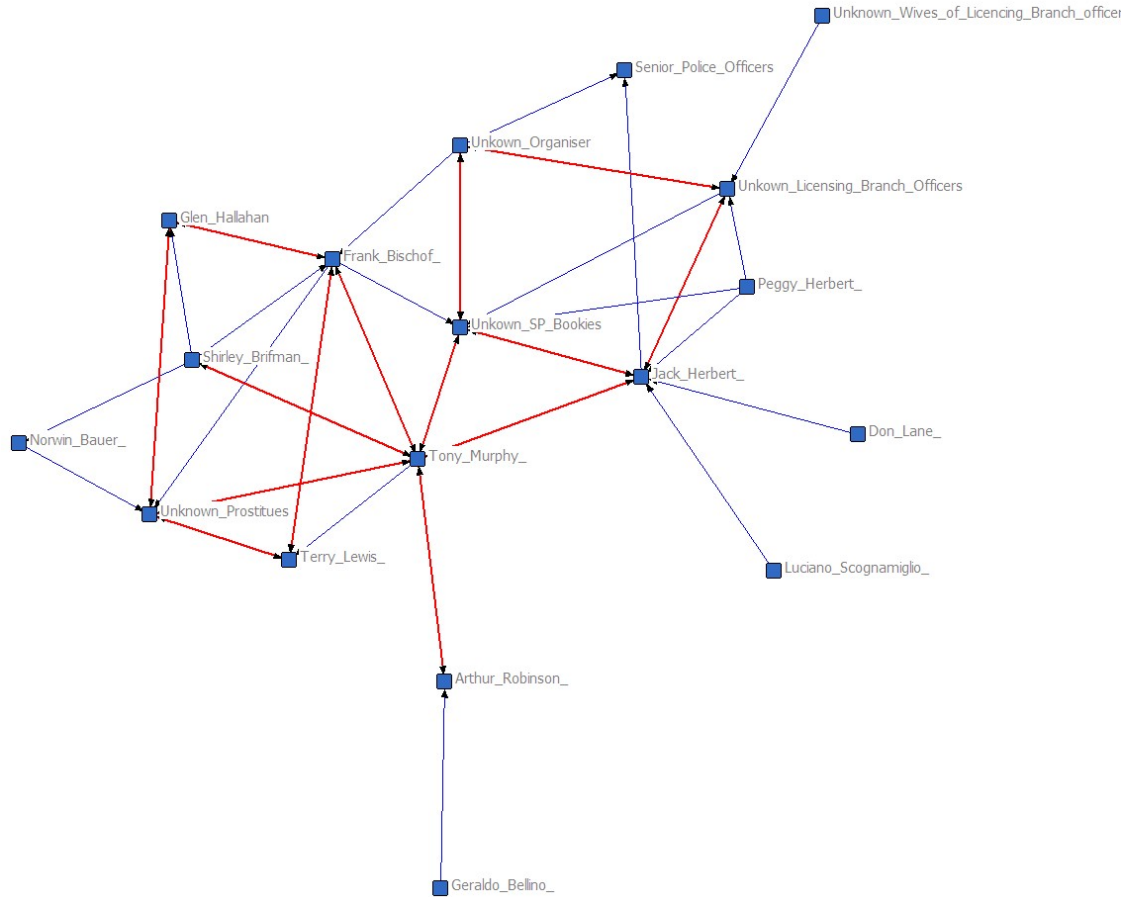
The third set of ties, Corrupt Support, is the event that characterises most ties in the network (23) and displays the highest level of density at 0.0368 for this network. Although this measure is low by normal standards, it is apparent that the corrupt network operates to provide a slightly denser web of connections that support and implicitly condone the illegal activities of the Bribe and Joke sub networks.

The overall low density measures for the Network Map (aggregate ties) highlights the low degree of connection between actors. A loosely coupled network is a necessary feature for a clandestine entity such as the corrupt police network which operates mostly under the radar, with players from different areas connecting the network (i.e. if it was too dense the corruption would be more recognisable). Another consequence of its confidential nature is the network's broken up/destroyed format; one of the few central players is removed the network and information held between the others is disconnected.

A further measure indicating the structure and operation of the network is the average path distance. That is, how easily it is for members to make contact or exchanges with others. In this case the *average distance among reachable pairs = 1.000*. This means that amongst those people who are connected, on average they only need to travel one path/edge to reach another player they are not connected to. This finding is likely a feature of the relatively small size of the network. However, it does point to the fact that there is little distance between actors and therefore it is unlikely that those involved, even those on the peripheries were not aware of the activities.

¹ Density is a ratio of the number of actual ties out of the number of all possible ties with a node that met all the ties having a rating of 1.

Network Map 2: Reciprocal Relationships



	Reciprocal Ties
	Unreciprocated Ties

A deeper interrogation of the network reveals that there exists a level of reciprocity between particular players. Reciprocity indicates that there is a two way, or reciprocal, relationship between actors. This reciprocity gives the network or the set of actors engaged in this behaviour with a higher level of robustness, thus re-enforcing the actions. While reciprocal relationships can mean the exchange of like for like, in this case reciprocal ties between network actors are not ties of the same relationships. Bookies, gamers and prostitutes paid bribes were made in return for protection, by Licensing Branch officers, of their illegal activities. Individual QLB officers who were members of the Joke would take payments of about £20/month from their "own" Starting Price bookmakers (SP Bookies) from all over Queensland and even over the NSW border (Herbert & Gilling 2004, 55). The payments would be passed to a person known as the 'organiser' who would distribute the money both within the QLB and to key senior officers outside the Branch. Payments were not equal and the size varied with the importance of the officer (Fitzgerald 1989, 32 & Herbert 52). The organiser kept a list of the payers and their phone numbers and ensured there was always a Joke member on duty who could warn payers of upcoming raids.

Licensing Branch officers shared their bribes with senior police in return for an assurance that there would be no effective investigation of their illegal activity, thus ensuring the protection and perpetuation of the Joke. The reciprocity was not necessarily provided on a one to one basis. For example, Herbert collected bribes and distributed them to the officers who would protect the bribers. Thus some of the bribers do not have reciprocal links with Herbert and likewise the Unknown Licensing Branch Officers do not have reciprocal links with bribers. The reciprocity was provided by the network rather than the individual. Nonetheless there are strong reciprocal links in the centre of the network between police officers. This is because the protection provided by senior officers was directly reciprocal. Two different systems of trust operated: within the Licensing Branch officers could trust each other sufficiently for separate people to collect bribes and others to provide protection, while protecting the Joke was a more exclusive affair where the corrupt senior police did not trust others to provide the protection. Reciprocal relationships are the corner stone of the network. If they could be disrupted then the *raison d'être* of the Joke would cease to exist. If the Licensing Branch could not protect the illegal operators then they would not bribe them and if the senior police could not protect the Joke then they would not receive their share.

Network Map 3: Identifying Key Actors

The following map demonstrates a further vulnerability of the network in the form of its key players. The map identifies the strength of relationships by the size of the boxes for each player. The three largest boxes are Frank Bischof, Tony Murphy and Jack Herbert. Potentially the removal of one or all of these from the network could disrupt or end the Joke.

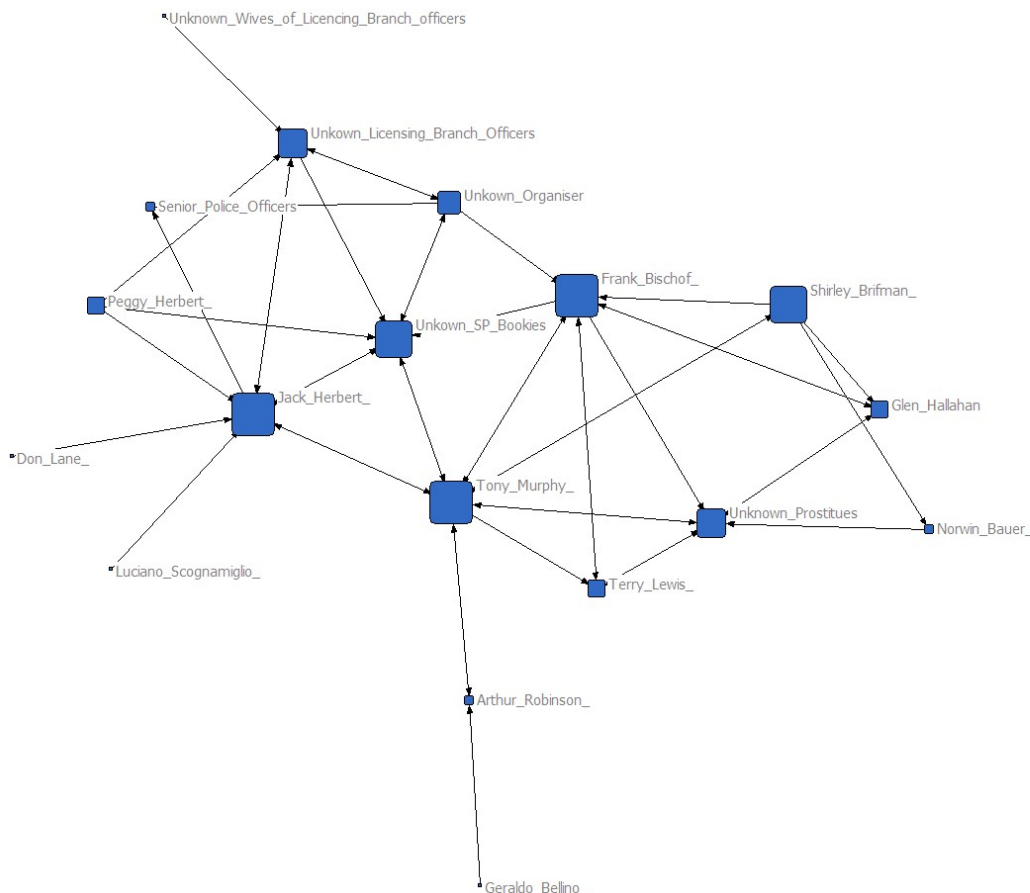


Table 2: Centralization Measures

	Centralization (%)
Bribe	13.5
Joke Payment	18
Corrupt Support	25.25

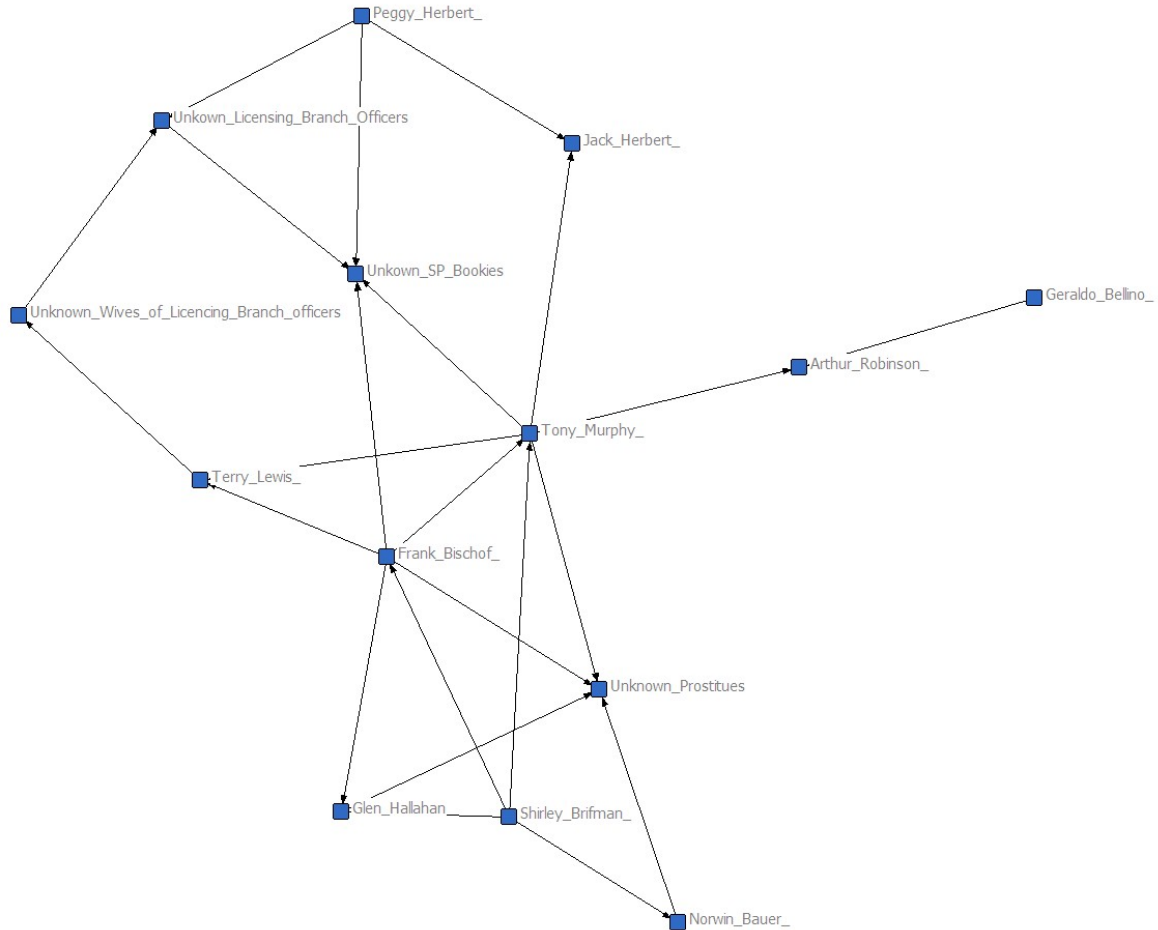
The higher the percentage in centralization indicates that some actors have more connections than others. This measure is based on the number of ties to the actor. Table two indicates that the Bribe sub net has a centralisation percentage of (13.5%). Although low, this highlights that in relation to bribes, some actors are more connected than others. Similarly, the Joke Payment sub net, reflects a low centralization measure (18%). The Corrupt Support sub net scores the highest measure of centralization (25.25%), showing that in corrupt support relations slightly over one quarter of ties are directed towards certain actors. Table 2 emphasises the percentage to which ties are central to particular actors and Map 3 is an aggregate of these ties, visualising who these actors are.

Bischof was not present in the network for the duration of the period under review. Bischof was made Police Commissioner in 1958. He had been a member of the Joke for some years and used his position of authority to support its continuation (Fitzgerald 1989, 31). He retired and was replaced by Norwin Bauer. This event did not disrupt the network because Bauer was already a member of the Joke and maintained the supervisory and protective role of his predecessor. Jack Herbert likewise took over this position from a string of former organisers. Herbert was transferred to the Licensing Branch 1959 and stayed till 1974 (Fitzgerald 1989, 32). Herbert was made the organiser in 1964 because he kept the phone numbers of SP Bookies up to date (Herbert & Gilling 2004, 52). Once in this position he also became responsible for initiating new members to the Joke (Fitzgerald 1989, 33). When he was away Herbert's wife Peggy used to take new phone numbers from SPs and pass them on to other officers. According to Herbert, half of the QLB officers were members of the Joke and most of their wives knew they were (Herbert & Gilling 2004, 53-54). Herbert could conceivably be replaced just as he had replaced a previous organiser. Murphy, on the other hand, played a more significant role. His power in the network was dependent on his relationships rather than his position. He held this influential role while serving in a number of jobs both within and outside the Licensing Branch. It appears his function was as a relationships facilitator. Thus he would not easily have been replaced by another corrupt officer backfilling his position. The only possible successor with similar relationships was Terry Lewis. Murphy's removal would have severely disrupted, if not ended, the network.

The Joke did not operate completely below the radar and relied on corrupt support when allegations of corruption arose. An example of the system of support can be demonstrated when the most serious threat to the Joke occurred with the National Hotel Inquiry in 1964 (Gibbs 1964). One of the staff of the National Hotel, a pub in central Brisbane, told an opposition politician that the Hotel provided free alcohol and meals to Bischof, Tony Murphy, and Bauer in return for them turning a blind eye to prostitution and after-hours sales of alcohol. Despite two employees coming forward to give evidence in support of the claims, the Inquiry did not find any proof of wrongdoing. This was assisted by officers, such as Herbert, and other witnesses such as Shirley Brifman, a prostitute who had worked at the National Hotel, giving false evidence before the Inquiry. Joke members were also willing to take direct action to protect themselves. This mainly took the form of discrediting or professionally destroying their enemies, but on rare occasions more serious action was taken. For example, in 1971, Shirley Brifman made claims to the media that she had perjured herself before the National Hotel Inquiry and spelt out the corruption that was occurring. Brifman was subsequently interviewed by Queensland police officers, and in 1972 charges were laid against Tony Murphy for perjury. But this case fell over when Brifman died of a

drug overdose a month later. Unsubstantiated allegations have been made by Brifman's family that Tony Murphy forced Brifman to commit suicide (Fitzgerald 1989, 34).

Network Map 4: Corrupt Support



Network Map 4 (Corrupt Support) extends the visual representation provided in Network Map 1 where it was noted that corrupt relations provide a foundation for the overall network. A more isolated view of this tie reveals a point of fragility within the Joke. First, there were two networks of corrupt support: support between QLB officers and support between police and bribers. Second, there link between the two groups were Bischof and Murphy. Given that corrupt support was essential for the Joke to operate the reliance on the position of police commissioner and a relationships facilitator like Murphy shows that the Joke was extremely brittle.

The network also benefitted from a further layer of political alliances which could legitimately frustrate attempts to investigate or terminate the Joke. The primary player was the Queensland Police Union of Employees (QPUE). There is no evidence that the union executive were aware of corrupt activity but the QPUE always took the stance of defending members against allegations of corruption and consequently obfuscating the actions of those who tried to bring change to the Police Force (Fitzgerald 1989, 35). In the National Hotels Inquiry, the QPUE provided legal support to 88 officers who were named by investigators (Fitzgerald 1989, 34). Further support came from the Premier of Queensland, Johannes Bjelke-Petersen, who made a political alliance with the QPUE. The Premier did his best to stop change occurring in the QPF in return for the public support of the QPUE and police officers for his hard-line law and order policies (Fitzgerald

1989, 36). Once again there is no evidence that Bjelke-Petersen had knowledge of, or received any payments from, the Joke.

Network Disruption

But the “Joke” network was not indestructible and it only took ‘a few good men’ to bring it down. The first of these was Allen Hodges who upon becoming Minister of Police in May 1969, began instituting changes in the QPF in accordance with a review conducted by South Australian Police Commissioner, John McKinna. One of his first reforms was to replace Bauer as Police Commissioner with Ray Whitrod, a non-Queenslander. Whitrod was a righteously honest officer who tried to clean up the Queensland Police Force and modernise its operation. This rankled the rank and file membership and created an immediate and long-lasting conflict with the QPUE and by association, the Premier. One of Whitrod's reforms was to set up the Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU) under Gulbransen with the power to investigate police and specific instructions to keep watch on the QLB (Fitzgerald 1989, 38). He also transferred Tony Murphy and Terry Lewis to country postings away from the action of the Joke (Fitzgerald 1989, 43).

These developments would not have been enough to close down the Joke. The outer layer of support mobilised with the QPUE and the Premier openly opposing the new Commissioner. The QPUE, with Bjelke-Petersen's acquiescence, advised its members not to cooperate with CIU (Fitzgerald 1989, 38) and actively opposing Whitrod's reforms and denied his allegations of corruption in the QLB (Fitzgerald 1989, 36). But the removal of Bauer, Murphy and Lewis meant that the corrupt support network was broken; the new police commissioner was not only a non-member of the Joke but actively opposed corruption, also both the relationship facilitator, Murphy, and his only possible replacement, Lewis, were geographically isolated from each other and the Joke. But the end of the Joke came when appointed Bill Osborne as head of the QLB. Osborne had been a member of the Branch for 10 years and knew how the Joke worked, even if he was never a member. Osborne informed Herbert that the Joke had to stop. The members had to comply because Osborne's knowledge of the system meant they couldn't trick him and keep the Joke going (Herbert & Gilling 2004, 74). Herbert and others transferred out of QLB in 1974 (Fitzgerald 1989, 38) Herbert went to the Public Relations Office and retired medically unfit 3 months later. The Joke couldn't continue without a senior officer involved (Herbert & Gilling 2004, 74-75). Future research will discuss the return of corruption, known as the Second Joke, when the corrupt support network was re-established by the appointment of Lewis as Police Commissioner in Whitrod's stead, and the reappointment of Murphy to Brisbane.

Implications

This network analysis has revealed two strategic characteristics of the Joke. First, Jack Herbert, the organiser, held a central position in the network. Whilst not having exclusive control of the movement of money, he was the conduit for most of the payments and the repository of the intelligence on participants. His value is corroborated by his importance as a protected witness in the Fitzgerald Inquiry into the corrupt network. The second, and more important, discovery is the role of multiple layers of protection in ensuring the survival of the network. This was alluded to in the Fitzgerald Inquiry but the report did not explicitly layout the nature of the protection that occurred. The protection took two forms: protection provided by senior police officers including police commissioners who could control inquiries into misconduct and corruption, and political alliances with powerful individuals who could obfuscate the work of reformers.

Ray Whitrod intuitively broke the Joke organisation through key appointments and transfers. He was able to remove the strategic personalities who protected the Joke from detection and investigation. In doing so he did not affect any arrests or convictions of Joke participants but Whitrod created an environment which was toxic for the survival of the network; it was too dangerous for the network participants to operate without the protection from scrutiny provided by the senior police.

There are three avenues for further research based on this project. The first is to determine further strengths and weaknesses of the networks via organisational theory and establish practical strategies for detection, investigation and prevention within the police service. A further step will be to map the Second Joke. This will be followed by network analysis of the corrupt networks investigated by the Wood Royal Commission in New South Wales (Wood 1997) and the Kennedy Inquiry in Western Australia (Kennedy 2004).

When the project is complete the methodology can be repeated in other jurisdictions. For example, there are a plethora of inquiries into police corruption in the United States of America which could be examined. The project could be also be repeated in other corrupt networks. Many non-policing public officials with significant decision making powers can also act in a predatory manner, for example, licensing, housing, and other agencies in which an official has the ability to affect the livelihood or basic standard of living of their clients. An immediate opportunity would come from the New South Wales ICAC investigations into corruption in Rail Corp (Independent Commission Against Corruption, 2008). The findings of this research can be used for further projects to determine preventative and investigative strategies that could be applied to all government agencies.

Conclusion

This paper is the commencement of a project to analyse police corruption networks in Australia. It has covered the initial study of the Joke, a bribery network operating in Queensland from the 1950s to the 1970s. Analysis began with plotting of the movement of money and corrupt support within the network. This network map was broken down to reveal the relationships between the participants. The first finding was the reliance on reciprocal ties to maintain the Joke. An analysis of network structure and strength identified four key players being the police commissioner, the relationships facilitator, the organiser and Jack Herbert (who took over and expanded the role of organiser). This in itself did not reveal the true vulnerabilities of the network. While each of these players were important some were replaceable. However, a further map of the corrupt support network, an essential part of the Joke, revealed that the key links were the police commissioner and the relationships manager. History had shown that the network had the strength to control the position of commissioner most of the time, but the relationships manager, Tony Murphy, was extremely difficult to replace. The end of the First Joke occurred when the new Police Minister, Hodges, replaced the commissioner with Whitrod, who in turn, removed Murphy and his only viable replacement, Lewis, from Brisbane, thereby cutting them out of the network.

This study has demonstrated that the 'Joke' exhibited many of the characteristics of a 'dark' network. A set of internal norms ordered relations and behaviours allowed for the formation of a loose membership extending to higher levels of police and political authority. Entrenched by implicit and explicit support the Joke was hidden within the legitimate operation of the Queensland police service. By uncovering the patterns of relationship, composition and key actors' network analysis has provided those responsible for the policing of corrupt police networks. In short, network analysis provides a way to move beyond intuition to informed decision making.

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