

Police Experiences: Navigating Hypervisibility and Critique

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Abstract

Increasing levels of surveillance and public visibility have had a significant impact on police perceptions of themselves, their peers, and their rights and duties as officers. Through this ethnography, five current and retired police officers affiliated with the same department were interviewed using a semi-structured approach. Officers discuss the public's changing perception of police, their values, the gendered nature of their workplace, and differences between older and newer generations. Responses were analysed through the frameworks of both symbolic interactionism and dissonance theory to give insight into how officers come to define and negotiate their surroundings. Notable themes highlighted throughout the interviews were the wavering legitimacy of officers in management roles, performative masculinity, and workplace burnout.

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