# Policing as Myth: Narrative and Integral Approaches to Police Identity and Culture

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**Abstract**

> The role of police in US society remains a topic of ongoing controversy and discussion in both field literature and popular media. The multiple roles of police officers span from coercive instruments of social control (backed by state-sanctioned powers to use force), to suppressors of crime and disorder, to agents of social service and community assistance. Police culture and identity is discussed here as functions of persistent myths and archetypes as filtered through Graves, Beck and Cowan's Spiral Dynamics theory of development. In addition, Wilber's Integral meta-theory and elements of narrative psychology serve as appropriate theoretical mechanisms to organize and examine the roots and characteristics of police identity and culture.

## Introduction

The vital yet controversial role of police officers in contemporary society bears investigation from a variety of theoretical lenses. Few professions represent such powerful and evocative symbols in mainstream culture, and few symbols generate such polarized reactions. These reactions range from euphemistic mythologization to vitriolic demonization. The aggregate of these perceptions (which may or may not be founded, depending on the specific situation) forms a cultural narrative, or mythos, of policing.  This mythos may be considered as a product of the social construction school of thought, specifically the narrative psychology approach. This work connects narrative research to the overlying map of Wilber's Integral Theory (IT), an alignment that may provide new insights into the deeply-trod ground of police culture.  I review foundational tenets of Wilber's Integral Theory (IT)/All Quadrants-All Lines/Levels (AQAL) meta-theoretical overlay that serves as unified map of art, science, and morals, the physical world, as well as human development and activity. The IT/AQAL (hereafter referred to as either IT, Integral Theory/perspective, or AQAL) vantage point is an ambitious, expansive and wide-ranging one. In the current work, the IT acts as a general organizing template for the application of narrative psychology, the Carl Graves' Spiral Dynamic moral development stage-based theory (Beck & Cowan, 1996), and archetypal sources of police identity construction. The narrative research represents a branch of social constructivist psychology that proposes an internal, subjective, seemingly innate cognitive tendency to organize experiences into universal and sociocultural stories, episodes, or _narratives_.

This paper proposes and discusses two main ideas: (1.) Narrative psychology and the concept of archetypal lore inter-relate with the Spiral Dynamic moral wave development to describe and explain the internal construction of the mythos at the level of the individual officer (and its expansion to a collective inertia within the police culture); and (2.) Integral Theory provides value as a meta-theoretical geography of the scholarly terrain, one which maps out the direction and territory of this topic specifically as well as

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criminology in general. To the first point, I draw from the body of literature of narrative psychology. This subdiscipline inhabits a domain of social constructivist thought that refers to a cognitive inclination to organize experiences and perceptions into a recognizable story, or narrative (Bruner, 1990, 2004; Gergen & Gergen, 1988; Gergen, 1994; Sarbin, 1986). To the second, I reference selected tenets of Wilber's IT/AQAL theory as an overlying context. Although a full background of IT/AQAL is beyond the scope and depth of this work to fully present here, I will discuss key elements of the perspective as a brief outline of how it serves as an overall meta-template for mapping human activity, behavior and development. Specifically, the IT demonstrates how narrative psychology contributes to the phenomenon of police culture and identity construction. Furthermore, the Integral perspective includes how the Spiral Dynamic (SD) moral stage/wave development, as well as subjective, objective, individual, and collective quadrants of knowledge, furnish fundamental keys to the understanding and description of the police mythos (as well as other branches of criminological study). This work is an initial discussion of police identity and culture dynamics as viewed through an Integral lens. Narrative psychology is also an under-represented sector of scholarship in the criminological literature, yet provides a rich field of inquiry into the understanding of both lawbreakers and law enforcers (see Author, Years). These two theoretical approaches inter-relate to describe and explain aspects of extant policing literature from a new perspective.

## The Integral Framework

*Quadrants of Knowledge*

Although a full discussion of Wilber's Integral Theory is outside the scope of the present work, a basic overview of his work is necessary. Wilber's Integral Theory (or IT) encompasses all dimensions of human activity and evolution (as well as the physical world), and serves as both a roadmap and a lens. The perspective serves as a superordinate organization of inquiries and knowledge in its most basic categories: science, philosophy, art, and morality. The IT/AQAL approach has been used as a model for various disciplines, including business, psychology, the arts and others (Wilber, 2000; 2003). See, for example, Landrum and Gardner's (2012) work on IT and corporate organization and functioning; Esborn-Harger's (2006) article on IT and graduate education; Perloff's (2010) scholarship on IT and mediation and conflict resolution, and Wilber's (2009) perspective on IT and literary theory. The IT/AQAL approach has appeared in the criminological literature as well, including theoretical orientation (Author, Year; Gibbs, Giever & Pober, 2000; Martin, 2006); research conceptualization (Martin, Cohen & Author, year); and white collar crime (Author, year), among others.

| **Upper Left**<br>**Interior-Individual**<br>**(Intentional)**<br>*An individual's internal, subjective cognitions; affect and emotional states; awareness; individual moral stage development; internal spiritual experiences; individual criminal intentions and thinking patterns.* | **Upper Right**<br>**Exterior-Individual (Behavioral)**<br>*An individual's externally observable, measurable, empirically validated behaviors and physiological processes. Observable behaviors of the individual.* |
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| **Lower Left**<br>**Interior-Collective**<br>**(Cultural)**<br>*The collective internal experience; shared worldview; societal culture, laws within their social context; narratives and stories, collective morality* | **Lower Right**<br>**Exterior-Collective (Social)**<br>*Empirically testable collectives of an organization and its processes; empirically validated macro-structural aspects of crime; black-letter law and systems.* |

Figure 1. Adapted from Wilber's four quadrant model (2007). The right quadrants represent exterior, objective, empirical realities. The left quadrants correspond to the interior, subjective experiential realities. The upper quadrants denote the individual. The lower ones signify the collective.

The four-quadrant model (depicted above) represents perennial principles of humankind's thinking, actions, and evolution. The quadrants represent fundamental value spheres of Arts, Morals and Science, also referred to as the Good, the True and the Beautiful. These "big three" spheres (Wilber, 1998, p. 74; 2001, p. 70) are the primary dimensions of human activity and development. Wilber set forth his quadrant model as an interpretation of these three perennial spheres of knowledge, which differentiate between the subjective, the collective intersubjective (cultural) and the objective (truth, as externally measured). Wilber regards the quadrants as the "four corners of the known world" (p. 75), adding the fourth domain as an acknowledgement of how reality may be objectively assessed at both the individual as well as the systemic/collective level. From the high-altitude, meta-theoretical lens of IT/AQAL, the Big Three and the Integral quadrants assume the same meaning. They are pathways to capturing and understanding the noosphere of human and physical existence.

The Good (Morals) is a line of development that is experienced from the lower left (LL) quadrant. This is the quadrant of inter-subjective collectivism and is the perceptual lens for the concepts of culture and the collective morality that underlies a society's spirit of justice. This collective spirit of justice, this rough facsimile of a society's moral posture at a given point in time, eventually filters itself into statutory laws and system of legal machinery (however imperfectly). The right quadrants represent the external, empirical treatment of individual units (upper) and systems (lower) (Wilber, 1998; 2001). In this application, the lower right quadrant is the perceptual/experiential realm that manifests as the technical dimension of the criminal justice system (CJS): the black letter of criminal law and the mechanics of the CJS machinery.

The right quadrants also represent the objective observation of behavior, and reveal the body of empirical research that relates to the field. This realm is the quantitative, external representation perspective of research: it supports the collection and interpretation of statistical data as well as interpretations of qualitative data. This interpretation of reality applied here is characterized by the various research methods that seek to understand the field through objective observation, usually through the quantification of behavior and an appropriate method of statistical analysis. It is a valuable tool of inquiry and is helpful in the external measurement of hypotheses and imposes a structure and rigor to the pursuit of specific lines of investigation. However, it does little to capture the subjective aspects of experiences. These are important domains as well, especially when considering policing, crime, victimization, and the inevitable conflicts between individual freedoms and social order (Wilber, 1998; 2001; 2003; 2007).

The upper left *I* quadrant represents the subjective internal landscapes of human thinking, feelings, sensations, experiences and development at the individual first person level (Wilber, 2007, p. 70). Fear, anger, motivation, hope, anxiety, pride, and other markers of the internal subjective are best recognized through the upper left quadrant (Wilber, 1998; 2001; 2003; 2007). The lower left (L.L.) *We* quadrants reveal the intersubjective; the shared collective. Therefore, the L.L. realm is one of culture and shared values, or the Grecian "morals" (Wilber, 1998; 2001; 2007). Further, it is this realm that I propose represents the cultural narratives of heroes, anti-heroes, loyalty, retribution and adventurism that constitute some of the subjective markers of policing. It is the right *It/Systems* quadrants that represent the "Science;" the "True;" the externally observable and measurable activities of the matter in question that result in an outlined image of the phenomenon from an outside view (e.g. crime statistics, quantitative studies, neurophysiological measurements). This realm provides an exterior image of behaviors as empirically measured (Wilber, 1998; 2001; 2003; 2007). In attempting to capture the nature of police culture, the AQAL/IT provides value as a lens for the individual, the collectives, the subjective/internal and the empirical/external quadrants.


## Integral Theory, Narratives and Moral Wave Development


### *Good Guys and Bad Guys: Cop Archetypes*

The literature of police culture provides rich examples of police narratives that describe and explain police behaviors and attitudes. Although a comprehensive review of the literature pertaining to police personality and culture would exceed the scope of this work, a review of a few of the major components of police culture that have been consistently portrayed in the literature are sufficient for this work. The persistent elements, garnered from the policing literature and presented below are *Violence/Danger/Force*, *Loyalty*, *Crime-Fighting*, and *Authority*. As a side note, Charman and Corcoran's (2015) recent study of the Irish National Police Service suggest that police may be more adaptable in meeting new cultural and social challenges than they have previously been given credit. This demonstrates that the characteristics of police identity and cultural are not immutable and may continue to develop upwards over time, which aligns with Wilber's overall thesis that IT/AQAL assumes a general, incremental ascension in human development, although it may not always be discernible (Wilber, 1998; 2001; 2003; 2007).


#### *Violence, Danger and Force*

The tenet of danger, violence and force is one of the central tenets of the established police identity (Bittner, 1974; Crank, 2004; Sherman, 1980; Skolnick, 1966). Pearson's (1991) conceptualization of the Warrior archetype meshes with the spirit of violence of action that is a necessary component of police capabilities. The use of force continuum, generally based on the Federal Law Enforcement Training

Center (FLETC) model (National Institute of Justice, 2009) is a staple of law enforcement training at all levels (as well as undergraduate policing classes). The legitimized use of force by officers is a salient component of the job for many citizens, and the likelihood of individual officers to use some level of force in citizen interaction is one of the most controversial aspects of policing.

The willingness to commit force in the cause of righteousness is a powerful component of the police personality, and tracks with the heroic narrative. The clash of the Danger/Force narrative with citizens enacting their own story-lives is of course inevitable, as law breakers proceed through their own phenomenological experiences similarly grounded in hero/anti-hero/warrior narratives. Violence of action and force are mainstays of the police identity. Crank (2004) refers to the righteous use of force by officers as one the most polarizing and conflicting aspects of policing, pointing out the dilemma imposed on LEOs by a fickle public: Society expects and often demands police to use force when needed to apprehend lawbreakers and protect the citizenry, at the same time it repels in horror when police aggression is displayed in its raw form in the public arena. The coercive powers of police, ultimately backed by physical force, distinguish police from other social control agents (Bittner 1970; Sherman 1980).

### Crime-fighting Mission

The crime-fighting narrative provides an elemental and powerful animation for police officers (Van Maanen, 1978). Despite the expansion of community policing, recruits are still socialized into the occupation as a crime-fighting warrior even in relatively low-crime area departments (Alexander, 2016). Coupled with this are concerns about the increased militarization of police (Doherty, 2016) and one can see how the police crime-fighting mission maintains its adherence to the violence/action narrative. As Doherty (2016) notes, the mission of police officers is to support and defend the Constitution, and Alexander's (2016) advocacy for community policing to replace the occupying force storyline represents a potential counter to the powerful warrior lore. However, the conflict between the two narratives continues. Current police employment of military/para-military tactics, weaponry, vehicles and uniforms drive the warrior model in US policing and blur the line between law enforcement and military operations (Doherty, 2016).

### Loyalty

The cohesion of the fighting unit is paramount in military doctrine (Reilly, 2000). The loyalty of police to fellow officers is, like use of force, a well-documented subcultural power that spins off into both positive and negative consequences. Crank's (2004) exposition of police solidarity includes reference to the tendency of groups to cohere in the face of outside hostility and conflict. This conflict may be physical criminal aggression or political/social. The antipathy of street-level officers towards hostile others, (e.g., Van Maanen's exposition of the "asshole" [1978]) has become the stuff of common knowledge and makes regular appearances in popular culture. The overall support from entertainment/news media of anti-police activist groups and messages—often linked to race-- (e.g., the Colin Kaepernick story [Wyche, 2016]) demonstrate the popularity and resonance of the anti-police message (the legitimacy of individual cases under protest may be endlessly debated). As certain segments of popular media continue to batter police agencies with negative stereotyping, police and their supporters counter-rally with "Blue Lives Matter" mantras, blue-striped US flags, and any variation of several "thin blue line" placards. Thus, the hostile outgroups foster and harden increased cohesion for those within the LEO ingroup (Allport, 1954).

*Authority*

Police authority has both legal and social aspects. The legal authority of state and local police to search, seize persons and property, detain, investigate, and other sanctioned powers are rooted in the 10th amendment as part of the state's powers to impose laws and regulations to maintain the safety of its citizens (Legal Information Institute, n.d.). The social and cultural aspects of policing are more relevant to the current discussion. Skolnick (1966) identifies authority as one element of his triad of police "working personality" components. The element of authority, according to Skolnick, factors in to the overall social isolation of officers, and may burden them with the obligation to enforce regulations and laws perceived by the officer as petty, moralistic or otherwise unimportant. In the same work, Skolnick also relates that police who gain experience and initiative may tend to arbitrarily exercise authority to enact some form of justice that captures the spirit of substantive criminal law, potentially promoting crime control over legal restraints or accountability (1966). The trappings of authority are powerful psychological symbols: Sidearm, handcuffs, radio, lighting systems; uniform and overall command presence connote dominance and control. Goldstein (1977) describes police authority as "awesome" (p. 1) in the degree to which their powers can be deployed to invade and disrupt the privacy and freedoms of individual citizens. Further, Goldstein notes, the most visible and direct applications of the authority to arrest, detain, search and use force are usually enacted by the individual line officers at the lowest (street-level) line of the hierarchy (1977).

## War Gods, Tribes, and True Blue Law Enforcement

In general, the body of work pertaining to police personality and culture reflect a perennial scholarly interest in how LEOs perceive themselves, their roles, and their attitudes towards criminals and the public at large. The Integral adaptation of the Spiral Dynamics (SD) memes is one example of how IT lays out a map for description, explanation, understanding, and, perhaps (to an extent), prediction. Carl Graves' work (Beck & Cowan, 1996) SD theory assumes a developmental, unfolding, stage (or "meme")-based progression of consciousness that unfolds throughout a person's life (although not all people reach the upper stages). These memes are identified by color and have attending characteristics, progressing from survival to egocentricity to increasing consciousness of others at the community and global scales. Three such developmental waves, (or levels, or memes) that directly relate to the policing literature are the Red ("War Gods"/Impulsive/Aggressive); the Purple (Magical/Tribal/Ritual) and the Blue (Righteousness/Order/Law).

### Red: Cops as Righteous Gods of War

*"We hunt what you fear"* -LAPD Rampart Officer. (Lait & Glover, 2000).

*"...something-that-ought-not-to-be-happening-and-about-which-someone-had-better-do-something-now"*
Bittner (1974, p. 30)

*"People sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf"*—mixed attribution.

The IT conceptualization of the Red meme as it applies is the righteous aspect of force, violence of action and the striking of fear into the hearts of enemies. Like all levels/memes discussed by Wilber, the Red

state can manifest in both positive, productive developments, as well as toxic, pathological or destructive exhibitions. Therefore, the use of force can be used in heroic fashion (physically stopping and apprehending a violent, vicious, resisting lawbreaker) or as toxic and excessive, even sadistic assault. The righteous Red conforms most closely to the general societal expectation of force. The public relies on police for protection against criminals, and Pearson's (1991) conceptualization of the Warrior archetype represents an idealized IT/SD Red. In her work, she describes the Warrior as a heroic slayer of monsters, driven by lofty morals to defend innocents, country and king from evil-doers. It is a defender type (although still egocentrically-driven), its components including fighting to attain goals, high aggression, and an ingrained desire to "slay, defeat or convert" the enemy (The Warrior, para. 2).

## *Purple: Protect the Tribe*

The human tendency at the Purple meme level of development is one of tribes and magical thinking. The cohesion of police and loyalty to other officers reflects the Purple meme's reflection of the police cohesion and loyalty. This allegiance has both positive and negative aspects. Unit cohesion and loyalty are integral components of surviving and winning high-stress situations and physical threats. Military training doctrine stresses the building of unit integrity as an essential element of preparedness and *esprit de corps* (Reilly, 2000). As such, loyalty among officers provides an assurance that one's comrades will stand fast in battle, whether that battle is physical or metaphorical. It is the latter which may generate misconduct. When the conflict transcends legitimate imposition of force, deception or persuasion in the apprehension of lawbreakers and extends to concealing criminal actions of fellow officers, the Purple meme becomes toxic. Purple characteristics include devotion to rituals, faith in "magical" powers of talismans and sacred objects, traditions and rites of passage, and tribal loyalty. For the purposes of this discussion, these do not translate to literal beliefs in supernatural ideations, but instead in a tendency towards a devotion to group allegiance and its ritualistic trappings. The artifacts of the toxic Purple in police activity are plentiful in contemporary society, the "blue wall" in the face of corruption or brutality investigations has become the stuff of mass-culture consumption in both popular media as well as news headlines. Yet, the pathological side of Purple is not restricted to police agencies. The invocation of "loyalty" to protect organizations affects all cohesive groups: from criminal gangs to terrorist cells; from collegiate football teams to corporate trading rooms.

## *True Blue: Social Cohesion and Order*

The Blue meme represents the cement of society; the stability of rules, order and law. Blues tend to gravitate towards systemic, authority-based military/para-military chain of command (Beck & Cowan, 1996). This meme would seem to be the natural gravitational pull of law enforcement. Beck & Cowan (1996) note that Blues tend to subscribe to a belief system based on the belief that "laws, regulations and discipline build character and moral fiber" (p. 46). The Blue meme of LEOs represents not only how individual officers may function and develop as individuals and the greater police culture, but also represents the socially recognized role of police. As guardians of a stable society, the Blue is a powerful force in that it is the cement of civilization and, in its healthy form, provides safety and order in an equitable manner for law-abiding citizens to go about their lives free from victimization. Like all other memes, however, Blue has its pathological side. The unchecked exercise of governmental authority in the name of law order is responsible for human miseries that span from US police brutality to Stalinist communists to Islamic fundamentalists imposing Sharia law. Although these originate from vastly different ideologies, it is the meme itself that determines the identity and behavior, not the actual content (Beck & Cowan, 1996)

*Beyond Purple, Red and Blue*

These represent only three of the SD phases, of course, and police are not restricted to these stages (waves) of meme development (either individually or collectively). The equity of green and the integrality of yellow (for example) are certainly all part of the landscape of policing just as they are with any given population. However, given the nature of policing and its many risks and challenges, these three memes represent the most salient characteristics of police culture, motivations and behaviors.

## Narrative Psychology and the Stories of Policing

Narrative psychology (NP) first arose in the 1980s as a sector of social psychology that resisted the overall empirical quantification of cognitive study. The NP line of inquiry explores what this work shall identify (as per Wilber's IT) as the subjective/intersubjective domain of the human development.  In general, NP regards the perennial cultural influence of story-telling, the dramatic arts, and persistent themes of lore as a source of motives and behaviors of people. In essence,  humans tend to filter, organize and construct the phenomenology of external events into storied arcs.

According to Bruner (2005), the basic narrative structure consists of five basic elements. In order, they are the *initial canonical state*, *perpeteia*, *action*, *resolution*, and *coda* (2005, para. 16). These progressive stages represent the arc of advancement from the perception of external phenomena to the internalization of a narrative. The initial *canonical state* is a state of stability and normalcy, followed by a disruption of the status quo (*perpetiea*). Following this disruption is an *action,* a struggle to overturn or neutralize the perpetiean violation. *Resolution* may be achieved a number of ways, through defeat, victory, or some other dissolution of the struggle. It is the climax and downward arc of the story. The struggle is over, and the arc ends with the *coda,* an Aesopian tagline, or "…and the moral of the story is…" termination.

Bruner's construction is readily applied to typical police activity. In the most basic of scenarios, consider an officer on routine patrol (*canonical state*). She cruises through a strip mall parking lot and witnesses (or is called to) a domestic assault in the fire lane of a parking lot (*perpetiea*). She rolls up and exits, exhibiting her command presence and ordering the assailant to stop. The suspect resists and shoves the officer, then attempts to swing at her. She sprays him with a chemical irritant and he backs off, temporarily blinded and subdued. (*Action*). The officer handcuffs the blubbering suspect and puts him into the back of the cruiser. Then she has follow-up duties once the assault is halted and the violence stopped: check the victim for injuries, identify both parties, radio in the status of the call, and so on (*resolution*). And then, the *coda*, or some summative lesson from the experience. For this example, a coda for the officer may be, "you never know when you have to take action to stop a bad guy, so be prepared." Or, "always assume that the assailant will attack you."

Relying on the premise that stories act as a "root metaphor" (Sarbin, 1986, p. 3) for human behavior, NP assumes that stories drive an organizational framework for human experiences. People tend to fit the influx of experience into a recognizable and meaningful story arcs (presumably because they are readily accessible and have universal as well as perennial appeal). As such, the narrative represents a type of cognitive heuristic, or organizing principle for humans as they attempt to "impose structure on the flow of human experience" (Sarbin, 1986, p, 9). As Jung (1959/1990) wrote, humans have an "imperative need…to assimilate all outer sense experiences to inner, psychic events." (p. 6).   Narrative psychology is one line of scholarship that corresponds to the idea of including the left/subjective quadrants within the overall understanding of criminology.

Sarbin writes,

> The narrative is a way of organizing episodes, actions, and accounts of actions; it is an achievement that brings together mundane facts and fantastic creations; time and place are

incorporated. The narrative allows for the inclusion of actors' reasons for their acts, as well as the causes of happening. (Sarbin, 1986, p. 9).

Sarbin (1986) considers the narrative as a "root metaphor" (p. 3) for the study of human conduct (citing Pepper [1942]), as an organizing principle for human experiences, and as a guide for actions (including moral choices). As a metaphor, this principle reflects the lower left (LL) quadrant of cultural inter-subjectivism and can influence the thinking and intentions of the upper left (UL). Therefore, the Integral map of the quadrants serves as a higher level of organization; a template upon the template.

Sarbin (1986) remarks that quantified social sciences operate on metaphors as well, albeit bloodless, positivistic, mechanical ones such as cognitive heuristics or macrostructural theories. Instead, he seeks to include richer humanistic metaphors rooted in stories, drama and cultural artifacts. In other words, Sarbin seems to be recommending the scholarly inclusion of the Left quadrants in theoretical advancement and cautions against assigning exclusive scholarly weight to the right ones. The extraction of "reality" and understanding of human behavior from LL metaphors is not frivolous (as Sarbin notes), but simply an acknowledgment of a potentially useful method of inquiry into human activity.

Narrative psychology discusses the adaptation of cultural artifacts, stories, myths and archetypes to cognitions and behaviors. Bruner (1990) purports that the narrative structure is an innate one, and that this disposition exists as a dramatic shift from the "computational mind" as currently espoused in cognitive science to an inherent tendency of humans to construct subjective meanings to experiences (Nelson, 2003, "The Role of Narrative," para. 14). Nelson further argues that narratives operate at both the individual as well as collective level, and arise as "social forms" to foster cultural structure and integration (para. 16). Hendricks-Jansen (1996) posits a systems framework of human intentionality by which developing children grow up surrounded by narratives and adapt them into their own.

Whether regarded as a neurophysiological or as a cognitively constructive mechanism, the notion that human behavior may be animated by archetypes, lore, stories and narratives is a perennial conception that has spanned philosophy, art, the social sciences, as well as sectors of right quadrant empiricism.

## *Empirical Support of the Personal Narrative*

Despite the substantial role of the left quadrants in understanding the nature of narrative psychology, researchers have also examined the perspective from the right external/empirical quadrants (despite these lenses being imperfect and limited for the job. Baddely's (1993) work in positron emission tomography (PET) imagery has tied internal speech patterns to neurological activity (cited in Bickle, 2003). Bickle (2003) contends that neurological evidence of the internal narratives is not reflective of actual external actions or speech, implying a fictitious/storied internal monologue rather than a calculated reflection of external reality. In a 2008 article, Hevern provides an overview of neurophysiological studies that support the narrative approach. This body of research includes memory models that rely on episodic themes (Baddely, 2001a, b; Baddely, Aggleton & Conway, 2002, as cited in Hevern, 2008); the constraints of biology on the lore of primitive humans (Ong, 1982, as cited in Hevern, 2008); and neuroimagery studies reporting distinctions between autobiographical vs. episodic memory (subjectively encoded) retrieval (Gilboa, 2004; Svoboda, McKinnon & Levine, 2006).

Other theoretical validations of the narrative perspective (although not usually considered as part of the narrative literature) include established theories from related disciplines such as social psychology and criminology. Bandura's (1999) conception of "moral disengagement" (p. 3) as a cognitive device used by lawbreakers and aggressor to order to detach themselves from the dissonant shame and guilt associated with criminal activity. Bandura also asserted that moral disengagement explained types of terrorism (religious, eco-, and political) as rationalized elevation of violence and mass murder to a noble-cause and righteous retribution (1999). Similarly, Sykes and Matza's neutralization and drift theory (1964) identifies several components of internal rationalization for criminality, identifying components such as condemnation of the condemners, denial of the victimhood and humanity of the victims and thus

justifying their harm, and the euphemistic identification of higher loyalties (including, implicitly, law and order or religious deities).

### *Beyond External/Right-side Empiricism*

Expanding the conception of empiricism in psychology, criminology, sociology and the general field of social sciences is not a new idea. In C. Wright Mills' conception of *abstract empiricism* (2000), he voices similar concerns about scientific data collection that had not overarching structure, systematic direction and detached from broad theoretical forms. Further, he argues that such abstracted empiricists are often "more concerned with the philosophy of science that with the social study itself." (Mills, 1959, Abstracted Empiricism, para. 33). Other scholars have called to include the internal subjective for consideration along with empirical external among social scientists has been sounded before (Bruner, 1990, 2004; Martin, 2006; Sarbin, 1986) social psychologists and other scholars have trod this ground in their development of narrative lens to the understanding of human nature (MacIntyre, 1981; Sarbin, 1986; Gergen, 1994). In maintaining proximity to an empirical core, as Rock and Holdaway (1998) state criminologists must do to maintain theoretical discipline, it is at the same time important to remember that the AQAL approach recognizes traditional exterior empiricism as a core component of knowledge. Furthermore, Wilber (2011) has argued that empiricism properly spans validity in intersubjective mental, sensory, spiritual, contemplative and communal experiences.

### Discussion

*Limitations:* Seeking new understanding of the criminological literature in general through introduction of IT/AQAL is a cumbersome task. One must first set up a basic overview of the lines, levels, quadrants, and other salient aspects of Wilber's Integral meta-structure, and then pull in related supporting theoretical structures to the degree that they further explain the phenomenon in question. Then, after laying the IT template against the conventional criminological landscape of literature, one must select the points of illumination that flare most brightly. This work seeks to apply IT as an organizing principle of understanding and explanation, (particularly in the capture of the role of left-side quadrants) in examining a well-researched topic in a new light. It does not break ground in terms of new observations, of course, but it does provide an overarching context for the extant scholarship. The depth and scope of IT, of course, far exceeds the scope of this paper (Wilber's work, including 1998, 1999, and 2007 are recommend as further foundational readings on the structure and nature of IT). The Integral perspective provides a map for the volumes of theories, studies, and general scholarship for criminology and its many specialized subfields. In a discipline that spans scholarship nodes (from neurophysiology and blood spatter analysis to metaphysical philosophy and deconstructed feminism) in terms of delving into the darker nature of humankind, IT lays out an atlas to chart out the territory of knowledge domains.

In this paper, the mythos of LEOs taps the existing knowledge and introduces the work of narrative psychology as a means to understanding its source and development. In addition, the Red, Purple and Blue memes characterize the aspects of policing that seem to attract the most attention (both scholarly and popularly): the identity of police as stanchions of order and the use of state-sanctioned force in maintaining that order. There is risk of oversimplification here, of course. Broad generalizations of police behavior are as inaccurate, dull-witted and offensive as any stereotype, and are as mindlessly applied. Considering the narrative line of social psychological research as a means of inquiry that may be viewed through the Integral meta-theoretical framework carries implications for future research into policing as well as broader approaches to the field. The Wilberian Integral perspective (specifically the LL cultural-intersubjective collective) may provide insights into understanding new ways to think about the story arc of policing and give new insights into the issues of force, militarization, training and

screening/recruitment. The narrative psychology line of social psychology research, applied to the Integral map, is an example of how criminology scholars may draw from other disciplines to enhance their own field. The AQAL approach allows for consideration of the subjective and objective/individual and collective realities of crime. The narrative approach to understanding human behavior is merely one example of how the inclusion of all quadrants may benefit an overall approach to the challenges facing both police officers and the citizens whom they are sworn to serve. In addition, I have applied Integral Theory, Spiral Dynamics, and the narrative literature to the question of police culture here as merely one interpretation of these constructs. The discussion and conclusions here are merely one effort to assign an Integral meaning to a narrower subject of focus.

*The IT Superstructure and Implications*

Adapting the IT as a navigator for theoretical terrain allows scholars to study and teach in a systematic and organized approach to the subject matter. In this paper, I demonstrated how the IT may be used an organizing framework of understanding for the issue of police culture and behavior (and this was only one specific method of application), as I have written in the past regarding IT and criminal offending (Author, years). At the very least, an AQAL perspective aligns theory, data, arguments and constructs of criminological scholarship into the appropriate quadrantial lens through which to focus. For example, the macrostructural Chicago School (social disorganizational) theory of crime (Shaw & McKay, 194) tends to unfold from the bottom left and right quadrants, in that it provides some external empirical attempt to tap crime from an inter-subjective, collective genesis. Psychopathy research that examines neural structure abnormalities as demonstrated by neuroimaging studies (Santana, 2016) is a vastly different, yet equally valid, lens from which to understand some sector of reality of criminal behavior from the upper right quadrant of individual empirical/external focus. Many of the criminal justice ethics inquiries often start with deontological Kantian tenets of duty and the categorical imperative (upper left quadrant spiraling to include the lower left collective of humankind). The partial captures of reality are all means of looking at the same phenomena—crime, justice, and the state's reaction to it—from different keyholes. All keyholes depict a bit of reality (that is subject its own validity check), and the Integral map allows for quadrants to operate in accordance with their own nature.

A work such as this requires a basic overview of IT/AQAL as well as review of standard literature before discussing the main points. Therefore, there are many loose ends of potential inquiry that cannot be properly explored here, but represent additional venues of research. It is also likely that other IT/AQAL-based perspectives of police culture might yield markedly different ideas than the current work does. This article offers merely one AQAL/Integrally-informed perspective of police culture and behaviors. This keyhole was constructed with the aligning theory of narrative psychology and the IT components of SD moral stage development and the four-quadrant model. The established literature of narrative psychology aligns with this focus as well. Linking narrative psychology, archetypal concepts, Spiral Dynamics within the AQAL context constructs a new way to consider the extant knowledge of police culture and provides new approaches to describing that particular focal point. The notions of narratives, stories, myths and archetypes as robust agents of human behavior has earned the status of a serious mode of inquiry for criminology. Regarding policing, the perennial narratives align with the established points of individual police identities as well as collective subcultural elements. Both IT/AQAL as well as criminology have much wider range, and there are almost innumerable possibilities to link the two in explaining, identifying, understanding, and possibly predicting aspects of crime, justice and human/state interactions. Therefore, the AQAL map provides a contextual superstructure from which to consider, learn, teach and comprehend criminal justice literature of any sub-disciplinary knowledge areas.

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