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The inspired maverick:
Dirty Harry lives on the edge

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to describe three threshold experience cases where individuals avoid and disobey hierarchy and rules in order to satisfy their own values and aspirations.

Design/methodology/approach – Observations of the author as a participant observer, employee, and academic researcher are reported and analyzed.

Findings – In each of the three cases, the formal hierarchy was reversed or temporarily dissolved, continuity of tradition was uncertain and outcomes were thrown into doubt. These were liminal situations which involved uncertainty, ambiguity, doubts, and fear as a result of the suspending of organizational structure. The circumstances in which disobedience is most likely to occur are: lack of transparency; conflict between point of view of leaders and individual perception; demands that seem to be unreasonable; individual role in conflict with authoritative expectations.

Originality/value – Organizational hierarchy and mandates are designed to produce achievement of management goals. There are, however, circumstances where individual resistance is required in order to achieve desired results.

Keywords Transparency, Role, Discretion, Maverick, Professionalism

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

In the film *Dirty Harry* (Siegel, 1971) Inspector Harry Callahan, played by Clint Eastwood, is the stereotype of an organizational maverick. His singular desire to catch and punish criminals overcomes the demands of his department to conform to rules reflecting political and legal requirements. Because Callahan has searched the home of a serial rapist and killer without a warrant and improperly seized his rifle, the evidence he has obtained is inadmissible and the district attorney must free the villain. When confronted by the mayor, Harry reveals his rebellious attitude:

> Mayor: I don't want any more trouble like you had last year in the Fillmore District. Understand? That's my policy.

> Harry Callahan: Yeah, well, when an adult male is chasing a female with intent to commit rape, I shoot the bastard. That's my policy.

In the end, the film story displays the Dirty Harry phenomenon. We see Harry as a hero, albeit a flawed and complex one, and his rebellious behavior as justified. Harry catches up with the murderer and kills him. We are left to ponder the questions:

- Is it necessary for Harry to work his way around the system to achieve the goals of the system?

- Why does individual motivation, at times, overcome the pressure to conform to organizational pressures?

- Do the rebellious means used by Harry justify the ends that he has achieved?

These are questions asked repeatedly in the literature associated with policing (Manning and van Maanen, 1978; Wilson, 1968) and with social policy (Dubois, 2010; Evans, 2010; Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2000, 2003) among other disciplines. This paper develops this work, describing three threshold experience cases from different organizations where individuals work their way around hierarchy and rules to satisfy individual values and aspirations as well as accomplish critical objectives. In each case, the formal hierarchy was reversed or temporarily dissolved, continuity of tradition was uncertain, and outcomes were thrown into doubt.

In the three ethnographic observations described, as is the case with most modern complex organizations, a formal structure of bureaucracy, a culture of professionalism, and individual personality characteristics exist side by side in potential conditions of both synergy and conflict. Bureaucracy, as a form of organizing, produces hierarchy, rules, and a division of labor which are intended to result in control, predictability, and efficiency. (Weber, 1998; Du Gay, 2000). Professional culture, which is manifested in the socialization and training of individual lower level participants, provides for the effective application of specific expertise, the guidance of shared values, and dedication to serving the needs of specific clients or society in general (Huntington, 1957; Evetts, 2011; Sciulli, 2005). And, of course, the people who participate in organizational activity bring their individual unique personal perceptions and values into the mix of factors that determine action and outcome (Lipsky, 1980; Schon, 1983). The behavior of Dirty Harry, after all, can neither be completely explained by his formal job description nor his socialization and training as a professional policeman. We also need to understand Dirty Harry simply as Dirty Harry.

The formal structure of hierarchy, rules, and division of labor is devised within a particular organization. The development of expertise, shared values (i.e. ethics), and motivation to serve, originate as a result of the experience of people before they are employed by an organization. This takes place in institutions of higher learning and certification that train, and socialize practitioners. All of this is affected by variations in human personality that are neither predictable nor controllable.

Expert practitioners enter into employment as socialized and trained professionals. Conformity to the mandates of management is necessary yet at times not sufficient to satisfy the dictates of a professional role. Accordingly, there is always the potential for tension resulting from the pulls and hauls of management control, professional ethics, and individual personality (Lipsky, 1980). It is the function of leadership to control this tension. In the ethnographic observations described, however, the melding of bureaucratic management structure, professionalism, and idiosyncratic temperament is fractured as the protagonists live on the edge of their leader's aspirations and expectations.

The ethnographic data reported here reveals the motivations for working around the formal structure of an organization. In the case of the Ship's Force Overhaul Management System (SFOMS), the author was a member of the organization, the USS Neversail. The observations emerge from a report written at the time, 1971, and form more of an ethnographic reflection on this experience. In the case of the police horseback patrol force in Gotham City Park, the research took place during a sabbatical year in 1996. With the permission of the Police Commissioner, the author was an outsider who participated in the activities of the organization, but acted primarily as a scholarly observer of patrol work, including walking the beat and ridealongs in patrol cars and on horseback. In the case of the Naval Air Station (NAS) Podunk munitions storage, the author was an outside observer as part of his work for the US Naval War

College in 1976. (The name of the ship, Neversail, the city, Gotham, and the NAS, Podunk, are fictional.)

These were liminal situations which involved uncertainty, ambiguity, doubts, and fear as a result of the suspending of organizational structure. In each of these cases, organizational participants found themselves in uncomfortable situations treading unknown terrains and risk of punishment.

The case of a shipyard overhaul

During my tour of duty aboard the aircraft carrier USS Neversail, we cruised to Boston for a periodic overhaul. The overhaul was to be conducted over a period of seven months and would accomplish major maintenance and upgrading of all aspects of the ship and its operating systems. The work would be done by members of the ship's crew together with a civilian workforce of unionized shipyard employees. Traditionally, these overhauls were completed as the result of the efforts of each shipboard department working in fairly intimate contact with civilian shipyard engineers and blue collar workers.

Experienced officers, including me, knew that civilian workers, who were not a formal part of the ship's hierarchy, could not be controlled effectively with an authoritarian style of leadership. This was because the unionized civilian employees worked for the shipyard and not directly for the ship and because as highly skilled laborers they resented being led by naval officers. The blue collar workers considered naval officers to be aristocratic dilettantes.

In the past, an informal relationship between ship's officers and sailors and civilian workers had been established in order to accomplish an effective overhaul. This relationship was captured by the time honored prescription of "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours." On the part of the ship's crew, this meant giving the civilian workers a great deal of discretion in deciding the day-to-day work schedule and procedures, as well as giving them unauthorized side payments such as large bags of coffee that were always available in the ship's store, and free meals in the enlisted mess. On the part of the civilian workers, this meant doing whatever had to be done to produce the desired results of the overhaul, including the maintenance and installation of equipment and the performance of work that was desired by the crew, but not necessarily part of the formally authorized overhaul package and budget.

Overall supervision and coordination of an overhaul was traditionally accomplished by a group of naval officer-engineers organized into a project team titled Supervisor of Ship Construction and Repair and known as Supship. The Supship team consisted of only a few officers and these few could not keep up with the thousands of details of the overhaul of an aircraft carrier. Because of this, and because of the impossibility of integrating the civilian shipyard workers into a military hierarchy, supervision on the part of Supship was traditionally loose. In the past, the work details of an overhaul had not been centrally controlled.

This particular overhaul was to be different. In response to a general trend toward scientific management and tighter management control, higher naval authority in Washington had decided to use a computer-assisted management information system that could be applied to the overhaul of an aircraft carrier. The system was called SFOMS. The intent of SFOMS was to control the utilization of the ship's crew and shipyard workforce labor in a way that would provide for the efficient accomplishment of the overhaul. Equipment was considered to be a fixed cost. Man-hours were, therefore, perceived to be the limiting factor determining efficiency. SFOMS was to

rationally divide the necessary labor among the ship's crew and the shipyard workforce and to monitor performance.

For one year prior to the overhaul, all ship departments were required to identify each necessary shipyard job. The details of each planned job, ranging in complexity from replacing light bulbs and the filters on electronic equipment to replacing the entire flight deck and its catapult and arresting wire equipment, were made part of a comprehensive complex computer program. The program included weekly progress checks based on a comparison of man-hours estimated for the job completion and actual accomplishment. Daily computer inputs were to be generated on the job to keep the computer up to date with the reality of progress. Each week the computer would spit out a report that would inform the ship's commanding officer, the shipyard commanding officer, and each shipboard department head, concerning whether or not a department was behind schedule. If the old system of cooperation between civilian workers and the navy did not involve centralized control, the new SFOMS system would. Now, it was the management information system in the form of the SFOMS computer program that would give the orders, supervise the work, and evaluate the results. The old system merely got the job done, but with little direct and predictable control of efficiency. The new system was designed to get the job done with a perfection of efficiency and close supervision that was hitherto unthinkable.

As the department head of the Communications Department, I was responsible for the maintenance and operation of a vast array of sophisticated communications equipment, including receivers, transmitters, teletype machines, and electronic cryptographic equipment. Communications was a unique shipboard department. My seniors on the ship, the commanding officer and executive officer, had little or no expertise *vis-à-vis* the communications function. I had little enough myself and depended on a group of highly trained technical people. Cryptographic procedures that subsumed just about all communications called for tight security. This gave me the opportunity to operate my department free of any detailed direct supervision by my superiors in the hierarchy. My bosses had no direct knowledge of anything that I did. As long as the ship was able to perform required communications functions, nobody seemed to care what I was doing. I liked this discretion because it enabled me to trust my subordinate technical specialists and to convince them that the only thing that really mattered was results.

Prior to entering the shipyard I noticed that my technical workforce frequently had to work around official procedures to get the job done. This meant "jury rigging" circuits and equipment as well as taking various procedural and administrative short cuts. I looked the other way at appropriate moments and from time-to-time told little white lies to my superiors, falsehoods concerning the status of various equipment and procedures. I did not want my seniors to become involved in micromanaging the communications functions. This did not create any problems. I was left alone and received only the most general guidance from above. I provided only the most general guidance to my subordinates. The department operated virtually free of direct hierarchal supervision and virtually free of problems. We got the job done.

It was clear that the use of the SFOMS management control system was designed to curb departmental discretion. The esoteric nature of my job, however, enabled me to escape from the omnipresent eye of the computer and its threatening reports on efficiency. During this overhaul, virtually all communications equipment would be replaced or upgraded. The overhaul of the living spaces for communications personnel was also scheduled. As we entered the shipyard, I perceived the SFOMS management

information system as a threat to the effectiveness of my department. I did not like the idea of a computer looking over my shoulder and forcing me to look over the shoulders of my technical experts. I was concerned that the work required to feed the computer would rob my people of the precious time that was required to get the overhaul work done. I knew that SFOMS, if taken seriously, would preclude the sort of "you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours" relationship between my people and the shipyard electronics division, a relationship that I believed was necessary to effect a successful overhaul.

With all this alarming baggage burdening me, I formulated a scheme to implement SFOMS in a way that might counteract what I believed to be its dysfunctional and threatening impact. First, I set aside a small room that would be used exclusively to prepare daily computer input. Then I trained one of my smartest and most loyal junior enlisted men in the administrative procedures required by SFOMS. Once the overhaul period commenced, this fine lad would run the entire overhaul for the Communications Department as a simulation. My man would check to see what the computer program called for on any given day and proceed to enter data in a manner appropriate to having fulfilled the expectations of the program. In this manner, the department, according to the computer, was always exactly where it was supposed to be with respect to daily progress and man hour utilization. I kept in close touch with the shipyard civilian electronic workers. I made sure that they were kept happy and were provided with the traditional unauthorized side payments, i.e. bribes. The shipyard workers responded positively. By the end of the scheduled seven months all communications equipment had been overhauled or replaced. Some new equipment that was neither expected nor budgeted for mysteriously arrived and was installed. All Communications Department living spaces were painted and made otherwise more attractive and liveable.

At weekly shipyard progress meetings, the Communications Department was always mentioned as a "model of effective management." The other departments were not nearly as successful. Various excuses were made, including the irrationality of the program itself. Shipyard workers assigned to jobs replacing flight deck equipment, an Air Department responsibility, had gone on strike three months into the overhaul period to protest working conditions and procedures that were outside of contract provisions. By the time the strike was settled the overhaul had been delayed for two months and the yard period had to be extended accordingly. At the four month mark a fire broke out in the engine room below decks as a result of shipyard worker carelessness when doing a welding job on the flight deck. Damage was estimated at three million dollars.

The case of police park patrol

During a sabbatical leave from my teaching duties, I spent the better part of a year as a participant observer in the Gotham City Police Department. A few months of that time was spent on horse patrol in the city park. Gotham City Park consists of 1,017 acres configured as a rectangle. It is over three miles long east to west and about a half mile north to south. In total, 13 million visitors come to the park every year.

The city was grappling with the problem of homeless people living in the park. Homeless person encampments were described by journalists as full of garbage, broken glass, hypodermic needles, and human excrement, and the people in them described as suffering from serious addictions and often behaving aggressively with police and park gardeners. There were occasional incidents of violence against homeless people in the

park, including a beating to death of one homeless man and an attack on park visitors by dogs owned by a homeless encampment park resident. The city police had been ordered to conduct sweeps of the park to eliminate the homeless encampments. Tactics that were mandated by the mayor included orders to inform homeless residents that it is illegal to camp in the park, force homeless people to leave the park, seize possessions, and arrest people who refused to leave. These crackdowns were criticized by antipoverty activists and civil liberty groups who claimed that the crackdown dealt only with the symptoms of homelessness while ignoring the root causes as well as criminalizing the poor. As a result of political pressure generated by public opinion in the left leaning population of the city, the District Attorney did not prosecute people who were arrested. Soon after an arrest, homeless persons would show up back in the park to resume occupancy of their encampments.

I arrived to participate and observe police horse patrol operations in the park early on a Monday morning. Four teenage girls were cleaning out stalls, grooming horses and cleaning and oiling saddles and bridles. The contingent of police consisted of a lead sergeant and 12 patrol officers. One by one, the officers arrived and changed into clean and pressed immaculate uniforms and polished boots which were laid out in a locker room adjacent to the horse stalls by the young women volunteer horse groomers. The sergeant in charge, clad in black trousers, a not so clean white T shirt, and a gun strapped to his protruding belly greeted me by telling me, in a not so friendly tone, that he was expecting me. Shortly, the 12 officers strolled out of the locker room and were ordered to line up for muster and instructions. By the look on their faces, I could tell that morning muster was not a usual procedure and that it was enacted for the benefit of my observation. Three officers were designated for the morning park patrol and instructed not to bother homeless people because effort trying to clear them of the park was wasted. I mounted a horse and joined the three mounted officers heading out for four hours of patrol. The weather was clear and the mood very relaxed. I rode side by side with each of the officers and discussed various aspects of what was going on.

Each of these patrolmen had been assigned to park horse patrol duty for more than three years. They decided not to take the exam for promotion to sergeant because promotion would mean a transfer from the park patrol operation. They loved their job and wanted to stay with the horses, the teenaged girl grooms, and the park, as long as possible. Using a small portable tape recorder I recorded the following conversation from one or another of the three men:

The problem of homeless people in the park is made worse by the sanctuary laws of the city. Many immigrants come here believing they are untouchable. Some of these end up living in the park. There is also a problem concerning the ways the laws are enforced. The DA does not prosecute.

This is a public relations organization, or about 60 to 70 percent of it. I did a school group tour just yesterday and the same thing the day before. We are a positive influence on the kids. I remember the time I saw a cop when I was a kid. So that's what we like to do. The kids are really the greatest part of this job.

Even though we have been ordered to arrest homeless campers, we don't do that. They try and keep statistics on us, but we don't pay attention to that. The citations are a waste of time. So now there is new stuff we are doing. The guys downtown don't have the slightest idea about this. We set aside a space back in the woods that is out of sight and tell those poor homeless people that it is okay to camp and sleep there. Every Thursday we get a large garbage truck. We come in our jump suits at six o'clock in the morning and take the garbage

away. I would not be surprised if some day some attorney for the ACLU comes and tells us that what we are doing is unconstitutional because we are illegally seizing the property, that is the garbage, that belongs to these people.

Every once in a while we issue a citation just so we have the stats not to get into too much trouble. At times a homeless person actually makes it up in front of a judge. The judge says, "You were camping in the park." The defendant says, " Yes, Your Honor. I have no place to live." Then the judge will bang the hammer and say, "Dismissed." So we wonder, why the hell are we citing in the first place?

We are trying to create an image to counteract the Rodney King thing where the cops were filmed beating a guy senseless. The best part about this job is to work on a holiday or a Sunday. The streets are full of people. They see you as a good guy because you are on a horse. People really like horses.

The case of munitions storage safety

While on active duty as a Naval Officer I was assigned to teach and do research at the Naval War College at Newport, Rhode Island. One of my assignments was to develop factual case studies that could be used in the classroom. The following is the result of my observations during that assignment.

The NAS Podunk was a large US Navy air base assigned the mission of maintaining and operating facilities which provide services and material support to aviation units of the fleet operating forces (squadrons). Readiness at NAS was conceived of in terms of material condition of the base infrastructure and the state of training of personnel. Tenant resident commands at NAS Podunk consisted of ten aircraft squadrons and 12 other units including a Naval Air Rework Facility where major aircraft maintenance and overhaul was performed by a civilian workforce. There were 203 aircraft that call the base home. The base covered 1,815 acres and had 35 miles of roads, 482 buildings and two million square yards of concrete which made up runways, taxiways, and aircraft parking ramps.

Commander Bob Sardo, the NAS Weapons Department Head, was six months away from retiring with 27 years of active duty as a Naval Officer. He had been in this job for two years. The officer he relieved was hospitalized with a heart attack so there had been no face-to-face job turnover. During his first day on the job he read his job description in the publication entitled, Organization Charts, NAS Podunk. The appropriate section read:

Functional statement, Weapons Department: Procurement of all ordnance and weapons authorized the station in support of Fleet Air Operations and other tenant activities; storage, issue, testing and maintenance of ordnance, missiles, explosives and ammunition.

Sardo was responsible for both conventional and nuclear munitions.

There was no doubt in Sardo's mind that he was not competitive for promotion. He had been passed over for promotion to Captain four times. This was a dead end job and he knew it. Nevertheless, with a good deal of help from senior enlisted technical experts assigned to his department, he learned his job and took pride in the Weapons "shop." These enlisted men could help Sardo learn about the more technical aspect of his job. Most of them had been ordnance technicians for a considerable length of time. Their expertise, however, was limited to narrow technical subjects. Whatever decision making Sardo would do, with respect to performing coordination and control functions, would have to be informed by his past experience, none of which was similar to his present situation, as well as whatever he could learn on the job.

The Navy did not provide Sardo with the expectation of career-oriented satisfaction. He relied exclusively on the production output of his department for day-to-day job-related pride. The results of an interview with Commander Sardo are reported verbatim as follows:

First of all, we get more inspections than anybody else around here. Every two years we get a Department of Defense *explosive safety survey*. Every year you get another Chief of Naval Operations safety survey. No less than every 12 months you get a special (nuclear) weapons inspection. At the discretion of the Defense Nuclear Agency you will get either a biannual or a triannual NWTI (Nuclear Weapons Technical Inspection). All the people who inspect us are real *pros*, not like the others on the staff here. I'm the one that's responsible to coordinate everything all together in one program that will get us through the inspection. We always come up with zero defects; I mean ZERO!

Our primary mission is to be ready to go to war at all times. To do this we keep the war reserve stuff ready to go on a day to day basis. This takes constant reworking of missiles, torpedoes, and bombs. It is a complete training cycle to be ready for the next inspection. We must have a certain number of weapons ready to go at any particular time, and we have published guidelines on this. There are firm requirements and its all on trailers ready to roll right now. Give me two hours and I can meet any need laid on.

I've finally convinced the Staff [a tenant command in the operational chain of command for some of the squadrons stationed at the NAS] Weapons Officer not to get into my business. If he wants any weapons, he just calls us. A while back the staff made the mistake of ordering a whole damn carload of mines himself. They came in and Supply called me and said, "What do you want to do with those mines?" I said, "I didn't order any mines. If the Staff ordered them give 'em to the Staff." After a week of the Staff begging us to tell them what the hell to do with the mines, I asked them if they'd learned their lesson. They had! I don't fly their airplanes; they don't order any ordnance, any more.

Now we do have plenty of ordnance handling rolling stock. Here's one place we really made out. On an explosive safety survey the guy took one look at our vehicles and screamed, "It's UNSAFE!" I said, "Yeah, we've been trying to get new stuff." He wrote a scathing endorsement about the inadequacy of transportation in the Weapons Department and within six months I had all new trucks.

I don't have anywhere near enough money. I have got major projects planned, trying to take this department from pre-World War II to bringing it into this century. I need well over two million dollars to do this. I need to build loading zones at the warehouses. I've got magazines that are falling down. All I've got from Public Works is $25,000 to refurbish two magazines [weapons storage buildings] that were unsafe and unusable. I don't allow safety problems like this to come up on an inspection. No way am I going to let an inspector tell me that one of my magazines is unsafe. I'll empty it first! I'll declare it unsafe myself!

Everything besides us seems to have higher priority for money, like the Commanding Officer's $6000 green house for growing plants to decorate the station. It is the *old man* that assigns priorities to projects. I have a long list of unfunded project requests. All this hinges on the Commanding Officer's list of priorities. Right now I think putting curtains in the barracks is higher on the list than the fence. I think that the most important thing around here in recent months was trying to win the Ney Award for the best enlisted mess. The CO wants that award so bad he can taste it! We actually had *Operation win the Ney Award*. They spent lots of money making the galley look good. But the chow didn't get any better.

To accomplish the mandated zero defects goal, and in preparation for an anticipated inspection Sardo rebelled. He emptied the magazines. He ordered that weapons material

stored in buildings that showed defects in storage safety specifications be removed from those buildings. Because he had no alternate place on the station to keep this material, he shipped the ordnance out of the area. At least for a time, the capability of the NAS to provide munitions for fleet aircraft has been reduced to nil. The safety defects had been reduced to zero, and so had the combat readiness of operational units stationed on the base.

Analysis

In each of the cases described, we observe the Dirty Harry phenomenon/That is the behavior of lower level participants who rebel against the formal structure of an organization. We can probe this ethnographic data to determine:

- What were the common circumstances that resulted in the Dirty Harry phenomenon?
- What were the consequences of Dirty Harry behavior?
- What are the lessons for leaders and managers?

A lack of transparency

The most obvious circumstance that empowered individuals to live on the edge where management meets individual motivation was the opaqueness that existed between lower level participants and those whose function was to control conformity to bureaucratic structure and values. It was a lack of transparency with respect to participant activity that resulted in the opportunity, if not the motivation, for people to march to the beat of their own drum.

In the shipyard case, the Communications Department was physically accessible only to those people who had security clearances and a reason to be there. The day-to-day operations of that department were blind to the eyes of all except those who worked there. This lack of transparency made the use of computer generated false reports a distinct possibility. There was little chance that a whistle blower would reveal the scam because members of the department accepted the notion that the willing cooperation of civilian workers would be destroyed by the computerized overhaul management system. In contrast, the Air Department was responsible for extensive work done on the flight deck during the overhaul. This work was visible to all and it was obvious that the actual work done, or not done, was accurately reflected by the data entered into the computer. Here, as I expected, civilian workers did resent the formal management control system. With respect to the overhaul of the flight deck, this resentment resulted in work progress shortfalls and failure of the control system to produce the desired results. Indeed, it was the control system itself that produced the unintended consequences of ineffectiveness.

The work of the police in Gotham City Park was similarly obscured from direct observation by police headquarters, the office of the mayor, and the district attorney. The political universe of these people was the city. The political attention of the police was the park. Here the police functioned as "street corner politicians" (Muir, 1977). A lack of transparency enabled the police to make independent decisions concerning the situation of homeless people. The park mounted police focussed exclusively on their desire to serve the park as an entity rather than the city as a whole.

In the case of the Air Station, the base Commanding Officer was more interested in what might be directly observed than what was hidden from view in ammunition magazines.

When I interviewed this senior officer, I asked him "what is your highest priority?" His response was "base beautification and cleanliness." He went on to say: "When you wash your car, it runs better, doesn't it?" He told me that, when his seniors visited the base, if they perceived a clean and well decorated base, they would conclude that the base was accomplishing its assigned support mission effectively. What might be observed, cleanliness and beautification, was considered to be indicators of mission effectiveness. What was not directly observed, e.g. munitions storage, was ignored.

Bounded rationality

When the behavior of lower level participants is hidden from the observation of their managers, local decision making rationality can be bounded by local values and facts. This was the case in the Communication Department, the Park, and the Air Station munitions storage facilities where participants avoided the broader requirements and mandates of the ship, the city, and the base. When rationality is bounded, the decision making behavior of individuals is limited by the information they have, the cognitive limitations of their minds, and the finite amount of time they have to make decisions. This is in contrast to rationality as optimization which views decision making as a fully unconstrained process (Simon, 1957). When decision makers lack the resources to arrive at an optimal solution, they apply their rationality only after having greatly simplified the choices available, thus seeking a satisfactory solution rather than an optimal one.

Decisions are most often based on value premises as well as factual premises (Simon, 1967). A focus on what is rational to those on the ground (the Dirty Harrys of this world) and the resulting decisions that are narrowly satisfactory rather than broadly optimal must be explained in terms of values of local decision makers as well as the local situation – what is Dirty Harry's policy in this situation? As has been noted above, the police in Gotham Park, acting as "street corner politicians" (Muir, 1977), focussed exclusively on their desire to serve the park as an entity rather than the city as a whole. It was the value of what police perceived to be the usefulness of the park and the local situation of homeless people that motivated police behavior. The SFOMS was designed to serve an optimal rationality based on the value of overall efficiency: completing the overhaul on time and on budget. The availability of computerized data processing created the possibility, that information might be unlimited, cognition unconstrained, and time controlled. My decision to cheat the management control system was based on my expectation that civilian (and naval) workers would reject the rationality of the management control system and the extent to which I valued a successful overhaul in the Communications Department. Similarly, Commander Sardo's rationality was bounded by his value of safety specifications.

Zone of indifference

Chester I. Barnard suggested that executives should issue orders to subordinates that were in their zone of indifference, orders that would be accepted unquestioningly and without resistance (Barnard, 1968). In this way, orders would be accepted without the questioning of authority and without the need to provide costly incentives to motivate employees to conform to bureaucratic managerial norms of obedience. When the mandate, either explicit or implicit, of higher authority is outside of a subordinate's zone of indifference, when subordinates are not at all indifferent to orders from above, it becomes increasingly likely that they will act in a rebellious manner.

In the shipyard case, I was not at all indifferent to the way that orders were given to document work accomplished on a day-to-day basis. The police on patrol in Gotham City Park were not at all indifferent to the mandate to arrest homeless people when the homeless invariably returned to their encampments in the park. Commander Sardo was not at all indifferent to the lack of resources necessary to comply with safety rules regarding munitions storage.

Barnard did recognize that it was not always possible for management to channel their commands into a subordinate's zone of indifference. Sometimes, the power and the resources of authority are necessary to push people into behaviors that they would otherwise resist. In the cases described here, this did not happen. The Shipyard Commander as well as the Ship's Commanding Officer were not aware of my falsification of reports and, therefore, did not push me into behaving in accordance with the structure of the overhaul management system. The same was true in Gotham City Park and for Commander Sardo.

Role conflict

The width of an individual's zone of indifference, the extent that s/he will follow management control without reluctance, is determined by the extent of socialization, the process of accepting the values of a group. When an organization, such as the Navy or a police department, employs professionals, the impact of socialization becomes inherently complex and stressful. This is because the group as in organization is not the same as the group as in profession. Professional ethics, standards, morals, and codes of behavior can be, and often are, in conflict with the bureaucratic structure of organizations.

When individuals are trained and indoctrinated as professionals they are encouraged to accept, even to swear, that they embrace professional values. The police swear to protect and serve the community. The naval officer swears to protect and defend the Constitution. Professionalization, which takes place before the individual becomes a member of the organization that employs him/her, involves training which results in specialized expertise, indoctrination that results in the motivation to serve society, and the shared experience that results in common values. When the newly frocked Naval Officer or police officer becomes an employee of a police department or a military unit, for example, they carry the values of professional socialization with them. Commander Sardo's socialization, as well as my own, took place in the professional indoctrination of officer training programs. The socialization of the police was accomplished during police academy experience and subsequent initial on the job training and mentoring.

As Max Weber has famously pointed out, the modern organization is structured as a bureaucracy. The essence of this structure is the ladder of hierarchy, the mandate of formal rules and standard operating procedures and a division of labor (Weber, 1998). In the case of the shipyard, the determination of the hierarchy to conduct the overhaul efficiently, to employ a highly structured management control system, came into conflict with my professional motivation to get the job done effectively. Sardo worked his way around his Commanding Officer's expenditure of limited funds on base cleanliness and appearance. When the funds were not available to construct safe munition storage facilities, he removed the munitions. It was the professional enthusiasm of the police to make sure that the park served the needs of society that motivated them to protect the rights of homeless people.

Type of organization

In all three of the cases discussed, the hierarchy had the authority and the power to enforce the rules. Yet, in all three cases, this formal power became irrelevant.

The professional norms drove behavior outside of the "box" of bureaucratic structure. Etzioni (1964) formulated a typology of organizations based on the method used to induce people to join and to conform to organizational mandates. His three types are: utilitarian, normative, and coercive. Utilitarian organizations, such as profit making businesses, induce cooperation primarily by providing income and fringe benefits. Normative organizations, such as churches, encourage people to pursue moral goals and commitments. Coercive organizations, such as prisons, seek forcefully to control all phases of their member's lives. Organizations such as the police and the military, which employ professionals, provide the incentive of salary and fringe benefits and, to this extent, they fit, at least in part, Etzioni's utilitarian type. In addition, stricter discipline is expected in police and military organizations than in private profit making organizations. In this sense, we might expect some of the characteristics of Etzioni's typology of coersion. At the same time, however, he tells us that the "response of the participants to a particular use of power or combination of powers is determined not only by that use of power, but also by the participants' social and cultural personalities" (p. 61). The cultural and social personalities of the Gotham Park police gave rise to an extreme loyalty to the park as an institution. The same could be said of Commander Sardo's resentment of the shortfalls of resources provided to his munitions storage infrastructure and my own devotion to the effectiveness of the ship's Communication Department. Clearly, in the situations described, it was the "social and cultural" personalities of the participants as well as their professional roles that placed these organizations as essentially normative in Etzioni's typology. Despite the elements of utilitarian and coercive in the mix, the power of upper levels of the hierarchy became irrelevant. Here, the organizations became increasingly normative as the participants responded to their own "social and cultural" (we might even say Dirty Harry) personalities, rather than to bureaucratic norms.

The fact that the organizations discussed here are public rather than private created conditions that help to explain the rebellious behavior of lower level participants. The measures of performance that can be used to appraise a government manager are often vague and open to interpretation (Lipsky, 1980). How does the Commanding Officer of an Air Station know that his delivery of support services is optimal? How does a mayor know that police are in fact protecting and serving a city? How does a shipyard commander know that the work being done is as effective as it might be? In contrast, in private business organizations, various tests of performance, such as financial return and market share, are unambiguous measures of accomplishment (Allison, 1979). Managers and senior officers rely on surrogate output measures to demonstrate managerial effectiveness. This created the distance from practice, the lack of transparency, that allowed Dirty Harry to emerge in each of the three cases.

Conclusion
The three cases described demonstrate that the conditions which make rebellious behavior possible, if not likely, are:

(1) a lack of transparency;

(2) the bounded rationality of participants which encourages them to focus on their immediate area of concern rather than the organization as a whole; and

(3) the professionalization and personality of participants which causes them to come into conflict with bureaucratic norms.

The quest for accomplishment in both public and private organizations results in the quest for management control. When subordinates reject the push of hierarchy and the pull of rules, the attempt of managers to achieve organizational missions can be frustrated. Paradoxically, as managers attempt to influence the behavior of subordinates and overcome their tendency to avoid compliance and cooperation, the result can be less, rather than more, control.

Complete executive control can be effective only when knowledge of the situation is complete and the organization can operate as a decision machine driving a fully analyzable system. Yet in the complex conditions that confront most modern and postmodern organizations, the knowledge of the situation is incomplete and, as a result, the ability to predict with absolute certainty that decision A will produce result B is problematic. Systems of control, therefore, are often hypotheses based on a manager's flawed conviction that his/her knowledge completely captures the realty of the situation and enables him/her to predict the organization's future. The result is that, as management attempts to control, it commits the analogy of a statistical type 2 error, i.e. accepting an hypothesis that is false (Landau and Stout, 1979).

The difficulties brought about by situational complexity and uncertainty can be exacerbated when managers conceive of their organizations as cost-effect producing machines. This is because the nature of the human parts that make up the organizational machine are much more mysterious, inexplicable, and unpredictable than machine-like management control strategies assume. The perception of the organization as a machine and the reality of the organic properties of human being workers creates a puzzling situation. As the attempt to control the organizational machine becomes more intense, the accomplishment of a desired mission can become less likely. In the shipyard case, it was the unintended consequence of the management control system that resulted in gross inefficiency in overhauling the flight deck of the ship. In contrast to this, the avoidance of the management control system resulted in the effectiveness of the workforce in the Communications Department. When the Air Station Commanding Officer attempted to control the perception of the effectiveness of his organization by diverting scarce resources to accomplishing base cleanliness and beautification, he created the circumstance where the capability of the base to provide munitions to operational forces was wrecked. When the Gotham City leaders had homeless people arrested in an attempt to control the quality of life of Gotham's citizens, this encouraged police to patrol, indeed to manage, the park as a political system separate and apart from the city political system.

Food for thought

Whether or not Dirty Harry's behavior is justified depends on whether or not one accepts the fundamental political and philosophical principles of the system he is opposing. Harry shoots first and answers questions later. He does so because he will not tolerate the possibility of a guilty person going free. On the other hand, the mayor at the top of Harry's hierarchy is the guardian of a political system which prescribes foundational rules: an accused has the right to representation by a lawyer and is presumed to be innocent until proven guilty in a court of law; evidence must be obtained in accordance with strict rules; and the accused must be made aware of his rights.

So […] at times, as we have seen in the cases presented above, individuals will live on the edge and work their way around, i.e. avoid, hierarchy and rules to satisfy their own values and aspirations. So […] we might explain, as has been done in the cases presented above, why this behavior occurs. So what? In the end, it seems, we are left

with the "so what" question: are the rebellious means used by the Dirty Harrys of this world justified by the ends that they have achieved? Questions grappling with justification are much more thorny than those which deal with the matter of explaining individual behavior. To search for answers to the "so what," we have to leave the epistemology of organization theory and its cousins sociology and psychology and look outside the box into the domains of politics and philosophy.

Politics has been defined as the authoritative allocation of values (Easton, 1965). Should the locus of authority be in the hands of those at the top of formal hierarchies or in the hands of those closer to the bottom or, indeed, be shared by all? Philosophy has to do with the rational investigation of truths and principles of being. Is it true that human beings would be better served by organizations and civilizations that are structured as hierarchies? Political and philosophical paradigms present us with a wide variety of answers to these sorts of questions, answers that are the result of a never ending search for meaning rather than a mining of facts (Bloom, 1968; Marx and Engels, 1888; Aristotle, 1962; Machiavelli, 1961; Everett, 1966; Aune, 1979). Our own search for a clear and unambiguous understanding of the Dirty Harry phenomenon may be limited to looking for causes rather than for justification. As we attempt to make judgements concerning justification, we see Dirty Harry behavior through the lenses of our own philosophical and perceptual lenses.

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