CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

County Donegal is the northernmost county in the Republic of Ireland, in the province of Ulster. Uniquely, it is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean on its southwest, west, and north. To its east, the vast majority of its land-border is joined with the Northern Ireland counties of Derry/Londonderry, Tyrone, and Fermanagh. It’s somewhat diminutive south eastern border provides minimal attachment with only a single county in the Irish Republic – County Leitrim (for cartographical illustration of this point see the map of Ireland provided on page ix).

This position, connecting elements of Ireland's mainly Nationalist-Republican community living within the boundaries of the county (who broadly self-identify as Irish and/or Roman Catholic) and its mix of both Northern Irish Catholic-Nationalists (who also broadly self-identify as Irish and/or Roman Catholic) and Northern Irish Protestant-Unionists (who on the contrary, broadly self-identify as being British and/or Protestant) communities on the Northern Ireland side of the border, served to ensure Donegal was never far from the three decades (from the late 1960s and considered by many to have ended with the Belfast ‘Good Friday’ Agreement in 1998) of ethno-political conflict and paramilitary violence in Northern Ireland, colloquially referred to by most as ‘The Troubles’.
Further, this divorced situation on the very periphery of Ireland has led to Donegal residents claiming their own distinct cultural identity that has even recently been used by the Irish North Western Tourist Board to market the county with the catchphrase: “Up here it's different” (Discover Ireland, 2011, p.1). Indeed, it has been labelled by one of its own politicians, Donegal Senator, Joe McHugh, as: “…the forgotten county”, owing, it is alleged to the increasing regularity with which it is ignored by the Irish Government, even in times of crisis (Gilson, M., Belfast Telegraph, Wednesday, 21 April 2010, p.1).

Whether in fact Donegal is a ‘forgotten county’ is a contentious and debatable suggestion. What is most certainly the case, however, is that since the 15th July 2002, Ireland’s citizens have been made aware of through the eight published reports of Justice Frederick Morris’ Inquiry (2002-2008) into allegations of police misconduct by members of An Garda Síochána (the national police service of the Republic of Ireland) and the ensuing media treatment of same, that the institution of Irish policing ‘up there’ was unquestionably ‘different’ and what is more that there were a number of core problems within Irish policing. This was demonstrated by the veritable litany of corrupt behaviours in which certain Gardaí (the plural word for an Irish police person/member) working in County Donegal were discovered to have been engaged.
Genesis and scope of the Tribunal’s inquiries

The Morris Tribunal was created by a resolution passed by Dáil Éireann (the lower house, but principal chamber of the Oireachtas [Irish National Parliament]) and Seanad Éireann (the Senate of Ireland and upper house of the Oireachtas) on the 28th March 2002, and by an Instrument entitled ‘Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act 1921 (Establishment of Tribunal) Instrument 2002’, made by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, on the 24th April 2002. While it was set up to investigate public complaints and address concerns relating to Gardaí and their methods of working in County Donegal, Ireland, only, its findings emerged to indicate that a number of the problems identified were systemically institutionalised within An Garda Síochána. In point of fact, the Tribunal reached the conclusion that there was no reason to suspect that the events that occurred in County Donegal were limited to that particular Garda division, as all Gardaí experienced the same manner of training and many offending Gardaí had served in other Garda divisions before taking up their respective positions in County Donegal (Morris, 2005, 2/6.02). The Morris Tribunal had therefore placed the entire institution of An Garda Síochána under scrutiny and this as we shall later see served as a major catalyst for reforms necessitating change.

The matters under consideration by the Tribunal though incredibly intertwined, varied and far too complex to precisely capture here, began in the late 1990s, when it was claimed by means of a number of public complaints raised in the media and in Dáil Éireann that Gardaí in County Donegal had been involved in
hoax explosives and bomb-making equipment finds. Other civic allegations of inappropriate Garda (the singular word for an Irish police person/member) behaviours were also to emerge including: assertions that the quality of criminal investigations were deficient and that telephone calls had been made by Gardaí to entrap a suspect; allegations of a campaign of Garda provocation and malice directed against particular persons in County Donegal; separate claims that a named Garda had planted evidence to validate arrests; complaints concerning the improper interrogation of twelve suspects in Garda custody; criticisms concerning a campaign of harassment against particular persons and the ineffectiveness of the Garda complaints process to deal with public complaints arising from these matters; and finally, anonymous allegations of Garda corruption at the highest level. Before dealing with the findings which Justice Morris reached (later in chapter two of this thesis), it is perhaps fitting that we now turn to a more detailed consideration of each of these separate issues, which are, as we may shortly appreciate, collectively suggestive of institutional corruption and expressive of a number of shortcomings in Garda occupational culture.

**Hoax explosive finds**

Detective Garda McMahon was attached to Letterkenny Garda Station, County Donegal. By 1999, his marriage to Mrs McMahon had broken down. Both parties were in dispute and Mrs McMahon, who was being legally represented by her sister, Mrs O’Doherty, Solicitor, formally complained that her client’s estranged
husband, Detective Garda McMahon, had left a telephone message which Mrs McMahon perceived to be a threat (Morris, 2004, 1/1.10).

When subsequently interviewed about this incident Mrs McMahon disclosed misconduct by her husband Detective Garda McMahon, Superintendent Lennon and others. She went on to recount events that implicated her husband and his superintending boss in manufacturing and planting caches of homemade explosives at a number of sites around County Donegal. This extended to them involving themselves in hoax subversive activities outside of the Irish State, in Northern Ireland (Morris, 2004, 1/1.11). Mrs McMahon further alleged that these activities centred on a Ms McGlinchey, a person represented to her at the time, and to the Gardaí generally in County Donegal, as a criminal informer against the ‘Provisional IRA’ (a subversive group of mainly Catholic Nationalists whose intent was to achieve a united Ireland by means of ‘bomb or ballot box’).

Ms McGlinchey was interviewed by Garda Chief Superintendent Carty and further serious assertions emerged (Morris, 2004, 1/1.12). She asserted that Detective Garda McMahon abused her trust in him and in the Gardaí. She claimed that he used his powers as a Garda both to threaten her and also to help her avoid prosecution. She stated that at his request she had been complicit in pretending to feed Gardaí information on terrorist activities that she had been briefed about beforehand. In order to bridge any credibility gap that might cause scepticism or suspicion, she took charge of quantities of materials and bomb
making equipment that otherwise would denote Provisional IRA activities and deported herself in front of Gardaí as a subversive operative. These items she alleged were given to her by Detective Garda McMahon or were procured by her at his request (Morris, 2004, 1/1.15).

She claimed Superintendent Lennon, Detective Garda McMahon's supervisor, was also complicit in this matter. She stated that she had been involved in a number of significant incidents involving the movement of explosive materials - all supposedly Garda bomb finds (Morris, 2004, 1/1.20). It was reasoned that the Gardaí concerned engaged in these activities, seeing an opportunity for promotion, self-glorification or for building themselves a false status as leading investigators (Morris, 2004, 1/1.22). If these allegations were discovered true, it further implied that a number of senior Gardaí whose jobs it was to provide supervision and leadership in An Garda Síochána had failed in their respective roles.

**The death of Mr Richard Barron and extortion calls**

Difficulties first arose when a call made to the Gardaí for their assistance by a resident of Raphoe failed to achieve a response from either the local Garda on duty, or Gardaí from the next closest town for reasons then unknown. When Gardaí did eventually arrive at the scene, they found that Mr Barron had been removed from the road and taken to hospital where he subsequently died. It was
raining heavily that night and while Gardaí were said to have found blood, skin and hair, it was supposed that a decision was made not to preserve these items or the scene in accordance with police standard practice. To compound this matter, the hospital pathologist, not the State pathologist examined the remains of Mr Barron. He determined death to have been caused due to head injuries received from a blunt instrument. However, by his own admissions the hospital pathologist was not qualified to undertake the examination conducted because the death had occurred in suspicious circumstances.

Rumours were circulated at Mr Barron's wake that he had been murdered. They were quickly given credence by investigating Gardaí, who formulated the belief that this murder had been committed by two cousins, Mr McBrearty Jnr. and Mr McConnell. It was alleged by both these parties that Gardaí subjectively set out to prove that they had committed murder without giving weight to the possibility that an alternative explanation was possible.

It was further asserted that when a Garda incident room was set up, a witness, 'Mr X', a Garda informer of suggestible mind, came forward and told how he saw two men matching the descriptions of the suspects coming from the scene. It was claimed that Garda misconduct included influencing this informer to make the untruthful statement needed to arrest Mr McBrearty Jnr. and Mr McConnell. It was also claimed that the Gardaí concerned had in fact gone further and doctored the statement in question to achieve greater evidential impact.
In short, Gardaí were accused of setting up the cousins for a murder they did not commit. When Mr Barron’s body was eventually exhumed and examined by a qualified State pathologist, for the first time, it was discovered that Mr Barron had not been murdered as originally assumed, but rather had died due to a vehicle/road impact (Morris, 2005, 2/1.07; 2/1.13).

A month after the death, a local resident, Mr Peoples, was suspected of having played a part in the Barron ‘murder’, he had seemingly received a number of phone calls from a Garda influenced source, saying he knew that Mr Peoples had been involved in the killing of Mr Barron - a demand of money in return for silence was then made. When Mr Peoples turned up to a meeting place suggested by the extortionist, this action was perceived by investigating Gardaí lying in wait as an admission of guilt and he was subsequently arrested.

It was further claimed that attempts were made by Gardaí to cover-up their unethical behaviours when they later came under scrutiny. Moreover, it was alleged that the Gardaí concerned with the initial ‘murder’ scene had repeatedly refused to account for their movements on the night of the incident (Morris, 2005, 2/1.73).
The arrest and detention of McConnell and Peoples

The third significant set of allegations that the Tribunal dealt with related to the circumstances surrounding the arrest and detention of Mr McConnell on 1st October 1998 and Mr Peoples on 6th May 1999, for supposedly threatening Mr Conlon for giving evidence against the McBreartys in a prosecution for breach of their liquor licence.

At the core of this module the Tribunal was tasked to deal with allegations made by Mr Conlon against another serving member in the Donegal Division, namely Detective Sergeant White. If these allegations were true then it meant that Detective Sergeant White, with the assistance of Garda Nicholson, induced Mr Conlon, with the promise of reward, to attend at a licensed premises owned by Mr McBrearty Senior, in Raphoe, County Donegal, to allow himself to be found drinking after hours on the premises. The object was to provide Detective Sergeant White with a reliable witness upon whom he could base a prosecution against Mr McBrearty. It was further alleged that Mr Conlon was rewarded for his services on foot of forged documentation supporting a claim for his witness expenses (Morris, 2006, 3/1.06).

Further statements were made that while the prosecution against Mr McBrearty was at hearing before the local District Court and before Mr Conlon gave evidence, he, Mr Conlon, was induced by Detective Sergeant White to make
false allegations against two members of the extended McBrearty family to the
effect that he was threatened by them that if he gave evidence against Mr
McBrearty he would be shot. This action in turn facilitated the ‘legitimate’ arrest
and detention of Mr McConnell and Mr Peoples (Morris, 2006, 3/1.07).

The Garda mishandling of the Ardara arson attack

Further complaints were made against Detective Sergeant White. They
concerned his investigation of an arson attack on property situated on the site of
the telecommunications mast at Ardara, County Donegal, in October and
November of 1996 (Morris, 2006, 4/1.02).

The background to this matter concerns County Donegal’s proximity to Northern
Ireland, this geographical position meant that Donegal residents were able for a
time to avail of both broadcasting networks in the North and the South of Ireland,
free of charge. In 1995, however, a system was put in place to affect local
television transmission and replace it with a system for which recipients would
have to pay (Morris, 2006, 4/1.07). Local persons were angry at this developing
situation and protested. Garda Superintendent Cullinane was the District Officer
for the area. He was worried that there might be a confrontation as equipment for
the mast was being brought in passed the protestors. He decided therefore to
use a sleight of hand to avoid projected trouble. To achieve this he set up a
meeting with the protestors and when this meeting was taking place he had the
company whose task it was to attend to the necessary works on the mast, move onto the mast site (Morris, 2006, 4/1.10).

In the aftermath of this action the protestors’ mood became somewhat less peaceful and more emotive leading to an allegation that many minor intimidating acts had been directed towards local Gardaí. In November of 1996 an arson attack occurred at the site causing considerable damage. Detective Sergeant White was assigned to investigate the arson attack. It was suspected he conducted this investigation in a corrupt manner – searching lands of ‘suspects’ initially without warrant and when potential evidence of a combustible substance were found thereon, later obtaining a warrant, which it was said he did not use simply because the detention period allowed by that particular warrant was too short and did not suit his wants (Morris, 2006, 4/1.32; 1.35).

It was further claimed that Detective Sergeant White then planted a hoax bomb on the mast so that he might have the benefit of exercising different legislation under the Offences Against the State Act, 1939, which attracted far lengthier periods of detention (Morris, 2006, 4/1.42).

**The Burnfoot arrests**

The fifth set of allegations concerned the arrest and detention of seven members of the Traveller community in Burnfoot, County Donegal on 23rd May 1998. Once
again these claims centred on the actions of Detective Sergeant White, who maintained he had received confidential information that a group of Travellers were in possession of a shotgun. On the 22\textsuperscript{nd} May 1998, White made arrangements with other Gardaí to search the site where the travellers were staying. It was alleged that on the night before the search he planted the gun that was later found to substantiate the arrest of seven Travellers. Each detainee in turn made complaints of mistreatment in custody. It was claimed no investigation file was ever completed in respect of this matter, and the cartridges that had been with the gun, which might have expanded forensic evidence, were purported to have gone missing (Morris, 2006, 5/156).

\textbf{Allegations centring on the arrest and detention of twelve suspects}

Next in order, the Tribunal had to deal with public complaints that were concerned with the distress, mental abuse, torture and breaches of rights afforded to persons in custody, which it was claimed that the twelve suspects to the Barron ‘murder’ had to varying degrees to contend with while being detained by Gardaí for questioning about the death. By inference, it was also asserted that this harm happened because other Gardaí who should have been concerned for prisoner welfare in custody had stood back and turned a blind-eye to such maltreatment (Morris, 2008, 6/ Vol. 1, 2, 3).
Claims of harassment and the ineffectiveness of the complaints process

The penultimate set of allegations addressed by the Tribunal of Inquiry was concerned with two distinct matters. The first related to an accusation that there was a ‘policy’ of harassment by Gardaí against members of the McBrearty family, their agents and associates. The second claim concerned the perceived ineffectiveness of the Garda Síochána complaints process to hold to account a number of Gardaí associated with the aforementioned incidents in County Donegal between 1997 and 2001 (Morris, 2008, 7/1.01).

Anonymous allegations

The final allegations to be tackled were made anonymously about high ranking Gardaí firstly charged with investigating the Donegal incidents. These allegations were made to a Dáil Deputy (an elected member of Irish Parliament) and suggested that Detective Sergeant White had information of past misconduct on the parts of Assistant Garda Commissioners Carty and Hickey. It was claimed that Detective Sergeant White used this alleged hold he had over the high-ranking officers to call in a favour and secure an advantageous work-place transfer when it became expedient to do so (Morris, 2008, 8/2.61).
Discerning a research issue

A grounding of the primary issues in Donegal having been offered, it is not the intention of this thesis to provide further focus on the emergence of claims about corrupt Garda activity; neither shall it unduly concern itself with the Parliamentary processes of the Irish Government deciding to establish the Morris Tribunal, (the first of its type in the history of Irish policing) for the road leading to Morris has been comprehensively covered elsewhere by others (see Conway, 2010, pp.21-47; Fitzgerald, 2008, pp.1-36; and Nolan, 2005, pp.1-56). Besides, the necessity for this Tribunal is hereafter unreservedly accepted by this author given the stark gravity of the accusations made against certain Gardaí and the significant wider threat to public confidence they posed.

Amongst other things what this thesis is concerned with, however, is presenting a critical synopsis of the findings that emerged from the Tribunal reports to offer an overview of the nature of the criticism levied at the Garda organisation. Those accounts of police corruption, malpractice, ineptitudes, lies, and deceit, which when first they were revealed arguably astounded many. Perhaps sufficient time and political detachment have now passed since the last of the Tribunal’s reports (October, 2008), to reach the rather sad conclusion that this affair has categorically “dripped like acid on the reputation of An Garda Síochána” (Brady, *Irish Times*, 13 February 2002) leaving behind “a stain of the darkest dye on the otherwise generally fine tradition of the institution” (Murray, 2007, p.1).
Faced with this contextual driver for change, Garda management can be observed to have moved swiftly, introducing a number of radical and sweeping reforms to administrative structures and senior management positions in the organisation. The deficiencies that were highlighted by Justice Morris also led to the reform of many long-established Garda policies and procedures. Consequently, it is necessary for this thesis to offer a critical overview of the reforms that were implemented in the years following the Tribunal to understand how those charged with responding to Justice Morris’ recommendations completed their task.

A residual difficulty relating to the various reform programmes introduced concerns the widespread recognition, over time, of operational-level police workers to redefine the policy directives of their supervisors if they do not consider such changes to be in accordance with everyday practices. This is particularly so when reforms are being imposed from the top-down in response to scandal and disgrace (Punch and Naylor, 1973, pp. 358-361; Holdaway, 1983, pp. 66-82; Goldsmith, 1990, pp.93-94; Reiner, 1992, pp. 231-232; Chan, 1996, pp. 109 -134; Chan and Dixon, 2007, pp. 443-468; and Savage, 2007, pp.141-144).
Drawing on the above, the primary research objectives guiding this thesis as represented in Table 1 below will seek to discover:

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<th>TABLE 1: RESEARCH OBJECTIVES GUIDING THIS THESIS</th>
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<tr>
<td>RESEARCH OBJECTIVES</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 1:</strong></td>
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<td>What were Morris’ findings?</td>
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<td><strong>Objective 2:</strong></td>
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<td>What institutional reforms did An Garda Síochána introduce to address Morris’ concerns?</td>
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<td><strong>Objective 3:</strong> What do the structural reforms introduced by An Garda Síochána to address Morris’ concerns tell us about the need for a change in Garda occupational culture?</td>
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<td>Finally, chapter two will draw attention to what can be extracted from the Tribunal’s findings about the need for cultural change in Irish policing.</td>
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| **Objective 4:** Was the Morris Tribunal perceived by Gardaí as being necessary? |
| In chapter five of this thesis the findings of the research conducted with Gardaí will be drawn upon to offer a reasoned interpretation of whether or not the Morris Tribunal was perceived by Gardaí as being necessary. |

<p>| <strong>Objective 5:</strong> Have the reforms introduced since the Morris Tribunal been broadly accepted? |
| In chapter five, this thesis will also draw upon research findings derived from Garda perceptions to offer a reasoned interpretation of whether or not the reforms introduced since the Morris Tribunal have been broadly accepted. |</p>
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<th>Objective 6:</th>
<th>In chapter six of this thesis, pertinent shared findings will be presented to derive an interpretation of whether or not Garda occupational culture has hindered change.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Has Garda occupational culture hindered change?</td>
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<td><strong>Objective 7:</strong></td>
<td>Having discovered whether or not cultural change was evident, in chapter seven of this thesis an attempt will be made to resolve, if appropriate, objective seven, by arriving at an interpretation of the characteristics of An Garda Síochána’s ‘new’ occupational culture.</td>
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<td>If cultural change is discovered to have occurred, what can successively be interpreted about the characteristics of An Garda Síochána’s ‘new’ occupational culture?</td>
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<td><strong>Objective 8:</strong></td>
<td>Having discovered whether or not cultural change was evident, in chapter seven of this thesis an attempt will be made to resolve, if appropriate, objective eight, by means of an assessment of what may have worked best towards achieving such cultural change.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If cultural change is discovered to have occurred, what worked best towards achieving such cultural change?</td>
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With these amongst other important questions in mind, it was clear that work was needed to determine Garda perceptions about the reforms introduced following the Morris Inquiry. It was also vital to address the extent to which such reforms may have modified Garda behaviours and developed integrity, thereby facilitating a conclusion that speaks to the impact of reform agendas on Garda occupational culture.

**Research aim**

Arising from the above, the principle aim of this thesis will be achieved by:

Drawing upon operational-level Garda perceptions to determine the extent to which the reforms implemented by Garda management owing to the findings of the *Morris Tribunal of Inquiry* (2002-2008), have impacted upon An Garda Síochána’s occupational culture.

**Outline of thesis chapters**

In order to develop the above aim, this thesis will be divided into six chapters.

Chapter two seeks to substantiate a good deal of the research strategy guiding this work. It concentrates on the findings of the various modules of the Morris Tribunal, offering a theoretical model of Garda integrity adapted from Kohlberg’s
conceptual representation of moral reasoning that was used to filter a synopsis and examination of what each of Morris’ reports had to say about Garda misconduct. Notwithstanding the fact that Justice Morris criticised the aberrant behaviours of a number of non-Garda suspects throughout his proceedings and published reports, this thesis shall restrict itself to the extrapolation of Garda wrongdoing only. How these findings were responded to and influenced reforms will also be addressed. Finally, this chapter draws attention to what can be extracted from the Tribunal’s findings about the need for cultural change in Irish policing.

Chapter three examines and critically evaluates the concept of ‘culture’. It also considers why it is important for this thesis to discuss culture. Culture can be observed to represent frameworks that are often found to be in disagreement concerning answers to the question: ‘How are cultures to be explained?’ The exposition offered in this thesis will reveal some of the modifying decisions that helped to define the intellectual boundaries and biases of this research. In turn, these legitimised the working definition of ‘culture’ chosen. Then a critical explanation of the theoretical concepts surrounding the notion of ‘organisational culture’ is offered so that it will serve as a frame of reference for the analysis. These assessment frames having been worked through, two ‘conventional’ concepts of police culture are next explored. This examination process will focus; firstly, on the relationship that exists between police culture and its characteristics, and after that, the relationship that is said to be present between
police culture and its functional roles will be offered. The cumulative effect of these evaluations is designed to derive a conceptual model of long-established ‘conventional’ police occupational culture that will afterwards be applied to the causes, prescriptions and outcomes of our present-day research findings.

Chapter four deals with the methodology and research methods used to gather the primary data that involved making strategic decisions between varieties of options. As each individual choice brought with it a set of biases and assumptions about the research, each shall be qualified. Then the ideas governing the research design will be addressed. Thereby the selection of semi-structured interviews, which had a quantitative selective component, as the method most appropriate to the needs of this research will be substantiated. This is an important issue, which will specifically seek to reflect on many of the practical, theoretical, and ethical issues that were repeatedly encountered during this research project. Next, the application of this research instrument shall be analytically appraised, by critically dealing with the interviews conducted. Lastly, issues relating to data analysis will be considered.

Chapter five is where the reader gets introduced to the primary data of this thesis. Pertinent aspects of the findings are singled out and described. The intention of this chapter is to present relevant findings and discuss what implications they might have for the various concerns, problems and ideas presented within chapters one and two which prompted the research. This
chapter specifically addresses two research objectives, the first, is concerned with whether or not Gardaí perceived the Morris Tribunal was needed and the second addresses whether or not the reforms introduced have been broadly accepted. It will facilitate our moving from the findings, to considering what significance the data may have for the context of the overall aim of the research. The findings that have been outlined by our Garda cohort are subjected to critical scrutiny in an interpretive attempt to discover what they might mean. They are systematically evaluated and contrasted with reference to the theories, information and problems that were noted in chapters one and two of this thesis report. The aim of this chapter is to “make sense of the findings by considering their implications beyond the confines of the current research” (Denscombe, 2007, p.326).

Chapter six is also concerned with singling out and presenting pertinent shared findings. Here though, it is another research objective that we are attempting to tackle, specifically, we will be trying to appreciate what the research findings uncovered about the subject of whether or not Garda occupational culture hindered change. Once again the findings that have been outlined by our Garda interviewees will be subjected to critical scrutiny in an interpretive attempt to discover what they may mean. They are systematically evaluated and contrasted with reference to the theories, information and problems that were constituted to arrive at the framed analysis of police organisational culture previously presented in chapter three of this report.
Finally, the concluding chapter of this thesis will provide a summary of the key concepts dealt with above. It will concentrate on a retrospective evaluation of the research and the contribution it made to address the research objectives guiding this work. It seeks to draw together the individual strands of the research. Should Garda cultural change be perceived, it will also be necessary to offer an interpretation of the characteristics of An Garda Síochána’s ‘new’ operational-level organisational culture. Further, it will deliver, if changes to operational-level organisational culture are discovered, an assessment of what may have worked best towards achieving such changes in An Garda Síochána and draw attention to some of the possible challenges lying ahead.
CHAPTER 2: REFINING MORRIS' FINDINGS, REFORMS AND CULTURE

The findings of Morris

In early June 2002, the Morris Tribunal commenced operations under the chairmanship of its sole constituent Mr Justice Frederick Morris. It examined the events, which were outlined in the introductory chapter above as leading to its instigation. Its hearings began in March of the following year and did not wrap up until it had produced its final report almost six years later. By October 2008, eight reports were published amounting to over four-thousand pages of complaint, contextualisation, and conclusion on the subject of policing in An Garda Síochána.

Such was the nature and length of the reports published that any number of primary issues can be extrapolated from the findings and recommendations contained within (such as those relating to accountability, governance, conscientiousness, professionalism, deviance, human rights etc.). While it is perhaps regrettable that the Tribunal did not publish a summarizing end-report that dealt with the core issues as Morris understood them, maybe because the Tribunal had already taken six years and a significant amount of public money to reach an ‘appropriate’ point of cessation, and/or possibly because many of the concerns which Morris posed, as will later be presented in chapter two of this thesis, had begun to be addressed by the Garda Síochána Act 2005 and other
reforming legislation. That being said, the difficulty that is arguably presented by the nonexistence of a summarizing end-report, is that, with the publication of over four thousand pages of findings, the abridgment of meaning of each of the reports that Morris produced is open to the subjective selection and emphasis which a particular reader may decide to place upon certain findings over others. For that reason, it is here suggested that a theoretical filter is needed to guide the extraction of the broader themes of the reports. It is to the detail of arriving at the filter that was used in this thesis to derive framed meaning that we now turn.

Arriving at the filter for the Morris reports?

This author having read through the eight reports that the Tribunal published, was left with the definite impression that the facts exposed related to individual Garda misconduct and institutional corruption, he was, in turn, of the view that at the core of the reports that were produced, there also lay an overarching problem relating to individual Garda integrity surrounding judgement and behaviour. In this author’s opinion it was clear that three key public policy imperatives of personal responsibility, ethical conduct, and a willingness to be answerable for one’s actions, which are reasoned below as consecutively defining individual Garda integrity, had been found wanting. Why were these three filtering categories important and relevant to this author above others that might also have been extrapolated from the Morris reports?
The Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1932) developed three stages of moral awareness in his publication *The Moral Judgement of the Child*. The first psychological stage towards developing individual consciousness he suggested was where the child acted on the basis of reward and punishment, so that the moral filter of its actions was determined by response to an external constraint. The second stage was where the actions of the older child were governed by what we would now call peer pressure or the cultural influence of those within societal contact. While this was an advance on fear as the primary motivation factor grounding behaviour, its difficulty is that it is still a moral filter based on an external criterion. His third, 'mature stage', is where the child becomes a rational clear-thinking adult and makes their evaluative decisions on the basis of their own individually reasoned judgement of what they intuitively know to be right or wrong.

Harvard psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg (1958a) further developed this Piagetian moral psychology into three levels, namely, pre-conventional morality, conventional morality and post-conventional morality (see Table 2 below adapted from Kohlberg, 1978). Each of these has two progressive stages, with the final sixth stage, that of 'mutual respect' suggesting itself to this author as the relevant 'acceptable level' of adult behaviour in public institutions.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Stage of moral reasoning</th>
<th>Mode behaviour is that which:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-conventional morality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Avoids punishment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Gains reward</td>
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<td>Conventional morality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Gains approval and avoids disapproval of others</td>
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<td>Level 4</td>
<td>Is defined by rigid codes of “law and order”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-conventional morality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>Is defined by “social contract” generally agreed upon for public good</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 6</td>
<td>Is based on the universal principles of ‘mutual respect’. Moral principles that determine one’s own moral code</td>
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</table>

Adapted from Kohlberg (1978).

What makes this level relevant for use as the filter for the Morris reports is that, it clearly provides a robust set of principles that can be utilised as a yardstick, or standard, to provide a moral objectivity about the way policing operates in democratic societies such as in the Republic of Ireland. As former Police Chief Constable, John Alderson, can be interpreted as arguing in his book *Principled Policing*, every police officer engaged in professional policing must base their
thinking, reasoning and practice, on an unprejudiced and balanced set of principles (1998). Alderson was of the view that: “Recourse to some philosophical [and moral] justification of policing is essential in order to give a robust confidence to the police command [and correspondingly to the public perhaps], and thereby to the function, of the organisation” (Alderson, 1998, p.17).

Were Garda integrity to be guided solely by intuition, it may be capricious, or inadequate, at the very least, it would surely deliver diverse and inconsistent concepts of right or wrong. Measuring Garda integrity needs adequate objectivity, critical thinking and decision making based on a set of principles which are logically reasoned to be sound. What makes Kohlberg’s post-conventional level of morality relevant for use as the filter for the Morris reports is that it is the level of objective judgement normally employed in law courts, where mentally healthy adults are held responsible for their actions not on the basis of their conformity to the relativistic standards of the first two levels of pre-conventional morality or conventional morality, but in terms of principles considered to bind all members of a community, at the higher level of post-conventional morality.

Drawing on this, since Gardaí are as much, if not arguably more so, bound by Irish laws and accepted principles as all other citizens, it is possible to say that they are also expected to act on the basis of the standard of an individually achieved post-conventional evaluation of Kohlberg’s theory - in favour of what they know is right.
This involves an individual imagining what they would do in another's shoes and asking if they believed what that other person perceives to be truly correct. The resulting consensus is the action taken. In this way action is never a means but always an end in itself. The Garda acts to achieve 'mutual respect' because what they are doing is the right thing to do and not just because it is instrumental, expected, legal, or previously agreed upon (Colby et al., 1983).

Individual integrity [see figure 1, below] then, is the source of their personal responsibility to do what they know is good, and their actions, therefore, are expected to live up to such a notion of individually attained ethical conduct. Following on from which, the social implication of this lived responsibility is each Garda’s duty of accountability to society (and to their own conscience) for their actions. Where such accountability becomes all the more acute is when their actions are alleged to have failed to come up to the standard of what Kohlberg would regard as ‘mutual respect’, which as we are about to see, was found to be the case when the Morris Tribunal terminated its investigations.
Collectively, the Tribunal Reports can be read as having suggested significant weaknesses in each of the imperatives of personal responsibility, ethical conduct, and a willingness to be accountable for one’s actions, thereby also arguably condemning the levels of individual Garda integrity present within An Garda Síochána at that time. In point of fact, these identified flaws may have contributed significantly to the circumstances, behaviours, actions and outcomes which led to the Tribunal in the first place, and were exhibited consistently by many Garda witnesses throughout the hearings. What follows next, is a filtered synopsis and analysis of the findings of those reports, which clearly demonstrates the need for a reform agenda to tackle the lack of integrity certain members of An Garda Síochána showed.
The findings that relate to weaknesses of personal responsibility

Inherent in many of the reports is the fact that, had it not been for the neglect of certain Gardaí of varying ranks to take personal responsibility for the events that were occurring in County Donegal, many of the public complaints could have been avoided. It was not simply about the corruption, towards self-aggrandisement through fraud which a small number of Gardaí within the Donegal policing division were said to have engaged in (Morris, 2004, 1/1.42); but also the discovery of those findings that revealed that this situation could not have flourished and gone unchecked had many others within An Garda Síochána not behaved blindly and in an all too casual manner towards their respective personal duties in the first place.

Indeed, across the various reports, certain Gardaí fell well below the professional standards that the Irish public might have reasonably expected them to be personally responsible for, including for example, when they were criticised for orchestrating the planting of hoax explosives finds (Morris, 2004, 1/7.141; Morris, 2004, 1/9.160).

Moreover, it can be argued that it was a lack of personal responsibility that served to substantiate the Tribunal’s findings that the leadership in County Donegal as provided by certain senior Gardaí, was frequently prejudiced, tendentious and utterly negligent (Morris 2004, 1/1.40; Morris 2004, 1/14.96; Morris, 2004, 1/13.13; Morris, 2005, 2/1.40). This ultimately, led Justice Morris to
his conclusion that such persons were at times dilatory and shockingly inadequate (Morris, 2004, 1/13.122). Consequently, the Tribunal’s findings regarded with disquiet the promotion to senior ranks of persons who were unwilling or unable to give their vocation the energy and aptitude it demanded (Morris, 2004, 1/1.43).

The Tribunal also took issue with another Garda recruitment concern that is arguably linked to personal responsibility having regard to the principle of ‘mutual respect’; it noted that An Garda Síochána had not made an effort to recruit from religious or ethnic minorities (Morris, 2004, 1/13.123). This matter came to the attention of the Tribunal in the context of the attitudes of certain Gardaí that you “don’t hang your own” (Morris, 2004, 1/1.08). Justice Morris was of the view that if a sector of society providing one of the most important functions of a democratic society is monolithic in its makeup, then that monolithic attitude will be reinforced (Morris, 2004, 1/13.124). He reasoned that what was needed in An Garda Síochána was a fresh approach, along with experience, dynamism and honesty (Morris, 2005, 2/9.08).

In describing the personal responsibility of those concerned with policing in County Donegal, it may be extrapolated that the above failures were broadly indicative of two worrying developments. The first was that certain Gardaí had for whatever reason or reasons, clearly ignored their commitment to the broader community they were duty bound to serve. Secondly it was clear that several of
the Gardaí involved, may conceivably have been driven to such extreme measures, because of their perceptions of the institutional workings of the promotion system in An Garda Síochána at that time. As Conway (2010, p.88) expands: “The lack of independent involvement in the promotion system within the force at the time ensured nepotism could thrive. Unsuitable candidates were being promoted into positions for which they were not capable, and no system of review existed whereby management could later revisit this position.”

The findings that relate to weaknesses of ethical conduct

It is also possible to claim that Justice Morris’ inquiries had identified a number of Gardaí who had failed in their duties to maintain the pursuit of policing values based upon ethical conduct, which in turn perhaps, should be guided by the imperatives of honesty, accountability, respect and professionalism. In point of fact, the Tribunal alleged it had experienced a lack of ethics, cover-up, and self-protection, repeatedly throughout its modular hearings. The extract that follows exemplifies this:

The sorry sequence of events in respect of this matter which was important to the investigating Gardaí is an appalling reflection on the standards of integrity, efficiency, management, discipline and trust between the various members and ranks of the Garda Síochána … Gardaí looked to protect their interests. The truth was to be buried. The public interest was of no concern (Morris, 2004, 1/3.179).
Furthermore, the Tribunal was also forced to find that it had been hampered in its quest for the truth by reluctance on the part of many members of An Garda Síochána to deviate from the party line, even when that line was irrational (Morris, 2006, 5/5.45). Commenting on this engrained sense of solidarity and loyalty, which left many Gardaí unwilling to answer Tribunal questions concerning the misconduct and corruption of others, let alone report it, Conway has in recent times damningly said that a 'blue-wall of silence' operates in Irish policing (2010, p.92).

The values of An Garda Síochána were breached; so too the expected ethical standards of Irish policing were called into question by Justice Morris’ findings. Justice Morris critically reflected: “It is clear that members of An Garda Síochána adopted a thoroughly uncooperative manner with my investigations. The Tribunal noted the same attitude in testimony” (Morris, 2004, 1/1.08). Correspondingly, he also said: “The enquiries by the Tribunal have been lengthy and difficult. Let it clearly be stated that this happened because so many witnesses were determined to persistently lie” (Morris, 2004, 1/1.08).

It may or may not be the case that many Gardaí pursue careers in policing because they have a desire to protect the public from criminals and to make a difference in Irish society. Doing what is right and helping others may also serve to drive them. Further, it may be that Gardaí are often attracted to law enforcement because of the respect they have for the law. Such desires and
respects, might, if revealed, be antithetical to immoral behaviours such as maintaining a code of silence. Yet Justice Morris having weighed the evidence available to him reproachfully took a broad view that the Garda Síochána as a whole was losing its character as a disciplined force.

In fact, he predicted that: “Ultimately the gradual erosion of discipline within An Garda Síochána is a developing situation that will, sooner or later, lead to disaster” (Morris, 2004, 1/ 13.102). He resolved that: “Without a management structure being restored to the Gardaí that is based on strict compliance with orders and immediate accountability, the danger is extreme that what the Tribunal has reported on in Donegal will be repeated and that such conduct will multiply if allowed to go unchecked (Morris, 2006, 5/6.05).

He was also careful to stress the institutional-wide application of his findings, suggesting there were no obvious reasons why the Tribunal happened in County Donegal and nowhere else in An Garda Síochána: “Of the Gardaí serving in Donegal it cannot be said that they are unrepresentative or an aberration from the generality. All of them were trained as Gardaí and served under a uniform structure of administration and discipline that is standardised” (Morris, 2006, 5/ 6.02). Moreover, he determined that without the application of immediate organisational reforms to ensure greater accountability and change it was possible this could happen again (Morris, 2006, 5/ 6.05).
The findings that relate to weakness of accountability for actions

The final point to extrapolate from the findings revealed by Morris, communicates the lack of answerability/accountability that right the way through the hearings seems to have characterized policing in Donegal. This lack of liability for duties and actions performed clearly emerged when Gardaí were exposed for having failed to follow organisational procedures which obliged the submission of detailed reports to Garda headquarters on all bomb finds (Morris, 2004, 1/14.30). Additionally, they were broken when Superintendent Lennon was found to have ignored a threat made by one officer, on another, with a firearm, notwithstanding his presence at the time of the incident and this being a serious breach of the disciplinary code (Morris, 2004, 1/5.55). Further, when instead of telling the truth about events as they had happened, the Tribunal held that certain Garda evidence was ‘bizarre’, extraordinary’, ‘beyond credibility’ and ‘a tissue of lies’: …[It had] all the hallmarks of an invention cobbled together as a cover-up for their ‘extraordinary’ activities (Morris, 2004, 1/6.32). Moreover, accountability was also found lacking in procedures concerning the use of informants (Morris, 2004, 1/12.101).

This failure to account for one’s actions to others continued within the Tribunal reports when certain Gardaí failed to preserve the scene of a fatal road traffic accident that was soon after measured as a murder because they were, respectively, consuming alcohol in a public house while on duty (Morris, 2005,
Generally, Justice Morris, found that he was able to identify no less than fifteen faults in how the Gardaí had directly failed to answer for their actions (Morris, 2005, 2/3.53). Most damningly perhaps, it was discovered that the custody record for the first arrest of Ms McGlinchey on the 8th July 1991, was missing. Likewise, the first page of the custody record for her second arrest on the 18th May 1993 also could not be located. Similarly, the diaries and journals kept by Chief Superintendent Fitzpatrick for the relevant period had disappeared. So too, a number of search warrants, original statements, covering reports, miscellaneous reports, minutes of meetings and Garda note books all went missing when requested (Morris, 2004, 1/12.60) - a fact the Tribunal viewed with “great suspicion” (Morris, 2005, 2/3.86).

Realising justice through the discovery of the truth from Gardaí was a difficult task for the Tribunal. However, Morris found it equally extraordinary that the Garda Complaints Authority (a body which part-comprised members of An Garda Síochána as investigators, who were figuratively at least Garda-insiders) had also met with a lack of cooperation in respect of all their efforts. Further, the tribunal found that Gardaí frequently sheltered behind what Justice Morris called “trigger syndrome” in their reluctance to confront the truth - provided counsel for the Tribunal was inspired to ask precisely the right question that would serve to ignite the item of information required, then that piece of information was revealed and disclosed. If however, counsel was not so inspired, that information
was to remain undisclosed. Indeed Morris observed that asking Gardaí for assistance in terms of a general narrative on a particular issue was found to have evoked few useful responses (Morris, 2004, 1/1.49) Gardaí in the main were found simply not willing to answer for their own wrong-doings or those of their colleagues. Neither were they willing to ‘whistle blow’ on irregular behaviours.

Perhaps it is not surprising; therefore, that the Tribunal found it as unacceptable that members of An Garda Síochána could not be obliged to immediately give an account of their duties when asked (Morris, 2004, 1/1.43).

**The process of reforming An Garda Síochána**

In the wake of Justice Morris having arrived at the above findings an inexorable conclusion was perhaps realised - that the significant reform of Irish policing was necessary if Garda legitimacy by way of the highest standards was to be recovered.

Towards achieving this contextually driven objective, on the 13th April 2005, Deputy Garda Commissioner Fitzgerald appeared before the Morris Tribunal and pledged his personal commitment on behalf of the Garda organisation to “remedy and resolve as many of the areas of concern identified in evidence and subsequently articulated in the Tribunal Reports” as were within his authority and capacity to achieve (Fitzgerald, March 2008, p.4). The die was cast on high for an internal Garda reform agenda to commence. External legislation to direct this
The Garda Síochána Act 2005

The Garda Síochána Act was signed into law on the 10\textsuperscript{th} July 2005. It is noteworthy perhaps that it was launched somewhat quickly mid-ways through Morris’ inquiries. Just why this was the case one can merely surmise, however, it possibly may have had to do with the fact that it expediently provided Garda defenders with a means of neutralising or diverting attention away from the Tribunal’s findings, by presenting the opening to recast An Garda Síochána in the more favourable public light of an organisation actively responding to the criticisms made of it - that come what may the concerns raised by Justice Morris could not possibly arise again because of the new structures in place.

Nonetheless, the Garda Síochána Act 2005 was soon heralded as “the most profound piece of legislation relating to An Garda Síochána in the history of the State” (Statement by Tánaiste [Ireland’s Deputy First Minister], 29 November 2006, as cited in V. Conway, 2010, p.137). An extremely lengthy Act comprising one hundred and thirty-one sections, it provided for a wide range of areas including many it can be argued which mandated instant improvements by Gardaí towards their \textit{personal responsibilities, ethical conduct and their willingness to be accountable for actions}. For it can selectively be discerned that at the heart of this Act, there rested legislative directions concerning the three
key public policy imperatives that were earlier referred to as mutually relating to individual Garda integrity. The overall stated requirements of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 were:

To make further and better provisions in relation to the Garda Síochána and, in particular, to consolidate with amendments certain enactments relating to the Garda Síochána, to provide for the establishment of a body to be known as Ciomisiún Ombudsman An Garda Síochána or, in English, The Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission for the purposes of ensuring openness, transparency and accountability in the process by which complaints against the Garda Síochána are investigated and also for the establishment of a body to be known as Cigireacht An Garda Síochána or, in English, The Garda Síochána Inspectorate for the purpose of achieving and maintaining the highest levels of efficiency and effectiveness in the operation and administration of the Garda Síochána, and related matters (Garda Síochána Act, 2005, p.9).

It is to the revelation of the key sections of the Act that sought to deal with each of the imperatives of integrity mentioned above and a number of subsequent reforming regulations which this thesis must now turn its attention.
Addressing issues that relate to personal responsibility

As was previously discerned, a common theme throughout the Tribunal hearings was the manner in which members of An Garda Síochána tried to avoid accepting responsibility for their own actions or inactions by referring to the duties of others and/or interpretive prescriptions of their Garda code regulations. In fact this led Justice Morris to conclude towards the end of his first report that “members have shown the minimum initiative and maximum dependence upon the limitation of their duty by a strict interpretation of either the directions received and/or possible ambiguity in the parameters of their role” (Morris, 2004, 1/12.110).

Addressing this issue directly, Section 20 of the said Act established a process to set priorities and performance targets for An Garda Síochána, while Section 24, required the establishment of a Professional Standards Unit within An Garda Síochána, to thereafter examine and review, as directed by the Garda Commissioner, the operational, administrative and management performance of An Garda Síochána at all levels. This unit was further charged with proposing measures to improve that performance and promote the highest standards of practice as measured by reference to the best standards of comparable police services. Guidance on the preparation of improvement plans based on the identified areas was required to be communicated as part of each report produced to the officer in charge of the relevant area for implementation (The
Garda Síochána Act, 2005, Sec.24).

As the Tribunal had also damningly taken issue with a number of recruitment issues in An Garda Síochána, specifically: that the system of promoting personnel, in its experience, had too often produced superiors who did not bring to the task the requisite level of enthusiasm, commitment and ability (Morris, 2004, 1/13.122); and the failure to make determined efforts to recruit from religious and ethnic communities was ignoring an increasingly multi-ethnic society that might challenge the existent ‘them versus us’ mentality which pervaded An Garda Síochána (Morris, 2004, 1/13.122), it was necessary for instruction to resolve these concerns.

Consequently, Garda Síochána promotion regulations were introduced by Statutory Implement No. 485 of 2006, which required that those administering selection techniques for positions in An Garda Síochána were to be adequately trained to prevent bias and ensure probity and, further, that two-thirds of the recruitment board comprise non-Garda personnel – presumably to avert the effects of cliquish canvassing or partiality. This was strengthened by the Garda Síochána Code of Practice for Internal Appointments and Promotions which was produced on a partnership basis with representatives of the staff associations and Garda management, coming into operation on 18th June 2008. Moreover, the admission regulations into An Garda Síochána were amended by Statutory Implement No. 560 of 2005, which specifically removed the previously prohibitive
height and Irish language entry-requirements, in so doing opening An Garda Síochána up to the potential of receiving a wide diversity of applicants. The diversity training of all staff was also presented as a minimal requirement of diversity appreciation efforts (Garda Síochána, Diversity Strategy, 2009, p.2)

Addressing the broader failings of personal responsibility raised by the Tribunal that certain Gardaí had for whatever reason, or reasons, clearly lost sight of their commitment to the broader community they served. Sections 34-36 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 required the immediate re-engagement of Irish citizens in policing matters through the establishment and maintenance of Joint Policing Committees by local authorities and the Garda Commissioner. Such committees were to consult, discuss and produce recommendations on policing matters affecting the local authority’s administrative area. These were to be tasked with considering levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, advising the local authority and An Garda Síochána on how best to perform its functions. Arranging public meetings and establishing, as necessary, community stakeholder groups and local policing forums for discussion of such matters (An Garda Síochána Act, 2005, Secs.34-36). The professional expertise of Gardaí on functional policing matters was thereby reduced and devolved, in part at least, to local residents who were for the first time formally to have a say in how they were policed.

Additionally, the Garda Síochána National Model of Community Policing was introduced to build and sustain positive partnerships with all community
stakeholders. The stated function of which was to “renew, reinvigorate and re-structure” collaborative ‘partnerships’ between An Garda Síochána and community members, in order to find workable solutions that increased safety, security and protection in Irish society. This model was designed to re-energise the community policing culture within An Garda Síochána and enhance the organisational importance and attractiveness of the community policing role amongst Garda staff, so that, a strong ‘ethos’ of community policing would be inculcated throughout the entirety of An Garda Síochána (An Garda Síochána, *National Model of Community Policing*, 2009, p.1).

**Addressing issues that relate to ethical conduct**

The Tribunal had sat through years of evidence and read thousands of documents and, as a result, has come to the conclusion that An Garda Síochána was losing its character as a disciplined force. This was detrimental to the morale of members who wished to serve within the context of a police force that had, relative to many police forces, in the United Kingdom and United States of America for example, a traditionally good public record of integrity. It was undermining respect for authority both within the force, and in relation to those who had to interact with it, on whatever basis (Morris, 2004, 1/13.101). In point of fact, in the conclusion of the Tribunal’s third report of inquiry, it was suggested that amongst other things it was urgently necessary for changes in structure to the ethics and training of Gardaí so as to militate against a recurrence of the extraordinary chronicled events (Morris, 2005, 3/5.05).
Concentrating on this issue, Section 17 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005, pressed for the establishment by regulation of a code of ethics that was to include standards of acceptable conduct and practice for members of An Garda Síochána. While work towards producing a Garda Code of Ethics is currently maintained to be “well underway” (Ahern, 2010, p.1), the said code has not yet been introduced. Regardless, Gardaí are not without guidance concerning this issue, for each and every Garda, has signed-up to and received instruction about the Declaration of Professional Standards and Ethical Values (2003). This comprises a professional set of constraints under which members are pledged to operate, and is intended to provide a tangible basis for public trust based on universal principles that can be understood to sponsor ‘mutual respect’.

Further, An Garda Síochána’s Corporate Strategy Document 2007-2009 assures the public that Gardaí are value focused and can be expected to have respect for people and their needs, protect human rights, be courteous and caring in their public service, to maintain partnerships with the community accepting individual responsibility, ensuring transparent public accountability, providing ethical leadership, and to practise disciplined professionalism. Gardaí are expected to be honest and truthful and always adhere to the principles of fairness and justice, to promote and accept diversity in all its forms, to continuously be willing to learn and embrace change (An Garda Síochána, Corporate Strategy Document 2007-2009, 2007, p.2).
Besides, Gardaí should be aware of their commitments to the *European Convention of Human Rights* which was signed into effect by An Garda Síochána on 31st December 2003. This convention compels every Garda action to have a clear basis in law. When Garda action occurs it should be strictly necessary in order to resolve a particular problem or deal with a threat. It must be capable of being demonstrated that such action was proportionate to the threat or problem that was being prevented. It must be capable of being shown that the said action is sufficiently open to scrutiny by the public and other authorities in order to ensure that the Gardaí are accountable in practice as well as in theory. Further, all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that Garda action will avoid discrimination (An Garda Síochána, *Crime Investigation Manual*, 2009, pp. 1-2). These principles are central to the assessment of any action or proposed action in terms of its conformity with the convention. Before a Garda precedes in his/her duties they ought to be aware that they must always take these principles into account.

Throughout the Tribunal’s inquiries, it might have been the case that Gardaí in County Donegal believed they could engage in unethical behaviours and that their activities would not be discovered, and in terms of the internal oversight mechanisms which had remained unaltered for decades they were perhaps correct. Sections 113-120 inclusive of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 were intended therefore to address this issue. They established an Independent Inspectorate that was tasked with ensuring that the resources of An Garda
Síochána are used efficiently and effectively and judged by best standards in comparable police forces. They were to complement the Garda Professional Standards Unit (Conway, 2010, p.140) in its operations. Its functions are to inspect or inquire into any aspect of Garda operation or administration and report to the Minister for Justice advising him of best practice. To date, six reports that directly affect Garda operational practices have been produced by this body. They are presented in Table 3 below as follows:

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<th>TABLE 3: REPORTS PRODUCED BY THE GARDA INSPECTORATE</th>
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<tr>
<td>TITLE OF REPORTS PRODUCED</td>
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<tr>
<td>Addendum to Inspectorate’s Report Responding to Child Sexual Abuse.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responding to Child Sexual Abuse</td>
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<td>Resource Allocation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing Persons Review and Recommendations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policing in Ireland Looking Forward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review of Practices and Procedures for Barricade Incidents</td>
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It can be observed that Garda operational practice was also radically altered by the introduction of the Garda Covert Human Intelligence System (CHIS) to enable the safe handling of criminal informants and remove the dangers of corruption which this field of policing can present.

**Addressing issues that relate to accountability for actions**

Perhaps the findings that received the greatest attention within the Garda Síochána Act 2005, were those that referred to weaknesses of certain Gardaí to answer for their past actions and/or inactions. The Act sought to redress the ineffectiveness of the Garda Complaints Authority to deal with public complaints arising from these matters, particularly those highlighted in Morris’ seventh report, by introducing a new body called the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (GSOC) that would be responsible to ensure Garda accountability. Sections 63-112 of the said Act, dealt with the institution of GSOC, complaints, investigations and other related procedures.

The key functions of the Ombudsman's Office towards ensuring Garda liability are clear, it is to receive complaints from the public about the behaviours of members, to use its powers and perform its duties with regard to those complaints, to issue guidelines for informal resolution, advise on areas for improvement and set out procedures for investigations. Further, they are to report on its investigations to the Garda Commissioner and the Director of Public
Prosecutions, to conduct such other investigations into An Garda Síochána as may be necessary; and to examine the practices, policies and procedures of An Garda Síochána (An Garda Síochána Act, 2005, pp. 46-76).

It is clearly possible to observe that the Ombudsman’s functions are much broader in scope and remit than that of its predecessor, the Garda Complaints Authority; “where the investigating officer, a senior Garda, was empowered only to collect statements from witnesses, and not to question them on any inconsistencies arising” (Conway and Walsh, 2011, p.248). G.S.O.C is most notably different because it has the power to initiate investigations into the conduct of a member without a public complaint having been received. Moreover, in Section 98 of the Act, Ombudsman investigators are provided with all the powers, immunities, privileges and duties of a member of An Garda Síochána. Specifically, they may enter and search any place pursuant to a warrant and seize evidence therein. They may arrest a member under investigation, they can charge a member, conduct a bodily search of that member and take photographs, fingerprints and palm prints from them. They can detain and question a member and take bodily samples from the member (An Garda Síochána Act, 2005, p. 67). As Conway notes (2010, p.145): “The granting of such fundamental policing powers to non-police for the purpose of investigating the police” marked a landmark difference from the types of complaints that were previously capable of being conducted into Garda actions.
The need for cultural change in Irish policing

While the specific word ‘culture’ is not mentioned by Morris, it can be inferred that each of the issues identified within his reports were in fact manifestly linked to the wider occupational culture of An Garda Síochána that existed at that time. Justice Morris had after all suggested that: “Of the Gardaí serving in Donegal it cannot be said that they are unrepresentative or an aberration from the generality. All of them were trained as Gardaí and served under a uniform structure of administration and discipline that is standardised” (Morris, 2006, 5/6.02). He had also taken the broad view that the Garda Síochána as a whole was losing its character as a disciplined force (Morris, 2004, 1/13.102).

While it is true that the findings arrived at were each inextricably linked to weaknesses of individual officer integrity, the limitation of Justice Morris’ original terms of reference to not go beyond inquiry into concerns generally relating to the McBrearty family and what happened in the single policing district of County Donegal, makes the wider organisational application of the findings he finally reached a rather more debatable concern.

Was it fitting for Justice Morris to effectively tarnish as he did (Morris, 2006, 5/6.02) the entire organisation of An Garda Síochána with an accusation of systemic corruption? An argument could be advanced that if there was pervasive indiscipline and corruption in another part of the country, it would have been
included in the Inquiries’ terms of reference or at the very least someone would have come forward and said something either then or since?

That being said, it should be remembered, that any person with knowledge of additional Garda corruption than that which was evidenced in County Donegal might not have been willing to have come forward if they perceived, as Conway has said: “[that] a blue-wall of silence operates in An Garda Síochána” (Conway, 2010, p.) . It should also be kept in mind that such terms of reference as may be set by Parliament under which a Tribunal may operate could possibly involve political tactics on behalf of the Government party in power to prevent the core issues relating to the behaviours under consideration being seized upon by those in opposition to gain political advantage.

Of course the history of public inquiries elsewhere has taught us that there is much to be gained from Morris’ process of ‘conceptual inflation’ (Miles, 1989, as quoted in M. Rowe, 2004, p.12) beyond County Donegal, especially where the police are concerned. Take for example, the possible error made by Lord Scarman within his report into the Brixton disorders of 1981 in London, England, where his markedly narrow definition of police racism adopted, served to ensure the necessity for the Macpherson investigation (1999) into the death of Stephen Lawrence not quite two decades on. “The ‘new realism’ on this [issue] maintains that corruption and police misconduct are persistent and constantly recurring hazards generated by the organisation itself” (Punch, 2000, p.301).
Leaving the somewhat nay-saying issue of conceptual inflation aside for the time being, it is worth noting that during the period of the Morris Tribunal we find the association between the Irish public and its police is one characterised by broad popularity. As Lynch and Kennedy (2007, p.8) observed only a year after the bulk of the Tribunals' reports had been published: “In comparisons with police from 32 European countries, over three decades, the satisfaction rating for An Garda Síochána has been between 84 and 86 per cent, the highest in Europe.” In point of fact, the overall stakeholder satisfaction rating of the Garda Síochána in 2006 at 80 per cent was more than 20 per cent higher than in Northern Ireland, Scotland, England, Wales and many other European countries (Lynch and Kennedy, 2007, p.8) that were not then engaged in a scandalous public inquiry.

Possibly in an attempt to take up this issue, the then Garda Commissioner, Noel Conroy, during an apology for Garda misdeeds may be interpreted as having refuted Justice Morris’ finding of widespread indiscipline, preferring instead to set down that only a small number of Gardaí were responsible for the abuse of powers:

The vast majority of Gardaí perform their duties in an ethical manner, never violating or abusing the authority granted them and working at all times to meet the needs of the communities they serve. The small minority who fail to observe those professional standards do a grave disservice to their colleagues and dishonour the history and tradition of a proud

Whether Commissioner Conroy’s inferred dissatisfaction with the Tribunal’s findings is justified or merely a defensive reiteration of the oft used ‘few bad apples in an otherwise healthy barrel excuse’ (Newburn, 1999; Punch, 2003; Dean et. al., 2010), it is here acknowledged that the very presence of such unsheathed misgivings at executive level may signal that other Gardaí, particularly those at operational-level, could correspondingly experience difficulties internalising the need for the sweeping reforms to policies and procedures that were introduced.

This moves the challenge of reform onto rocky ground, where, as Brogden and Shearing (1993) remind us in the context of attempted modifications to the South African Police system, rules and regulations may be implemented but fail to have a real impact on culture. Reforms bring change; this affects the currency and credibility of our ideas and values. Change also forces us to revaluate or at least revisit some of our long-held beliefs and principles. In short, structural reform agendas present change possibilities. The choice to accept these possibilities of change, on the other hand, is an intentional act. Choice is something we must decide to do, or, not to do. What choice is really about is human freedom and having the courage and integrity to do what is right. It is about each Garda being individually conscientious towards and accountable for their ethical work-place performance and attitudes to change.
For Gardaí it would, of course, be easy or, at least, a lot easier to make choices – value based or otherwise - if they occurred in a vacuum free from the influence of their occupational culture, which for example, as we shall observe in the next chapter of this thesis, ‘conventionally’ demands tacit co-worker solidarity and categorical support of group norms or other variables, without adjustment or weight of outside influence. But clearly, such is not the case. And so the challenge that each Garda faces is to try and handle the fluidity of change while managing their personal integrity and ethical priorities. Here perceptions are important, each Garda has the ability to choose their attitude in a given set of circumstances, to choose their own way. No studies have specifically been conducted on Garda perceptions towards the Morris Tribunal or the subsequent reforms introduced, but in the following chapter we begin this process, by defining a conceptual model of Garda occupational culture that can be applied to the results of our later research findings.
CHAPTER 3: EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE

Introduction

This chapter will consider why it is important for this thesis to discuss culture. Then it will examine and critically evaluate the concept of ‘culture’. Culture can be observed to represent frameworks of understanding that are often found to be in disagreement concerning answers to the question: ‘How are cultures to be explained?’ This exposition will, in part at least, reveal some of the modifying decisions that helped to define the intellectual boundaries of this research. In turn, these legitimised the working definition of ‘culture’ chosen.

Then the critical explanation of the theoretical concepts surrounding the notion of ‘organisational culture’ will serve as a frame of reference towards analysis, as it too can also be studied in a variety of ways. The method or methods one chooses should undoubtedly be determined by one’s purpose.

These assessment frames having been worked through, two traditional concepts of police culture are next explored. This examination process will focus firstly on the relationship that exists between police culture and its characteristics and then the relationship between police culture and its functional roles. The cumulative effect of these evaluations is designed to derive a conceptual model of long-established ‘conventional’ police occupational culture that can afterwards be
applied to the causes, prescriptions and outcomes of our more contemporary research findings.

**Why is it important for this thesis to discuss culture?**

Why is it important that this thesis discuss culture? In any occupation, such as policing, where the inherent features of the working role may involve long periods of repetitive work and instances of personal risk, it may be necessary to have cultural characteristics which reinforce the collective and impersonal nature of police work. Cultural characteristics as we shall soon explore below are the man-made aspects of social organisation, as distinct from structural institutions, but both structure and culture may make incompatible demands, and it is at these pressure points that occupational culture often emerges to address the ‘issues/problems’ that may arise. As Cohen (1955, p.59) informs us: “The crucial condition for new cultural forms [which broadly can be interpreted to represent cultural change] is the existence, in effective interaction with one another, of a number of actors with similar problems of adjustment.” Organisational reforms such as those introduced in An Garda Síochána which sought to change structure, only, may or may not influence the ‘conventions’ of Garda shared occupational culture. Such being the case, it is therefore necessary that this thesis look more closely at Garda operational-level organisational culture as it currently may be.
What exactly does ‘culture’ mean within this thesis?

It can be argued that one’s interpretation of and emotions about culture are subjectively dependent upon one’s particular feelings and position. Accepting this premise, it becomes apparent that the precise meaning of culture directing this research needs clarification. This attempted clarification will as we shall see expose contradictory paradigms which need some exploration to address the intellectual framework guiding this research. All told this is necessary for the reason that there are certain individuals for whom ‘culture’ represents a theoretical schema which is only capable of being understood in evolutionary terms, while for others, an anti-evolutionist outlook must direct cultural analysis.

Edward O. Wilson spoke of socio-biological evolution as ”The extension of population biology and evolutionary theory to social organisation” (1978, p.x). The apparent strength of evolutionary interpretations of human culture rests with the possibility it offers for an understanding of human behaviour in the kind of strictly scientific way found in genetics or the looser, yet scientifically observable recurrences observed in zoology. The primary aim of human behaviour within this framework of understanding is concerned with survival and reproduction. And Richard Dawkins (1982), Susan Blackmore (1999) and others, have used the application of Darwinian principles to develop what claims to be a science of ‘memetics’ to deal with the rather different realities of human culture, where ‘memes’ are said to play a determining rule analogous to genes in biology.
While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to mount an adequate critique of socio-biology, still, it is relatively easy to at least state a basic limitation in the genetic or zoological determinism of Wilson (1978), Dawkins (1982), and Blackmore (1999), for their approaches rely heavily on the successes and prestige of the natural sciences to justify their essentially metaphorical interpretation of human behaviour. Yet faced with the empirical given of say, the cultural world of a Garda, which requires developed skills in sizing up all manner of situations, within a more or less articulately framed principled universe of right and wrong, socio-biology seems profoundly inadequate. Cultural determinism is therefore rejected by this author, who prefers instead a framework of understanding that facilitates interpretive value.

**Culture defined**

To this end, the sociological meaning of culture as provided by Tylor (1871[1958], p.1) proved somewhat more attractive. He was of the view that:

Culture taken in its wide ethnographic sense is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society. The condition of culture among the various societies of mankind, insofar as it is capable of being investigated on general principles, as a subject apt for the study of human thought and action.
Notwithstanding the fact that Tylor’s definition certainly captures the tenor of what was considered as necessary here, perhaps it fails to deliver the concision one could accord to Deal and Kennedy (1982, p.4), for whom culture is simply “the way we do things around here.”

In the end, bridging the gap between these two definitions which involved too much complexity on the one hand as against too little exactitude on the other hand facilitated the choice of the working definition of culture that will henceforth be used throughout this thesis. The distinguished Jesuit anthropologist MacGreil (1996, p.33) understands culture as standing for:

The interrelated set (configuration) of learned created and borrowed beliefs, ideas, values, norms and symbolic meaningful systems, which characterise and influence the human behaviour of people.

It is a point worth making that this definition specifically refers to culture as a composite phenomenon of beliefs, ideas (i.e., cognitive components), values (i.e., ethical ideals), norms (i.e., shared expectations and obligations or the specification of values of behaviour) and symbolic meaningful systems (i.e., language and rituals), that concern learned, created and borrowed characteristics. The absence of qualifying terms like ‘inherited, hereditary, or innate’ within this definition suits its rejection of a material explanation of culture operating under biological determinism. Likewise, MacGreil’s appreciation of the
behaviour of people as ‘human’ fits with the goals of this research and moves us beyond remaining at the surface towards a more complex emphasis in relation to how culture works. Moreover, his formation of culture’s beliefs, ideas, values, norms and symbolic meaningful systems as having ‘learned, created and borrowed’ features, affords us our first clue that culture is mutable and involves dynamic forces that might explain how culture is actually learned, passed on, and possibly even changed.

**What is organisational culture?**

Having critically evaluated the concept of ‘culture’ and arrived at a working definition that can from now on be applied to An Garda Síochána, it is appropriate to further describe the frame of reference adopted for the rest of this research. This will outline an understanding of the influences that are frequently responsible for producing differing perceptions of cultural development and modification within an organisation. It will at the same time map the particular biases that are implicit within this research in favour of the selection of the interpretative organisational cultural approach taken. Before doing so, however, the related hypothetical concept of ‘organisational culture’ must now be distinguished.
What is organisational culture? Organisational conceptions are characterised by such diversity that it is impossible to speak of a particular notion or starting point which approximates to a normative empirical understanding (Kuhn, 1962). In point of fact, apart from being contained within organisational theory, this concept draws upon theories and insights within law (Laster, 2001), business (Druker, 1954), management (Weinshall, 1977), humanities (Morgan, 1986; Scott, 1992), technology (Woodward, 1980), and many other fields of study. So too, Smircich (1983a) has demonstrated how numerous debates in the study of organisational culture are also found within anthropology.

This diversity of understanding aids rivalry between different perspectives of meaning. Anytime a research approach is selected it must be governed by the principle of being “fit for purpose” (Cohen, Mahon and Morrison, 2000, p.73). Applying this standard to our present task requires that the individual choices made, each serve to locate a meaning of ‘organisational culture’ within MacGreil’s (1996, p.33) wider definitional framework as presented above. So that this may be achieved here, an attempt to locate the concept of organizational culture drawn from organisational theory literature will now be addressed.

Morgan (1986) in his informative book, Images of Organisation, suggests that, it is a metaphor or analogy which gives us the best possible understanding of the concept ‘organisational culture’.
We use metaphors whenever we attempt to understand one element of experience in terms of another…Many of our taken for granted notions about organizations are metaphorical (Morgan, 1986, p.13).

Morgan (1986) examines a number of different metaphors, within each of which paradigms are said to govern actions. The way you think, Morgan emphasises, directs the way you act. He advises that there is always more than one way of thinking about and appreciating an organisation. As a result, any cultural analysis of an organisation should not be restricted by a particular framed analysis; rather the application of the most appropriate metaphor or metaphors should be pursued.

Scott (1992) tells us that the machine and the biological organism are the most recognized metaphors for depicting organizations as rational and natural systems. “The rationalist perspective transfers the machine mind-set to the domain of culture, while the functionalist perspective specifies that organisational culture is viewed according to its contribution to organisational function and survival.” (Schultz, 1995, p.15) These metaphors direct our focus on to the organisation’s formal and informal structures respectively. Here, organisational culture is perceived as an instrumental attribute to be attained and perhaps manipulated by members of the organisation. Since organisational culture from both these perspectives has a character of one or several variables, it can be separated from other organisational variables in order to affect the organisation’s
efficiency and performance.

Hence, a rationalist perspective emphasises the concept of organisational culture as a means to an end of efficiency, focused on the calculated elaboration of organisational values (i.e., ethical ideals), which are analysed and evaluated in terms of their contribution to predefined organisational goal achievements. Likewise, the functionalist perspective of an organisation allows culture’s functions to be analysed according to the organisation’s various functions. These findings are then analysed in terms of their contribution to organisational survival. Arising from both these constructions the emphasis is on the fact that organisations have culture. (Smircich, 1983a; Schein, 1984; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Schwartz & Davis, 1981) “Organisations have culture in that culture is seen as one variable among several others…” (Schultz, 1995, p.10) Those who appreciate culture from this positivistic perspective tend to see culture as something that organisations have (Sackmann, 1991).

On the other hand organisational culture understood in terms of a cultural metaphor operates neither according to the prescribed behaviour directed towards the fulfilment of goals, nor according to the informal behaviour oriented towards survival (Scott, 1992). Rather, the culture metaphor operates to elaborate the meaning and significance which the members of the organisation attach to both the prescribed and the informal behaviour of organisation members. Within this perception the organisation does not exist in isolation, but is constructed by the organisation’s members through the meanings and the
interpretations which they accord to actions and experience within the organisation (Morgan, 1980, 1986; Feldman, 1986; Smircich, 1983a). In this alternative metaphor organisation is culture. Smircich’s (1983 a, pp.347-348) perhaps more anthropological view is that, culture as a [interpretive] root metaphor promotes a view of organisations as expressive forms, manifestations of human consciousness. He notes that organisations need not be understood only in economic, material or functional terms, but in terms of their expressive, ideational and symbolic meanings. Or as Sackmann (1991, p.21), referring to the statement that organisation is culture remarks, “it is what they [organisational members] have in their mind [what they perceive], and not what they do, and make.”

Of course this appreciation that culture may enable people to interpretively solve the problems created for them by their organisational environment moves the realisation of cultural change into some tricky territory, where, structural adjustments directed by reform agendas, may not necessarily always amount to cultural adjustments. The manifestation of change therefore, may be dependent on the perceptions of operational-level Gardaí to consider the policy directives presented to them for integration, to be fitting with their everyday practices as the ‘correct’ way to perceive, think, feel and behave.

This fundamental variance between the views that organisations have culture as opposed to the notion that an organisation is culture, cannot, be emphasised enough here, and will be borne in mind when we next move on to make choices.
between these competing perspectives for our empirical purposes.

Choosing between competing perspectives

Arising from the dialogue above we can see that organisational culture will have a major effect on any attempts to bring about organisational reform towards achieving greater individual integrity in An Garda Síochána. The degree of impact these reforms will have, however, is entirely dependent upon whether organisational culture is observed as being what the Irish police have, or what it is?

Rationalism

From this author's standpoint the rationalist organisational cultural perspective, while it does admittedly view culture as a tool for achieving results, it also seeks at times to reduce organisational culture to little more than what may be assumed to be in conflict with the efficient achievement of the organisation’s ‘common’ objectives. As Schultz (1995, p.15) regards it:

> When transferred to the concept of culture rationalism focuses on the calculated elaboration of organizational values, which are analyzed and evaluated in terms of their contribution to predefined organizational goal achievement.
Hence, the rationalist perspective of organisational culture is conceivably best applied to an analysis of organisations that operate in totalitarian regimes, or at the least, in authoritarian systems that might wish to delimit culture as an abstraction from efficiency within means-end rationality. This perspective may fail to acknowledge that we must recognize that we cannot know things as they are in themselves and that our knowledge is subject to the conditions of our experience (Honderick, 1995, pp. 741-744). We must take note of the contribution that our faculties of reason and judgment make to our experience of objects. While a rationalist’s analysis of Garda perceptions might inform us about the content of perceptions, it could not provide us with a coherent demonstration of the metaphysical truths about a Garda’s world, their sense of self, the soul within the organisation, subjective gut-feelings about reforms, ideas and attitudes concerning individual accountability, personal considerations of what is good or otherwise, and so on.

Moreover, rationalism might undermine the power of communication with others in decision making. As a matter of fact, our knowledge is clearly affected in and through our discussions with others. Without interaction through the senses, the rationalist analytical model of organisational culture, while interesting, may simply not be complex enough for our present purposes. Consequently, its value as an analytical model to guide our understanding of the research findings may or may not be somewhat limited.
Functionalism

An organisational cultural analysis of An Garda Síochána from the rationalist perspective having been discussed, it next became necessary to think about the application of the functionalist and symbolist perspectives of organisational culture respectively.

According to Schein (1985a, p.49) organisational cultural analysis within functionalism is concerned with requesting responses to certain queries: What does culture do? What function does it have? How does it arise, evolve and change? From this point of view ‘social facts’ are observed to be ‘thing-like’. Definitions of organisational culture which reflect the underlying assumptions of the functionalist model emphasise organisational culture as the ‘glue’ which binds an organisation together through a sense of interdependency, shared values, agreed norms and a common sense of purpose drawn from both shared wider societal values (Hofstede, 1991), values rooted in the history and tradition of the organisation itself (Hanson, 2003, pp.60-61; Schein, 1985, p.6; Deal and Kennedy, 1983, p.14), and values arising from a conflation of societal and organisational norms (Walker and Dimmock, 2002; Wilson, 2007, p.2).

"The attraction of the [functionalist] model of organisational culture from the standpoint of institutional improvement is that leaders can audit [and attempt to logically adjust as deemed appropriate] their organisational cultures" (Wilson,
This model is therefore frequently used by organisational managers, as it views change as predictable, rationally determined, and capable of being brought about as a result of strategic planning based on an initial evaluation and a common-sense approach to effective change administration. What organisational culture does is to offer ‘objective’ solutions to organisational actors when faced with functional problems of outside adaption and internal adjustment, as they develop, learn and create values according to the problem resolution they face (Durkheim, 1938 [1895]; Weber, 1968 [1921]; Parsons, 1959, pp.26-27; Merton, 1967, pp.51-52; Popper, 1962). Organisational culture is seen as set of shared values, unifying symbols of commonality, or systems of exchanges to be adhered to.

Thinking critically about this idea, there are as we shall see several reasons to evaluate this methodical system of organisational culture as perhaps still being too limited for our purposes.

Firstly, as Giddens (1989, p.12) has argued, this theoretical perspective cannot account for “purposive, reflexively monitored [human] action.” Functionalism does not seem to take into account that organisational culture in policing is based on the skilled individual abilities of members, who must creatively coordinate their respective actions one with another, for public service and good. Arguably, the narrowness of its scope limits a deeper understanding of culture that takes into account more subtle levels of meaning, taken-for-granted values and basic
assumptions held by members of the organisation, as for example, have been described by Schein (1985a, p.14).

Moreover, as Giddens (1976, p.21) writes: “There is no action in Parson’s ‘action frame of reference’, only behaviour which is propelled by need-dispositions or role expectations.” Drawing on this remark, is it possible to say perhaps that because this inadequate functionalist theory of agency is based purely on the consensus of organisational values that have been internalised, it would miss out on, underplay or might just be unable to see, An Garda Síochána’s communal organisational culture as actively constituted by its member’s judgements of what is for them personally, good or bad, or somewhere in between.

Another related difficulty that may exist with the functionalist model of organisational culture is raised by Tucker (1998, pp.56-57), who is of the view that functionalism neglects complex levels of social organisation that are rationally and consciously monitored and not simply unconsciously and automatically reproduced. From this scrutiny, functionalism clearly discards the significance of power, politics and position in structuring social relations. Consequently, functionalists might be criticised for not tying social action to the power of different groups in society, largely because of their vision of internal compromise and continuous integration. As Giddens (1976, p.26; 1977, p.14) notes: “[Functionalist’s] do not grasp the negotiated character of norms, which are often based on compromises of conflicting and divergent interests.”
Functionalism’s view of organisational culture, like the rationalist model before it, of a natural [positivistic] scientific explanation of human knowing is based on the belief that language un-problematically reflects ‘objective’ reality. Contrary to this view the epistemological parameters directing this thesis have suggested that conscientious interpretation (free-willed decision making) is understood to be a central part of human judging, it is the creative element of human action. The reflexivity of people is not an irritation to be evaded, as is the functionalist’s position, rather it may be considered a defining qualitative aspect of human experience which may possibly give Garda organisational culture its unique interpretive character.

As it is this author’s belief that a world of facts does not exist apart from the observer, nor is the truth of a proposition distinct from its origins, it is difficult to see how using the simple form of objectivity prescribed by functionalism would reveal something approaching the truth of things. However, time and further exploration, will reveal which, if either, of these competing perspectives may be appropriate to an analysis of Garda organisational culture.

Having thus arrived at a qualified oppugn of the proposition which views culture as a variable that an organisation has, what then of the opposing logic that an organisation is culture?
Interpretivism/Symbolism

At first analysis, the judgment that an organisation is culture sits more effortlessly within MacGreil’s (1996, p.33) wider definitional framework implemented above. The standards for fixing upon such a presumptive conclusion at this early stage arise, as we shall see, from this author’s understanding of the subject studied and a grasp of his relationship to the subject, more readily than from any general methodological assertion. For while the interpretative, symbolist, or hermeneutic conceptions of organisational culture all share certain qualifying features which distinguish them from a positivist outlook, their respective analyses proceed along varied courses.

Tucker (1988, p.44) helped to develop this idea; for him “The shared distinctiveness of the interpretive viewpoint, as distinguished from the objective perspective, contains certain shared implications for any interpretive study.” They may be summarised as follows: the strict separation of observer and observed cannot be maintained, as explanation is not achieved through a process analogous to physical or natural processes, but is concerned instead with the explanation of meanings giving directions to actions. The imagery characteristic of a symbolic science is one of participation in/with the object of study. The creation of meaning has an inter-subjective bias. Meanings are created and reproduced through the interaction of individuals in daily life; an organisation is best understood, therefore, through an understanding of its members’
perspectives. Subjective understanding is constituted in an inter-subjective context, often creating a mosaic of realities, which may vary between sub-cultures and over periods of time. Organisational culture can be seen as a series of interrelated sub-cultures that cannot be severed from the social context in which they originate. All organisational knowledge, whether scientific or based on common-sense, derives from the inter-subjective nature of social life and the application of meaning to actions (Tucker, 1988).

Even if all of the interpretive perspectives of organisational culture share the common features detailed above, their respective approaches progress in quite different ways. The symbolic interactionist, phenomenological and ethnomethodological perspectives concentrate on micro-processes or particular nuances of social interaction in organisational cultural contexts. While the cultural persuasion represents what might be considered a macro-process that supplies a public system of beliefs that give people their conceptions of meanings and symbols that enables them to understand their social world.

A combined overview of the micro-process contained within the symbolic interactionist, phenomenological, and ethnomethodological perspectives of cultural analysis shall now briefly take place. This synopsis will enable a collective evaluation of the worthiness of these analytical perspectives, in favour of or otherwise against, their later use.
Social interactionists believe we must focus on group actions and exchanges to derive organisational cultural meaning. It is according to Ritzer and Ryan (2011, p.324), a major sociological perspective that places emphasis on social interaction, which can be seen to be primarily derived from the work of George Herbert Mead (1910), and later Herbert Blumer (1962). A summary of the perspective is put forward by Nelson (1998, pp.1-4) thus:

People act toward things based on the meaning those things have for them; and these meanings are derived from social interaction and modified through interpretation. Human beings are best understood in relation to their group environment.

Griffin (1997) informs us that people respond to others based on interpretations of meaning, language and thought. These three core principles in turn lead to conclusions about the creation of a person’s self and socialisation within an organisation. As Blumer (1969, p. 180) states “human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another’s actions.” Within Blumer’s (1969) perspective researchers investigate how people create meaning during social interaction, how they present and construct the self, and how they define situations of co-presence with others. One of this perspective’s central ideas is that people in organisations behave in ways that are directly related to how they define situations.
While symbolic interactionists perceive organisational culture via their interpretation of group actions and interactions, phenomenologists like Schultz, (1962, 1967), believe that the meaning of organisational culture is already established in a subject’s psychological construct.

Because organisational cultural analyses seek to study an inter-subjective, pre-interpreted world, they should necessarily concern themselves with the nature of Verstehen therein. For Schultz, (1962b, p.51) Verstehen is “the particular experiential form in which common-sense thinking takes cognizance of the social-cultural world.” In such a theory a “deep understanding, an empathy or indwelling with the subject of one’s enquiries is required.” (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.8) We learn from Denscombe (2008, pp. 75-87) and Miles and Huberman (1994, p.8), that phenomenologists often work with small sample groupings, taking great care to represent the multiple realities being described by their subjects. Indeed, they are often dubious about condensing research material altogether. They do not employ analytical coding, but assume that through their continued readings of source material and through vigilance over one’s presuppositions, one can reach the Lebenswelt of the informant, capturing the ‘essence’ of a cultural account – what is constant in a person’s life across its multiple variations. The central point of this perspective is that it does not result in covering laws, but rather delivers common-sense meanings and actions.

By contrast, it can be argued that classic ethno-methodologists, like Garfinkel (1967), take the phenomenological idea of multiple realities to the next level.
From this position, reality is very fragile and ever-subject to change. As Tucker (2004, p.48) notes of the particular emphasis of organisational cultural analysis embodied in this perspective:

Ethnomethodologists problematize the assumption, prevalent among interpretive approaches, that people share a pre-existing world. They concerned with how people actively constitute such a common world. According to ethnomethodologists, social integration does not result from a consensus on shared values or interests, but from explicit and implicit practices that people use to create social order. Shared meaning arises from mutual recognition of a social rule.

According to Lynch and Peyrot (1992, pp. 113-122), ethnomethodologists may be differentiated from other interpretative occupational culture analysts because they utilise the notions of reflexive action and indexicality to inform their understanding of how people make sense of the world. From this standpoint, those interested in organisational cultural analysis should not only examine the rules and values that characterise social groups, but examine how such rules and values are negotiated, maintained and achieved.

Stepping back in evaluation of each of the three qualified interpretative organisational cultural perspectives presented above, which, if any of these might be considered broad enough to be appropriately applied to the research findings
of this study?

Each of these approaches is interesting in that they each provide a prescriptive basis towards reified understanding and the establishment of meaning. Each offers a diverse and nuanced way of interpreting Garda operational-level organisational culture. Indeed, any of these perspectives could be applied to a sensitive study of the particular social contexts involving Garda organisational culture, thereby exploring the myriad ways that help Gardaí to make sense of the world around them. To do so, however, could arguably ignore the critical deficiencies inherent in each of these approaches and change direction away from MacGreil's (1996, p.33) broad definition previously adopted to guide this thesis.

What the symbolic interactionist, phenomenological and ethnomethodological perspectives of organisational culture each concentrate on are the micro-processes of social action – particularly narrow lenses through which a subject’s social contexts may be viewed. None of these approaches seek to widen the focus of their respective lenses and encompass a larger macro-scale analysis of social and cultural process that affects individual interpretative actions. As Tucker (2004, p.49) notes of these analytical positions:

They do not examine in detail Marx’s and Weber’s contentions that people’s position in society [class, social standing, seniority etc.] affects
their behaviours and beliefs and their capacity to exercise power. Neither do they explore the ways that collective symbols, rituals and beliefs shape group life and supply people with a shared vocabulary of meaning.

What is needed, therefore, is a perspective of organisational cultural analysis that grasps many of the themes that are contained within social interactionism, phenomenology and ethnomethodology, yet broadens them somewhat further.

The uniting essence of each of these theories of understanding rests with their respective interpretations of how best to interpret human acts of meaning. Because the constitutive functions of meaning within each of them are different from each other, we must match this effort to understand meaning in all its manifestations with a comparable effort to judge meaning. Or to put it another way, what each of these theories provides us with is a practical common-sense approach to understanding Garda organisational culture through its different meanings, what they do not give us is a structure of judgment that will allow us to responsibly carry that out. But why would or should they?

They arguably ought to, because in this author’s view, science, whether natural or human, puts a premium on verifying or falsifying hypotheses. Among others, Karl Popper (1962), a philosopher of science, has pointed out the need for overall theories to include in their formulation the criteria by which they can, if necessary, be falsified. Otherwise, their scientific status might be considered by
some as highly questionable. Here, Aristotle’s dictum has to be borne in mind, especially for verification or falsification in human studies, such as this inquiry, that “it is the mark of an educated man [researcher] to look for precision in each class of things just so far as the nature of the subject admits” (Ross, 1995, p.1730). But how then do we resolve this issue of requiring a theory of human knowledge of meaning to include a structure of judgement?

One possible solution is to draw on the writings of another eminent philosopher of science, Bernard Lonergan (1963), whose major text; *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* articulates a theory of the structure of knowledge not unlike that of Karl Popper. For Lonergan, the human cognitional process has four basic structures [see figure 2 below]. The first being sense-perceptual experience (seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, imagining), which leads to understanding (inquiring, understanding, formulating) and judgement (reflecting, weighing the evidence, judging). Then according to Lonergan (1972) there is a fourth very important structure involved in human knowing, which he explains as being associated with human free-willed choice or decision (the intuitive judgement of what is good or otherwise and the choice one makes that follows from that).
So, human knowing is not experience alone, nor understanding alone, nor judgment or decision alone, nor the combination of any three of them. It only occurs as a result of all four activities; it requires experience, understanding, judgment and a free-willed decision.

Human knowing is a structure whose parts are activities. But these activities do not happen independently of a knower. A Garda is the one who might have the experience of, say, hearing his managers speaking about the change agenda required of An Garda Síochána and ‘the new ways to be embraced to do things around here’. They may try to understand the meaning of what is being said in light of their own interpretive framework. As a consequence of having such an experience, a Garda will ask how can I arrive at a true judgement of what is being said by management about change in relation to my own understanding?
They must therefore run through various possible interpretations. Having weighed the evidence for the various interpretations, the Garda makes a judgement, that what is being said by their manager about the need for change is right and should be adhered to, or otherwise is incorrect and should be broadly ignored. It is this free-willed process of decision that adds the forth level (of free-willed decision) to our adopted structure of human knowing in this thesis. Where, as Lonergan (1967) might put it, we all have the freedom to experience an event, understand its significance, judge its worthiness, and decide what if anything to do about it; that is, there are always options open to us in terms of how we approach any occurrence in our life.

Within the above system of knowledge lays each Garda’s effective freedom, his or her power to choose, if and how they will respond to an imposed post-scandal change agenda. An appreciation of this principle of free-will is essential to an analysis of individual integrity within Garda operational-level culture, as it holds implications regarding whether individuals can be held morally accountable for their actions. While change of An Garda Síochána may be reasoned as necessary, if it is not informed by actual Garda experience, understanding and judgment of what is the good to be done, it may not decisively be compelled by it. All too often we are aware of what we should do, and yet because we are humans possessing freedom of choice, we simply do not do it.

This arrival at organisational culture as something that involves a prescribed human cognitional and volitional structure may provide us at last with a useful
working approach to organisational culture that corresponds with MacGriel’s (1996, p.33) definition. It means we could look for the common shared experiences in terms of feelings, images, and external expressions of Garda organisational culture. Common shared understandings might relate to the collective ideas that Gardaí reported as having on who they are and what they are doing. Common judgments could be the shared agreements on how Gardaí perceive their world and common decisions could be the overall ideals or morale that helps Gardaí to function as a single service.

The opposites of that which is not shared could be seen as representing individual choices which diverge from what is generally shared – so there could be failures to pick up on key elements in the Garda experience, there could, for example, be misunderstandings of what being a Garda demands, there could be quite different judgements of what it is to be a Garda, and there might be serious failures exposed in commitment to standard Garda ethics and ideals.

Thus, our organisational cultural analysis involves an on-going interpretive process of ensuring balance or, at least, a sense of coherence and integration, between our research subjects’ shared perceptions of particular judgments and decisions that substantiate subjective actions that are directed towards morally responsible actions and those that are not so directed.
Constituting a framed analysis of police culture

A critical explanation of the theoretical concepts surrounding ‘organisational culture’, as this author sees it, having been advanced, an evaluative overview of ‘police culture’ shall next be provided. This is necessary both to justify and contextualise our empirical work and also to later facilitate a comparison of research findings with a body of academic police literature.

In preparing this examination, an interpretive and overarching perspective was necessary. A framework had to be created to cover a range of fixed themes. It is intended to begin with a critical examination of the characteristics of police culture; this is needed to develop the key concepts before further pressing forward. Then our need to address increasingly pragmatic and specific themes requires us to discuss the varied functional roles that police culture may play in the lives of officers. Finally, a concise summary is offered by way of conclusion to draw together each of the elements uncovered in this chapter. It is to each of these areas in succession that we now turn our attention.

It is, perhaps, important at this juncture to clarify that the acceptance of researcher bias was intrinsic to these choices. That is to say, the identification of the categories selected to structure the relevant literature in this thesis into its thematic sections has involved the qualified selection of some materials at the expense of excluding others not deemed applicable here [for example, excluded
literature related to ‘police culture and accountability’ (Crank, 2004; Walker 2001; Fleming and Lafferty, 2000, pp.154-168; Kelling, Wasserman and Williams, 1998), ‘police culture and governance’ (Dubber and Velverde, 2006; Goldsmith and Lewis, 2000; Dupont, 2003; Lustgarten, 1986), ‘police culture as it relates to public complaints procedures’ (Harrison and Cunneen, 2000; Goldsmith and Lewis, 2000; Lewis, 1999), police culture and human rights (Walsh, 2011), and ‘police culture and public scandal’ (Rowe, 2009; Crank, 2004;) etc.].

The characteristics of ‘conventional’ police culture

A great deal of the existing literature regarding police culture argues for the certainty of a distinctive and characteristic culture that may be defined by its core features. The central tenet of this conception is that police forces operating in liberal democracies are characterised by a wide gap between formal rules and informal practice. Formal dimensions – “the politically correct language of the organisation” (Prenzler, 1997, p.47) – can be seen to include mission statements, strategic plans, ethical declarations, regulations, codes and prescribed procedures. By contrast the informal police culture – like any other organisational culture – is, as MacGreil (1996, p.33) may be adapted as saying, that complex interrelated set (configuration) of learned, created and borrowed beliefs, ideas, values, norms and symbolic meaningful systems which characterise and influence the actual governing principles of those engaged in the occupation of policing.
From this standpoint, it is essential to appreciate that police culture might not be perceived as an excessively unitary construction, neither is it a deterministic phenomenon, although some cultural examinations within the United Kingdom and the United States particularly, have in the past been inclined to portray it as such; in point of fact, Reiner (2000, p.85) accuses Crank (1998) of this. Likewise, Loftus (2010) draws upon her more current research to show us that the underlying world-view of police officers displays remarkable continuity with older monolithic patterns. Indeed she may be viewed as arguing that stereotypical police culture is steadfast and enduring, even if her research cohort might have been drawn from a somewhat bucolic environment.

What then amounts to this alleged universal stereotyped image of ‘conventional’ police culture? Elements of police culture have been categorised in different ways by different academics. That said however, it is possible to argue that, specifically, the less recent scholars are unified in their respective approaches to displaying remarkably pejorative and sometimes critical impressions of police culture.

By way of explanation let us consider the elements that have in the past been presented in the relevant literature to qualify ‘conventional’ police cultural characteristics.
Police culture is thought to include a sense of mission towards ‘crime fighting’
(Reiner, 2000, p.80; Crank, 1998; Geller and Touch 1996; Skolnick and Fyfe
1993; Graef, 1989; Holdaway, 1977, 1983; Police Studies Institute, 1983, iv-
pp.51-56); the desire for action and excitement, especially the glorification of
violence (Reiner, 2000, p.88; Crank, 1997; Waddington, 1999a, p.287) an ‘Us
versus Them’ division of the social world with its in-group isolation and solidarity
on the one hand, and racist/sexist components on the other (McLaughlin, 2007,
p.55; Reiner, 2000, p.91; Waddington, 1999a, pp.99-101, p.117; Crank 1998;
Skolnick and Fyfe, 1993; Graef, 1989; Reiner, 1978, pp.208-213; Cain, 1973); its
authoritarian conservatism (Reiner, 2000, pp.95-97; Bernstein et al., 1982;
Skolnick 1966, p.61); and its suspicion and cynicism, especially towards the law
and legal procedures (Reiner, 2000, p. 89; Smith and Gray, 1985, p.369-370;

More precisely perhaps, a disregard for rules, regulations and procedures, is said
to be a key characteristic of the informal code of policing referred to earlier,
especially in the treatment of suspects (Reiner, 1992, p.107). Such breaches of
due process or law may be defended by Gardaí as necessary to do their job. As
Prenzler (1997, p.47) citing Skolnick (1975) might be paraphrased as contending
the goal of doing police work may frequently be a mask for either self-interest or
organisational interest. From this perspective self-interest could, for example,
cover such things as the anticipation by individual Gardaí of a promotion because
of their achievement of high conviction rates or the praise and standing given to a
Garda owing to his development of an important informant. Organisational interests might include high crime clear-up rates, reduced losses in court, or even a desired improvement in public image in terms of being perceived to keep criminals off the streets. Disregard for rules may include tolerance of corruption, and the use of police time and equipment for personal benefit. Misuse of position could be justified as compensation for the complications encountered in policing and the lack of appreciation and public understanding received.

This culturally delineating disregard for due process is reasoned to be an outcome of an overriding crime control model of policing. This approach is understood by its operational proponents to be highly dependent upon a rapid mobile response to calls for assistance received and the utilisation of advanced technical equipment with a focus on apprehending offenders (Reiner, 1992, p.107). Despite the weight of evidence against the effectiveness of this strategy to actually reduce crime, as presented for example by Kelling and Coles (1996) and Akers (1994), police officers may well – ‘convention’ suggests - cling to the crime control model as a justification for the mores and habits of their culture. Such alternative approaches to crime as have recently been introduced by reforms involving variants of community policing – such as problem-oriented policing (Goldstein, 1990), preventative justice (Appier, 1992), crime prevention (Clark, 1992) or intelligence-led policing (Lynch, 2009) – might therefore conceivably be perceived by some, to be repudiated for their being soft on crime and out of touch with the vagaries of public expectation, or as Prenzler (1997,
p.47) comments, “academic and [therefore] not practical”, of course, the converse might also be revealed. Further, this crime control perception has ‘conventionally’ been said to have produced a bias in police officers away from the more difficult and socio-politically sensitive prosecutions of white collar crime to the easier targets of lower class street crime, or otherwise. This in turn may or may not be seen to drive a macho culture and a quasi-paramilitary command-style that could sequentially be anticipated to stifle public consultation, evaluation and joint problem solving, in preference to autocratic directives of what is best.

Cynicism, isolation and intolerance are also presented within the literature as being characteristics central to the alleged police culture typecast (Reiner, 2000). Arising from this perception, it is traditionally said that police officers will possess a powerful sense of mission to protect the public and property from criminals, an intense cynicism and suspicion regarding criminality in all its forms, together with a tangible hostility or unreliability of the public (Skolnick and Fyfe, 1993).

Added to this, police officers are said to relay their invariable sense of betrayal by management and a taken-for-granted acceptance of the need to look after ‘number one’ in avoiding responsibility or difficult tasks (Prenzler, 1997, p.48). Politically, it is assumed this cynicism may perhaps reveal the right-wing intolerances of police officers towards racial and gender minorities, and non-conventional lifestyles (Reiner, 1992). This, in turn, could anticipate the reported differential enforcement of the law and discretion against minorities and those
who defy police authority (Chan, 1997).

A possible offshoot of such isolation and cynicism may be solidarity (Reiner, 2000, p.91). This could take the form of police officers reporting mutual reinforcements of behaviour, and closing ranks to affect a “blue-wall of silence” (Conway, 2010) and cover up misconduct when coming under scrutiny from external agencies, like, for example, attention from the Garda Ombudsman, or internal examiners such as senior Garda management. Arising from this conceivable sense of solidarity, it is traditionally said that we may also uncover a two-fold distain amongst police officers, firstly for whistle-blowers and secondly, for recruitment policies that enable ethnic minorities and female membership to increase in number (Fitzgerald, 1989; Reiner, 1992).

Whether, in fact any or all of these possible core characteristics are revealed by this research, a key point to be drawn from this critical evaluation of the alleged central ‘conventional’ features of police occupational culture presented above is that they collectively may paint an unflattering picture, yet unwaveringly in the past, at least it seems recur again and again within the academic literature. Whether in fact this critical, possibly unscrupulous, world-view of policing elsewhere proves to be true of An Garda Síochána has yet to be resolved in this thesis.
The typical functional roles of police culture play in police officer’s lives

For some, the significance of understanding police culture lies in the role it plays in the everyday functioning of police officer’s lives. We have already discovered above that much of the early academic subtext concerning police culture historically painted a negative picture. On the other hand, there are positive aspects of police culture that should not be understated. As possibly with Irish farmers, Welsh miners, French truck-drivers, and many other occupations, the collectiveness and solidarity of police culture is said to ease the strains that police officers are faced with on a daily basis (Brown, 1988; Chan, 1996; Waddington, 1999). Study of the role police culture plays from this perspective focuses on the “coping mechanisms” (Paoline, 2003, p.200) that are said to insulate group members from the pressures and tensions confronting police in their workplace.

The hazards police culture is said to protect officers from originate in two environments, occupational and organisational.

The occupational environment relates to an officer’s relationship to the citizens he serves. Within this environment an officer may be conscious of the presence of or potential for danger inherent in every call he must attend (Kappeler et al., 1998). He may also be cognisant of the unique coercive power he possesses, providing him, where he judges it appropriate, with “a licence to threaten drastic
harm to others” (Muir, 1977, p. 37). Unrealistically perhaps, no matter what the situation an officer’s duty finds him involved with—dangerous, adrenalin-fuelled, awkward or otherwise—he is perhaps expected as Manning (1995) cited in Paoline (2003, p. 201) comments: “to create, display and maintain his authority” and not lose face. From this standpoint officer-mistakes may not be tolerated, they might therefore have to be covered up entirely or at the very least, where possible, diminished in advance of scrutiny.

The second environment police officers work within is organizational, which consists of one’s relationship to the formal organisation. Here the officer may again be faced with a number of major issues that make it hard for him to cope with the situations in which he may find himself. This includes the unpredictable and punitive supervisory oversight he might face (Manning, 1995). It also includes the ambiguous role identification which may force him, depending on time and place, to be a custodian of order-maintenance, a law enforcer, and also a service provider (Brown, 1988) and the pressures he may endure through the need to achieve results, convictions and clear-up rates (Skolnick, 1975).

Moreover, the highly permissive legal context he ought to referee justly – characterised by the doctrine of officer discretion and autonomy - may place further moral strain on an officer. How can he treat every person he engages with according to their needs? How can he distinguish the potential for good from the potential for bad? Each of these elements may place the police officer in a position where it is more likely understandable that he will utilise the value
In addition to helping officers to cope with the stresses of their environments, the core characteristics of police culture are said to teach new and advancing members about the day-to-day components of police work, by means of their learning the craft of policing through occupational socialisation (Manning, 1995; Van Maanen, 1973). Within this construct, a new recruit’s occupational culture is said to provide him with a blueprint of instructions on how to become an effective and accepted police officer. This may involve not alone acquiring an understanding of the formal norms and values associated with policing through training, but also borrowing, creating, and acquiring the informal ‘know-how’ of policing in the real world where he is barraged with the stresses of his occupational and organisational environments (Punch, 1979).

It can be argued that Chatterton’s (1979) early study of police work on the streets of Manchester, England, ably encapsulates this notion of ‘police culture as a teaching-tool,’ in that he demonstrates how young trainees are transformed into ‘practical coppers’. The common-sense or “recipe rules” (Brogden et al. 1988, p.33), of the police culture are experienced, understood, judged, decided upon, and then absorbed, as the recruit police officer is said to become streetwise.

In this job it’s not always possible to work to the book. Common sense plays a large part in police work and that’s the angle that the practical
copper sees the rules from. That's the way you can tell the good bobby from what we call the plastic policeman – the bookman who doesn't know what the job is all about (Quoted in Chatterton, 1979, p.83).

Closely associated with the alleged requirement that police trainees must learn from their occupational culture to be successful, is the notion that police culture can also be utilized as a tool of reinforcement. Here it is important to remember MacGreil’s (1996, p.33) definitional contention which guides this research, that culture is part-corroborated through the use of symbolic meaningful systems, i.e. through shared language and rituals. Indeed the processes of reinforcing police culture may be seen to occur through the mediated transmission of war-stories, myths, anecdotes, gallows-humour, and jokes (Van Maanen 1974; Holdaway, 1983; Fielding 1994a).

The final function of police culture which shall now be explored deals with bureau-legal rule manipulation. Police work is a morally complicated activity because discretion has to be exercised as to whether in any given situation a criminal or disorderly act has taken place. In essence, a Garda is personally responsible to ethically ensure that the precepts of the criminal law are justly transformed into action. The low-visibility of much police work, with little direct supervision or monitoring by senior officers – other than retrospectively – means that Gardaí may report having considerable operational discretion regarding the how, where, when, and who to monitor, stop, search, arrest, charge, and detain
or seize goods from, and whether to and what amount of force to use to achieve these means. Just as crucially, formal action draws officers into file preparation, statement taking and other bureau-legal processes that include case construction, interpretive court presentation and organisational and judicial review (McLaughlin, 2009).

Drawing on this, Reiner (1992, p.107) has suggested that police officers are actually guided by their cultures in the direction of what he classifies as the “ways and means act”; a position where prejudices, stereotypes and social biases may guide a policeman’s actions given the potential latitude presented by ‘discretion’. Whether or not, this “ways and means act” (Reiner, 1992, p.107) has analogous application in An Garda Síochána may prove interesting to uncover.

**Conclusion**

The notion that culture is not a variable that An Garda Síochána has; it is something that defines how the organisation is raises the possibility that reform and change in policing are not simple matters of cumulative and progressive improvements. The often cited ‘fly in the ointment’ of reforms and policing plans is, as we have already touched upon above, that operational-level police culture has an unambiguous ability (the free-will) to subvert adjustment efforts if its members do not consider such modifications needed or necessary.
Disillusionment with rule-tightening as a way of reforming the police leads as Chan (1997, p.55) tells us, to a growing interest in a second approach: changing the police culture [by influencing officer’s hearts and minds]. From this alternative paradigm, it is not that rule changes and structural adjustments are incapable of advancing significant change, it is not that advice, decree or management direction will fail to induce long-lasting organisational transformation. It’s just that without operational–level Gardaí working interactively and collaboratively as one to create their own and the organisation's future (Dannemiller and Jacobs, 1992); any talk of change may be meaningless and premature. What must be determined, therefore, in an evaluation such as this, which is concerned with analysing the subjective interpretations of Garda culture, is, whether or not the operational-level personnel of An Garda Síochána are championing the policies introduced by reforms as their own and turning them into meaningful actions on the ground. This is neatly captured by Senge (2000, p.15) when quoting W. Edwards Deming, he said: “Nothing changes without [the] personal transformation [of those within].”

This was the real challenge for Garda senior management as they embarked on the path of reform post Morris. An agenda of reform in An Garda Síochána had been set out and put into action. But what was needed was a paradigm shift in the way policing was thought about and delivered throughout the organisation; what has yet to be decided is whether street-level Gardaí have decided each of the reforms introduced were needed in the first place, and if so, whether they
were for good or for bad i.e. advantageous or detrimental. To put this issue in a nutshell, police culture as an outcome of the free-willed decisions of Gardaí can affect conscientious judgements and behaviours. As Samuel Butler, said “Every man’s work, whether it is literature, or music, or pictures, or architecture, or anything else, is always a portrait of himself” (Gini, 2010, p. 76).

Improved Garda integrity, therefore, is not something that the organisation that is An Garda Síochána can simply claim to possess because it has introduced reforms aimed at improvement in this area. It is something the organisation’s members must satisfactorily demonstrate and deliver through their individual perceptions when they are called to account. It is to the enterprise of such an analysis, that the research efforts of this thesis must soon turn. Before doing so, however, it is necessary to say something of the methodological concerns and methods which directed the empirical discovery of this research.
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Introduction

This chapter deals with the methodology and research methods used to gather the primary data later relied on in this thesis which required the researcher to make strategic decisions involving varieties of options. As every individual choice brought with it a set of biases and assumptions about the research, each key decision deserves qualification. Then the ideas governing the research will be addressed. Thereby, the selection of semi-structured interviews, as the method most appropriate to the needs of this research, will be substantiated. This is an important issue, which will specifically seek to reflect on many of the practical, theoretical and ethical issues that were repeatedly encountered during this research project. Next, the application of this research instrument shall be analytically appraised. Finally, issues relating to data analysis will be considered.

The initial planning phase

Having decided to draw on perceptions to determine the extent to which the reforms implemented owing to the findings of The Morris Tribunal, have affected the operational-level occupational culture of An Garda Síochána, it became necessary to make a number of evaluative decisions about the strengths and weaknesses of the variant research strategies which were presented in the
relevant literature, in order to ensure that the investigative approach adopted was appropriate to the research needs of this work.

As methodology penetrates the whole research process, in turn, it placed a number of requirements on the planning stage of this project. The first of which was to elaborate the nature of the link between theory and research. Then the epistemological and ontological background of the research needed to be meticulously thought through. After that, the link between Garda perceptions and actions needed to be reflected upon. Each of these issues is now reviewed in turn.

The link between theory and research

Being faced with the challenge of elaborating the nature of the link between theory and research in this work, it was soon appreciated that one of the defining decisions which had to be addressed was whether this research was to be done in order to answer questions posed by theoretical considerations (the process of deduction). The alternative position was to view theory as something that should occur after the collection and analysis of some or all of the data associated with the project (the process of induction) (Parahoo, 1997, pp.36-37).

Bryman (2004, p.8) points out that deductive theory involves, reasoning from the general [a hypothesis carefully constituted on the basis of what is known about a
particular domain] to the specific [a premise that provides a guarantee of the truth of a conclusion]. This would not have been fitting because what was to be accomplished in setting the research question as it is, was not simply to empirically posit the core characteristics of individual integrity and Garda culture, to deductively test the sample’s adherence or otherwise to a circumscribed and inadaptable model. Rather what was required was to derive the fundamental nature of a Garda’s world as revealed by their perceptions of everyday social-working life, in order to determine the extent to which the reforms implemented owing to the findings of the *Morris Tribunal of Inquiry* (2002-2008), have impacted upon Garda occupational culture to deliver enhanced individual integrity. The approach therefore had by necessity of purpose to be inductive. It had to move from the specific [research question] to the general [an argument assembled by interpretive reasoning] if it was to place a special emphasis and importance on the fluidity of the perceptions and personal experiences of each sample participant.

**Establishing an epistemological and ontological grounding**

Having decided upon a qualified inductive strategy, the next issue was to consider an epistemological and ontological grounding for this research. The concern here was what subjective assumptions about knowledge and being were inevitably present in the way the researcher envisaged his work? Here, he specifically wished to substantiate the idealistic predilection which had directed
the research. A central issue in this context was the question of where he had sought to position himself between the two paradigm extremes of positivism and interpretivism. In the former, the research focus involves an effort to construct universal laws which demonstrate that social behaviour has an objective reality. In the latter, by contrast, the research emphasis would be to make accurate descriptions of social reality in terms of the persons involved (Bryman, 2004, pp. 11-16).

Thinking about this clash of epistemological positions in light of this author’s subjective assumptions about knowledge and being, philosophically, he felt most comfortable with the canons of interpretivism; for in his subjective opinion, knowledge of the world is intentionally constructed through a person’s lived ‘human’ experiences. This position embraces the ontological tenets of constructivism as postulated by Bruner’s (1986, p.95) claim that, “contrary to common-sense, there is no unique ‘real world’ that pre-exists and is independent of human mental activity and human symbolic language”. By accepting this position he thereby rejected the positivist contention that human experience of the world reflects an objective independent reality. In so doing he appreciated that his own position as a Garda working within the organisation under investigation would impact upon the outcomes of this research. Specifically then, this approach uses: an interpretive ontology, transactional epistemology, and directs a hermeneutic, dialectical methodology, which is relative to time, place, paradigm, the interpreter and his selections, the research sample chosen and
their respective positions, and perhaps many, many, more variables besides.

Put plainly what all this means is that this thesis reports on this author’s production of reconstructed understandings and rests upon the craft, skills, and the personal judgement of this author/researcher. It is concerned with validity but also concentrates on trustworthiness and authenticity. This will not stop those who believe in objective truth from criticising this research, but at least, this author has sought throughout the entire report to demonstrate integrity concerning his impact on the research and the subjectivity and partiality, this reveals. This thesis represents an inside-researcher's aim to look for the different means by which meanings are made through a Garda's relationship with his/her occupational culture – through the ways discourses relating to organisational issues and key events may control every manner of Garda perceptions.

As was necessary this author looked very closely at the issues surrounding being an inside-researcher. His readings afforded him an awareness that, in general, the chances of findings being considered worthy “can be enhanced by a judicious combination of [researcher] balance between involvement and estrangement” (Hammersley, 1993, p.219). The potential problems in this instance, as the researcher reflectively observed them, centred on his researching in familiar settings and the relative lack of culture shock or disorientation he may have felt because of this. Likewise, there was a possible conflict related to his ability at times to gauge the honesty and accuracy of responses. Similarly, participants
may have been more likely to reveal intimate details about their lives to someone not deemed a ‘stranger’. Certainly the researcher also appreciated that the relative partialness of his insider knowledge, from his position of holding the rank of Garda [the lowest rank in An Garda Síochána], may have hampered his understandings. He was also wary of assuming his views were more widespread or representative than was the case. Moreover, balance was demanded between being ‘too native’ as against ‘turning stranger’ (Hockey, 1993). The researcher was also aware that while in time his mantle may seem magical and offer revealing insights, he was not organisationally bullet proof (Holian and Brooks, 2004, p.14) – he did, after all, wish to continue to progress his career in An Garda Síochána after the publication of findings.

An awareness of these issues before the research began ensured the researcher put in place an inside-researcher ‘survival kit’ of a trusted highly experienced non-police researcher acquaintance to act as touch stone offering advice and detachment when regularly needed. Keeping a reflexive log of personal judgments and drawing continuously on all supervisory support available also proved a useful way to ensure the researcher’s strategy would be challenged if personal bias or organisational interests tended to predominate. Throughout the study it was evident that the importance the researcher had placed on considering ethical issues in advance of his embarking on research, and the time he had taken to capture and reflect upon the events that happened within the research, ensured a degree of findings dependability that at the very least must
surely be deemed higher than had he failed to do so.

**The link between Garda perceptions and actions**

The epistemological and ontological background of this research having been indicated, the link between Garda perceptions and Garda actions, was what next attracted attention. Broadly speaking, “Talk and action are related in either of two ways: on the one hand, ‘police sub-culture’ might be conceived … as attitudinal variables that seek to explain police behaviour [what police officers say they do is useful to predict what they do]. Alternatively, ‘police sub-culture’ might be conceptualized as a hypothetical construct that lends coherence and continuity to the broad spectrum of police thought and practice” [police officers may often say one thing yet do another] (Waddington, 1999, p.288). Either way, learned analysts of police sub-cultures have long-since been aware of this potentially contentious gap between ‘talk and action’, and its intrinsic implications for drawing conclusions from research (see for example, Waddington’s, 1999, pp.287-309; Glietman’s, 1994, pp.420-451; and Loftus’, 2008, pp.756-777, respective divergent attempts to address this issue).

Concentrating on a delineation of the relationship between Garda perceptions and Garda actions in this thesis, as was already evidenced in chapter one, some level of cultural change has been assumed by Garda management to have already occurred as an implicit consequence of the reforms being introduced.
Correspondingly, it was a central premise of this research that a greater understanding of Garda perceptions in An Garda Síochána will help to assess whether real change had taken place or otherwise.

However it must be recognized at this juncture that perception “describes one’s ultimate experience of the world and typically involves the processing of sensory input.” (Lindsay & Norman, 1977, p. 2) This view recognizes that the reforms introduced to a Garda’s world to affect their culture are not simply neutral objects which stand before Gardaí for contemplation. Each reform is likely to symbolize or recall a particular way of behaving, thus provoking reactions which are either favourable or unfavourable towards developing integrity and accepting change. Consequently, this connection between the reported perceptions that Gardaí offered and the subsequent actions they may thereafter take is quite a complex issue for a number of reasons. The not least of these reasons being that perceptions are often pre-reflexive and pre-behavioural. As a result, they may have a structural, functional and cultural logic, yet may be considered at times contra-rational.

The link between perceptions and actions may not always be like for like. A Garda may for example, report holding contradictory perceptions - attesting to a belief in work-place diversity, while at the same time expressing a degree of prejudice. That being said, accessible evidence from past Presidential election poles in the United States of America (see Fazio and Williams, 1986, pp. 505-
for example, do clearly indicate that there seems to be a high correlation between strongly held (positive or negative) perceptions and their behavioural expressions; by extension it may also be reasoned that if it were not so, then research efforts such as this would be as useful as a chocolate teapot and have little to reveal. Indeed (in a closely related way to the cognitive development theory of Jean Piaget), it may realistically be the case that Gardaí will try to avoid the cognitive disequilibrium caused by dissonance. As a result, they learn to understand that consistency and predispositions which match action serve to reduce inner anxieties.

Besides, the suspected irregularity of interviewees and the revelation of opposing meanings and understandings (where detected) was expected to reveal as much to the researcher as strictly comparable replies.

Such being the case, it is nonetheless here recognized that the reporting of perceptions in a research setting can be affected by other factors such as "...self-presentation, self-perception, and self-justification" (see Weber, 1992, pp. 132-134). The words of Oakley (1981, p. 56) instantly came to mind, she notes: "Interviewees are people with considerable potential for sabotaging the attempt to research them". An awareness of these issues presented a problem in the planning of this research effort, which concerned the overall degree of "impression management" (Goffman, 1990, pp.7-10) that the research may be subjected to in time. It was, therefore, going to be vital that each respondent was
assured from the beginning that the researcher himself was a Garda and that their individual anonymity was and will continue to be one-hundred per cent assured – it was guaranteed that in no way could they be identified through their responses or other means to anybody other than the researcher.

Taken together the methodological issues highlighted above, coupled with the direction provided by MacGreil's (1996) approach to cultural inquiry and Kohlberg's (1958a) means of evaluating Garda integrity, represent the contextual parameters which refined the research strategy of this work. The next section shall address how these commitments shaped the way this thesis was designed.

**The research design**

Just as form should follow function in architecture, likewise, method is directed by ontological and epistemological position in research. “A decision at one stage has consequences that both open and limit the alternatives available at the next stage.” (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p.111) In practice, what this meant was that it became necessary for this research to adopt a qualitative stance that favoured interviews if the provision of rich, varied and valuable narratives concerning Garda perceptions was to be realised. This decision was reached for a number of reasons. Firstly, a consideration of Kvale's (1996) advice enabled the researcher to appreciate the potential merit of this method for his own purposes:
The qualitative research interview is a construction site of knowledge...interviews are particularly suited for studying people's understanding of the meanings in their lived world, describing their experiences and self-understanding, and clarifying and elaborating their own perspective on their lived world. (Kvale. 1996, pp. 2 & 15, as cited in S. Charman, 2004, p.11)

Secondly, this method was chosen because the researcher had used it in past research endeavours that were similar to this one and it had always appeared to be objective. It was also considered useful because it utilised the researcher's strongest chance of obtaining 'good' information, by drawing on his position both as an inside researcher and, hopefully, trusted colleague. Finally, the interview empowers Gardaí to talk about themselves and their work, which is a very useful research tool indeed when dealing with this group, as Reiner has noted of his own research: "No doubt I was aided by the social researcher's strongest weapon, the delight people take in talking about themselves to an unfailingly rapt audience" (1991, p.52).

The obvious disadvantage of this method relates to the interaction between the researcher and interviewee that has been covered above and will be discussed more thoroughly shortly when an examination of the research process is presented.
In turn, this decision to interview sample participants directed a number of further key choices. The first of which was whether the interviews were to be in some way guided. Then, it was necessary to consider sampling issues and how best to select the participants for this research and how many interviews would be 'enough'. Thereafter, it was necessary to address the research decision to only select operational-level Gardaí working in Dublin, Ireland’s capital city, for participation. Then a number of ethical issues had to be appreciated. We will now focus on the clarification of each of these design considerations.

**Whether to guide or not to guide?**

In response to the question of whether or not to guide the interviews, the researcher drew predominantly on Bell's (1993, pp.92-94) advice, and wanted to veer away from structured interviews due to the inherent rigidity they tend to possess. He was also cognizant of a number of previous ethical and operational difficulties that he had with unstructured interviews, so a focused (semi-structured) approach was selected to offer the best returns of data. A semi-structured interview falls somewhere between a structured and unstructured format. Importantly, it allows one the flexibility where required to modify the interview schedule as new issues arise and developments emerge (Charman, 2004, p.14) or as the researcher gets wiser about their subject. Moreover, it provided the researcher with an interview schedule (see Appendix 1, page 226) which insured the interviews conducted remained focused on the research
issues, while at the same time allowing him to take part in the interview outside of merely recording responses. This was necessary to establish a working rapport in order to earn participant trust.

The interview schedule which was utilized for this research was broadly based on overlapping themes. Having been piloted and adjusted according to a number of teething difficulties encountered, it thereafter sought to capture participant’s name; age; gender; rank; specialization; and length of service. It continued with a broad question which was designed to settle interviewees by requiring them to speak about the policing experience they had gained in their respective careers - a subject which was intended to be uncontroversial and innocuous. Research participants were then each asked to explain what they understood about the reasons why the Morris Tribunal of inquiry was set up - did they think it was needed? Next, the interviewer asked his participants to provide their understandings of the conclusions/findings Morris reached about An Garda Síochána. Then, interviewees were required to outline what they considered to have been the most significant organisational reforms to have come out of the Morris Tribunal. This question, in turn, was followed by a request for the Gardaí involved to provide the interviewer with their perceptions of the impact the Morris Tribunal had on their work as a Garda. Each of these questions was designed to assess the level of contextual knowledge participants possessed concerning the Morris Tribunal and the resulting reforms introduced.
At this point in the interview schedule a change in research strategy occurred, interviewees were now asked to complete a quantitative schedule requiring they view a list of nine key reforms, namely: community policing; diversity recruitment/training; code of ethics; the Professional Standards Unit; policing forums; Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission; civilianisation of promotion boards; Covert Human Intelligence System; and the Garda Inspectorate. Participants were instructed to select each of these reforms in order of significance having regard to their impact on policing in Ireland.

The researcher realised all too well that this decision to effectively conduct a mixed methods approach may for some (see for example: Smith, 1983, pp. 12-13, and Smith and Heshusis, 1986, p.8) instantly raise an issue of epistemological controversy, in that not all academics would agree that the integration of qualitative and quantitative research methods is either possible or desirable. Addressing this issue, the researcher had appreciated from his reading (Bryman, 2004, pp.454-463; Deacon et al., 1998, pp.47-63; and Bryman, 1984, pp. 75-92) that in certain instances: "a research method from one research strategy is viewed as being capable of being pressed into the service of another" (Bryman, 2004, p. 454). The justification for doing so in this case rests with the fact that the researcher was still putting his participant's qualitative perceptions of reforms at the centre of inquiry. After all, what was intended was to use participant's ranking of reforms in order of their significance, to enable a structured conversation concerning the interviewee’s choices.
Finally, the informants of this research were asked to reflect on the questions they had been asked throughout the interview and the discussion they had provided relating to the reforms. Thereafter they had to consider if policing in Ireland changed because of the Morris Tribunal, or was there anything else that they would like to discuss about any of the issues raised.

**Sampling issues**

Design issues having been settled, this researcher had to consider: how he might suitably select a ‘correct’ sample, where participants should emanate from, and how many interviews to conduct would be 'enough'. Here two key considerations guided methods: “appropriateness and adequacy” (Fossey et. al, 2002, p.726).

Deliberation resulted in participants being randomly chosen using a purposive judgement sample. “A judgement sample is obtained according to the discretion of someone who is familiar with the relevant characteristics of the population” (Mugo, 2011, p.5), its common element, perhaps, is that participants are selected according to relevant criteria. Drawing on his acquaintance with the internal structures of An Garda Síochána and drawing on Reiner's (2000, 87) advice, which noted that police occupational culture may present … “structured variations according to rank, assignment, and specialization…” it became clear that a stratification of the research population according to these noted variables was required. The population strata of all street-level officers (not above the
rank of Sergeant) attached to Dublin’s north-central policing division deemed necessary for inclusion in this instance were as follows: regular policing; community policing; detective backgrounds; training specialists; traffic personnel; and support staff. As to the issue of how participants were randomly selected, this was done by simply writing the unique registered number of each person obtained from a listing of all persons employed in each of the specialisations under scrutiny, folding them up, mixing them thoroughly and then getting another person to pick out ‘enough’ persons to be invited to participate – the researcher’s instruction was that this point would be reached when fifty persons had been selected.

**How many was enough?**

Why was fifty persons deemed to be ‘enough’? The key to selecting participants was to reach the milestone of theoretical saturation suggested by many (e.g. Morse, 1995; Sandleowski, 1995; Bluff, 1997; Byrne 2001; Fossey et al. 2002) as the criterion by which to justify adequate sample sizes in qualitative inquiry. The difficulty, however, was as Morse (1995, p.147) observed that “saturation is the key to excellent qualitative work”, but at the same time she noted that “there are no published guidelines or tests of adequacy for estimating the sample size required to [inductively] reach saturation” (1995, p.147).
A general yardstick was needed, therefore, to estimate the point at which saturation was likely to occur. This issue had in some ways been part predetermined by the research proposal submitted by the researcher in keeping with university guidelines; this required an up-front estimation of the number of participants likely to be involved in the study. Drawing on Bertaux’s (1981) advice that fifteen is the smallest acceptable sample size in qualitative research and Creswell’s (1998) recommendation that twenty to thirty interviews were necessary, this author had contingently hedged his bets and fixed upon the safety of thirty interviewees to deliver the possibility of theoretical saturation. With the possibility that not everybody invited to take part would have the time or interest to participate in this study, fifty interviews was afterwards considered ‘enough’ to provide a good chance of input success.

**Towards an operational-level view of change**

Why did this sample not include officers above the rank of Sergeant? This happened because the researcher had benefited from reading Elizabeth Reuss-Ianni’s (1983) most interesting book, which indicated the likely probability of two cultures existing between street-level officers and management in An Garda Síochána. She can be seen to have argued that this is a situation that might be expected in any policing organization where authority and responsibility are dispersed and a tradition of operation and procedure is being forced to respond to internal and external pressures for change.
As this research had been specifically designed to address the possible resistance that the various reform programmes introduced because of Morris might have, over time, experienced, if not accepted by operational-level police workers as being in accordance with their everyday practices, it made contextual sense that this research would solely concentrate on the perceptions of Gardaí and Sergeants - for in this author’s opinion they represent the operational-level coal-face where procedure gets translated into operational practice.

Another issue that arises from the above is why was this sample not chosen from a Donegal population of Gardaí, after all Justice Morris’ Inquiry had been limited to this singular policing division? While it is true to say that the terms of reference of Morris were restricted to County Donegal, many of his findings as we have already seen and each of the reform programmes towards change had nationwide application. Consequently, we should now be as likely to interpret augmented Garda integrity, or otherwise, in every one of the twenty-five Garda divisions throughout Ireland. Furthermore, it is also possible that the Gardaí serving outside of the Donegal policing division might be all-the-more likely to resist changes introduced by a reform agenda because of their shared perception that ‘up there it was different’ and that what happened on the border during ‘The Troubles’ has little bearing on Garda activities and functions elsewhere down South.
The division chosen to conduct the present research is the largest and by far the busiest in Ireland. It is situated in the heart of Dublin’s demanding metropolitan area. It comprises four Garda districts, each with their own respective stations. The districts being researched are: commercial; residential; urban; suburban; recreational; and industrial in categorization. It can be argued that the Gardaí working therein constitute a microcosm of the wider Irish policing context. It can also be said that they are very much operating at the sharp-end of Irish policing. This selection of individuals with various experiences gained over time and place was expected to maximise depth on a range of perspectives relating to the research aim.

Towards the end of October 2010, the sample was first contacted by way of a letter of invitation to participate in the research (see copy of letter, Appendix 2, page 227). They were requested to make contact with the researcher by return and to indicate a time and place that was convenient to meet. Of the fifty letters posted, providence and the good will of thirty-eight Gardaí (76%) who had agreed to participate left the researcher with a decision to make; did he need to interview all of his volunteers? In keeping with Peshkin’s (2001, pp.240-242) advice, it was decided that sampling would be on-going throughout the course of the research and intimately linked with the emergent nature of the research process. And so it was the intention to let sample recruitment continue until emerging themes were fully developed. While perhaps this stage was reached after fifteen or so interviews, ultimately, all thirty-eight substantive interviews
were completed, as it simply did not seem fair or right to deny a volunteer the opportunity of an interview as they had been so kind as to offer to contribute.

In the end, a quite inclusive Garda sample was secured to inform this research. There were ten females and twenty-eight males in the research cohort (it is noteworthy perhaps, that these figures are broadly representative of the demographic gender profile of An Garda Síochána, which in 2009 showed that female participation was 22.4% and male participation stood at 77.6% (An Garda Síochána, 2009, p.22). Moreover, there were ten Sergeants and twenty-eight officers of Garda rank. Of the ten female officers that participated, there were seven Gardaí and three Sergeants. Correspondingly, there were twenty-one male Gardaí and seven Sergeants. The mean average of years of service when rounded to the nearest whole number was eleven years. There were nine participants from regular policing units, eight from community policing, four from crime task force, six from detective backgrounds, three training specialists, five traffic Gardaí, and three individuals from support staff, all contributing to this research. Whether the perceptions of this sample are broadly representative of the wider Garda population is clearly impossible to say, as the semi-structured interview approach taken captured a specific cultural frame within a specific group at a particular time, that is not to devalue this research and say that it did not present a rich picture, as it was, of Garda operational-level culture and integrity.
Ethical considerations

“Any research that includes people requires an awareness of the ethical issues that may be derived from such interactions” (Orb, et. al., 2000, p.93). In qualitative research such as this difficulties can be alleviated by an awareness and use of the well-established ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence and justice. The researcher's continuous reflection on these ethical principles ensured he remained aware of the potential for role conflict in his research, in so much as he was both a member of the organisation he was researching, and a researcher of that organisation.

Formal access to research members of An Garda Síochána was anticipated to have been a stumbling block from the start. The difficulty in this instance was that given An Garda Síochána had only recently been criticised by Morris, senior management may have been suspicious and considered they had little to gain and much to lose from the findings of this research, if they turned out to indicate Garda opposition to reform.

Of course, the true litmus-test of an accountable organisation is that it is also an open one, so the ease with which official permissions to research An Garda Síochána (see Appendix 3, page 228) were granted was most pleasing. It pointed towards the transparency of the establishment that currently exists and the legitimacy of the proposed research. While the researcher did receive a
qualifying call from the head of the Garda Analyst Service which directed a request to if possible, apply his research to a national sample, rather than restrict his inquiries to a single Garda division, the context of this call was clearly directed by an attempt to be most helpful. In point of fact, the full resources of the Garda Analyst Service were offered to the researcher should the need for same have arisen.

**Being honest about the interviews**

The researcher found his participant’s stories and perceptions to be interesting and enlightening. Interviews with the sample ranged from thirty minutes to one hundred and thirty minutes with the average length being sixty-five minutes. They always began in a similar fashion as the researcher set the stage by reading aloud his notes for interviewees (see Appendix 4, page 231) and obtaining informed consent from his participants together with their permission to digitally audio tape the interview so as to ease the process of accurately transcribing what was said. In all cases he promised faithfully to store the recording safely and destroy it straight after the transcription of data had taken place.

The setting for the first few interviews proved a difficulty as the letter inviting Gardaí to participate in the research had naively indicated that the researcher was willing to conduct his inquiries in a place that was convenient to his
participants. The interviews that followed while informative were often staccato in nature due to them being subject to the awkward interruptions of a busy city centre Garda station. In an effort to overcome this hitch the researcher obtained the use of a private consulting room in each station he visited, and used this for the vast majority of his remaining interviews. This afforded him the privacy and comfort of being able to offer the informants to this research a cup of coffee and a Kit-Kat, which instantly established good relations with the interviewee and created a relaxed trusting environment that served to reveal rich and comprehensive narratives.

As to the actual process of producing quality knowledge through an interview, most interviews went well, while some others did not go so well. Reflecting on this occurrence, the researcher appreciated that the research interview presents an interpersonal situation. It was, after all, in the various instances that took place no more than a staged conversation between two colleagues of broadly equal standing within the same organisation about themes of mutual interest. Most of the researcher’s informants appeared to him to be consistent and as best he could tell, truthful. They gave concise accounts and offered valuable knowledge about the topics under consideration. However, a few were harder to interview than others, perhaps, in these cases, the researcher had failed to adequately motivate and facilitate his interviewees’ willingness to reveal their perceptions. His skill at interviewing then, while certainly having improved through the practice of this research process had yet to reach the point where he would lay claim to
being able to obtain interviews rich in knowledge from every individual.

As the live interview situations were always enriched through the interviewer’s sensory appreciations of interviewee’s facial and bodily expressions accompanying their narratives, it was necessary for the researcher to capture these potential nuances of meaning. Consequently, the researcher considered it worthwhile to complete a ‘record of iterative development’ (see Appendix 5, page 233), which sought to capture these immediate impressions – these contemporaneous field notes always served to provide a valuable reminder and context for the later analysis of transcripts.

**After the interviews**

This interaction of the interview situation having been offered, we now proceed to an appraisal considering the post-interview stages of the researcher’s working with the outcome of the interviews: analysing and interpretively reproducing a report of the knowledge produced in the interviews.
Analysis

As was previously delineated, this research employed a hermeneutical interpretation of meaning. Practically this required the researcher to involve himself in a continuous back-and-forth process between sub-parts, parts and whole. He had to review each single transcript and formulate a personal interpretation, at the same time keep in check what this micro interpretation meant to the overall macro picture being created. This process of meaning condensation and verification obviously required an abridgement of the hundreds of pages of scripts of perceptions, as expressed by interviewees, into shorter formulations restated as simply as possible by the researcher. As each interview was completed, the researcher asked himself what has just been said by the interviewee that confirms his earlier presupposed themes or confounds them. He chose interesting passages, nuances, differences, paradoxes, worked out metaphors to capture what were for him important shared understandings, attempted to bring out connections and structures significant to the project, and so on it went.

It is here recognised that in constructing the meaning of the research from an analysis conducted in this way, this researcher has played a part that might be interpreted differently by another. This report does not, however, claim objectivity in the sense that only one meaning is correct. On the contrary, it readily accepts that a plurality of interpretations may have been possible.
It was this author’s aim that the comprehensive consideration he afforded to each of the above issues would give rise to a “good Gestalt” (Radnitzky, 1970, p.218), an inner unity of the text, which is free of logical contradictions. The remainder of this thesis is offered to bear testament to whether or not this was achieved.
CHAPTER 5: THE FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF THIS RESEARCH [PART I]

Introduction

It is in this chapter that the primary data of this thesis is introduced. Pertinent aspects of the findings are singled out and described. The intention of this chapter is to present and analyse the findings and to discuss what implications they might have for the various concerns, problems and ideas presented within chapters one and two which impelled this research.

In addition, this chapter will facilitate our moving from the research findings to considering what significance the data may have within the context of the overall aim of the research. The findings that have been outlined by our Garda cohort of thirty-eight participants are subjected to critical scrutiny in an interpretive attempt to discover what they might mean. They are systematically evaluated and contrasted with reference to the theories, information and considerations that were noted earlier in this thesis report.

It is important to here note that, in general, the interviews raised issues which are beyond the limits of this dissertation and the tapestry, which respondents wove through answer, gesture and omission makes it clear that other substantive research undertakings may prove fruitful in this area. Such was the quantity of primary data generated by the interview process that it became necessary to
make a decision that would help to filter the findings for logical presentation.

To begin with, it was decided that analytical presentation would be eased by portraying the preliminary perceptions of those interviewed using the headings suggested by the previously refined three key public policy imperatives defining integrity; these were personal responsibility, ethical conduct and a willingness to be answerable for one's actions. This was intended to provide the reader with an initial flavour of what the Gardaí questioned had to say about the Morris Tribunal of Inquiry, broadly reflecting the arrangement of ideas presented in chapters one and two above, and supplying an assessment of whether or not Gardaí acknowledged the Tribunal as being necessary. There will also be an examination of what these issues might offer to our understanding of the perceived need for cultural change in Irish policing.

Thereafter, we will go below the surface of this group's culture or “backstage” as Goffman (1959) might put it and proceed to analyse participants' perceptions of the process of reforming An Garda Síochána. This examination is designed to present an insight which captures something of the shared, created, and borrowed, beliefs, ideas, values, norms and symbolic meaningful systems that the Gardaí interviewed held in relation to the reforms that were designed to modify their judgments and behaviours. Specifically, we will look at those perceptions that concerned: personal responsibility (the Professional Standards Unit; the promotion system; diversity policy implementation and training; joint
policing forums; community policing); ethical conduct (ethics; the Garda Inspectorate; CHIS); and a willingness to be accountable (GSOC). In so doing, it will also surely inform us of Garda perceptions on the acceptance or otherwise of reforms. This work will bring us partly, at least, towards our cultural analysis of Garda perceptions on the basis of a stage six evaluation of Lawrence Kohlberg's (1958a) moral psychology of integrity. The residual issue of ‘whether Garda occupational culture got in the way of change’, we will leave to chapter six to develop.

Garda perceptions of a lack of personal responsibility

It was suggested earlier that, had it not been for the neglect of certain Gardaí of varying ranks to take personal responsibility for the events that were occurring in County Donegal, many public complaints could have been avoided. Garda perceptions concerning this issue and those relating to the other key public policy imperatives of ethical conduct and a willingness to be answerable for one’s actions, were in the main, probed with the opening questions of the interview schedule.

Interviewees were asked for their views on the reasons why the *Morris Tribunal of Inquiry* was established, more particularly, interviewees were comprehensively quizzed through a series of focused questions as to whether or not they believed such Inquiry was needed. Simultaneously, they were requested to offer their
perceptive understandings of the findings and conclusions Justice Morris reached. They were also asked to provide their perceptions regarding the most significant organisational reforms to have come out of the Morris Tribunal and what impact, if any, the Tribunal has had on the work of a Garda. Within this general framework of questions asked, it was possible to introduce the many other related concerns that emerged through discussions of participant responses.

Generally, it is possible to suggest that almost all interviewees were broadly convergent in highlighting a contextual understanding of the main issues surrounding Morris, which were in step with those issues highlighted in chapter two above as weaknesses of personal responsibility. It is interesting to note that it was the shared belief of many that Morris had been charged with investigating "...Garda corruption and wrong-doing of a group of rogue members... that were irresponsible and stupid, and let us all down" (Interviewee 9). More particularly the offending Gardaí in Donegal were referred to by others in less flattering, yet no less edifying terms as "Gobshites intent on bringing us all down for self-interest" (Interviewee 33), and "Fucking idiots that were intentionally targeting families to exert power because they hadn't the wherewithal to exert control even though they knew it was like, wrong ..." (Interviewee 15). It is true to say, some of the cohort interviewed were quite vehement about their views and showed little empathy for those who had become embroiled in the Donegal situations. In point of fact, a senior Garda Sergeant puts this matter succinctly by asserting a view
that the Gardaí concerned got off lightly for their aberrant behaviours:

[Referring to the Gardaí highlighted for their misdeeds by Justice Morris]

...each and every one of them were grown men that deal with wrong-doing on a daily basis - there are teenagers with more sense. They knew what they should and shouldn’t do. They must have known it would out. They’re aware of, the North is no excuse, they shouldn’t have done what they done. They all got off lightly in my book. They were reckless for their own reputations and for the rest of us... It makes me bitter to think about, it really disgusts me to be honest. I couldn’t believe it even when it first broke on television...There’s no excuse for what they done. They should all have been sacked outright without fuck all, not pensioned off or retired out to pasture and allowed to have gotten away with it (Interviewee 6).

It is true that certain Gardaí interviewed did exhibit somewhat more magnanimity and sympathy towards the situations their Donegal colleagues found themselves operating in, as the “Troubles” (Interviewees 7;11;12;16;29;34) were often situationally referred to in dialogues. Still, it seems, these perceptions were not enough to accept the difficulties Gardaí may have encountered working in the "political hot-bed of Donegal" (Interviewee 27) as a valid excuse for the many irregularities of personal responsibility which occurred. This was exemplified by one interviewee’s response, who felt that: “The Donegal situation cannot be seen separately from what was happening on the other side of the border then..."
however, she continued thus: “what they did is inexcusable and offensive to the rest of us...they let themselves and everybody else besides down” (Interviewee 15). Indeed another officer interviewed said: “yes, there is no doubt the Guards up there had it rougher than the rest of us, but all the more reason for them to steer a straight course” (Interviewee 23).

In describing the perceptions of the interviewees, it may be proffered that it was the respondents’ general consensus that the lack of personal responsibility demonstrated by those concerned with policing in Donegal did not constitute an accepted cultural norm that generally existed in An Garda Síochána either then, nor since. Rather, the sample confirmed that the Gardaí, who featured in the Morris Tribunal, had for a number of reasons including: "...to get on with the demands of their bosses..." (Interviewee 30); "...because they wanted it seen that they were shit-hot investigators, when they weren't" (Interviewee 18); and "...it was to do with the optics of having a handle on the Provos...” (Interviewee 5), lost sight of their respective commitments to the professional standards and public service which was their collective personal responsibility to uphold.

It is noteworthy at this juncture, however, that the above vignettes can be interpreted as also generally failing to acknowledge the wider application of Morris’ findings as being relevant to the whole of An Garda Síochána, which may be suggestive of an explanation for what happened in County Donegal that seeks to distance or neutralise the Dublin based Gardaí from what happened ‘up there’.
Garda perceptions of unethical conduct

In chapter two we were made aware that Justice Morris’ inquiries had identified a number of Gardaí in Donegal who had failed in their actions to maintain the pursuit of policing values based upon the ethical imperatives of honesty, accountability, respect and professionalism. As a matter of fact, the Tribunal also reported it experienced a lack of ethics, cover-up and officer self-protection repeatedly throughout its modular hearings.

What then did Garda perceptions relating to the identified occurrences of unethical behaviours in Donegal reveal? What attitudinal standpoint did those interviewed broadly share regarding Donegal policing, which Justice Morris had pronounced as:


Each of the research participants were absolutely unequivocal that the various Gardaí that had behaved dishonourably in County Donegal, were worthy of the highest condemnation for their unethical behaviours. Here once again we arguably can evidence the neutralising properties of the ‘rotten apple’ theory being actively applied by participants. Despite the fact that little situational-
appreciation was shown for the “crooked carry-ons and shenanigans” (Interviewee 20) of the various Gardaí concerned, so too, it can be argued that there was little acceptance of the pejorative findings Justice Morris reached as having wider relevance for the whole of An Garda Síochána. That is not to say, however, as might subsequently have been broadly expected that the participants of this research considered the introduced reforms as being altogether unnecessary.

Interestingly, those interviewed showed varying degrees of repugnance for the wrongs that had led to the Morris Inquiry. As one interviewee put matters, “…there isn’t a Guard among us that could put hand on heart and come up with the conclusion that what happened in Donegal was anything other than absolutely wrong…” (Interviewee 25). Likewise, another research participant provided this telling comment: “Donegal reads like a Robert Ludlum or Patricia Cornwell fictional novel, it has all the makings of one of those far-fetched stories that you read on Spanish holidays, where absolutely everything and everyone is corrupt at the start and you know by the end that justice will have to prevail…it’s hard to describe how far removed from what actually goes on in the rest of this organisation, Donegal was or is” (Interviewee 23). It is suggested then that the perceptions of the cohort interviewed are such that they may once again be interpreted as having opted for a ‘rotten apple’ theory to explain the acts of deviance that occurred in County Donegal. On almost every occasion those interviewed asserted that the moral and cultural values of An Garda Síochána as
they stand were breached by those culpable Gardaí in Donegal (a neutralising presentation which incorrectly seeks to present the whole organisational body of An Garda Síochána as otherwise being sound).

So too, their respective interchanges can be interpreted as seeking to establish that the expected ethical standards of Irish policing had rightly been called into question by those concerned with Garda wrongs (perhaps in a cognisant or unwitting attempt to validate participants as having nothing to hide because, other than what happened in Donegal, the rest of the organisation is to be considered sound and different from ‘up there’).

In furtherance of this interpretation of the ‘rotten apple’ theory in play, it is interesting that being a member of An Garda Síochána provided many of the Gardaí interviewed with a reported sense of considerable pride, each in turn readily recognising that they represent “a proud tradition of world-recognised peace-keepers” (Interviewee 21). Further, they acknowledged their career as one which requires “…the highest standards of integrity and honesty with others” (Interviewee 14). It is hard to see how such shared assessments correspond with Justice Morris’ broad view that the Garda Síochána as a whole was losing its character as a disciplined force. In fact, it is, perhaps, fair to say that Morris’s prediction that: “Ultimately the gradual erosion of discipline within An Garda Síochána is a developing situation that will, sooner or later, lead to disaster” (Morris, 2004, 1/ 13.102), was not established by the perceptions revealed by
Having arrived at this point, the residual “backstage” (Goffman, 1959) question which remains as yet unresolved is why then would Gardaí operating in Dublin who it seems so openly see the Morris affair as being concerned with them ‘up there’, only, be willing to accept imposed change, if they earnestly felt that what happened within policing in County Donegal had little or no relevance to them?

By the same token, it is difficult to reconcile Morris’s suggested wider application of his unfavourable findings, which proposed that “…Of the Gardaí serving in Donegal it cannot be said that they are unrepresentative or an aberration from the generality. All of them were trained as Gardaí and served under a uniform structure of administration and discipline that is standardised” (Morris, 2006, 5/6.02), with our interviewee’s marked perceptions. Instead it appears, on the surface of matters at any rate, that the neutralising perceptions reported by the cohort interviewed for this research were very much at odds with Morris’ contention of pervasive ill-disciplined and atypical misbehaviour.

Once again however, it is this author’s sense of things that we must step back to remind ourselves that the lack of inclination of our participants to fully embrace the wider application of the criticisms of the County Donegal message. A message that made it abundantly clear to all that the very corruption unearthed ‘up there’ in County Donegal may very well at the time also have been systemic
throughout the rest of their organisation. The rejection of this message, is illuminating; as it is plausible that the participants to this research were in fact engaging in self-protection, they having realised the importance of wishing to distance themselves from and ultimately discard (by means of a neutralising message concerned with implied rotten apples) the privation of values and principles associated with Morris’ inquiry. While such neutralising behaviours may be ‘understandable’ given the damming circumstances revealed in Donegal policing, what would be less pardonable is for our cohort to not fully later recognise that the practices which went on in Donegal had wider consequences and therefore required the implementation of the reforms that were introduced.

Garda perceptions of failing to account

Justice Morris had made it abundantly clear that a failure to account for wrong-doings had characterised proceedings throughout his hearings. In point of fact, he insisted that instead of telling the truth about events as they had happened, some of the Gardaí called before the Tribunal gave evidence that was ‘bizarre’, extraordinary’, ‘beyond credibility’ and ‘a tissue of lies’: … “[It had] all the hallmarks of an invention cobbled together as a cover-up for their extraordinary activities” (Morris, 2004, 1/6.32). Perhaps one of the most perplexing findings made by Justice Morris was the extent of this steadfast failure of some to account for actions. Garda Martin Leonard, in explaining his reluctance to reveal what his colleagues had done, infamously explained to the Tribunal: “You don’t
hang your own.” (Morris, 2004, 1/1.49)

Interestingly, this failure to account for one’s actions drew mixed perceptions from interviewees. While in the main the research participants can be credited with offering disparaging attitudes towards some Donegal Garda members’ apparent sense of impunity and failure to account for actions; there were a notable few of the older interviewees in particular that offered views that might be interpreted as ‘contextually compassionate’ with regard to the non-existence of structures that were organisationally in place to report wrong-doing at the time of the Inquiry. Consider the following two quotations that have been specifically selected to highlight this suggested apposition, the first being:

A Guard’s job is not an easy one and it’s not always possible to be friends with everyone. Besides, anyone that involved themselves in the things they did in Donegal I wouldn’t want as a friend or owe them any loyalty. They should have told the truth, blown the whistle, done whatever – it would have been easier in the long run (Interviewee 32).

And the second being:

I have to say, I’m in some way, a small bit sorry for those lads up there [referring to Donegal] who were on the periphery, it must have been difficult. I mean it wasn’t just the ordinary regular Guards involved was it?
If you were a junior Guard up there those that were involved were the persons you were supposed to turn to for help. Donegal was hard enough without bringing that sort of trouble on you. I mean the senior detectives were the ones causing all the trouble as far as I know. Who could you have reported to? Back then there were no systems or procedures in place to anonymously report. To have come forward almost certainly would have meant you were sent to Coventry and your position would have been, well it wouldn’t have been easy would it? (Interviewee 8)

Both these extracts are striking as they clearly bring out the conflict between two strong commitments. On the one hand, we see the professional and personal obligation to ethical conduct, heedlessly upholding the reputation of An Garda Síochána and public service. While on the other hand, the commitment to self-preservation, and the relationship that exists where if the deviant behaviour is being conducted by an individual or individuals within the organisation that are deemed to be ‘powerful’ or ‘protected’ or ‘those to whom one should normally turn for help’ (the in-group), then the willingness to report aberrant actions becomes all the more difficult. In addition to losing their ‘in-group’ status within An Garda Síochána, the would be whistle blower may find themselves being feared, distrusted and ultimately ostracised or worse still not responded to when needing help to avoid danger. In such circumstances it is conceivable that the benefit of revealing information to a public or independent body, or, more particularly, to one’s immediate supervisor within the organisation may not be
perceived as worth the fallout. Both of these commitments may be felt as moral predicaments.

Drawing on the above, one thing becomes clear; Garda perceptions about accounting for actions, similar to those concerning personal responsibility and ethical conduct, may involve what might be quite often intricate and sticky moral situations that amount to dilemmas between principles and practices, which can draw on diverse and complicated, internalised, and external cultural values for direction. Clearly then having ‘independent’ structures to allow for confidential reporting, such as those recently made available by the Garda Confidential Reporting Charter (March, 2011), may have a positive influence on a Garda’s willingness to account for actions.

**Did Gardaí accept the Tribunal as necessary?**

Gardaí were specifically asked for their perceptions on whether or not a Tribunal was necessary in Donegal? If a change in Garda culture was to be observed - conditional to the reforms introduced having had an impact - it was crucial that this foundational issue be afforded a positive reception. To be deemed morally diligent Gardaí surely had to indicate the behaviours of their colleagues in Donegal as being “nothing less than outrageous” (Interviewee 6). They had to suggest that “they should not have been able to get away with it for as long as they did” (Interviewee 8). Further perhaps, those interviewed had to unveil
shared beliefs that pointed towards the view that the Gardaí concerned in the Donegal affair “…ought not to have taken the path they did in the first place” (Interviewee 23). As a minimum, they had to conscientiously agree that “the damage inflicted on their victims and the organisation was shocking” (Interviewee 4).

Given these requirements it is most interesting that members of the cohort interviewed offered each of the above individual responses. They were practically undivided in their agreement that the Morris Tribunal was required.

There was however one interviewee that had a different view, although she did by caveat leave the impression that something appropriate had nevertheless to be done. In return to the query of whether or not the Tribunal was needed, this female Garda had the following to say:

_The last thing any of us needed was another Tribunal, all that legal wrangling cost we the tax-payers of this country a small fortune. I think it cost eighty-million, or something like that. For what [reason]? So that a handful of Garda bullies and their yes-men could be rooted out. We should have been able to deal with the likes of them fellahs internally anyways without having a Tribunal. No I don’t agree a Tribunal was needed, that’s not to say something wasn’t needed though. I just think that a six year, eighty-million euro Tribunal was not the answer. Do you_ (Interviewee 27)
Why then, might interviewees have earlier sought to distance themselves so eagerly from the Donegal affair? Perhaps this happened because, Gardaí were not willing to tacitly accept all of criticisms levied at An Garda Síochána, and instead they veered toward self-protection or self-preservation from the blunt message being delivered about their practices. They did, nonetheless, it seems understand that those reforms introduced were needed to deal with the realities of Irish policing as it was back then.

In summary, we are dealing with the concern raised at the end of chapter two, of whether or not the above Garda perceptions are in agreement with the need for cultural change in Irish policing. It is hard to reconcile the insights offered by the interviewees informing this research concerning the recognised weaknesses of personal responsibility, unethical conduct and failures to account for actions they perceived certain Donegal Gardaí to be liable for, and their composite acceptance of the need for a Tribunal, alongside Justice Morris’ suggestion that the Garda Síochána as a whole was losing its character as a disciplined force (Morris, 2004, 1/13.102). The institutional extension of wrong-doing to the entire Garda organisation might - although understandable given the history and legacy of police corruption elsewhere - have been a step too far for those interviewed to fully accept. It cannot here, at any rate, be evidenced that the disease which was generally accepted as having affected a few apples at a particular place and time was as readily acknowledged as having been cultivated by a blighted barrel.
This undoubtedly moved the challenge of reform to a difficult place, where the currency and credibility of challenging the existing ways of doing things in An Garda Síochána had the potential - as our earlier highlighted reading of Brogden and Shearing (1993) had primed - to upset and challenge the reforms applied. This was particularly the case given that the Gardaí interviewed had been so strongly dissociated with what happened in Donegal. With this in mind, it is fitting to now focus on our interviewees perceptions of the reforms introduced, before making further assessment in the direction of our research aim.

**Garda perceptions towards the organisational reforms implemented**

As the respective interviews progressed past the opening stage described above, a change in research strategy occurred. Interviewees were invited to think through a list of nine key reforms, as follows: community policing; diversity recruitment/training; code of ethics; the Professional Standards Unit; policing forums; the Independent Ombudsman; civilianisation of promotion boards; CHIS; and the Garda Inspectorate. They were given a list of reforms and requested to give the reform they believed had the greatest impact on Irish policing their number one and the reform they considered to have had the least impact on Irish policing their number nine, with those selections that remained resting somewhere in between as appropriate. Table 4 below represents the selections made by all thirty-eight interviewees.
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**Mean Average:**

|               | 3.0 | 5.5 | 6.8 | 4.7 | 7.7 | 3.7 | 1.7 | 6.6 | 5.1 |

1 = Greatest Impact
9 = Least Impact
Even the most cursory look at the selections above indicates a distinctive pattern developing. To undertake an adequate statistical analysis of these figures discovered would be to go beyond this our current chiefly qualitative remit. What is interesting though, is that, regardless of structured variations according to rank, assignment and specialisation (Reiner, 2000, p.87), the frequency of selections in many of the columns appears to be shared by most. For example, strikingly thirty-one of the thirty-eight interviewees perceived the Garda Síochána Ombudsman’s Commission as having had the greatest impact on policing in Ireland.

Drawing on the results presented in Table 4 above, it can be reasoned that the findings are preliminarily indicative of a broadly connected configuration of learned, created and borrowed beliefs, ideas, values, norms and symbolic meaningful systems, which characterised and influenced the free choices of interviewees. In short, it is possible to discern that the effects of a distinctive culture may have influenced and guided the initial interrelated selections of interviewees’ choices and that no distinct sub-group cultures were distinguished. This was especially noticeable to the researcher during the general interviewing process where he discovered emerging themes developing rather more quickly than he had expected.
Garda perceptions of the reforms relating to personal responsibility

As highlighted in chapter two, it was a common theme throughout Justice Morris’ Tribunal hearings that certain members of An Garda Síochána had avoided accepting personal responsibility for their own actions and revealed the minimum initiative and maximum dependence upon the limitation of their duties by a strict interpretation of either the directions received and/or possible ambiguity in the parameters of their respective roles (Morris, 2004, 1/12.110).

It is this author’s view that cultural change and augmented integrity in An Garda Síochána are highly dependent on the presence of an organisational emphasis on ethics, pride and professionalism, and the acceptance of an interrelated set of specified satisfactory standards. It is most interesting then that the Gardaí interviewed for this research were broadly inclined to say that the process of setting priorities and performance targets for An Garda Síochána, (as required by section 20 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005), and the establishment of a Professional Standards Unit within An Garda Síochána, to examine, measure and review, as directed, the operational, administrative and management performance of An Garda Síochána, (required in keeping with section 24 of the same Act), have had the least impact on policing in Ireland - why was this discovered to be the case?
Research participants afforded the Garda Professional Standards Unit their lowest rating, perhaps, because the majority of respondents reported having little insight into the functional role that the Garda Professional Standards Unit actually carries out. In fact, one officer interviewed succinctly captured the shared essence of the majority when he said: “I gave the Professional Standards Unit my lowest score - well I gave it my lowest because, I don’t really know what they are supposed to do; it’s not really to do with us is it? It’s more for management, I think, so that they can measure improvements, set targets, and compete with each other reviewing whether one manager is better than the next at getting us to be more professional” (Interviewee 24).

It is clear from the above then that regardless of the work that the Garda Professional Standards Unit may or may not be doing to clearly identify both organisational strengths and areas where improvements can be made; disappointingly, the Unit’s chief message - that no member of An Garda Síochána must ever again allow themselves become complacent about the professional standards, it is everybody’s personal responsibility to uphold – has for whatever reason or reasons either failed to be fully communicated effectively to Gardaí on the ground, or if being properly delivered, has been rejected by the occupational culture of those operating on the ground as to a certain extent inconsequential. It also appears, that there may be a rather worrying and potentially precarious shared perception amongst certain rank-and-file Gardaí that the process of examining and reviewing professional standards might be
more concerned with quantitative box-ticking and the follies of management rivalry than with the arguably more effective method of stimulating strong positive leadership at all levels of the Garda organisation.

Despite this, it is critical to the promotion of integrity in An Garda Síochána, particularly as it relates to the personal responsibilities it is every Garda’s duty to uphold, that the Garda Professional Standards Unit strive to ensure that the improvement plans, advice and assistance that they provide to the organisation are disseminated in practical targeted ways that will maximize the professional self-regulation and reflexive learning of every single Garda.

As this author sees it, the importance of the Garda Professional Standards Unit’s communiqué that we are one and all personally responsible for eradicating what is bad and promoting what is good, is arguably too important to be delimited to just the officer in charge of the relevant area for implementation, as is the current situation. Rather should it in the future be conveyed to everyone throughout the entire Garda organisation? Such an effort in time might thereby eradicate the recurrent potential of Gardaí avoiding personal responsibility for their actions. In addition it may also help avoid accusations that Garda members revealed the minimum initiative and maximum dependence upon the limitation of their duty by a strict interpretation of either the directions received and/or possible ambiguity in the parameters of their respective roles (Morris, 2004, 1/12.110) owing to insufficient means of communication.
It was submitted in chapter two of this work that the Tribunal had taken issue with a number of specific recruitment issues in An Garda Síochána. The first of these drew attention to the fact that the then existing system of promoting personnel, which according to Morris had too often produced supervisors who did not bring to their task the requisite level of enthusiasm, commitment and ability required (Morris, 2004, 1/13.122). In this author’s view successful prevention of corruption and aberrant behaviour begins with strong leadership - leaders can and do make a difference – perhaps Garda supervisors particularly have to be capable of effectively demonstrating their determination to clean-up the organisation by offering themselves as personal champions of integrity should difficulties arise. As Punch reminds us, “People look up in organisations for signals to see if firm messages are really meant” (2000, p.318).

Therefore, the introduction by An Garda Síochána of their new promotion regulations pursuant to Statutory Implement No. 485 of 2006 – which required those involved in interviewing for promotion positions in An Garda Síochána to be adequately trained and comprised of a majority of ‘non-Garda’ staff – had without doubt two very tall orders to fulfil. Firstly, the participants of this research would have to perceive that the new promotion system ensured probity and fairness for all, and further that the effects of cliquish canvassing, partiality, or favouritism had been all but eradicated from the organisation. How did these standards of fairness relate to the actual perceptions of those Gardaí interviewed?
Interestingly, it was widely held amongst interviewees that: “there have been [really] significant improvements in this area” (Interviewee 23), owing it was felt by many to “the introduction of more civilians on boards than Gardaí, which has got rid of lads phoning each other for favours” (Interviewee 32). When asked by the researcher if they each felt the Garda promotion system is now fairer than once it might have been – almost all agreed that it was now fairer. There was however, a residual issue reported by a number of contributors that related to the connected concern of what were perceived as “lateral promotions to specialised units” (Interviewee 37). These seemingly preferential positions for many “in the national units, over in Harcourt Square [Garda Operational Headquarters]: SDU [Special Branch], NBCI [The National Bureau of Criminal Investigation], GBFI [The Garda Bureau of Fraud Investigation], OCU [The Organised Crime Unit], those sort of jobs, there’s still nepotism and favouritism in them jobs (Interviewee 3)”. As one member further explained: “NBCI is called after the nursery shop the Mamas and Papas, because you have to have a high-ranking Mother or Father in the Guards before you get in over there” (Interviewee 19).

The potential risk of disproportionate emphasis being placed on national and specialised units to the detriment of uniformed operations should not be overlooked. With the apparent success that the introducing of the requirement for two civilians on every civilian board has had on Garda perceptions of probity and justice being allied to their hierarchical interview process, it seems wise to insist, therefore, that the composition of every single interview board, including those
involving lateral movement into areas of specialisation, match the structure of what has been perceived by this author to have worked well for vertical promotion.

Accordingly, it is here suggested that An Garda Síochána continue its review of promotion processes to ensure relevance; they perhaps also should consider identifying a fair means to accelerate the advancement of highly talented employees through the various ranks.

Given the rather positive reception this reform has enjoyed from the cohort interviewed, it was perhaps surprising then that it scored quite so poorly in terms of the selections interviewees made relating to those reforms that have had the greatest impact on policing in Ireland. When examined about this, many participants reconciled this suggested anomaly with the reasoning that the positive effects of impartial promotions will take some time to overcome the results of what formerly passed as acceptable.

The second recruitment issue that reforms had attempted to address was concerned with the alleged failure of An Garda Síochána to make determined efforts to recruit from religious and ethnic minorities (Morris, 2004, 1/13.122). Consequently, the admission regulations into An Garda Síochána were amended by Statutory Implement No. 560 of 2005, which specifically removed the previously prohibitive height and Irish language entry-requirements, thereby
opening up An Garda Síochána to the potential of receiving a wide diversity of multi-cultural applicants, who might otherwise have failed to reach the basic entry requirements. The diversity training for members of An Garda Síochána was also presented as a minimal requirement of diversity appreciation efforts (Garda Síochána, *Diversity Strategy*, 2009, p.2).

Once again it is a noteworthy preliminary reflection of the levels of integrity of those interviewed that the vast majority shared affirmative and progressive perceptions of the introduction of “new people” (Interviewees 1; 4; 8; 20; 26; 36; 37) into An Garda Síochána. Many considered that this batch of “all different faces, shapes, sizes, religions, genders and persuasions, was a breath of fresh air and long overdue, given those we’re policing” (Interviewee 8). Gardaí broadly felt that: “all of them were given the same treatment and the welcome we’d gotten when we joined” (Interviewee 31). Many were of the view that “this new face of An Garda Síochána” (Interviewee 3) had done much to enrich the organisation since their arrival: “developing a wider ethnic and cultural appreciation” (Interviewee 18) and “helping to translate foreign languages” (Interviewee 28) were amongst the two most commonly cited ostensible benefits to An Garda Síochána resulting in no longer having “an all-Catholic, white, Irish male staff” (Interviewee 25). It was very difficult to detect any form of racism or prejudice amongst those interviewed towards their own colleagues. Equally, it is noteworthy that members reported having sympathetic views towards: “the homeless of Dublin” (Interviewee 4); “girls who are forced into prostitution”
(Interviewee 8) ; and “…travellers [who] have nowhere to camp and are now through no fault of their own forced to park up their caravans on the side of inappropriate roads without humane conditions” (Interviewee 11).

Given the broadly constructive views which those interviewed relayed in relation to diversity issues, it is disappointing then that An Garda Síochána has yet to deliver on its pledge on ethnic and cultural appreciation training to the entire service. This training should be implemented immediately to build on the solid foundation of diversity which has currently been presented in An Garda Síochána and guard against the danger of racist attitudes developing in the future.

Addressing themselves to the much broader failings of personal responsibility raised by Justice Morris - that certain Gardaí had for whatever reason, or reasons, clearly lost sight of their commitment to the broader community they served – pursuant to sections 34-36 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 those charged with reforming An Garda Síochána had introduced the immediate establishment of Joint Policing Committees. The professional expertise of Gardaí on functional and strategic policing matters was thereby reduced, in part at least, to local residents who were for the first time to have a formal say in how they were policed.
As can be observed in Table 4 above interviewees were inclined to place Joint Policing Forums quite high on their respective lists of reforms that have had the greatest impact on policing in Ireland. Just why this was the case was not generally revealed, however, it was reasoned by one contributor as having something to do with:

…the emphasis that has always been brainwashed into every member since their Templemore [Garda Training College] days – community comes first - what would I want the Guards to do if I lived here? What would the Good Samaritan do? How many times was that drilled into us in training? It’s what we’re the best in the world at (Interviewee 20)!

Indeed the Gardaí interviewed were practically undivided in their perceptions of Joint Policing Committees, seeing them, not as something that has made a significant impact on policing in Ireland, but rather commendably perhaps as:

Just a formalisation of what always went on the length and breadth of the country since 1922 [The year of formation of An Garda Síochána]; meetings with the community in school halls, farmhouses, creameries, churches and station barracks have been the cornerstone of the formation of the Garda Síochána - public service always meant just that (Interviewee 36).
While it is true that some of the older members interviewed were of the view that:

*The ‘Troubles’ and the drugs epidemics of the eighties may have caused a shift away from holding formal meetings because they were at times and in certain places too dangerous (Interviewee 27).*

They were quite insistent, however, that this did not mean that they had drifted away from their local communities. Maybe pleasingly, in the direction of our present assessment of Garda integrity, not a single member interviewed was of the view that the introduction of Joint Policing Committees had in any way taken from the professional expertise of Gardaí on functional and strategic policing matters. The Gardaí questioned did not take the bait of the researcher’s suggestion that they had relinquished their powers to the public for the first time, they preferred instead to insist that: “… *locals have always had a say in how they were policed*” (Interviewee 10) and that “*The image that is always depicted of a Guard is one of a person ready to listen and be directed by the issues that most need his attention*” (Interviewee 16).

Interviewees held strong positions in defence of their respective past records and offered contextual examples of their dealings with all stakeholders, especially with those whom they considered marginalised or vulnerable, that demonstrated considerable pride in the safety, security and protection they had each afforded to Irish society.
When examined about the objective of the Garda Síochána National Model of Community Policing to “renew, reinvigorate and re-structure” (An Garda Síochána, National Model of Community Policing, 2009, p.1) collaborative partnerships between An Garda Síochána and community members, interviewees generally entered into one or other of two camps. The first of which contained only a few members who were slightly affronted and tended to be defensive concerning the idea that there was a need in the first place to renew or reinvigorate community policing. They believed, rather, that the Gardaí “have always excelled at making inroads with the community and keeping them close” (Interviewee 16). The second camp contained the majority of contributors who were less defensive in their respective responses and broadly welcomed anything that might be perceived as helping to foster improvements. As one interviewee said: “If putting a model around what we already do helps to put more of the local community stakeholders at ease and encourages them to engage with us, then sure, I’m all for it” (Interviewee 14).

As discussed in chapter two, An Garda Síochána’s National Model of Community Policing was designed to “enhance the organisational importance and attractiveness of the community policing role amongst Garda staff, so that, a strong ‘ethos’ of community policing would be inculcated throughout the entirety of An Garda Síochána” (An Garda Síochána, National Model of Community Policing, 2009, p.1). Generally, research participants shared the belief that the community policing role was always considered important and attractive in An
Garda Síochána:

*Community policing has always been held in high regard, sure there are some that are better suited than others to it, but here in the North Central, community policing was always something good for your career. Most of the diddle-de-do [referring to the District Detective Units] cut their teeth in community policing and were rewarded for being good at it* (Interviewee 30).

Some participants did however express considerable lamentation for the passing of the Community Policing Unit from Store Street Garda Station from an area of dedicated specialisation to something for which all members within the station party were now responsible. Such interviewees generally felt that:

*…this dilution of responsibility prevents quality relations with community members from developing; look at [interviewee names a past member of the now disbanded Store Street community policing unit] when he was down in [interviewee names an identifying area of the Store Street district], he had the whole place sewn-up, nothing happened down there that he didn’t know about, because he put in the time with them and they trusted him. He couldn’t do that the way things are now* (Interviewee 32).
Drawing on this idea, it is suggested that the restructuring of community policing may have been an attempt, in certain places, to fix what was not broken. Given the strength of perception that those on the ground felt regarding the forced restructuring of community policing and demobilisation of the community policing unit in Store Street Garda Station, arguably there was little point in turning what was once an area of expertise and specialisation into a general role for which each and every member has responsibility. It is submitted that there may be some merit in reassessing the situation as it currently stands in the Store Street district by asking the public represented through the Joint Policing Committees to outline their particular preference.

**Garda perceptions of the reforms relating to ethical conduct**

It is perhaps an understatement to say that Justice Morris’ Inquiry had found significant inadequacies in the ethical conduct of certain Gardaí in County Donegal; for in this author’s view the situation presented in County Donegal was far more disconcerting as some of the behaviours uncovered bordered on scandalous criminality. Indeed, Justice Morris pointedly commented that An Garda Síochána was losing its character as a disciplined force. Addressing this concern in chapter two, we read that recommended changes in structure to the ethics and training of Gardaí were indispensable so as to militate against a recurrence of the extraordinary chronicled events (Morris, 2005, 3/5.05).
The harbinger of structural change to ethics and training in An Garda Síochána was Section 17 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005, which pressed for the establishment by regulation of a code of ethics that was to include standards of acceptable conduct and practice for members of An Garda Síochána. It is most unsatisfactory that in January 2012 - at the time of writing this thesis - the Minister of Justice and Equality has not yet published and ratified an ethics code for An Garda Síochána. In attempting to discover why this may be the case, this author was informed that a draft of the expected code has been furnished by Garda authorities and is currently with the Irish Attorney General for his endorsement. It would appear, then, that a Garda code of ethics is “well underway” as was Ahern’s (2010, p.1) foregoing appraisal.

In chapter two, we discovered that the Irish police are not without some guidance concerning this issue, for each and every Garda has signed-up to and received instruction regarding An Garda Síochána’s Declaration of Professional Standards and Ethical Values (2003). When interviewees were questioned on their perceptions of this issue, they were chiefly found to be mindful of their obligations to this declaration. They recognised their respective roles towards protecting and vindicating the personal dignity and human rights of each and every member of all communities; “yeah ethics –it’s clear enough really, our function requires us to protect and defend everybody’s dignity and human rights according to their needs, regardless of their background” (Interviewee 6).
Concerning the fact that An Garda Síochána can only carry out its functions with the consent and support of the community, Gardaí were aware of their “obligations to cultivate special relationships with the local community through regular contact and exchange of ideas, and partnerships” (Interviewee 19). They also perceived that their position in society was “a special one” (Interviewee 31), as one interviewee concisely recognised “we only hold our powers and authority in trust for the public, we must always operate with integrity and respect –we act on behalf of the public for their protection and good” (Interviewee 5).

Cultural values extolling diversity and equality were also a feature of Garda perceptions of the condition of ethics in An Garda Síochána. The Gardaí interviewed were almost undivided in their agreement that “diversity and a basic humanity for one another ought to be part and parcel of what every Guard does” (Interviewee 27). Similarly, most of those interviewed talked about the importance of moral judgement to guide the performance of their public duties. In point of fact, Garda members reported the significance of “having respect for people” (Interviewee 10). They felt that “it’s important to always be courteous and keep your cool” (Interviewee 32). Another interviewee said: “remaining objective is crucial”, for another, “doing what is right, especially in difficult situations that test you [is important]” (Interviewee 2). In addition Gardaí were fully aware of their responsibility in the direction of “…the need to always be professional in our dealings with public stakeholders” (Interviewee 10).
It is possible to conclude that many of the attitudes and perceptions detailed throughout the interviews were in complete agreement with the public assurances provided within *An Garda Síochána’s Corporate Strategy Document 2007-2009*. The constancy with which research participants’ communicated cultural values relating to “proportionality” (Interviewee 17), “basic honesty” (Interviewee 11) and “common decency” (Interviewee 6), and their seeming willingness to promote diversity and accept equality in all its forms, augur well in the direction of a positive assessment of the current state of justice and individual integrity among Garda members.

Interviewees’ perceptions in relation to their commitments to the *European Convention of Human Rights* that took effect in An Garda Síochána from the 31st December 2003, and the ensuing outcome of this document on policing in Ireland were also explored during the research process. Once again it is a promising reflection of Garda integrity as it may be that it was widely held by those contributing to the research that it was right that the minimum standards for the preservation of the fundamental freedom of each individual have been set out and merit protection not just by domestic and international law, but by each and every Garda all throughout their respective duties. As one officer said:

*Universal human rights impact the Guards, well they impact the Guards by doing what it says on the tin; they’re universal in that everybody has a right to them, regardless of whether you’re from Bantry Bay or Bengal.*
Whether you’re a fèar gorm [Gaelic word for person with dark skin] or fèar bán [Gaelic word for a person with white skin], whether you go to mass or attend a synagogue. Gay transgender, bi, young or old, it doesn’t matter. No matter what you’ve done you’re still entitled to your rights (Interviewee 13).

Fittingly, it was also very common for those interviewed to put forward the following mnemonic acronyms: “P.L.A.N.E.D” (Interviewee 33) [Garda actions must be proportionate, legal, accountable, necessary, equitable, and free of all discrimination] and “H.A.R.P.” (Interviewee 1) [Garda actions must be based on the organisational values of honesty, accountability, respectfulness and professionalism], which were presented as handy check-lists applied by members to aid their estimation of any action or proposed action in terms of its conformity with internalised principles.

In chapter two it was suggested that certain Gardaí may have supposed they could engage in immoral behaviours and their activities would go unnoticed, and in terms of the internal oversight mechanisms which had remained unaltered for decades they were perhaps correct. Sections 113-120 inclusive of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 were intended to address this reform issue. Sections 113-120 established an Independent Inspectorate to scrutinize and inquire into any aspect of Garda operation or administration and report to the Minister advising him of good practice. What assessment did the Gardaí interviewed make regarding the
impact of the Independent Inspectorate on Irish policing?

Table 4 above reveals that those interviewed in the main felt the Independent Inspectorate has had less of an impact on policing than some of the other reform measures introduced. In fact, only two of the thirty-eight research contributors were willing to place the Independent Inspector in their first three selections of the reforms that have had the most impact on policing in Ireland and both of these positioned this reform in third place. The far more popular position was to place this reform in the last three selections. This may be indicative of a reform which has failed to make a noteworthy impression. As a matter of fact, thirty-three of the thirty-eight participants placed the Independent Inspectorate in their last three selections.

Qualitatively, the reasons offered for this shared position were: “[because] it’s a bit like the Professional Standards Unit, really it has more to do with management than with Guards on the street” (Interviewee 23), and “unless I’m very much mistaken they’ve only produced a few reports. None of which really affected us, did they? They’re management and administration reports” (Interviewee 6). It is disappointing that there were also a significant number of persons within the sample cohort who simply wondered: “what is it the Independent Inspectorate actually does” (Interviewee 15)?
It seems then that street-level Gardaí have exempted themselves from the items offered for consumption by the Independent Inspectorate, deeming the Inspectorate reports disseminated as important for “management only” (Interviewee 18). This finding is revealing; it is arguably a shame that those consulted did not acknowledge their endorsement of the Inspectorate’s suggestions to the Minister as their own. What came across during the interviews conducted was that “this had to do with a failure of communication by the higher ups to stress the value of the Inspectorate” (Interview 2), or the fact that “it was not such a brilliant idea after all” (Interviewee 15). This deficiency of buy-in may be dangerous at the end of the day, translating into a situation where strategic intent fails to make an impression on the ground.

Addressing this potential issue the author suggests that enhanced contact is the key. The Independent Inspectorate should seek to improve their engagement and participation with Gardaí on the ground by using more innovative methods to disseminate their communications and by giving greater emphasis to marketing themselves and building grounded relations while visiting individual Garda Stations. The shared positive impressions of such professional exchanges may, in turn, cultivate Garda perceptions that the Inspectorate, while residually independent by necessity, is listening to Garda opinion in so doing, leading to its improved estimation with Irish police officers.
“The informant is the life blood of the good detective” (Westley, 1951, p. 70). The police use of informants is fraught with ethical difficulties, but the post-Morris introduction of the Covert Human Intelligence System (CHIS) into An Garda Síochána, driven by the need to develop safer, higher quality criminal intelligence than what had been conveyed in Donegal, offered a framework for ethical practice which may deal constructively with the important and complex ethical issues that informant handling frequently presents.

Interestingly it is good that it was the shared perspective of most interviewees that criminal informants and the CHIS handler, who exclusively works with them, are involved in an interdependent relationship; the informant requiring the advantage that the handler may offer and the handler needing the informant’s unique access to an otherwise impermeable area of criminal activity. Interviewees fully recognised the inevitable risk involved in this type of relationship:

*The problem [here] is what if the member handling the tout becomes too close, maybe he starts to sympathise with the tout [informer] too much, or to see things too much from their position, it’s hard to be objective if you’re not properly trained and closely supervise* (Interviewee 19).
Likewise, those asked broadly acknowledged the fact that CHIS was to be welcomed, as without it, a sub-culture might possibly exist that could foster a belief amongst Gardaí that the ends justify the means. In other words, policing in Ireland was professed as being engaged in a mission to keep communities safe and preserve the peace, if it requires at times temporarily suspending the Irish Constitution, infringing human rights or violating laws in order to accomplish that mission, then for the greater good of Irish society, it was recognised that some Gardaí might hypothetically say, so be it. It is supposable then that this type of misconduct could in turn nurture a situation where the rotten apples of An Garda Síochána fast became the golden apples for achieving results that others simply could not ethically accomplish. As one interviewee typically put this matter:

...there is always the possible worry that a Guard who isn’t a CHIS handler will be brainless enough to involve himself in a measure of risky behaviour to secure a conviction, particularly under pressure, what I mean is – take Donegal - the pressure they were under up there surrounding terrorist activities might have meant that the decision to participate in something a bit risky was a worthwhile consequence of securing difficult convictions for persons who they thought they knew did it, but are a bit away from proving it [noble cause corruption]. That’s why CHIS is so important (Interviewee 26)!
Towards our assessment of the state of Garda integrity, it is noteworthy that the majority of the participants of this research understood that the drive for quality intelligence and the secret nature of this area of work with criminal informers considerably boosts the possibility of the legality of the operation, as the untrained Garda’s subjective perception may hazardously begin to confuse the division between what is lawful and what might be considered ‘just’ in certain circumstances.

The foundation of CHIS to deal more effectively with the ethical issues involved with secrecy and accountability and the progress of introducing a professional model of appropriate practice that now offers guidance on how to precisely acquire criminal-intelligence, were equally accepted by a broad section of the research cohort as absolutely necessary to the promotion of an ethical response to the issues of Donegal coercion. Worryingly though, it was the reported perception of many of those interviewed that:

*The development of criminal-intelligence sources doesn’t really have anything to do with the ordinary Guard [on the street] anymore; we’re not really responsible. Even if you do develop someone willing to talk CHIS must take them away and that’s that – you’ll never hear from them again. There’s no real benefit to you to develop touts anymore (Interviewee 15).*
So, on the face of it, it would appear that many Gardaí have released themselves from their personal responsibility towards the increase of criminal informers available to Gardaí. As a result, it strikes the current author that An Garda Síochána needs to marry its compulsory focus on a strategy for safe proactive intelligence-led policing with equal efforts to offer increased encouragement and training to Gardaí to cultivate opportunities for additional intelligence gathering. Otherwise it may eventually be shown as one interviewee sullenly put it: “that the baby was thrown out with the bath-water” (Interviewee 15), thus potentially leaving An Garda Síochána without their lifeblood (Westley, 1951, p. 70) made available via the systematic use of police informants.

Garda perceptions of the reforms relating to accountability for actions

It is right that there is always an expectation that Gardaí will impartially enforce the law and their decisions will be open to internal and external scrutiny. Unfortunately, the legacy of policing in Donegal has revealed that for a few within An Garda Síochána this was mere myth. Certain Gardaí had engaged in a range of activities that broke their disciplinary code, overrode their sworn oath of office, flouted departmental directives and where corroborated by personal judgement, perhaps, even contravened the law. Morris’ findings clearly showed that some Gardaí were unwilling to account for their respective actions and/or inactions, and that the Garda Complaints Board existent at the time was incapable of getting to the truth of public complaints about this matter. In chapter two we read
that sections 63-112 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 dealt with the institution of
The Garda Síochána Ombudsman’s Commission (GSOC), procedures for public
complaints, investigations and other related measures to ensure on-going Garda
answerability. What were the perceptions of the Gardaí interviewed for this
research concerning GSOC?

The first thing worth drawing attention to is the fact that GSOC has by far had the
greatest impact on policing in Ireland; it is a stark piece of data that 82 per cent of
those who participated in this research were willing to say so. Of the Gardaí
consulted it was the shared perception of most that:

_The Ombudsman was needed sure because public confidence in the
Complaints Board was shot… The difficulty [arising from this issue] was
that even though the Complaints Board were trying their best, the
[general] reading [of the Complaints Board’s effectiveness] was that they
were a tiger without teeth_ (Interviewee 3).

Many of the Gardaí recognised that what was needed moving on from the Morris
affair was “a tough organisation that was completely independent of Garda
influence to satisfy public expectation” (Interviewee 21). In point of fact Gardaí
generally welcomed GSOC seeing it as “a determined effort to tackle the problem
of some old-school Guards thinking they were impenetrable” (Interviewee 7).
Correspondingly, it was cited as an immense disappointment to many research
participants that: “GSOC ruined their opportunity to be truly independent by taking ex-members of An Garda Síochána in as investigators...” (Interviewee 29). It was further suggested that:

...what should have happened was for those who were brought into the Ombudsman to have been set up to teach the civvies over there how to investigate. They shouldn’t have been allowed to have gone out into the field themselves. It wasn’t right that on Friday they were detectives in the Guards and on Monday they were leading investigations out of Abbey Street [the location of GSOC Headquarters] (Interviewee 14).

Garda dissatisfaction with GSOC’s early development was also expressed thus: “the Ombudsman fucked-up some of its earliest cases and showed they lacked real professionalism as investigators – they’ve had the up-hill climb of clawing back their credibility ever since” (Interviewee 15). Other issues concerned: “The lacks of sympathy Ombudsman officers have shown in sensitive investigations” (Interviewee 11), and the failure of GSOC “to offer general advice to Guards and prosecute vexatious and malicious complaints made [against them]” (Interviewee 23). While Gardaí readily accepted that the decision to prosecute complaints rests with the Director of Public Prosecutions in all cases, nevertheless, the general tenor of their grievance rested with “the fact that we’re not even told [by GSOC] that a file has gone to the D.P.P. for consideration” (Interviewee 1).
While those interviewed broadly accepted that the need for the establishment of GSOC was “totally crucial” (Interviewee 23), many feared that it has spawned “an error-intolerant environment” (Interviewee 15). The view largely expressed was captured by one interviewee, he said that: “to come forward when genuine mistakes or errors of judgement have happened is generally discouraged, because there is the impression that the Ombudsman is unsympathetic to the practical dilemmas Guards face, particularly where there has been a physical confrontation or altercation with a member of the public” (Interviewee 33).

Whereas it was interesting to see that GSOC has made the tough impact on Irish policing that it has, it is a perhaps a perturbing development that some street-Gardaí perceive that a blame culture might now exist pertaining to GSOC. Fostering integrity requires of Gardaí that they are open, honest and accountable for their individual actions, and those of their colleagues. It requires a perception that empathetic justice will prevail.

To go forward, the findings suggest that a climate of education be fostered where sensitive subjects can be discussed between concerned parties [the complainant, the Garda and the GSOC representative] without fear of instantaneous reprisal, with the emphasis of such sessions resting on remedially addressing individual learning rather than concentrating on individual faults.
As realizing justice through the discovery of the truth from Gardaí was such a difficult task for the Tribunal, promoting the development of an atmosphere of education - as already provided for within the Garda Síochána Act 2005 - might also have the advantage, if deemed appropriate, of building a greater measure of trust than currently subsists between some Gardaí and GSOC. This could bear influence on what Justice Morris labelled the “trigger syndrome”, whereby Gardaí were found throughout the Tribunal to only reveal information if they were specifically probed to disclose same. A general narrative on a particular issue was found to have evoked few useful responses (Morris, 2004, 1/1.49). Addressing this issue during research it is most reassuring that it was largely understood by most interviewees that: “We’ve had to adjust and change to the new system of accountability measures...” (Interviewee 6) As one research participant advanced: “It’s each man for himself now” (Interviewee 19). Another was of the view that:

It is compulsory now that you do account for your actions and for whoever is out with you. If there was a time when everybody by keeping their mouths shut and behaving like the three monkeys kept trouble at the door, then that day is well and truly gone now...The expectation that you will cover for another Guard has disappeared; it’s not worth your job (Interviewee 10).
On the face of things it appears then that GSOC has been perceived as: “the new broom” (Interviewee 34). The majority of those interviewed spoke of a culture of “always having to account for out of the ordinary behaviour now during investigations” (Interviewee 32).

But what of interviewee perceptions regarding whistle-blowing on a colleague, whether loyalty is perceived to be toward An Garda Síochána or to protect the public interest? What of the other side of the accountability coin? How agreeable were Gardaí to report aberrant behaviours of their colleagues? These issues deal with the really persistent problems of ‘silence’ and ‘not denouncing’; after all, deviant Gardaí can only succeed in wrongdoing if they are enabled to do so by those who are complicit.

Those who offered their views on this aspect of the research were almost unanimous in their responses having been asked if they believed ‘whistle blowing’ is acceptable practice in An Garda Síochána; the reply most recurrently received was “it depends” (Interviewee 17). This area of moral reasoning it seems is dependent relative to: “the seriousness of what’s been done” (Interviewee 25); “the politics in the unit” (Interviewee 36); “if I was going to be given the cold shoulder” (Interviewee 16); “whether or not I perceive there was intent” (Interviewee 8); “whether or not I feel it is my responsibility or a supervisor’s to call him to check (interviewee 11)”; and “it dependents if they’ve pissed me off or not with what they’ve done” (Interviewee 7), thus amalgamating
moral judgements about wrongdoing with emotions and self-regulation. In turn, this may be interpreted to mean that the question for a potential whistle-blower in An Garda Síochána may be whether the fall-out from his action would be worth it in terms of the reprisals. This implies that misconduct involves a high degree of value judgement and a thorough internal appraisal of the significance of the offending act, which in turn raises the potential prospect of bad behaviour becoming normalised as a result of increased exposure, if not initially addressed.

It is, therefore, advocated that more be done by Garda management to give Gardaí the confidence to report deviance. The key to tackling this issue rests with dispensing a clear message at every instance that it is ‘courageous’ to come forward with evidence of wrongdoing as well as essential to preserve the public’s respect for and cooperation with the Gardaí.

**Was the necessity for the introduced reforms accepted by Gardaí?**

In chapter one, we discovered that when Garda management were confronted with Justice Morris’ findings they moved swiftly, introducing a number of radical and sweeping reforms to administrative structures and senior management positions in An Garda Síochána. Such deficiencies as were highlighted also led to the reform of many long-standing policies and procedures. It was mentioned that a residual difficulty relating to the various reform programmes introduced remained unsettled; it concerned the widespread capacity, over time, of operational-level police workers to redefine the policy directives of their
supervisors if they did not consider such changes to be in accordance with their everyday practices. This particularly was likely to occur when reforms were being imposed from the top-down in response to scandal and disgrace (Punch and Naylor, 1973, pp. 358-361; Holdaway, 1983, pp. 66-82; Goldsmith, 1990, pp.93-94; Reiner, 1992, pp. 231-232; Chan, 1996, pp. 109-134; Chan and Dixon, 2007, pp. 443-468; and Savage, 2007, pp.141-144). Headed in the direction of an impending cultural interpretation of Garda perceptions on the basis of a stage six evaluation of Lawrence Kohlberg’s (1958a) moral psychology of integrity, a formative question remains unanswered: ‘was the necessity for the reforms introduced accepted by operational-level police workers?’

Kohlberg’s (1958a) post-conventional-level morality respects justice, welfare, social contracts and prior rights. It places an onus on Gardaí to promote and accept what is for the greater good of the Irish public. As a minimum it necessitates a willingness to be personally responsible for one’s actions and recognise when misconduct has occurred; the discovery of diffusion and fragmentation of responsibility going forward then might have been indicative of an intention to cover-up wrongdoing rather than rectify it. When tested against this standard it is revealing that the Gardaí interviewed broadly demonstrated their abhorrence of the events which defined the Donegal inquiry; albeit they had a tendency to wish to see this affair as something that happened ‘up there’. The lack of personal responsibility demonstrated by those concerned with policing in Donegal did not constitute an accepted cultural norm that generally existed in An
Garda Síochána either then, nor since. Rather it was possibly seen by those at operational-level as an individual aberration of an incidental nature. Worryingly, however, it must not be overlooked that it may be the case that, even still, few Gardaí would report co-worker wrongdoing.

Post-conventional-level morality also requires Gardaí to honour their socially-contracted responsibilities to behave in an ethical manner. The pursuit of policing principles based upon the just imperatives of honesty, accountability, respect and professionalism are to be valued because, as standards to be attained between Gardaí and the public they surely serve to vitally contribute to the general well-being. It is noteworthy then that the shared perceptions of the majority of the cohort informing this research were such that they fully recognised - without recourse to qualification or reservation - that their Garda colleagues in Donegal had absolutely done wrong. So too, their respective contributions may be interpreted as having recognized that the ethical standards of Irish policing had rightly been called into question.

In order to prevent impulsive amorality from becoming normalised in An Garda Síochána and successively to avoid Gardaí gratifying or acting out their personal urges regardless of any consequences, integrity maintenance requires accountability and liability for actions carried out. It is, perhaps, worrying then that the failure of certain Gardaí to account for their actions in Donegal drew mixed perceptions from research participants. In the main most of the research cohort
established their moral reasoning to be at post-conventional-level as they can be credited with offering disparaging attitudes towards some Donegal Garda member’s apparent sense of impunity and failure to account for actions. There were a notable few of the older interviewees in particular who offered contextually compassionate views that demonstrated moral reasoning at no higher a level than of conventional conformity, as they highlighted the non-existence of structures that were organisationally in place to report wrongdoing at the time of Morris’ inquiry as a possible extenuating factor for findings relating to failures of accountability.

On the whole the Gardaí involved in this research had tacitly accepted the Morris Tribunal as necessary to preserving policing consistency, public confidence and law and order. We have to acknowledge the disappointing fact that the Gardaí interviewed may possibly have failed to grasp the Garda Professional Standards Unit’s main message which is that Gardaí ought to never again allow themselves become complacent about the professional standards it is everybody’s personal responsibility to uphold. They appear also to have been unsuccessful in grasping the important role the Independent Inspectorate has to play towards ensuring augmented integrity and the need to ‘always’ whistle-blow on any suspected wrongdoing they may witness.

On a more positive note, it is encouraging that all of the other reform measures were broadly considered as welcome and required to ensure justice. Moreover, it speaks to the capacity for moral reasoning of the Gardaí who participated that
the vast majority showed empathy for the various perspectives of all those members of the public who were mistreated in County Donegal. In conclusion, it may also be interpreted that the interviewees broadly viewed the introduction of reforms as essential to respecting the rights of all people in Irish society.
CHAPTER 6: THE FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF THIS RESEARCH [PART II]

Introduction

This chapter just like the one that preceded it is concerned with singling out and presenting pertinent shared perceptions of interest uncovered during research, even if it is a separate yet interconnected issue that we will be attempting to tackle. Specifically, we will be endeavouring to appreciate what the findings uncovered about the subject of Garda occupational culture hindering organisational change. Once again the findings that have been proffered by our Garda cohort will be subjected to critical scrutiny in an interpretive attempt to discuss what they may reveal about Garda operational-level organisational culture as it may currently be held by Gardaí. The reported perceptions of those interviewed are assessed and contrasted with reference to the ‘conventional’ theories of culture, information and problems that were formulated to arrive at the framed analysis of police culture presented earlier in chapter three. A number of pragmatic suggestions are advocated throughout this chapter as deemed fitting.

Garda perceptions of the characteristics of their occupational culture

In chapter three it was highlighted that the principle of free will in human cognition is essential to an analysis of individual Garda integrity within police culture, since it holds implications regarding whether individuals can be held
morally accountable for their actions.

This principle was presented as recognising the possibility of our finding differences of outlook within An Garda Síochána, because the individual levels of reflexivity of its members with respect to what is good and just was reasonably expected given the precedent set by many of the principal police cultural reviews that have past appeared in the relevant literature (Muir, 1977; Reiner, 1978; Broderick; 1978; and Walsh, 1977). So we could expect individual Garda integrity to vary according to a variety of subjective variables such as “personality, generation, or career trajectory, and structured variations according to rank, assignment, and specialization” (Reiner, 2000, p.87). It is on the whole perhaps significant then that this research did not uncover any such divisions in group cohesion or the presence of subgroups – although they are a subgroup themselves all based in one urban city.

In An Garda Síochána it may be the case that almost all operational Gardaí see their world through the same metaphorical lens and also cope with the strains of their occupation in unison - albeit the view from this lens has, as we are about to uncover, changed down through the years and presents many interesting valences in contrast with the features of culture presented by ‘conventional’ police research.
When asked to provide their respective perceptions regarding whether policing in Ireland changed because of the Morris Tribunal, nearly all those regardless of their position or place within An Garda Síochána agreed that policing in Ireland had changed in many ways.

The key point harvested from almost every participant response concerning the above issue revealed that “colleague loyalty” (Interviewee 15), “the culture of having each other’s backs” (Interviewee 20) and “sticking together at all costs” (Interviewee 3) is no longer given predominance over the rule of law or the prescribed requirements of professional procedure.

This was particularly reported to be the case “when you’re [dealing] with a mate whose been involved in a bit of a scrap [physical quarrel] and gone too far” (Interviewee 34) and in dealing with “members who take the law into their own hands and might [in the past] have been inclined to deliver summary justice” (Interviewee 15). It was clearly understood amongst the cohort questioned that the current realities of loyalty in An Garda Síochána are such that, “the main concern is always to cover your own arse” (Interviewee 2). It is clear then that these responses are contrary to Reiner’s (2000, p.87) view as earlier presented that - we could expect individual Garda integrity to vary according to a variety of subjective variables such as “personality, generation, or career trajectory, and structured variations according to rank, assignment, and specialization” - it is here suggested that Gardaí were discovered not to represent an assortment of
divergent perspectives. Quite the opposite: operational-level Garda culture may not be far from a single culture distinguished by a number of ‘unique’ shared core features.

Preliminarily, it possibly speaks highly of our review of the existing state of Garda integrity and the impact of Garda culture on change that the primary of these core features is at odds with the central thesis of the conception presented in chapter three. For in that chapter we read that police forces operating in liberal democracies are widely characterised by an extensive gap between formal rules and informal practice.

It was not found to be the case in An Garda Síochána that the “the politically correct language of the organisation” (Prenzler, 1997, p.47) and “the complex interrelated set (configuration) of learned, created and borrowed beliefs, ideas, values, norms and symbolic meaningful systems” (MacGreil, 1996, p.33), which characterised and influenced the actual governing principles of those engaged in the occupation of policing in Ireland were greatly in conflict. Instead we find that informal occupational culture in An Garda Síochána may be fundamentally linked to many of the contemporary features of formal goal-directed activity.

This standpoint conveys an essential appreciation that contemporary Garda culture contradicts some of the assumptions associated with traditional monolithic patterns and with the deterministic constructions of many of the
seminal cultural examinations conducted in the early to mid-1970s (see for example, Westley, 1970; Van Maanen, 1974; and Drummond, 1976). Moreover, our research is most certainly at variance with Loftus’ (2010) more recent research that argued that stereotypical police culture remains steadfast and enduring.

The Gardaí participating in this research having been comprehensively questioned about just how policing had changed in Ireland, were discovered to display a sense of mission, this was not limited to ‘a crime fighting function’ only, as had been forecast (Reiner, 2000, p.80; Crank, 1998; Geller and Touch 1996; Skolnick and Fyfe 1993; Graef, 1989; Holdaway, 1977, 1983; Police Studies Institute, 1983, iv-pp.51-56). Rather, the sentiment within the cohort tended to be expressed as follows: “public service to the people of Ireland” (Interviewee 4); “public commitment” (Interviewee 9); “keeping the peace” (Interviewee 29); “supporting communities” (Interviewee 11); and “to legitimately work with the community to assist society” (Interviewee 21).

Perhaps it is noteworthy fact that the researcher did during some of the earlier interviews conducted critically wonder whether he had in some way influenced the participants of his research to offer such ‘positive sentiments’. Having thereafter decided to be extra vigilant concerning his effect on the various interview settings that remained, he felt confident that a significant threat to this study’s validity had not transpired.
Similarly, the desire for action and excitement, especially the glorification of violence as portrayed by earlier literature (Reiner, 2000, p.88; Crank, 1997; Waddington, 1999a, p.287), was not revealed amongst our cohort, who broadly felt “being professional and methodically following everything up is what police work is about” (Interviewee 4). There was also general agreement that: “giving young-fellows a clip around the lugs or the straightener isn’t accepted no more, ’cause it has too bad an effect on the locals…the CPF [Community Policing Forum] would be straight back going bananas” (Interviewee 21).

Moreover, an ‘Us versus Them’ division of the social world with its in-group isolation and solidarity on the one hand, and racist/sexist components on the other (MacLaughlin 2007, p.55; Reiner, 2000, p.91; Waddington, 1999a, pp.99-101, p.117; Crank 1998; Skolnick and Fyfe, 1993; Graef, 1989; Reiner, 1978, pp.208-213; Cain, 1973) - was not exhibited. On the contrary the Gardaí informing this research displayed a more expansive role orientation, explaining that: “…things have changed - interests are more varied now. Guards don’t live in stations with each other anymore. They don’t socialise in the same way as they used to. We’re all so different from each other now, you identify with your home friends, and those you went to university with or those you face-book with, probably as much, if not more, than you identify with those you work with” (Interviewee 28). For another Garda it was simply the case that: “Ireland has changed and we’ve [An Garda Síochána] changed with it. Here in this station you’re a Guard first and gender, religion, race, whatever, comes next”
While ‘conventional’ police culture might at one time have been distinguished by its authoritarian conservatism (Reiner, 2000, pp.95-97; Bernstein et al., 1982; Skolnick 1966, p.61); many of the values, attitudes and norms commonly associated with our Garda cohort’s culture, had more to do with: “being tolerant to different views and collective human rights” (Interviewee 33).

Furthermore, although suspicion and cynicism, especially towards the law and legal procedures can often be a feature of police culture (Reiner, 2000, p. 89; Smith and Gray, 1985, p.369-370; Vick, 1981; Reis, 1972, p.58; Niederhoffer, 1967), the Irish police interviewed were far more inclined to have fewer misgivings than what might once have been customarily expected. One Garda captured this issue philosophically when he said: “we work within a system, come what may, you just have to keep trying your best” (Interviewee 19).

More precisely, perhaps, we read in chapter three that a disregard for rules, regulations and procedures was said to be a key characteristic of the informal code of policing referred to earlier, especially in the treatment of suspects (Reiner, 1992, p.107). However, it is unlikely that such breaches of due process or law would be defended by Gardaí as necessary to do their jobs, given that they nearly all to some extent accepted that: “the limitations and accountability measures [were] placed on us are for good reason” (Interviewee 17).
Prenzler (1997, p.47) citing Skolnick (1975) might be paraphrased as contending that the goal of doing police work may frequently be a mask for either self-interest or organisational interest.

The goal of doing police work in An Garda Síochána, however, was distinguished by our research participants considering what they do as a worthy vocational end in itself. Interviewees did not subscribe to perspectives of self-interest, save conceivably when one contributor mentioned: “The way to get promoted now - as I see it - is to get on well with community stakeholders” (Interviewee 12). The organisational interest in breaking procedural rules might conceivably include high crime clear-up rates, reduced losses in court, or even a desired improvement in public image in terms of being perceived to keep criminals off the streets, there was negligible uptake with our research participants for rule breaking in any guise. They were more inclined to positively accept and value due process safeguards and procedural systems as essential.

Given these findings it is hard to see how a Garda’s exploitation of position would at this point in time be justified as compensation for encountering process complications in Irish policing.

It had been suggested in chapter three that the Gardaí researched for this study may have traditionally clung to the crime control model as a justification for their traditions and habits of their culture. Such alternative approaches to crime as
were recently introduced by reforms involving variants of community policing – such as problem-oriented policing (Goldstein, 1990), preventative justice (Applier, 1992), crime prevention (Clark, 1992) or intelligence-led policing (Lynch, 2009) – might therefore have been perceived by some Gardaí to be repudiated for their being soft on crime and out of touch with the vagaries of public expectation.

Instead the Gardaí interviewed asserted a variety of broadly positive remarks in describing their orientations towards alternatives of these newly introduced crime models. For most they represent: “the only logical way forward” (Interviewee 22), for another Garda member (Interviewee 8) they were helpful because:

*The days of assuming we know what’s best are gone. What the public wants now is ownership – ownership of the task of advising policing and to be fair ownership or at least a say in the difficulties that come with that. They want to be kept informed. They want to know resources aren’t being wasted and that they can have confidence in the Guards. The way the Guards have achieved that is to engage them at every chance – work with them rather than against them - that’s what keeps the info’ flowing. The recent changes from reactive policing to more proactive policing have helped to ease public concerns… everyone is trying their best ….*
Collectively the findings discovered created the impression that the Gardaí interviewed offered value judgements and norms, which speak of Irish policing operating well beyond mere crime fighting and detection. In point of fact Garda officers readily reflected on the importance of “professionally maintaining a positive rapport with the locals” and “[receiving] input from those most closely affected by anti-social issues.” Drawing on this it may be possible to claim that the Gardaí informing this research preferred to consider the more recent alternative approaches to crime as ‘practical’, and not therefore, ‘just academic applications’ – a position that seems to contradict Prenzler’s (1997, p.47) a priori expectancy.

By extension this rebuff of the crime control model provided the leeway for Gardaí to detail their readiness to take on the more difficult and socio-politically sensitive prosecutions of white collar crime along with targeting street crime – a willingness to police ‘the suites as well as the streets’. In this regard it was interesting to discover that:

*We were the first in Europe to set up CAB [Criminal Assets Bureau]; we’ve happily undertaken complex investigations into banking system abuses and the Catholic Church’s scandals recently. We’re not the kind for shying away from a case just because it may involve powerful persons, institutions, or sensitive issues. As you well know Guards are well trained, well read and well supported in what they do. Why not take them on, if*
they’ve done wrong (Interviewee 21)?

It is hard to reconcile such a finding and those that came before, with the conventional expectancy presented in chapter three that a macho culture and a quasi-paramilitary command-style might have been expected to stifle consultation, evaluation, and joint problem solving, in favour of dictatorial directives of what is best.

Rather, it is most instructive that an operational-level Garda member - who is here interpreted as capturing the views of others - was willing to report feeling: “…well supported” (Interviewee 7). Going forward, it is imperative that this sense of professional empowerment be built upon, fostered, and nurtured, by Garda management. This may conceivably be all the more difficult as austerity measures begin to bite hard on the resources of An Garda Síochána, given the recessionary credo at the time of writing [January 2012] of: ‘cut, cut, and cut some more’; it may be timely to here propose that managers avoid the danger of hobbling their employees by limiting the tools they need for their work, or restraining information-flow.

Preventatively, they may need to put further emphasis on demonstrating that ‘their people’ are really valued, by fluently sharing their leadership vision, goals and direction for the tough times ahead. They have to show through the regular encouragement that they mete out, that they trust the intentions of operational-
level Gardaí to take personal responsibility and make ethical decisions. It is well worth remembering that it is only through delegating authority, status, and impact opportunities - not just more work - that managers will guard the trust that has been interpreted as currently existing in An Garda Síochána.

Cynicism, isolation and intolerance were also presented within our literature review as being characteristics central to the supposed police culture typecast (Reiner, 2000). Arising from the perceptions uncovered here, it would be a difficult task to reconcile such negative qualities with the cohort’s attitudes, values, and norms. It is true that certain interviewees did offer somewhat disparaging comments about many of the incidents they can find themselves involved with. For example: “It is pointless being sent out every day to move people on because they are begging. What good does it serve? Without proper legislation or interventions to deal with the issue, all we are doing is moving the problem from one end of the street to the other” (Interviewee 13). Weighing up this comment, at least three interpretations are perceptible.

The first explanation is that the interviewees that participated in this research were collectively trying to dupe the researcher and foil the research process by speaking in a way that they deemed would be interpreted as ‘acceptable’ when written-up [Hawthorne Effect]. The second explanation is that our participating Garda cohort is tacitly distinguished by ‘cynicism, isolation and intolerance’. The third, much more occupationally considerate interpretation might be that Gardaí
are in the main introspective onlookers of the many often complicated criminological and sociological issues that happen around them; while they may often vent strong frustrations; they vocationally have people’s best interests at heart.

Dismissing the first two explanations in favour of the latter explanation, it is interesting that the animosity expounded by the interviewee in the above comment relates to the issue of begging itself and the futility of incompetently frittering away police time dealing with this issue, as opposed to being directed at the persons situationally involved in the act of begging. It is also edifying that it could be inferred from what the interviewee said, that with “…proper legislation or interventions to deal with the issue…” (Interviewee 13) there may be hope that the concern could yet be improved.

Arising from this issue, it is here suggested that An Garda Síochána not overlook an opportunity to learn from its members’ experiences. In this respect the recent introduction [2010] of the ‘Lessons Learned Framework’ (LLF) mechanism to assimilate Garda-learning is most welcome. It is essential that all Garda managers fully encourage those under their supervision to engage with the LLF to support and stimulate the generation of new lessons and the adoption of lessons learned throughout the Garda organisation by embedding them in their systems, processes, policies and culture.
It was submitted in chapter three that along with the taken for granted presence of cynicism, isolation and intolerance in An Garda Síochána, which our interviewees may have likely relayed, a sense of betrayal by management and a taken for granted acceptance of the need to look after number one in avoiding responsibility or difficult tasks might be expected (Prenzler, 1997, p.48). This supposed mistrust of Garda management did not generally emerge. There were many Garda members who recognised the need to: “look after number one” (Interviewee 18), “Watch your own back...” (Interviewee 34), and “…protect yourself by deflecting negative attention” (Interviewee 28). Still, it was the shared view of many (Interviewees 6; 7; 9; 12; 14; 15; 16; 17; 20; 26; 27; 29; 20; 33; 35; 37) that this could be best achieved by “looking after your own files and requiring others to be in charge of doing the same” (Interviewee 14) and “not making bogey excuses or accepting them either” (Interviewee 37). Equally, street-level Gardaí were not broadly found to have severe misgivings with reference to their management, as one research participant explained:

*Things are more open than once they were - if you have a bit of experience under your belt - you soon appreciate that the way to make sure you don’t get in bother and avoid uncalled-for accusations, from whoever in the Guards, is to produce lots and lots of reports that force supervisors to make decisions… The other thing is that it is crucial to keep first-rate notes. Passing decisions up, keeping copies of everything and accurate note taking ensures everybody stays honest. I send everything*
through PULSE [the name of the Garda computer system], that way there’s a continuous record. If Donegal taught us anything it was related to the importance of note-taking (Interviewee 20).

Politically, it was assumed in chapter three that our cohort might exhibit right-wing tendencies or perhaps intolerances towards racial and gender minorities and non-conventional lifestyles (Reiner, 1992). Towards a realisation of this expectancy one issue, which may, or may not - depending on one's personal interpretation denote right-wing prejudice - should now be addressed. Many of the Garda participants (Interviewees 1;2;3;4;5;6;7;9;10;12;14;16;21;23;24;25;27;30;31;32;33;34;36;37) offered views similar to the following: “the all too lax attitudes we’ve had to enforcing immigration policies during the Celtic-Tiger years [Irish economic boom years 1995-2007], especially” (Interviewee 16).

In assessment of this, while the actual effects of legal and unauthorized immigration on Ireland’s economy and society are as yet not fully known. This did not stop certain Gardaí from asserting that: “immigration controls need to be better enforced” (Interviewee 12). The consistency of broadly similar responses throughout our interviews indicates that Gardaí may be deemed, perhaps, as generally intolerant of outsiders. This in turn, could indicate the reported differential enforcement of the law and discretion against minorities and those who defy police authority (Chan, 1997). Otherwise their broadly shared views might be connected with the fact that, at the time this research was conducted,
certain persons in the Irish media and politicians had raised the issue of spiralling social welfare costs in Ireland. The presence of ‘too many illegal immigrants, who may, or may not, cost the exchequer additional expenditure’, had thereby received considerable attention as a then newsworthy ‘problem’.

It is the author’s understanding that the Gardaí interviewed in answer to the topicality of the public’s reaction to - ‘illegal immigrants costing Irish taxpayers too much, and the Gardaí apparently not attending to the enforcement of this issue’ - may have deliberately used their research interviews to deal with public concerns.

At any rate, while it is absolutely legitimate and technically correct that Gardaí ought to be concerned with immigration that is unlawful, a clear danger may arise whereby Gardaí through their focusing on the media-driven issue of ‘illegal immigrants’, might begin to exaggerate the negative, and forget about the positive impact of the presence of non-native Irish in Ireland.

Correspondingly, it may be the case that stereotyped development and its consequential variations in police behaviour – even if broadly unintentional - may be driven either through variant exposure to groups involved in illegal immigration incidents or through an overestimation of negative behaviours associated with particular minority group members. In turn, racial profiling might casually be used to justify the ‘stop and search’ of all those perceived as immigrants. Should
such occurrences happen they could lead to the development of a culture of Gardaí becoming hostile towards all those perceived not to be Irish, whether or not they are legally in the country? It is here counselled that such hazards ought never to be allowed to take root.

As against the hypothesis mooted above that, Gardaí may exhibit racial animus and some members may ignore their training by choosing to purposefully target minorities, at the risk of leaving himself open to a rebuke of having himself engaged in “neutralizing techniques” (Shiner, 2010, p.938) to release his [colleague] participants from spoiling their collective identities, this author feels, it must not be forgotten that those interviewed for this research did not elsewhere reveal racist attitudes, prejudices or xenophobia. Besides, we are obliged to remember that Gardaí may well be ethically mature thinking beings that are - as the above findings may alternatively be interpreted as supporting - capable under scrutiny of simultaneously representing conventional public worries, yet remaining professional enough to extend their moral reasoning to overcome the apparent injustices of societal bias.

Had this research discovered isolation and cynicism to be core features of Garda culture, a possible offshoot of which might have been “co-worker solidarity” (Reiner, 2000, p.91), this could have taken the form of participants reporting mutual reinforcements of behaviour and closing ranks to affect a “blue-wall of silence” (Conway, 2010). In turn, Gardaí might have been expected to cover-up misconduct when coming under scrutiny from internal or external sources.
Instead, this research clearly found that: “if ratting out another member is what I have to do to keep my job - then fuck it - so be it. If they’ve done wrong and I’m asked to account for their actions, everybody understands, under the new Act you have to tell and that’s that” (Interviewee 20).

The important qualification not to be overlooked in the above excerpt [as also mirrored by the excerpts contained on pages 167 and 168 of this thesis] is that “ratting out another member”, is, it seems, culturally acceptable with Gardaí at operational-level, only in circumstances where a member has been “asked to account for their actions” (Interviewee 20).

It might be suggested therefore that the Gardaí interviewed for this research have not yet fully grasped the perception that being willing to account for what happens in the work-place remains primarily their personal responsibility. Instead they seem to have devolved this prime function to outside agents, i.e. Garda management/GSOC.

It can be argued that loyalty in Donegal was exacted with a code of honour that required Gardaí, back then, not to turn in other Gardaí. This alleged ‘wall of silence’ conceivably demanded Garda members’ respect for and loyalty towards their peer groups ahead of organisational and/or public loyalty; it may have encouraged those involved in the Morris Inquiry to abide by their perceived code of honour and to heed the understood commitment of friendship and silence,
rather than justice.

Given such a scenario it is perhaps reasonable to assume that in the past a wall of cultural norms prevented all unwanted inspection of An Garda Síochána. While this may once have proved true of policing in Donegal, it seems that nowadays “there have been big changes to the boys sticking together” (Interviewee 6). As one Garda anecdotally explained, regarding the formerly existing cultural norm of ‘solidarity’ in An Garda Síochána: “when the ship is sinking it’s every man for himself. Providing for your family comes first” (Interviewee 29). It is worth mentioning, perhaps, that when the researcher raised this likely adjustment to cultural norms with participants, they left him with little doubts that they attributed such change to “the introduction of the Ombudsman” (Interviewee 14).

In chapter three the possibility was discussed of our discovering that the core characteristics of Garda occupational culture as revealed by our research findings might have painted an unflattering picture. In review of our findings what now can be said about the world-view of operational-level policing in An Garda Síochána in contrast to the ‘conventional’ central features of occupational culture historically found in many of the police forces in, for example, the United Kingdom and the United States of America?
Conceivably there is something about each of the police systems represented in the academic literature that generates their overtly negative cultures. Or perhaps certain personality types in the countries in question have a tendency to be inadvertently recruited into the police. Either explanation is possible or both may be correct.

Unfortunately for this writer, however, a lesser amount of researchers have sought to consider the interpretive premise upon which many of the above authors based their arguments, that police officers are unconsciously predetermined to behave negatively towards the public because of their informal culture. From this perspective we can see there may be an in-built tendentious presumption to make a connection between what are considered to be unconscious core characteristics that police officers form and the subsequent discriminatory actions it is alleged many officers will take. That somehow police officers are determined because of their culture to be very much at odds with almost every fundamental ethical principle of public service they take an oath to uphold. Moreover, that they are individually not morally strong enough, not reflexive enough, or simply incapable of overcoming the conditioning of their culture, societal bias, and environment.

In brief, the criticism that can perhaps be levied at many of the early studies of police culture cited in chapter three, in particular, is that they potentially underplay the abilities of police to respond to what is good or bad according to their
individual sense of free-willed integrity. Do such researchers possibly reveal a bias on their own part in not seeming to consider adequately that police officers could correct the biases of their culture within themselves?

It is here humbly suggested that this present analysis has been revealing in this regard. It has perhaps served to illustrate the maxim that “paradigms power perception and perceptions power emotions” (Young, 2008, p.197). Is it possible that the paradigm of policing in An Garda Síochána has altered because of the reforms introduced thereby causing the shared perceptions’ of its members to adjust and change with the times, rather than remaining steadfast and recoiling from progress?

Following the prescriptions of the Kohlbergian analysis of Garda operational-level occupation culture here undertaken dictated that we looked not just for those findings that matched the pejorative core characteristics distilled by previous enquiries. Rather what this research has uncovered, is based upon an on-going interpretive process of ensuring balance and integration between research participants’ shared perceptions of those particular decisions which were for them responsible and just and those that were not that clear. In other words, we looked for the positives and the negatives of integrity relayed by participants.
In so doing, we found that the sub-culture of Irish police might conceivably be less pervasive, malign and a potent influence on the behaviour of Gardaí than has in the past been suggested of police organisational culture elsewhere. The grounds for this portrayal are as we have seen, noteworthy.

**Garda perceptions of the functional roles culture plays in their lives**

In chapter three it was suggested that for some, the significance of understanding police culture lies in the role it plays in the everyday functioning of police officer’s lives. Study of the role police culture plays from this perspective focuses on the “coping mechanisms” (Paoline, 2003, p.200) that are said to insulate group members from the pressures and tensions confronting police in their job. The hazards police culture were said to protect officers from were expected to have originated in two environments, occupational and organisational.

It was suggested that the fundamental and enduring nature of the occupational environment of Gardaí – entailing the use of coercive force and repeated contact with offenders and social deviants in often dangerous or threatening settings – would prompt an ‘conventional’ finding that Gardaí would be expected “to create, display and maintain [their] authority” (Manning, 1995, cited in Paoline, 2003, p.201), thus providing a rationalization for Gardaí not to alter their work in adjustment to their environment. By extension it was also suggested that it might
be deemed acceptable to cover up Garda mistakes entirely, or at the very least, where possible, diminish them in advance of scrutiny.

This research represents a continued investigation to gauge whether or not change has happened in An Garda Síochána because of reforms or if the operational-level occupational culture of Gardaí got in the way and caused hindrance. Positively it can be argued that the cumulative outcome of our findings relating to the reforms introduced has shown that a genuine constructive revolution in policing practices may have occurred as Gardaí have culturally responded to the many social and political demands of their changing occupational environment in a thoughtful, enlightened and dare we say, at times, post-conventionally reasoned way. Those interviewed, did for example, demonstrate that they now “happily consult with the public and look for their views on a whole host of issues” (Interviewee 29). Another interviewee said: “with policing plans, accountability meetings, regular conferences, and PULSE [the name of the Garda computer system], there is now a good fit between what we do and what we say we do – that’s been the real change in the Guards” (Interviewee 5). Further, it was suggested that “policing around here is [now] about trying to encourage the locals to work with you because it is in everybody’s best interests. It’s about giving people what they say they need, giving them a bit of latitude and hoping God willing, when the time comes they’ll rally with us, support us, on important occasions” (Interviewee 16).
Given these findings it is here tentatively suggested that Gardaí have – contrary to expectation - certainly altered their work in adjustment to their reprioritised occupational environment - they are it seems disposed to representing order maintenance and service provision as legitimate public safety goals of the Garda professional function. For that reason, it is possible to propose that Garda members might value their respective relationships with public stakeholders too much to risk the potential injury caused by covering up for each other’s mistakes. As one interviewee explained:

_You work hard to build up friendships and one arsehole [of a Guard] comes along and wrecks everything with a stupid comment or because they’re thick with someone mouthing off at them. Fuck them! Why should I defend them? If they’re wrecking what I’ve got going on; they should know better_ (Interviewee 19).

The second environment which chapter three drew attention to was organisational, which consisted of a Garda’s relationship to the formal organisation. Here the Garda may again traditionally be expected to face a number of major issues, which are said to make it hard for him to cope with the situations in which he could find himself. It was suggested by Manning (1995) that this could include the unpredictable and punitive supervisory oversight he might face. Addressing this issue the findings uncovered by our research do not support such a contention. Rather, interviewees offered a broad spectrum of
opinions about their respective managers that were generally complimentary, for example: “most of my skippers [informal name assigned to Garda Sergeants] and cigs [informal name assigned to Garda Inspectors] are sound and you can go to them if you have an issue” (Interviewee 37); and “things are generally fair enough...” (Interviewee 2).

Equally, the Gardaí interviewed did not represent themselves as being under undue pressure to achieve results, convictions, or clear-up rates as might have been Skolnick’s (1975) anticipation. As one Detective Garda detailed: “Things are quite standardised...we open a book that applies the same investigation management system to every serious case, as well as that, we have the cold-case unit and SIO [Senior Investigating Officer] reviews to catch any misses” (Interviewee 15). Another Garda employed on a regular unit reasoned, “we’re in such a busy area here if you do ayre-a-bit-at-all there’s no load” (Interviewee 7). He continued: “...you’d want to be very bad to feel under pressure for captures [arrests]” (Interviewee 7).

In addition to helping Gardaí professionally cope with the stresses of their environments, elements of Garda culture as presented above were said in chapter three to aid the teaching of new and advancing members of An Garda Síochána about many of the day-to-day components of police work, by means of their learning the craft of policing through occupational socialisation (Manning, 1995; Van Maanen, 1973). Certainly this was found to be the case in our
research: it was broadly shared by the Gardaí interviewed that they only became ‘practical coppers’ after they “…spent some times on the streets” (Interviewee 25); or “after they’ve been around the place for a while” (Interviewee 20). These findings are offered as tidily encapsulating Chatterton’s (1979) study of ‘police culture as a teaching-tool,’ in that they infer that a Garda’s learning extends beyond the confines of their training college and continuous professional development classes. As a result it may be construed that the ‘common-sense, or “recipe rules” (Brogden et al. 1988, p.33), of Garda culture are experienced, understood, judged, decided upon, and then absorbed, as the probationary Garda is said to become streetwise.

On this topic it must not be forgotten, however, that the previously shared findings of our research cohort were such that, ‘culture as a teaching tool’ in An Garda Síochána might not involve junior Gardaí acquiring an understanding of cultural norms and values that are all that different from those they received instruction about during the course of their formal training. To a certain extent informal Garda culture - as we have here discovered it - might serve to buttress a great deal of An Garda Síochána’s goal-directed formal activity; one working in tandem with the other.

Learning how police work is done then could well involve a probationer Garda acquiring not only a formal knowledge of the law, procedures, regulatory codes and so on, but crucially an understanding of the informal beliefs, norms, and
values of Garda occupational culture that are also by condition required to be compatible with conscientious practice. Working rules that operationally guide Gardaí, not as passive or determinately manipulated learners of rule sets, but rather as conscientious free-willed personally responsible, ethical directed, wholly accountable interpreters of same. Closely associated with the above requirement that Garda trainees must learn from their occupational culture to be successful, is the notion that police culture is traditionally utilised as a tool of reinforcement for acceptable practice. In chapter three we learnt that here it may be important to remember MacGreil’s (1996, p.33) definitional contention which guides this research: that culture is part-corroborated through the use of symbolic meaningful systems, i.e. through shared language and rituals. Indeed the processes of reinforcing police culture may be seen to occur through the mediated transmission of war-stories, myths, anecdotes, gallows-humour, and jokes (Van Maanen 1974; Holdaway, 1983; Fielding 1994a).

The researcher’s experience of carrying out the interviews for this research confirms that such communication modes were used as exploratory models of just and unjust conduct - what is knowingly good from what is not - which through allegory, simile, parable and symbol, enable Gardaí to derive workable hypothesises of competent practice to be explored pre-figuratively according to their individual perceptions of integrity. As one Garda stated, “Yeah, we use stories to make members sound like heroes when there’s been a good result or something like that - that way good work gets repeated. We also use them to
highlight weaknesses in practice so that mistakes aren’t continually repeated” (Interviewee 18).

Additionally, Gardaí were discovered to use war-stories, myths, anecdotes, gallows-humour, and jokes (Van Maanen 1974; Holdaway, 1983; Fielding 1994a) to talk about their daily activities “to blow-off steam and have a good bitch about someone so that problems don’t fester” (Interviewee 9); “…to make themselves seem experienced in other’s eyes” (Interviewee 3); and to “check things out with someone you trust to give you the right answer” (Interviewee 7). Arising from these findings it is possible to argue that Gardaí also utilize the mediated transmission of war-stories etc. so they can be comforted by the fact that their interpretive perspective on truth and justice are shared by their colleagues, “thus acquiring [something which may feel like] social anchoring in an objective truth” (Hannerz, 1996, p.111).

Given the fact that Gardaí through their occupational culture already make use of stories to casually reflect and reinforce acceptable practice, it might be interesting if this procedure of reflection were harnessed by An Garda Síochána to introduce a more formalised structural process that might guide the act of operational-level reflection on practice and procedure. Such reflective practice might simply involve facilitating an opportunity within every Garda’s working-tour for them to collectively think about their own experiences in a theoretically structured way as they make the connections between knowledge and practice within their respective disciplines. Towards advancing this proposal it is
noteworthy that there are numerous theoretical models of reflection relating to learning that could be adapted for this purpose (see for example, Schön, 1987; Kolb, 1984; and Priest & Glass, 1997). As Reiner (2000, p.101) reminds us, police officers have in the past been “reluctant to contemplate innovation, experimentation, or research.” Perhaps it is time for the skilled pragmatic artistry of a broad-spectrum of experienced operational-level Gardaí to be afforded the extended value deserved?

The final function of police culture which shall now be explored deals with bureau-legal rule manipulation. Police work is a morally complicated activity because discretion has to be exercised as to whether in any given situation a criminal or disorderly act has taken place. In essence what this means is that a Garda is responsible to their own sense of integrity to ensure that the precepts of the criminal law are justly transformed into action. The low-visibility of much police work, with little direct supervision or monitoring by senior officers – other than retrospectively – means that Gardaí may report having considerable operational discretion regarding the how, where, when, and who to monitor, stop, search, arrest, charge, and detain or seize goods from, and whether to and what amount of force to use to achieve these means. Just as crucially, formal action draws officers into file preparation, statement taking and other bureau-legal processes that include case construction, interpretive court presentation and organisational and judicial review (McLaughlin, 2009).
Regarding the above issue it was a key finding of this research that those interviewed believed perhaps rightly they had considerable operational discretion in their work. As one officer said, “of course we have a lot of discretion about what we decide to consider important and what we choose to ignore at times, if a Guard was to act on every whim and gripe he came across he’d never get anything done. Being professional requires you have to pick and choose the issues that will structure your day” (Interviewee 19). Correspondingly another interviewee commented “Discretion is the backbone of Irish policing and the Irish public respect us for it. They realise that we have the power to prosecute, but because we more often than not give them a chance and let them off with advice or a caution, they think the Guards are sound” (Interviewee 11).

Having discerned such findings it may indeed be interpreted that operational discretion is certainly a feature of Garda occupational culture. The Gardaí interviewed in this study were confident that their decisions were and had to be largely a matter of individual discretion and that, the existence of discretion may well be a blessing for some. It might also be interpreted that a Garda’s human qualities and empathies with the public he serves can also govern conduct to a greater extent than formal rules and procedures if the Garda considers the legal bureaucratic rules to be quite impractical or simply inadequate in a given situation. The Garda’s discretion may therefore be attributed to the creation, sharing, and continuity of Garda occupation culture as Gardaí adapt the law according to their conscientious insight. As Goldsmith (1990, p.96) may be
paraphrased as arguing, operational police rarely have an influence on police policy decisions: they may thus be forced to make the law workable through the utilization of informal rules. From this perspective Gardaí may well have shown themselves to be “legal craftsmen” rather than “legal actors” (Skolnick, 1969, p.231).

Of course a potential difficulty with the above interpretation as we read in chapter three is that police officers may be actually guided by their occupational cultures in the direction of what Reiner (1992, p.107) classifies as the “ways and means act” - a position where prejudices, stereotypes and social biases may guide a Garda’s actions given the potential latitude presented by discretion to leave him free to make a choice among possible courses of action or inaction.

The insight that this research provides is that such discrimination in Irish law enforcement was not manifest in the narratives revealed by our interviewees. Take for example, the vision expressed by a Garda Sergeant when he said:

*Guards [Gardai] are good at matching the response to the situation. Our strength is that we’re good at applying common sense and a sensitive touch [when] required. No matter who or what we deal with; we know when to be human, when to laugh, when to have a quiet word, intervene, sweet-talk, do nothing, or if needed create a permanent record, open a file, and investigate. Experience is a great teacher: it gives you good*
judgement (Interviewee 4).

Consequently it is here interpreted that the exercise of discretion by Gardaí may not be classified as deterministically repressive or otherwise socially biased; rather, is it more closely concerned with the serendipities of ethically channelled professional good sense.

We have observed then that Garda culture may function in a variety of ways for an assortment of reasons. All of which relate to the inevitable notion that a Garda is the one who individually experiences and interprets the world his duty finds him operating in. He is the one who will try to understand the public he must serve, along with their requests or responses, and all of this both in light of the bureau-legal paradigm he is formally required to work within, and the moral paradigm supplied by his own sense of integrity and his natural tendency towards being human and judging the free-willed actions of others.

Has operational-level Garda culture hindered change?

Post scandal reform throughout the world typically conveys the removal of the bad apples from the [afterwards considered diseased] barrel through resignation, retirement, or dismissal, and a ritual housecleaning, as opportunity structures associated with deviancy are altered. This is done in the hope that new cultural values will be propagated to reassure stakeholders that the organisation in question has genuinely put its house in order. This premise broadly concerns
organisational structure; but the model additionally assumes a culture of renewed veracity where all officers are imbued with, or simply reminded that, policing by consent is fundamental to their functioning. Structural change through reform is not enough; every member of the police service has to personally demonstrate a want to express integrity (Sherman, 1978; Punch, 2009).

Of course, the notion that culture is not a variable that An Garda Síochána has; it is something that defines how the organisation is - which raises the possibility that reform and change in policing are not simple matters of cumulative and progressive improvements. The frequent stumbling block of reforms and policing plans is, as we have already touched upon above, that operational-level police culture has an unambiguous ability to subvert adjustment efforts if its members do not consider such modifications needed. Organisational change requires congruence between the values of an organisation and its employees (Posner, Kouzes and Schmidt, 2006, p.330).

In social and political theory this has been articulated in terms of the dichotomy of needing both ‘structure and agency’ to enable change (Giddens, 1976). Chan (1997) similarly relies upon Bourdieu's duality of 'field' and 'habitus' to explain the cultural modification process.
Drawing on these ideas, it can be argued that structure in An Garda Síochána as it may be represents the reforms introduced post-Morris, whereas ‘agency’ can be located in Garda occupational culture, which should always be remembered as a derivative of the free-willed decisions of its professional members. Relying on the research findings as presented above, it can clearly be stated the relationship between structure and agency as it may be in An Garda Síochána, is strongly associated.

We did, after all interpretively find that the informal occupational culture of An Garda Síochána’s operational-level workers could be foundationally linked to many of the contemporary features of formal goal-directed activity and such is the strength of this culture that it may be free of the presence of sub-cultures.

Further, we discovered above that the occupational culture of Gardaí may have changed in response to the reforms introduced into An Garda Síochána, with individual members now willing to report many interesting valences in contrast with the features and functions of culture presented by traditional research. The most striking of which to this author was that the traditional characteristics of colleague loyalty and solidarity are no longer, it seems, given predominance in every circumstance over the rule of law or the prescribed requirements of professional procedure. While some loyalty and solidarity [perhaps reasonably given the nature of policing] persists in policing, GSOC has undoubtedly swayed some change in this area. Although it is, perhaps, also interesting that many of
the additional characteristics that the interviewees relayed, speak highly of the state of integrity as it may now be in An Garda Síochána. Given these findings it is hard to see how the corruption and exploitation of position that went on in County Donegal would at this point in time be culturally accepted as justified.

The Gardaí interviewed for this research have revealed that they have moved with the times and, perhaps, even accepted the challenge of the gauntlet thrown down by Justice Morris. In so doing, they have ensured their occupational culture now has a far less pervasive, malign and potent influence on individual Garda behaviour than might have been traditionally thought. Moreover, through the assortment of functions of Garda culture dealt with above we may clearly state that Gardaí are not “cultural dopes” (Shearing and Ericson, 1991, p. 500), rather they have demonstrated they are capable of selecting what best suits them from the “cultural tool-kit” (Shearing and Ericson, 1991, p. 500) presented by Garda management. From this perspective, we see Gardaí as active agents in the reform process – they are indeed the ‘street-level bureaucrats’, the not to be forgotten operatives who played a crucial part in the positive articulation and construction of public policies where they have their greatest impact on the ground (Lipsky, 1980).

In conclusion, the interpretations of Garda culture revealed by this research have made it clear that operational-level Gardaí are indeed repeating in their narratives the policies introduced by Garda management towards reform as their
own and could well be turning them into meaningful actions on the ground, leading us to the ultimate conclusion that Garda occupational culture may not have hindered change.
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Introduction

It is the aim of this chapter to provide a summary of the key concepts dealt with above. It will concentrate on a retrospective evaluation of the research and the contribution it made towards addressing the research objectives guiding this work. It seeks to draw together the individual strands of the research. Then, it will offer an interpretation of the characteristics of An Garda Síochána’s ‘new’ occupational culture. Finally, it will deliver an assessment of what may have worked best towards achieving such changes in An Garda Síochána and draw attention to some possible challenges lying ahead.

Evaluating the research

This thesis set out to draw on Garda perceptions obtained through inductive research, to determine the extent to which the reforms implemented owing to the findings of the *Morris Tribunal of Inquiry* (2002-2008) have impacted upon An Garda Síochána’s occupational culture.

The circumstances grounding the Tribunal, elucidated in chapter one, made reference to a veritable litany of corrupt incidents wherein Gardaí operating in the ‘remote’ border region of County Donegal - who should have been conscientiously occupied in the practices of lawfully defending the Irish State
during the ‘Troubles’, from the considerable twin challenges of criminality, and Nationalist and Unionist subversive activities, had favoured instead to decide upon becoming involved in the hazardous morass which political terrorism seemingly time and again presents. As McCullagh (2005, cited in Conway, 2010, p. 90) clarified “the context of a terrorist threat and of the over-riding political need to be seen to be defeating terrorism contributed significantly to the kind of corruption [seen] in Donegal.” It was against this background that certain Gardaí at several levels engaged may have engaged in misconduct. Instituting a Tribunal of Inquiry under the guidance of its sole chairman, Justice Morris, to address the numerous public and media protests raised by alleged Garda misbehaviours appeared then, the only sensible course of action to take.

Between 2002 and 2008, Justice Morris led a thoroughly scrupulous review of the individual and institutional misconduct which happened within An Garda Síochána, leading to the publication of eight comprehensive reports that levied many criticisms. It was suggested in this thesis that such were the nature of these reports that any number of primary issues of disparagement could have been extrapolated from the findings and recommendations therein. Nevertheless, at the heart of what was produced there lay an overarching problem that related to a dearth of individual Garda integrity. Borrowing inspiration from Kohlberg’s psychology of moral reasoning, individual integrity was here defined as the source of every Garda’s personal responsibility to do what they know is good and just, and their actions therefore were expected to live up to this notion of
individually attained ethical conduct. Following on from which, it was suggested that the social implication of this lived responsibility was each Garda’s duty to be willing to account to society for their actions.

Where such accountability became all the more acute was when the Gardaí involved in Donegal policing were discovered to have failed to have come up to the standard of what Kohlberg might call ‘mutual respect’ in their internal and external contacts. For we soon discovered in our analysis of the many Morris’ reports produced, that had it not been for the neglect of certain Gardaí of various ranks to take personal responsibility for the events that they observed occurring in Donegal, many of the public complaints could have been avoided. It was not just about the corruption Gardaí were said to have engaged in, but also the importance of discovering that the situation in Donegal could not have flourished and gone unchecked had many others in An Garda Síochána not behaved blindly or in an all too casual manner towards their personal duties in the first place.

Applying the filter of individual integrity discerned, it was also suggested by means of our examination that Justice Morris’ reports had collectively identified a number of Gardaí who had failed in their duties to maintain the pursuit of policing values based on honesty, accountability, respect and professionalism. In point of fact we found that the Tribunal had experienced a lack of ethics, along with cover-up and self-protection, repeatedly throughout its modular hearings. The
final point we extrapolated from Morris’ findings communicated the lack of accountability that right the way throughout the Tribunal’s hearings seems to have characterised policing in County Donegal.

In the wake of our having arrived at such critical findings an inexorable conclusion was further realised that the significant reform of Irish policing was immediately necessary if Garda legitimacy and public confidence were to be maintained. The Garda Síochána Act 2005 and a number of additional reforming regulations, launched midway through Morris’ inquiries, were suggested as being designed to develop individual Garda integrity and recover professional standing.

While the specific word ‘culture’ was not referred to in Morris’ reports, it was inferred within this thesis that each of the issues raised by him may have been manifestly linked to the workings of the occupational culture that existed in An Garda Síochána at that time. This moved the challenge of reform into tricky territory, where the changes introduced may have been implemented yet have failed to make any real impact on Garda occupational culture. Regulatory reforms bring change possibilities, the choice to accept the possibilities that change presents; on the other hand, is, as we have argued, an intentional act. Choice is something we must decide to do, or not to do. Within this thesis choice was presented as entailing human freedom and the courage to do what is just and right. And so the challenge that faced every Garda was to try and get to grips with the range of reforms being imposed on them, while managing their moral
selves and ethical priorities. Ultimately, this required the Gardaí interviewed for this thesis to give a positive reception to the contention that the Morris Tribunal was essential.

It would be difficult to reconcile the specific insights offered by the interviewees who informed this research concerning: their colleagues’ lack of integrity; their tacit acceptance of the need for a Tribunal; and their collective views of reforms as being needed to respect the rights of all people in Irish society, with Justice Morris’ warning that An Garda Síochána might generally be losing its character as a disciplined force (Morris, 2004, 1/13.102). Given this interpretation, it was submitted that the institutional extension of wrong-doing that went on in Donegal to the entire Garda organisation – although understandable given the history and legacy of police corruption as it has occurred elsewhere – may have been considered a step too far in the Irish case by our research participants. It could not here at any rate, be construed in the narratives of our interviewees that they would broadly accept that the disease which had blighted the few bad apples was expressive of a wider scale corrupting barrel. In so doing they may have been trying to distance themselves from the scandal of the Donegal affair? It was suggested that perhaps this happened because, Gardaí veered toward self-protection or self-preservation from the blunt message being delivered. They did, however, it seems understand that those reforms introduced were essential.
Next, this research took on the broader concern of whether or not Garda occupational culture had hindered organisational change. This was necessary as the acceptance of policy and process reform introducing change was not enough; rather, was it necessary that every Garda demonstrate a desire to display integrity when required to submit an account of their attitude towards policy and process reform? Of course, the contention settled upon earlier in this thesis that, occupational culture is not a variable that An Garda Síochána has. Rather, it is something that defines how the organisation is, had raised the possibility that reform and change were not simply matters of cumulative and progressive improvements; instead, reforms and policing plans might have been subverted, co-opted or even scuppered by Garda culture.

Relying on the interpreted research findings, a case was presented which maintained that the relationship between the informal occupational cultures of An Garda Síochána’s operational-level workers could be fundamentally linked to many of the contemporary features of formal goal directed activity; such was the strength of this culture that it might well be free of the presence of sub-cultural deviations. Further, we found that the occupational culture of Gardaí had changed in response to the reforms introduced into An Garda Síochána, with individual members now willing to report many interesting valences in contrast with the features and functions of culture presented by long-established monolithic ‘conventional’ descriptions.
The most striking of which we learned was that the traditional characteristics of colleague loyalty and solidarity are no longer inevitably given predominance over the rule of law or the prescribed requirements of professional procedure, but rather are dependent on a subjective interpretation by Gardaí of the circumstances at hand. It was perhaps also interesting that many of the additional narratives that the interviewees relayed all speak highly of the state of integrity as it may be in An Garda Síochána.

In the end, we concluded by suggesting that the nature of the findings uncovered by this research make it difficult to see how the corruption and exploitation of position that went on in Donegal would at this point in time be culturally accepted as valid.

These findings may be classified as largely representative of a successful change project in a professional bureaucracy which may well, at times, have delivered post-conventional moral reasoning. Police culture can and does change (Sklansky, 2006, pp.1209-1244). Consequently, we must ask ourselves what key characteristics An Garda Síochána ‘new’ occupational culture might have been discovered.
An interpretation of An Garda Síochána’s ‘new’ occupational culture

Overall the narratives revealed within this thesis indicate that there were significant changes as well as limited continuities in what might have been considered the ‘conventional’ occupational traditions of Irish policing as Gardaí possibly sought to make sense of and react to the realities of change (see Table 5, page 220). For instance, this research, in contrast with the ‘conventional’ views relating to police culture, generated an assessment of Garda operational-level occupational culture that contradicted the expectancy of a role orientation defined by a wide gap between formal rules and informal practice. Instead, it may be regular that Garda occupational culture is thought to include: a shared outlook that views formal rules as self-serving legitimate normative orders designed to guide professional conduct and deliver a level of protection to all-concerned.

Further, it is here suggested that the shift to re-emphasising community policing and the introduction of policing forums throughout all of An Garda Síochána’s divisions, has in some regards at least, served to discard the relevance of a mission towards the glorification of aggressive crime fighting. In its place we find that Garda occupation culture at operational-level may currently be demarcated by its appreciation of the need for, deliberative, trust based initiatives that develop a more intimate localised face-to-face form of community accountability which are principally focused on peace keeping and crime prevention goals.
Indeed, it is possible that the aforesaid community policing philosophy may likewise have affected the traditional propensity of Gardaí to create an ‘us versus them’ divide in their social world directing in-group isolation, in favour of the cultural acceptance of alternative pluralistic relations which seek to progressively develop mutual respect between parties and develop partnership.

It might also hold true that police racism, sexism and homophobia have less residual “cognitive burn-in” (Sklansky, 2007, p.1) within Garda occupational culture than might conventionally have been assumed by some (see for example, Conlon, 2004, p.320). Instead, it may be reasoned that Garda occupational culture is thought to include: a shared sensitive outlook that understands the importance of social justice, through inclusion, and appreciating the cultural experiences and dynamics of the communities they serve.

Similarly, cynicism, isolation and intolerance’, which are also often presented within ‘conventional’ literature as being characteristics central to an alleged policing typecast were not revealed in the narratives provided within this research. As an alternative Garda occupational culture may be seen as more closely concerned with: protecting against human rights violations, improving the treatment of different identity groups and promoting better team work. As a consequence An Garda Síochána may have become more professional, more of a learning organisation willing to admit its mistakes; it may also be more willing to accept factional dissent and tolerate diversity of opinion.
The one area, however, where the field of culture may not have changed substantially, where some continuity in what might have been considered the ‘conventional’ occupational traditions of Irish policing was discovered in interviewee’s narratives was concerned with Garda solidarity. The experience of Gardaí described in this thesis suggests that those interviewed see accountability and whistle-blowing as areas fraught with organisational stressors. Increased accountability delivered through GSOC and emphasis on integrity has meant that the once reputed ‘blue wall of silence’ is no longer culturally sustainable: Gardaí reported having too much to lose (their careers, attendant financial security and position in Irish society) for protecting other Gardaí from scrutiny for misconduct.

Yet accountability as it was with the Gardaí interviewed for this research could not by extension be presumed, rather, it was found to be dependent on the subjectivities of the situation the Garda found themselves dealing with. What was clear, however, in relation to accountability within this research is that Garda occupational culture is very much concerned as ever it might have been with: the age-old [traditional] practice of self-protection by not involving one’s-self in the business of others. Whistle-blowing is possibly not culturally validated.
### TABLE 5
POSSIBLE KEY FEATURES OF AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA’S ‘NEW’ OCCUPATIONAL CULTURE

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<td>1</td>
<td>A shared outlook that views formal rules as self-serving legitimate normative orders designed to guide professional conduct and deliver a level of protection to all-concerned.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Garda occupation culture may currently be demarcated by its appreciation of the need for, deliberative, trust based initiatives that develop a more intimate localised face-to-face form of community accountability which are principally focused on peace keeping and crime prevention goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>There may possibly be cultural acceptance of alternative pluralistic relations which seek to progressively develop mutual respect between parties and develop partnership.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Garda occupational culture is thought to include a shared sensitive outlook that understands the importance of social justice, through inclusion, and appreciating the cultural experiences and dynamics of the communities they serve.</td>
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<td>Garda occupational culture may be seen as more closely concerned with: protecting against human rights violations, improving the treatment of different identity groups and promoting better team work.</td>
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Having delivered an interpretation of what may be some of the key ‘new’ characteristics of Garda occupational culture; next, we must consider what may have worked best towards achieving such change in An Garda Síochána.
Developing a premise of what may have worked best to achieve change

As described in this thesis it is clear that reform efforts in An Garda Síochána have met with a lot of trust, goodwill, and satisfaction; they have it seems elicited no small measure of commitment from Garda members.

The real challenge for Garda senior management as they embarked on the path of reform post-Morris was to cancel out Garda cultural resistance and win over the hearts and minds of operational–level Gardaí. In this author’s view this may have primarily happened because the rationale for the reforms being internally implemented was accepted by all. It seems Gardaí may have understood that the reforms introduced were necessary to maintain the faith of public support in light of the discomforting disclosure of corruption. Consequently, a shared mind-set to achieve organisational goals was established and communicated from the beginning. Maybe the reforms appear to have worked because the Donegal situation had challenged pride in integrity, ideas and the shared values of operational-level Gardaí with reference to how their policing ought to work? Is it possible that the nature of change may be overwhelmingly a matter of Gardaí shaping the job, and not so much as was traditionally held, the other way around?
Besides, perhaps modifications in An Garda Síochána progressed as smoothly as they did because Garda reformers persuaded operational-level Gardaí to embrace certain goals and values not because doing so would produce desirable personal consequences, or failing to do so would produce negative ones, but because doing so was simply right or just or the best way. In view of this, it is here suggested that Garda reformers may have demonstrated considerable cultural insight, to pre-figuratively recognise the professional autonomy and profoundly individualistic perceptions that Gardaí may well hold concerning themselves and their work.

They might well have recognised that Gardaí are broadly free to deal with most situations and incidents they come across according to their individual integrity to duty. As such, professional independence of action is accompanied with the condition of personal responsibility. All Gardaí are accountable for their ethical actions to internal and external authorities and are held responsible for ensuring that they maintain high standards of behaviour.

The considerable efforts of An Garda Síochána’s reformers strategically appear to shy away from a rigid approach of rule-tightening and supplementary regulations which assume that rules will bring Gardaí into line with service requirements. Rather, they favoured encouraging public service through persuasive initiatives that appeal to principles. This approach acknowledges Garda professional discretion, yet seeks to raise human awareness through
education and mutual respect, with the emphasis being placed on Gardaí adopting correct attitudes when dealing with members of the public. It’s an approach which appears to have influenced change towards the current style of ‘born again’ ethical Irish policing and pride in one’s work. Greater empowerment and professional employee freedom then may be the key to successful organisational development.

Another item that appears to have worked well towards achieving change rests with the efforts reformers made to address solutions which would cancel out the functional isolation which Gardaí might have experienced. In an orthodox fashion this was undoubtedly achieved by firstly taking the police to the community, and secondly by bringing the community to the police.

The Gardaí interviewed for this research clearly transmitted their willingness to face the challenge of policing a multi-cultural polity to attract and sustain support from everyone in Irish society. Moreover, they broadly welcomed the introduction of community policing strategies, preventative policing and multi-agency working, which seem to have re-emphasised partnership. It is encouraging that possibly through increased engagement with the public the Gardaí here interviewed were more inclined to feel loyalty to protect what is right and just, than to at all times automatically protect each other from what they knowingly understand to be wrong. This is something they had been accused of failing to do in County Donegal in the past, leading one to the unavoidable conclusion that partnership
processes may have an authoritative effect on cultural resistance.

Before concluding this appraisal it is important to consider one final issue that may have brought about change in An Garda Síochána, since the introduction of GSOC to both provide oversight and scrutinize public complaints can be observed to have had a significant impact on the cultural norms of Gardaí. The essential lesson from this experience seems to be that oversight mechanisms and accountability are part of the solution to corruption. They are vital, according to this research, for ensuring both effectiveness in achieving public confidence in a robust complaints procedure and fairness in operational behaviours. It must here be emphasised, however, that it was a central tenet of this thesis that duties towards accountability and whistle-blowing were identified as personal responsibilities that should be encouraged as a habit of formal and informal operational-level Garda culture, and should not ‘depend’ on the subjectivities of interpretation of Gardaí, as may currently be the case, nor should they solely be associated with the institutionally reactive preserves of oversight mechanisms.

Finally, it may be fitting to conclude this evaluation with a word of caution about the challenges that may lie ahead to ensure that individual Gardaí conscientiously continue to develop their integrity and practice ethical virtues through their daily interactions with others at a post-conventional level.
Towards a realisation of this objective this author trusts that Gardaí would do well to remember that reforms tend not to be durable; and continued vigilance and scepticism is [for ever and a day] vital (Newburn, 1999, p.46). At this stage of writing it may also be worth noting that not everyone would necessarily agree with the analysis that much of the reforms in An Garda Síochána have been positive, Conway and Walsh (2011, p.241-257) for example, have argued [short of making any direct contact with Gardaí] that “insufficient steps have been taken to address police governance and accountability in Ireland and that the best opportunity for reform may have been missed” (Conway and Walsh, 2011, p.241).

It has been this author’s personal experiences in his career so far, however, that policing presents an opportune environment for a Garda to realize one’s self-image of full potential. For Maslow (1943) the motive to realise one’s full potential is the drive towards self-actualization. “This tendency might be phrased as the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming” (Maslow, 1943, as quoted in Hoffman, 1999, p.143). The idea of human well-being through character development and self-actualization is an aspiration, not an accomplishment. People, born with free-will, make thousands of decisions every day, some for good, others for bad; quite often Gardaí are called on to make an intervention in the lives of others, they must manage ‘situations’ in the pursuits of justice and mutual respect.
Although Wilber (1996a) does not say so explicitly, it seems almost implied in his work that a person’s well-being is related to the person’s attained stage of human development as well as the development stage corresponding to his/her society’s centre of gravity. Drawing on this the Garda seeking to act with the ‘right’ balance of virtues is surely required to see each incident they deal with as an opportunity to exercise, and further develop, their own human moral character.
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview Schedule

1. Tell me about your policing experience in your career so far?

2. Explain your understanding about the reasons why the Morris Tribunal of inquiry was set up - do you think it was needed?

3. What’s your understanding of the conclusions/findings Morris reached about An Garda Síochána?

4. What have been the most significant organisational reforms to have come out of the Morris Tribunal?

5. What impact has the Morris Tribunal had on your work as a Guard?

6. Please take a moment to rank the following recent organisational reforms in order of significance, having regarded their impact on policing in Ireland.

   - Community Policing
   - Diversity Recruitment/Training
   - Code of Ethics
   - The Professional Standards Unit
   - Policing Forums
   - G.S.O.C.
   - Civilianisation of Promotion Boards
   - C.H.I.S.
   - Garda Inspectorate

7. Let us think about each of the above reforms in turn, what impact has each had on your work?

8. Finally, has policing in Ireland changed because of the Morris Tribunal? If yes, in what ways specifically has it changed?

9. Is there anything else you would like to discuss about any of the issues raised?
Please take a moment to rank the following recent organisational reforms in order of importance, having regarded there impact on policing in Ireland.

- Community Policing
- Diversity Recruitment/Training
- Garda Inspectorate
- Code of Ethics
- The Professional Standards Unit
- Policing Forums
- G.S.O.C.
- Civilianisation of Promotion Boards
- C.H.I.S.

Signed: 
Dated:
Appendix 2: Copy of letter of invitation to participate in the research

Dear

My name is Donal P. Corcoran. I am a member of An Garda Síochána. I’m attached to the Operations Office, at Store Street Garda Station. I am currently completing a dissertation to be submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements of a Professional Doctorate in Criminal Justice, at Portsmouth University, England. I was required to choose a topic associated with an area of study relating to criminal justice. I chose to focus my research on changes within policing in Ireland. I should stress to you that the Garda Síochána has not yet commissioned this research, albeit, I have applied for official approval.

I need your help, please! You have been randomly selected from a list of every Garda working within this policing division to take part in an interview. Only a small number of Gardaí have been selected to participate, so your experiences and perceptions on the subject are very important. You will be representing many employees who are similar to yourself.

Being a member myself I fully appreciate the demands that are on your time. With this in mind, I propose to conduct our interview at a time and place, which is most convenient to you, within the next month. I don’t anticipate our interview will last beyond an hour or so.

Your anonymity and confidentiality will be protected by this researcher.

You will be free to leave the interview at any time during discussion. You are also free to decline to answer any question without any inferences or offence being drawn from such a refusal.
It is proposed to digitally audiotape this interview. The tape-recording is for data processing purposes only. I give you an earnest assurance that it will be stored securely. Access will be limited to me and those providing typing services only for the duration of the research programme. Thereafter, the tape will be immediately destroyed.

Any quotations generated by our interview that may later be used in the finished dissertation, or other such disseminating document, will not bear any details that could serve to link the particular quotation to you.

The results of this study will document the changing nature of policing in Ireland. The findings will be utilised to inform dissemination measures. A copy of my finished work will of course be made available to you should you wish to see same. It is hoped that your views will be used to inform future projects and address policies and practices within An Garda Síochána.

Please give me a ring as soon as you receive this, either at [office details removed], or on my mobile [telephone number removed] to arrange to meet up.

Thanks for your help.

Sincerely,

Donal P. Corcoran
Appendix 3: Official permissions to research An Garda Síochána

Chief Superintendent,
DMR North Central

Re: Permission to conduct Doctoral Research – Garda D. Corcoran,
28756E, Operations Office, Store Street Garda Station

I refer to the attached correspondence as received on the 22 November 2010. Approval has been given by Mr. Gurchand Singh in accordance with Code (F) 15.4.

(John Twomey)

Assistant Commissioner

30 November 2010
An Garda Síochána

Chief Superintendent,
North Central Division
An Garda Síochána,
Store Street,
Dublin 1.

Tel./Telefax: (01) 6668092/93/94/95/96.
Fax/Envs: (01) 6668099
Web site: www.garda.ie
E-Mail: store_street_DV@garda.ie

Please quote the following ref. Numbers: DMRNC

Garda Donal Corcoran
Operations Room
Store Street

RE: Doctoral Studies, Request for Permission to conduct research within the DMR N.C.

In relation to the above, I wish to inform you that I will facilitate your research by giving you access as requested. You might contact me in advance of your interviews with a view to discussing your scope and approach further.

I wish you all the best with your endeavours.

Patrick Leahy
Chief Superintendent.

10 September 2010
Garda Donal P. Corcoran,
Community Policing Unit
Mountjoy Garda Station
Dublin 7

Re: Application for favour of professional supervision of doctoral studies – Garda Donal P. Corcoran, 28156E, Community Policing Unit, Mountjoy.

I would be pleased to assist you in this matter. Please contact me as appropriate to the completion of your studies.

Michael Fechan
Assistant Commissioner
Appendix 4: Notes for Interviewees

Notes for Interviewees

Dear colleague,

At the outset I’d like to thank you for arranging to meet with me today. I am currently completing a dissertation to be submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements of a Professional Doctorate in Criminal Justice, at Portsmouth University, England. I was required to choose a topic associated with an area of study relating to criminal justice I chose to focus my research on changes within policing in Ireland.

I should stress to you that the Garda Síochána has not officially commissioned this research. Should you wish to continue participating in this interview, I wish to bring the following points of interest to your attention, please.

1. Anything discussed in this interview shall remain confidential and anonymous between the interviewer and interviewee.

2. The interviewee is free to leave at any time and has the right to decline to answer any question free from any inferences being drawn from any such refusal.

3. It is proposed to audiotape this interview. The tape is for data processing purposes only and I give you an earnest assurance that it will be stored securely and accessed by me alone for the duration of the research programme, thereafter, the tape will be immediately destroyed.
4. Any quotations generated by this interview that later may be used in the finished dissertation, will not bear details that could serve to link the particular quotation to the respondent.

5. The findings will be used to inform disseminating measures.

6. Should you have any questions, concerns, or further issues you might like to raise at any stage I have provided you with my personal contact details below, please feel free to use them?

Once again a sincere thank you for your time!

Signed: Dated:

Donal P. Corcoran,
[Contact postal address was provided as was a contact telephone number]

I have had these notes for interviewees read over and explained to me by the researcher (Donal P. Corcoran). I am happy to proceed with this interview.

Signed: Dated:
### Appendix 5: Meta data iterative development record sheet

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### Inscriptive Field Notes

- **(ON)** Observation Notes: (Saw, Heard, Sensed)
- **(MN)** Methodological Notes: (Interview Setting, Distractions, Interferences, Problems Encountered)
- **(TN)** Theoretical Notes: (Hunches, Hypotheses, Connections, Alternative Interpretations, Does it offer a critique to what I thought?)
- **(RN)** Reflexive Notes: (What were my feelings?)
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Was there a new idea for a code? Can I combine a code with another? What was my hunch; is there a relationship between X and Y? Is an integrative remark possible? Are there quality issues arising from this interview? Has an issue arisen that would question analytical framework as it stands? What is surprising or puzzling about the interview? Why might this be so? Has this interview presented a nuance on hypothesis generated? What's the general theme or metaphor raised? Other peculiarities/issues arising?
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Chapter Six


Chapter Seven


