7. Below, beyond, and above the police: pluralization of policing

The Politics of the Police (5th edn)
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Chapter:
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The chapter surveys theories concerning the hybrid nature of the plural policing web. It evaluates the claim that a fundamental shift in policing occurred at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Holding police métier as a definitional constant, the chapter examines how policing is enacted from different institutional positions in plural policing. It outlines the history of claims about the rise of plural policing before discussing its relation to law, the military, technology, territory, locality, the rising importance of private ‘high policing’, and the centrality of surveillance. The chapter demonstrates the complex opportunity structure of the plural policing web, the variety of legal and technological tools involved in its operations, and suggests that it poses fundamental problems for the democratic governance of police that have not been resolved. It
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concludes that there is both continuity and change in the politics of the police and that claims of a fundamental break have been overstated.

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