Community Policing

Can It Work?

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Introduction

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Community policing is the most important development in policing in the past quarter century. Across the country, police chiefs report that they are moving toward this new model of policing, which supplements traditional crime fighting with a problem-solving and prevention-oriented approach that emphasizes the role of the public in helping set police priorities. What they say they are doing when they do community policing varies a great deal, however. In some places it is in the hands of special neighborhood officers, whereas in other places agencies try to transform the entire organization. Departments point to bike patrols, drug awareness programs in schools, home security inspections, and expanded roles for foot patrol officers as evidence that they have gotten involved. In some cities residents participate in aggressive neighborhood watch patrols as part of their city's program, though in many more places public involvement is limited to being asked to call 911 quickly when they see something suspicious. Agencies have also mounted sophisticated public relations campaigns to sell their programs, and they compete hotly for national awards for innovation. Assistant chiefs get promoted, and chiefs move to more visible cities, because they are said to have made a success out of community policing.

This book takes a critical look behind the resulting "hype" to see if anything is actually happening. Because they are experienced police researchers, the authors started with a suspicion: if almost everyone claims that they are doing something that is as difficult to implement as a serious community policing program, that claim deserves a second look. As they report in their chapters, the authors range from mildly optimistic to decidedly pessimistic about what they have seen.

Where did community policing come from? Into the 1980s, American policing was dominated by the professional model of policing. The professional model emphasized responding rapidly when victims called the police, plus a technically skilled follow-up effort by detectives to find "whodunit" and arrest them. Police focused on each case as it came to them via 911. After responding officers filled out a report (it turns out they usually did not catch anyone themselves), detectives were called in to sift through clues and try to finish the job. When they were not answering calls, the bulk of the force spent their time driving around on "preventive patrol," keeping visible because that was believed to deter crime. By staying mobile, they were available to be sent anywhere headquarters needed them to respond to calls. Police tried to focus on

serious victimizing crime. There was a great deal of controversy over their efforts to keep the streets clear of apparent drunks, loiterers, prostitutes, drug dealers, and variously disorderly persons, because some believed that such efforts overstepped the boundaries of the Constitution. It was also apparent that discretionary application of the law to control disorder too often followed racial lines.

Community policing represents an alternative vision of the role of police in society. It challenges almost every "professional" police practice described earlier. Proponents think police should deal with batches of related problems after thinking about them systematically, rather than just driving quickly to the scene of each call and taking a report. They are dubious that detectives add much value to crime fighting and think that more police resources should be devoted to teams of uniformed officers who deal with all of the problems that arise in particular areas. Rather than drive around keeping visible, proponents think those officers should be walking on foot, talking with residents, attending neighborhood meetings, and using the computers in their cars to keep abreast of crime trends in their small assigned beats. Most of all, they believe police should take responsibility for a neighborhood rather than just drive anywhere the computer at the 911 center decides to send them. Proponents also think that police must tackle head-on some of the difficult social disorder issues of our time, and that they should take the lead in coordinating action on the physical decay that blights the face of too many American neighborhoods.

The essays presented here examine this debate over the role of the police in the community. This introductory chapter sets the emergence of community policing in historical and conceptual context. First, we review some of the precursors to community policing, to highlight what each contributed to the evolution of this new model of policing. Then we describe the end product, or at least its current configuration. We present an extended definition of community policing and some cursory evidence of its popularity. Next, we show how the chapters address the "can it work?" question that is part of the title of this book. The first set of chapters examine trends in the adoption of community policing, to see whether anything fundamental is indeed changing. Another addresses the role of the public in securing neighborhood safety, and several chapters address the reaction of police officers, which is often negative, to their involvement in community policing. The final section looks at the effectiveness of community policing in addressing neighborhood problems.

THE ROOTS OF COMMUNITY POLICING

Community policing was eventually constructed out of critiques of the professional model, but the way forward was illuminated by a series of interim experiments in policing. During the 1970s and early 1980s, grassroots attempts to improve on the professional model sprung up here and there around the coun-

try. There was no master plan behind them, and there was no thought-out theory about why the innovations might supercede the day's dominant model for policing. Instead, cities around the country tried new things they thought might work. In retrospect, it is possible to give these pilot tests labels: team policing, community outreach, community crime prevention, problem-oriented policing, and fear reduction (Moore, 1992). Though each had its limitations and visibly failed in some places, collectively they broadened society's view of what policing might entail. They changed the nature of police executives' conversations about where policing was heading at the end of the twentieth century, and they led the federal government to get more heavily involved in fostering police innovation.

TEAM POLICING

Police departments in New York City, Cincinnati, and Los Angeles were among the first to try fostering turf-based responsibility among police by forming teams of officers dedicated to particular areas of the city. This would not have been a new idea before about 1910, because at that time most police walked their beat and dealt with whatever they came across, but by the mid-1960s their work was parceled out by radio and they drove wherever the dispatcher sent them. In Los Angeles, team policing worked like this: The patrol force was divided into "X cars" that could be dispatched throughout the city and "basic cars" that were to remain in particular neighborhoods. "Senior lead officers" were assigned to each basic car and given higher pay in recognition of their key role in establishing and maintaining liaison with the community. The city was divided into seventy patrol areas, each policed by three to five basic cars and commanded by a lieutenant. Each lieutenant directed not only the X and basic cars, but all of the special units working in the area (gangs, drug squads, and the like), and had twenty-four-hour accountability for conditions there. Because of this neighborhood-level focus, Mark Moore (1992: 133) describes team policing as "the first modern model of what [was] becoming community policing."

Moore reports that evaluations of team policing in several locations found that the model was popular with the public and sometimes improved neighborhood conditions, including crime rates. However, even successful examples of team policing eventually fell by the wayside. The reasons were varied but included resource constraints (officers in basic cars could not easily be sent from place to place), opposition by higher ups in the chain of command (who could be uncomfortable with delegating responsibility to mere patrol officers), and incompatibility with an organizational culture committed to the professional model. Despite the virtual demise of full-blown team policing in most jurisdictions, several of its vestiges—dispatching rules that keep beat officers in their beats, a team approach to decisions in the field, and pushing decision-making responsibility down to the beat level—are prominent in descriptions of community policing today.

Community Outreach

Special units dedicated to improving community relations date back at least to the 1950s, when "Officer Friendly" visited schools, made speeches, and spoke to citizens in other forums, as a means of gaining the support of community residents. In the wake of urban riots in the 1960s, these units often evolved into community liaison offices. They became more involved in organizing and sustaining public meetings, and in forming advisory committees that gave visible roles to community activists. Meetings and advisory councils then, as now, offered "megaphones for the department [and] . . . antennae tuned into neighborhood concerns" (Moore, 1992: 135). In some places, community relations units became valuable "eyes and ears" for departments attempting to monitor community tensions and coopt potentially dissident leaders. At their best, community relations units opened up two-way channels for communication between police and the community. One shortcoming of the professional model of policing is that it encouraged police to think they would be most effective if they could ignore public opinion and politics, and by the end of the 1950s many lived in insular worlds indeed. In a 1990 conversation with Moore, Herman Goldstein describes community relations units as among the first innovations that alerted chiefs to the potential value of community outreach. They may also have helped to create a congenial climate for building police-community partnerships with action agendas, but the idea that the public could be involved in neighborhood security projects awaited the emergence of another innovation, the community crime prevention movement of the 1970s.

Community Crime Prevention

The community crime prevention movement emphasized collaboration between the police and community organizations. It was built on the observation that, in a democratic society, police cannot effectively deal with crime on their own. At the end of the 1960s, it was widely believed that rising crime could be traced to community disorganization, and it reflected a decline in the factors that had shaped people's behavior in the past: jobs, churches, schools, families, and traditional values. The solution seemed to be organization—getting neighborhood residents involved in voluntary, collective efforts to fight crime on their own. This could include marking their property to deter burglars, forming neighborhood watch groups and resident patrols, "hardening" local businesses against shoplifting and robbery, cleaning up crime-prone spaces open to the public, and challenging the loitering and public drinking that bred simple assaults and petty crimes. Neighborhood groups could battle physical dilapidation by conducting clean-up and fix-up campaigns and by pressuring city bureaucracies for better service. They could involve youths in supervised recreation programs. When playing these roles in securing community safety, residents brought to the table resources and expertise not available to the police (Skogan, 1988).

Community-based anticrime programs were extremely popular during the 1970s. In a national survey conducted in 1981, 12 percent of the adult population claimed membership in a neighborhood group that was involved in

crime prevention (cf. Skogan, 1988). When cities began to run out of money in the 1980s, residents' voluntary contributions to neighborhood safety were appreciated. Community crime prevention projects were also the first precursor of community policing to be systematically evaluated, using modern research methods. A large collection of evaluations (e.g., Rosenbaum, 1986) demonstrates that communities can have useful and legitimate roles to play in crime prevention, roles that go well beyond being the "eyes and ears of the police." The community anticrime movement also played an important role in establishing *prevention* as an important, and measurable, goal. In a period in which police were still mostly reactive, coming to the scene only after something bad had happened, communities were instinctively proactive. They did not want bad things to happen in the first place. Community-based prevention remains an active enterprise to this day. Now it is more commonly called "situational" prevention, and it encompasses both resident and police strategies, along with an emphasis on building design, neighborhood layout, and "designing out" crime in the manufacture of products such as automobiles.

Problem-Oriented Policing

In a seminal article, Herman Goldstein (1979) proposes an alternative to the "one crime at a time" approach that characterized professional policing. Goldstein raises the point that clusters of calls—often from the same address—might have a common cause. He reasoned that if police came to understand crime clusters—he dubbed them "problems"—they could reduce the volume of future calls by resolving their common cause. In this model, policing would become problem oriented rather than response oriented. Subsequent research on 911 calls indicates that they were indeed heavily clustered. For example, a study in Minneapolis found that more than 50 percent of calls came from just 3.3 percent of the city's addresses (Sherman, 1989). Goldstein also calls for police to "think outside the box" when it came to solving problems. First, he wants them to analyze problems: to learn more about victims as well as offenders and to consider carefully why they came together where they did. Then he wants them to craft responses that went beyond the traditional solution of arresting someone in the hope that somewhere further down the criminal justice pipeline they would see the error in their ways. Solutions to problems might, for example, require enlisting the help of other city service agencies, or using the civil courts or the health department, or turning to residents to help them "take back the night." Today, well-organized departments identify and promote "best practices" that draw on what their officers have done. Finally (and this was also a new idea), Goldstein wants police to assess how well they did. Did it work? *What* worked, exactly? Did the project fail because we had the wrong idea, or did we have a good idea but fail to implement it?

Problem-oriented policing and community policing are overlapping concepts, but each has a distinctive thrust. Problem-solving projects can be organized without many of the features that accompany community policing. In Chapter 8 of this book, John Eck points out that community policing is differentiated from

problem solving by its emphasis on broad roles for the public in identifying, prioritizing, and solving problems. As Eck points out, involving the community is a tactic to be adopted if it is appropriate for the problem at hand, not an end in itself. Problem solving can be conducted without community input, but then it is likely to remain focused on conventionally defined crime that is identified by intensive analysis of police data. Community policing programs can address a wider scope of problems, they have wider problem-solving goals (including "involve the community"), and they use a broader range of tools to address them. They are likely to address teen truancy and problem buildings as well as burglary and theft from autos; officers may use housing or health codes in addition to the criminal code; neighborhood residents and city agencies may focus on cleaning up graffiti, and call that "community policing" too. Beyond that, seeking and using residents' input in identifying problems and setting priorities increase the likelihood that policing projects will address problems of concern to the community and that police tactics will be respectful of neighborhood residents. Somewhere down this path, problem-oriented policing becomes community policing.

Fear Reduction

The final piece of the pre-community policing puzzle is the fear-reduction projects of the 1970s and early 1980s. Reducing communities' fear of crime emerged during the 1980s as a policing problem in its own right, for several reasons. First, observers recognized fear of retaliation as one of several barriers to citizen participation in community crime prevention and problem-solving activities (Grinc, 1994). Second, the finding that fear of crime was not completely determined by the level of victimization (Skogan, 1988) implied that reducing fear would require something different from programs that focused narrowly on crime.

Third, police practitioners and researchers identified two promising strategies for reducing fear: visible police foot patrols and policing disorder. An early spark for fear-reduction initiatives came from successful experiments with foot patrols in Flint, Michigan, and Newark, New Jersey. Although the foot patrols did not reduce property or violent crime, they did reduce citizens' fears; the Flint experiment was so popular that voters passed a tax to continue the program, and calls for service declined (Pate, 1986; Trojanowicz, 1992). Later, federally sponsored experiments in Newark and Houston, Texas, demonstrated that police could reduce fear using tactics such as opening neighborhood substations, going door to door to learn about neighborhood problems, and encouraging citizens to form new neighborhood organizations (Skogan, 1990; Pate et al., 1986).

The second fear-reduction strategy, policing disorder, is an implication of what is sometimes known as the broken windows theory, after the title of a 1982 *Atlantic Monthly* article by James Q. Wilson and George Kelling. They argue that, left uncorrected, signs of physical decay (the metaphorical broken window) and social disorder (e.g., public drinking, groups of loiterers) communicate the message that "anything goes" in the neighborhood. In turn,

frightened law-abiding people avoid the area, leaving it to the disorderly and the criminal. Families move out, and no one particularly wants to move in, so property values fall. Buildings deteriorate and begin to fall vacant. Squatters move in, and crack houses open for business.

In some cities the broken windows metaphor has become the rationale for joint police-community efforts to repair signs of physical decay. In Chicago, for example, community policing includes neighborhood clean-ups and graffiti paint-overs by residents, focused trash removal and street repairs by city agencies, and a new police focus on health and building code enforcement. Residents also get involved in controlling social disorder by challenging prostitutes and public drinkers, taking measures to close bad businesses, challenging the liquor licenses of establishments that foster trouble making, and retaking control of parks after dark (Skogan and Hartnett, 1997).

Other cities turned more exclusively to the police to solve their disorder problems by arresting people. Kelling and Coles (1996) describe two examples from New York City, both involving proactive policing. One target was "fare-beaters" who avoided paying to ride the subway by jumping turnstiles instead of inserting tokens. The other was "squeegee men" who, unasked, "washed" the windows of cars stuck in traffic and then intimidated drivers into giving them money. Arresting them became known as "quality-of-life policing." Plummeting crime and fear in New York City seemed to validate this strategy and played an important role in the cheer that arose at the end of the 1990s that "New York Is Back." But much to Kelling's (1999) regret, many observers now describe the New York Police Department's proactive order maintenance strategy as "turning police loose" in ways that led to well-known abuses of their authority. Kelling himself remarks that some New York Police Department adherents to "tough" policing have misconstrued successful assertive policing as license for combative or military policing. New York's model also did not feature any community input into identifying problems or setting police priorities, ignoring the concept of partnership that figures so prominently in the community policing paradigm.

COMMUNITY POLICING IN THE 1990S AND BEYOND

This brings us to the 1990s, the era of community policing. Community policing advocates picked up the lessons of the past that we have documented and blended them together while adding a few new ingredients. What does the resulting dish look like? What police departments actually *do* when they do community policing turns out to be highly varied. Two of our authors, John Eck and Dennis Rosenbaum (1994) describe community as a "plastic" concept because the range and complexity of programs associated with it are large and continually evolving. When asked if they practice community policing, agencies point to a long list of activities as evidence that they are doing so. These

range from bike and foot patrols to storefront offices and citizen advisory committees. At root, however, community policing is not defined by a list of particular activities but rather by strategic organizational adaptation to a changing environment. Police departments practicing community policing adopt some mix of three new, interrelated organizational stances.

One feature of many community policing programs is *decentralization*. Community policing often leads departments to assign officers to fixed geographical areas and to keep them there during their day. Usually they attempt to push authority and responsibility further down their agency's organizational hierarchy to encourage decision making that responds rapidly and effectively to local conditions. Decentralization is supposed to facilitate the development of localized solutions to neighborhood problems. It is intended to encourage communication between officers and neighborhood residents and to promote community-oriented projects. Often there are moves to flatten the structure of departments by compressing the rank structure to shed layers of bureaucracy and to speed communication and decision making within the organization.

The second common feature of departments adopting this new model of policing is *community engagement*. Community policing encourages agencies to develop partnerships with community groups to facilitate "listening" to the community and constructive information sharing. To this end, departments hold community meetings and form advisory committees, survey the public, and create informative Web sites. Wesley Skogan's Chapter 3 in this book describes how these work in Chicago. In some places police share information with residents through educational programs or by enrolling them in citizen police academies that give them in-depth knowledge of law enforcement. Engagement usually extends to involving the public in some way in efforts to enhance community safety. Residents are asked to assist the police by reporting crimes promptly when they occur and by cooperating as witnesses. Community policing often promises to strengthen the capacity of communities to fight and prevent crime on their own. Residents sometimes get involved in the coordinated or collaborative projects when they participate in crime prevention projects or walk in officially sanctioned neighborhood patrol groups. Even where these are old ideas, moving them to center stage as part of a larger strategic plan showcases the commitment of police departments to resident involvement. Other partnerships involve other government organizations that have some direct responsibility for neighborhood quality of life. These agencies can include those responsible for health, housing, and even street lighting.

Third, community policing usually involves *problem solving*. As we note earlier, problem solving is an analytic method for developing crime prevention strategies. As a police strategy, problem solving represents a departure from the traditional approach to policing, which too often was reduced to driving fast to crime scenes to fill out reports of what happened. Community policing problem solving stresses involving the public in identifying and prioritizing a *broad range* of neighborhood problems. One of the consequences of opening themselves up to the public is that police inevitably get involved in more problems and in less traditional problems than they did in the past. At community

meetings residents complain about bad buildings, noise, rats in the alley, and people fixing their cars at the curb, not just about burglary. If police reply "that's not our responsibility" and try to move on, no one will come to the next meeting. Of course, the police are not very good at solving all of the problems of stressed neighborhoods, so they need to form partnerships with other agencies of government and see to it that they get the work done. Finally, in many circumstances community policing can involve the public in solving problems as well. Neighborhood residents can paint over graffiti, walk their dogs in areas frequented by prostitutes, hold prayer vigils in the midst of street drug markets, and join court watch groups that bring pressure on judges and prosecutors.

What does all this mean in actual practice? As we note at the outset, police departments everywhere claim that they are doing community policing because it is so popular with the public that no city wants to seem to be out of step with the times. They all have that list of activities to point to when they are asked if they practice community policing. Although this new interest by the public in law enforcement policy is certainly a good thing, the apparent popularity of community policing is also a reason for caution. Translating the fundamental principles of community policing into actual practice is difficult. Abstract concepts need to be turned into lists of practical, day-to-day activities and then enshrined in enforceable orders for officers in the field. The troops out there have to actually go along with those orders, and the emphasis should always be on the "para" in these "para-military" organizations. It can also be surprisingly difficult to get the community involved in community policing and—more predictably—to get other city bureaucracies to take ownership of problems raised in police-community meetings.

Even when all the intended parties seem to be "getting on board," legitimate questions remain. When discretion becomes decentralized to officers on the beat, which uses of discretion get rewarded and which get ignored or penalized? When communities become engaged, are residents mostly listening, talking, exchanging information, coordinating activities, or implementing a shared agenda when they meet with police? When a problem gets solved, who nominated the problem, who participated in planning and executing the response, who assessed the effectiveness of the response, and who checked to make sure the problem stayed solved?

There is evidence that police departments around the country have actually changed how they are organized. A study by the federal government (Hickman and Reeves, 2001) reports that elements of community policing are common, especially among those serving communities of more than 50,000 people. By 1999, almost two-thirds of local police departments reported they had officers serving in full-time community policing roles. Departments employing about 80 percent of the nation's police officers had adopted some form of geographical responsibility for patrol officers, and about half of all officers worked for agencies attempting to do problem solving in a systematic way. Most Americans lived in places where police had formalized problem-solving partnerships with other agencies and groups. Virtually everyone (96 percent)

lived in places where police reported meeting regularly with neighborhood residents. More evidence about the spread of community policing is reported in Chapter 1 of this book.

Some of this expansion in community-oriented policing has been financed by the federal government. In 1994, Congress approved the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, which included an allotment of $9 billion to hire as many as 100,000 new police officers. The Act specified that one of the roles of these new officers should be "to foster problem solving and interaction with communities by police officers." Title I created a national Office of Community Oriented Policing Services in the Justice Department to coordinate spending these funds. The office also provided training in community policing, paid for new computers and other technological assistance for departments, and assisted them in setting up community policing programs. However, federal support for community policing certainly will be on the wane. The 1994 Act had at least one of its intended effects: major police groups endorsed the presidential candidate who sponsored it. Now crime is down, a new team is in the White House, and federal largess toward local law enforcement is being redirected to post-September 11 concerns. An important test of the staying power of community policing will come when cities have to pay all of its costs.

THIS BOOK

This book reports on new studies of community policing and its close ally, problem-oriented policing. The chapters were completed after the authors met to thrash out their ideas, yet they are still not in total agreement about the status of community policing. This was probably inevitable. The questions the group had to address were hard ones, and there were usually limited data with which to answer them. Some of the chapters in this book are national in scope, whereas others draw on studies of individual cities because they are the best evidence available. The book is organized around those four fundamental questions: Are police changing? Will the public get involved? Will police officers buy in? Can it work?

Are Police Changing?

This is an important question because changing police departments is very hard. Dorothy Guyot (1991) describes the task of changing police as akin to "bending granite." Although there is a lot of talk about innovation in policing, the field is littered with the casualties of failed efforts to make change.

How do we know if police are changing? One way is to conduct on-site analyses of community policing programs, and another is to send questionnaires to large numbers of departments asking what they are doing. The authors of the first chapter in this section ("Trends in the Adoption of Community Policing") do both. Jeffrey Roth, Jan Roehl, and Calvin Johnson look

at four key issues: the formation of police-community partnerships, the adoption of a problem-solving orientation toward police work, police roles in crime prevention, and the extent of organizational change to support those three objectives. Each subsection of this chapter combines the findings of agency survey data with "reports from the field" that are based on dozens of site visits. Their survey-based data suggest that in the wake of the 1994 Act, large agencies jumped into wholesale adoption of a whole battery of signature community policing practices, but later took a more cautious and selective approach. Perhaps because traditional policing is inherently community policing in smaller towns, small agencies reported adopting community policing practices more cautiously and still have not adopted them as widely as the large agencies. They may not be able to support specialist community officers when they have a total of only five. The authors' on-site assessments reveal that reported adoption of a community policing practice could have several meanings: that the chief had merely incorporated the practice into the departmental vision, or pinned the practice label on some idiosyncratic local tactic, or had indeed incorporated the practice into agency routines.

The second chapter, Jack Greene's "Community Policing and Organization Change," discusses the obstacles to implementing a serious community policing program. These require wholesale changes in the ways agencies are organized and services are delivered. He argues that political and institutional realities work against any substantial shift away from a "crime fighting" stance by police departments. Proponents of community policing call for changes in how departments are organized, formal ways to form deeper links between police and the community, and changes in the "core technology" of policing—how services are actually delivered. He does not see much evidence that police agencies have reorganized themselves root and branch to accommodate any of these demands, and he draws on organizational theory to explain why. He concludes that many departments have adopted the rhetoric of community policing, but mostly they are still organized to do traditional "professional" policing. There is some evidence that police organizations have become more open to input from their environment (the public, interest groups, other government agencies), which is a key aspect of community policing. A crucial test of community policing will be whether this input actually changes how they prioritize problems and craft their operational strategies, an issue revisited in the next chapter.

Will the Public Get Involved?

The claim that community residents should be deeply involved in efforts to secure community safety is a key rhetorical point in any discussion of community policing. However, it can also be surprisingly difficult to get community residents interested in cooperating with police, especially in poor and disenfranchised neighborhoods. They may not have a history of getting along, and police may be perceived as arrogant and brutal rather than as potential partners. Residents can rightly be skeptical of claims about community policing, and that it will be different this time. They may also have difficulty getting organized by

themselves. Civic participation is difficult to sustain in high-crime areas, where fear stifles community life. Residents easily view each other with suspicion rather than with neighborliness, and this undermines their capacity to forge collective responses to local problems. Because they fear retaliation by drug dealers and neighborhood toughs, programs requiring public meetings or organized cooperation may be less successful. As a result, high-crime areas often lack the organizational infrastructure needed to get things done.

Chapter 3, "Representing the Community in Community Policing" by Wesley Skogan, examines whether expectations about community involvement are realistic. Can and will residents step forward and get involved, especially in fear-ridden, high-crime neighborhoods? Will those who do represent the views of the entire community, or only their parochial concerns? Certainly, friends of the police may get involved, but how about those who are critical of their actions? The chapter also directly addresses the challenge posed by Greene in the previous section when it examines the impact of resident involvement on the operation of a community policing program in Chicago. There, the vehicle for grassroots consultation and collaboration between police and residents is neighborhood meetings that are held monthly in all parts of the city. About 6,000 residents and 1,800 officers attend each month. These meetings are intended to be forums for exchanging information and for identifying, prioritizing, and analyzing local problems. They also provide occasions for police and residents to get acquainted, and a vehicle for residents to organize their own problem-solving efforts. The study finds that, in Chicago, beat meetings did a good job of translating residents' priorities into action. There was a strong relationship between residents' priorities and the delivery of city services. However, there was a strong middle-class bias in participation, and the meetings did a better job at representing previously established stakeholders in the community than at integrating marginalized groups with fewer mechanisms for voicing their concerns.

Will Police Officers Buy In?

Police have a remarkable ability to wait out efforts to reform them. Important aspects of police culture mitigate against change. Police resist the intrusion of civilians (who "can't really understand") into their business. They fear that community troublemakers will take over programs and that people will seek to use police for their private purposes or for personal revenge. When police dislike changes proposed from within, they snort that the top brass are "out of touch with the street." They scoff at performing tasks that smack of "social work" or the "wave and smile" policing they associate with community relations programs. Things are not always better among their bosses. The sergeants who immediately supervise them may have only a dim understanding of community policing, which they never practiced. The habits of the old hierarchical management structure are also hard to break. The lieutenants another layer above often resist surrendering their authority to decentralized teams. The labyrinthine reviews and rereviews of decisions provide lieutenants and captains with something to do, and many who have risen to the top under the old

rules find the fluidity of tasks and relationships required by community policing evidence of its faddish character. Another significant issue is that larger departments have a great deal of difficulty in determining whether community policing is taking place. Police are good at tracking how many calls they answer and whether they are making enough arrests and handing out enough tickets. By and large, they have to trust the professionalism and commitment of their officers when it comes to dealing with the law-abiding public.

The three chapters in this section of the book address these organizational change issues. In Chapter 4, Dennis Rosenbaum and Deanna Wilkinson ask, "Can Police Adapt?" They describe two midsized cities that attempted to adopt serious community policing programs. The programs called for participatory management, extensive training, area-based decentralization of police operations, and the creation of special community policing units. As part of their evaluation, the authors track the attitudes of the officers in these cities over a six-year span. This gives them a unique opportunity to address questions about organizational change. They find that the best strategy for adopting community policing may be the "special unit" approach—vesting it in the hands of skilled and largely volunteer officers—rather than pursuing wholesale, departmentwide change. The work of most officers doing routine patrol did not change, as Greene predicts in his chapter, and neither did their hearts and minds.

Chapter 5, "Working the Street: Does Community Policing Matter?" by William Terrill and Stephen Mastrofski, examines community policing in two cities: St. Petersburg, Florida, and Indianapolis, Indiana. As the Rodney King episode of 1991 reminds us, everyone must be concerned about abuses of police power. Although use of force is inevitable, good policing is associated with economy in the use of physical and verbal coercion. Reformers hope that community policing will contribute to less coercive policing. They argue that community-oriented officers will be less alienated from the citizens they serve, more committed to developing deep and positive relations with the public, and more knowledgeable about the people with whom they interact. Others are more skeptical, fearing that police use of force is too firmly rooted in situational and neighborhood factors to be much affected by new philosophies of policing. During their study, Terrill and Mastrofski observe how police in the field interacted with 3,500 suspects. They look at how police treatment of citizens was affected by community policing factors, including department philosophy, officer assignment, officer training, and attitudes about community policing. They find sobering results. The departments differed in the use of force, but community policing assignments, training, and even attitudes were not systematically related to the extent to which officers used coercion.

All of the authors in this section would agree that community policing involves a war for the hearts and minds of police officers, who distrust attempts to stuff "social work" down their throats and are dubious about untried social experiments. In Chapter 6, "Diving into Quicksand: Program Implementation and Police Subcultures," Richard Wood, Mariah Davis, and Amelia Rouse examine opposition to community policing among influential coalitions of officers, ranging from hard-headed "paramilitary" types to "get

ahead" careerists, rule-bound bureaucrats, and expert craftsmen. Wood spent four years tracking changes in the elements of police culture in a large Southwestern city. The chapter traces the evolution of what was once a relatively unified, "traditional" police culture, one that was dominated by a code of silence concerning officer misconduct and resistance to outsiders and change. By the 1990s this department had—like police departments around the country—fragmented into competing factions, reflecting changes in the demography of the city and of police officers themselves. But each of these emergent subcultures had its own, often negative, reaction to community policing, and they undermined the attempt of department and city leaders to implement change. Wood notes that police administrators intent on innovation need to find ways to harness the interests of the various subcultures in their agency and make clever use of divisions among them.

Can It Work?

Community policing and its precursors emerged because of dissatisfaction with important elements of the professional model of policing. Among the sources of discontent was evidence that key elements of the model—including rapid response, the specialization of detective work, and the deterrent effects of both visible patrol and arresting people—were not having much effect on the crime rate. The big-city riots of the 1960s and 1970s were also a reminder that the professional model was not meeting the needs of significant parts of the population, who were increasingly disaffected from the criminal justice system. However, there is to date embarrassingly little evidence that the alternatives to the professional model work much better. Note that the absence of evidence is not evidence of an absence of effectiveness. Studies in scattered cities point to successes on the community policing front, and case studies describing successful problem-solving projects abound. But other studies disagree about broader and more durable effects of a community- and problem-oriented policing, and the jury is still out about both of these movements.

Three chapters of this book address the "can it work?" question. In Chapter 7, Nick Tilley examines the concepts of community and problem solving policing. He argues that although we cannot do community policing without adopting problem solving, problem solving can function as an autonomous police function. The chapter challenges conventional notions by outlining how the concept of community must expand to include nongeographical virtual communities as sites for problem solving. College students provide a good example of a common-interest group that is scattered geographically and typically are not "of" the community where they live yet suffer common crime problems. The chapter describes why the potential of community policing to anticipate, identify, make sense of, and respond to problems has not been fully realized. Using the ideas of effectiveness, efficiency, and equity advanced elsewhere by two of our authors (John Eck and Dennis Rosenbaum), Tilley dissects the limits of community policing and problem solving, using examples from Great Britain and the United States. He argues that both models of polic-

ing have fallen far short of their promise, and the rhetoric of their supporters. Community policing has been slow to deliver measurable results, and problem solving turns out to be a lot easier in theory than in practice. He proposes decoupling the two and pushing harder on the police-centered problem-solving side of the equation.

Because he also thinks police are just mediocre at it, John Eck in Chapter 8, "Why Don't Problems Get Solved?" digs more deeply into the problems associated with neighborhood problem solving. Many of the reasons are internal to police agencies: they don't know how to do it, how to manage it, or how to encourage more of it. They don't like change (a recurring theme in this book), and they think they are just too busy to try new things. More sophisticated practitioners lament that "the technology" is not there; that is, we don't know what works in policing generally, and in problem solving in particular. Calling for "the return of the problem solver," Eck recommends a new regimen for police. He argues that academics and researchers need to pay more attention to the nature of problems themselves. There needs to be more research on problems ranging from bored youths to bad liquor stores that yields insights into their causes and tells us why they are concentrated in some places but not others. There needs to be more careful evaluation of what works and what does not in countering problems, and how police can figure out which are the most effective strategies. Because problem solving is vital to any healthy community policing program, more effort needs to be focused on making it effective.

Does community policing work, in the eyes of the public? Are neighborhoods better off because of this new movement? This is a common and important question, yet one for which there have been few answers. Most sociological research on crime and quality-of-life problems has focused on their association with race and class, not on what can be done about them. The final chapter, "Community Policing and the Quality of Neighborhood Life" by Michael Reisig and Roger Parks, traces the impact of community policing in two large cities. It is based on surveys of police officers and neighborhood residents, and official homicide numbers. It shows how community policing activities such as foot and bike patrol, greater police-citizen collaboration, and more intensive motor patrol are associated with enhanced quality of life and lower rates of crime.

OUR CONCLUSION

Well, can community policing work? Taken as a whole, the chapters of this book raise the possibility that community policing can be adopted, that it may increase the legitimacy of the police in the eyes of the public, and that it may help them more effectively target problems that are of priority concern to the community. The agency surveys that are described in Chapter 1 document that programmatic elements of community policing—community partnerships, problem solving, prevention, and policing strategies planned in the neighborhoods—swept the

country during the 1990s. The counterpoint, presented in the very next chapter, is that this rhetoric seems not to have reshaped most agencies at their core. However, it is remains that the public expects the police to continue to provide the professional service to which they have become accustomed. A significant fraction of every police department will continue to be involved in responding to the public's calls, directing traffic and arresting speeders, and providing support during emergencies of all kinds. It is not clear that it is feasible to jettison the organizational structure that enables that work to be done efficiently. Skogan (Chapter 3) demonstrates that in at least one large multicultural city, the rhetoric of community policing is backed by enough reality to encourage thousands of residents to turn out every month, voting with their time and energy for the success of the program in their neighborhoods. Reisig and Parks (Chapter 9) find evidence that the adoption of community policing tactics reduced disorder and homicide in two cities.

The difficulty is that the rhetoric that surrounds community policing may discourage some officers from buying in to the concept. After all, it echoes back to the days when community-oriented policing began and ended with an occasional visit from the chief to deliver a speech at a community center. Today, community policing officers can still earn jeers from their colleagues because they are not doing "real police work" and instead are "empty holster guys." However, the national evaluation of the spread of community policing that is described in Chapter 1 cited the Las Vegas, Nevada, police department as an example of how skillful leadership of a problem-solving unit—by a sergeant known as a "cop's cop"—lit a spark of problem-focused, sometimes aggressive, community policing that is reshaping that department and the neighborhoods it polices. It is at least plausible that Terrill and Mastrofski's conclusion (Chapter 5) that the extent of community policing is unrelated to a department's use of force reflects something other than a failure of community policing to reduce use of force; perhaps tacit (or, even better, explicit and structured) permission to continue using appropriate levels of force helped innovative policing in those two cities flourish by making it more acceptable to respected veterans who already command the respect of their fellow officers.

If valid, this scenario would exemplify the "clever use of divisions" that Wood, Davis, and Rouse (Chapter 6) believe is helpful in turning a department toward community policing. In turn, a less adversarial reorientation of a department may free its community policing staff to teach, and its officers to learn, the "better use" of problem solving and other community policing tools that Eck (Chapter 8) finds missing in the typical department. It may even encourage middle managers to follow Tilley's (Chapter 7) suggestion to become more creative in defining communities, developing outreach strategies, and developing responses to their problems.

More fundamental, if community policing is to succeed, we believe that it has to be a city's program and not just the police department's program. Community policing is not cheap; it is labor extensive and thus expensive. When money is tight and resources are hard to come by, it may be at risk. But if its supporters can build broad public and political support for it, the budget for

community policing may survive. Political support, and deep support from the community, can also help internally. It can be a tool for overcoming resistance to community policing within a department, if necessary. If it is a good program it will be good politics, and in the end public servants must do what their leaders tell them. Building political capital with the community can pay dividends when instances of brutality or corruption occur, because the promise that it will not happen again will have some credibility. Finally, this will help police departments get other municipal agencies to work with them on problem-solving projects. When those agencies think that community policing is the police department's program, they will not be very enthusiastic about bending their priorities and spending their money on those projects. To work, community policing has to be the city's program.

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