

An Overview of Community Policing: Origins, Concepts and Implementation

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INTRODUCTION

Police departments across the United States report that they have adopted community policing, an organizational strategy which supplements traditional crime fighting with problem-solving and prevention-oriented programs that emphasize new roles for the public. While there are competing models, community policing is surely one of the most important developments in American policing in the past half-century. It is a model of policing which has been adopted elsewhere, including Canada, Australia and the UK; chapters in this book review parallel movements in other nations as well. This chapter focuses on developments in the United States. It first presents a brief history of developments that led up to community policing there. Then it reviews the three core concepts that make up community policing, and describes how these concepts have been turned into concrete programs. The chapter concludes with questions about the future of community policing. Throughout, it draws heavily on my experience in evaluating community programs in a number of cities, as well as on research by others.

What is community policing? Some object that the concept is unclear, or that it “means everything to everybody.” Under the rubric of “community policing” police patrol on foot, horses, bicycles and Segways. Departments train civilians at “citizen police academies,” open small neighborhood storefront offices, conduct surveys to measure community satisfaction, canvass door-to-door to identify local problems, publish newsletters, conduct drug education projects, inspect private homes in order to give residents crime prevention advice, and work with municipal agencies to enforce health and safety regulations. In some areas residents participate in their own neighborhood patrols as part of their city’s program, while in others their principal role is to call the police promptly when they see a crime occur.

However, these activities do not define community policing. Rather, it is an organizational strategy. What police do when they are “doing community policing” should vary a great

deal. Communities with different problems and different resources to bring to bear against them should try different things. Projects and tactics should come and go as conditions change. Adopting community policing actually involves changing the structure of organizations and their decision-making processes, so that they manage this flexibility more effectively. Underlying long lists of specific "community policing" projects are the three central strategic commitments of community policing: citizen involvement, problem solving and decentralization. These are hard to separate, for in practice these three dimensions turn out to be closely interrelated, and departments that overlook one or more of them will not have a very effective program. All of them have roots in developments in policing that began in the early 1970s.

THE ORIGINS OF COMMUNITY POLICING

Community policing was developed from the bottom up. During the 1970s and early 1980s, grass-roots attempts to improve on the dominant "professional" model of policing sprung up around the United States. There was no master plan behind them, and no systematic theory about why the innovations might be more effective than the dominant model for policing. Instead, cities around the country tried new things that they thought might work for them. In retrospect, the origins of community policing can be found in some of these experiments. Though each had its limitations, together they broadened society's view of what policing might entail, and by the end of the 1980s they had changed the nature of the discussion of where policing was heading at the end of the 20th Century.

Team Policing was the first of this list of innovations. Police departments in New York City, Cincinnati and Los Angeles were among those that tried to foster geographically-based responsibility by forming permanent teams of officers dedicated to particular areas of the city. For example, in Los Angeles the patrol force was divided among cars that could be dispatched throughout the city and "basic cars" that were to remain in particular neighborhoods. The city was divided into 70 patrol areas, each policed by 3 to 5 basic cars and commanded by a lieutenant. The lieutenants also directed all of the special units working in the area (including specialized gang units and drug squads), and were accountable for conditions there (Sparrow, Moore & Kennedy, 1990). Evaluations of team policing found that the model was popular with the public and sometimes improved neighborhood conditions, including crime rates (Moore, 1992). Several vestiges of team policing, including dispatching rules that keep beat officers in their beats, a team approach to decisions in the field, and decentralizing decision making responsibility down to the small-area level, can be seen in community policing today.

Herman Goldstein (quoted in Moore, 1992) described community relations units as among the first innovations that alerted chiefs to the potential value of reaching out to the community for their support. These units dated back at least to the 1950s, but following the hundreds of riots that spread across the face of urban America during the 1960s, they became involved in organizing and supporting public meetings, and forming advisory committees that gave visible roles to community activists. 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 American police departments were very insular and even dismissive of the views of the general public. Post-1960, community relations units may have

helped to create a congenial climate for building police–community partnerships with action agendas. However, 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.

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 reflected a decline in the factors that had shaped peoples' behavior in the past: jobs, churches, schools, families and traditional values. The solution seemed to be renewing that organization by 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, protecting 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 through 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. The contributions of community members became known as a "co-production" process for security community safety (Skogan, 1988). Community-based anti-crime programs were extremely popular during the late 1970s. In 1981, 12 per cent of the American population claimed membership in a neighborhood group that was involved in crime prevention (Skogan, 1988). By the early 1990s, the idea that the police alone could not solve community problems had become widely accepted. In truth, evaluations of the effectiveness of these projects were mixed (see the collection presented in Rosenbaum, 1986). However, when it came along, community policing adopted wholesale these crime prevention strategies, the rhetoric of public involvement, and the view that the community shared responsibility for securing neighborhood safety.

In parallel, a seminal article on problem-oriented policing by Herman Goldstein (1979) proposed an alternative to the 911-driven model of responding to crime that was dominant at the time. He argued that if police came to understand clusters of crime – 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." Goldstein wanted police 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 wanted them to craft responses that went beyond the traditional solution of arresting someone in the hope that they would be deterred in the future. Solutions to problems might, for example, require the help of other city service agencies, or using the civil courts or the health department. Finally, Goldstein wanted police to assess how well they were doing, by systematically asking if it worked. Problem-oriented policing blended easily into community policing when the public became involved in its basic elements: identifying, prioritizing and solving problems, and assessing how effectively the police are doing their job. As I note below, because the public took a very expansive view of what problems they needed help with, the police of necessity began to look for allies in other public agencies and private service organizations as well.

Another pre-community policing innovation was the fear reduction projects of the early 1980s. By then, responsibility for reducing communities' fear of crime had emerged as a

Community Involvement

Community policing is defined in part by police efforts to develop partnerships with community members and civic organizations. Effective community policing requires responsiveness to citizen input concerning both the needs of the community and the best ways by which the police can help meet those needs. It takes seriously the public's definition of its own problems, which is one reason why how community policing looks in practice should vary considerably from place to place, in response to unique local situations and circumstances. Working with the public can produce new policing priorities. Officers involved in neighborhood policing quickly learn that many residents are deeply concerned about problems that previously were not taken very seriously. The public can be more concerned about casual social disorder and the physical decay of their community than they are about traditionally defined "serious crimes." They worry about graffiti, public drinking, and the litter and parking problems created by nearby commercial strips (Skogan, 2006). In the past, community residents were unsure if they could rely on the police to help them deal with these problems. Many of these concerns thus do not generate complaints or calls for service, and as a result, the police know surprisingly little about them. The routines of traditional police work ensure that officers will largely interact with citizens who are in distress because they have just been victimized, or with suspects and troublemakers. Accordingly, community policing requires that departments develop new channels for learning about neighborhood problems. And when they learn about them, they have to have systems in place to respond effectively.

Community involvement often includes involving the public in some way in efforts to enhance community safety. Community policing promises to strengthen the capacity of communities to fight and prevent crime on their own. The idea that the police and the public are "co-producers" of safety, and that they cannot claim a monopoly over fighting crime, pre-dates the community policing era. As noted earlier, the community crime prevention movement of the 1970s was an important precursor to community policing, for it promoted the idea that crime was not solely the responsibility of the police (Skogan *et al.*, 1999). Now police are being called upon to take responsibility for mobilizing individuals and organizations around crime prevention. These efforts include neighborhood watch, citizen patrols and education programs stressing household target-hardening and the rapid reporting of crime. Residents are asked to assist the police by reporting crimes promptly when they occur and cooperating as witnesses. Community policing often involves increases "transparency" in how departments respond to demands for more information about what they do and how effective they are. Even where efforts to involve the community were already well established, moving them to center stage as part of a larger strategic plan showcases the commitment of the police to community policing.

All of this needs to be supported by new organizational structures and training for police officers. Departments need to reorganize in order to provide opportunities for citizens to come into contact with their officers under circumstances that encourage these exchanges. There has to be a significant amount of informal contact between police and residents, so that trust and cooperation can develop between the prospective partners. To accomplish this, many departments hold community meetings and form advisory committees, establish store front offices, survey the public and create informational web sites. Chicago holds about 250 small police-public meetings every month. The police in Chicago began doing so in 1995, and by the end of 2003 residents had shown up on more than 600,000 occasions

to attend almost 25,000 community meetings (Skogan, 2006). 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. By 1999, almost 70 per cent of all police departments – and virtually every department serving cities of 50,000 or more – reported regularly holding meetings with citizen groups (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2001).

What are the benefits of citizen involvement? Community policing aims at recapturing the legitimacy that police have in large measure lost in many of America's minority communities. Opinion polls show that African-Americans and recent immigrants have dramatically less confidence in the police, and are much more likely to believe that they are brutal and corrupt. They are the only growing part of the population in many American cities, and municipal leaders know that they have to find ways to incorporate them into the system. Community policing might help police to be more effective. It could encourage witnesses and bystanders to step forward in neighborhoods where they too often do not, for example. More indirectly, it might help rebuild the social and organizational fabric of neighborhoods that previously had been given up for lost, enabling residents to contribute to maintaining order in their community (Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997).

Can it work? My own research in Chicago concludes that, after 11 years of community policing, popular views of the police improved by 10–15 percentage points. There were improvements on measures of police effectiveness, responsiveness and the politeness with which they treated neighborhood residents. Latinos, African-Americans and whites all shared in these improvements (Skogan, 2006). Evaluators also should look into the “mobilizing” effects of programs, including the extent to which community policing encourages community self-help efforts and develops leadership capabilities among newly activated residents. Sociological research indicates that “collective efficacy” (a combination of trust among neighborhood residents and the expectation that neighbors will intervene when things go wrong) plays an important role in inhibiting urban crime. However, the same work indicates that it is mostly white, home-owning neighborhoods that currently have it, and researchers have yet to document how neighborhoods that do not have collective efficacy can generate it for themselves (Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997). Although its effects on collective efficacy are undocumented, the rhetoric of community policing and its accomplishments in turning out residents point in this direction, and this should be an important focus of evaluation in this area.

An important implication of involving the public is that the adoption of community policing almost inevitably leads to an expansion of the police mandate. Controlling serious crime by enforcing the criminal law remains the primary job of the police. But instead of seeing the police exclusively in these terms, and viewing activities that depart from direct efforts to deter crime as a distraction from their fundamental mission, advocates of community policing argue that the police have additional functions to perform and different ways to conduct their traditional business. As a practical matter, when police meet with neighborhood residents in park buildings and church basements to discuss neighborhood problems, the civilians present are going to bring up all manner of problems. If the police who are present put them off, or have no way of responding to their concerns, they will not come back next month. Community policing takes seriously the public's definition of its own problems, and this inevitably includes issues that lie outside the traditional competence of the police. Officers can learn at a public meeting that loose garbage and rats in an alley are big issues for residents, but some other agency is going to have to deliver the solution to

that problem. When police meet with residents in Chicago, much of the discussion focuses on neighborhood dilapidation (including problems with abandoned buildings and graffiti) and on public drinking, teen loitering, curfew and truancy problems and disorder in schools. There is much more talk about parking and traffic than about personal and property crime, although discussion of drug-related issues comes up quite often (Skogan, 2006). The broad range of issues that concern the public requires in turn that police form partnerships with other public and private agencies that can join them in responding to residents' priorities. They could include the schools and agencies responsible for health, housing, trash pick-up, car tows and graffiti clean-ups.

In practice, community involvement is not easy to achieve. It can be difficult to sustain in areas that need it the most. Research on participation in community crime prevention programs during the 1970s and 1980s found that poor and high crime areas often were not well endowed with an infrastructure of organizations that were ready to get involved, and that turnout for police-sponsored events was higher in places honeycombed with block clubs and community organizations (Skogan, 1988). In high crime areas people tend to be suspicious of their neighbors, and especially of their neighbor's children. Fear of retaliation by gangs and drug dealers can undermine public involvement as well (Grinc, 1994). In Chicago, a study of hundreds of community meetings found that residents expressed concern about retaliation for attending or working with the police in 22 per cent of the city's beats (Skogan, 2006). In addition, police and residents may not have a history of getting along in poor neighborhoods. Residents are as likely to think of the police as one of their problems as they are to see them as a solution to their problems. It probably will not be the first instinct of organizations representing the interests of poor communities to cooperate with police. Instead, they are more likely to press for an end to police misconduct. They will call for new resources from the outside to address community problems, for no organization can blame its own constituents for their plight (Skogan, 1988). There may be no reason for residents of crime-ridden neighborhoods to think that community policing will turn out to be anything but another broken promise; they are accustomed to seeing programs come and go, without much effect (Sadd & Grinc, 1994). They certainly will have to be trained in their new roles. Community policing involves a new set of jargon as well as assumptions about the new responsibilities that both police and citizens are to adopt. The 2000 survey of police departments found that "training citizens for community policing" was common in big cities; in cities of more than 500,000, 70 per cent reported doing so (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2003).

In addition, community policing runs the risk of inequitable outcomes. In an evaluation of one of the very first community policing programs, in Houston, Texas, I found that whites and middle-class residents received most of the benefits of the program. They found it easy to cooperate with the police, and shared with the police a common view of whom the troublemakers were in the community. Blue-collar blacks and Latinos remained uninvolved, on the other hand, and they saw no visible change in their lives (Skogan, 1990). Finally, the investment that police make in community policing is always at risk. Episodes of police misconduct can undermine those efforts. When excessive force or killings by police become a public issue, years of progress in police-community relations can disappear. The same is true when there are revelations of widespread corruption among the police.

There may be resistance among the police. Public officials' and community activists' enthusiasm for neighborhood-oriented policing encourages its detractors within the police to dismiss it as "just politics," or another passing civilian fad. Officers who get involved

can become known as “empty holster guys,” and what they do gets labeled “social work” rather than “real police work.” Police officers prefer to stick to crime fighting. My first survey of Chicago police, conducted before that city’s community policing program began, found that two-thirds of them disavowed any interest in addressing “non-crime problems” on their beat. More than 70 per cent of the 7,500 police officers surveyed thought community policing “would bring a greater burden on police to solve all community problems,” and also “more unreasonable demands on police by community groups” (Skogan & Hartnett, 1997). Police are often skeptical about programs invented by civilians, who they are convinced cannot possibly understand their job. They are particularly hostile to programs that threaten to involve civilians in setting standards or evaluating their performance, and they do not like civilians influencing their operational priorities. Police can easily find ways to justify their aloofness from the community; as one officer told me, “You can’t be the friend of the people and do your job.”

On the other hand, some studies point to positive changes in officers’ views once they become involved in community policing. Lurigio and Rosenbaum (1994) summarized 12 studies of this, and found many positive findings with respect to job satisfaction, perceptions of improved relations with the community, and expectations about community involvement in problem solving. Skogan and Hartnett (1997) found growing support for community policing among officers involved in Chicago’s experimental police districts, in comparison to those who continued to work in districts featuring policing as usual.

Problem Solving

As I noted earlier, community policing involves a shift from reliance on reactive patrol and investigations toward a problem-solving orientation. Problem-oriented policing is an approach to developing crime reduction strategies. Problem solving involves training officers in methods of identifying and analyzing problems. It highlights the importance of discovering the situations that produce calls for police assistance, identifying the causes which lie behind them, and designing tactics to deal with these causes. Problem solving is a counterpoint to the traditional model of police work, which usually entails responding sequentially to individual events as they are phoned in by victims. Too often this style of policing is reduced to driving quickly to crime scenes in order to fill out pieces of paper reporting what happened. Problem solving, on the other hand, calls for examining patterns of incidents to reveal their causes and to help plan how to deal with them proactively. This is facilitated by the computer analyses of “hot spots” that concentrate large volumes of complaints and calls for service. Problem-oriented policing also recognizes that the solutions to those patterns may involve other agencies and may be “non-police” in character; in traditional departments, this would be cause for ignoring them. The best programs encourage officers to respond creatively to the problems they encounter, or to refer them appropriately to other agencies (Eck, 2004).

Problem-solving policing can proceed without a commitment to community policing. A key difference between problem solving and community policing is that the latter stresses civic engagement in identifying and prioritizing a broad range of neighborhood problems, while the former frequently focuses on patterns of traditionally defined crimes that are identified using police data systems. Problem-oriented policing sometimes involves community members or organizations in order to address particular issues, but more often it is conducted

the police add involvement in athletic and after school programs, anti-drug presentations in schools, special efforts to reduce violence in families and initiatives that focus attention on the recruitment of youths into gangs.

Decentralization

Decentralization is an organizational strategy that is closely linked to the implementation of community policing. Typically, more responsibility for identifying and responding to chronic crime and disorder problems is delegated to mid-level commanders in charge of the geographical districts that make up a city. Departments have had to experiment with how to structure and manage a decentralization plan that gives mid-level managers real responsibility, and how to hold them accountable for measures of their success. Here community policing intersects with another movement in policing, the emergence of a culture of systematic performance measurement and managerial accountability. This is symbolized by New York City's CompStat system, although most cities have adopted only parts of that model (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003).

Decentralization involves devolving authority and responsibility further down the organizational hierarchy, away from police headquarters and closer to where the work is actually being done. Departments do this in order to encourage the development of local solutions to locally-defined problems, and to facilitate decision making that responds rapidly to local conditions. In this, the police are not independent of the rest of society, where large organizations in both the public and private sectors have learned that decentralization can create flexibility in decision making at the customer contact level. There may be moves to flatten the structure of the organization by compressing the rank structure, and to shed layers of bureaucracy within the police organization to speed communication and decision making. In Chicago, most of the department's elite units – including detectives, narcotics investigators, special tactical teams and even the organized crime unit – are required to share information and more closely coordinate their work with the geographical districts. The department's management accountability process calls them on the carpet when they fail to act in support of uniformed patrol officers (Skogan, 2006). To flatten the organization, Chicago abolished the civil service rank of captain, leaving the police department with just three permanent civil service ranks (Skogan & Hartnett, 1997).

At the same time, more responsibility for identifying and responding to community problems may be delegated to individual patrol officers and their sergeants, who are in turn encouraged to take the initiative in finding ways to deal with a broad range of problems specific to the communities they serve. Structurally, community policing leads departments to assign officers to fixed geographical areas, and to keep them there during the course of their day. This is known as adopting a "turf orientation." Decentralization is intended to encourage communication between officers and neighborhood residents, and to build an awareness of local problems among working officers. They are expected to work more autonomously at investigating situations, resolving problems and educating the public. This is also the level at which collaborative projects involving both police and residents can emerge. By 1999, a national survey of police departments found that assigning officers geographically was virtually the norm in cities over 250,000 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2001).

Decentralization is adopted not only so that police can become more proactive and more preventive, but also so that they can respond efficiently to problems of different magnitude and complexity. Under the professional model, orders for the police largely came from two sources: 911 calls from the public concerning their individual problems, and initiatives or programs originating at police headquarters or even City Hall. Every experienced officer can tell stories of the crazy things police have had to do because department managers isolated at headquarters announced a city-wide initiative that was irrelevant for conditions in their particular district.

Decentralization, paired with a commitment to consultation and engagement with local communities, also allows the police to respond to local problems that are important to particular communities. Police were not organized to respond to the organized groups and community institutions that make up “civil society.” Now surveys of departments indicate that, as part of a community policing initiative, virtually all larger departments now consult local advisory boards representing specific communities.

Decentralization is also very difficult. It is at least as hard as problem solving, and it can be politically risky. Researchers who track trends in police organization are skeptical that there has been much fundamental “flattening” of police hierarchies – which is, after all, about their jobs (Greene, 2004). Resistance to reform does not just come from the bottom of the organization. Junior executives at police headquarters may resist authority taken from them and pushed to lower levels in the organization. Managers at this level are in a position to act as a filter between the chief and operational units, censoring the flow of decisions and information up and down the command hierarchy. This is one reason why special community policing units are often run from the chief’s office, or housed in a special new bureau – it enables the department to get neighborhood officers on the street while bypassing the powerful commanders who dominate key positions at headquarters. Too often they are command-and-control-oriented and feel most comfortable when everything is done by the rule book. Discussions of community policing often feature management buzz words like “empowerment” and “trust,” and this makes them nervous because they also worry about inefficiency and corruption.

And, of course, these concerns are real. One of the dilemmas of community policing is that calling for more operational and street-level discretion runs counter to another trend in policing, which is to tighten up management controls and create an increasingly rule-bound environment in order to control police corruption and violence. Ironically, many recent innovations in policing go the other way; they recognize and widen the operational independence of individual officers. Community policing recognizes that problems vary tremendously from place to place, and that their causes and solutions are highly contextual. We expect police to use their best judgment rather than somehow (it’s not possible) “fully enforcing the law.” Decentralizing, reducing hierarchy, granting officers more independence, and trusting in their professionalism are the organizational reforms of choice today, not tightening things up to constrain officer discretion. But police do misuse this discretion, and they do take bribes.

It may be difficult to pull off decentralization to the turf level because it takes too many people. To staff Chicago’s community policing program required a 15 per cent increase in the number of police officers in the districts in which it was first developed (Skogan & Hartnett, 1997). Community policing is labor-intensive, and may require more officers. Police managers and city leaders will have to find the officers required to staff the program. Finding the money to hire more officers to staff community policing assignments is hard, so

departments may try to downsize existing projects. This can bring conflict with powerful unit commanders and allied politicians who support current arrangements. Police departments also face “the 911 problem.” Their commitment to respond to 911 calls as quickly as possible dominates how resources are deployed in every department. Community policing has encountered heavy political resistance when the perception arose (encouraged to be sure by its opponents) that resources previously devoted to responding to emergency calls were being diverted to this “social experiment.”

Decentralization is also difficult to manage because evaluation of the effectiveness of many community policing initiatives is difficult. The management environment in policing today stresses “accountability for results” (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003). Units are not to be rewarded for their activities, however well meaning, but for declining crime. However, the public often wants action on things that department information systems do not account for at all. In decentralized departments, residents of different neighborhoods make different demands on police operations. They value the time officers spend meeting with them, and they like to see officers on foot rather than driving past on the way to a crime scene. Reducing fear of crime and increasing confidence in the police are important agenda in many neighborhoods, and better crime reporting may actually cause crime rates to go up. As a result, both individual and unit performance is harder to assess in community policing departments (Mastrofski, 1998).

CONCLUSION

In a 1997 survey of police departments conducted by the Police Foundation, 85 per cent reported they had adopted community policing or were in the process of doing so (Skogan, 2004). Bigger cities included in the survey (those with populations greater than 100,000) all claimed to have adopted community policing – half by 1991 and the other half between 1992 and 1997. However, among the unanswered questions about community policing in the United States is whether it can survive the withdrawal of federal financial support and attention. Under the 1994 Violent Crime and Law Enforcement Act, the federal government spent billions of dollars to support community policing. Federal agencies sponsored demonstration projects designed to spur innovation and promote the effectiveness of community policing, and they promoted it heavily through national conferences and publication. 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.” Innovations such as community policing highlight the importance of training for officers, and the 1994 crime act also funded the creation of regional community policing centers around the country. By 1999, 88 per cent of all new recruits and 85 per cent of serving officers worked in departments that were providing some community policing training (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2001).

The issue is whether police departments will continue to staff their community policing components. Federal financial support for community policing certainly is on the wane. Now crime is down, a new political party controls Congress and the Presidency, and federal support for local law enforcement is being redirected to post-September 11th concern about terrorism. Even where commitment to community policing is strong, maintaining an effective program can be difficult in the face of competing demands for resources. There is also pressure from the federal government to involve local police extensively in enforcing immigration laws. This is being stoutly resisted by many chiefs of police, who claim that it

would be a great setback to their community involvement and trust-building projects. We shall see if they can continue to resist.

A second issue is whether community policing can survive accountability management. This is another innovation in American policing, and many of its features push in the opposition direction. To a significant extent, in this new management environment what gets measured is what matters. Top managers decide what is a success, and hold mid-level managers to their standards. The accountability process is about harnessing the command hierarchy down to the beat level to achieve top management's objectives. Their goals are in turn driven by the data they have at hand, and those data say little about community priorities. The thrust of New York City's CompStat and similar management initiatives all over the country is that measured accomplishments get attention and unmeasured accomplishments do not. As a result, there is a risk that the focus of departments will shift away from community policing, back to the activities that better fit a re-centralizing management structure driven by data on recorded crime (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003).

Community policing also stresses the importance of developing the general purpose skills of line officers through education and training, and it frequently features talk about empowering rank-and-file employees and encouraging them to act autonomously. It stresses that workers at the very bottom of the organization are closest to the customer, and are to use their best judgment about how to serve the neighborhoods where they are assigned. However, these are at best low priorities for CompStat-style accountability management. Community policing is an attack on the traditional hierarchical structure of police departments. It calls for the bottom-up definition of problems. Police researchers attribute many of the problems of contemporary policing to the mismatch between the formal hierarchical structure of police organizations and the true nature of their work, which is extremely decentralized, not amenable to standardized solutions, dependent on the skills and motivation of the individual officers handling it, and mostly driven externally by 911 calls rather than management strategies. Perhaps the accountability process has come to the rescue of the traditional hierarchical structure, trying to impose that hierarchy on work that does not fit its demands (Weisburd *et al.*, 2003). Is the accountability process the last refuge of the command and control mentality of the past, and can community policing survive it?

The final question is whether community policing can live up to its promises. Like many new programs, its adoption in many instances preceded careful evaluation of its consequences. The effectiveness of community policing has been the subject of some research, ranging from its impact on crime to how openly it is embraced by the officers charged with carrying it out. However, a recent review of research on policing concluded that there was not enough evidence either way to assess the effectiveness of community policing (Skogan & Frydl, 2004). A movement in policing not addressed earlier – “intelligence-led” policing – strives to identify and utilize the best research on police effectiveness. However, most of this research has focused on the effectiveness of variations in traditional policing tactics, including gun interdictions, hot spot policing, targeting repeat offenders and the like, and it has not had much to say about community policing. There have been evaluations of a few specific tactics that might be deployed under the rubric of community policing, including storefront offices and foot patrol, and we also know that real problem solving is difficult to get off the ground. Otherwise, there has been precious little research speaking to the generic effectiveness of community policing at the strategic level, which is the vantage point of political leaders, senior civil servants and the public. This “intelligence gathering” should be high on the list of priorities for police research in the 21st Century.

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