2   *Advocate*
     The promise of community policing

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Community policing is very popular. So popular is the concept with politi-
cians, city managers, and the general public, that few police chiefs want
to be caught without some program they can call community policing.
In a 1997 survey of police departments conducted by the Police Foun-
dation, 85 percent reported they had adopted community policing or
were in the process of doing so (Skogan 2004). The biggest reason for
not doing so was that community policing was "impractical" for their
community, and my own tabulations of the data found these replies were
mostly from small departments with only a few officers. Bigger cities
included in the survey (those with populations greater than 100,000) all
claimed in the 1997 survey to have adopted community policing – half
by 1991 and the other half between 1992 and 1997. By 2000, a federal
survey with a much larger sample found that more than 90 percent of
departments in cities over 250,000 in population reported having full-
time, trained community policing officers in the field (Bureau of Justice
Statistics 2003).

What do cities that claim they are "doing community policing" actually
do? They describe a long list of projects. Under the rubric of community
policing, officers patrol on foot (in the 1997 survey, 75 percent listed
this), or perhaps on horses, bicycles, or segways. Departments variously
train civilians in citizen police academies, open small neighborhood store-
front offices, conduct surveys to measure community satisfaction, can-
vass door-to-door to identify local problems, publish newsletters, conduct
drug education projects, and work with municipal agencies to enforce
health and safety regulations.

However, community policing is not defined by these kinds of activities.
Projects, programs, and tactics come and go, and they should as condi-
tions change. Communities with different problems and varied resources
to bring to bear against them should try different things. Community
policing is not a set of specific programs. Rather, it involves changing
decisionmaking processes and creating new cultures within police depart-
ments. It is an *organizational strategy* that leaves setting priorities and the

means of achieving them largely to residents and the police who serve in their neighborhoods. Community policing is a process rather than a product. It has three core elements: citizen involvement, problem solving, and decentralization. In practice, these three dimensions turn out to be densely interrelated, and departments that shortchange one or more of them will not field a very effective program.

This chapter sets the stage for a discussion of community policing. It reviews the three core concepts that define community policing, describes how they have been turned into concrete community policing programs, and reports some of what we know about their effectiveness. It draws heavily on my experience evaluating community programs in a number of cities, as well as on what others have reported. It summarizes some of the claims made for community policing, and some of the realities of achieving them in the real world.

Community involvement

Community policing is defined in part by efforts to develop partnerships with community members and the civic organizations that represent many of them collectively. It requires that police engage with the public as they set priorities and develop their tactics. 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. This is one reason why community policing is an organizational strategy but not a set of specific programs – how it looks in practice *should* vary considerably from place to place, in response to unique local situations and circumstances. Listening to the community can produce new policing priorities. Officers involved in neighborhood policing quickly learn that many residents are deeply concerned about problems that previously did not come to police attention. To a certain extent they define things differently. The public often focus on threatening and fear-provoking *conditions* rather than discrete and legally defined *incidents*. They 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. The public sometimes define their problem as people who need to be taught a lesson. In Chicago, a well-known social type is the "ganghanger (gang member)," and people want them off the street. The police, however, are trained to recognize and organized to respond to crime incidents, and they have to know what people do, not just who they are. Given these differences, community

residents are unsure if they can (or even should) 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.

Civic engagement usually extends to 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, predates the community policing era. In fact, the community crime prevention movement of the 1970s was an important precursor to community policing. It promoted the idea that crime was not solely the responsibility of the police. The police were quick to endorse the claim that they could not solve crime problems without community support and assistance, for it helped share the blame for crime rates that were rising at the time (cf. Skogan, Hartnett, DuBois *et al.* 1999). Now police find that they are expected to lead community efforts. They 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 in "transparency" in how departments respond to demands for more information about what they do and how effective they are. A federal survey of police agencies found that by 1999 more than 90 percent of departments serving cities of 50,000 or more were giving residents access to crime statistics or even crime maps (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2001). Even where efforts to involve the community were already well established, moving them to center stage as part of a larger strategic plan showcasing 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 "face time" between police and residents,

so that trust and cooperation can develop between the prospective partners. To this end, many departments hold community meetings and form advisory committees, establish store front offices, survey the public, and create informational web sites. In Chicago they hold about 250 small police–public meetings every month. They began doing so in 1995, and by mid-2003 residents had shown up on more than half a million occasions to attend almost 25,000 community meetings (Skogan and Steiner 2004). 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 percent 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 presumed benefits of citizen involvement? Community policing aims at rebuilding trust in the community and ensuring support for the police among taxpayers. Opinion polls document the fact that Americans have given up thinking that politicians and government adequately represent them; for example, Moy and Pfau (2000: 13) note that there is "a profound and consistent lack of confidence in the executive branch of the federal government," and document that the proportion of Americans who believe that "the government in Washington" can be trusted "to do what is right" dropped from 76 percent in 1964 to just 14 percent in 1994. Police come off better than most government institutions, when Americans are asked how much confidence they have in them. My own review of public opinion polls indicates that during the 1990s police did better than the presidency and the Supreme Court, and Americans had much more confidence in the police than they had in the Congress. In May 2004, Americans were most confident in their military (85 percent had "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in them), but police came next, at 64 percent. Less than half of Americans had that much confidence in the Supreme Court, and only 30 percent in the Congress.

However, community policing is especially about recapturing the legitimacy that police have in large measure lost in many of America's minority communities. The same 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 (Skogan and Steiner 2004). They are the only growing part of the population in a surprisingly large number of American cities, and civic leaders know that they have to find ways to incorporate them into the system. Police take on community policing in part because they hope that building a reservoir of public support may help them get through bad times (see the

discussion of "nasty misconduct" below) when they occur. Community policing might help police 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, and Earls 1997).

However, I do not know of a single police department that adopted community policing because they thought that it was a *direct* route to getting the crime rate down. Efforts to evaluate it need to focus as well on the important community and governance processes that it is intended to set in motion, because they represent potentially important "wins" on their own. The extent of the public's trust and confidence in the police is an obvious first issue. For example, after eight years of citywide community policing, Chicagoans' views of their police improved by 10–15 percentage points on measures of their effectiveness, responsiveness, and demeanor. Latinos, African Americans and whites all shared in these improvements (Skogan and Steiner 2004). Evaluators also should look into the "mobilizing" effects of programs, including the extent of parallel community self-help efforts and extending even to the possible development of organizational and 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, and 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 spin-off of civic engagement is that the adoption of community policing almost inevitably leads to an expansion of the police mandate, and this further expands the list of points on which it should be evaluated. 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 the 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, Steiner, Hartnett *et al.* 2003). 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 pickup, car tows, and graffiti cleanups.

In practice, community involvement is not easy to achieve. Ironically, 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 neighbors' children. Fear of retaliation by gangs and drug dealers can undermine public involvement as well (Grinc 1994). In Chicago, a 1998 study of hundreds of community meetings found that residents expressed concern about retaliation for attending or working with the police in 22 percent of the city's beats (Skogan and Steiner 2004). 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 (cf. 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 and 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 by the federal government found that "training citizens for community policing" was common in big cities; in cities of more than 500,000, 70 percent 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 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 who 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. Nasty 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.

On the police side there may be resistance in the ranks. 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." Police officers prefer to stick to crime fighting. (For a case study in New York City of how this happens, see Pate and Shtull 1994.) 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 percent of the 7500 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 and 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 twelve 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

Community policing also involves a shift from reliance on reactive patrol and investigations toward a problem-solving orientation. In brief (for it is discussed in detail in other chapters of this book) 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 fast 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 solely by specialized units within the police department. On the other hand, community policing involves neighborhood residents as an end in itself, and in evaluation terms it is important to count this as a "process success." The problem with relying on the data that is already in police computers is that when residents are involved they often press for a focus on issues that are not well documented by department information systems, such as graffiti, public drinking, and building abandonment. Effective programs must have systems in place to respond to a broad range of problems, through partnerships with other agencies. The 2000 survey found that in cities of more than 250,000 residents, more than 50 percent of departments reported they had formed problem-solving partnerships with community groups and local agencies (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2003).

Is this easy to do? It is at least as hard as involving the community, for bureaucracies are involved, and interagency cooperation can easily fail. For a long list of familiar bureaucratic and political reasons, other city and state agencies usually think that community policing is the police department's program, not theirs. They resist bending their own professional and budget-constrained priorities to accommodate police officers who call on them for help. Making this kind of interorganizational cooperation work turns out to be one of the most difficult problems facing innovative departments. When the chief of an East Coast city was new, he told me that he could handle things in his department; his biggest fear was that his mayor might not handle the city's other agencies, and that they would not provide the kind of support that community policing requires. If community policing is the police department's program, it may fail. Community policing must be the city's program.

It is also hard to involve police officers in problem solving. Cordner and Biebel (2005) did an in-depth study of problem-solving practice in a major American city. Although the department had been deeply committed to problem solving for more than fifteen years, they found that street officers typically defined problems very narrowly (e.g., one address, or one suspected repeat offender); their analysis of it consisted of making personal observations from their car; they crafted solutions from their own experience; and two-thirds of the time their proposed solution did not go past arresting someone. The study concluded that, after fifteen years of practice, this department's "glass" was only "half full." What observers would classify as "full-scale" problem solving was rarely encountered. Even the advocates of problem solving (you will hear from them in later chapters) admit that it requires a great deal of training, close supervision, and relentless follow-up evaluation to make it work. However,

one important organizational function that often gets shortchanged is training. Training is expensive and officers have to be removed from the line – or paid overtime – to attend. And few departments are adequately staffed with supervisors who themselves were full-fledged problem solvers (Eck 2004).

Community policing has also revived interest in systematically addressing the task of crime prevention. In the traditional model of policing, crime prevention was deterrence based. To threaten arrest, police patrol the streets looking for crimes (engaging in random and directed patrol), they respond quickly to emergency crime calls from witnesses and victims, and detectives then take over the task of locating offenders. Concerned residents, on the other hand, do not want the crime that drives these efforts to happen in the first place. Their instinct is to press for true prevention. Police-sponsored prevention projects are in place throughout the country. Problem solving has brought crime prevention theories to the table, leading police to tackle the routine activities of victims and the crucial roles played by "place managers" such as landlords or shopkeepers, and not just offenders (Eck and Wartell 1998; Braga, Weisburd, Waring *et al.* 1999). When community policing came to Chicago, one of the first actions of a new district commander was to convince a bank to open an ATM machine in his police station, so residents had a safe place to go to transact business. An emphasis on "target hardening" has gotten police involved in conducting home security surveys and teaching self-defense classes. But when communities talk about prevention they mostly talk about their children, and ways of intervening earlier with youths who seem on a trajectory toward serious offending. Much of the work preventing the development of criminal careers lies with agencies besides the police, including family courts, children's protection agencies, parents, peer networks, and schools. To their efforts the police add involvement in athletic and after school programs, DARE (Drug Awareness and Resistance Education) 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. Decentralization can be pursued at two levels. 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 or precincts 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 (and the subject of another pair of chapters in this book), the emergence of a culture of systematic performance measurement and managerial accountability.

The idea is to devolve authority and responsibility further down the organizational hierarchy. Departments do this in order to encourage the development of local solutions to locally defined problems, and to facilitate decisionmaking that responds rapidly to local conditions. 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 decisionmaking 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 decisionmaking. 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 serve as "support units" for uniformed patrol officers (Skogan *et al.* 2003). To flatten the organization, Chicago abolished the civil service rank of captain, leaving the department with just three civil service ranks (Skogan and 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. They are being asked to discover and set their own goals, and sometimes to manage their work schedule. 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).

This pattern of dual 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, marching orders for the police traditionally come from two sources: 911 calls from the public concerning individual problems, and initiatives or programs originating at police headquarters or even City Hall. Every experienced officer can tell stories of the crazy things officers sometimes have to do because "downtown" announced a citywide initiative that was irrelevant for their district. A Chicago commander once described to me how he was punished (he lost a day's pay) because – as a district commander – he assigned two officers to identifying abandoned cars and getting them towed, rather than the maximum of one officer that the rule book mandated. He used this story to good effect whenever officers complained in a meeting that the department was getting away from its traditional practices because of community policing.

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.

Is decentralization easy to pull off? It is at least as hard as problem solving, and politically risky to boot. For all of the adoption of specific programs, 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 being 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 (for a case study of how this can undermine community policing initiatives, see Capowich 2005). This is one reason why special community policing units are often run from the chief's office, or housed in a special new bureau – this enables the department to get neighborhood officers on the street while bypassing the barons who dominate key positions at headquarters. Too often they are command-and-control oriented and feel most comfortable when everything is done by the 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 the management screws tighter and create an increasingly rule-bound environment in order to control police corruption and violence. Ironically, *many* of the recent innovations discussed in this book go the other way; they recognize, widen, and celebrate 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 "good judgment" rather than somehow enforce "the letter of the law." Decentralizing, reducing hierarchy, and 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. 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, Mastrofski, McNally *et al.* 2003). Units are not 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. As a result, both individual and unit performance is harder to assess in community policing departments (Mastrofski 1998).

Prospects

An unanswered question about community policing 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 publications. 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 percent of all new recruits and 85 percent 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 team is in the White House, and federal largesse toward local law enforcement is being redirected to post-September 11 concerns. Even where commitment to community policing is strong, maintaining an effective program can be difficult in the face of competing demands for resources. For example, between 1995 and 2003, the city of Cleveland received $34 million in federal assistance for hiring police officers, but for 2004 that figure shrank to $489,000, and the city expected to receive even less in 2005. To handle the shortfall they cut 250 officers from the payroll and closed the neighborhood mini-stations that were created as part of the city's community policing effort (Butterfield 2004). 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 new thing in policing, and many of its features push in the opposite direction. Community policing continues to ask officers to think and act in new and unaccustomed ways, and many

of its presumed benefits do not show up in police information systems. 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 hierarchy to achieve top management's objectives, which 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 recentralizing management structure driven by data on recorded crime.

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 "cookie cutter" 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 ridden in to the rescue of the traditional hierarchical structure, trying again to impose that hierarchy on work that does not fit its demands. 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. There has not been enough research to definitively address the effectiveness question. As this chapter has documented, implementing a serious community policing program is risky and hard, and departments can fail at it.

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