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Representing the Community in Community Policing¹

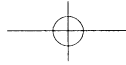
WESLEY G. SKOGAN

This chapter examines the role that resident involvement plays in community policing. Although definitions vary, resident involvement (along with organizational decentralization and the adoption of a problem-solving orientation by police) is among the core components of most community policing programs. Forms of involvement vary considerably. In some places police try to *educate* residents by involving them in informational programs or enrolling them in citizen police academies that give them in-depth knowledge of law enforcement. Residents are often asked to *assist the police*, usually by being their “eyes and ears” and reporting crimes promptly when they occur. Residents sometimes get involved in the *coproduction of safety* when they partner with the police in crime prevention projects or walk in officially sanctioned neighborhood patrol groups. Finally, residents may be called on to *represent the community* by serving on advisory boards or decision-making committees. Even where these are old ideas, pushing them to center stage as part of a larger strategic plan showcases the apparent commitment of police departments to resident involvement.

The issue is whether these are real and effective venues for resident involvement. Police can hope to gain even if they are not, by accruing some publicity, popularity, and political support via the press conference where these programs are announced. One reason—perhaps the major one—cities adopt community policing is to solve their legitimacy problems and buy peace in poor and disenfranchised neighborhoods. But cities also have a history of not following through very well on promises made in these communities, especially if they are at all difficult, costly, or politically risky. So, rather than taking claims about resident involvement in community policing at face value, analysts need to ask hard questions about them: Who is the community? Who gets involved? Does their involvement make any difference? Whose interests are served by the program?

This chapter examines one form of resident involvement in community policing: representational. It examines the role citizens play in identifying and

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prioritizing neighborhood problems and monitoring the activities of police in Chicago. The chapter first examines the structure of the program and then the issues of who gets involved, what they represent, how effectively they monitor police activity, and the impact of their involvement on neighborhood conditions.

THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY IN CHICAGO

Chicago's community policing initiative features a number of organizational strategies, and resident involvement is built into virtually every aspect of the program. The department adopted a decentralized turf orientation by reorganizing patrol work around small geographical areas, the city's 279 police beats. The dispatching process was adjusted to keep officers on their assigned beats while answering calls, and priority was given to calls for which beat officers' knowledge of local conditions could make a difference. Officers assigned to beat teams are expected to engage in identifying and addressing a broad range of neighborhood problems in partnership with neighborhood residents and organizations, and to attend community meetings. Tactical teams, youth officers, and detectives are also expected to work more closely in support of beat officers, and to exchange information with them and the community more readily.

The department also adopted its own problem-solving model. Officers are to move beyond responding in traditional fashion to individual calls and to adopt, instead, a proactive, prevention-oriented stance toward a wide range of neighborhood problems. An important feature of Chicago's program is that these do not have to be crime problems, and an administrative mechanism was developed that enables beat officers to easily trigger a broad range of city services in response to resident complaints and to support problem-solving projects. Because residents are to play an important role in identifying, prioritizing, and even dealing on their own with local problems, they as well as police were trained in how to implement the model. Between 1995 and 1997, most patrol officers and about 12,000 civilians were taught to analyze how offenders and victims collide at particular locations to create crime hot spots. Both police and residents were also given new tools for solving problems, ranging from computerized crime analysis to the support of an interagency inspections task force.

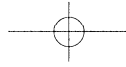
The vehicle for all grassroots consultation and collaboration between police and residents is neighborhood meetings that are held in almost all of the city's 279 police beats, almost every month. During 1998, an average of 250 beat meetings were held each month and about 5,800 people attended. An average of seven police officers attend each meeting, including the beat's sergeant, beat officers who are on duty, and a few beat team members from other shifts. The latter are paid overtime, at a yearly cost of more than \$1 million. The meetings frequently feature presentations by police from special units or detectives, and



those who attend include representatives of city service agencies, aldermanic staff, school personnel, local business owners and landlords, and activists representing area community groups. These meetings are perhaps the most important link among residents, police, and many of these agencies and community leaders. Beat 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. (For further information about the program, see Skogan and Hartnett, 1997.)

The structure of Chicago's community policing program resolves the question of "who is the community" by defining it as the residents of a specific administrative unit of the city, along with assorted building owners, business operators, and others who have a stake in the area. Their representation depends on who shows up for a meeting. This resolution was the result of a political struggle between police and politicians on one side, and a fragmented collection of community organizations on the other, that was played out during the early years of the program. The organizations "outside" wanted "inside." They demanded that the meetings be organized and led by local groups, who would control the agenda and invite police to participate on their terms. They wanted civilian involvement in all significant aspects of the program to be directed by leaders who were either elected by beat residents or somehow emerged from locally prominent organizations. They saw resident involvement in the city's community policing program as one vehicle for building the autonomous capacity of residents to help themselves and lobby effectively in the corridors of power for the outside resources they needed to address their most pressing problems. Because all of this would take time and energy, they also wanted grants and contracts to support the professional organizers it would take to carry off this vision of resident involvement. The police and city leaders would have none of this, and because it was a one-sided struggle, Chicago proceeded with a "depoliticized" version of representational involvement.

But that raises the hard questions. Unlike formally constituted bodies—made up, for example, of heads of a list of formal organizations, official nominees of the mayor, or elected representatives—beat meetings are composed of those who happen to hear about them and choose to attend. Attendance at beat meetings has remained remarkably stable. Between their inception in 1995 and the end of 1999, Chicagoans attended beat meetings on about 325,000 occasions. But inevitably, only a small percentage of beat residents will attend the meeting. Although in 1998 the average beat was home to about 7,000 adults, a good meeting by Chicago standards draws about 30 residents. This is only about 0.4 percent of the adult population. (By contrast, in the average beat about 28 percent of age-eligible residents turned out for the 1995 general mayoral election.) So, although sheer numbers are important, it is also important that beat meetings represent the interests of residents. Even a small meeting can do this effectively, if those who attend adequately articulate the concerns of the general public. This chapter addresses three representational questions about beat meetings: Do they reflect the composition of the beat?



Do they represent the problems facing the beat and residents' views of the quality of police service? Can involvement in beat meetings have any impact on neighborhood conditions that residents care about, by affecting the priorities of service providers?

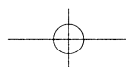
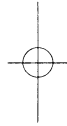
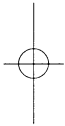
A variety of data is used to address these questions. The results of surveys represent the views of neighborhood residents, and the findings of questionnaires distributed at beat meetings describe who attended and what their concerns were. The Appendix describes all of the surveys and the wording of questions addressing neighborhood problems and perceptions of police. Observers attended a large sample of beat meetings, and what they recorded is examined, as well. City agencies contributed data on their cleanup efforts. Finally, demographic information from the 1990 Census, updated where possible, portrays the race and class composition of the beats. All of the data are centered around 1998, the year beat meetings participants were surveyed.

REPRESENTATION OF RESIDENTS

The first question is, to what extent do those who attended beat meetings resemble community residents? The answer involved comparisons such as those made in Figures 3.1 and 3.2. They describe the relation between the demographic composition of the beats and the characteristics of those who attended meetings there. Information about beat residents is based on U.S. Census data for 2000. The contrasting data on beat meeting participants is drawn from questionnaires completed by 4,673 residents who attended meetings in 195 beats for which complete data are available for this study. The questionnaires were distributed by observers who attended beat meetings during 1998.

Figure 3.1 examines the match between the percentage of beat residents and meeting participants who owned their home, an important feature of any neighborhood. As it indicates, home owners were significantly overrepresented at the beat meetings we observed. At the average meeting, 75 percent of the participants were home owners, compared with a beat average of 40 percent. More than 90 percent of the meetings had a greater percentage of home owners present than lived in the beat, and home owners were the majority group at 87 percent of the meetings. The overrepresentation of home owners is especially apparent at low levels of beat home ownership; this is signaled by the decelerating regression line that is the best statistical description of the relation between the two measures. As the arrows in Figure 3.1 illustrate, beats that averaged about 30 percent home owners were represented by meetings where about 70 percent of the participants were home owners.

Figure 3.2 presents similar data charting the representation of the city's Latinos. Latino is the locally preferred term in Chicago for reference to historically Spanish-speaking peoples whose origins lie largely in Mexico, with smaller groups representing Puerto Rico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. At the end of the 1990s, the city's Latinos totaled about 730,000—



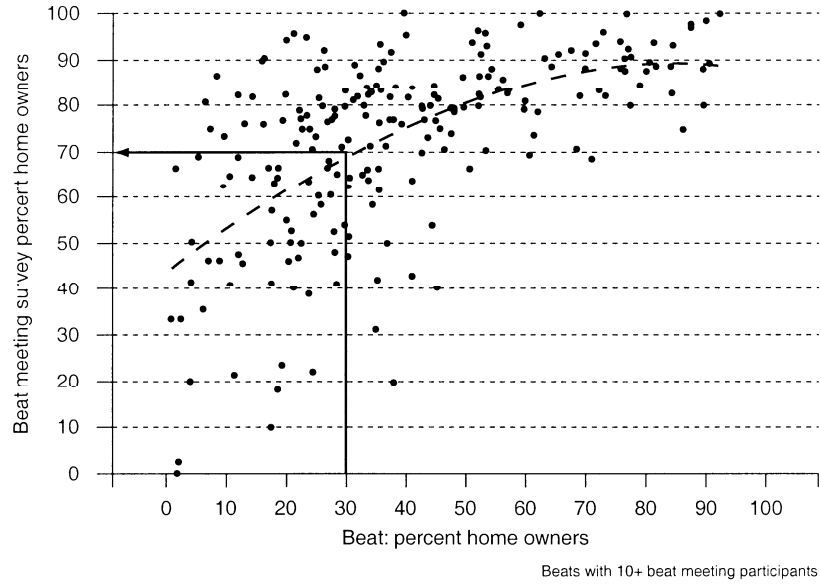
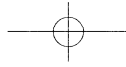


FIGURE 3.1 Representation of home owners at beat meetings.

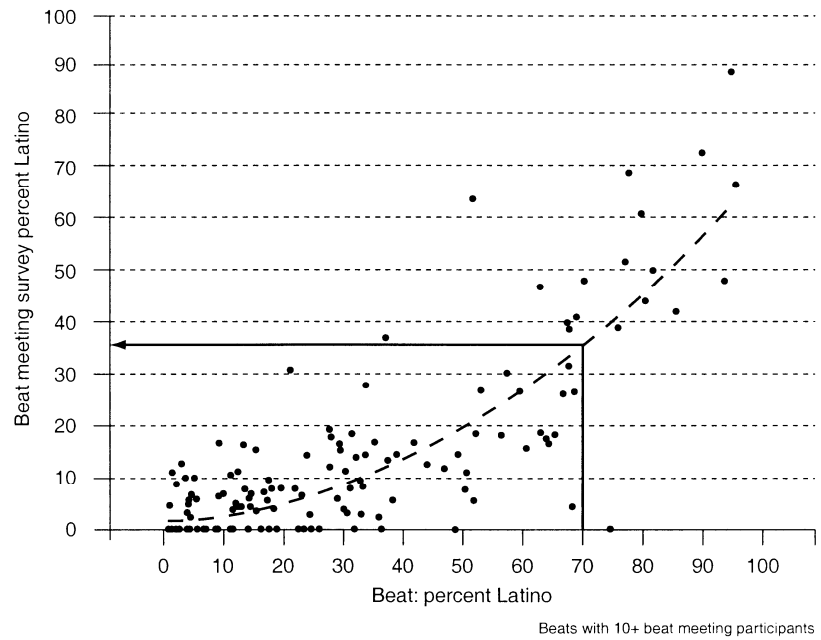


FIGURE 3.2 Representation of Latinos at beat meetings.

a group larger than the total population of all but thirteen American cities. They are also the only large racial or ethnic group that is growing in numbers, and it is anticipated that before 2010 they will constitute the second largest racial or ethnic group in Chicago. However, Figure 3.2 indicates that Latino participation in beat meetings tends to be low except in beats where a “critical mass” of Latinos live. There it skyrockets, as illustrated by the rapidly accelerating regression line in Figure 3.2. But there are relatively few concentrated Latino beats in the city above the take-off point (35 beats in the city were more than 60 percent Latino by 2000), so gross underrepresentation of Latinos is the norm. As Figure 3.2 illustrates, even at 70 percent Latino, the proportion of Latinos at beat meetings is generally about half their fraction in the population.

Beat meetings overrepresent other groups as well. The biggest gap is education, because residents with more education turn out heavily. For example, in beats where about 30 percent of residents have a college education, almost 75 percent of beat meeting participants reported having a college degree, and college graduates made up a majority at 70 percent of the meetings. Older neighborhood residents were also overrepresented. The areas examined here averaged about 12 percent over age sixty-five, but the beat meetings averaged 25 percent, double the population figure. Like home ownership, the link between the beat and meeting age leveled off at higher figures; for example, in beats where residents over sixty-five make up about 20 percent of the population (a high number), about 35 percent of meeting participants reported being in that age range. On average, meeting participants had lived in their neighborhood nine years longer than the average area resident. Women were the biggest group at about 75 percent of the meetings. The meetings attended by observers ranged from 25 percent to almost 90 percent women, and averaged 60 percent women. Women were more overrepresented in African-American areas, in poor beats, and in public housing areas.

In short, on many dimensions, involvement in Chicago’s beat meetings demonstrates a strong middle-class bias. In many social programs that rely on volunteers, better off and more established members of the community are the quickest to get involved and take advantage of the effort. Research on involvement in neighborhood anticrime organizations find that higher income, more educated, home-owning, and long-term area residents more frequently know of opportunities to participate and are more likely to get involved when they have the opportunity (cf. Skogan, 1989). In the case of beat meetings, the largest discrepancies in involvement favored college graduates, home owners, and older, long-term residents. Latinos were the most underrepresented racial or ethnic group. Chicago has certainly made efforts to involve Latinos more deeply in its community policing effort. The publicity campaign supporting the program features a component aimed at Spanish-speaking residents. It includes paid promotional announcements and a police-staffed talk show on Spanish-language radio; booths at festivals held in Latino neighborhoods; and wide distribution of posters, flyers, and newsletters in Spanish. Spanish-speaking community organizers work for the city to generate involvement in beat meetings and problem solving. The city’s emergency



communication system is staffed to handle foreign-language calls, and the police department itself has about 800 Spanish-speaking officers. Beat meetings held in predominately Latino areas routinely are conducted in both languages, although the translators are almost always police or resident amateurs, and the meetings run at a slow pace. The department's cadet diversity training includes some role playing exercises revolving around linguistic issues. Despite these efforts, the integration of the city's Latino residents into CAPS has proven difficult.

REPRESENTATION OF CONCERN ABOUT NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS

The second question is: to what extent did those who attended beat meetings represent the views of residents concerning the problems they faced? We have seen that the meetings overrepresent more established members of the community, based on a comparison of beat populations with profiles of meeting participants. The same kinds of comparisons can be made between reports of neighborhood problems gathered in surveys of beat residents and meeting participants. The data indicate that meeting participants were more concerned about problems than were the residents of their beat: those who attended gave higher ratings than did their neighbors to a broad range of problems. Second, the data indicate that those who come to the meetings broadly represent the views of beat residents, but more accurately for some issues than for others.

To make these comparisons, the results of citywide surveys conducted during 1997, 1998, and 1999 were aggregated to the beats in which the respondents lived. The yearly surveys were large, averaging about 3,100 completed interviews, but because the respondents were scattered throughout Chicago, many beats were still sparsely represented. Not all beats had a full set of participant data, either, because the observers could not attend and successfully survey all of them and because some meetings were only sparsely attended. This chapter requires ten survey respondents as the minimum number for characterizing a beat. As a result, it examines 195 beats (70 percent of the city's 270 residential beats) where at least ten meeting participants completed questionnaires and ten residents were interviewed in the city surveys. As a group, these beats were better off with lower crime than the 75 beats that were excluded, but the biggest difference between the two groups is population size. The beats represented in the study are about one-third larger than those that are not, because residents there were more likely to be sampled in the citywide surveys.

Comparisons between residents and beat meeting participants could be made for assessments of the magnitude of seven neighborhood problems that were included in both surveys. Both groups were asked to rate whether each was a "big problem," "some problem," or "no problem" in their neighborhood. The largest gap between meeting participants and residents concerned street drug sales. Almost half of those who attended beat meetings reported that street

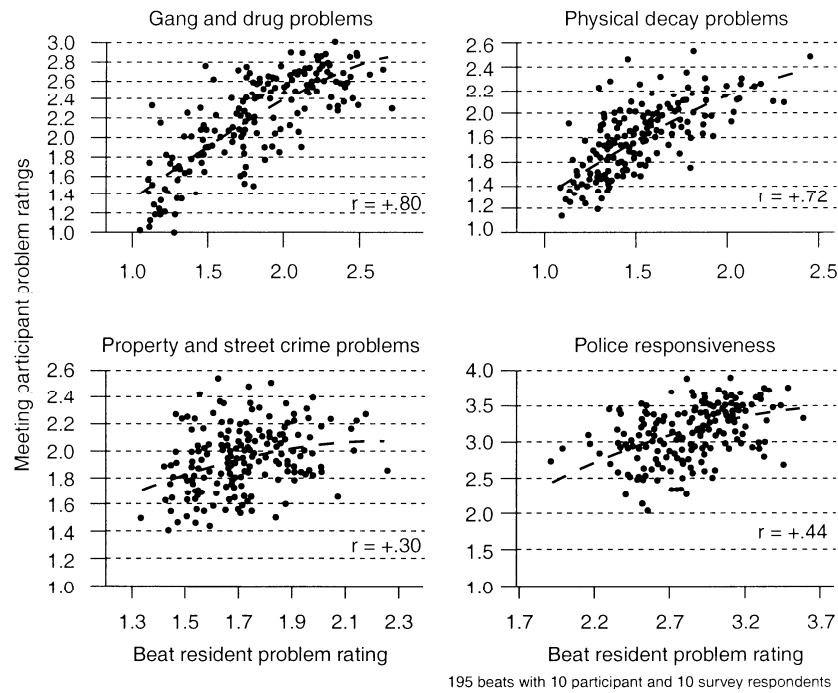


FIGURE 3.3 Representation of interests at beat meetings.

drug sales were a big problem in their neighborhood, compared with 32 percent of residents. Gang violence and graffiti came next; the gap between residents and participants was about 12 percentage points for both problems. Other gaps were smaller, but those who came to meetings were more concerned than were run-of-the-mill residents about all seven problems.

Three panels in Figure 3.3 address the extent to which residents' perceptions of beat problems were reflected in the level of concern that participants brought to beat meetings. Beat by beat, they compare ratings of problems gathered in the city surveys with ratings of the same problems supplied by meeting participants. Responses to questions about three forms of physical decay—abandoned cars, abandoned buildings, and graffiti—were combined to form a neighborhood physical decay index. Questions about the extent of problems with burglary and street crime formed a personal and property crime index, and questions about gangs and drugs constituted a measure of their own. Figure 3.3 presents average resident and beat meeting participant scores on these measures for each beat.

The strong relation between resident and participant ratings of gang and drug problems is apparent in Figure 3.3. The correlation between the two measures was $+0.75$. Likewise, there was a strong link between beat and participant

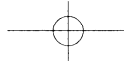
assessments of the extent of physical decay in their area; that correlation was $+0.72$. In these domains, where residents are concerned, so are those who show up at meetings; where they are not, many participants share that view, as well. Chicagoans can feel fairly confident that those who attend meetings in their beat reflect their views about the seriousness of gang, drug, and neighborhood physical decay problems.

The link was weaker between beat meeting participant's views of crime problems and what the general public thought about burglary and street crime. As Figure 3.3 indicates, the two were correlated only $+0.30$. Public concern about street crime translated to the meetings a bit more directly (the correlation between the two measures was $+0.48$ for street crime and $+0.22$ for burglary), but neither linkage was particularly strong. Careful inspection of Figure 3.3 also reveals that there was less variation across beats in the views of both groups when it came to crime. The high-to-low range for each group was smaller, and more beats were clustered near the city average.

There are at least two plausible explanations for the limited correspondence between resident and activist concern about crime. One is visibility. Most of the remaining problems probed by the surveys have visual manifestations. Graffiti, abandoned cars and buildings, street drug sales, and even some aspects of neighborhood gang activity can be clearly visible neighborhood issues. Seeing them provides evidence of their magnitude that can be shared by broad segments of the community. Graffiti has as its "victim" everyone who views and is offended by it, and unless it is cleaned up they will see it over and over again. By contrast, burglary and street crime victimize individuals and households, and they are crimes of stealth. People may hear and gossip about victims of these offenses, but they rarely see such crimes in progress, and after the fact they leave few visible scars. They do not present the kind of shared, visible, repetitive experience that other problems in our inventory can manifest, even if they are widespread in a community.

Another possible explanation for the relatively weak link between residents' views of crime and those of beat meeting participants is representational. The issue is, to what extent do biases in the representation of groups account for any lack of correspondence between the views of the general public and those that are carried into beat meetings? The views of beat meeting participants vary, depending on who they are, so the demographic imbalance in representation we have already observed may have an impact on the correspondence between the priorities of the general public and the issues that concern just those who show up.

To examine this involves contrasting the impact of imbalances in the representation of various groups at the meetings on the fit or lack of fit between the views of meeting participants and their neighbors. The group that made the largest difference was older people. Their overrepresentation affected the views of the group, for they tended to see fewer crime problems than did their younger counterparts. Residents over age sixty-five were only half as likely as those aged eighteen to twenty-nine to report that street crime was a big problem in their neighborhood, and the gap was almost as wide for burglary. The



varying mix of younger versus older participants at the meetings thus had a substantial effect on the gap between beats and meetings, the strongest effect of any demographic factor. The correlation between the average age gap between beat meeting participants and residents and the underrepresentation of crime problems at the meetings was .21. In contrast, there were only small differences between older and younger people when they were asked about neighborhood physical decay or drug and gang problems; therefore, age misrepresentation had a much smaller effect on the match between the views of residents and beat meeting participants.

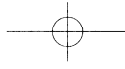
REPRESENTATION OF CONCERN ABOUT POLICE

Beat meetings do not simply serve as a forum for identifying and prioritizing neighborhood problems. They also play a role in monitoring police activities in the area. An official agenda item for each meeting is a report by police about what they have been doing in response to problems identified at previous meetings. Our observers watched for them, and found that feedback reports were actually made at 61 percent of the beats they attended. The police also suggested solutions to the problems discussed at the meeting 58 percent of the time.

Although not on the agenda, complaints about police also came up frequently; the observers noted that they were discussed at meetings in 47 percent of the beats. There was also specific praise for police at a third of the meetings. The most commonly cited concern was response to 911 calls, and in particular the speed with which police arrive at the scene. There was some dissatisfaction voiced about how well police treated people who had called, and with how carefully police followed department policies designed to protect the anonymity of callers who provided them with information. The perception that there are not enough police on patrol was voiced at about one in five beats, and dissatisfaction with the implementation of various aspects of CAPS came up in 12 percent of the beats. At about a third of the meetings there was discussion of problems with the extent of citizen involvement in CAPS. Beat meeting turnout, a lack of police-citizen cooperation, and the need for more follow-up on problems that were discussed headed that list, and there was frequent discussion of the issue of retaliation against residents who become visibly associated with the police.

Beat meetings, thus, can actually provide a forum for residents to voice their concerns and try to hold police accountable for working on them, both separately and in partnership. Representing the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of residents with policing in their area should be one of their most important functions. In practice, however, this form of interest representation does not appear to be a very direct one.

The lower right-hand panel in Figure 3.3 illustrates the relation between resident views of the quality of police service in their neighborhood and the

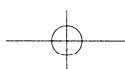
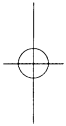


views carried into beat meetings by those who attended. The index of opinion about police presented in Figure 3.3 is based on responses to questions about how well police dealt with problems of concern to residents, worked with residents to solve local problems, and responded to community concerns. Figure 3.3 indicates that beat meetings provided this link in the most general sense. The correlation between beat and participant attitudes was $+ .44$, providing a direct but not particularly strong link between the two. The correlations between the individual components of the index were all in about the same range, between $+ .36$ and $+ .43$.

There are at least two reasons for this tenuous linkage. First, meeting participants were more optimistic than their neighbors about the quality of police service in their neighborhood. For example, about 70 percent of those attending meetings in these beats thought police were doing a good or very good job at dealing with problems that concerned beat residents, but the comparable figure for residents was 60 percent. The divide was greater—about 15 percentage points—in the proportion who thought police were doing a good job working with residents to solve problems. Although we have seen that those who attend the meetings were more concerned than were their neighbors about a broad range of local problems, they were less concerned about the police.

This optimism probably has several sources. Those who choose to attend beat meetings in the first place may be more optimistic about police, whereas those who are not favorably inclined toward the police stay away. The gap may grow because those who attend and have a bad experience do not come back, and critics who speak up may feel unwelcome to return. Their voices are less likely to be heard. Alternately, those who attend may come to know and appreciate the concern shown by the police who are there. They would also see any positive accomplishments that stem from the meetings. These explanations are consistent with the finding that people who attend beat meetings frequently are more positive about the police than are those who attend only once or twice, and infrequent participants are in turn more optimistic than those who do not come at all. The gap in optimism about police that emerges between participants and the general public is also consistent with the extremely high levels of satisfaction that participants report with what takes place at the meetings. In citywide surveys, 85 percent or more routinely report that they learn something at the meetings, that action has taken place in their neighborhood as a result of the meetings, that they are useful for finding solutions to problems, and that they improve the community's relationship with the police.

A second source for this optimism gap is that there were strong racial differences in views of the police, and racial differences in the size of the gap between residents and activists from their own community. The first—sheer racial differences in views of the police—are large, and meetings that overrepresented White Chicagoans were more optimistic as a result. For example, in 1998 almost 70 percent of White residents thought police were doing a good job “working together with residents . . . to solve local problems.” The comparable figure for African-Americans was 41 percent, and for Latinos, 48 percent. However, neighborhood racial segregation is so extreme in Chicago that



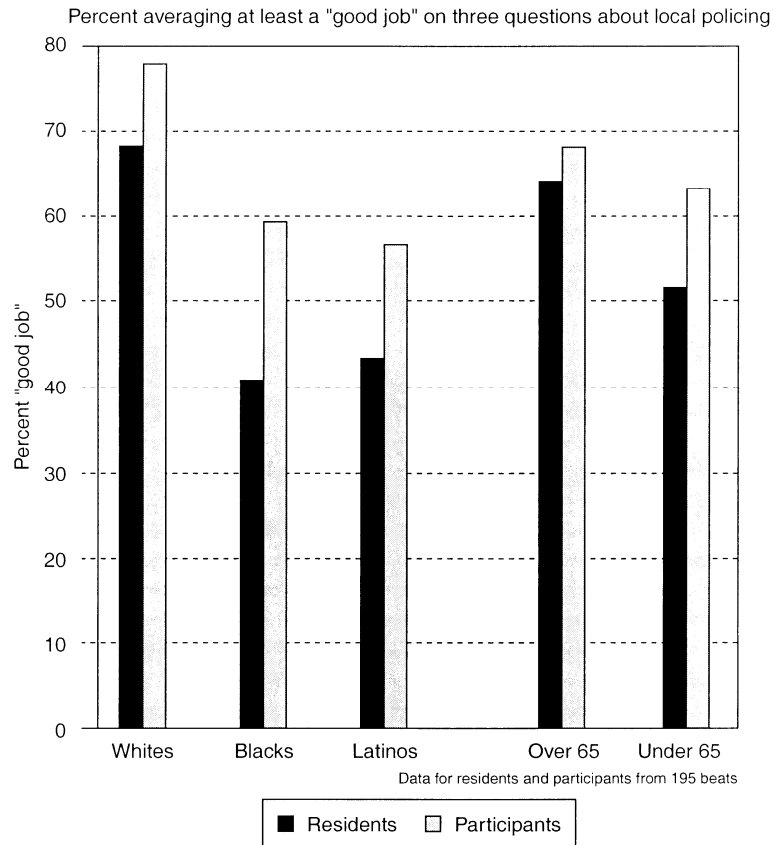
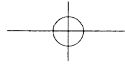


FIGURE 3.4 Race and representation of views of policing.

the overrepresentation of Whites in predominately African-American beats was not a factor in very many places. More important is that the distance between African-Americans who showed up at beat meetings and their African-American neighbors who did not attend was particularly noticeable when it came to views of the police. The gulf between residents and participants was almost as great for Latinos. The differential gap between beat residents and CAPS participants, depending on their race, further attenuated the link between beat meeting participants and their neighbors.

The magnitude of the gap can be seen on the left-hand side of Figure 3.4. It presents the percentage of respondents who on average rated the police as doing at least a good job on the three measures of perceptions of the quality of police service. The difference between each pair of bars represents the gap between neighborhood residents and beat meeting participants of the same race in the 195 beats where both were well represented in the data. The gulf



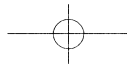
between the two groups was greatest—17 percentage points—among African-Americans. It was smallest—9 percentage points—among Whites. The gap between residents and CAPS participants was 14 percentage points for Latinos, close to the divide for African-Americans. Because large numbers of less satisfied segments of the public stay away, the representation of residents' views of police service is less effective in African-American and Latino communities, where the climate of opinion at beat meetings may make police-community relations appear to be rosier than they really are.

As Figure 3.4 indicates, the overrepresentation of older residents also attenuated the link between resident and beat meeting opinion. Attitude surveys usually find steep age gradients in views of policing, both among the general public and those who are stopped by police, and Chicago is no exception. In 1998, 74 percent of residents over sixty-five reported that, on average, police were doing a good job on the three aspects of police work summarized in Figure 3.4. The comparable figure for those under age thirty was 45 percent, and for thirty- to fifty-year-olds it was 53 percent. The correlation between the average age gap between beat participants and residents and the understatement of concern about policing was .29. As in the case of problem priorities, the link between age and attitudes toward police means that beat meetings provide a more favorable venue for police than they would if adults of all ages were more fully represented.

IMPACT ON NEIGHBORHOODS

The last issue addressed by this chapter is whether any of this makes a difference for the city's neighborhoods. This is a difficult question to address, for the character of neighborhoods in a large city like Chicago is influenced by a broad range of macro- as well as micro-level forces. In contrast to factors like large-scale immigration, a shift from manufacturing to services as the economic engine of the city, and the exodus of the child-rearing middle-class to the suburbs, the representativeness of beat meetings probably is not very consequential. At the local level, beat meetings compete with a long list of policies and practices for affecting the course of neighborhood development, and probably they do not account for as much as many other factors. The proper place to look for the effect of beat meetings is closer to home, in their impact on how the community policing program that embraces them is conducted. Does the program respond effectively to the concerns of residents, as they are articulated through beat meetings and other venues? Do "the goods get delivered" in response to citizen priorities? Even then, there inevitably will be other forces at work affecting how the program operates and who enjoys its benefits, so the question becomes: what is the role of beat meetings as compared with other factors determining who gets what from the program?

One important place to look for the effect of these forces is in the delivery of city services. Although both police and residents are concerned about

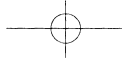


crime, an important feature of Chicago's program is that the problems it addresses do not have to be serious criminal matters. Community policing inevitably involves an expansion of the police mandate to include a broad range of concerns that previously lay outside their competence. By the time CAPS began, everyone locally believed that crime is rooted in a range of neighborhood conditions and events, and that it is necessary to address both criminal and criminogenic problems in practical fashion if the city is to take its mission of preventing crime seriously. A department publication noted,

CAPS recognizes that graffiti, abandoned vehicles and buildings, malfunctioning street lights and other signs of neighborhood disorder do have an adverse effect on both crime and the public's fear of crime. By addressing these relatively minor problems early on, police and other government agencies can prevent them from becoming more serious and widespread crime problems. (Chicago Police Department, 1996:2)

An expansion of the police mandate is also required by the department's commitment to open itself to public input and scrutiny. If officers responded to community concerns with remarks such as, "Well, that's not a police matter," no one would show up for another meeting. Therefore, police in Chicago find themselves involved in orchestrating neighborhood weekend cleanups and graffiti paint-outs. The districts have problem-buildings officers who inventory dilapidated and abandoned structures and track down the owners of the property. Police stand with residents at prayer vigils and guard barbeque "smoke-outs" on drug-selling corners. They distribute bracelets that would identify senior citizens if they fall unconscious and take note of street lights that are out and trees that need trimming. They are steered by residents toward problems such as the sale of loose cigarettes and individual cans of beer, as well as toward the open-air drug markets that plague too many neighborhoods.

But to make this work, community policing could not be just the police department's program; it had to have the assistance of other city agencies. So, from the beginning, Chicago envisioned that the delivery of city services would be an integral part of community policing. The mechanism is a quick and easy service request procedure involving only one sheet of paper. Officers' service requests trigger a prioritizing and case-tracking process that increases the responsiveness of other city agencies. Making this function smoothly was difficult at first. An interagency task force worked on the logistics of coordinating agency efforts against problems while programmers developed a software system that logged in, tracked, and recorded the final disposition of police service requests and generated user-friendly reports that could be double-checked in the field. District commanders and agency troubleshooters met weekly to iron out interagency communication problems. Changes were made in city ordinances to facilitate expedited building demolitions and car tows. During the program-development period the service-delivery component was one of the most successful elements of CAPS. The evaluation found that, in contrast to matched comparison areas, physical decay went down in the worst off prototype areas, and several districts made effective use of the process to tar-



get specific problems, including abandoned buildings, trash, and graffiti (see Skogan and Hartnett, 1997). More recently, the city's civilian CAPS Implementation Office stations service coordinators across the city to see to it that problem-solving projects have the support that they require. Beginning in early 2000, service requests were entered directly into the city's service-tracking system using computers located in police district stations. The system allows station personnel to check the status of individual requests and print out reports on service requests for distribution at beat meetings.

Data from the city's information system can be used to monitor two high-volume services that address problems of concern to the public and are widely discussed at beat meetings: graffiti and abandoned cars. The 1998 citywide survey found that half of Chicagoans thought graffiti was either some problem or a big problem in their neighborhood, and 32 percent expressed similar concern about abandoned cars. Residents who turned out for beat meetings were more emphatic; in the same year, 76 percent of residents who attended beat meetings thought graffiti was a problem in their neighborhood, and 59 percent were concerned about abandoned cars. The question is: how closely does the delivery of services track the priority that residents of various beats give to these two problems?

To examine this, city data banks contributed indicators of the distribution of the relevant service responses for 1997 and 1998. In those two years there were almost 180,000 graffiti site cleanups and 83,000 car-tow requests, and the data indicate that over the period the average beat was cleaned 646 times and car-tow requests were filed 225 times. Because beats vary greatly in size (they were drawn to equalize police workloads rather than population), rates of service per 1,000 residents were calculated using updated estimates of the population for each beat. These rates can be contrasted with the measures of concern about graffiti and abandoned car problems gathered in surveys of beat residents and beat meeting participants.

Figure 3.5 describes the general relation between some of the factors that may influence the distribution of city services. Behind the two "need" measures—the concern expressed by beat residents and those who attended beat meetings in the surveys—lies something that we cannot observe directly: the actual extent of the problems that bother them. This presumably drives public concern, as expressed through beat meetings but also through complaints to politicians or calls to city hotlines. The extent of the problem also affects officers' observations and priorities set for city agencies, and have influence through other channels that steer services in response to local priorities. Another factor that may affect who gets what from community policing is beat activism—the extent to which residents turn out and get involved in beat affairs. This is represented by the 1998 beat meeting turnout rate (the number of participants per 1,000 adults). In Chicago, politics provides another priority-setting process that channels benefits to this neighborhood or that, and it needs to be taken into account in any portrait of the distribution of city services. In this case it is represented by the percentage of each beat's vote that went to the incumbent (and ultimately successful) mayoral candidate in the 1995 general election.

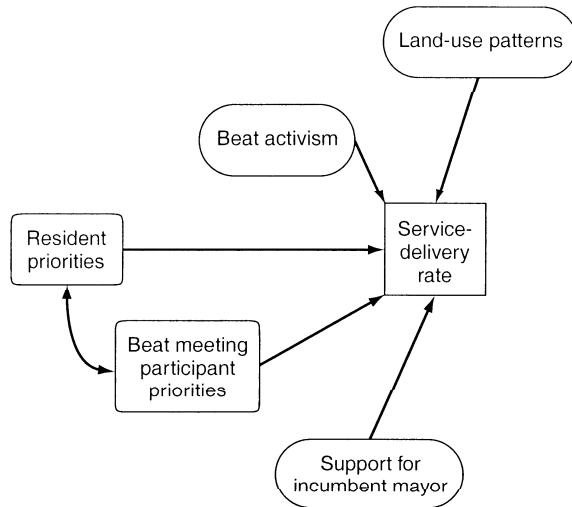


FIGURE 3.5 Beat factors and service-delivery patterns.

Finally, Figure 3.5 anticipates that land-use patterns will also affect the extent of service delivery. Many beats in Chicago contain a mix of residential and nonresidential buildings, so it is important to control for this factor before examining the effect of people-based factors such as beat meeting attendance and resident priorities. Graffiti and cleanups are both affected by the density of buildings in a beat, and small businesses provide a common target. The statistical analysis also controls for land uses (such as parking lots, automobile repair facilities, and others) that concentrate cars in a beat. The impact of those control factors is presented at the bottom of Table 3.1.

The statistical relation between these factors is described in Table 3.1. It indicates the strength of the correlations between service delivery and the factors sketched in Figure 3.5, and their relative impact when taken together in multiple regression. It documents that the link between service-delivery rates and the two ancillary components of the model summarized in Figure 3.5, politics and beat activism, varied from service to service. Being part of the mayor's electoral coalition was linked to graffiti cleanups independent of residents' priorities and the priorities of beat meeting activists. On the other hand, beat meeting attendance rates were strongly linked to action against abandoned cars, but the political complexion of the beat was not. However, in both cases there were substantial direct links between beat residents' priorities and who got what from the city. It was the strongest factor affecting car tows and followed politics for graffiti-related services. In addition, where beat meeting participants were especially concerned compared with their neighbors, service-delivery rates were higher still. The impact of both beat meeting attendance rates and the priorities of meeting participants suggests that the squeaky wheel is indeed being greased by Chicago's community policing program.

Table 3.1 Correlates of Beat Service Delivery Rates

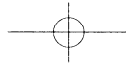
VARIABLE	(LOG) GRAFFITI CLEANUP RATE		(LOG) CAR-TOW RATE	
	STANDARDIZED REGRESSION COEFFICIENT	BIVARIATE CORRELATION	STANDARDIZED REGRESSION COEFFICIENT	BIVARIATE CORRELATION
Resident Priorities	.30	.58	.29	.48
Meeting Attendee Priorities	.18	.57	.29	.52
Meeting Attendance Rate	.21	(-.06)	.20	.42
Vote Share for the Incumbent Mayor	.36	.63	-.22	-.34
Nonresidential Land Use	.18	.46	-.18	-.13
Percent of Parcels Small Businesses	.18	.32	—	—
Building Density	.13	.20	—	—
Percent of Parcels Automobile Uses	—	—	.34	.22
R^2 (adj.)	.65		.54	

Note: Table reports standardized regression coefficients. All coefficients and correlations are significant $p < 0.05$ unless indicated by parentheses; $N = 195$.

Of course, other factors were correlated with service-delivery rates, as well. There was a strong association between the size of the Latino population and both resident and meeting participant's ratings of graffiti problems, and Latinos voted heavily in favor of the incumbent mayor. Only in the multivariate analysis was beat activism, which is relatively low in many Latino communities, also significantly related to the delivery of graffiti services. On the car-tow side, relatively few complaints were lodged in the city's better off White neighborhoods; they were moderately concentrated in Latino and African-American areas, and voters in the latter were particularly indisposed to vote for the incumbent in 1995.

SUMMARY

This chapter finds that the representational structure created by Chicago's beat meetings to a significant extent translates residents' priorities into the program in action. There is a strong middle-class bias in participation in the meetings. Beat meetings do a better job at representing already established stakeholders in the community than they do at integrating marginalized groups with fewer mechanisms for voicing their concerns. The priorities that participants bring to the meetings sometimes reflect those of their neighbors, but it is ironic that neither concern about crime nor dissatisfaction with the quality of police service is particularly well represented in this community policing program. This



being said, there were strong correlations (.48 to .58) between residents' priorities and the delivery of city services that speak to two widely discussed neighborhood problems: graffiti and abandoned cars. Neighborhoods plagued by these problems received more help.

CITATIONS

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| <p>Chicago Police Department. 1996. <i>The Role of City Services in the CAPS Problem-Solving Model</i>. Chicago: Chicago Police Department.</p> <p>Skogan, Wesley G. 1989. "Community Organizations and Crime." In Michael Tonry and Norval Morris (Eds.),</p> | <p><i>Crime and Justice: An Annual Review</i>. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 39-78.</p> <p>Skogan, Wesley G. and Susan M. Hartnett. 1997. <i>Community Policing, Chicago Style</i>. New York and London: Oxford University Press.</p> |
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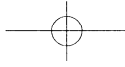
APPENDIX ON DATA SOURCES

OBSERVATIONS AND PARTICIPANT SURVEY

During 1998, trained observers attended 459 beat meetings in 253 beats. Some beats that were involved in a parallel study were observed more than once. The data for beats with multiple observations were weighted so that all areas are represented equally, and the unit of analysis here is the police beat. At the meetings the observers completed an observation form that systematically recorded important aspects of what took place at the meeting. They also counted the number, race, and gender of residents and police who were there, and took note of city service representatives, local politicians, and other nonresidents who attended.

The observers also distributed questionnaires to the residents and police officers who were present. They contacted district neighborhood relations offices and civilian beat meeting facilitators before each meeting to ensure that they would be on the agenda. A primary goal was to not interfere with the flow of meetings, so observers were flexible in the administration of the survey. At the appointed time they arose to explain who they were and briefly described the purposes and goals of the evaluation. The questionnaires were necessarily short, so they would not take up much time, and they were designed and worded to be as accessible as possible to a wide audience. Questionnaires were available in both English and Spanish. Observers were instructed to assist any respondent who could not read the form, apart from the rest of the meeting's participants to avoid a breach of confidentiality. Police officers who were present filled out longer questionnaires while residents completed theirs.

The observers kept no formal records of refusals, noncompletions, or survey-completion rates beyond informal reports made to the project manager. Beat meetings have a fluid character. Residents and police officers come late and leave early, and they often stand and stretch or mill around in the back and conduct personal business out of the room. As a result, the simple question of how many are in attendance is a problematic one. Observers would generally recount meeting participants when they could to gauge survey response, but they were very busy during this period. Because the questionnaires were anonymous, it was not possible to determine who did not complete one or supplied only partial information. Also, although observers handled inquiries from officers or residents on any number of issues regarding the questionnaire, in no case were potential respondents pressured into completing a questionnaire if they did not desire to do so. In a few instances the observers reattended meetings in beats where the ratio of participants to completed interviews appeared to be low, and they offered surveys to those who had not completed one previously.



RESIDENT SURVEYS

The city surveys were conducted by telephone using random-digit-dialing procedures that ensured that unlisted households would be included in the sample. In 1998 and 1999 the random component of the sample was augmented by approximately 250 telephone numbers that were selected at random from published lists of numbers to increase the number of completed interviews in a few low-population police districts. They are excluded from citywide analyses but were included in the aggregated beat data examined here. The most conservative survey completion rates ranged from 40 percent to 60 percent, declining over time. The 1997 survey included 3,066 respondents, in 1998 it included 3,071 respondents, and in 1999 it included 3,101 respondents. Of this group, about 6,800 residents lived in the 195 beats for which there was complete information for this study. The questions were administered in both English and Spanish. The surveys were conducted by the Survey Research Laboratory of the University of Illinois.

The resident and beat meeting participant surveys shared three questions about the quality of police service:

How responsive are the police in your neighborhood to community concerns? Do you think they are [very responsive to very unresponsive]?

How good a job are the police doing in dealing with the problems that really concern people in your neighborhood? Would you say they are doing a [very good job to poor job]?

How good a job are the police doing in working together with residents in your neighborhood to solve local problems? Would you say they are doing a [very good job to poor job]?

Responses to these questions went together consistently. In the 1998 resident survey they were correlated an average of $+0.65$, and at the individual level the combined index had a reliability of $.85$.

The resident and beat meeting participant surveys shared seven questions about neighborhood problems. Respondents were requested to rate a list of things "that you may think are problems in your neighborhood." They were asked to indicate whether "you think it is a big problem, some problem, or no problem in your neighborhood." Responses to three of these questions were used to assess the extent of neighborhood physical decay.

Abandoned cars in the streets and alleys.

Abandoned houses or other empty buildings in your area.

Graffiti, that is, writing or painting on walls or buildings.

Responses to these questions went together consistently. In the resident survey they were correlated an average of $+0.45$, and at the individual level the combined index had a reliability of $.76$.

Two questions about neighborhood crime drew strongly consistent responses, and they were more closely linked to each other than to any of the remaining questions. At the individual level, responses to these questions were correlated $+0.71$ in the resident survey. Combined, they formed an index of neighborhood gang and drug problems.

Shootings and violence by gangs.

Drug dealing on the streets.

The resident and beat meeting participant surveys shared two questions about property and street crime. At the individual level, responses to these questions in the resident survey were correlated an average of $+0.56$.

People breaking in or sneaking into homes to steal things.

People being attacked or robbed.

