emerald**insight**

Policing: An International Journal

Neighborhood by neighborhood: community policing in a rust belt city
Will Cooley, Michelle Bemiller, Eric Jefferis, Rose Penix,

Article information:

Users who downloaded this article also downloaded:

,"Examining officer support for and perceived effects of police consolidation",
Policing: An International Journal, Vol. 0 Iss 0 pp. - https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-07-2017-0086

(2018),"Examining police use of force and citizen complaints", Policing: An International Journal, Vol. 41 Iss 4 pp. 496-509 https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-01-2018-0024

For Authors

If you would like to write for this, or any other Emerald publication, then please use our Emerald for Authors service information about how to choose which publication to write for and submission guidelines are available for all. Please visit www.emeraldinsight.com/authors for more information.

About Emerald www.emeraldinsight.com

Emerald is a global publisher linking research and practice to the benefit of society. The company manages a portfolio of more than 290 journals and over 2,350 books and book series volumes, as well as providing an extensive range of online products and additional customer resources and services.

Emerald is both COUNTER 4 and TRANSFER compliant. The organization is a partner of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and also works with Portico and the LOCKSS initiative for digital archive preservation.

*Related content and download information correct at time of download.

Community
policing in a
rust belt city

Neighborhood by neighborhood: community policing in a rust belt city

Will Cooley
Department of History, Walsh University, North Canton, Ohio, USA
Michelle Bemiller
Department of Sociology, Walsh University, North Canton, Ohio, USA, and
Eric Jefferis and Rose Penix
College of Public Health, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio, USA

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine citizen satisfaction with police services and perceived safety using survey research in two high crime neighborhoods. Problem-oriented crime deterrence strategies were used in one neighborhood, the other served as a control group.

Design/methodology/approach – Mixed-methods approach was used to measure the effectiveness of problem-oriented approaches in persistent high-crime areas. Pre- and post-intervention surveys were conducted by sampling addresses in both neighborhoods and analyzing results.

Findings – No between-neighborhood differences were reported regarding the satisfaction with police services or improvement in perceived safety.

Originality/value – These findings suggest that this deterrence strategy is a promising approach to reducing crime while not damaging community perceptions. However, departments must vary place-based strategies, and prevention is difficult given historical contexts, the absence of credible community partners and limited resources in a declining city.

Keywords Community-oriented policing, Discretion, Citizen satisfaction, Implementation

Paper type Case study

Introduction

In 2012, the Canton, Ohio Police Department (CPD) started over. The force was hamstrung by manpower shortages and state funding cuts for local governments. Violent crime was on the rise and CPD management realized that their reflexive responses to high-crime areas had been ineffectual. Certain districts, such as Homestead [1], had experienced elevated crime levels for the past two decades despite numerous programs. In response, CPD executives adopted intelligence-led policing (ILP) to institute evidence-based crime suppression tactics while upgrading community relations neighborhood by neighborhood.

CPD executives hoped to modernize the department and confront concerns over citizen satisfaction and police legitimacy. In recent decades, police forces have made substantial strides in reducing crime while combatting abusive behaviors, harassment and corruption. Yet, police still regularly fail to gain the cooperation of citizens, especially racial minorities. Frustrations over bias and mistreatment have mounted, sparking disturbances across the country.

This study used a mixed-methods approach, incorporating a historical narrative and community survey methods, to gauge the effectiveness of problem-oriented campaigns in

persistently crime-ridden zones. As studies demonstrate, targeted approaches are effective in stifling crime (Braga *et al.*, 2014). However, more research is needed on which strategies work best and how the tactics influence police legitimacy (Haberman *et al.*, 2016; Weisburd and Telep, 2014). While police departments often engage in community policing efforts, they rarely measure citizen satisfaction (Mazerolle *et al.*, 2013; Braga *et al.*, 2014). Place-based initiatives have reduced disorder, but critics charge that they are often racially discriminatory, constitutionally suspect and worsen legitimacy (Taylor, 2006; Gau and Brunson, 2010). Our research not only sought to measure if the CPD's tactics could prevent crime, but if they could do so without alienating residents (Kochel, 2011; Lord *et al.*, 2009). The study details the overhaul of a police department in a small city and examines the obstacles of political pushback and limited resources. Key questions explored include: What is the effect of a community-based police intervention on citizen satisfaction with police and perceived safety in their community? How can these efforts be contextualized by local history, economics and politics?

The study sites were three neighborhoods in Canton, Ohio. The first, Homestead, was selected by the CPD as the area to launch their problem-oriented tactics in 2013. The force achieved notable reductions in crime in the area during this intervention period, but also confronted concerns over the intrusive nature of their strategies during a sensitive time for police–community relations. After the CPD assessment of Homestead, the authors were engaged to study citizen satisfaction and perceived safety. The result was an expanded examination of two additional neighborhoods—McCormick and Brickyard. McCormick served as our intervention neighborhood while Brickyard, chosen because of its demographic and crime rate comparability to McCormick, served as the control. In this paper, we share a historical narrative of the CPD as well as survey results from our neighborhood analysis. We conclude by discussing the possibilities and challenges of modernizing a police force.

Historical narrative

As police executives can attest, refurbishing a department is no easy task. As one researcher noted, it is akin to "bending granite" (Guyot, 1979). Canton's transformation was particularly difficult because of the force's generally poor reputation. The city had been "wide-open" for much of the twentieth century, and many officers participated in graft. Professionalization, better compensation and changes in vice economies gradually slowed corruption, but some officers were taking payoffs into the 1980s (United States Senate, 1984; Limbacher, 1989). A pattern of racial bias also dogged the force, leading to a spate of lawsuits in the 1980s and 1990s. While the CPD tried to make strides to rectify community affairs and bolster minority hiring, these attempts were hampered by controversies and litigation. Allegations of brutality surfaced again in the late 1990s and early 2000s, inspiring organized actions by civil rights groups (*Canton Repository*, 1999, 2000). CPD executives acknowledge that this history hinders their ability to secure citizen assistance, especially from African-Americans.

Economic and demographic factors also made policing Canton especially arduous. Canton is a shrinking Rust Belt city of 73,000 in Northeast Ohio. Once home to a plethora of industrial firms and a prosperous working class, the city has suffered massive job losses and population declines (Wang, 2011). From 2001 to 2009, a crushing 41 percent of manufacturing jobs disappeared (Zeller, 2010). In 2008, Canton had the highest family poverty rate in Ohio, with 28 percent earning less than the federal poverty line. Most of the census tracts in the southern half of the city had poverty rates above 40 percent. By 2012, nearly one in five houses sat empty, 60 percent of families were headed by a single parent, and a research firm named Canton as the second most dangerous small city in America (Canton Comprehensive Plan, 2015; Monsewicz, 2012; Nelson, 2014; Wang, 2009).

Meanwhile, policymakers complicated the CPD's reform efforts, as budget cuts prevented employing a full-time data analyst and the Canton City Council scuttled hiring a deputy chief to oversee the ILP initiative. The council's majority leader inveighed against the appointment, stating that it would mean "taking a patrolman off the street and creating another desk position," showing how most elected officials valued traditional reactive crime-control methods (Rink, 2014).

The state government also told the CPD to do more with less, offsetting tax cuts by deeply slashing local aid (Siegel, 2011). The number of officers fell from 173 in 2008 to 142 in 2013. In 2016, Canton faced a $5m deficit, and the budget forecast called for the CPD to drop six officers through attrition and make $962,000 in personnel cuts and $275,000 in overtime reductions (Matas, 2016b). Over the course of this study, the CPD lost their part-time data analyst and eight more officers were retained only after the department shifted grant money, reflecting countrywide trends of flagging resources for police departments (Wines, 2016; Wollan 2012). In Canton, police executives took on the task of undertaking ILP while chasing grants to keep the force afloat.

Many citizens were also skeptical of the CPD's modernization effort given its disjointed experiences with community policing. Facing a crisis in public confidence in the tumultuous decades of the 1960s and 1970s, forces sought partnerships between citizens and law enforcement. By 1997, 85 percent of departments had embraced community policing or were planning to do so (Skogan, 2004). Though often hyped as the future of urban policing, in practice community policing ranged from evidenced-based procedures to commanders merely encouraging more friendliness (Hunter and Barker, 1993). As the Justice Department Inspector General admitted in 1998, the agency "accepts virtually any activity related to law enforcement as community policing" (*Criminal Justice Newsletter*, 1998).

The CPD experimented with a host of fashionable strategies, but never integrated them as primary aspects. As part of the Clinton Administration's push for outreach in 1994, for example, the CPD pledged to be a model force. One officer asserted that the tactics would repair the force's repute. "We're not going to be the abrasive police officer that Canton people are used to" (*Canton Repository*, 1994). Though these programs received positive feedback from the press and residents, all were short-lived, including place-based methods in Homestead. After receiving a Weed and Seed grant in 2007, the CPD bolstered patrols and opened a substation. The city declared that this was not a "grant" program, but rather a comprehensive plan to tackle crime and boost community relations (Canton Quarterly, 2007). Contrary to these claims, Weed and Seed, like earlier programs, desisted when resources ran out. According to a local pastor, Cantonians grew frustrated by "the on-again, off-again nature of grant-based programming," especially when the effort ended "before the 'seeds' really had a chance to grow into mature plants" (Morgan, 2015).

In the minds of many Cantonians, this transience indicated that the force was not serious about making genuine modifications. As a local newspaper columnist observed, the federal government used Canton as a "test bed" for community policing programs. Law enforcement and politicians announced the agendas with "great flair" and they "earn top billing on campaign flyers." Cantonians had grown cynical, though, because "when the dollars inevitably dry up, the programs quietly end" (Hillbish, 2007). The CPD championed community policing but did not make it essential to operations. In addition, they had no measureable data on which tactics worked.

The national context made this consideration even more vital. Approximately, 24 percent of Canton's population is black and the country has cavernous racial divides on faith in the police (Newport, 2014). The CPD had a long history of bias, brutality, and discrimination, and recent racial conflagrations put cities on edge. At a forum on race relations, Canton's safety director said, "As the chief likes to tell me, we're only one incident away from a Ferguson" (Goshay, 2015). The CPD focused resources on minority

neighborhoods at a time when some African-Americans stated that they wanted the police to pull back. The criticisms ranged from ending the enforcement of petty offenses to reducing force sizes (Auletta, 2015; Campaign Zero, n.d.). Radicals went further, arguing that they wanted "no interaction" with the police and the opportunity for self-determination (Wisconsin Gazette, 2015).

These activists reaped attention, but black opinions on police tactics are nuanced and varied. During a neighborhood meeting on Canton's southeast side, an African-American audience member charged that locals were not receiving adequate police service. The second speaker rejected this, arguing that the CPD was fixated on the area and harassing young black men. Similarly, at a citywide assembly organized to avoid a riot, several speakers detailed discriminatory acts and racial profiling. As one man noted, the CPD's "history of disrespect produces a disregard for powers that be." However, other residents urged youths to be more respectful and lectured the audience on "personal responsibility" (Hall, 2016). Judging the community tenor is an inexact science, and citizen attitudes are frequently contradictory and muddled. The CPD need more direct feedback from targeted communities to understand responses to interventions.

The police intervention

A crucial aspect of the CPD's ILP initiative was problem-oriented tactics in Homestead. The area is home to viable institutions and an active neighborhood association, but it is blighted by dilapidated and abandoned buildings. It has long been city's most crime-ridden, violent district, plagued by drug dealing, scrap metal theft, burglary and prostitution. Canton includes several loosely organized gangs, and they often quarreled in Homestead (Jefferis *et al.*, 2005). Specialized police units conducted investigations that brought about arrests and evictions, but no lasting crime decreases. For decades the CPD gave Homestead a great deal of attention with limited results.

Homestead contained many "hot spots." Expending intensive resources on these zones has become standard practice and when done right can lower crime (Braga *et al.*, 2014). Too often, though, the police concentrate on where crime is happening without asking why it is happening. The resulting high-profile busts reinforce the misconception that law enforcement can tackle crime alone. Without input from residents, targeted policing can devolve into zero tolerance campaigns that worsen community relations (Rosenbaum, 2006; Tonry, 2011).

To avoid this trap, the newly formed Priorities Bureau blended problem-oriented policing into their emphasis on Homestead. Following a scanning, analysis, response and assessment approach, the Priorities Bureau identified disorderly conditions. They then asked citizens about crime and environmental concerns. The informal surveys gave residents the opportunity to co-produce prevention and directed the Priorities Bureau to unconventional duties. These were the concerns that "have made neighborhoods uncomfortable places to live and raise a family," the CPD's chief told the city council. "By focusing on these quality of life issues we hope to change the public perception of the police department from an enforcement entity to more of a community partner" (Rink, 2014). The collected data not only provided intelligence, but also directed the Priorities Bureau toward residents' concerns.

To break with its paramilitary past, CPD leadership tried to encourage officer discretion. The Priorities Bureau commander asked them to imagine that they lived in the neighborhood and to take notice of what they would want to change, initiating projects such as painting over gang graffiti. Instead of responding to calls in other parts of the city, officers stayed in Homestead for extended periods, especially near areas with a high volume of service calls. The biggest complaint from residents was landlords who tolerated disruptive tenants and were lax in property upkeep. A Priorities Bureau officer created a

Community
policing in a
rust belt city

database of recurrent violators and confronted them directly. The scofflaws had repeatedly ignored complaints but usually acted when a person in uniform interceded.

Informed by research demonstrating that people are more likely to cooperate with the police if they consider the law to be legitimate, the CPD expressly made better dealings with Cantonians integral to the agenda (Tyler and Fagan, 2008). The Priorities Bureau connected to neighborhood groups, distributed information in Spanish, and made appearances at Project Rebuild, a job training center for at-risk youth. Most of the enrollees in Project Rebuild had been involved in the criminal justice system and held negative views of the police. Some participants expressed an appreciation of the new roles taken by officers. "They're actually trying to do something in Canton," an 18-year old stated. "They're actually trying to, you know, be human" (Byer, 2016).

Empiricists may quibble with the heterogeneity of place-based interventions, as it is difficult to narrow down what causes crime drops. However, this is also a strength of problem-oriented policing. Using their discretion, officers adapted to concerns as they came up. In Canton, abandoned housing is a festering wound. Other cities may not face this dilemma. Likewise, law enforcement must be aware of a city's cultural quirks. In Canton, when the city's high school basketball teams squared off the rivalry sometimes led to mayhem. Police departments need to have their fingers on the city's pulse to attend to these circumstances.

Unlike previous crackdowns in Homestead that involved mass apprehensions, the commander stated that the Priorities Bureau would make an impact with fewer arrests. CPD executives admitted that the "sweep" approach had turned some Cantonians against the force, encumbering civilian cooperation (*Canton Repository*, 2005). "If we don't have the respect of our citizens," the CPD's chief stated, "there is no way we can do our jobs fully" (Ponder, 2015). The CPD not only needed to prove that it could reduce crime, but could do so without alienating the people it set out to help.

Arrests still played a key role in ILP, though, as the goals in Homestead included the focused deterrence of repeat offenders. Researchers argue that to avoid charges of bias, the police should concentrate on places and not on people (Weisburd, 2011). However, some residents made clear that certain people were the "problems." The Priorities Bureau evaluated offenders subject to post-release control, collaborated with parole officers, and met with prolific offenders to offer assistance in re-integration. Pleased with the results, the CPD expanded the program by visiting soon-to-be-released inmates.

The results in Homestead convinced the CPD leadership that they were on the right path. From 2013 and 2014, their efforts led to a 24 percent reduction in reported quality-of-life crimes and 39 percent drop in violent offenses in the neighborhood. More decreases followed from 2014 to 2015, with violent crime falling 41 percent and quality-of-life crimes dipping 27 percent (Canton Police Department, 2015).

The department made statistical progress, but frictions in Homestead emerged. The city newspaper lauded the department for lowering crime rates but noted that some residents disapproved of the heightened police presence. As one dissenter stated, "I think they are going a bit overboard" (Byer, 2014). Others complained that officers were harassing law-abiding people. In the wake of the Ferguson disturbances, a newspaper editorial urged the CPD to strive for a "balance" in its approach and include citizen feedback (*Canton Repository*, 2014).

The CPD began the ILP initiative with dual goals of boosting quality of life and enhancing community relations. Yet while chiefs frequently state that community policing is intended to lift the force's standing, the two are not necessarily correlated, and few take the extra step of measuring this objective (Reisig and Giacomazzi, 1998; Jesilow *et al.*, 1998). Indeed, the CPD had no assessable benchmarks for this outcome. The present study seeks to close this loop through evaluating citizen satisfaction and perceived safety with a problem-oriented intervention.

Methods

Given the positive results in Homestead, the CPD implemented the same protocol in the McCormick neighborhood beginning in 2015. A community survey methodology to assess the impact of the intervention follows. The data analyzed come from two sources—police data examining crime rates in Canton pre- and post-intervention and citizen perception data collected using the Citizens Perception of Crime and Policing Survey administered during Spring of 2015 and 2016. The survey was administered in the McCormick neighborhood (where police interventions were implemented) and the Brickyard neighborhood (no interventions implemented). These neighborhoods were selected by the CPD based on crime and disorder rates as well as similar neighborhood characteristics and sizes. The survey asked for responses regarding interactions with police, perceived safety and assessments of disorder and crime. Survey administration occurred prior to the intervention, and again one year after implementation. Eligible respondents resided in one of the select neighborhoods and were ages 18 or above[2].

At Time 1 of survey administration researchers collected 79 surveys. At Time 2, 89 were collected, totaling 168 surveys between the two neighborhoods. Of the 168 surveys, 78 surveys stemmed from the intervention neighborhood (i.e. McCormick) and 89 the control neighborhood (i.e. Brickyard). The research design of this project allows for between-neighborhood comparison at both Times 1 and 2 of data collection, as well as general analysis between Times 1 and 2.

Measures

The crux of this paper focuses on whether problem-oriented strategies work in reducing crime, if they have influenced citizen satisfaction, and if they influence citizen's perceived safety. The first focus, whether problem-oriented strategies work, is addressed using CPD statistics that show increases and/or decreases in specific criminal offenses in the test neighborhoods. The second two areas of interest (i.e. perceived safety and citizen satisfaction) were addressed using the Citizens Perception of Crime and Policing Survey[3]. To that end, the survey used the following measures.

Citizen satisfaction

Citizen satisfaction was measured using the following ordinal-level proxy question —"Overall, do you think the Canton Police are doing […] 1) a very good job, 2) a good job, 3) a fair job, 4) a poor job, 5) a very poor job?"

Perceived safety

Perceived safety was measured using the following questions—how safe do you feel when walking alone at night on your block? and In the past 6 months, have you felt afraid of becoming a victim of crime on your block? The first question is an ordinal-level variable with five response categories ranging from feeling "very safe" to feeling "very unsafe." The second question is nominal level, consisting of a "yes" or "no" response.

Sample characteristics

Tables I and II provide an overview of sample characteristics between the intervention and control groups as well as comparisons at Times 1 and 2 of data collection.

When comparing the intervention and control groups, we see few differences between the groups in terms of the CPD doing a good job, whether respondents fear walking alone at night, and if they fear being a crime victim on their block. Individuals rarely indicated that they feared walking alone in either group. Similarly, not many fear being a crime victim. However, differences were noted when examining gender, race, age, employment and education.

Community
policing in a
rust belt city

The control group respondents were older, less likely to be employed full or part-time, were less educated, were mostly African-American and female. Interestingly, from Times 1 to 2, both fear of being a victim and fear of walking alone at night decreased by 7 percent. From Times 1 to 2, perceptions of the police increased by 3.5 percent .

Statistical methods

The Canton Police Department provided data on crime rates during the one-year survey period in both the intervention and control neighborhood. χ^2 and difference-in-difference (DID) tests were performed in SPSS on the crime and survey data at both Times 1 and 2. χ^2 tests were used to determine significant differences between the intervention and control neighborhoods with regards to violent and quality of life crime data. Logistic regression-based DID analysis of survey data allowed for a direct test of the intervention between communities, controlling for the influence of pre-treatment differences between communities.

Results

When analyzing the data, comparisons were computed between the intervention and control neighborhoods, and between Times 1 and 2 of data collection. See Table III for results of the analyses of the crime statistics. Table IV provides analyses of citizen satisfaction and perceived safety data.

Canton crime statistics

Two primary questions were asked regarding the officially reported police data. First, did reports of violent crime go down after the intervention, and how does this compare to the

	Intervention ($n = 78$)	Control ($n = 90$)
Demographics		
Gender (female)	41%	59%
Race (nonwhite)	46%	69%
Mean age (in years)	42	49
Employed	51%	38%
HS or less	39%	46%
Fear being a victim of crime (yes)	23%	26%
Afraid to walk alone at night	47%	50%
Believe CPD are doing a good job	45%	41%

Table I.
Demographics of intervention and control neighborhoods

	Time 1 ($n = 78$)	Time 2 ($n = 90$)
Demographics		
Gender (female)	50%	50%
Race (nonwhite)	63%	54%
Mean age (in years)	46	46
Employed	34%	51%
High school or less	41%	44%
Fear being a victim of crime (yes)	28%	21%
Afraid to walk alone at night	52%	45%
Believe CPD are doing a good job	42.5%	46%

Table II.
Demographics
Times 1 and 2

	Time 1	Time 2	
Violent crimes			
Intervention area	52% (170)	48% (160)	
Comparison area	48% (50)	52% (54)	$p = 0.541$
	Difference-in-difference = −14		
Quality of life offenses			
Intervention area	53% (522)	47% (462)	
Comparison area	47% (149)	53% (165)	$p = 0.084$
	Difference-in-difference = −76		

Table III.
Comparison of crime reports before and after intervention (row percentages reported)

Notes: "Violent Crime" includes police incident reports of aggravated assault, aggravated burglary, aggravated menacing, aggravated murder, aggravated robbery, assault, menacing, murder, rape and robbery. "Quality of life offenses" include police incident reports of breaking and entering, burglary, damaging, harassment, improper discharge of a firearm, motor vehicle theft, theft and vandalism

Predictor	Canton Police are doing a good job (n = 152)			Safe walking alone at night (n = 151)			Afraid of being a victim (n = 154)		
	B	SE B	e^B	B	SE B	e^B	B	SE B	e^B
Time (reference: year 2)	−0.283	0.448	1.327	0.317	0.466	1.373	−0.657	0.523	0.519
Group (reference: treatment)	−0.363	0.533	1.438	0.201	0.504	1.222	−0.460	0.560	0.632
Time × Group	1.068	0.700	0.344	0.008	0.680	1.008	0.739	0.778	0.500
Constant	−0.123			−0.442			−0.693		
χ^2	3.42			1.64			1.843		
df	3			3			3		

Table IV.
Logistic regression analysis: difference of difference of analysis

comparison area? Second, did other quality of life crimes go down after the intervention, and how does this compare to the comparison areas?

As seen in Table III, the number of violent and quality of life crimes did decrease in the intervention area when comparing the one-year intervention period with the same 12 months preceding the intervention. Violent crimes fell from 170 to 160 and quality of life crimes dropped from 522 to 462 during this period. The comparison area witnessed slight increases in both crime categories across the same period. While these differences are promising, they were not of a magnitude to reach the conventional level of statistical significance using the χ^2 test ($p = 0.541$ and 0.084, respectively, for violent of quality of life offenses). DID analyses were also performed to assess intervention effects. $DID = (\bar{y}_{T2} - \bar{y}_{T1}) - (\bar{y}_{C2} - \bar{y}_{C1})$, where the difference between observations of treatment groups (T2 and T1) are differenced from observations between control groups (C1 and C2). The DID reveals a treatment effect of −14 violent crimes and –76 quality of life crimes post-intervention. Additional assessments, not reported here, also compared the post-intervention period to pre-intervention, three-year averages for both crime types. The results were similar in that the post-intervention period had lower crime counts but the differences did not achieve statistical significance.

Neighborhood comparisons
One of our key questions was whether respondents felt that the police were doing a good job. A χ^2 comparison of neighborhoods with regards to whether the police are doing a good job provided no statistically significant differences ($\chi^2 = 1.85$; $p = 0.76$). A χ^2 comparison of

Community
policing in a
rust belt city

fear of being a victim of a crime in the intervention and control groups show no statistically significant differences between neighborhoods ($\chi^2 = 0.182$; $p = 0.669$). The same can be said for fear of walking alone at night ($\chi^2 = 0.942$; $p = 0.81$).

Times 1 to 2 comparisons

We used logistic regression to test the intervention effects, comparing pre- to post-intervention periods, to determine whether the ILP intervention significantly improved citizen satisfaction and reduced fear of crime. The outcome and predictor variables of interest were all dummy coded for analyses, where: police doing good job = 1; safe walking alone = 1; afraid of being victim = 1; treatment area = 1; and post-intervention = 1. The intervention by time interaction estimates treatment effects while controlling from the time period. As can be seen in Table IV, our findings did not reveal any significant differences between the treatment and control areas between the two time periods for any of the outcomes measured. *Post hoc* analyses of observed power were 20 percent—due to limited sample size—illustrating the possibility of a type II error and highlighting the need for further study with a larger sample size.

Limitations

The historical commentary, community survey and analysis of police data presented here provide an attempt to understand the complex relationship between the Canton Police and citizens. While all efforts were made to ensure the utmost scientific rigor of this study, we encountered limitations. Perhaps foremost, the sample size was not particularly robust. Surveyors scoured the neighborhoods on bitter cold days seeking respondents but were only able to complete a total of 168 surveys. While this number is respectable, when broken down into pre- and post-intervention groups, as well as intervention and control areas, we were limited in the types of analyses and comparisons. The limited period of the study is another concern. The time that it takes to institute a policing program, make people aware, and realize results may take longer than a one-year study.

Discussion

Based on crime rates and visible disorganization, both neighborhoods in this study were deemed priorities by the CPD. Our findings indicate that citizen satisfaction was low in both communities. When examined from a purely statistical perspective, the findings from the community survey and the analysis of crime reports do not provide resounding evidence of a major impact from the police intervention. So, did the problem-oriented policing program fail? It is important to note that violent and other crimes went down in the intervention areas while they went up in the comparison area—even though the numbers did not reach statistical significance. On the other hand, no between-neighborhood difference was reported regarding citizen satisfaction or improvement in perceived safety.

The CPD did not replicate Homestead's dramatic crime reduction in McCormick. In Homestead, the Priorities Bureau partnered with the neighborhood association and business owners. Residents often blamed transients for disorder, and many came forward with advice on improving their neighborhoods. In contrast, the gangs in McCormick were generational and offenders were embedded in the community. Residents were usually unwilling to discuss specific problems. The Priorities Bureau also struggled to build relationships in McCormick, a more socially disorganized area. There are hardly any businesses, no established community organization, and while the CPD held meetings to cultivate leadership and find partners, few people stepped forward. The problems within a city can differ greatly, even when the neighborhoods have similar demographic profiles. Problem-oriented policing requires making adjustments and refinements based on local

conditions (Sparrow, 2016). However, this task is much more demanding, perhaps impossible, without community partners. The CPD chief raised this issue but was pilloried by city officials insisting that the police should be the main thrust of crime prevention.

The officers in McCormick also may not have been as dedicated to the Priorities Bureau philosophy and they struggled with the concept of discretion. Unlike officers in Homestead that thrived in the problem-oriented approach, those assigned to McCormick were more comfortable receiving direction. Vexing interactions with skeptical or hostile residents lowered morale. During a police-sponsored trash pick-up, hardly any locals joined, instead residents lectured officers on how they should do their jobs and the CPD's corrupt past. As one policeman stated, "This might be the most irritating thing I've ever done" (Byer, 2016). At the end of their terms, these officers transferred out of Priorities Bureau shifts.

As in many departments, the fidelity to inventive approaches remains an open question (Cordner and Biebel, 2005). Studies of community policing have found increases in job satisfaction and motivation, improvements in citizen relations, and greater co-production of safety. Researchers are cautious about these findings, though, due to methodological issues (Lurigio and Rosenbaum, 1994). Officers, especially early in their careers, usually have a punitive mindset and are not interested in keeping the peace but rather in catching the bad guys (Paoline, 2003). Though the bulk of police work involves dealing with domestic quarrels and other conflicts stemming from substance abuse, mental illness, and poverty, officers often regard these tasks as beneath them. The jaded scoff at community policing and protest that they are not "social workers with guns" (Moskos, 2008). Likewise, not everyone in the CPD embraced the ILP reforms, as some thought the tactics were "hug-a-thug" programs. The overarching goal of CPD executives is to put ILP the core instead of another fleeting project. To do so, they will have to convince line officers on the merits of this approach.

A community meeting in McCormick exemplified the disconnect between strategy and implementation. Rival cliques had recently been exchanging gunfire, putting the neighborhood on edge. Though many locals had pledged to attend, speakers from the county prosecutor's office and CPD outnumbered the residents present. The meeting began with a castigatory tone, as prosecutors boasted of the extended terms they could give offenders for just being associated with gangs and the school principal asked if they could also charge the parents of wayward youths. The prosecutors and a CPD detective complained that they could put many of these "gangbangers" and "thugs" in prison if witnesses would only come forward. The presenters showed surveillance video of a shooting in a local tavern and noted that none of the patrons (almost all of whom were African-American) had agreed to testify. The speakers scolded the residents present for not speaking up about crimes and the detective charged that "our family structure is broken."

Finally, a white resident responded that people were too afraid to cooperate with the police. The detective retorted, "If we keep living in fear we're never going to win." An African-American woman, after thanking the Priorities Bureau for their presence around the school, objected to the term "thugs," countering "these are our children." Taken aback, a prosecutor countered that only a small number of offenders were creating the mayhem, but again expressed his bafflement over why locals refused to name names. "Other communities do not have this problem because they snitch," he asserted.

The meeting illustrated many of the hurdles to effective community policing. The prosecutors and detective were clearly frustrated but exhibited scant interest in why the criminal justice system lacks legitimacy in McCormick. Only a handful of citizens attended, and those present said they were apprehensive about assisting the police. The admonishments delivered by the white prosecutors and detective sparked a pointed rejoinder from an African-American mother. Law enforcement cannot encourage the co-production of safety if they undermine their own efforts through belligerence and an unwillingness to examine policies and procedures.

Community
policing in a
rust belt city

Conclusion

Upon examining the results of the survey, the CPD decided to expand their strategies into other neighborhoods. The CPD's willingness—even eagerness—to evaluate its strategies are a positive development. For years, the force had dabbled in community policing without long-range goals or measurable outcomes. In this project, they not only embarked on an evidence-based plan for troubled neighborhoods, they also gauged citizen reactions. Our findings support previous studies indicating that intensified policing in targeted areas does not necessarily lead to increased tensions (Ratcliffe *et al.*, 2015; Weisburd *et al.*, 2011). Further research should examine the impact of place-based tactics on citizen satisfaction. In addition, history is a factor in citizen assessments of law enforcement fairness. As such, research should incorporate questions that include the role of past conduct in current perceptions.

While the CPD made substantial crime prevention gains in the initial intervention in the Homestead neighborhood, the effects in McCormick were more modest. McCormick is a short drive from Homestead, but the circumstances differed, especially the capacity for partnerships. Problem-oriented policing requires collaboration, but the CPD could not find capable partners in McCormick. More examinations are needed on community policing in socially disorganized areas.

CPD executives touted that ILP was not another project, but rather the new model to change departmental reputation and effectiveness (Lawver, 2015). However, the city's precarious finances and political pressures strained the transformation. Canton struggled to meet the costs of managing the city and reductions to the size and capabilities of the police force are probably inevitable (Matas, 2016a). According to authors of the city's comprehensive plan, a reactive police force merely had its fingers in the dyke. "Spending on public safety is a perpetually losing proposition until underlying distress and consequential disorder are tamed" (Canton Comprehensive Plan, 2015). Yet, when violent crime spiked, Cantonians and elected officials demanded that the CPD respond with shopworn methods such as more patrols and faster responses (Byer, 2017). Part of the CPD's challenge is not only to get results through ILP, but to convince the public that police actions are the last line of defense. For Canton to make strides in safety, investments and changes in thinking are needed across the board.

Notes

1. The names of neighborhoods have been changed to protect the identities of respondents to the surveys conducted during this study.

2. It is important to note that this was a convenience sample at both points in data collection. As a result, we were unable to interview the same respondents at Times 1 and 2. But, a perusal of the Times 1 and 2 data characteristics illustrates that there is little difference demographically between the respondents at Times 1 and 2.

3. Select survey questions were adapted from Weisburd *et al.* (2011).

References

Auletta, K. (2015), "Fixing broken windows", *The New Yorker*, September 7, pp. 38-45.

Braga, A., Papachristos, A. and Hureau, D. (2014), "The effects of hot spots policing on crime: an updated systematic review and meta-analysis", *Justice Quarterly*, Vol. 31 No. 4, pp. 633-663.

Byer, K. (2014), "Safer streets: police focus attention on homestead area", *Canton Repository*, August 23, pp. A1, A8.

Byer, K. (2016), "Building trust and respect", *Canton Repository*, March 20, pp. A1, A4, A5, A11.

Byer, K. (2017), "Extra police cruiser will hit the streets in Canton", *Canton Repository*, July 4, p. B1.

Campaign Zero (n.d.), "End broken windows policing", available at: www.joincampaignzero.org/brokenwindows (accessed July 27, 2016).

Canton Comprehensive Plan (2015), Canton, OH, August 9.

Canton Police Department (2015), "Homestead reported offenses", Canton Police Department, Canton, OH.

Canton Quarterly (2007), "Community policing is back in our neighborhoods", Vol. 1 No. 4, p. 9.

Canton Repository (1994), "Reaching the people", *Canton Repository*, July 11, p. B6.

Canton Repository (1999), "Request for police probe rejected", *Canton Repository*, October 20, p. A1.

Canton Repository (2000), "Sharpton accusations produce action", *Canton Repository*, June 25, p. A1.

Canton Repository (2005), "McKimm to Chavers: what rights violations?", *Canton Repository*, September 15, p. B1.

Canton Repository (2014), "Lessons from Ferguson, Canton", *Canton Repository*, August 24, p. C2.

Cordner, G. and Biebel, E.P. (2005), "Problem-oriented policing in practice", *Criminology and Public Policy*, Vol. 4 No. 2, pp. 167-170.

Criminal Justice Newsletter (1998), "Audit cites many problems in monitoring of COPS grants", *Criminal Justice Newsletter*, December 15, p. 4.

Gau, J.M. and Brunson, R.K. (2010), "Procedural justice and order maintenance policing: a study of inner-city young men's perceptions of police legitimacy", *Justice Quarterly*, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 266-273.

Goshay, C. (2015), "Malone forum takes on race, policing, and faith", *Canton Repository*, April 25.

Guyot, D (1979), "Bending granite: attempting to change the rank structure of police departments", *Journal of Police Science and Administration*, Vol. 7 No. 3, pp. 253-284.

Haberman, C., Groff, E., Ratcliffe, J. and Sorg, E. (2016), "Satisfaction with police in violent crime hot spots: using community surveys as a guide for selecting hot spots policing tactics", *Crime and Delinquency*, Vol. 62 No. 4, pp. 525-557.

Hall, M. (2016), "Residents air concerns on interactions with police", *Canton Repository*, August 10, p. B1.

Hillbish, J. (2007), "Call in the real police to discourage crime", *Canton Repository*, June 23, p. B1.

Hunter, R. and Barker, T. (1993), "BS and buzzwords: the new police operational style", *American Journal of Police*, Vol. 12 No. 3, pp. 157-168.

Jefferis, E., Flanner, D. and Wiles, T. (2005), *Canton Gang Assessment*, Kent State University, Kent, OH, July 31.

Jesilow, P., Meyer, J., Parsons, D. and Tegeler, W. (1998), "Evaluating problem-oriented policing: a quasi-experiment", *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*, Vol. 21 No. 3, pp. 449-464.

Kochel, T. (2011), "Constructing hot spots policing: unexamined consequences for disadvantaged populations and for police legitimacy", *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 350-374.

Lawver, B. (2015), "A proactive approach to policing", *Canton Repository*, August 23, p. C1.

Limbacher, J. (1989), "Ferruccio influence is targeted", *Akron Beacon-Journal*, February 1, p. B1.

Lord, V., Kuhns, J. and Friday, P. (2009), "Small city community policing and citizen satisfaction", *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*, Vol. 32 No. 4, pp. 574-594.

Lurigio, A.J. and Rosenbaum, D.P. (1994), "The impact of community policing on police personnel: a review of the literature", in Rosenbaum, D.P. (Ed.), *The Challenge of Community Policing*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 147-166.

Matas, A. (2016a), "$3.2M in City jobs on the line: personnel cuts urged", *Canton Repository*, January 11, p. A1.

Matas, A. (2016b), "Canton's budget: how to cut 5.1 million", *Canton Repository*, March 22, p. A1.

Community
policing in a
rust belt city

Mazerolle, L., Bennett, S., Davis, J., Sargeant, E. and Manning, M. (2013), *Legitimacy in Policing*, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Monsewicz, L. (2012), "Vacant homes invite problems", *Canton Repository*, September 30, available at: www.cantonrep.com/article/20120930/News/309309952

Morgan, C.D. (2015), *Weed and Seed. [email]*, October 16.

Moskos, P. (2008), *Cop in the Hood: My Year Policing Baltimore's Eastern District*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.

Nelson, R. (2014), "These are America's ten most dangerous small cities", March 26, available at: www. movoto.com/blog/top-ten/dangerous-small-cities/ (accessed June 16, 2016).

Newport, F. (2014), "Gallup review: black and white attitudes toward police", available at: www.gallup. com/poll/175088/gallup-review-black-white-attitudes-toward-police.aspx (accessed July 27, 2016).

Paoline, E.A. III (2003), "Taking stock: toward a richer understanding of police culture", *Journal of Criminal Justice*, Vol. 31 No. 3, pp. 199-214.

Ponder, R. (2015), "On the right path toward better police-community relations", *Canton Repository*, May 17, available at: www.cantonrep.com/article/20150517/OPINION/150519464

Ratcliffe, J.H., Groff, E.R., Sorg, E.T. and Haberman, C.P. (2015), "Citizens' reactions to hot spots policing: impacts on perceptions of crime, disorder, safety and police", *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, Vol. 11 No. 3, pp. 393-417.

Reisig, M. and Giacomazzi, A. (1998), "Citizen perceptions of community policing: are attitudes toward police important?", *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*, Vol. 21 No. 3, pp. 547-561.

Rink, M. (2014), "Canton police chief proposes new position to lead restructuring, new unit", *Canton Repository*, July 11, available at: www.cantonrep.com/article/20140611/News/140619788

Rosenbaum, D.P. (2006), "The limits of hot spots policing", in Weisburd, D. and Braga, A. (Eds), *Police Innovation: Contrasting Perspectives*, Cambridge University Press, New York, NY, pp. 245-263.

Siegel, J. (2011), "Kasich's budget slashes aid to local governments", *Columbus Dispatch*, March 15, available at: www.dispatch.com/article/20110315/NEWS/303159741

Skogan, W. (2004), "Community policing: common impediments to success", in Fridell, L. and Wycoff, M.A. (Eds), *Community Policing: The Past, Present, and Future*, Police Executive Research Forum, Washington, DC, pp. 159-168.

Sparrow, M. (2016), *Handcuffed: What Holds Policing Back, and the Keys to Reform*, Brookings Institution Press, Washington, DC.

Taylor, R.B. (2006), "Incivilities reduction policing, zero tolerance, and the retreat from coproduction: weak foundations and strong pressures", in Weisburd, D. and Braga, A. (Eds), *Police Innovation: Contrasting Perspectives*, Cambridge University Press, New York, NY, pp. 98-114.

Tonry, M. (2011), "Less imprisonment is no doubt a good thing: more policing is not", *Criminology and Public Policy*, Vol. 10 No. 1, pp. 137-152.

Tyler, T.R. and Fagan, J. (2008), "Legitimacy and cooperation: why do people help the police fight crime in their communities?", *Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law*, Vol. 6, pp. 231-275.

United States Senate (1984), *Profile of Organized Crime: Great Lakes Region*, GPO, Washington, DC.

Wang, R. (2009), "Family poverty in canton: worst among Ohio's biggest cities", *Canton Repository*, September 29, p. A1.

Wang, R. (2011), "Census shows sharp population decline in Canton", *Canton Repository*, March 9, available at: www.cantonrep.com/article/20110309/NEWS/303099892

Weisburd, D. (2011), "Shifting police from people to places", *Criminology & Public Policy*, Vol. 10 No. 1, pp. 153-163.

Weisburd, D. and Telep, C.W. (2014), "Hot spots policing: what we know and what we need to know", *Journal of Contemporary Violence*, Vol. 30 No. 2, pp. 200-220.

PIJPSM

Weisburd, D., Hinkle, J., Famega, C. and Ready, J. (2011), "The possible 'backfire' effects of hot spots policing", *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, Vol. 7 No. 4, pp. 297-320.

Wines, M. (2016), "Hamstrung Heroes in San Bernadino", *New York Times*, February 3, p. A11.

Wisconsin Gazette (2015), "Young gifted and black coalition: open letter to Madison Police Chief Michael Koval", Wisconsin Gazette, January 9, available at: www.wisconsingazette.com/news/young-gifted-and-black-coalition-open-letter-to-madison-police/article_8eaf50dd-19f4-5a4b-b584-9138fb47a92c.html

Wollan, M. (2012), "Mediation fails, pushing Stockton toward bankruptcy", *The New York Times*, June 28, p. A18.

Zeller, G. (2010), "Economic indicators", available at: www.georgezeller.com/qew0309.pdf (accessed December 16, 2016).

Corresponding author
Will Cooley can be contacted at: wcooley@walsh.edu