Community Policing: A Critical Analysis of a Small Police Department

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This study critically analyzed the community policing program and operational practices of patrol officers at a small police department in the southeastern United States. The department's mission statement, community policing policy and procedure, reports, and patrol officers' opinions were used to determine whether the community policing program was being implemented in accordance with an operational definition of community policing. A qualitative, holistic, case study design used participant observation to report and analyze interview questions asked of patrol officers. Coding and comparing specific community-policing-related words and phrases were the basis for analysis. Results revealed that while participants believed they were practicing community policing, they did not fully understand its philosophy or implementation.

Community policing is based on the concept that the police and community can work together to solve such problems as crime, fear of crime, social and physical disorder, and neighborhood decay. It shifts the way traditional police departments operate by decentralizing the rank and file and allowing police officers to identify and address core community problems instead of merely answering calls for service (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990). Because much federal funding assumes that a community policing model is in effect, it is important to evaluate purported community policing programs to determine whether they adhere to the tenets of community policing. To date, little research has done this.

Local law enforcement composes slightly more than three fourths of all officers employed in law enforcement. Local police departments employ 565,915 persons, while sheriff's departments account for 293,823 full-time employees (U.S. Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2007). While both police and sheriff's departments have implemented community policing, police departments make up the majority of law enforcement personnel in the United States. For this reason, it was appropriate to evaluate the efforts of a particular police department to implement community policing and the extent to which department personnel understand and practice community policing methods. Most studies of community policing have been case studies (Scott, Duffee, & Renauer, 2003), most of which have focused on large urban police departments (Falcone, Wells, & Weisheit, 2002). Accordingly, it was appropriate to focus on a smaller police department located in a rural setting.

This qualitative study critically analyzed the community policing program and operational practices of patrol officers in the police department of a small city (population 31,000) in the southeastern United States. The study used the department's mission statement, community policing policies and procedures, reports, and patrol officers' opinions to determine whether the implementation of the community policing program was in accordance with the operational definition of community policing. Results revealed that while participants believed they practice community policing, they did not fully understand its philosophy or proper implementation.

Community policing was initially introduced in the Centerville Police Department in 1992 by its then-current chief of police and became department-wide in 1999.[1] The department received national accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) in 1986 and has been reaccredited in 1991, 1996, 1999, and 2005. CALEA accreditation is voluntary and does not require a police department to accept community policing as a philosophy; however, it does demonstrate a department's desire to maintain a progressive approach to contemporary policing.

Objective

Community policing has become an accepted component of law enforcement throughout the United States. To help implement community policing, law enforcement entities sometimes apply for federal grants. Such applications must include descriptive statements of the applicant's community policing program. However, because the concept of community policing is subject to differing interpretations, it is important to specify what the concept means and to apply accepted criteria in evaluating whether a purported community policing program does in fact practice what it preaches.

The primary purpose of this case study was to assess the community policing program of a small rural police department in the southeastern United States and to determine the extent to which the department's patrol officers understood and practiced actual community policing. The results of this study will be useful in giving the chief of police of the organization under study an independent evaluation of the department's community policing program to better equip the organization in fulfilling its mission. Beyond that, this study will help other law enforcement agencies assess their community policing programs and improve their ability to serve the citizens in their jurisdiction.

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[1] Centerville is a pseudonym. All other information in this article about the police department under study is factual.

Methods

This qualitative study employed a holistic case study design. It was based on normative sponsorship theory and compared Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux's (1994) definition of community policing with practitioner assessments to determine whether the spirit of the department was in compliance with the definition of community policing and normative sponsorship theory. The study used three sources of data collection: "asking questions, making direct observations, and examining written records" (Maxfield & Babbie, 2005, pp. 210–211). Data collection depended on participant observation during scheduled ride-alongs authorized by written permission from the chief of police. As an independent observer, the researcher asked specific questions and observed policing behavior of participants. During the scheduled ride-alongs, the researcher made observations and notes to identify themes that emerged and drafted most documentation at the end of each ride-along. The researcher conducted further analysis once all five ride-alongs had been completed.

Sample

Participants represented a stratified random selection of five officers from the patrol division of the Centerville Police Department, which was accomplished by using badge numbers. A sample of five participants represented 15% percent of the total number of patrol officers (34) working the first or second shift. This number was deemed sufficient in light of Yin's (1994) observation that case studies do not need a minimum number of cases and that researchers must work with the situation that presents itself in each case. Stratifying the selection of officers by randomly selecting three officers, one from each category based on race (Caucasian, African American, and other) and two officers based on sex (one male and one female), provided for homogeneous subgroups within a subgroup (Trochim, 2001). To maintain participant anonymity, the study refers to them by letter: A, B, C, D, and E.

Patrol officers have the most frequent contact with the community on a daily basis. When a citizen calls the police department or 911, those calls for service are most frequently answered by patrol officers. The most appropriate participants, therefore, were members of the patrol division. The Centerville Police Department has three patrol shifts; participants were chosen from the first and second shifts only. The first shift is from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.; the second shift is from 3 p.m. to 1 a.m. The third shift is from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m., which would not have allowed sufficient public contact to evaluate community policing. In the course of a 10-hour ride-along, many opportunities for conversation arise; however, since the study's focus was to assess officers' responses to interview questions in light of six coded terms and to observe whether they practiced community policing, only those observations and conversations that were relevant to the study's purpose form the researcher's notes.

Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed the Centerville Police Department's mission statement, standard operating procedures, and other relevant departmental reports, including crime statistics, and compared them with Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux's definition of community policing (1994). Immediately after each ride-along, the researcher typed and analyzed participant interviews and compared community policing terms interviewees used with those Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux used (partnership, fear of crime, quality of life, department-wide commitment, problem solving, decentralization). The researcher coded and tallied all

relevant words and phrases and evaluated them in light of the literature on community policing, then conducted further analysis to determine whether the Centerville Police Department consistently practices community policing as conventionally defined.

Literature Review

While the literature is clear about the philosophy of community policing (Kelling, 1981; Trojanowicz, 1982; Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990; Wilson & Kelling, 1982), its application is often misinterpreted. The philosophy of community policing is supported by the theory of normative sponsorship, which describes the way a group (e.g., the police) must establish and legitimatize its intent as a facilitator of social control. For example, the police act in the best interests of the community to create a better social environment—to bridge the gap between the police and the community. Without community support, community policing will be unsuccessful (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990).

Normative sponsorship theory was developed by Sower, Holland, Tiedke, and Freeman (1957) in connection with research about community perceptions of public health. They argued that the efficacy of surveys eliciting such perceptions depends on community support (p. 18). The theory stipulates that a community program will be sponsored only if it is *normative*, "within the limits of established standards," to all persons and interest groups involved (Trojanowicz & Dixon, 1974, p. 332). Normative sponsorship theory was illustrated in Trojanowicz's (1982) foot patrol study in Flint, Michigan, which demonstrated that the police cannot make positive social change in a community without public support.

A major consideration when planning and implementing community development programs is understanding of how various interest groups can achieve consensus. According to Sower et al. (1957), communities that follow the tenets of normative sponsorship theory will have a higher likelihood of success. The philosophy of community policing postulates that the community and the police will work together in a concerted effort to solve community problems. The role of a community police officer is that of leader, facilitator, educator, and role model. It is the officer's job to work with and for the community to serve its needs based on personal observations and information that emerges from the community. Once the community and police department begin to develop a working relationship, both parties engage in the process of goal sharing, resulting in a congruent relationship (Trojanowicz & Dixon, 1974).

Although positive police-community relations by themselves do not constitute community policing, they are an important first step in establishing a working relationship with the community. According to proponents of community policing, every officer in a police department should be an efficient and effective public servant by establishing positive police-community relations. Such efforts are threatened if they are viewed as a "sell" instead of a sincere effort by the police to work with the community (Trojanowicz & Dixon, 1974). "Normative sponsorship theory postulates that programs that challenge the 'skeptics' through involvement, participation, and cooperative action will be more effective than programs that are conflict oriented" (Trojanowicz, 1972, p. 411). The police cannot be the only problem solvers and planners in a neighborhood. An effective police-community relations program requires a grassroots effort of the police and community working together to form a partnership and provide for a better quality of life. For this to occur, the police must receive leadership and direction from their department.

Community Policing

Community policing can be distinguished from the professional model, which casts police officers more squarely in the role of respondents to requests for service. In between calls for service, officers practicing community policing might randomly patrol their area in an effort to deter any crime by virtue of their physical presence (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990). The most thoroughgoing explication of community policing is that of Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1994), who list 10 principles:

1. *Philosophy and organizational strategy.* As consumers of police services, the people in a community deserve to be informed about the process of problem solving and change. This strategy describes the ways the police and community can forge partnerships and work together as coproducers of a better quality of life.

2. *Commitment to community empowerment.* Both the police and civilian personnel must be community problem solvers by working to identify and solve problems creatively with freedom and autonomy. With their understanding of the significance of problem solving and their ability to use their own discretion without being bogged down by bureaucracy, police can be more effective.

3. *Decentralized, personalized policing.* Officers assigned to a community-oriented policing unit must be able to provide direct assistance to the people on their beat without being dispatched to calls outside their beat.

4. *Immediate and long-term proactive problem solving.* The role of community-oriented policing officers is to act as generalists and provide continuous contact and support to law-abiding citizens. Working together with private citizens and other public organizations, each officer serves as an ombudsman for the community. The goal is to work together to improve the quality of life in the community not only by answering calls for service and making arrests but also by listening to the needs of the community and providing long-term solutions.

5. *Ethics, legality, responsibility, and trust.* Community policing implies a new way of thinking and acting. The police must provide a clear vision of hope for the welfare of the community as they work together for a better quality of life for all members; a mutual effort takes trust and respect from the community. Once the police have established themselves as a catalyst for the betterment of the community, they can ask citizens to take more responsibility for minor issues that constrain the police, enabling them to focus on long-term solutions for problems citizens have identified.

6. *Expanding the police mandate.* The police have a responsibility to educate citizens they serve about community policing. For the long-term betterment of the community, the police must use their resources in the most productive manner.

7. *Helping those with special needs.* By serving special and immediate needs in a community, police act as a catalyst to other programs often associated with community policing, such as crime prevention and public relations.

8. *Grassroots creativity and support.* Community policing is a grassroots effort by police to establish good human relations with the community. Its focus is on relationships and trust. Officers must be empowered to make short-term decisions and work to produce long-term results in creative ways, which makes them problem solvers and community generalists.

9. *Internal change.* The police must communicate the significant long-term effect they can have in a community to others in the department who are not otherwise assigned to a community policing unit. The idea is to incorporate all members of the department into the philosophy of community policing.

10. *Building for the future.* The police must legitimize their philosophy of community policing within the community in order to work as independent resource providers. Community policing is the process of continuously assessing the needs of the community and providing long-term solutions in partnership with law-abiding citizens.

According to Zhao, Lovrich, and Robinson (2001), because community policing has achieved considerable prominence in law enforcement circles, local police departments may feel pressure to espouse its principles even though they continue to operate according to a professional model of policing. Walker and Katz (2005) conclude that for many departments, community policing is little more than rhetoric. A disjuncture between stated philosophy and actual practice is perhaps troubling wherever it occurs, but the stakes are raised if money is involved, as it will be if a police department has received outside funding to implement community policing.

Centerville Police Department

The Centerville Police Department is one of four law enforcement agencies in its county, located in the southeastern United States. Its leadership includes a chief of police, deputy chief, and three bureau majors supervising administrative services, field operations, and support services. The community policing coordinator is located under the field operations bureau. Other parts of field operations include patrol division, selective enforcement, K-9 teams, reserve unit, SWAT team, DUI task force, hostage negotiation, bicycle patrol, wrecker services, and bomb squad. The police department employs 98 sworn officers and 13 nonsworn civilians. Of the 98 sworn officers, 13 are female and 85 are male. The medium age of sworn officers is 38 years. The racial makeup for sworn officers is 85% Caucasian, 9% African American, and 6% other.

The Centerville Police Department—through its mission statement, written policies and procedures, and public pronouncements—says it practices community policing. However, based on previous observation of the department, the researcher had reason to believe it operated much closer to a professional model. A disconnect between stated and actual behavior has several potential consequences. It could diminish the Centerville Police Department's effectiveness, and it could jeopardize the department's receipt of additional federal funding, which is based on implementing community policing.

The problem this study addressed is the possible disjuncture between community policing philosophy and practice in the Centerville Police Department. The study critically analyzed the community policing program and the practices of patrol officers in the department to determine the benefits from this program for the community. It considered the department's mission statement, community policing policies and procedures, reports, and patrol officers' opinions of their role to determine whether implementation of its program was in accordance with community policing as Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1994) define it. The study sought to determine whether patrol officers believe the following: (a) they work in concert with their mission statement and written policies; (b) the mission statement, policies, and procedures allow them to

deliver community policing to their community; and (c) the community gets the best value from its police as a result of the department's mission statement and community policing policies and procedures.

Results

Document Review

Document review was limited by scarcity of police department records. The researcher had access to all relevant department files, but relevant information was limited to the mission statement, standard operating procedures, and departmental crime statistics. Data analysis addressed the question of how well the Centerville Police Department implements community policing as defined by Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1994).

Document review indicated that community policing at the Centerville Police Department appears to have evolved from indirect community interest. In 1992, the local housing authority received a federal grant under the Public Housing Drug Elimination Program. It does not appear that the housing authority wanted the Centerville Police Department to establish a community policing program, specifically; rather, it was the housing authority's intent to provide more foot patrol officers to interact with residents and improve their quality of life. Nevertheless, this grant can be seen retrospectively as the first step toward what would later evolve into a department-wide effort to incorporate community policing.

The initial $250,000 grant provided funding for four police officers (one supervisor and three officers): $78,000 for law enforcement services and $172,000 for drug prevention. The money for law enforcement services paid for the officers' salaries, an office, and some equipment. The Centerville Police Department paid for all officer benefits, the use of a patrol car and gas, duty equipment, radio, and uniforms.

The housing authority was successful in securing a Public Housing Drug Elimination grant for 1992 but was unsuccessful in 1993. In 1993, the city of Centerville decided to incur the costs of the program in the hope that the housing authority would reapply and obtain full funding the next year. This action would allow the city to continue providing foot patrols and crime prevention programs without any disruption of services. In 1994, the housing authority reapplied and again received federal funding from the Public Housing Drug Elimination grant. From 1994 to 1998, the housing authority continued to contract with the Centerville Police Department for police officers to provide security services. In 1999, the housing authority decided to discontinue its contract with the Centerville Police Department and to employ off-duty police officers.

In 1999, the police department decided to incorporate the philosophy of community policing as a department-wide commitment to all residents. In the past, the department's efforts had been limited to the area served by the housing authority. The written record suggests that the police department decided that what its officers had been doing was worthwhile because of the positive interaction between officers and citizens. Therefore, they decided to make it a department- and community-wide commitment.

A need to change is often precipitated by rising crime rates. The Centerville Police Department keeps statistics on many different crimes, including nine index offenses—the most serious crimes. Monitoring these nine offenses allows the department to better understand the type and amount of crime. Table 1 reviews the nine index offenses two years before and after the Centerville Police Department implemented community policing in 1999.

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Table 1. *Centerville Police Department Incidents by Classification of Crimes,1997–2001*

Crime	1997	1998	Total (1997–1998)	1999[α]	2000	2001	Total (2000–2001)
Homicide	1	3	4	2	3	3	6
Forcible Rape	11	8	19	8	9	13	22
Robbery	95	69	164	55	68	51	119
Aggravated Assault	158	157	315	151	150	126	276
Aggravated Battery	366	368	734	375	404	263	667
Burglary	645	557	1,202	435	465	394	859
Theft (felony)	810	565	1,375	430	589	465	1,054
Auto Theft	173	169	342	123	107	157	264
Arson	25	18	43	19	14	13	27
Total	2,284	1,914	4,198	1,598	1,809	1,485	3,294

[α]The year community policing was implemented at the Centerville Police Department.

These figures indicate that the number of index offenses committed decreased after community policing implementation; however, there is no scientific way to determine whether implementing community policing had any effect on the reduction of crime in Centerville. Many variables could have caused the index offense to decrease after community policing implementation.

On March 25, 1999, the Centerville Police Department drafted a plan to address how it would implement the new community-oriented policing (COP) program. The plan detailed seven areas of importance: (a) COP implementation, (b) ways to inform the community, (c) duty of the first-line supervisor, (d) duty of management personnel—upper and midlevel, (e) responsibility of officers in the field, (f) COP coordinator responsibilities, and (g) training unit strategies. The department kicked off the COP program officially on April 17, 1999, at an event billed as COP Awareness Day. On May 8, 1999, the police department officially incorporated the COP program department-wide. On November 19, 2001, the police department further confirmed the community policing philosophy by adding it to the standard operating procedures manual.

The department generated two distinct community policing job descriptions, one for the initial COP supervisor assigned to the housing authority in 1992, the other for the current COP coordinator. Major duties of the COP supervisor included ensuring adherence to departmental rules, regulations, and policies; monitoring performance of officers in the field; patrolling all projects and assisting other units; enforcing laws and investigating crimes and accidents; responding to all major calls to assist and advise; attending departmental meetings, housing authority meetings, and community-oriented programs; and working with the Centerville Housing Authority and the drug elimination coordinator to improve housing project areas. The community-oriented policing coordinator is responsible for planning, developing, coordinating, and maintaining community relations programs as well as the timely submission of all reports.

The mission statement of the Centerville Police Department describes a department that is clearly committed to the community it serves. It articulates a sense of pride and professionalism for the services the department provides to its community and reinforces four of the six terms coded in this study: *partnership* (used twice), *quality of life* (twice), *department-wide commitment* (once), and *problem solving* (once). Two coded terms not found are *fear of crime* and *decentralization*.

The Centerville Police Department's policy and procedure manual uses the term *community relations* in three places. It mentions two of the six terms coded in this study: *partnership* (once) and *department-wide commitment* (once). The primary focus is on accountability. The COP coordinator is responsible for maintaining a database to monitor whether officers on first and second shifts complete a citizen contact sheet demonstrating that they initiated two nonenforcement contacts with citizens per shift. The COP coordinator compiles this information in a monthly report submitted to the chief, deputy chief, bureau majors, watch commanders, unit/division supervisors, and accreditation manager.

Interviews

In ride-along interviews, the research asked participants five questions.

1. *How do you define community policing?*

Participants emphasized interacting with citizens.

2. *Would you recommend any changes to the way community policing is being implemented at the Centerville Police Department?*

Participants mentioned having more individual contact with people and being assigned to more specific areas. One interviewee recommended doing away with the program: "It seems the community runs the police department. There should be more of an us versus them mentality."

3. *Do you think community policing is being used to its full potential at the Centerville Police Department?*

Most participants answered in the negative. Several complained that patrols leave insufficient time to knock on doors and get to know people.

4. *Do you think community policing is being implemented in accordance with the Centerville Police Department's mission statement and standard operating procedure?*

All but one participant answered affirmatively.

5. *What is the most significant problem the patrol officers of the Centerville Police Department encounter on a daily basis?*

Participants mentioned drug use, loitering, lack of respect from citizens, and lack of individual contact with people.

Responses to interview questions were coded for terms mentioned in Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux's (1994) definition of community policing. Participants used few of these terms (participation, partnership, fear of crime, quality of life, department-wide commitment, problem solving, decentralization). Of the five interviewees, two used the term *partnership* and the term *problem solving*.

Based on these results, it does not appear that officers of the Centerville Police Department practice community policing as defined by Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1994); however, the officers appear to believe they practice community policing to some degree because they are directed by their standard operating procedure to make two nonenforcement contacts a day. The coded terms alone should not serve as a definitive indicator of whether patrol officers practice community policing. These terms represent one of three methods of qualitative data collection methods: asking questions (Maxfield & Babbie, 2005). Asking

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questions, when combined with direct observations and examination of written documents, allows for converging lines of inquiry (Yin, 1994).

To further analyze the data, the researcher extracted words and phrases from each interview question response to establish a theme. Table 2 summarizes these excerpts.

In addition to interviewing five patrol officers of the Centerville Police Department, the researcher made observations and took notes during full-shift ride-alongs to see whether officers practice community policing in their natural setting. Scant evidence

Table 2. *Critical Analysis of Interview Questions*

Interview Questions	Participant A	Participant B	Participant C	Participant D	Participant E
1. How do you define community policing?	Interaction with citizens- getting their opinion and views of what needs to be done.	When patrol has contact with people.	Interaction with people.	Getting to know the community. To be more personable.	Interaction between the residents in the commu-nity and the police department.
2. Would you recommend any changes to the way community policing is being implemented at the Centerville Police Department?	Yes. More one-on-one contact with people in the community.	No.	Yes. Go back to the way it used to be by having a community policing unit.	Yes. We need to get to know the people in our community better.	No. I would do away with the whole thing. Go back to the way it used to be when the COP team would put people in jail. There should be more of an us vs. them mentality.
3. Do you think comm-unity policing is being used to its full potential at the Center-ville Police Department?	No. Need to make a better effort to talk to citizens more on a one on one basis.	Don't know.	No. Need to have more interaction with the people. This is where a smaller unit has more time to go door to door.	Yes. Although more could be done as a department. The Comm-unity Oriented Policing team concept worked better.	No. Most of us just put down contact information. We typically don't go door to door to get contact information.
4. Do you think comm-unity policing is being im-plemented in accordance with the Centerville Police Department's mission statement and standard operating procedure?	Yes. I know our admini-strative staff follows our policy and procedures.	Yes. I haven't heard any complaints from the community and our supervisors and admin-istrative staff are good about im-plementing policy.	Yes. Because we actually make citizen contacts, if we have time.	Yes.	No. Not real sure what it says.

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Table 2. (continued)
Critical Analysis of Interview Questions

5. What is the most significant problem the patrol officers of the Centerville Police Department encounter on a daily basis?	Lack of respect from citizens.	High activity of drugs, especially marijuana and metham-phetamine.	Not enough one-on-one time spent with citizens.	A lot of people in the public don't like us and have an attitude toward us.	Juveniles and respect, especially from younger kids.

Emerged that participants practice community policing. One incident stood out because it was an unusual example of engaging the public in community relations. One participant stopped at a rally sponsored by the housing authority in recognition of National Night Out, a nationally recognized crime prevention program. This event was coordinated by an officer who works part-time with the housing authority and who had sent a memorandum to the patrol division major requesting as much police participation as possible. The department responded by sending its mobile command center, motorcycle officers, and drug dog. The event was staffed primarily by officers who work part-time for the housing authority and officers from the selective enforcement unit. Patrol officers who work during that shift did not participate in the rally or subsequent parade. No other observation was made of patrol officers engaging in community policing.

All five of the participants appeared receptive to having an observer ride along with them. Collectively, they displayed an adherence to the professional model of policing rather than to community policing. They consistently responded to service calls from the dispatcher rather than proactively identifying problems and formulating solutions. Their primary sense of obligation seemed to be demonstrating accountability to the shift supervisor by turning in a daily log that reflected their response to dispatcher-initiated service calls.

Conclusion

The philosophy of community policing became well known in the law enforcement community when Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1990) published *Community Policing: A Contemporary Perspective*. In 1994, federal funds were made available through the United States Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (2005), under Title I of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, to hire 100,000 police officers in the United States. Many law enforcement agencies took advantage of the opportunity to receive federal money. The Centerville Police Department was not one of those agencies. In 1999, the department decided to incorporate the philosophy of community policing both department- and community-wide, after having a four-officer team work in local housing projects from 1992–1998.

Not receiving federal money also meant the Centerville Police Department did not receive any federal guidelines on how to implement community policing. The only information on community policing the officers received was from the deputy chief before an inservice training session. Participants invoked interaction with people in the commu-nity to describe what makes their efforts distinctive; however, interaction alone does not define community policing. Police officers inevitably interact with the community regard-less of whether they practice community policing.

The department appears to have implemented community policing because it believed in the efficacy of the four-officer team working in the housing project. Full agency commitment to community policing reflected a conviction that officers needed better communication with the community at large and not just in the housing project. The housing authority was not under any mandate to incorporate community policing; it simply wanted to provide a better quality of life for its residents. One of the most significant decisions the housing authority made was to assign officers to foot patrol, which allowed them to get to know the residents. Foot patrol removes officers from the patrol car, which serves as a barrier. In addition, officers in the housing project worked the same hours and days so residents knew when a particular officer was working.

The Centerville Police Department did not provide specific training for community policing, although the department's community-oriented policing plan stated that officers would receive training in crime prevention and community relations strategies. The plan did not call for any training in community policing itself. Lack of training appears to be the primary cause for the department's failure to incorporate conventional community policing in Centerville.

New Centerville Police Department hires are sent to one of 10 regional academies to complete 404 hours of training in a basic law enforcement training course. The current curriculum for that course includes a two-hour segment on community policing crime prevention techniques. In reality, this course should simply be called crime prevention techniques. Nowhere does the lesson plan define or discuss the philosophy of community policing. New officers coming into the police department receive no introduction to the philosophy of community policing while at the police academy nor when they arrive at the department.

The Centerville Police Department did initially seek community input by hosting a public awareness day. They have also administered four neighborhood surveys—two in 2001, one in 2002, and one in 2005. In addition, the accreditation manager administers one survey every three years to comply with the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies and the department's standard operating procedures. This Likert survey is administered to any person who comes in contact with the police department during a particular month. In 2001, 172 people received the questionnaire by mail. Twenty-seven replied, a response rate of 16%. Results revealed that 89% of the respondents found the service of Centerville Police Department officers to be average. A limitation of this survey is that it does not reflect the entire community; it targets only those who have had some form of documented contact with the police department.

The four neighborhood surveys were administered under the direction of the community-oriented policing coordinator. Both of the two 2001 neighborhood surveys—one administered in north Centerville and one in south Centerville—addressed quality-of-life issues in particular areas. The response for action reflects language associated with community policing, such as soliciting input from the community, assigning officers to particular areas, providing a mobile command center, working with building inspectors to enforce clean-it-or-lean-it ordinances, cooperating with the street department on drainage problems causing flooding, partnering with solid waste personnel to inform community members of trash pick-up dates, and teaming with public works to remove graffiti.

No follow-up analysis was implemented to determine whether any recommended actions were taken. The report said the timeline for implementation is contingent on the supervisor. While supervision is

necessary in law enforcement agencies, Thacher (2001) argued that a decentralized department with "minichiefs"—officers who regularly work in a particular area of the community, identify problems, and coordinate the appropriate corrective action—is more effective than a top-down agency.

In 2002, a neighborhood survey was administered because complaints were made to the city manager by residents of south Centerville about decaying quality of life. The city manager in turn sent a memorandum to the chief of police to establish a strategy of keeping him informed through monthly reports. The memorandum asked the chief to deal with drug dealing and loitering in the south Centerville area and provide a report of his findings. The police department complied with the city manager's request and drafted a plan of action, including a Likert survey with nine questions. The community-oriented policing coordinator directed the selective enforcement unit to collect surveys by going door to door asking citizens' opinions regarding the neighborhood. Some 188 surveys were collected between March 11 and March 15, 2002. In some cases, members of the unit filled out the questionnaire for a resident, which could have caused some bias in how citizens answered the questions. Nonetheless, survey respondents rated the nine categories in order of importance as follows: drugs, traffic, noise, trash, crime, residents, poor maintenance, unsupervised children, and vandalism/graffiti.

The department responded to the neighborhood survey findings by conducting a road check in the south Centerville area, where they arrested seven people and issued 60 citations. They seemed to believe that by conducting a road check they would reduce the amount of drugs, traffic, and noise in the south Centerville area. Road checks are a form of zero-tolerance policing, not community policing. This single incident does not indicate the Centerville Police Department does not conduct community policing, but it does imply that the department operates under the professional model of policing as opposed to community policing. The department appears to be more concerned with "dealing with the running of the organization rather than the impact of the organization on the community's problems" (Goldstein, 1990, p. 15). This attitude may further explain why the participants in this study overwhelmingly stated lack of respect by members of the community as one of patrol officers' most significant problems. The perceived lack of respect may hinder their attempts to discover the core social ills of their community and instead attack crime with a letter-of-the-law mentality.

The patrol officers of the Centerville Police Department do not appear to subscribe to normative sponsorship theory. Most community meetings are attended by administrative staff but not patrol officers. No evidence suggests any initial effort by the police department to solicit community support for a community policing program. It is the police department's job to work with and for the community to serve its needs. As stated previously, once the community and police department develop a working relationship, both parties can engage in the process of goal sharing and, as a result, form productive working relationships (Trojanowicz & Dixon, 1974).

The department does have a training unit that organizes Neighborhood Watch meetings for residents; however, officers from the training division host these meetings, not those officers who patrol areas where the meetings are held. Hosting Neighborhood Watch meetings is a good way for community members to voice their concerns to the police about ways to improve their quality of life, but these concerns should be discussed with officers who regularly work that particular area, thereby encouraging residents to confide in an officer with whom they have an established relationship.

The index crimes for the Centerville Police Department have dropped steadily since implementation of community policing (Table 1); however, the number of calls for police service has increased. In 1997, the department received 108,274 calls for service; in 1998, it received 110,737; in 1999, 113,346; in 2000, 123,653; and in 2001, it received 126,544 calls. The increase in the number of calls places the patrol officers in a position to have more interaction with the public and solve more social problems.

The patrol officers of the Centerville Police Department believe they practice community policing; however, they lack knowledge about the philosophy of community policing. Bailey found that only about 50% of chiefs and sheriffs in America understand what community policing means (cited in Walker & Katz, 2005).

Community policing, by its name, may seem simple to incorporate; however, as one investigates the philosophy of community policing, it becomes obvious that it is a complex set of ideas reduced to an umbrella term for scholars and practitioners to use in establishing relationships and preventing crime. The hallmark of community policing is that the police serve the community's best interests, not just use a buzzword to create better public relations. Hunter and Barker (1993) warned that "for many people community policing seeks to be all things to all people, with little meaningful content" (p. 157). Community policing should be used to identify and solve problems that are significant to the community, including preventing crime from occurring. Under the auspices of community policing, the police should shift gears and start to focus on why crime occurs, deploying proved crime-prevention methods to deter crime rather than continuing to respond to an escalating cycle of crime or a set of beliefs based on their own sense of what is best for the community.

The patrol officers of the Centerville Police Department appear to believe they practice community policing because they have a mission statement and a policy that they make two citizen contacts a day. But the officers in this study were not able to define community policing, probably because they have never been provided with any training in community policing, and, therefore, they cannot make an educated assessment of what community policing is and how it can benefit a community.

As noted above, only about half of police chiefs and sheriffs in the United States clearly understand what community policing is. Despite this fact, nearly everyone affirms that community policing is valuable, and most departments claim to practice it. This study confirmed that the gap between intentions and results, between vague familiarity and in-depth knowledge, is real. By tracing the history of community policing in the Centerville Police Department, this study shows how good intentions fail to be realized in the absence of follow-up, ongoing training, and consistent monitoring.

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