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ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE FIVE CITY REPLICATION OF  
THE DES MOINES COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS EXEMPLARY PROJECT\*

By

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ACQUISITIONS

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## INTRODUCTION

Several years ago the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice selected Des Moines, Iowa Community-Based Corrections Program as an exemplary program worthy of transfer to other local jurisdictions throughout the nation. The Des Moines program offered four alternatives to formal criminal justice processing: (1) release on own recognizance; (2) pre-trial supervised release; (3) probation, and (4) residence in a residential center which offers work and educational release.

In order to facilitate transfer and further evaluate the Des Moines program, L.E.A.A. selected five cities to replicate the Des Moines Community-Based Corrections Program. The cities chosen included the following: San Mateo, California, Salt Lake City, Utah, Duluth, Minnesota, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Orlando, Florida. Each city received a grant of \$250,000.00 to cover a twelve month period only.

An interdisciplinary research team from the School of Criminology at Florida State University was selected to evaluate each of the five cities' replication of the Des Moines program. The evaluation has several purposes including the following: to provide feedback on various project problems to each of the five jurisdictions; specification of the extent to which each jurisdiction is able to replicate the Des Moines program; and an explanation of variations between the jurisdictions in replication efforts.

The research design of the evaluation has four interrelated components: offender-based tracking analysis; program effectiveness assessment; community survey; and organizational analysis. The following discussion focuses upon the theoretical background and design of the organizational analysis component of the evaluation.

### ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

There are two general organizational models of the criminal justice system that have been employed in organizational studies of the criminal justice system. These include the rational goal model and the functional systems model.<sup>1</sup> Thompson (1967), in an attempt to differentiate the two models describes the different analytical approaches utilized by each. A "closed systems approach" which restricts the number of pertinent variables related to organizational policy and operations, and accentuates definiteness and certainty is employed by the rational goal model. In contrast, an "open systems approach" that stresses uncertainty both within the organization and throughout the external environment that influences and shapes the organization is assumed by the functional systems approach (Thompson, 1967: 4-7).

To elaborate, the rational goal model views formal organizations as instruments oriented toward the realization of expressed goals. Emphasis is placed upon the formally prescribed structure or official organizational blueprint. The imagery employed is that of a mechanical system in which organizational parts, components, or subunits are coordinated in such a

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<sup>1</sup> For further discussion see Etzioni, 1960.

way as to enhance the efficiency of the whole. Deviations from expressed organizational goals are assumed to result from error in calculation or ignorance. The rational goal model is exemplified generally in the work of Weber (1947) on the theory of bureaucracy, the scientific management school (i.e., Taylor, 1911), and the administrative management school (i.e., Gulick and Urwick, 1937). Criminal justice works utilizing the rational goal model include the studies of Goldstein (1960), Wald, et al. (1966), and Medalie (1968). These studies are characterized by a general framework which focuses upon formal criminal justice agency goals and the extent to which these justice agencies reach their formal goals.

In contrast, the functional systems model assumes that formally expressed goals are but one of several organizational concerns. Formal organizations have, in addition to their goals, basic needs related to organizational maintenance and expansion. Thus, functional systems studies place emphasis upon those adaptations organizations make to meet their needs which, in turn, may undermine their capacity to achieve their formal goals. Studies of the criminal justice system which have employed a functional systems approach include those of Sudnow (1965), Skolnick (1966), Blumberg, (1967), Packer (1968), Mileski (1971), and Cole (1973). These criminal justice studies, unlike the rational goal justice studies, go beyond the determination of discrepancy between everyday operations and formal goals. Specifically, functional systems studies of the criminal justice system seek explanations for observed goal versus operational discrepancies. Consideration is given to conflict, cooperation, and exchange for explaining criminal justice operations as well as formal goals, rules, and defined roles. As Feeley argues, in their explanatory attempts functional systems

analysts consistently emphasize "the working conditions, the systems of controls, incentives, and sanctions at the disposal of the various actors, and the larger environmental effects of the system" (1973: 414).<sup>1</sup>

Overall, there has emerged a consistent pattern of findings from the various organizational studies of the criminal justice system. Specifically, the findings point to a disparity between the everyday operation and mass processing of offenders by the criminal justice system and such formal jurisprudential concerns associated with adversary proceedings, the presumption of innocence and the relationship between the substantive law and criminal procedure. It is in their attempts to explain this goal versus operation discrepancy that organizational analysts have turned to a consideration of a number of classic issues involved in the administration of large scale organizations. Very generally this includes the ever present tendency within large scale organizations to drift away from formal goals and rules and to develop informal goals and procedures, to have conflict between line workers and staff, and to have the always present tension concerning product quality and production requirements. These issues have been conceptualized into a series of inter-organizational dimensions within the criminal justice system including formal goal versus operation adaptation, competition, cooperation, exchange, and conflict.

The present organizational analysis of the five city Des Moines Replication assumes the general perspective outlined above. The analysis is centered upon describing and assessing the problems encountered by the

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For a more detailed discussion of organizational studies of the criminal and juvenile justice systems see Blomberg, 1976.

local jurisdictions in their attempts to implement the Des Moines project. This will include specification of the project's developmental background and formal goals, political and/or bureaucratic obstacles involved in the project implementations, the training and recruiting of staff, levels of coordination or conflict between the various interrelated justice agencies and the Des Moines project, and how local justice staff were or were not familiarized with the Des Moines project's role and function in the local criminal justice system. Consideration of these areas should point to the varying levels of organization, cooperation, coordination, exchange, conflict, and adaptation within the local criminal justice systems during the implementation of the replication projects. It is assumed that marked differences in these areas will, in part, account for difference in replication form and/or success between the five city jurisdictions.

In summary, in the analysis of the Des Moines replications, the organizational component of this study will attempt to determine the extent to which offender classification and processing is dictated by both formal and informal policies. The assumption here is that offender classification and processing is not capricious or idiosyncratic but reflects patterned policies (formal and informal) of the various decision-makers within the criminal courts and related justice agencies. These formal and informal policies provide the determinants or basis for justice decision-making. The description, examination, and interpretation of these policies must be carried-out within the context of the related justice organizations and include the specific organizational opportunities, requirements, and constraints that are perceived by those involved in the decision-making process.

Therefore, the concern here is with the discovery of the rationality or functional-basis of internal organizational decision-making.

This analysis assumes that decisions based on internal organizational rationality are the product of the "common-sense" constructs of individual justice decision-makers. This common-sense definition of reality is determined primarily by the individuals' perceptions of their roles within the organization, together with the requirements and constraints of fulfilling those roles. This assumption dictates a twofold methodological strategy in which there is (1) an examination of the daily activities of decision-makers, and (2) a specification and interpretation of the values and premises upon which they base their activities and decisions.

### METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The methodological approach to be used in the organizational analysis is based upon the assumption that central variables in organizational operations are the perceptions of the organizational personnel. Understanding of how organizations come to define, classify, and process persons requires comprehension of the perceptions and beliefs of those organizational personnel involved in the decision-making process. In short, it is of central importance for the researcher to take the role of the other, in this case, decision-makers in criminal justice organizations.

This methodological approach is referred to by several names. It has been termed qualitative research, participant observation, the action perspective, field research, ethnomethodology, and phenomenological sociology.

All of these approaches share an emphasis upon actual observation and viewing behavior as a process within an ongoing social organization. Further, there is a de-emphasis upon the detached role of the researcher and the importance of quantitative data that does not correspond with observed social reality. Qualitative research in criminal justice de-emphasizes the importance of studying only "static facts" such as rates of occurrence and instead focuses upon the examination of the ongoing social action and ~~organizational~~ organizational processes that produce these rates of occurrence.

Among the strongest influences upon the qualitative research tradition have been the works of Schutz (1943; 1945; and 1953). It was his contention that to understand observed social action is to view it in terms of the common-sense interpretations used by the members of the group or organization producing the social action.

As earlier mentioned, the determination of common-sense interpretations by organizational personnel requires emphasis upon the practical and everyday decisions that are constantly being made. How do organizational personnel distinguish and order the vast number of cases they deal with? What connection is there between the informal or common-sense offender categories and formal organizational offender categories? These questions cannot be answered without comprehension of the rationality of organizational decision-making within criminal justice agencies.

Therefore, in the attempt to establish the rationality of criminal justice decision-making this study will rely, in part, upon qualitative techniques. However, it is assumed that if this form of data is sufficient

and accurate it will both reflect this study's codified data concerning the offender-based tracking flows and provide an interpretation of the offender flows as well. The techniques to be used will include observation and interviews (which are compiled and reported in bimonthly narratives), a questionnaire to be administered in the early and later stages of the replications and in-depth interviews with project and related justice agency personnel. It is clear that the gathering of direct proof pertaining to the explanation of decision-making within an organizational setting is limited. Therefore, reliance must be given to a number of indirect or partial indicators which together can provide accurate interpretation. In particular, reliability should not be a major issue given the comparative nature of the evaluation and the use of a number of interrelated data collection techniques which will enable a series of data cross-checks.

### DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

The organizational analysis will be based on several data sources. The general sources include twelve month project narratives for each city, criminal justice surveys, and in-depth interviews (see Appendices 1, 2, and 3). At present we are receiving a variety of general information from each of the Des Moines Replication sites. These materials are being organized into files for each jurisdiction. These general materials (i.e., bi-monthly narratives from our area directors, miscellaneous documents related to the project, etc.) will provide a basis for a case history or twelve month narrative of each jurisdiction's replication of the Des Moines project. In addition, we have begun administering the first wave of the criminal justice personnel survey. The survey will be administered to all justice

agency personnel within each jurisdiction (i.e., police, court, corrections, and Des Moines project) that have either direct or indirect Des Moines project contact or familiarity. Following the second wave (eleven to twelve months) administering of the survey, in-depth interviews with selected police, court corrections, and Des Moines project personnel will be conducted.

### IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSION

Normatively speaking,, operationalization of the Des Moines community correctional alternatives should result in decreased reliance on traditional methods of court processing for selected offenders. From an organizational viewpoint it could be expected that the incorporation of the Des Moines alternatives would result in a client-drawing or "program magnet phenomenon." Certainly it is not obvious where the clients for the community-based alternatives will be drawn from. It may well be that a portion of the clients for the community alternatives will be displaced or "diverted" from traditional criminal justice processing. Another method of gaining clients, however, is the discovery of "new" or different clients previously viewed not in need of criminal justice handling. At issue here is that the previously operating programs (traditional criminal justice agencies) do not readily relinquish their domain and clientele. Instead, the tendency involved in the incorporation of innovative or alternative justice programs is a dual process of limited client displacement from previously operating programs and the discovery of new clients viewed appropriate for the new alternatives. The result is that both the new programs are provided a clientele and previously operating programs retain clients for continued operation. This process of client displacement and new client discovery can be measured by

comparison of the frequency of client contacts and patterns of correctional sanctions statistically evident before and after implementation of community corrections programs (development of a before and after community correction sanction gradient for local jurisdictions).

Therefore, this can be partially addressed via the offender-based tracking analysis, however, in terms of explanation we will investigate this aspect more directly through observation and interviews with selected personnel in all the relevant justice agencies. Regular observation of community corrections in action (i.e., from arrest to a community correction disposition and subsequent handling) will indicate particular characteristics, processes, client-handling patterns, etc. Follow-up interviews with those personnel observed will record their perspective and explanation of their actions. In connection to this form of observation research, Schutz (1953) suggests that the action of human beings is based on a series of common-sense constructs that they have preselected and preinterpreted. It is these common-sense constructs which determine their behavior by motivating it. Our attempt here will be aimed at discovering and describing how various justice agency personnel have interpreted community corrections and subsequently respond and act toward it in terms of client handling.

Finally, it is assumed for a variety of untested assumptions that the implementation of community corrections will de-institutionalize, de-criminalize, and generally increase the quality and effectiveness of the criminal justice system. The glaring failure of the juvenile court movement with its attempt to de-institutionalize and de-criminalize youth should stimulate a critical or cautious approach to the community corrections trend.

It could be that community corrections will have a number of unanticipated consequences and outcomes. Certainly without systematic evidence that indicates specific results and outcomes of community corrections, such programs are likely to continue proliferating. The Des Moines Replication evaluation should provide a substantial contribution to our understanding of the impact of community corrections.

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THE FIVE CONCEPTUAL AREAS OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PERSONNEL SURVEY

- PART I            ORIENTATION TO CRIME CONTROL (TREATMENT AND/OR PUNISHMENT)
- PART II           INTER-AGENCY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE DES MOINES PROJECT AND  
OTHER LOCAL JUSTICE AGENCIES
- PART III          INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN THE DES MOINES PROJECT AND OTHER  
LOCAL JUSTICE AGENCIES
- PART IV          EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE DES MOINES PROJECT AND OTHER LOCAL  
JUSTICE AGENCIES
- PART V           DES MOINES PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

APPENDIX 2

DES MOINES REPLICATION PROJECT  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE PERSONNEL SURVEY

PART I

AGENCY \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

CIRCLE ONE

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply
1. Punishment is a highly effective way to deal with crime.	1	2	3	4	5	9
2. Treatment is a highly effective way to deal with crime	1	2	3	4	5	9
3. The Des Moines Replication Project emphasizes a punishment approach to crime	1	2	3	4	5	9
4. The Des Moines Replication Project emphasizes a treatment approach to crime	1	2	3	4	5	9
5. The Des Moines Replication Project has resulted in more effective justice for selected adult offenders.	1	2	3	4	5	9
6. In what ways has the Des Moines Replication Project resulted in any changes in your agency and the criminal justice system as a whole? (Use back of page if necessary)						

## PART II

### CIRCLE ONE

- |   | Strongly<br>Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly<br>Disagree | Does Not<br>Apply |
|---|-------------------|-------|---------|----------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Representatives from this agency have the ability to influence decisions and policies of the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project.                        | 1                 | 2     | 3       | 4        | 5                    | 9                 |
| 2. This agency openly shares information with the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project.  | 1                 | 2     | 3       | 4        | 5                    | 9                 |
| 3. The various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project openly share information with this agency.   | 1                 | 2     | 3       | 4        | 5                    | 9                 |
| 4. The various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project follow through on agreements reached with this agency.   | 1                 | 2     | 3       | 4        | 5                    | 9                 |
| 5. What are the major points of agreement and disagreement between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project? (Use back of page if necessary) |                   |       |         |          |                      |                   |

## PART III

### CIRCLE ONE

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply
1. The police are instrumental in helping the Des Moines Replication Project meet its formal goals.	1	2	3	4	5	9
2. The courts are instrumental in helping the Des Moines Replication Project meet its formal goals.	1	2	3	4	5	9
3. Probation is instrumental in helping the Des Moines Replication Project meet its formal goals.	1	2	3	4	5	9
4. Local government is instrumental in helping the Des Moines Replication Project meet its formal goals.	1	2	3	4	5	9
5. The police regularly refer clients to the Des Moines Replication Programs.	1	2	3	4	5	9
6. The court regularly refers clients to the Des Moines Replication Programs.	1	2	3	4	5	9
7. Probation regularly refers clients to the Des Moines Replication Programs.	1	2	3	4	5	9
8. List any joint agreements (formal or informal) between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project. (Use back of page if necessary)						

## PART IV

### CIRCLE ONE

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply
1. This agency is in regular contact with the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project.	1	2	3	4	5	9
2. A usual reason for contact between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project relates to client matters.	1	2	3	4	5	9
3. Most contact between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project is written.	1	2	3	4	5	9
4. Communication between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project is satisfactory.	1	2	3	4	5	9
5. Contacts between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project follow set procedures.	1	2	3	4	5	9
6. Contacts between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project are productive.	1	2	3	4	5	9
7. Contacts between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project are deceptive.	1	2	3	4	5	9
8. Contacts between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project are flexible.	1	2	3	4	5	9
9. Contact between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project are guarded.	1	2	3	4	5	9

PART IV (CONT.)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply
10. Contacts between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication project are a consequence of mutual problems and clientele.	1	2	3	4	5	9
11. Contacts between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project are a consequence of a formal contact.	1	2	3	4	5	9
12. Contacts between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project are a consequence of a statute or ordinance requiring a relationship between us.	1	2	3	4	5	9
13. Contacts between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project are a consequence of joint membership on a committee or council.	1	2	3	4	5	9
14. This agency benefits from exchange with the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project.	1	2	3	4	5	9
15. The various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project benefit from exchange with this agency	1	2	3	4	5	9
16. This agency imposes restrictions upon its referrals to the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project.	1	2	3	4	5	9
17. The various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project make referrals to this agency.	1	2	3	4	5	9
18. The various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project impose restrictions upon the referrals they make to this agency.	1	2	3	4	5	9
19. Describe the number and type of referrals made (a) by this agency to the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project and (b) by the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project to this agency. (Use back of page if necessary)						

PART V

CIRCLE ONE

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply
1. The various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project are well coordinated.	1	2	3	4	5	9
2. The adult services within the community are well coordinated.	1	2	3	4	5	9
3. Adult services programs today are more efficient than they were a year ago.	1	2	3	4	5	9
4. The various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project include feedback concerning client progress.	1	2	3	4	5	9
5. The various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project are regularly reviewed for effectiveness.	1	2	3	4	5	9
6. The relations between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project are facilitative.	1	2	3	4	5	9
7. The relations between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication project are competitive.	1	2	3	4	5	9
8. Cite examples of cooperation and resistance between this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project that affect the goals of both this agency and the various parts of the Des Moines Replication Project. (Use back of page if necessary)						

## DES MOINES REPLICATION PROJECT

### IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW OF DES MOINES PROJECT AND RELATED JUSTICE AGENCY PERSONNEL

#### I. INTRODUCTION

1. Each informant should be very briefly familiarized with (1) the Des Moines Community-Based Corrections Program, (2) L.E.A.A.'s attempt to transfer the program to other jurisdictions by offering replication funding, and (3) Florida State's evaluation of the 5-city replication efforts. You can follow the introductory comments made on the second-wave organizational questionnaire.
2. A very brief summary should be made of your jurisdiction's Des Moines Project goals and objectives as drawn from the original grant proposal.

#### II. INFORMANT ANONYMITY AND FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE DES MOINES PROJECT.

1. Following the introductory comments each informant should be advised that their names will remain anonymous and that their responses will only be seen by the Florida State Research Team. However, in the event that the interview responses are used in various research reports or publications, it will be necessary to identify the agency and general function of the informant.
2. The informant's position and extent of formal or informal contact with the Des Moines Project should be specified.

#### III. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT, OPERATION, IMPACT, AND FUTURE.

1. (a) Why was this jurisdiction interested in attempting to replicate the Des Moines Project?  
(b) Was it anticipated that the Des Moines Replication would result in a specific alternative court services agency?  
(c) If it was not anticipated that the Des Moines Project would result in an alternative court services agency, what was anticipated? Explain.
2. (a) What have been the primary accomplishments of the Des Moines Project?  
(b) Specific comments should be sought relating to the accomplishments of the OR, SR, Probation, and Residential Care Program components.
3. (a) What have been the primary problems, difficulties, or setbacks experienced by the Des Moines Project?

- (b) Specific comments should be sought relating to any problems or difficulties of the OR, SR, Probation, or Residential Care Program components.
4. (a) Overall, how do you account for or explain the success and/or failure of the Des Moines Project?
- (b) What were the political obstacles or centers of support that influenced the Des Moines Project's operation?
- (c) Can you specify any agreements concerning training and preparation, or degrees of cooperation and exchange between the Des Moines Project and related criminal justice agencies and personnel?
- (d) Can you specify any disagreements and conflicts between the Des Moines Project and related criminal justice agencies and personnel?
5. Overall, how has this jurisdiction modified or adapted its original Des Moines Project objectives?
6. (a) Will the Des Moines Program be retained either as a whole or some other form by this jurisdiction?
- (b) If the program will be retained in some form, explain why?
- (c) If the program will not be retained, explain why?



**END**