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Modern Policing and the Control of Illegal Drugs:

Testing New Strategies in Two American Cities

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Modern Policing and the Control of Illegal Drugs:

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by

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Message

Drug trafficking and abuse, and the crime and violence that accompany it, have reached such grave proportions in urban America that it has become a cliche to refer to it as a national epidemic. While there is some evidence that drug use is declining among the middle and upper classes, there is little to convince us that the same is true in our inner cities.

Recognizing the severity of the problem, the National Institute of Justice funded a Police Foundation study to evaluate drug control programs in two cities—Oakland, California, and Birmingham, Alabama. Each program combined various enforcement strategies with community policing techniques. The evaluation results are significant and reinforce knowledge previously acquired.

The landmark Newark and Houston fear reduction studies of the mid-1980's, also conducted by the Police Foundation, found that an increase in police visibility and interaction with the public had a number of salutary effects on the community. The Oakland and Birmingham studies that follow add to our understanding of community policing and our ability to control crime, as well as to our understanding of drug traffic control. They show, for instance, that special enforcement strategies combined with increased contact with the citizens of a community can (1) reduce the number of some types of reported crime, (2) reduce citizen fear of crime, and (3) enhance public perception of police services.

Significantly, these results were obtained with relatively limited application of community policing techniques. Indeed, the philosophy of community policing, to be truly tested, must be fully integrated with traditional policing strategies and police value systems. Although pioneering efforts have helped community policing gain a foothold in some of the Nation's more progressive police departments, much work remains to be done. The findings of the Oakland and Birmingham studies give us cause to hope that we are on the right track. More research on the subject and greater commitment to implementation strategies by the Nation's police, I believe, will lead us to the improved policing, reduction in crime, and better quality of life suggested by our research findings.

Hubert Williams
President
Police Foundation

Foreword

Throughout the United States, clamping down on street drug trafficking is a major police priority. Law enforcement officials know that flagrant drug markets on our cities' streets openly challenge their authority and diminish the public's sense of security and confidence in police.

The National Institute of Justice, working with police officials and their professional organizations, is engaged in comprehensive research to learn which enforcement strategies and tactics have an impact on street drug trafficking and on the fear residents feel when neighborhood streets are overtaken by drug dealers.

This study provides an indepth examination of the way two large police departments have dealt with the problems of drug trafficking and drug-related crime. Police in Oakland, California, and Birmingham, Alabama, employed special task forces for identifying and arresting drug traffickers and also incorporated, to a limited extent, some of the techniques of community policing. The findings highlight the potential of police-citizen contacts both in stemming crime and encouraging positive attitudes toward police.

The National Institute of Justice is committed to evaluations such as the one presented here. A number of evaluations of community policing are now under way, and NIJ expects that its comprehensive research on community policing will fill in some of the gaps noted in this report and assist other police departments in considering options best suited to their communities.

NIJ commends the able work of the Police Foundation and the police departments of Oakland and Birmingham, whose cooperation was essential to the success of the research effort. NIJ will continue this close cooperation with the law enforcement community to investigate practical new approaches to crime control.

Charles B. DeWitt
Director
National Institute of Justice

Acknowledgments

During the life of the two research projects covered in this report, we have had the good fortune to work with several individuals from a variety of backgrounds and environments. Police officers, detectives, crime analysts, administrators, interviewers, citizens in Oakland and Birmingham, researchers, government officials, and friends and relatives all played important roles in our work. We thank them all.

There are several persons we wish to acknowledge by name. They helped us in various ways, and many of them will no doubt remain in our minds and in our "war" stories for years to come.

Charles B. DeWitt, Director of the National Institute of Justice, prodded the lead author to publish this monograph. Former Director James K. Stewart also encouraged the completion of the final report. We greatly appreciated his guidance, support, insight, and kinship with policing and drug enforcement activities. Our Program Manager, Dr. Bernard Gropper, was exceedingly patient with us and understood the administrative problems that come with individuals-who-change-jobs.

We would like to thank the officers of the Oakland and Birmingham Police Departments who shared their knowledge, expertise, and wisdom with us. Chief George Hart of the Oakland Police Department and Chief Arthur Deutcsh of the Birmingham Police Department allowed us complete and unrestricted access to their departments. Their command staffs gave us full cooperation throughout the 2 years of these projects.

In Oakland, Cpt. Steve Jensen, Lt. Greg Lowe, Lt. Larry Newman, Sgt. Frank Moschetti, and Sgt. Barney Rivera were always available for informal chats and discussions. Officers Mike Cefalu, Ron Davis, Gus Galindo, Kevin O'Rourke, Shawn Thurman, and Frank Uu were the original members of Special Duty Unit 3 who patiently put up with our research efforts. Police Services Technician Sunshine Palmese deserves special thanks for her work on the door-to-door surveys.

In Birmingham, Lt. Bob Berry and Officer Roger Thorne gave us everything we needed in a quiet, low-key manner. Their thought-provoking insights about drug control strategies and their care in developing Birmingham's program left us with lasting impressions. Cpt. Dennis Blass led the effort to instill community policing within his precinct. His officers, notably, Richard Davis, David Weir, and Carl Washington, worked diligently on the surveys in Gate City.

Our research assistants at each site served as our eyes and ears while we worked in Washington. Their accomplishments were tremendous. Mary Gronert (Oakland) and Cecilia Saulters (Birmingham) went on raids with the officers routinely; collected, keypunched, and analyzed data continuously; and wrote reports precisely. Their contributions to this report should not be overlooked.

Other contributors worked quietly in the background. At the Police Foundation, Michael Whalen and Peter McMahon wrote computer programs, cleaned the data, and conducted preliminary analysis. Hattie Matthews kept track of our citizen interviews and ably assisted with interviewer training. At the National Institute of Justice, Mike Wilson's assistance in the latter stages of the analysis proved to be extremely constructive.

The support of these individuals and their respective organizations was invaluable. We appreciate and applaud their efforts to help us put this report together. We are, of course, solely responsible for any errors that may arise in the text.

Craig D. Uchida
Brian Forst
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Chapter 1: Overview

Two fairly large U.S. cities—Oakland, California, and Birmingham, Alabama—recently served as testing grounds for the effectiveness of different models of policing to control street drug trafficking. In 1987, the Oakland and Birmingham Police Departments received Federal funds for this purpose. Soon afterward, the National Institute of Justice commissioned the Police Foundation to evaluate the effort. The Police Foundation worked closely with officials in the Oakland and Birmingham Police Departments to ensure that the resources made available to each department under the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) grants would make possible a systematic assessment of the respective programs' effectiveness.

For a number of reasons, Oakland and Birmingham were selected from the seven sites that received BJA funding. Both cities had planned strategies that lent themselves readily to evaluation under a field experiment. Both are moderately large cities, Birmingham having about 280,000 residents, Oakland 340,000. The population of each city is about 50 percent black and 40 percent white, and both cities have black mayors and white police chiefs (Chief George Hart in Oakland and Chief Arthur Deutcsh in Birmingham). Both employ about 600 sworn officers.

The two cities, however, are quite different in other significant aspects. In particular, Oakland's crime rates and drug problems are among the worst in the country, while Birmingham's are moderate for cities with populations of 250,000. Both cities have a cocaine problem, although Oakland's is more serious and involves "crack." Birmingham, on the other hand, has a more serious problem with powder cocaine and Dilaudid, a synthetic approximation of heroin.

While the analogy is imperfect, the pairing of Oakland and Birmingham in this study is reminiscent of the pairing of Newark and Houston in the study on reducing the fear of crime conducted by the Police Foundation for the National Institute of Justice some 5 years earlier.[1]

This monograph describes, analyzes, and evaluates each department's attempts to control street-level drug trafficking.

In Oakland, the police employed Special Duty Unit 3, a corps of hand-picked, specially trained officers who engaged in undercover buy-and-bust operations, aggressive patrol, and motor vehicle stops. As part of the

evaluation effort, the department also reluctantly agreed to try a door-to-door approach aimed at enlisting residents of the community to join with the police to control the retail trade of illegal drugs on the street.

In Birmingham, to counter the existing drug problem, the department embarked on a multiphased program, known as Operation 'Caine Break, aimed at street-level drug traffickers. The narcotics division targeted buyers and sellers through buy-busts and sting operations. A second component involved a captain in one precinct (of four) who devoted a group of his patrol officers to a community-oriented policing program.

In both cities, community policing was limited to employing different techniques rather than to a philosophical change within the police agencies. Members of the police agencies expressed a desire to explore the possibilities of community policing but did not fully embrace its fundamental aspects such as value structures, training, reallocation of patrol, and other new policies.[2]

The community-oriented programs in Oakland and Birmingham involved the use of "directed police-citizen contacts." This strategy involved a survey of residents within particular beats. Police went "door-to-door" with a questionnaire, inquiring about major problems that residents faced in their neighborhoods. Results of the surveys, it was hoped, would assist the police in identifying and solving problems of direct concern to residents.

In both cities, the evaluation consisted of a pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design. In Oakland, the deployment of two aspects of the street drug trafficking prevention program—Special Duty Unit 3 and the door-to-door interviews—was structured so that each aspect could be evaluated within a 6-month field experiment in 4 of the city's 35 beats.[3] Similarly, in Birmingham, three beats were selected for the evaluation of Operation 'Caine Break and the door-to-door contacts by police. At both sites, the selected beats were noncontiguous and dispersed to avoid problems of contamination of effects in the experiment.

The analysis used multiple indicators, including observational information, official data, interviews, and newspaper reports.

Findings

Overall, the study found these results in the two cities:

Oakland

- Notable declines took place in reported crimes of violence in the beats that received door-to-door contact, either alone or with special enforcement.
- In the areas where both treatments took place, burglaries increased about 5 percent, still less than the citywide increase of about 11 percent.
- In the beats that received the door-to-door component only, violent crimes declined, but the number of burglaries did not appear to be affected.
- The special drug enforcement unit helped reduce violent crimes and burglaries, but not robberies.
- The coordinated work of the special enforcement officers and officers who conducted the citizen interviews produced good results. The presence of extra officers, whether carrying a clipboard, stopping and questioning individuals, or making surprise busts, appeared to have an impact on reported crime.
- Perceptions that drug trafficking was a problem declined. On the beats that received special enforcement only and in the area that experienced *both* the special enforcement and the door-to-door interviews, residents perceived that police presence lessened the drug problem. In the area where the door-to-door interviews took place, residents were more satisfied with the way police handled neighborhood problems. Residents in all three treatment areas said they felt safer than before.

Birmingham

- Narcotics detectives achieved success in terms of drug arrests, positive media coverage regarding Operation 'Caine Break, and possibly a reduction in property crime as well.
- In the neighborhood where a police substation was established, residents reported that they were more satisfied with the way police handled neighborhood problems, worked with residents and victims, and kept order in the neighborhood.
- In the area with the door-to-door interviews, there was a decline in reported homicides, rape, assault, and robbery.
- Residents who participated in the door-to-door interviews thought that police were more responsive to community concerns and that police were spending more time in their neighborhood.

- Residents in the three areas did not change their perceptions of drug trafficking as a problem.

Recommendations

The following approaches are recommended for police, based on these findings:

- Carefully supervised special narcotics units should use high-visibility patrol and buy-busts as a means to control street-level drug trafficking in areas where it is prevalent.
- Special narcotics enforcement units should work with community police officers to inform citizens about their work and to gather more information on community concerns.
- Police substations should be established to bring the police closer to neighborhoods with high levels of drug activity.
- Door-to-door contacts should be conducted in areas where high levels of crime and drug activity occur so officers can be visible to residents and supportive of them.
- Police should use video equipment in sting operations to preclude charges of entrapment and respond to other constitutional issues.
- Community policing should be tested and evaluated further, with a stronger commitment by police and with a view that the community is a partner in controlling crime and drug trafficking.

Notes

1. Antony Pate et al. *Reducing Fear of Crime in Houston and Newark*, Washington, D.C.: Police Foundation, 1986. While two sites are by no means sufficient to support the claim of generalizability, two are clearly better than one. In the present case, the differences in the programs themselves across the two sites are enormous, arguably greater than they were with Houston and Newark.

2. These efforts are more fully described in Craig D. Uchida, Brian Forst, Sampson Annan, "Modern Policing and the Control of Illegal Drugs: Testing New Strategies in Two American Cities," Final Report, unpublished manuscript, Police Foundation, 1990.

3. At both sites, beats were matched and selected based on census data, crime data, drug arrests, and police officer input. For more details on target selection see, Uchida et al., *supra* note 2.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Illicit drug trafficking has been a serious problem in Oakland for more than a decade. Drug-related homicides have created an aura of fear in some neighborhoods. About 27 percent of the homicides committed in Oakland in 1984 were believed to be drug-related. In 1987, nearly half of the 114 homicides were drug-related. Crack cocaine emerged at this time, with sellers and buyers openly dealing crack in residential neighborhoods across the city. Drug dealers had become more blatant in their attempts to sell their wares, heightening fear among law-abiding citizens. Controlling street-level drug trafficking became much harder for the police department.

Understaffing at the Oakland Police Department compounded these difficulties. Oakland's ratio of officers to resident population was about 35 percent lower than other cities with populations of more than 250,000. It was 1.8 per thousand residents versus 2.8 per thousand nationally. More important, compared to 10 other cities of similar size, the Oakland Police Department ranked among the top 5 in reported homicides, robberies, and burglaries per officer. Oakland was the only department that was in the top 10 in all three serious crime categories. Table 1 shows the ranking of Oakland compared to other cities for 1985 and 1986.

Table 1

Murders, Robberies, and Burglaries per 100 Officers, 1985–86 Averages, Top 10 Ranking Cities

Murders per 100 officers			Robberies per 100 officers			Burglaries per 100 officers		
1.	Fort Worth	20.0	**1.**	**Oakland**	**566.9**	1.	Fresno	2,362.4
2.	**Oakland**	**17.9**	2.	Miami	551.1	2.	Portland	2,287.9
3.	Dallas	14.5	3.	Tampa	522.4	3.	Oklahoma City	2,162.7
4.	Birmingham	14.4	4.	Newark	498.5	4.	Fort Worth	2,158.2
5.	Fresno	13.6	5.	Portland	492.3	**5.**	**Oakland**	**1,923.0**
6.	Miami	13.4	6.	Memphis	472.8	6.	Sacramento	1,896.1
7.	Detroit	13.3	7.	Los Angeles	413.4	7.	Tampa	1,896.0
8.	New Orleans	13.1	8.	Sacramento	403.2	8.	San Antonio	1,855.2
9.	Atlanta	12.7	9.	Long Beach	394.9	9.	Corpus Christi	1,687.0
10.	Memphis	12.4	10.	Atlanta	392.2	10.	Austin	1,586.9

Source: Police Foundation Law Enforcement Data Base of 59 agencies serving populations over 250,000, 1985–6.

In its attempt to regulate drug trafficking in the early 1980's, the Oakland Police Department instituted many strategies including a variety of patrol strategies—mounted patrol, foot patrol, canine units, motorized patrol—in the central business district;[1] the rigorous enforcement of applicable drug-related statutes; and the use of special duty units to combat street traffickers.[2] Despite these efforts, the drug problem continued. Faced with budget cuts and a reduction in personnel,[3] the Oakland Police Department confronted the question of how to deal with an enormous drug problem with diminishing resources.

In Birmingham, illicit street-level drug trafficking emerged as a serious problem around 1985. The problem in Birmingham differed from that in Oakland in many ways. First, rather than concentrating on crack cocaine, Birmingham drug traffickers sold and used powder cocaine and Dilaudid, a heroin substitute. Second, street-level trafficking was confined primarily to public housing areas, rather than permeating residential neighborhoods. Third, drug enforcement responsibility was given solely to vice-narcotics detectives and not allocated to patrol officers, as was done in Oakland. While Oakland patrol officers made arrests, they did not have the training or ability to control drug trafficking systematically. As few as a dozen narcotics officers were responsible for dealing with the entire city's drug problem.

Each department decided to alter its traditional enforcement methods and implement new strategies. The Oakland Police Department formed Special Duty Unit 3, and the Birmingham Police Department launched Operation 'Caine Break. Both departments also explored community policing to combat drug trafficking and to encourage citizens to participate in the battle against drug abuse.

Design of the Oakland Experiment

The centerpiece of the Oakland Police Department's program was Special Duty Unit 3 (SDU-3), a corps of carefully selected patrol officers. In addition, the police engaged in a form of community policing by using door-to-door contacts to enlist community support against drugs. The researchers helped the Oakland Police Department develop this latter approach by providing orientation materials and onsite training.

Evaluation of the door-to-door campaign and the tactics of SDU-3 used a pretest/posttest experimental design. The deployment of these two aspects of Oakland's street drug trafficking prevention program was structured so that

each aspect could be evaluated within a 6-month field experiment in 4 of the city's 35 beats.[4] Two were in East Oakland (Beats 25 and 34) and two in West Oakland (Beats 7 and 11).

Research staff collected baseline data in each of the four areas during Phase I of the evaluation. This preexperimental phase lasted for 3 months, February to April 1988. During that period, they conducted the first wave of citizen surveys, collected monthly crime data, and recorded preliminary observations of police activity.

Treatment and control sites for Phase II were chosen at random. Beginning May 1, 1988, and ending October 31, 1988, Beats 7, 25, and 34 received the treatments, with Beat 11 serving as the control. In Beat 34 the door-to-door approach and the special duty unit activities were applied. Beat 25 also received the special duty unit activities in addition to conventional strategies. In Beat 7 the door-to-door campaign was added to conventional strategies. In Beat 11 current police operations were maintained at their preexperimental levels and strategies. (Table 2 shows the design of the study.)

On November 1, 1988, a rotation of treatments took effect. That is, for the next 6 months (Phase III of the evaluation), treatments were provided in Beats 7, 11, and 34, with Beat 25 serving as the control. Whereas in the first 6 months Beat 7 received only the door-to-door treatment, in the second 6 months it received both the door-to-door interviews and SDU-3. Beat 11 received the door-to-door interviews only. Beat 25, which previously received special enforcement, now became the control beat. SDU-3 continued to work in Beat 34.

Phase III data collection was limited to crime data and observations of police activity. Because of budgetary constraints, citizen surveys were not conducted.

Table 2

Distribution of Strategies in Oakland

	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
Beat 7	CP	DD	DD + SDU3
Beat 11	CP	CP	DD
Beat 25	CP	SDU3	CP
Beat 34	CP	DD + SDU3	SDU3

CP = Conventional policing
DD = Door-to-door interviews
SDU3 = Special Duty Unit 3

Design of the Birmingham Experiment

The Birmingham Police Department's approach to controlling street drug trafficking was similar to Oakland's in that it included the door-to-door approach; a captain in one precinct (of four) devoted a group of his patrol officers to conduct a survey of residents and engage in problem identification. The department differed, however, in its traditional enforcement effort, including a multiphased program, known as Operation 'Caine Break, aimed at street-level drug traffickers. The narcotics division targeted buyers and sellers through buy-busts and sting operations.

As in Oakland, research staff and members of the Birmingham Police Department engaged in a multistage selection process to ensure that the drug enforcement and community-oriented policing strategies were implemented in comparable areas. Three beats were purposely selected for the experiment, two to receive the treatments and one to serve as the control area. As in Oakland, the selected beats were noncontiguous and dispersed to avoid problems of contamination of effects. Two were in the South Precinct (Beats 61 and 62) and the third was in the East Precinct (Beat 84).

Baseline data were collected in all three areas during Phase I of the evaluation. This preexperimental phase lasted 4 months (May–August, 1988). During that period, research staff conducted Wave 1 of the citizen surveys, collected monthly crime data, and recorded preliminary observations of police activity.

As in Oakland, areas were chosen as the treatment and control sites for Phase II. Beginning on September 1, 1988, and ending February 28, 1989, Beats 61 (Goldwire) and 84 (Gate City) received the treatments, with Beat 62 (Kingston) serving as the control. In Gate City the door-to-door approach was measured, and in Goldwire Operation 'Caine Break was measured. In Kingston current police operations were maintained at their preexperimental levels and strategies. At the end of this period, a second survey was conducted to find the effects of the program. Table 3 presents a schematic of the design.

Table 3

Distribution of Strategies in Birmingham

	Phase I	Phase II
Gate City	Conventional policing	Door-to-door interviews
Kingston	Conventional policing	Conventional policing
Goldwire	Conventional policing	Narcotics enforcement

Data Sources and Collection

The first step in the analysis was to determine whether the programs were implemented by the police in both cities and to ensure that experimental conditions were followed. The research team used observational and official data for this purpose. To evaluate the programs and determine their impact, the team relied on both survey data and reported crime data. A survey panel of residents in each beat was selected and interviewed twice. Reported crime data were collected for each beat and for the city as a whole to find if the experimental treatments altered crime patterns.

In addition to using these data sources, the researchers collected newspaper articles from the *Oakland Tribune* from January 1, 1988, to August 1, 1989, and the Birmingham *Post-Herald* and the Birmingham *News* from April 1, 1988, to October 1, 1989, to see how drug enforcement efforts were communicated to the public.

Observational Data

In Oakland, the research team made structured observations of the activities of SDU-3 for the year-long period beginning May 1, 1988, and ending April 30, 1989. During this time, a trained observer systematically recorded the major roles, behavior, and decisions of police and citizens in drug-related encounters.[5]

The observer rode with various members of SDU-3 on tours of duty that lasted from 8 to 10 hours. She recorded her observations immediately afterward. Of 220 SDU-3 tours during the year-long period, the observer rode on 82 (37.3 percent). During the tours, 483 police-citizen encounters occurred. These encounters (predominantly proactive in nature) included contacts with 810 suspected drug traffickers, 43 suspicious or disruptive persons, 3 complainants, and 2 victims. More than 2,700 bystanders were present at the encounters.

In Birmingham, the observations were not as structured, since each incident was basically the same—officers bought drugs from suspected traffickers or conducted sting operations.

Drug Arrests

The team coded and tabulated data on all arrests made by SDU-3 during the 1-year period to measure the unit's activities and to see if the experimental design was followed. Research staff obtained copies of all crime and arrest reports generated by SDU-3. They paid particular attention to the location of the arrest (beat number) and various characteristics of the arrest. Suspect characteristics, crime type, type of evidence, weapons, injuries, and other elements including those in the narrative were coded and analyzed.

In Birmingham, all drug cases and arrests made by narcotics detectives and patrol officers from January 1, 1987, to April 1, 1989, were coded and tabulated. Research staff were allowed access to these records by the narcotics division. Characteristics of the case included location of arrest or police contact, suspect information, crime type, and evidence. In addition, the researchers attempted to follow these cases through the court system to find if videotaped evidence strengthened the case. Thus, it was necessary to examine district attorney files and court records.

Crime Data

The impact of the two approaches on the control of drug trafficking was also measured in terms of the rates of serious crimes against the person (homicides, rapes, and felonious assaults), burglaries, and robberies in the target beats and citywide. In Oakland, monthly recorded crime data were collected for the four experimental areas and for the city during the 16 months before the programs were implemented and for 12 months while they were in operation.

In Birmingham, monthly recorded crime data were collected for the three target areas and the city for 1987 to 1989.

Newspaper Coverage

A newspaper clipping service collected published reports from the Oakland *Tribune* and two Birmingham newspapers, the *Post-Herald* and the Birmingham *News*, that dealt with police matters and drugs during the months of the projects. This allowed the research staff to examine the media coverage that the largest newspapers in both cities gave to the drug problem.

Birmingham and Oakland Panel Surveys

The purpose of the panel survey of residents was to determine the impact of the enforcement strategies and door-to-door component of the experiment, measured in a variety of ways.

The fundamental evaluation design was based on comparing attitudinal measures collected before and after the programs' introduction. Interviewing the same people twice had the advantage of allowing for statistical controls that were not possible in an areawide analysis. These measures were obtained by conducting interviews with random samples of residents in the program areas and in the control area.

In both cities citizens were asked several questions about their awareness of a drug trafficking problem, the prevalence of crimes other than drug trafficking, their awareness of specific police programs aimed to control

crime and drugs, their fear of crime and perception of the safety of the streets, the quality of life in the neighborhood, and their satisfaction with police service generally.[6]

Response Rates

Table 4 shows the response rates for the Oakland survey. It shows that response rates of 59.3 percent (Beat 7, door-to-door), 59.4 percent (Beat 25, SDU-3 only), and 68.7 percent (Beat 34, SDU-3 and door-to-door) were achieved in the program areas during Wave 1 interviewing at the residential units. The control beat (Beat 11) had a response rate of only 42.3 percent. The general Wave 1 response was 57.6 percent. These rates were considerably lower than those in other studies conducted by the Police Foundation. In Newark, Houston, and Baltimore, for example, response rates ranged from 75 percent to 82 percent.

The low rates in Oakland can be attributed in part to fear. Interviewers reported that residents did not wish to talk with anyone about the drug problem or the police for fear of retribution. In Beat 11 the number of refusals and "respondent unavailable" responses was particularly high (over 30 percent).

Table 4

Oakland Wave 1 Survey Results
(numbers in parentheses are percentages of selected sample size)

Area	Total units	Selected sample	Number completed	Refusals	Number vacant	Numbers with bad address	Respondent unavailable	Moving, ineligible, duplicates	Other[1]	Response rate[2]
Beat 7	1,277	426	198 (46.5%)	31 (7.3%)	57 (13.4%)	29 (6.8%)	38 (8.9%)	6 (1.4%)	67 (15.7%)	(59.3%)
Beat 11	1,894	421	144 (34.2%)	61 (14.5%)	41 (9.7%)	31 (7.4%)	67 (15.9%)	9 (2.1%)	68 (16.2%)	(42.3%)
Beat 25	2,419	403	201 (49.9%)	33 (8.2%)	37 (9.2%)	21 (5.2%)	29 (7.2%)	7 (1.7%)	75 (18.6%)	(59.4%)
Beat 34	1,900	418	244 (58.4%)	38 (9.1%)	29 (6.9%)	26 (6.2%)	37 (8.8%)	8 (1.9%)	36 (8.6%)	(68.7%)
Totals	7,490	1,668	787 (47.2%)	163 (9.8%)	164 (9.8%)	107 (6.4%)	171 (10.2%)	30 (1.8%)	246 (14.7%)	(57.6%)

[1] "Other" includes the number of respondents who were in the hospital, ill, on vacation, or had a language problem; cases that were not fielded; plus completed interviews that were invalidated during quality control checks.

[2] "Response rate" equals "number completed" divided by "selected sample" minus ("number vacant" plus "number with bad address" and "number ineligible").

Results from the panel survey interviews show that over 75 percent of the desired sample were reinterviewed (Table 5). The response rate ranged from a low of 69.1 percent in Beat 7 (door-to-door treatment) to a high of 81.5 percent in Beat 34 (both SDU-3 and door-to-door). These results compare favorably with the studies conducted in Newark and Baltimore.[7]

Table 6 shows the response rates from the Birmingham survey for Wave 1. Here, the numbers are higher than those in Oakland or even Newark and Houston. For Wave 1 the general response rate was about 84 percent. The responses ranged from a low of 76 percent in Goldwire (enforcement beat) to a high of 90 percent in the control area (Kingston). For Wave 2 over 77 percent of the desired sample were reinterviewed (Table 7).

Data Analysis

Two types of data analysis were used for each site—descriptive statistics and panel data—to determine whether changes occurred in the treatment areas.

Descriptive statistics—means, percentages, and frequency distributions—provided an indication of the general levels and changes demonstrated by the various survey measures in the program and comparison areas.

Table 5

Oakland Wave 2 Panel Survey Results
(numbers in parentheses are percentages of sample size)

Area	Panel sample size	Number completed	Refusals	Vacant	Respondent moved	Respondent unavailable	Respondent unknown	Other[1]	Response rate[2]
Beat 7	198	114 (57.6%)	10 (5.1%)	12 (6.1%)	18 (9.1%)	32 (16.2%)	3 (1.5%)	9 (4.5%)	(69.1%)
Beat 11	144	95 (66.0%)	6 (4.2%)	7 (4.9%)	6 (4.2%)	23 (16.0%)	1 (0.7%)	6 (4.2%)	(73.1%)
Beat 25	201	130 (64.7%)	6 (4.0%)	8 (4.0%)	20 (10.0%)	23 (11.4%)	5 (2.5%)	7 (3.5%)	(77.4%)
Beat 34	244	167 (68.4%)	5 (2.0%)	5 (2.0%)	27 (11.1%)	25 (10.2%)	7 (2.9%)	8 (3.3%)	(81.5%)
Totals	787	506 (64.3%)	27 (3.7%)	32 (4.1%)	71 (9.0%)	103 (13.1%)	16 (2.0%)	30 (3.8%)	(75.8%)

1 "Other" includes the number of respondents who were in the hospital, ill, on vacation, or had a language problem, plus completed interviews that were invalidated during quality control checks.

2 "Response rate" equals "number completed" divided by "selected sample" minus "number vacant."

The research staff studied simple comparisons of these statistics at Waves 1 and 2. Difference-of-means tests were conducted to determine whether critical variables changed significantly from Wave 1 to Wave 2.

Table 6

Birmingham Wave 1 Survey Results
(numbers in parentheses are percentages of selected sample Size)

Area	Total units	Selected sample	Number completed	Refusals	Number vacant	Number with bad address	Respondent unavailable	Moving, ineligible, duplicates	Other[1]	Response rate[2]
Gate City	777	246	198 (80.4%)	18 (7.3%)	11 (4.5%)	0 (0.0%)	10 (4.1%)	2 (0.81%)	7 (12.8%)	(84.9%)
Kingston	1,040	257	198 (77.0%)	8 (3.1%)	16 (6.2%)	16 (6.2%)	6 (2.3%)	6 (2.3%)	7 (2.7%)	(90.4%)
Goldwire	1,318	255	184 (72.2%)	15 (5.9%)	12 (4.7%)	0 (0.0%)	34 (13.3%)	1 (0.39%)	9 (3.5%)	(76.0%)
Totals	3,135	758	580 (76.5%)	41 (5.4%)	39 (5.1%)	16 (2.1%)	50 (6.6%)	9 (1.2%)	23 (3.0%)	(83.6%)

1 "Other" includes the number of respondents who were in the hospital, ill, on vacation, or had a language problem; cases that were not fielded; plus completed interviews that were invalidated during quality control checks.

2 "Response rate" equals "number completed" divided by "selected sample" minus "number vacant" plus "number with bad address" plus "number ineligible."

Table 7

Birmingham Wave 2 Panel Survey Results
(numbers in parentheses are percentages of desired sample size)

Area	Sample size	Number completed	Refusals	Number vacant	Respondent unavailable	Respondent moved	Number ineligible	Other[1]	Response rate[2]
Gate City	198	162 (81.8%)	3 (1.5%)	2 (1.0%)	6 (3.0%)	25 (12.6%)	—	—	82.6%
Kingston	198	145 (73.2%)	9 (4.5%)	4 (2.0%)	7 (3.5%)	17 (8.6%)	2 (1.0%)	14 (7.1%)	75.5%
Goldwire	184	131 (71.2%)	4 (2.2%)	2 (1.1%)	16 (8.7%)	28 (15.2%)	1 (0.5%)	2 (1.1%)	72.3%
Totals	580	438 (75.5%)	16 (2.8%)	8 (1.4%)	29 (5.0%)	70 (12.1%)	3 (0.5%)	16 (2.8%)	77.0%

1 "Other" includes the number of respondents who were in the hospital, in jail, dead, in the army, or who had a language problem, plus completed interviews that were invalidated during quality control checks.

2 "Response rate" equals "number completed" divided by "sample size" minus ("number vacant" plus "number ineligible").

The panel data were analyzed to provide indicators of the possible program impact on residential respondents. The panel analysis supplied evidence of program impact at the broad area level. For that analysis two waves of surveys, before and after the treatments, were applied and merged into one data set. The research staff analyzed them as a single set of data, with controls for the wave, area, and a number of covariates.

The analysis of panel data using regression analysis made it possible to explore the likely effects of the program on the area and on individuals.

Notes

1. For a fuller discussion of the use of these resources in the downtown area of Oakland, see Albert Reiss, Jr., *Policing the Central Business District: The Oakland Story*, National Institute of Justice, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1984.

2. David Bayley and Jerome Skolnick discuss the special duty units in *The New Blue Line* (1986).

3. Chief George Hart reported that in 1987 Proposition 13 (a California referendum passed in the early 1980's that affected the ability of cities to tax its citizens) was forcing a 100-officer reduction at a time when demand for police service had increased 75 percent.

4. Beats were matched and selected based on census data, crime data, drug arrests, and police officer input. For more details on target selection see Uchida et al., note 2 in chapter 1.

5. The primary purpose of this data collection effort was to determine the level of implementation by the police. At the same time, however, valuable information was collected regarding drug enforcement generally.

6. For more details about the survey, see Uchida et al., note 2 in chapter 1.

7. See Pate et al., note 1 in chapter 1.

Chapter 3: Program Implementation in Oakland

The Oakland strategies comprised two major sets of activities, those of the police department's Special Duty Unit 3 and door-to-door interviews with residents of the areas studied. The discussion below focuses on how the strategies were implemented and provides findings on the squad's drug arrests and on citizen perceptions about crime, drug trafficking, and police services in their neighborhoods.

Special Duty Unit 3

Special Duty Unit 3 (SDU-3) was formed in the spring of 1988 with funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance. It followed an Oakland Police Department tradition of housing special units within the Fourth Platoon.[1] SDU-3 was charged with providing "high visibility" drug enforcement and using buy-busts to disrupt street-level dealing. Six officers transferred from the patrol division to SDU-3.

Activities

SDU-3 used a variety of techniques to control street-level drug trafficking. Of the 483 police-citizen encounters recorded by the trained observer, 54 percent were the result of "high visibility patrol." Within each target area, officers stopped motor vehicles and bicycle riders; questioned groups or individuals who appeared to be engaging in drug activity; talked with residents about problems; and engaged in stops and frisks. The remainder of time was spent on "buy-busts" (42 percent) and raids of crack houses (3.5 percent). Raids usually involved the use of a search warrant or arrest warrant.

"Freelancing"

During high visibility patrols, uniformed SDU-3 officers, in teams of two, patrolled the target beats, using their discretion in making stops or conducting surveillance. The emphasis of this "freelancing" was on visibility, but arrests could occur. Police initiated encounters.

On one evening, for example, 12 proactive encounters took place, all of them observed by the study's principal investigator. Three involved field interrogations of groups of three or four men standing on street corners or in a park. In each situation the officers said that they had previously arrested one or more of the individuals in the group and were "checking them out." "Pat-downs" took place, followed by requests for identification and warrant checks to find whether arrest warrants existed for them. No arrests were made in these three encounters.

On five occasions the officers saw suspicious actions and made stops. In one case, a man standing on the street in a residential neighborhood

appeared to be a drug seller. The officers cruised around the block and on their return saw the man fidget and look around nervously. When the officers asked for identification, he could not produce any. The officers patted him down, found two pieces of rock cocaine in his pocket, and arrested him for simple possession. A similar incident took place about a half-hour later, but when the officers looked closely at the substance, they found that it was "bunk," soap cut up to look like crack. The suspect was released.

During the same tour the officers showed the principal investigator the "back yards"—areas where surveillance of drug transactions frequently took place. These areas were, literally, the back yards of residences. Officers parked their car down the street and surreptitiously watched drug deals from a perch in a tree or through a peep-hole in a fence. If their timing was good, one officer could watch while the other positioned himself to make an arrest. They communicated quietly with hand-held radios, but during the observation that night they could not make an arrest.

The four other encounters involved a bicycle stop, an arrest of an intoxicated driver, arrests of two juveniles for possession of crack cocaine, and foot pursuit of a drug dealer. While this was not a typical evening in terms of numbers of encounters, it does highlight SDU-3 activities.[2]

During the first month of implementation (May 1988), high-visibility patrol, or freelancing, was the only form of activity. The officers patrolled the target areas freely, stopping suspicious persons, making arrests, and disrupting drug deals during their tours. The officers were enthusiastic about what they were doing, remarking that this was "real police work." Freelancing, with its emphasis on drug traffickers, offered a marked change from usual patrol activity. No longer required to answer calls for service or deal with everyday citizen complaints, the officers were eager to start work night after night.

After a month, however, one of the commanders found that arrests made through freelance activities did not meet screening standards. Vice narcotics detectives, who screened cases internally before sending them to the district attorney, rejected about 40 percent of the arrests. Part of the problem lay in the poor quality of the officers' reports. Deputy district attorneys retrained the officers in report preparation, and more scrutiny was provided to the unit.[3] By the end of July, vice narcotics detectives had sent about 95 percent of the cases to the district attorney's office.[4]

Buy-Busts

"Buy-busts" have been used in Oakland to control drug trafficking for at least 4 years. However, the technique was not used intensively in one or two locations, nor was it used systematically. Intuition, hunches, city council pressure, and vocal community leaders influenced the selection of targets. SDU-3's task was to target two beats for 6 months and apply constant pressure to hot spots in those areas.

The standard buy-bust operation consisted of the following sequence of events. Usually, the officers worked the evening shift (3–11 p.m.). At roll call, the supervisor of SDU-3 designated the areas for enforcement within the target beats and assigned individual tasks. The targets were based on anonymous tips, patrol officer observations, and SDU-3 surveillance.

Two officers, usually black and dressed in undercover garb, made up the "buy" team. On many occasions, another black patrol officer was invited to participate. The officers used marked bills to make undercover buys—usually crack cocaine.

During the first 2 months of the project, driving around in a dillapidated car, they made buys from dealers on street corners, in front of motels, houses, and mom-and-pop stores located in residential areas. The rest of the officers were members of the arrest team. They wore blue jeans, tennis shoes, bullet-proof vests, light-weight blue windbreakers (with OAKLAND POLICE clearly emblazoned on the back), and drove semi-marked police vehicles.[5] These officers situated themselves within striking distance of the sellers, usually about 4 or 5 blocks away. The arrest team maintained constant contact using hand-held radios.

The buy team was responsible for locating dealers, informing the backup team of their location, and then making a deal with the drug seller. If a deal could not be completed, the undercover officers moved to another location. Because drug trafficking was so rampant in the early days of the experiment, it was fairly easy to find willing sellers. When the buy team was successful at making a deal, they immediately notified the backup team via hand-held radios. The arresting officers then moved in (or "swooped") as quickly as possible.

The speed and quickness of the arrest usually took the seller by complete surprise. Normally the officers jumped out of their semi-marked vehicles, pounced on the suspect, made the arrest, and then secured the area.

If buyers were in the vicinity, they were also arrested. The entire operation lasted 5 to 10 minutes and was visible to the citizens in the immediate vicinity. Once satisfied that all the evidence had been collected, the officers moved on to a new target. After six to eight arrests, the officers stopped to write up the arrest reports and called the police wagon to take the suspects to jail. A typical evening in May 1988, the first month of operation, netted about 12 arrests.

During the summer months (June to August 1988) SDU-3 arrests climbed. At the same time, a difference could be seen in the target areas. The traffickers either changed their location by moving a few blocks away or hid the drugs in nearby hideouts (e.g., under the steps of a porch, in a brown paper bag, or in a cup) rather than on their persons. More important, the drug sellers began to recognize the officers by sight and by name, which created safety problems for the buy-bust operations.

The officers quickly saw that it was getting harder to make buys. By mid-August the undercover officers reported that Beat 25 had "dried up." Emphasis then focused on Beat 34 where traffickers were more abundant.

In response to the change in sellers' tactics and to their increased familiarity with SDU-3, the unit introduced a variety of vehicles and officers. Different officers rotated into the unit as "buy" officers, and a city van, a Volkswagen van, a U-Haul truck, a camper, and a taxi were used in the operations. Other tactical changes included increased use of "snitches," or paid informants. The officers were encouraged to talk with suspects to obtain information about new drug locations and traffickers.

During this period the unit arrested several major drug traffickers: one who controlled the drug trade at 96th Avenue and Olive Street (Beat 34); two brothers who controlled the drug trade in Beat 25; and several who controlled the drug trade at 85th Avenue and Olive Street and the Mission Motel (Beat 34). By the end of the summer, the observer reported, Beats 25 and 34 had visibly improved.

The rotation of treatments began on November 1, 1988 (see page 7). While officers continued to operate in Beat 34, a new area, Beat 7, opened up for enforcement. Replacement officers also rotated into the program from patrol assignments. SDU-3 continued to engage in freelancing and buy-busts.

In Beat 7 community complaints had reached new intensity because of drug trafficking activity in front of the Oakland Boy's Club on Market Street. Officers worked to clear the area of traffickers and arrested major dealers. In addition, they successfully used search warrants at two crack houses, and their arrest of a major supplier drastically reduced the availability of street drugs at one location.

Drug Arrests: Official Data

During the year-long period between May 1, 1988, and April 30, 1989, SDU-3 made 834 arrests, of which 820 (98 percent) were for drug offenses. For the entire period, 55 percent of arrests were made in the treatment and control areas, and 45 percent were made in areas outside the experiment (Table 8). At first glance these data suggest that officers in SDU-3 did not follow the experiment rigorously.

Table 8

Drug Arrests for SDU–3, by Beat
Oakland
May 1, 1988, to April 30, 1989

Beat	Number of arrests	Percent
7	99	12.0
11	2	0.2
25	92	11.0
34	257	31.0
Other	373	45.0
Totals	823	99.2

Missing cases = 11

On closer inspection, however, such a conclusion seems premature. Table 9 shows the breakdown of arrests for SDU-3 by beat during the project period. During the first 6 months of the project, Beats 25 and 34 were selected as targets for SDU-3. From May 1 to October 31, 1988, 260 of 434 arrests (60 percent) were made in the target areas. More important, only two arrests were made in the control area (0.5 percent) and 10 arrests were made in the door-to-door-only section (2.5 percent).

When one examines the arrests more closely, one finds that SDU-3 officers made 67 arrests (15 percent) in areas that directly abutted the target beats. These areas were no more than one or two blocks away from the target beats and were often on the border of the experimental areas. This is particularly important in the first month of operation, given that three of the six SDU-3 officers had never worked in East Oakland before and were unfamiliar with

the beat boundaries. If these are included as "legitimate" target-area arrests, then 75 percent of the arrests in the first 6 months were within the experimental group. However, this also increases the percentage within the control and door-to-door-only areas.

Table 9

Drug Arrests for SDU–3 by Beat and Phases

	Phase I			Phase II		
Beat	**N**	**(Percent)**	**Activity**	**N**	**(Percent)**	**Activity**
7	10	(2.0)	Door-to-door	89	(23.0)	Combination
7A	26	(6.0)		59	(15.0)	
11	2	(0.5)	Control	0	(0.0)	Door-to-door
11A	15	(3.5)		23	(6.0)	
25	81	(19.0)	SDU-3	11	(3.0)	Control
25A	41	(9.0)		21	(5.0)	
34	179	(42.0)	Combination	78	(20.0)	SDU-3
34A	26	(6.0)		35	(9.0)	
Other	54	(12.0)	None	75	(19.0)	None
Totals	434	(100.0)		391	(100.0)	

A = areas around target beats Missing = 11 arrests

In the second phase of the study, the target beats were rotated. In other words, the treatments shifted from one beat to another: Beat 7 received both the community-oriented and enforcement treatments, Beat 34 received SDU-3 enforcement, Beat 25 became the control, and Beat 11 received the door-to-door interviews only.

Just as it did in the first 6 months of the project, SDU-3 stayed out of the control and door-to-door-only beats (there were no arrests in Beat 11 and only 11 in Beat 25). The percentage of arrests made in other beats increased during this second phase (from 12 percent in Phase I to 19 percent in Phase II). In the target beats (7 and 34), SDU-3 officers made 167 arrests or 43 percent of the total during this period. Once again, if one includes the arrests made in beats that adjoin the target areas, then 67 percent of the arrests are within the experiment.

Two factors stand out from these data. First, as noted earlier, SDU-3 officers avoided the control areas and thus did not contaminate them. Second, they show that the enforcement strategy was implemented in the target areas.

Summary of SDU-3 Activity

From the observations and drug arrests, one can conclude that SDU-3 officers followed the guidelines of the experiment. Officers were active in dealing

with drug traffickers in that they made drug arrests and field contacts. They also received the exposure to the public they desired.

In addition, the field observer perceived that drug trafficking in the beats had decreased and that sellers and buyers were no longer working actively in the same locations. This was particularly true for many motels in Beat 34. Along the outer reaches of the beat, six motels were known to be frequented by drug dealers. Sellers would carry a small amount of their wares on the street and stash larger quantities of cocaine in motel rooms. By constantly making buy-busts and occasionally obtaining search warrants for motel rooms, SDU-3 cleaned the area of the drug traffickers.

After more than 3 months in Beat 25 and 6 months in Beat 34, officers found it difficult to make arrests and contacts, further evidence of the dislocation and disruption of drug trafficking.

Community Policing Program

In the original grant proposal to the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Oakland police expressed a desire to use some forms of community policing in the drug enforcement effort. While the department was not committed to the philosophy of community policing, it was curious about the success of community policing programs across the country, especially its use in Newark and Houston to reduce citizen fears. Thus, a community-oriented component to drug enforcement was added that involved the use of directed police-citizen contacts. These contacts took the form of door-to-door interviews by the police.

The Oakland police wanted to establish contacts with residents and inform citizens about the department's efforts; these efforts included a drug hotline and officer training to provide immediate response. Second, the police wanted to inform citizens that the department would be regularly and intensively policing areas in which street drug trafficking was a problem. Third, the police hoped to alert citizens to the signs of drug trafficking and to instruct citizens to refrain from intervening personally but to call the drug hotline immediately, with as much information and complete descriptions of participants as was possible. The police would assure citizens that they would treat all information confidentially and guarantee total anonymity.

Initially, six police service technicians conducted interviews and distributed pamphlets about drug trafficking in two beats (7 and 34).[6] Questionnaires developed by research staff and police officers asked citizens about the relative

condition of their neighborhood, its problems (particularly drug trafficking), what they felt should be done about the problems, and the location of drug trafficking operations. In addition, the police prepared a pamphlet that explained the use of the drug hotline and the signs of drug trafficking.

The research staff explained the importance of the project to the technicians and trained them in interview techniques. The staff generated a list of households in the target beats, and weekly assignments were given to each officer. The lieutenant in the Special Operations Division and the onsite research assistant supervised the activities.

The initial contacts began on May 1, 1988, and continued until October 31, 1988. Despite the initial enthusiasm of the group, only two officers diligently participated in the project. Part of the problem lay in the low priority given to the project by the watch commanders. The commanders believed that the approach would not reduce drug trafficking activities; they permitted the officers to conduct interviews only during periods of low workloads. This led to quick, haphazard interviews and low officer visibility.

After a month of limited compliance by the technicians, a single patrol officer on "light duty" was assigned the task instead. While diligent in his work, the officer became increasingly disgruntled and alienated (on matters external to the project) and resigned from the department, having conducted interviews for 5 weeks.

After lengthy prodding by the research team and a 1-month delay, another officer was assigned full-time to the door-to-door component. This officer, a police services technician, served the project well; she completed about 75 percent of the interviews in both target areas during a 10-week period.

Even with these problems, during the 6-month period officers completed 1,829 interviews among 3,177 occupied households (57.6 percent). More specifically, in Beat 7, of 1,277 households, 850 or 66.6 percent were interviewed. In Beat 34, of 1,900 households, 979 or 51.5 percent were interviewed.[7] These figures are comparable to those obtained in the Newark study, where interviews were completed in 52 percent of the occupied units (Pate and Skogan, 1985:27).

The lower response in Beat 34 can be attributed to two factors. First, the commitment to the project was low. As already noted, the watch commander in this beat did not give community policing a high priority because he did not understand some aspects of it and its potential effectiveness.

Second, the residents of Beat 34 were afraid to talk with the police. Six weeks before the experiment was implemented, drug dealers firebombed an elderly widow's home because she had defied their warnings not to talk with the police. A 68-year old great-grandmother had tried to start an anti-drug program in her neighborhood because of the drug activity that constantly occurred in front of her home. A firebomb was thrown at the rear of her home. Although she escaped unharmed, the blaze destroyed clothes, the kitchen, a bathroom, and the back porch.

A week after the incident, Oakland police arrested a 27-year-old drug user for the firebombing. The suspect told police that drug dealers had rewarded him with $40 worth of rock cocaine (two rocks). Despite the Oakland *Tribune's* July 18, 1988, report that the widow was heroic and that neighborhood residents were not fearful, many told officers conducting the door-to-door interviews that they would not talk because they feared retribution.[8]

Residents who did agree to be interviewed answered questions fully and provided insight into neighborhood problems. The interviews usually lasted from 5 to 10 minutes. Black females were the primary respondents.

Tables 10 and 11 present a summary of the types of problems mentioned in response to the questions about the first and second most important problems in the neighborhoods. Not surprisingly, in both beats, "drugs" was mentioned more than half the time. In addition, other problems were associated with drug dealers, buyers, and users. Traffic, speeding cars, noise, shootings and violence, and burglaries and thefts were mentioned in conjunction with drugs. For example, residents complained that cars cruising through the area for drugs were noisy and dangerous. They also associated drive-by shootings and violence with the turf wars of drug traffickers. In Beat 7, residents were concerned about the prostitutes and pimps who walked around the neighborhood; their presence was also characteristic of drug problems.

In some cases information obtained from the interviews was used directly by SDU-3. Complaints of drug trafficking at specific locations were noted and passed on to the SDU-3 sergeant. On several occasions the unit used the buy-bust tactic at these locations.

However, the completion of interviews, the enumeration of neighborhood problems, and the use of the information by SDU-3 did not mean that the

Table 10

Distribution of Problems Mentioned in Directed Police-Citizen Contacts (in descending order of mentions)

Beat 7

Type of problem	Number of mentions	Percent
Drugs	524	53.0
No problems	179	18.1
Speeding cars/traffic	56	5.7
Prostitution	43	4.4
Noise	39	3.9
Litter/trash/dirt	31	3.1
Burglary	28	2.8
Poverty/unemployment	20	2.0
Loitering/vagrancy	18	1.8
Juveniles (hanging out)	13	1.3
Shootings/violence	11	1.1
Robbery/serious crime	10	1.0
Other	16	1.6
Totals	988	100.0

These figures are based on responses to questions about problems of first and second most importance.

Table 11

Distribution of Problems Mentioned in Directed Police-Citizen Contacts (in descending order of mentions)

Beat 34

Type of problem	Number of mentions	Percent
Drugs	734	60.0
No problems	177	14.5
Speeding cars/traffic	118	9.7
Noise	37	3.0
Burglary/theft	33	2.7
Shootings/violence	24	2.0
Juveniles (hanging out)	24	2.0
Litter/trash/dirt	21	1.7
Loitering/vagrancy	17	1.4
Vandalism	10	.8
Robbery/serious crime	7	.6
Panhandlers	5	.4
Other	15	1.2
Totals	1,222	100.0

These figures are based on responses to questions about problems of first and second most importance.

community-oriented approach was fully implemented. There was in fact little commitment to the strategy. The police rarely followed up on the problems reported by citizens in the surveys. Although the sergeant in SDU-3 did make use of some information received on the questionnaires when he selected areas of enforcement for his troops, systematic problem solving and followup with residents did not occur.

Impact of the Strategies in Oakland

Of primary concern to the police and to the research was the effect of these programs on community perceptions of drug trafficking, quality of life, and police services, as well as their fear of crime and victimization. Based on previous studies conducted by the Police Foundation and the specific goals of the Oakland program, researchers developed a few testable hypotheses.

In the control beat (Beat 11) and the beats that received the door-to-door police-citizen contacts (Beat 7), SDU-3 enforcement (Beat 25), and the combination of both treatments (Beat 34) during the first 6 months of the project, the experiment examined changes in citizen perceptions of:

- The drug trafficking problem.
- Quality of life.
- Property and personal crime.
- Police services.
- Safety from crime.

It was anticipated that the degree of impact would vary across the treatment areas based on the observations and implementation of the programs discussed in the previous chapter. That is, unlike the Newark or Houston fear-reduction programs, the community-oriented component in Oakland was not fully implemented. Thus, no significant change was anticipated in attitudes of the residents that received the door-to-door interviews only.

To examine these effects, the study used measures from the citizen survey. Prior to implementation of the programs and 6 months after they began, citizens were asked a series of questions about drugs, police, and their neighborhoods.

Attitudes of the panel of citizens in each beat helped to determine the effectiveness of the program. The study used multivariate analyses to

explain the changes in attitudes regarding the dependent variables. (For a discussion of the multivariate analyses and regression models used to measure impact in Oakland, see Appendix A.)

Citizen Perceptions of Drug Trafficking

Citizen perceptions of drug trafficking changed in the areas that received only the enforcement unit intervention (Beat 25) and in the beat that received both the door-to-door contacts and enforcement (Beat 34). The perception that drug trafficking was a problem *declined* in these beats. In addition, the police in Beat 25 were perceived to be doing a better job of controlling street-level sales and use of illegal drugs.

In a second analysis of the data, research staff included variables that indicated whether the respondent had seen a drug arrest or was contacted as part of the door-to-door interview process. When these two variables were considered, not only did the area treatments have an effect on the change in attitudes of the residents, but they also showed that the lack of the interventions individually made a difference in those perceptions. Residents who reported that they were contacted by the police for an interview perceived that the drug problem had diminished. Residents who reported seeing a drug arrest said that the police were doing a better job of controlling drug trafficking in their neighborhoods than before.

Citizen Perceptions of Quality of Life

The regression analyses do not show that the treatments had an impact on changes of quality of life. This is due, in part, to the changes that also occurred in the control area. When the treatments are compared to the control in the regression analysis, the effects of the treatments are negated.

Citizen Perceptions of Property and Personal Crime

Overall, citizen perceptions of crime did not change as a result of the interventions. Only one model regarding property crime was significant. Residents perceived that a decrease in the number of cars being vandalized occurred in the combination beat and the SDU-3-only beat.

Residents' perception of sexual assaults increased in Beat 7, where the door-to-door component was implemented. This finding runs counter to the study's hypothesis; it was expected that perceptions of violent crimes would diminish in treatment beats. When the independent variable is added regarding the door-to-door interview, however, the results are as expected; the perception of sexual assaults declines.

Beat 7

Residents in Beat 7 received the door-to-door contacts during Time 2. During this period a decrease in violent crimes occurred (-25 percent), but slight increases took place in robberies (+7.8 percent) and burglaries (+8.6 percent). When SDU-3 enforcement was added to the door-to-door component during Time 3, a marked decrease in both robberies (-41.2 percent) and violent crimes (-19.5 percent) took place.

Beat 11

Beat 11 was the control area during Time 2 and received the police-citizen contacts during Time 3. At Time 2 all crime categories show a *decrease,* though no extra activities by SDU-3 or door-to-door officers occurred. When the door-to-door component was added at Time 3, no change occurred in robberies. Substantial increases in burglaries took place during Time 3 (40.4 percent). This increase in reported burglaries may be attributable to the door-to-door contacts and may be an unintended consequence of these interviews. Residents may have felt more comfortable in talking with the police and thus reported occurrences more often.

This beat is somewhat of an anomaly because it does not follow the crime trends that occurred citywide. Because this was the control area during Time 2, the research staff expected to find crime patterns similar to those shown in citywide data across all crime types, yet that was not so. The Oakland Police Department was unable to provide any compelling explanations for the fluctuations.

Beat 25

Beat 25 received SDU-3 enforcement during Time 2 and became the control beat during Time 3. At Time 2 a decline in violent crimes took place, while robberies and burglaries increased by almost 20 percent. When SDU-3 enforcement was taken away, robberies continued their upward trend, though the numbers appear to fluctuate considerably. During Time 3 the number of robberies reached both the highest (December 1988) and lowest (March 1989) points during the 28-month period.

These data suggest that SDU-3 enforcement alone had little impact on the

citizen perceptions of drug trafficking, property crime, satisfaction with police services, and neighborhood safety. In addition, crimes reported to the police declined substantially in one of the treatment areas.

Overall Impact in Oakland

Overall, by working in tandem, the officers of SDU-3 and those that conducted citizen interviews made potential offenders less likely to engage in criminal activities. The presence of extra officers, whether carrying a clipboard, stopping and questioning individuals, or making surprise busts, appeared to have an impact on reported crime.

More specifically, it was found that:

- Residents perceived that drug trafficking as a problem declined in the combination beat (Beat 34), in the area that received SDU-3 enforcement only (Beat 25), and among those who were contacted individually by the police through the door-to-door interviews.
- Residents perceived that police improved their ability to handle the drug problem in the area that received SDU-3 enforcement only and where drug arrests were observed by citizens.
- Residents perceived that vandalism of cars decreased in the SDU-3-only area.
- Residents who were contacted through the door-to-door interviews perceived that sexual assaults had declined.
- Residents were more satisfied with the way police handled neighborhood problems in the area that received the door-to-door interviews.
- Residents in all three treatment areas felt safer than before the experiment.
- In the beats that received door-to-door contact, either alone or with SDU-3, notable declines took place in reported crimes of violence.
- In the areas that received both treatments, burglaries increased about 5 percent, still lower than the citywide increase of about 11 percent.

- In the beats that received the door-to-door component only, violent crimes declined (Beat 7, Time 2) and robberies stabilized (Beat 11, Time 3), but burglaries did not appear to be affected in either beat.
- The special drug enforcement unit helped reduce violent crimes in Beat 25 (at Time 2) and burglaries in Beat 34 (Time 3) but did not change the pattern for robbery.

Notes

1. The Fourth Platoon also included canine patrol, helicopter patrol, mounted patrol, foot patrol, and two other special-duty units.

2. During this tour, there may have been a "Hawthorne" effect, whereby officers knew they were being observed and acted differently as a result. During the structured observations conducted by the onsite observer, this effect diminished over time as officers became more comfortable with the situation.

3. Scrutiny of such activities is especially critical in light of a legacy of tension between a tough-minded Oakland Police Department and a vocal corps of civil libertarians in and around the community.

4. The research staff did not routinely compile data on cases accepted or rejected by either the police or the prosecutor. These numbers are estimates provided by narcotics detectives.

5. While the vehicles were not clearly marked patrol cars, they were recognizable by most suspects and citizens because of their color and style—usually gray or maroon Dodge Diplomats, with special antennae.

6. Use of nonsworn officers rather than beat officers to make door-to-door contacts runs counter to standard community policing technique in other cities. This turned out to be an early indication of the Oakland Police Department's skepticism about conventional community policing.

7. Baseline figures for occupied households come from the 1980 census estimates. This is a conservative figure because it does not take into consideration the migration out of Oakland that occurred during the early 1980's.

The officers who conducted the door-to-door efforts often noted on the interview sheets that houses or apartments were vacant. If their assessments are correct,

Chapter 4: Program Implementation in Birmingham

Like Oakland, Birmingham attempted to deal with the problem of drug trafficking by implementing two disparate approaches, deployed so that they could be assessed experimentally. Birmingham did not try an aggressive strategy like SDU-3's, and its commitment to a community-oriented door-to-door strategy was, at least initially, enthusiastic. Instead of an aggressive buy-and-bust strategy, the Birmingham Police Department implemented a sting operation it called "'Caine Break." The discussion below describes how 'Caine Break was implemented and presents drug-arrest data for the areas studied. It also offers details on the door-to-door interviewing strategy and summarizes the impact of the strategies on the police response to drug trafficking and on citizen perceptions of crime and public safety in their neighborhoods.

Drug traffickers in Birmingham sell and use Dilaudid, a painkiller similar to heroin, but less potent. A prescription narcotic, Dilaudid is taken orally by cancer patients for chronic pain. Dilaudid abusers make a solution from the pill and inject it into their bloodstreams. Like heroin, Dilaudid bonds with certain receptors in the brain and causes them to release chemicals that prevent pain signals from reaching the brain. Dilaudid is a "downer" that relaxes and slows most functions. In 1989, a 4-milligram tablet sold for $55 to $60 on the street. This drug is stolen with forged prescriptions or during pharmacy burglaries or robberies.

More recently, powder cocaine has emerged within Birmingham. Detectives suspect that traffickers from Miami and other Florida cities have begun to transport cocaine into Birmingham. Police laboratory results show that the purity of the cocaine is about 90 percent; this accounts, in part, for the limited use of crack cocaine.[1]

Operation 'Caine Break and Community Policing

With funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), the Birmingham Police Department embarked on a multiphased program aimed at street-level drug traffickers. The narcotics division of Birmingham Police

The commander of the East Precinct determined that a form of community policing would be useful in his struggle against drug traffickers. Having read the work of Herman Goldstein (1977), the Police Foundation (1983), and the Police Executive Research Forum, he was anxious to begin a community-oriented program in his precinct. He agreed to shift six officers from routine patrol duty to conduct door-to-door surveys of citizens in Gate City (the public housing area) and to engage in problem solving.

The Police Foundation employed a part-time, onsite research assistant to observe the actual activities of the detectives and officers and to ensure that the experimental conditions were followed. Her role included riding with the officers at least once every 2 weeks and observing the actions of the unit.[2] Site visits and ride-alongs by the principal investigator supplemented these observations. In addition, through informal chats and interviews with police personnel involved in the project, the research staff have documented the implementation of the drug enforcement strategy.

Activities of Narcotics Detectives

In March 1988, narcotics detectives began Operation 'Caine Break in selected areas in the city. The operation was divided into two phases: (1) the "straight-buy" approach targeted at sellers and (2) a sting operation aimed at buyers.[3] The narcotics detectives implemented these strategies in Beat 62 (Goldwire) and other areas where street-level drug trafficking was highly concentrated. They agreed to stay out of the control area (Beat 61, Kingston) and the door-to-door only area (Beat 84, Gate City) for a 9-month period.

During Phase I, undercover officers used unmarked vehicles equipped with video and audio recording devices and bought drugs from dealers. Each transaction was recorded surreptitiously, with arrests occurring only after several buys were made from each seller. The standard buy-bust operation consisted of the following sequence of events.

Two undercover officers, usually white,[4] constituted the "buy" team. They used unmarked bills, usually $10 and $20 bills, to make undercover buys—typically for Dilaudid or powder cocaine. The officers drove around in a van with the video equipment hidden on the dashboard and in the back of the vehicle. The officers bought drugs from dealers on street

corners or in front of houses located in residential areas. The rest of the officers were members of the backup team who monitored the activities of the buy team through radio contact. These officers situated themselves about four or five blocks away and were within striking distance if any problems arose.

The buy team was responsible for locating dealers, informing the backup team of their location, and then making a deal with the drug seller. If a deal could not be completed, the undercover officers moved to another location. Because drug trafficking was so rampant in the early days of the experiment, it was relatively easy to find willing sellers. The officers conducted this operation from March 22 to July 29, 1988. The operation culminated November 15–17, 1988, when arrest warrants were served on the sellers en masse.

Sting Operations

The second phase of the project involved the use of new legislation enacted in Alabama in 1988. Prior to 1988, soliciting for the purpose of purchasing drugs was classified as a misdemeanor. The Alabama Legislature, with the assistance of the Jefferson County District Attorney's Office and the Birmingham Police Department, made the crime a felony. The change rendered soliciting drugs subject to the same penalty as exchanging drugs.

Because of the new status of the offense, narcotics detectives set up a sting operation, Operation 'Caine Break, Phase II. Undercover officers posed as street-corner drug dealers, waiting for customers to drive up to them and ask to buy various drugs. To document the transaction carefully, the Technical Services Division set up a video and audio taping machine in a "boom box"—a large, portable stereo cassette player. An undercover officer held the machine on his shoulder and acted as if he were listening to music through stereo headsets. Inside the machine a video camera recorded the entire transaction. The headsets were connected to a radio

necessary to ensure their safety. The deputy district attorney explained the legal aspects of the operation and instructed officers on what to do and not to do in certain circumstances. Role playing and a series of trial runs were conducted to familiarize each officer with the proper procedures. Bullet-proof vests were required of everyone working on the sting operation.

The sting operations began August 1, 1988. Usually the drug transaction unfolded as follows. A customer drove up to the undercover officers who stood on a street corner in Goldwire or another section of the city where drug trafficking was active. The officers asked the person what he wanted. When he named a particular drug, the undercover officers asked to see his money. Once he showed the money, the deal was consummated and the Alabama State law governing drug conspiracy was satisfied. Rather than engaging in an actual exchange of goods, however, the undercover officer said something like, "Hey, I see a cop down the street. Go around the block and come back and get your stuff." This forced the buyer to drive around the corner.

When the driver left the scene of the drug solicitation, uniformed officers in a marked vehicle stopped the car. The occupants of the car were asked to show their driver's licenses or other documents of identification, which the officers recorded. At times suspects were issued traffic tickets for violations such as driving with a suspended license, but no arrests were made then regarding drug activity.

During the interview by the uniformed officer the suspects were told that the police were making routine stops because the area was known for drug activity and was dangerous. This sequence of events was also video recorded through a camera strategically located in the patrol car. By lining up the patrol car directly behind the suspect vehicle's rear tail-light and focusing the video camera correctly, the officers made a clear recording.

Additionally, when the patrol officers asked suspects to get out of the car, they placed them in front of the patrol car facing the camera. This ensured clear pictures of the individual suspects.

From August 1 to October 31, the officers worked on Phase II of the project. On December 14 through 16, they served 83 arrest warrants, charging 80 people with soliciting for the purpose of obtaining narcotics. Of those charged, 53 lived in Birmingham, 24 lived in the suburbs or in other Alabama cities, and 3 were from out of State. Birmingham Police Department officers also seized 32 vehicles because the deals were conducted while the buyers were in their cars. After seizing the cars, the police began civil forfeiture procedures to gain ownership of the vehicles.

For both phases, the department conducted large-scale "bust-outs." As previously mentioned, patrol officers and narcotics detectives served the arrest warrants during 3-day periods in November and December. This maximized exposure by the media and informed the public and offenders of the police program. The police hoped to send a message to the community that drug traffickers were being dealt with and that both dealers and buyers were being held accountable for their actions. The Birmingham *Post-Herald* and the *Birmingham News* gave extensive coverage to the bust-outs. In addition, for each arrest phase, the chief and other members of the department gave a press conference to announce that Birmingham Police Department officers were serving arrest warrants. Newspaper reporters and television crews followed the arrest teams to the homes of suspects and recorded the events.

These bust-outs served other purposes as well. First, by delaying the arrest, the police protected the identities of the undercover officers from the dealers and buyers. Second, the strategy enabled the police to build strong cases against both parties. Since several straight buys were video recorded for each seller, identification and evidentiary problems were minimized. So too for the reverse buys. Testing the new State law and avoiding entrapment problems concerned Phase II officers. To alleviate these concerns, a deputy district attorney rode with the surveillance team and viewed all videotapes before filing charges.

to inform citizens that the department would be regularly and intensively policing areas in which street drug trafficking was a problem. The commander also wanted officers to engage in problem-solving policing once residents had indicated what types of problems were of major concern. Early in the project, the commander indicated that Gate City, a housing project in Beat 84, was a haven for drug dealers and a crime-prone neighborhood. He noted that more police-citizen contacts and problem-solving efforts might make a difference in this area. Because the demographic characteristics of the area compared favorably to other sites, it was selected as the community policing beat.

Initially, six police officers were assigned to conduct interviews and distribute pamphlets about crime prevention to the residents of Gate City. Questionnaires developed by research staff and police officers asked citizens about crime in their neighborhood, the nature and whereabouts of drug trafficking, the relative condition of their neighborhood, and what they felt should be done about the problems. In addition, the Crime Prevention Unit within the department requested that officers distribute a pamphlet on crime prevention. Research staff conducted a 6-hour training session on community policing for 15 officers of the East Precinct. Eleven patrol officers, two sergeants, a lieutenant, and the crime prevention officer attended the training session.

The session had several goals. First, research staff explained the importance of the project to the officers and their supervisors. Second, officers and staff developed the questionnaire. Third, officers received training in door-to-door policing techniques. Fourth, research staff elicited the support of the officers through active participation. Each of these goals was achieved, and six officers agreed to participate in the project.

Additionally, the session served to alert the sergeants that patrol officers would be making contacts with citizens rather than answering calls for service during particular hours of their shifts. The repercussions of this activity would be felt by other officers who would have to respond to the calls for service forgone by the patrol officers on door-to-door duty. The commander foresaw that both the sergeants and other patrol officers should be informed of these changes. By including relevant actors in the

training session, the research staff hoped that tension between officers involved in the experiment and those outside it would be alleviated.

A list of households in the target beats was generated, and weekly assignments were given to each officer. The East Precinct commander and the onsite research assistant supervised activities.

The initial contacts began September 15, 1988, and continued until February 28, 1989. During this 5-month period officers completed 344 interviews out of 598 occupied households (57.5 percent), an experience almost identical to that of Oakland.[5]

Those who were interviewed answered questions fully and provided insight into the nature of problems in the neighborhoods. Usually, the interviews lasted from 5 to 10 minutes. Black females were the primary respondents.

Table 14 presents a summary of the responses to the questions about the first and second most important problems in the neighborhoods. Not surprisingly, "drugs" was mentioned by a plurality of residents (44.8 percent). In addition, other problems were associated with drug dealers, buyers, and users, such as shootings and violence, burglaries, and robberies.

Table 14

Distribution of Problems Mentioned in Directed Police-Citizen Contacts (in descending order of mentions)

Gate City		
Type of problem	**Number of mentions**	**Percent**
Drugs	238	44.8
Shootings/violence	84	15.8
Burglary/robbery	83	15.6
Juveniles	27	5.1
Poverty/unemployment	20	3.8

Answering calls for service was a major problem. During these 2 months, calls increased in Beat 84 and surrounding locations, particularly for burglaries and petty thefts. Because it was the Christmas season, retail businesses and shopping malls were demanding more services from patrol officers in the East Precinct. Officers who had volunteered for survey work could devote only a limited amount of time per day to that activity. In some cases, officers stopped conducting surveys entirely. The officers were not constantly present in Gate City, as planned.

A more serious problem emerged in late February. The commander who had been instrumental in the development and encouragement of the program, was abruptly transferred from his command to the Operations Division to supervise records and communications. The move was directly related to the problems with calls for service and to the department's lack of information on the value of community policing.

The shift in personnel disappointed the research staff and the officers involved in the project. Although the commander's replacement was willing to allow completion of the interviews, the department did not fully understand or undertake the problem-solving efforts that form part of community policing. While the door-to-door interviews were completed as quickly and as thoroughly as possible, the plan to conduct problem solving was curtailed and eventually abandoned.

Because of these problems with the door-to-door component, the research staff had low expectations regarding the effectiveness of this approach to control drug trafficking. The four officers were enthusiastic about the project, but enthusiasm did not compensate for factors external to the project.

Unanticipated Change: The Police Substation

During a 14-day period in August 1988, 11 persons were shot in Kingston, the area designated as the control beat. One person was killed and 10 were wounded in eight separate incidents. The police determined that many of these shootings were drug related, that is, victims were reportedly shot because drug deals had gone awry. In the aftermath of these

events, the residents, public housing authority, and police made changes that affected the nature of the research evaluation.

The major changes came about because of community demands for more security and the efforts of a newly appointed housing authority official in the city. Residents and public housing officials worked with the police to eliminate the shootings, violence, and drug problem in the Morton Simpson Village housing project in Kingston.

The housing authority director made wholesale changes immediately after the violence began. He ordered the repair of street lights, began a cleanup campaign, and transferred additional security officers to Morton Simpson Village. In addition, at his request, the police increased patrols in the neighborhoods.

Citizens also held anti-drug rallies in August and October to show their dismay with the drug problem and to show that they supported the police and public housing authority.

With the assistance of the housing authority, the police opened a substation in Morton Simpson Village on October 22. The substation was an apartment within the housing project, fortified by heavy wire mesh, with a front door protected by iron bars. The Birmingham police staffed the station with four patrol units (eight officers) 24 hours a day. This meant perpetual police presence and visibility. It was also strong indication that community-oriented policing could become a reality in Birmingham.

Early newspaper accounts indicated that citizens were pleased with the changes. The Birmingham *Post-Herald* reported that some residents' fears were allayed (*Post-Herald,* October 22, 1988) and that residents were anxious to work with the police to fight the drugs and crime problem (*Post-Herald,* October 26, 1988).

'Caine Break treatment. The highly visible, aggressive buy-busts of the Oakland police were not a part of the initial repertoire of the Birmingham narcotics detectives.

As in Oakland, the study's primary concern in Birmingham was to determine the effect of these programs on community perceptions of drug trafficking, quality of life, satisfaction with police services, fear of crime, and victimization.

In all three experimental beats—Goldwire, which received Operation 'Caine Break; Gate City, which received door-to-door police-citizen contacts; and Kingston, which received the police substation—the project focused on changes in citizen perceptions of the following over the 9-month period of the experiment:

- The drug trafficking problem.
- Quality of life.
- Property and personal crime.
- Police services.
- Safety from crime.

It was anticipated that the degree of impact would vary across the treatment areas based on the observations and implementation of the programs.

As in Oakland, to examine these effects, the research staff used measures from the citizen survey. Prior to implementation of the programs and 9 months after they began, citizens were asked a series of questions about drugs, police, and their neighborhoods. Attitudes of the panel of citizens in each beat helped define the effectiveness of the programs. Models for the multivariate analyses of these data can be found in Appendix B.

Citizen Perceptions of Drug Trafficking

As anticipated, citizens did not change their perceptions of drug trafficking in the areas that received narcotics enforcement or the door-to-door contacts. In Kingston, however, where a police substation was established, residents perceived that police had improved their ability to control street-level drug trafficking.

Citizen Perceptions of Quality of Life

The quality of life improved significantly for Kingston residents. Life in the area had become a better place to live, and the analysis indicates that the police substation was a significant reason for the change in perceptions by residents.

Citizen Perceptions of Property and Personal Crime

Citizen perceptions of property crime changed significantly in Gate City and Kingston. In Gate City, residents perceived that an *increase* in break-ins, stolen cars, and thefts occurred from Wave 1 to Wave 2. Conversely, in Kingston, the perception of cars being stolen decreased. These findings suggest that the door-to-door campaign increased the awareness and perception of citizens regarding property crime. Because the residents were more aware of the problems, they saw that property crime had increased as a problem at Time 2. This coincides with the increase in reported property crime within Gate City (see table 17 and accompanying text).

Citizen perceptions regarding violent crimes of robbery and sexual assault did not change in the intervention areas.

Citizen Perceptions of Police Services

Citizen perceptions of police services changed significantly. In the community policing models, the intervention that occurred in Kingston accounts for the significant results. Residents in Kingston perceived that the police were more responsive to their concerns, that the police aided victims, that they worked together with residents to solve problems, that they were spending time in the neighborhood, and that they were keeping order. These findings are not surprising given the active police presence and visibility created by the new substation. They are a positive reflection of

hood concerns and police improvement in maintaining order.

Citizen Perceptions of Safety

Citizen perceptions of safety did not change in the three areas from Time 1 to Time 2. Residents continued to worry about crime and were fearful about going out at night.

Additional Resident Perceptions

During the second wave of interviews the residents were asked additional questions about police performance, with particular emphasis on controlling drug trafficking. Table 15 shows the citizen responses to questions relating to the control of the drug problem.

Residents were asked, "How effective do you think the police are in reducing the amount of drug selling and buying on the streets in this neighborhood by arresting drug dealers and buyers?" Answers could range from very ineffective to very effective. Across all three beats 75 percent of the residents perceived police to be somewhat effective or very effective in their efforts.

A second question was, "Compared to 6 months ago, would you say the problem of drug selling and buying on the streets in this neighborhood has gotten much better, much worse, or stayed the same?" Responses were consistent across the three beats, although well over half the citizens in Kingston and Goldwire perceived that the problem had improved compared with 46 percent in Gate City. More important, only about 20 percent of the residents believed that the drug problem had worsened.

These responses do not directly measure changes in attitudes over the period of the quasi-experiment. Coupled with the results of the regression analyses, however, they indicate that Birmingham citizens had a positive view of police work in their neighborhoods.

Two additional questions on the police substation and its impact were asked of residents in Gate City, Kingston, and Goldwire. Table 16 reports the responses to those inquiries. First, citizens were asked if they had heard of the substation. All of the respondents in Kingston had heard about it, 83 percent in Gate City, and 74 percent in Goldwire.

Table 15			
Citizen Perceptions of Police Effectiveness in Reducing Drug Trafficking Wave 2 Responses in Percent			
How effective are police in reducing drug trafficking?			
	Gate City	**Kingston**	**Goldwire**
Ineffective	21.9% (30)	24.4% (28)	28.6% (32)
Effective	78.1% (108)	78.1% (87)	71.4% (80)
Totals	100% (138)	100% (115)	100% (112)
How has drug trafficking changed in Birmingham over 6 months?			
	Gate City	**Kingston**	**Goldwire**
Worse	18.5% (24)	18.7% (24)	20.2% (23)
Same	35.4% (46)	26.6% (34)	23.7% (27)
Better	46.2% (60)	54.7% (70)	56.2% (64)
Totals	100% (130)	100% (128)	100% (114)

Then they were asked, "How effective do you think the substation has been in reducing drug-related crimes?" In all three beats, more than 72 percent of the residents believed that the substation was either somewhat effective or very effective in reducing drug-related crime. Goldwire residents were the most skeptical, with 27 percent indicating that it was either not very effective or not at all effective. Residents in Gate City were the most positive, with almost 86 percent responding that the substation was at least somewhat effective in reducing drug-related crime.

Crime Data

To measure the impact of the programs on reported crime, the research staff analyzed data received from the Birmingham Police Department over a 33-month period (January 1, 1987, to September 30, 1989). Data for Part I offenses for each of the treatment beats were provided by the Crime Analysis Unit of the Birmingham Police Department.

Resident Perceptions of the Substation Wave 2 Responses in Percent			
Have you heard about the substation?			
	Gate City	**Kingston**	**Goldwire**
No	16.8% (25)	0% (0)	26.0% (32)
Yes	83.2% (124)	100% (138)	74.0% (91)
Totals	100% (149)	100% (138)	100% (123)
How effective is the police substation in reducing drug-related crime?			
	Gate City	**Kingston**	**Goldwire**
Not at all	10.2% (12)	9.2% (12)	6.1% (6)
Not very	4.2% (5)	7.6% (10)	21.2% (21)
Somewhat	48.3% (57)	48.1% (63)	44.4% (44)
Very	37.3% (44)	35.1% (46)	28.3% (28)
Totals	100% (118)	100% (131)	100% (99)

Citywide Crime Patterns

The number of property crimes (burglaries, thefts, and auto thefts) reported to the police throughout the city remained fairly stable during the entire 33-month period of study. However, violent crimes (homicides, rapes, robberies, and aggravated assaults) increased.

The pattern of violent crime is similar to that of other cities in which there have been rapid increases in violence, particularly drug-related violence.

Gate City

During the preexperimental phase, residents in Gate City experienced about 12.4 violent crimes and about 60 property crimes per month. During the time that residents received the door-to-door contacts, violent crimes dropped to about 10 per month but property crimes increased to 69 per month, a decrease in violent crimes of about 16 percent and an increase of 9 percent in property crimes. When the door-to-door interviews ceased (Time 3), the trends continued; violent crimes decreased and property crimes increased slightly. Thus, for the entire period of the study, property crimes increased and violent crimes decreased.

Table 17

Gate City, Goldwire, and Citywide Crime

Mean Number of Crimes per Month and Percent Change

Gate City	**Time 1 before experiment**	**Time 2 door-to-door**	**% change**	**Time 3 no door-to-door**	**% change**
Violent crime	12.4	10.3	-16.4	9.3	-9.7
Property crime	60.0	69.0	+15.0	72.0	+4.3
Goldwire	**Time 1 before experiment**	**Time 2 enforcement**	**% change**	**Time 3 no enforcement**	**% change**
Violent crime	17.9	18.7	+4.5	16.6	-11.2
Property crime	70.4	66.8	-5.1	66.1	-1.0
Citywide*	**Time 1 before experiment**	**Time 2**	**% change**	**Time 3**	**% change**
Violent crime	251.3	223.5	-11.1	353.4	+58.1
Property crime	1,812.5	1,708.0	-5.8	1,996.0	+16.9

*Excludes data from the target and control beats.

Time 1 = January 1, 1987, to August 31, 1988 (20 months)
Time 2 = September 1, 1988, to March 31, 1989 (6 months)
Time 3 = April 1, 1989, to September 30, 1989 (7 months)

Table 18

Kingston and Citywide Crime

Mean Number of Crimes per Month and Percent Change

Kingston			
	Time 1 before experiment	**Time 2 substation**	**% change**
Violent crimes	16.9	19.5	+15.4
Property crimes	61.4	61.9	+ .8
Citywide*			

crimes dropped. At Time 3, violent crimes continued their downward trend in Gate City (-9.7 percent) but increased dramatically in the rest of the city (58 percent).

Goldwire

Residents in Goldwire were subjected to almost 18 violent crimes and 70 property crimes per month prior to implementation of Operation 'Caine Break. Once the beat experienced the buy-bust and sting operations during Time 2, property crimes went down (about 5 percent), while violent crimes increased by about 4.5 percent. When the area reverted to its preexperimental stage, the number of violent crimes decreased while property crimes stayed relatively stable. In contrast, the data for the entire city show that during Time 3 violent crimes jumped by 58 percent and property crimes increased by almost 17 percent.

These data suggest that the enforcement efforts of Operation 'Caine Break may have had a lag effect on the reporting of property and violent crimes. Without such efforts by detectives, the crime pattern in Goldwire might have matched citywide patterns.

Kingston

Kingston received the police substation during Time 2. Table 18 depicts the mean number of violent and property crimes for Kingston and the city of Birmingham. The table is divided into two time periods. Time 1 represents the 20-month period prior to implementation of the substation. Time 2 represents the 13-month period of implementation. Column 3 shows the percent change that occurred between Time 1 and Time 2.

In Kingston, at Time 2, violent crimes increased by about 15 percent, while violent crimes throughout the city increased by 23 percent. Reported property crime remained relatively stable in Kingston but increased slightly in the rest of the city. These findings suggest that the police substation had a minimal effect on actual reporting of crimes to the police. When comparisons to citywide patterns are drawn, the reported crimes in Kingston are clearly of lesser magnitude but not significantly so.

Summary of Crime Data

The patterns that emerge in these data suggest that the door-to-door component had a beneficial effect on the control of violent criminal acts. The presence and visibility of officers within the neighborhood may have re-

duced violent behavior in some individuals. While residents in two of the three experimental beats perceived that property crime had gone down, reported property crimes actually increased slightly in the three beats as a group. This may well be a useful consequence of the door-to-door interviews, in that officers encouraged residents to call the police when they witnessed suspicious activities. In Goldwire, the findings show that the treatment had an effect after a lag of 3 months. In Kingston, there were no significant changes in reported crime resulting from the police substation.

Overall Impact in Birmingham

Operation 'Caine Break

The Birmingham police received a tremendous amount of positive press coverage for their activities in Operation 'Caine Break. The two large-scale sweeps of suspects or "bust-outs" were successful because of the press reports and because the police were able to apprehend a high proportion (over 90 percent) of the suspects they sought. The narcotics detectives also believed that they had sent drug traffickers a message that the city fully intended to apprehend, charge, and convict both dealers and buyers in the drug trade.

In both phases of the operation studied, the narcotics detectives were well-trained, organized, and thorough in their work. Their concerns for safety were impressive given the dangers inherent in drug enforcement activities. Equally notable was their commitment to follow proper legal procedures. Issues of entrapment, search and seizure, stop and frisk, proper field interrogations, and probable cause were emphasized throughout the project.

Yet Operation 'Caine Break was expensive, particularly the sting operation. During the 3-month period of Phase II, approximately 10 individuals were involved in the operation on a 4-hour-per-day basis: four patrol officers acted as backups and identifiers of the buyers; two undercover officers worked the street-corners; two surveillance technicians monitored the equipment; one supervisor selected target areas and managed the operation; and one deputy district attorney ensured that the solicitations fol-

videotaped buys. Residents were not expected to see arrests on a regular basis, so the impact on community attitudes was limited.

Instead, the experiment relied on reported crime as an indicator of success or failure of the operation. A reduction in crime seems to have taken place after a lag of 3 months in the area that received the buy-busts and sting operation. As previously noted, violent and property crimes declined in Goldwire.

Community Policing

In Birmingham, community policing took two forms: police-citizen contacts through door-to-door interviews and the establishment of a police substation in a public housing development.

While there had been hope for a more intensive use of the police-citizen contacts, the results were nonetheless positive. Although the police substation was an unanticipated event, the demands from the community and officials of the public housing authority could not be ignored. The willingness of the police to establish such a station is laudable. Clearly, it affected the residents in Morton Simpson Village, as the results of the citizen survey indicate.

The findings from this study show that these treatments had dramatic effects on citizen perceptions of quality of life, property crime, and satisfaction with police services. In addition, violent crimes reported to the police declined substantially in Gate City, where the police citizen contacts occurred.

In sum, the study found that:

- Narcotics detectives achieved success in terms of drug arrests and positive press coverage about Operation 'Caine Break; there was possibly a reduction in property crime as well.
- Residents in Kingston were more satisfied with the way police handled neighborhood problems and victims, worked with residents, and maintained order in the neighborhood after the establishment of the police substation.

- Residents in Kingston perceived that cars were not stolen as often as before.
- Residents in Gate City saw that police were more responsive to community concerns and that police were spending more time in their neighborhood after the door-to-door interviews.
- In Gate City a notable decline took place in reported homicides, rape, assault, and robbery following the door-to-door interviews.
- Residents in Gate City, Goldwire, and Kingston did not change their perceptions of drug trafficking as a problem.

Notes

1. One reason, among others, that crack cocaine has become popular is that its purity is higher than that of powder cocaine. The police believe that crack has not been widely accepted in Birmingham because it is roughly equivalent in quality to powder cocaine.

2. The role of the onsite observer in Birmingham was less encompassing than that of the observer in Oakland. This was due, in part, to the different methods employed by the narcotics detectives in Birmingham. Because the activities were more controlled in Birmingham, keeping track of the detectives was far easier than for SDU-3 in Oakland. "Freelancing" was not a part of the routine in the Birmingham Police Department and thus was not a day-to-day concern for the research staff.

3. A third phase involving the "quick buy and bust" began in the spring of 1989 but was not a part of this evaluation.

4. Unlike the situation in Oakland, white undercover officers could buy drugs with relative ease from the black sellers in Birmingham. Detectives reported that a number of buyers were from the suburban and rural areas of Birmingham, where the population is predominantly white.

5. Baseline figures for occupied households come from the 1980 census estimates. This is a conservative figure because it does not take into consideration the net outmigration that occurred in Birmingham during the recession of the early 1980's. The officers who conducted the door-to-door efforts often noted on the interview sheets that 25 houses or apartments were vacant. If their observa-

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

The Oakland Experience

Special drug enforcement units have become commonplace within police agencies across the country especially in combating drug trafficking. Recently the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) reported that 65 percent of the departments that responded to its questionnaire used special units for saturation patrols in particular areas (IACP, 1989). Oakland's SDU-3 was not very different from other squads that have been established in police agencies. Like the officers in Lynn and Lawrence, Massachusetts, and those in New York City's Operation Pressure Point or Washington, D.C.'s Operation Clean Sweep, this unit targeted street-level drug traffickers.

Unlike other programs, however, SDU-3, with six officers and a sergeant, confined its activities to two experimental areas for 6 months. Through this intensified effort, drug trafficking virtually ceased in one beat and was noticeably reduced in the other. More important, citizen reaction to these efforts was encouraging—residents saw the decline in street-level buying and selling and continued to view the police in a positive way.

The implementation of the community-oriented aspect of the program was less than expected but still showed positive results. As noted in chapter 3, the police-citizen contacts were less than comprehensive; considerable resistance emerged from both officers and supervisors involved regarding the philosophies and approaches of "community policing." While one police officer and seven police services technicians eventually fulfilled the assignments allocated to them and interviewed a higher percentage of persons in households than in the Newark or Houston fear-reduction experiments, followups with residents and problem-solving efforts never

more a traditional police-community relations program. The effort fell short of the models established elsewhere regarding community policing. This likely occurred because of the focus on traditional policing that pervades the department.

The chief's effort to bring community policing into his department was a noble idea. But it could not take shape fully because of the department's view that responding to calls for service was the most efficient way to serve the community. Other biases appeared to work against the community-oriented idea in Oakland. One deputy chief remarked early in the program that he viewed door-to-door interviews as "merely social work." Watch commanders saw little value in sending officers into the neighborhoods to talk with citizens about problems when they could be answering calls for service. Furthermore, the commanders believed they knew where the problems were and felt they could deal with them on their own.

Ironically and somewhat paradoxically, the *attempt* at the new wave of policing did have a positive effect on the community. Had the fullest efforts been attempted or even understood, the results could well have been even more apparent. For now, however, the small step that was made will have to suffice.

Overall, the context for these efforts should not be ignored. Like other police agencies, the Oakland Police Department was confronted with a severe drug and crime problem in 1987. In the last 3 years, however, the department has managed to control and perhaps stabilize the drug problem. With a relatively small number of sworn personnel of some 600 officers in a densely populated area, the police department has contained the violence and crime that are so often related to drug trafficking. In the long run, through the traditional, professional efforts of special duty units, vice narcotics, and patrol officers, and with a concerned community, the City of Oakland appears to have brought street-level drug trafficking under control. What remains untested, however, is the effect that community policing, applied with commitment, would have had on drug trafficking.

The Birmingham Experience

Sting operations, or "reverse buys," have become popular in a number of police agencies in targeting the buyers of illicit drugs. Making the user accountable for his or her actions has become another component of

the war on drugs. Unlike other police agencies, Birmingham's Operation 'Caine Break made use of video and audiotaping within its program. Police detectives were wary of charges of entrapment by defendants, so they employed a deputy district attorney who oversaw their activities.

As in the Oakland experiment, the officers and detectives in the Birmingham Police Department confined their activities to experimental areas. Through this effort, it was possible to make important determinations about their work. While drug trafficking itself was not noticeably reduced in the selected target areas, the door-to-door contacts in Gate City and the establishment of a substation in Kingston had a significant impact on citizen perceptions of property crimes, police services, quality of life, and safety.

In the door-to-door interviews, officers completed their assignments sporadically because of difficulties in responding to calls for service, although still at a higher rate than in previous such experiments. Unfortunately, followups with residents and problem-solving efforts were not attempted in Birmingham. The transfer of the captain of the door-to-door beat to another assignment and the loss of momentum by the line officers resulted in failure to fully implement this form of community policing in Birmingham, as in Oakland.

An unintended success was the establishment of the police substation in Kingston. Kingston was originally designated as the control area, but the residents and the housing authority insisted on police support after a series of drug-related shootings ravaged the area. The work of the housing authority and the residents in mobilizing support for the substation led to its relatively quick establishment by police administrators.

Like Oakland, however, the Birmingham Police Department efforts in community policing were more like a traditional police-community relations program. The efforts fell short of the community policing philosophy and

- Carefully supervised special narcotics units should use high-visibility patrol and buy-busts as a means to control street-level drug trafficking in areas where it is prevalent.
- More exchange of information on crime should take place between special narcotics enforcement units, community police officers, and neighborhood residents.
- Police substations should be established to bring the police closer to neighborhoods that have high levels of drug activity.
- Door-to-door contacts should be conducted in areas experiencing high levels of crime and drug activity so that officers may become visible and supportive of residents.
- Video equipment should be used in sting operations to avoid questions of entrapment and other constitutional issues.
- Community policing should be tested further, with a stronger commitment by police to view the community as partners in the control of crime and drug trafficking.

Appendix A: Multivariate Analysis of the Oakland Project

The analyses included iterative regression models using the method of ordinary least squares. They used the dependent variables of citizen perceptions of drug trafficking, quality of life, property and personal crimes, satisfaction with police services, and worry about safety. To explain the change in perceptions from within the panel survey, new variables were constructed by taking the difference between Wave 1 and Wave 2 questions (posttest scores minus pretest scores) along several dimensions.

For each critical dependent variable the following model was used to find whether the changes were attributable to the treatment:

Y = a + b*Treatment + b* covariates

Where

Y = Posttest scores – pretest scores;

Treatment = Dummy variables for Group1 (Beat 7); Group3 (Beat 25); and Group4 (Beat 34);

Covariates (respondent characteristics) = age, sex, education, victimization, vicarious victimization, total income, employment status, marital status, and race; and

a = constant.

A second model was also used that accounted for individual treatment effects. It included two independent variables that indicated whether the respondent had seen a drug arrest (Q60) or was contacted as part of the door-to-door interview process (Q62). The model was constructed as follows:

Y = a + b*Treatment + b*Individual treatment + covariates

Where

Y = Posttest scores – pretest scores;

Treatment = Dummy variables for Group1 (Beat 7); Group3 (Beat 25); and Group4 (Beat 34);

Criminal Justice Data at the University of Michigan, 800–999–0960, to obtain the data. For more information on the Data Resources Program, contact Dr. Pamela Lattimore at the National Institute of Justice, 202–307–2961, or Sociometrics Corporation, 170 State Street, Suite 260, Los Altos, CA 94022 (415–949–3282)

Notes

1. Craig D. Uchida, Brian Forst, and Sampson O. Annan, *op. cit.*

Appendix B: Multivariate Analysis of the Birmingham Project

As with Oakland, the analysis used the dependent variables of citizen perceptions of drug trafficking, quality of life, property and personal crimes, satisfaction with police services, and worry about safety. To explain the change in perceptions from within the panel survey, new variables were constructed by taking the difference between Wave 1 and Wave 2 questions (posttest scores minus pretest scores) a long several dimensions.

For each critical dependent variable the following model was used to find whether the changes were attributable to the treatment:

Y = a + b*Treatment + b* covariates

Where

Y = Posttest scores – pretest scores;

Treatment = Dummy variables for Gate City and Kingston; a second run used Goldwire instead of the other two beats;

Covariates (respondent characteristics) = race, sex, education, victimization, vicarious victimization, total income, employment status, rent or own residence, and marital status,; and

a = constant.

A second model was also used that accounted for individual treatment effects. Two independent variables were included that showed whether the respondent had seen a drug arrest (Q59) or was contacted as part of the door-to-door interview process (Q61). The model was constructed as follows:

Y = a + b*Treatment + b*Individual treatment + covariates

Where

Y = Posttest scores – pretest scores;

Treatment = Dummy variables for Gate City; Kingston; and Goldwire;

cluding the control group from the regression equation, the results showed the effects of the treatments. For the Birmingham model, however, the lack of a control group led to use of a multivariate analysis that, in essence, compared the community-oriented approaches to the enforcement approach. Because the police substation was urged by the residents and public housing authority, and because it is reminiscent of storefront police offices established in the Houston experiment, the intervention was treated as an element of community-oriented policing.

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The Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, establishes the policies and priorities, and manages and coordinates

About the Police Foundation

The Police Foundation was established in 1970 by the Ford Foundation. Its mission is to improve policing and reduce crime in America through research, technical assistance, and communication. It has conducted seminal research in police behavior, policy, and procedure.

The foundation played a pivotal role in the development of community policing, paved the way for the advancement of women in policing, and is breaking new ground with its comparative studies of large urban police departments. It provides technical assistance and training to government at all levels, as well as to private institutions concerned with public safety. In recent years, the foundation has developed model programs designed to help municipalities improve relations between the police and the community, adopt policies that foster cultural sensitivity, and reduce the use of excessive force by the police.

A sampling of the Police Foundation's contributions to policing in the two decades since its inception closely follows the evolution of progressive policing:

- Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment—raised questions about the priority given to preventive patrol; it suggested that as much as 60 percent of the time officers spent on patrol could be spent on more productive activities.
- Newark Foot Patrol Experiment—encouraged a reexamination and ultimately a revival of an effective approach to police patrol.
- D.C. Policewomen on Patrol Study—pointed out the advantages and disadvantages of hiring female patrol officers; relatively minor differences were found, thus encouraging departments to hire more females and enlarging the pool of qualified applicants for police jobs.
- D.C. Repeat Offender Project—found that programs to identify and apprehend repeat offenders can, if properly managed, keep those who commit a disproportionate amount of crime off the streets.
- Newark and Houston Fear Reduction Experiments—provided empirical evidence of the effectiveness of community policing techniques.
- The Big Six Project—a pioneering study done in partnership with the New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, Houston, and Detroit police departments laid the groundwork for information exchange and cooperation between the Nation's premier law enforcement agencies.
- The Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Safety and Community Relations: Report to Prince George's County, and the Review of Administrative Processes of the Tampa Police Department—two technical assistance projects that significantly improved the operations of police departments in communities struggling to ease racial tensions and build trust and respect between the citizenry and police.

Today, the Police Foundation continues to pursue a broad agenda devoted to its mission of improving policing in