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# Community characteristics and policing styles in suburban agencies

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**Abstract** *Recent policing reforms have strongly emphasized the role of community context in determining the form and content of effective policing, along with the traditional influence of organizational structures. Recognizing the increasing suburbanization of US communities, this study examines the empirical support for the underlying contextual and structural premises of these reforms in a sample of midwestern suburban communities. Merging data from a telephone survey of 194 municipal police departments in the five counties of the Chicago metropolitan statistical area with data on communities from other government sources, multiple regression was used to assess the relative importance of community context and organizational structure factors in accounting for differences in departmental policing styles. The findings both support and contradict some basic assumptions of current community-oriented policing reforms, as well as some of the findings of prior studies. They underline the importance of empirically testing our theoretical assumptions in all types of community settings.*

## Introduction

Recent developments in policing in the USA have heavily emphasized the idea of community. A central premise is that there is no single universal formula for how a police department should look and operate; rather, policing should be responsive to and shaped by local circumstances. Singular decontextualized models of policing imposed without regard for local conditions and contingencies will be inappropriate and ineffective. In its currently popular form, the community-oriented policing (COP) framework represents the formal expression of these ideas, while acknowledging there is considerable disagreement about the exact content of this framework (Buerger, 1994; Cordner, 1997; Maguire and Mastrofski, 2000; Mastrofski, 1998).

Parallel to the police emphasis on community has been a pronounced trend to suburbanization as a dominant feature of modern life (Palen, 1995). While an increasing proportion of the US population is living in metropolitan areas, many cities are in fact declining in population as well as economic vitality. An increasing proportion of the population now lives in metropolitan areas outside the central cities. As of 1990, a majority (59.5 percent) of the metropolitan population of the USA lived in the suburbs rather than in the central cities, a



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figure that climbed to about 63 percent in 1999 (Census Bureau, 2000). Thus, most people being policed and most policing activities are in suburban communities, rather than cities; although the latter have been the almost exclusive focus of traditional police research, theory, and policy development.

Despite these two major developments, recent published research and scholarship on policing have not systematically incorporated community variables into their empirical analyses. As a result, despite a decade-long debate about the adoption of COP programs and a rapidly expanding body of research describing their implementations, there is still little theoretically explicated and empirically verified knowledge about how policing varies across communities, or how community conditions influence local features of policing. Paradoxically, most implementations of COP have afforded little analytical attention to defining explicitly what a community involves and to specifying which community variables should be most important in describing how a community gets policed. Thus, despite the recent focus on the importance of community in policing, there are still no systematically explicated, empirically-grounded theoretical models to predict which community variables should be most influential in shaping the kinds of policing organizations and practices in a community, or to predict how these will influence the adoption of particular policing programs – including COP.

In addition to lacking an explicit theory from which to predict community variations in policing, we also lack general, empirically descriptive data from which to suggest what these community-level patterns might be. Despite a recent virtual growth industry in studies of community policing, most of which deal with limited local samples of police agencies, but also include a number of large national surveys of community policing practices (e.g. Hickman and Reaves, 2001; Maguire, 1997a, b; Maguire *et al.*, 1997; Trojanowicz, 1994), there is still no comprehensive empirical picture of what COP looks like across the thousands of police agencies in the USA. We lack systematic, empirical research that comprehensively measures a full range of community variables and explicitly includes them in the analysis[1]. Thus, much of the received knowledge about the social organization of policing in the USA, as well as the current debate about the dynamics of community-oriented policing, seems to be guided mainly by intuition and ideology rather than by systematic, empirical findings.

Lack of systematic consideration of community conditions also means that policing research generally fails to acknowledge the profound suburbanization that has occurred in the USA, which Klofas (2000) has likened to an “elephant in the living room” of contemporary policing scholarship, i.e. everyone knows it is there, but no one openly addresses it. Discussions of community policing are regularly predicated on assumptions about idealized and self-regulating communities that seem to represent ideological projections about the way things “used to be” or “are supposed to be”. It is, however, a decontextualized

conception of community at odds with existing demographic realities (Buerger, 1994; Klofas, 2000). This means that much of the received wisdom about what COP looks like and how it works may not apply well to most contemporary policing situations.

Very little empirical research has been done on the attributes and dynamics of suburban policing patterns. For example, a computerized literature search of journal articles having anything to do with suburban police departments spanning the period 1975 through 2001 produced only a handful of citations; and most were qualitative descriptive case studies of a few selected communities. Furthermore, a review of contemporary policing texts showed a similar dearth of attention to suburban policing. Despite the thousands of suburban police departments that surround the major urban centers in the USA, no college-level policing text includes a section dealing specifically with the characteristics of suburban police departments.

The research described in this paper is a step toward addressing both of the omissions noted above in the current research literature on policing by focusing on the:

- identification of distinctive empirical patterns in policing structures and operations across communities; and
- empirically grounded assessment of a general framework for further research and theory development on the community dynamics of policing.

In doing that, the analysis aims at an explicit measurement of community factors and an empirical examination of how these are predictive of the kinds of policing practiced in different suburban communities. This represents an avowedly inductive research strategy, rather than confirmatory, since we have no well-defined theoretical models to test. Nor is it really exploratory, because we do have a substantial assortment of prior theoretical suggestions and conceptualizations from which we have synthetically drawn our analytical framework.

#### *The analytical framework*

Any research dealing with community-level phenomena must confront the problem that, while widely recognized as a theoretically important idea, community is difficult to define with any precision and mostly is left undefined. While widely invoked in contemporary analyses of policing, the idea of community has been used as a “sensitizing concept,” rather than as a fully explicated and operationalized scientific construct. The analytical uses of the community concept in policing have been suggestive and discursive, rather than formally definitive. As a result, we have no fully explicated models of how the social, political, and economic characteristics of communities influence the organizational features or operations of police departments in those communities, or models that specify which community attributes should be

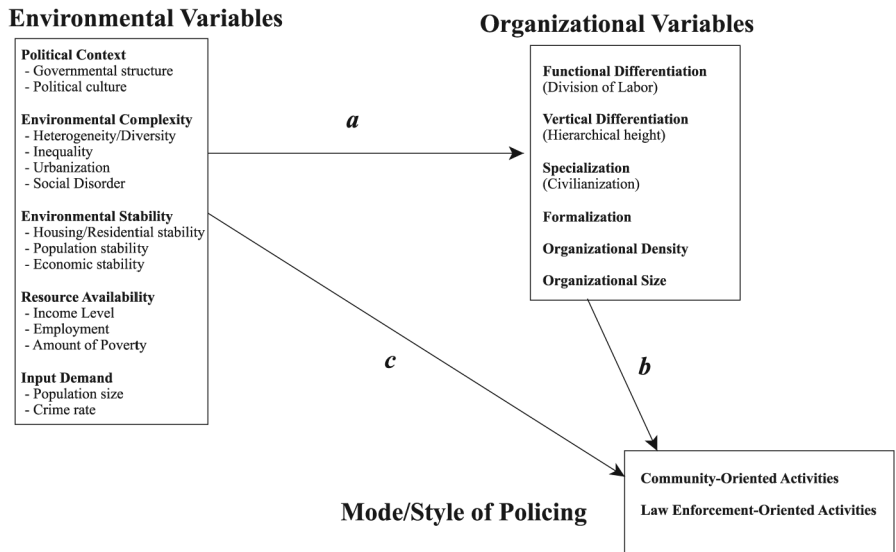
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included. To illustrate the difficulty, we note that of the dozens of publications of empirical studies on community policing, including the recent, large, national survey studies (for a summary see Maguire and Uchida, 2000), none provides an explicit discussion of what the term “community” means – either theoretically or operationally – or a systematic discussion of what are the important components of a community. Thus, the published literature on policing provides a variety of theoretically plausible, insightful, but loosely defined, conceptual frameworks for thinking about how police organizations are connected to their community environments, but none for specifying specific research hypotheses or appropriate measurement procedures[1].

In the absence of a well-defined theoretical model to generate specific research hypotheses, the analysis in this study is guided by a generalized analytical framework developed as a conceptual synthesis of numerous prior discussions of how community factors should theoretically influence the form and operation of policing organizations. We note, particularly Cardarelli and McDevitt (1995), Crank (1990), Davenport (1996), Langworthy (1986), Maguire (1997a, b), Slovak (1986), Wilson (2001), and Wilson (1968). The conceptual framework used here to describe relationships among community conditions, organizational features, and policing practices is rather simple. Its contents are familiar, developed as a conceptual amalgam of the diverse community factors and influences noted in prior studies, and presented here as a synthetic and comprehensive structure to guide our empirical analysis. The general causal framework is represented in the three-block diagram depicted in Figure 1, which separates variables into three conceptual groups and depicts the causal order among them. The three groups include:

- (1) community-environmental factors (the social/political/economic setting in which the police agency is located);
- (2) organizational structure factors (what the agency is as an organization and how it is set up); and
- (3) police operational modes (what the agency does and the manner by which these tasks are accomplished).

*Community context.* A variety of different researchers have included some considerations of community or environmental factors in their analyses, but these have been partial and selective inclusions of a few plausible (and readily measured) variables rather than comprehensive, multivariate analyses. The most fully developed accounts are those provided by Davenport (1996), Langworthy (1986), and Slovak (1986), but even these lack consensus on the essential components of community context. As a broad summary of prior descriptions, we conceptualized the community environment of police agencies in terms of five groups of factors, each multi-dimensional and describable by a variety of different empirical indicators[2]:



**Figure 1.**  
The analytical  
framework

- (1) The political context is the environment of formal power and influence structures in which the police agency is operating. This includes such factors as:
  - the specific governmental formats that authorize and regulate public agencies;
  - the formal structures of power and influence within the community;
  - the regulatory structure within which the police agency operates; and
  - the political culture of the community that shapes how events are interpreted and justified.
- (2) The social complexity of the community refers to the degree to which the social events in the agency's environment are simple, uniform, and amenable to routinized organizational procedures. This would include such factors as:
  - the social heterogeneity of the community;
  - the structure of systematic inequality within the community;
  - the degree of urbanization and crowding;
  - the physical scope or geographic diversity of the community; and
  - the amount of social disorganization or enduring conflict within the community.
- (3) The environmental instability of the community refers to the degree of turbulence, variability, disruption, and temporal unpredictability in

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community events or process – what Davenport (1996) termed “environmental dynamism.” This category would include such factors as:

- residential turnover;
  - shifts or fluctuations in population size or composition;
  - institutional disruptions involving changes in major social institutions; and
  - economic turbulence in employment or income levels.
- (4) The resource availability of the community reflects the extent to which material resources are available both to community residents and to police agency operations. This would include such socioeconomic factors as:
- the total or average wealth of the community;
  - the cultural capital in the community represented by its educational level;
  - the amount of employment available in the community;
  - the revenue or tax base of the community; and
  - the presence of severe amounts of poverty or economic need.
- (5) The input demand in the community involves all those features of the community that determine the volume of demand for police responses, services, or productive activities. This involves principally:
- the population size of the community (as the sheer volume of population to be policed); and
  - the amount of crime and disorder in the community (as the volume of problems to be handled).

*Organizational structure.* In describing the organizational form and structure of police agencies, the available research is more extensive and directly helpful; although, there is still wide diversity and no clear consensus regarding the specific dimensions of organizational structure. Synthesizing from the structural descriptions provided by Langworthy (1986, 1992), Maguire (1997a, b), and Davenport (1996), we identified four conceptual issues as basic for describing the organizational structure of police agencies:

- (1) Structural complexity has three distinct component dimensions within it that describe the internal diversity of police agencies as formal organizations:
- horizontal differentiation (referring to the formal partition of authority or task responsibility across subdivisions within the organization);
  - vertical differentiation (referring to the hierarchical height or number of distinct rank levels within the organization); and

- functional differentiation (referring to the degree of task specialization or performance of different jobs by different categories of persons within an organization).
- (2) Formalization involves the degree to which the activities in an organization are constrained, objectified, routinized, standardized, and made predictable according to a codified set of regulations, procedures, and policies. These should be reflected in formal mission statements, well-defined chains of command and communication, explicit hiring and training criteria, formal review and disciplinary procedures.
  - (3) Organizational density involves the relative concentration of the organization relative to its environment, i.e. its size relative to its input demands. Davenport (1996) used slightly different terms – organizational strength and departmental capacity – but they seem to reference the same concept. It could also be labeled as organizational intensity, which may be viewed as the obverse of organizational efficiency.
  - (4) Organizational size which simply (and obviously) involves the sheer mass of the agency as measured by the number of personnel, e.g. sworn police officers, who make up the employees and officials of the organization.

*Operational modes.* The third conceptual category in this framework deals with what police agencies characteristically do as task-oriented organizations and the manner in which they do it. The most common descriptive term for this is “policing styles,” but police scholars have used a variety of different labels that reference ostensibly the same idea, such as: operational strategies, modes of deployment, production strategies, operational codes, operational modes, organizational cultures, and orientational styles. All of these conceptually draw attention to the distinctive and varied patterns in policing activities across agencies, acknowledging that while all police departments must carry out common universal tasks, they may accomplish them in systematically different ways and in widely differing amounts, as the debate about COP amply illustrates.

While ubiquitously used, the concept of policing style is a rather ambiguous conceptual term that has resisted a clear, widely agreed upon definition. Numerous researchers have attempted to define and document distinct styles of policing, e.g. Langworthy (1986), Meagher (1985), Swanson (1978), Talarico and Swanson (1978), and especially Wilson (1968), but these invariably have been too narrowly conceptualized to account fully for the operational reforms associated with COP, and many have dealt with behavioral styles of individual officers, rather than organizational modes of operation. The present analysis relies on a simple, but widely cited, distinction between traditional law enforcement-oriented policing and community-oriented policing, implying that

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these describe radically different conceptual and operational frameworks for how police agencies look and work. This distinction is often depicted as a “paradigm shift”, entailing dramatic changes in the content of organizational culture and structure (e.g. Mastrofski, 1998), as well as “a radical redefinition of the police role and practices in the community” (Buerger, 1994).

Traditional police organizations place a high priority on their law enforcement function (which defines the essence of “real police work”) and on operating efficiently, impartially, and professionally in responding to law violations. This emphasizes well-trained, personally detached, specialized experts operating within rational, nonpolitical, rigorously disciplined, well ordered paramilitary organizations. In this mode of policing – also labeled as legalistic, bureaucratic, paramilitary, or traditional policing – police departments should be detached from their communities, technically specialized, and efficient. In contrast, agencies operating in the COP mode emphasize the coproduction of social order by police and community. This occurs through community engagement (relying on maintenance of close mutual connections between police and their community) and proactive problem solving (seeking to intervene effectively before criminal violations occur) (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 1994), both of which should result in less militarized, less distant, less bureaucratic, more democratic, less specialized, and less organizationally elaborate police organizations (Maguire, 1997a, b; Mastrofski, 1998).

*Causal structures.* Figure 1 arranges the three groups of variables into a simple, but theoretically plausible, causal order, intended to express our synthesis of the received wisdom upon which most current policing reforms are based (including COP). This wisdom presumes that to produce meaningful changes in how police work gets done, we need to make important substantive changes in the organizational structure of police departments, and that the content of those changes should correspond to the unique contextual features of the communities being policed (e.g. Maguire, 1997a, b; Mastrofski, 1998). This clearly presumes two fundamental causal premises:

- (1) a structural premise positing that how police work is actually accomplished (operational mode) depends strongly on how police departments are set up and organized (organizational structure); and
- (2) a contextual premise positing that what police agencies look like (organizational structure) and how they work (operational mode) is a result of, and should correspond closely to, the environmental conditions (the community context).

The general causal framework depicted in Figure 1 explicitly incorporates both of these premises, with the structural premise being represented by arrow b and the contextual premise by arrows a and c in the diagram.



## Methodology

### *Data set*

The data analyzed in this study were constructed by merging data from two primary sources:

- (1) interview data from a survey of suburban police departments in the Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area; and
- (2) Census Bureau data on the communities in which these departments are located from the *County and City Data Book* (Census Bureau, 1995).

The principle data on police organizations were collected by a telephone survey of 204 municipal police departments in five counties in the greater Chicago metropolitan area that were clearly suburban in residential and economic patterns (i.e. Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, and Will counties). All municipalities in these five counties were counted as “suburban” communities in this analysis. Two additional counties contained within the Chicago Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (i.e. McHenry and Grundy counties) were purposively excluded from the sample as not really suburban, but rather “rural fringe” counties that, while technically included in the CMSA (according to Census Bureau classification), were mostly rural in their settlement and economic patterns. The complete listing of police departments in the five selected counties was obtained from *Crime in Illinois 1999* published by the Illinois State Police (ISP, 2000). In all, 192 departments were successfully contacted and interviewed, with only 12 non-responding agencies in which repeated call-backs were unsuccessful in setting up an interview. Interviews with the highest ranking officer reachable in each department were conducted by one of the authors and a graduate assistant, lasting between 10 and 40 minutes. The majority of the interviews were with the chief of police or the assistant chief, taking an average of about 15 minutes to complete. Closed-ended questions in the interview protocol asked about the personnel composition of the department, its formal structure, its policies, and its modes of operation.

To supplement the police department data, community-level data were extracted from the place files of the 1994 *County and City Data Book* files distributed (on CD-ROM) by the Census Bureau of the US Department of Commerce (Census Bureau, 1995). These contain Census Bureau-collected data on the social, economic, housing, and employment attributes of the municipalities covered in the police surveys. Data on the form of municipal governments in each jurisdiction also were obtained from the *Municipal Yearbook* published by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA, 2000). File matching for each municipality was accomplished by means of Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) codes for federal designation of “places.” Using these codes as common identifiers, the

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separate data files from the interviews, the *County and City Data Book*, and the *ICMA Yearbook* were merged into a common integrated data file.

### *Computation of indexes*

Six variables were used to represent community contextual influences, including two indexes computed from the census data. The governmental context was represented by a mayor/city manager dichotomy indicating whether the municipality was directed by a professional city manager appointed by the city council or an elected mayor. As suggested by Wilson (1968) (also Crank, 1990), the city manager is seen as an indicator of efficiency-oriented, “good government” contexts, while the mayor is an indicator of public opinion-oriented, partisan political contexts. The environmental complexity of the community is represented by two indicators:

- (1) population density, indicating the crowdedness and urbanism of the community, was computed as its population divided by its geographic area; and
- (2) a minority population index, reflecting the racial and ethnic heterogeneity of the community, was computed as the sum of  $\log_e$  of percent nonwhite and  $\log_e$  of percent Hispanic in the community.

To reflect the environmental stability of the community, two separate indicators were used:

- (1) housing stability (measured by the percent of housing that is owner-occupied); and
- (2) population stability (measured by the percent change in the population between 1986 and 1998, recoded into nine discrete categories to “linearize” the change variable).

Resource availability is indicated by a three-item socioeconomic resources index computed as the sum of:

- (1) median household income in the community;
- (2) percent of adults who are high school graduates; and
- (3) percent of families above the poverty level.

In computing all multi-item indexes, each component variable was standardized (divided by its standard deviation) before being added to the index. Lastly, environmental input demand was indicated by two separate variables:

- (1) the size of the community, as measured by the 1998 population of the community, recoded into five distinct categories to achieve a more uniform, linear distribution of community sizes[3]; and
- (2) the annual crime rate, computed as the  $\log_e$  of the average of the reported crime rates for 1998 and 1999.

Major dimensions of police agency organization were measured by five variables, included as indicators of the conceptual categories of organizational structure noted earlier, except for formalization (which was omitted from the analysis due to inadequate operationalization)[4]. The complexity of organizational structure was represented by indicators of vertical, horizontal, and functional differentiation. Vertical differentiation was measured by the number of distinct formal ranks. Horizontal differentiation was measured by a count of the number of separate divisions or bureaux. Functional differentiation was operationalized by a civilianization variable, which was computed simply by the percent of departmental personnel not sworn officers. The organizational concentration of each police agency was computed as the density of police within the community (i.e. number of full-time sworn officers per 1,000 population). The organizational size of the police department was measured by the number of full-time sworn officers in the agency (although the raw counts were recoded into a 15-level scale to reduce the skewedness of the original size distribution)[5].

Because the conceptualization of operational styles or modes of policing remains an ongoing, ambiguous, and fairly diverse endeavor, measurement of this construct has also been rather open-ended, yielding no consensus on appropriate indicators or standardized indexes. Indeed, research on organizational styles most often has relied on indirect or proxy indicators, such as clearance rates or arrest rates for public order offenses, rather than direct measures. Because of the wide diversity in measurements of policing style, we have opted for relatively simple, face-valid measures of policing modes that are substantively consistent with our earlier simple conceptual dichotomy, in order to maintain interpretive clarity and reduce conceptual ambiguity. This conservative operational approach necessarily involves some trade-off between conceptual simplicity and direct interpretability on one hand (if our presumptions are correct) and reliability and content validity on the other. However, it is consistent with our incremental research strategy (that favors simple clarity over complex ambiguity, at least initially).

The analysis utilized two separate indexes of distinct policing modes. A law enforcement-oriented policing index was created to reflect the police agencies' formal adoption of professional, paramilitary, specialized, crime-fighting procedures, especially the organizational elaboration of separate tactical squads within the department. This index was computed as an additive combination of six dichotomous indicators of:

- (1) sting/undercover operations;
- (2) asset forfeiture procedures;
- (3) drug task force participation;
- (4) special gang units;
- (5) special weapons and tactics (SWAT) units; and

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- (6) whether any personnel would be lost if any of these operations were discontinued.

The community-oriented policing measure was constructed to provide a very general indicator of the “community connectedness” dimension of COP (i.e. the degree to which police identify with, communicate with, and are familiar with the community being policed) rather than the explicit implementation of formalized problem-solving, information-sharing, or technological innovations. The aim here was an indicator of organizational orientation (rather than program adoption) that focuses on an essential and defining attribute of the COP philosophy and that is equally relevant to smaller, simpler departments as it is to larger, more formally elaborated ones. In this sense, it is intended to be an indicator of community orientation that does not rely on a long checklist of formalized programs or technical innovations[6]. This COP index measures the social and personal connection of police officers and police agencies to the communities they police by a combination of three questions about departmental procedures (each coded as a yes-no dichotomy) asking whether the agency:

- (1) requires officers to be residents of the community;
- (2) uses permanent beat assignments that officers will come to know well;  
and
- (3) maintains regularly scheduled meetings with community members to discuss community concerns and maintain communication channels (at least six scheduled meetings per year).

While only three items are used in this index, we note that these three seem to be among those most commonly listed as exemplary indicators of the community connectedness component of COP[7] and should provide a directly meaningful indicator of this particular dimension.

### *Research questions*

The express purpose of this study was to address three research questions regarding suburban police agencies. First, how much do community characteristics (environmental/contextual variables) influence the form, content, and processes of suburban police departments? Second, how much do organizational factors correlate with, predict or influence the style, mode, and content of policing? Lastly, to what extent are community factors mediated by organizational factors?

### **Results**

Descriptive statistics for all the variables in the analysis are provided in Table I (and intercorrelations in Table II). Since most of the variables used in the analysis are computed indexes or transformed (e.g. standardized) quantities, the metrics of such variables are not intuitively meaningful. However, the

|   | Mean    | Standard deviation | Median  | Max. value | Min. value | Valid cases |
|---|---------|--------------------|---------|------------|------------|-------------|
| <i>Community variables</i>                    |         |                    |         |            |            |             |
| City manager (1) vs mayor (2)                 | 1.51    | 0.50               | 2.00    | 2.00       | 1.00       | 175         |
| Socioecon. resources index                    | 11.55   | 1.46               | 11.31   | 16.34      | 8.11       | 174         |
| Minority population index                     | 3.31    | 1.72               | 3.06    | 7.73       | -1.16      | 174         |
| Housing stability (percent owner-occupied)    | 71.51   | 13.58              | 72.67   | 97.14      | 27.66      | 174         |
| Population change 1986-1998 (nine categories) | 4.83    | 2.05               | 5.00    | 1.00       | 9.00       | 180         |
| Population density (pop./sq.mi.)              | 1,436.8 | 883.9              | 1,373.2 | 5,067.1    | 57.7       | 174         |
| Population size (five categories)             | 2.59    | 1.30               | 2.00    | 5.00       | 1.00       | 181         |
| Crime rate 1998-99 avg.                       | 3,872.3 | 2,630.5            | 3,148.4 | 15,650.5   | 636.8      | 179         |
| <i>Organizational variables</i>               |         |                    |         |            |            |             |
| Number of ranks                               | 2.63    | 3.00               | 0.79    | 5.00       | 1.00       | 174         |
| Number of bureaux                             | 3.01    | 1.15               | 3.00    | 7.00       | 1.00       | 174         |
| Police density (FT sworn/1,000 pop.)          | 2.67    | 1.60               | 2.35    | 17.00      | 0.20       | 170         |
| Percent civilian personnel                    | 25.06   | 25.00              | 10.49   | 75.00      | 0.00       | 179         |
| Dept. size (FT sworn) (15 categories)         | 6.40    | 6.0                | 3.80    | 15.00      | 1.00       | 180         |
| <i>Policing mode/style vars</i>               |         |                    |         |            |            |             |
| Community policing style index (three-item)   | 0.92    | 0.81               | 1.00    | 3.00       | 0.00       | 157         |
| Law enforcement style index (six-item)        | 2.79    | 1.66               | 3.00    | 6.00       | 0.00       | 145         |

**Table I.**  
Descriptive statistics on all variables

descriptive statistics do show that the variables are fairly symmetrically distributed and reasonably suitable for regression analysis. Correlations among all the variables used in the analysis are displayed in Table II.

Multiple regression was used to estimate the separate and combined influence of community variables on police organizational structures and practices, as well as to compare community-level and organizational-level influences on departmental policing modes or styles. The analytical framework depicted in Figure 1 provides a general analytical map for ordering the variables in the regression analyses, although it does not constitute a formal path diagram predicting specific causal effects. The results of the first set of regressions – regressing the five police organizational variables on the six community context variables – are presented in Table III. The results of the second step in the analysis – regression of the two policing style indexes on the community context variables and organizational structure variables – are reported in Table IV. In both Tables III and IV, the values shown are standardized regression coefficients, since the focus is on a comparative analysis of the estimated effects of different variables within the same sample

|                                    | (1)    | (2)    | (3)    | (4)    | (5)    | (6)    | (7)    | (8)   | (9)    | (10)   | (11)   | (12)   | (13)  | (14)  | (15) |
|------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|------|
| 1. Manager vs mayor                | -      |        |        |        |        |        |        |       |        |        |        |        |       |       |      |
| 2. Socioeconomic resources         | -0.393 | -      |        |        |        |        |        |       |        |        |        |        |       |       |      |
| 3. Minority concentration          | 0.112  | -0.370 | -      |        |        |        |        |       |        |        |        |        |       |       |      |
| 4. Housing stability               | -0.251 | 0.468  | -0.472 | -      |        |        |        |       |        |        |        |        |       |       |      |
| 5. Population change (1986-1998)   | -0.108 | 0.138  | -0.257 | 0.114  | -      |        |        |       |        |        |        |        |       |       |      |
| 6. Population density              | -0.062 | -0.366 | 0.319  | -0.302 | -0.413 | -      |        |       |        |        |        |        |       |       |      |
| 7. Population size (five-category) | -0.347 | -0.015 | 0.283  | -0.145 | 0.010  | 0.356  | -      |       |        |        |        |        |       |       |      |
| 8. Crime rate (1998-1999)          | 0.320  | -0.304 | 0.443  | -0.405 | -0.299 | 0.183  | -0.061 | -     |        |        |        |        |       |       |      |
| 9. Number of ranks                 | 0.053  | -0.093 | 0.180  | -0.143 | -0.307 | 0.276  | 0.212  | 0.306 | -      |        |        |        |       |       |      |
| 10. Number of bureaux              | -0.220 | 0.007  | 0.233  | -0.189 | -0.142 | 0.292  | 0.690  | 0.113 | 0.304  | -      |        |        |       |       |      |
| 11. Police density                 | 0.226  | -0.060 | -0.037 | -0.191 | 0.055  | -0.263 | -0.346 | 0.459 | -0.019 | -0.092 | -      |        |       |       |      |
| 12. Civilianization                | -0.002 | 0.061  | 0.116  | 0.000  | -0.158 | -0.023 | -0.022 | 0.155 | 0.211  | 0.030  | -0.029 | -      |       |       |      |
| 13. Dept. size (no. FTS)           | -0.260 | -0.025 | 0.374  | -0.201 | -0.053 | 0.345  | 0.921  | 0.112 | 0.253  | 0.736  | -0.107 | -0.046 | -     |       |      |
| 14. Law enforcement index          | 0.117  | -0.215 | 0.416  | -0.230 | -0.041 | 0.132  | 0.530  | 0.103 | 0.315  | 0.438  | -0.179 | 0.049  | 0.563 | -     |      |
| 15. COP index                      | -0.026 | -0.093 | 0.305  | -0.135 | -0.036 | 0.186  | 0.438  | 0.093 | 0.171  | 0.308  | -0.109 | -0.033 | 0.476 | 0.330 | -    |

**Table II.**  
Correlations:  
all variables in the  
analysis

| Independent variables              | Dependent variables |                   |                      |                  |                         |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
|                                    | Number of ranks     | Number of bureaux | Officers/ 1,000 pop. | Percent civilian | Dept. size <sup>a</sup> |
| Mayor (2) vs city manager (1)      | -                   | -                 | -                    | -                | -                       |
| Socioeconomic resources            | -                   | -                 | -                    | 0.120            | -                       |
| Minority concentration             | -                   | -                 | -                    | 0.184            | -                       |
| Housing stability                  | -                   | -                 | -0.155*              | -                | -                       |
| Pop. change (1986-98) <sup>b</sup> | -0.290**            | -0.158*           | 0.166*               | -                | -                       |
| Population density                 | -                   | -                 | -0.176*              | -                | -                       |
| Pop. size (5-cat.) <sup>c</sup>    | 0.252**             | 0.681***          | -0.307***            | -0.111           | 0.661***                |
| Crime rate (1998-1999)             | 0.142               | 0.200**           | 0.580***             | -                | 0.207***                |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>              | 0.196               | 0.505             | 0.433                | 0.054            | 0.881                   |
| (Adjusted)                         | (0.153)             | (0.478)           | (0.404)              | (0.004)          | (0.875)                 |
| Valid <i>n</i> of cases            | 158                 | 158               | 162                  | 162              | 162                     |

Notes: \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

All values displayed are standardized multiple regression coefficients

Coefficient values less than 0.1 are omitted to highlight the patterns of estimated effects

<sup>a</sup> Departmental size categories (in number of sworn officers): 1-10; 11-15; 16-20; 21-25; 26-30; 31-35; 36-40; 41-45; 46-50; 51-60; 61-75; 75-100; 101-150; 151-200; 201 and over

<sup>b</sup> Population change categories: (1) >10 percent decline; (2) 5-10 percent decline; (3) 2-5 percent decline; (4) stable (-2 percent to +5 percent); (5) 6-15 percent gain; (6) 16-30 percent gain; (7) 31-60 percent gain; (8) 61-99 percent gain; (9) 100 percent-more gain

<sup>c</sup> Community population size categories: (1) under 7,500; (2) 7,500-14,999; (3) 15,000 to 24,999; (4) 25,000 to 49,999; (5) 50,000 and over

**Table III.**  
Regressions: police organizational variables on community variables

(rather than comparisons across samples). For presentational clarity, only standardized partial regression coefficients of 0.1 or larger are displayed in the tables and levels of statistical significance are indicated by asterisks.

The results in Table III address the question of how strongly community context factors influence the form and structure of police departments. They surprisingly show that the estimated effects of several community variables prominently cited in prior policing literature are negligible or inconsistent. Specifically, the governmental form of the community's administration (mayor vs city manager) had no appreciable effect on the structural attributes of its police department, once other community factors are controlled. Equally surprising, socioeconomic and population composition factors had few significant effects, even though there is very wide variation in these socioeconomic factors across the suburbs in the sample. Even the minority composition of the community, usually cited as a central issue in describing the community context for policing, had negligible (statistically nonsignificant) regression coefficients for all the organizational dependent variables, once the influences of other factors were partialled out. Of the community complexity indicators, only population density (as an indicator of urbanism and urban crowding) showed any significant effect and that only on one structural dependent variable (police concentration). Overall, differences in community

| Independent variables                          | Dependent variables   |          |                      |                          |                      |                     |
|--|-----------------------|----------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
|  | Law enforcement index |          |                      | Community policing index |                      |                     |
|  | (1)                   | (2)      | (3)                  | (1)                      | (2)                  | (3)                 |
| <i>Community context</i>                       |                       |          |                      |                          |                      |                     |
| Manager (1) vs mayor (2)                       | 0.224**               |          | 0.195*               | –                        |                      | –                   |
| Socioeconomic resources                        | –0.152 <sup>ns</sup>  |          | –0.182*              | –                        |                      | –                   |
| Minority concentration                         | 0.240**               |          | 0.233**              | 0.166 <sup>ns</sup>      |                      | 0.150 <sup>ns</sup> |
| Population density                             | –0.127 <sup>ns</sup>  |          | –0.127 <sup>ns</sup> | –                        |                      | –                   |
| Housing stability                              | –                     |          | –                    | –                        |                      | –                   |
| Pop. change (1986-98) <sup>c</sup>             |                       |          | 0.131 <sup>ns</sup>  | –                        |                      | –                   |
| Population size (five categories) <sup>b</sup> | 0.565***              |          | 0.116 <sup>ns</sup>  | 0.393***                 |                      | –                   |
| Crime rate                                     | –                     |          | –0.152 <sup>ns</sup> | –                        |                      | –                   |
| <i>Organizational structure</i>                |                       |          |                      |                          |                      |                     |
| No. of ranks                                   |                       | 0.160*   | 0.213**              |                          | –                    | –                   |
| No. of bureaux                                 |                       | –        | –                    |                          | –0.109 <sup>ns</sup> | –                   |
| Police density                                 |                       | –        | –                    |                          | –                    | –                   |
| Civilianization (percent NS)                   |                       | –        | –                    |                          | –                    | –                   |
| Dept. size (FTS officers) <sup>a</sup>         |                       | 0.506*** | 0.353***             |                          | 0.515***             | 0.470*              |
| R <sup>2</sup>                                 | 0.149                 | 0.332    | 0.486                | 0.209                    | 0.211                | 0.234               |
| (Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> )                     | (0.382)               | (0.306)  | (0.430)              | (0.163)                  | (0.183)              | (0.158)             |
| Valid n  | 134                   | 134      | 134                  | 145                      | 145                  | 145                 |

**Notes:** Statistical significance levels: ns = nonsignif.; \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$   
 All values displayed are standardized multiple regression coefficients

Coefficient values less than 0.1 are omitted to highlight the patterns of estimated effects

<sup>a</sup> Departmental size categories (in number of sworn officers): 1-10; 11-15; 16-20; 21-25; 26-30; 31-35; 36-40; 41-45; 46-50; 51-60; 61-75; 75-100; 101-150; 151-200; 201 and over

<sup>b</sup> Population change categories: (1) > 10 percent decline; (2) 5-10 percent decline; (3) 2-5 percent decline; (4) stable (–2 percent to +5 percent); (5) 6-15 percent gain; (6) 16-30 percent gain; (7) 31-60 percent gain; (8) 61-99 percent gain; (9) 100 percent-more gain

<sup>c</sup> Community population size categories: (1) under 7,500; (2) 7,500-14,999; (3) 15,000 to 24,999; (4) 25,000 to 49,999; (5) 50,000 and over

**Table IV.**  
 Regressions: policing mode on organizational structure and community variables

complexity, in resource availability, and in political context did not account empirically for variations in suburban police departmental structures, even though such variables have been widely mentioned in research on urban police agencies.

In contrast, the environmental stability and input demand variables – including population change, crime rate, and especially population size – were fairly consistently predictive of differences in police departmental structures. According to the regression results, less stable communities tend to have less



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complex (lower vertical and horizontal differentiation) but more concentrated (higher police-to-population ratios) police organizations. The environmental variable with the strongest and most consistent regression coefficients is community size, revealing a pattern consistent with prior studies in which larger communities tend to have larger, more complex, more formalized, but less concentrated (lower police-to-population ratios) police departments. We note that crime rate (the other input demand variable in the analysis) also had consistent effects on police organizational characteristics, generally weaker than those for population size except for its strong effect on police concentration. Overall, the results in Table III show that in multivariate terms, population size constitutes the statistical “900-pound gorilla” of the community context variables, dominating the multiple regression predictions for police organizational characteristics and generally reducing the partialled effects of other community factors to negligible levels.

In addition, the results in Table III indicate that the impact of community factors is variable across different features or dimensions of the departments’ organizational structures. Not all organizational factors are readily predicted from community variables, according to the multiple *R*-squares for the five different regressions. The size of police organizations and their horizontal complexity were strongly accounted for by community features, while the degree of organizational concentration was slightly less so, and vertical differentiation was even less. Surprisingly, the degree of civilianization in police departments was not at all predictable from any of the community variables, the adjusted *R*-squared value being essentially zero (0.004). Somewhat at odds with prior studies, this last finding seems consistent with our suspicion that civilianization actually is not a very direct or clear-cut indicator of organizational complexity. Rather, the hiring of civilian employees seems to serve many different purposes in different departments, ranging from simple economics to increased technological specialization. If this suspicion is correct, then civilianization would have a complex and inconsistent pattern of association with other organizational factors, as was the case in our suburban sample.

The results reported in Table IV are germane to the rest of the relationships depicted in Figure 1, especially those indicated by the paths labeled b and c. The regression results in Table IV for each of the two policing mode indicators are presented in three parts and reported in the three columns under each dependent variable. Column (1) reports the regressions of the policing mode dependent variable on the community context variables only, essentially estimating the total contextual effect (i.e., direct influences of community factors plus the indirect influences mediated through organizational structural factors) of community characteristics on modes or styles of policing. Column (2) reports the simple estimated impact (“main effects”) of organizational structures on policing modes, ignoring the possibility that such effects may

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be confounded with community differences and influences. Column (3) reports the estimated direct and unique effects of community and organizational factors when both sets of variables are simultaneously included in the regression. Thus, differences between columns (1) and (3) indicate the degree to which the impact of community conditions on policing style is mediated by the organizational characteristics of the police departments. The differences between columns (2) and (3) represent how much of the apparent structural effects of police organizational features may be due to spurious contextual patterns, rather than to the outcome of organizational dynamics.

The results in Table IV indicate that environmental (community context) factors have a stronger influence on police agencies' adoption of a law enforcement style than organizational factors do, even though the strongest single predictor of a law enforcement style is departmental size. Moreover, a comparison of columns (1) and (3) shows that the influence of community factors on differences in law enforcement-oriented style are direct and unmediated by organizational variations. Of the organizational structure variables, only two – organizational size and vertical differentiation – have significant direct effects on law enforcement-oriented policing style, but these are consistent, theoretically plausible, and independent of community context factors. Departmental size has the largest effect of all the variables. This pattern provides substantial support for the contextual premise and partial confirmation for the structural premise as they pertain to traditional law enforcement-oriented policing practices.

The results for the COP mode indicator are similar in the continued prominence of departmental size as a predictor of variations in policing mode, but very different for the other variables just noted. Paradoxically and unexpectedly, the community context variables essentially disappear as significant influences on COP patterns; all coefficients for community variables reduced to near-zero levels in the full regression. This result is an apparent disconfirmation of the contextual premise, at least as it applies to the COP practices covered in our COP policing mode index. Only community population size shows any significant association among the context variables, and it becomes negligible when departmental size is factored into the analysis. Beyond department size, no other organizational variable has a significant influence on the COP indicator. This pattern was not expected, because our particular indicator of COP style was operationalized to minimize bias toward larger departments that might spuriously inflate its correlation with departmental size. The strong effect of departmental size would seem to be a substantive finding rather than a methodological artifact.

Overall, the COP mode index is less predictable than the law enforcement-oriented style index, as measured by the smaller multiple correlations (*R*-squares) of the regressions for our COP index variable. We suspect that the lower correlations are due to a reduced number of levels (i.e.

only four values) in our measure of COP mode which will have an attenuating effect on the variances and covariances of that variable. This means that other measures of COP, e.g., that tap other philosophical or programmatic aspects of the COP perspective or that incorporate a more diverse assortment of items, might well show a different, or at least a stronger, pattern of effects or influences.

One additional unexpected pattern in Table IV is that the direction of the independent variables' effects on the dependent variables is the same for both policing mode indexes, even though they ostensibly measure divergent, even mutually incompatible, policing styles. This pattern is readily evident in both the regression results and in the bivariate correlation matrix. Consistent with this pattern is the finding of a positive correlation between the two indexes of policing style;  $r = 0.33$  (see Table II). This suggests that different modes of policing may not be as incompatible as many policy reformers and textbooks suggest, even though they seem to represent radically different ways of thinking about and carrying out policing. Instead, it may suggest that most police departments may tend to be versatile, implementing a mixture of different policing modes and strategies. Because of their size, greater specialization, and greater segmentation, large departments are able to implement each of these different strategies more fully, in spite of their apparent differences and incompatibilities.

### **Discussion**

The empirical findings reported here suggest several distinctive patterns that seem substantively and methodologically important for policing research. These need to be replicated by additional studies on different data samples with alternative measures of the outcome variables to confirm their generalizability, but they raise interesting questions about the organization of policing in many communities.

One notable finding was the centrality of "environmental size" in this analyses. Two versions of this variable were included – size of the community environment and size of the organization environment – which, while conceptually distinct, are strongly correlated empirically and usually treated (in prior studies) as interchangeable indicators. Community size emerged as more important than any other environmental or organization factor in predicting how policing organizations were set up and how they operated, while organizational size had the strongest association of any of the organizational structures variables with operational style indicators. The finding that organizational size and community size are strongly associated with police organizational structures and operating modes is congruent with numerous other studies that have reported similarly strong correlations (using either community or organization size, although not both as done here).

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However, beyond confirming that “size matters,” these findings suggest that additional research should focus on clarifying the relationships among community size, organizational size, organizational structure and operational practices. These findings also indicate that the influence of environmental size is not artifactual. That, it is size itself that counts, not size functioning as a proxy for some other variables, such as level of urbanization or urban problems. For example, other more direct indicators of urbanization, such as population density, do not show the same dominating influence on structural and operational variables in this analysis. Although community size and organizational size are often omitted from many organizational studies due to the colinearity problems they introduce, they are too strongly implicated in organizational dynamics to be left out or merely included as a simple linear “control variable” whose effects are to be statistically removed from the analyses, but not seriously examined. We clearly need a more fine-grained empirical understanding of the causal contingencies by which environmental size factors condition organizational structures and practices, especially a more detailed consideration of non-linear influences. These would seem to be an essential component of any attempt to better understand the ways in which policing varies across different ecological contexts – from rural to urban settings and from small towns to the suburbs to urban central cities.

A second substantively important pattern here was the finding that community characteristics have little predictive influence on whether and how community policing is adopted in different communities. While our analysis was limited to one particular aspect or dimension of community-oriented policing (which invariably is conceptualized as a multi-faceted construct), we note the consistency of this pattern with similar findings reported in several unpublished studies (Zhao, 1994; Maguire, 1997a, b; Wilson, 2001). The inability to predict COP patterns from variations in community conditions seems theoretically problematic, since it contradicts a cornerstone premise of the COP framework that policing should be context-sensitive. The implications of this finding clearly demand that it be replicated with alternative measures of community-oriented and law enforcement-oriented policing modes, as well as with other, larger samples of police departments in other geographic locales.

A third substantive finding in this study was the positive empirical association between a specialized professional law enforcement orientation and a generalized community policing orientation as formal operational styles for police agencies. According to most conceptualizations of COP, these two orientations entail philosophically and operationally incompatible ways of defining and accomplishing the policing function. Yet the measures of these two orientations were positively correlated in our sample and showed similar patterns of association with other variables. Police departments who reported more extensive and elaborate enforcement-oriented specialization (such as having separate SWAT units, sting operations, and gang units) also were more

likely to report generalized community policing policies. These data suggest that it is not inconsistent for organizations to include both more specialized and more generalized operations, with the key common factor leading to both being organizational size. Larger police departments have the personnel to implement a variety of policing programs due to increased specialization and horizontal differentiation. This seems to merely document what many skeptics of COP have been arguing, i.e. that the differences between traditional and community-oriented policing are mainly rhetorical.

The positive correlation reported here seems especially noteworthy in light of our deliberate measurement of COP style in terms of the less formalized dimension of “connectedness,” an operationalization that should not favor larger departments and artifactually correlate with department size. Other indicators of COP focused more heavily on formalized adoption of technology-facilitated operations (e.g. departmental Web sites, community surveys, public access to local crime statistics, citizen police academies, formalized problem-solving programs) and would undoubtedly evince an even stronger correlation with department size and the other correlates of department size (such as specialized law enforcement units). This finding needs to be replicated using indicators of other dimensions of COP. But, if the same pattern is found for other COP measures, it will provide appreciable empirical evidence against the common argument that the implementation of COP represents a “paradigm shift” or “sea change” from traditional law enforcement-oriented policing.

A final and methodological finding from this analysis – one not necessarily revealed in Tables III and IV, but one that emerged in the computations leading to these tables – is that the particular patterns of results found from a multiple regression (or from any multivariate analysis) depend heavily on the particular set of independent variables used in the regression. This was especially apparent when a strongly correlated variable, like population size, was included in or excluded from the analyses, although also true to a lesser degree for the crime rate variable. This pattern underlines the importance for meaningful multivariate analysis of police organizational dynamics to develop explicit, theoretically complete models to guide the analysis, i.e. fully elaborated causal models that indicate all the variables presumed to be relevant and specify their inter-connections. It also highlights a caveat regarding the importance of including all the potentially relevant variables in any empirical analysis, especially those that are multivariate. Otherwise, the findings of a particular study utilizing a partial collection of selected variables (i.e. some but not all of the analytically relevant variables) may be idiosyncratic. They will be unique to the particular configuration of variables used in that analysis, unstable (varying dramatically as additional variables are omitted or added by other researchers), and substantively noncumulative (since we cannot combine

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divergent results of different studies using somewhat different sets of variables).

Finally, these results suggest the conceptual framework presented at the outset is in need of conceptual modification, as well as additional empirical analysis using additional indicators of the conceptual terms and more broadly inclusive samples. Conceptually, the framework is too simplistic, both in treating all variables in each conceptual block as equally important and in making only general suggestions about how specific variables are causally related to those in other blocks. It postulates that community context variables influence police organizational variables without specifying which community variables are most important, which organizational variables are most strongly affected by environmental factors, and the specific form of these effects. The analytical task remaining is to more systematically explicate the causal connections between groups of variables in the framework, and to judiciously pare down the listing of causally important factors in each. While empirical studies will be essential to this task (to identify what actually works and what does not), development of more sophisticated and explicit theoretical models will also be necessary – a task that may require a critical reexamination of implicit, but widely-shared, assumptions about policing.

Empirically, while this analysis was as theoretically inclusive as the available data would allow, several important conceptual elements of the community context part of the framework were not available or examined in this analysis. These omitted variables include such factors as:

- indicators of the political culture and political influence structures of communities;
- indicators of economic inequality (especially racial) and residential segregation (both racial and class-based); and
- more extensive measurement of additional aspects of community social disorganization, including indicators of family disorganization (e.g. divorce rate and single-parent families), anomie (e.g. suicide rates, mental illness rates, and economic decline), vacant housing, and residential transience.

While not available in the *County and City Data Book* file, these are clearly substantively relevant indicators that should be examined in subsequent studies. Thus, both the conceptual framework and the data analysis presented here are intended as starting points from which these developments may begin.

This study has focused wholly on suburban municipal-level police departments in the Chicago CMSA. These data reveal the enormous variation in variables, e.g. size, complexity, and population composition, that characterize suburban agencies. This diversity suggests that it is inadvisable to make sweeping generalizations about suburban policing or to dismiss it as an esoteric category. Although this suburban sample is substantially different

from most urban-focused research on policing, the findings are remarkably similar to those reported in prior central-city studies. Although it tends to confirm “what everybody already knew”, it provides empirical confirmation of patterns previously only hypothesized. We feel this underscores the importance for developing a valid knowledge base on police organizational processes by accumulating a comprehensive body of research findings based on studies of agencies of all sizes and locations.

### Notes

1. We acknowledge (and have made use of in this analysis) several impressive recent efforts to explicate and empirically investigate community-focused models of policing, including especially Zhao (1994), Davenport (1996), Maguire (1997a, b), and Wilson (2001). All are based on comprehensive theoretical reviews and provide substantial tests of specific organizational models. However, we note that all of these involve unpublished dissertations and presentations. Despite the importance of these analyses, none are available in the published literature on police organization.
2. A sixth category of environmental factors might be the spatio-temporal location of the agency, although such variables were not included in the data for this study. This category would especially include the regional location of the community, for which prior research has shown consistent agency-level differences (see Maguire and Uchida, 2000), as well as the historical context in which the agency is operating.
3. The items collected to form an index of formalization included three interview questions pertaining to: whether the chief was required to be a sworn police officer, whether agency officers were unionized, and whether the agency was guided by a formal, written standard operating procedures manual. Each of these was coded as a simple yes-or-no response. However, these items proved to be unreliable and the distributions of response categories were too strongly skewed to be useful or plausible. Combining three unusable items did not yield a satisfactory index. Thus, the indicator of formalization was left out of the analysis.
4. The specific community population size categories used were: less than 7,500 persons (42 departments); 7,500 to 14,999 (52 departments); 15,000 to 24,999 (35 departments); 25,000 to 49,999 (31 departments); and 50,000 and over (18 departments).
5. The specific departmental size categories used here were (in number of sworn officers): 1-10, 11-15, 16-20, 21-25, 26-30, 31-35, 36-40, 41-45, 46-50, 51-60, 61-75, 76-100, 101-150, 151-200, 201 and over. The recoding is essentially linear up to 50 officers and then category sizes become increasingly wide to make the distribution of departments more uniform and less skewed by a few very large agencies. The distribution of agency sizes in the sample of 180 departments was: 1-10 full-time sworn (10.0 percent); 11-20 (17.8 percent); 21-30 (18.9 percent); 31-40 (16.7 percent); 41-50 (11.7 percent); 51-60 (7.8 percent); 51-75 (5.0 percent); 76-100 (4.4 percent); 101-150 (4.4 percent); 151-200 (2.2 percent); 201 and more (1.1 percent).
6. A few studies have used much longer, more elaborate measures of COP, such as the 31-item scale used by Maguire *et al.* (1997) or the 11-item/three-subscale operationalization used in Wilson's (2001) LISREL analysis. However, such complex indices raise many unresolved conceptual questions about the essential structure and content of COP that cannot be resolved simply by correlation matrices or factor analyses (where observable patterns depend directly upon which set of items are included in the analysis and what assumptions have been made about their underlying structure of meaning). In addition, the reliance in such large quantitative indices based upon numerical counts of formal policy and program adoptions is operationally biased toward larger more formalized departments (who may

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adopt many new program innovations yet be less strongly connected to their communities than many smaller departments who do things more informally).

7. Initially a third global index of policing mode was computed from a direct self-descriptive checklist of types of policing approaches reported by the police agency's survey respondent. This was intended as an unidimensional self-classification of departmental policing mode, with law enforcement-oriented and community-oriented modes defining the opposing ends of the classification continuum. However, the survey question was administered slightly differently by the two interviewers, yielding inconsistent sets of responses with an implausible distribution of scores on the index. The resulting policing mode variables did not correlate with either of the two more objective indicators of policing mode, nor did it correlate appreciably with any of the community context or organizational variables. As the result, this third index was omitted from the analysis for (in)validity reasons.

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