

ARTICLE

Equity and Community Policing: A New View of Community Partnerships

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Introduction

These days police reformers regard the community with more ambivalence than first impressions might suggest. Community policing, like so many popular government reforms, certainly celebrates the role of citizens in helping police to improve neighborhood safety. The trouble is that the ideal of being *responsive* to individual community groups often conflicts with the equally-important ideal of *equity*, which directs police to provide fair service to all segments of the public. The source of this dilemma is simple: The whole community never shows up at police-community meetings, and it is often especially difficult to find neighborhood groups and other willing partners in poor neighborhoods compared with wealthier ones. As a result, if police are responsive to the community groups that do organize, they run the risk of winding up with skewed priorities that benefit the better-off at the expense of the poor.¹

Whether there is any way to mitigate this dilemma is a centrally important question for community policing. In a world in which community demands are obviously skewed—in which some communities do not articulate their interests and no group articulates the full range of interests in the community it purports to represent—do the police inevitably damage the notion of equity by forming partnerships with the communities that *do* mobilize?² In a place with ten communities, is it an improvement or a

retrogression when police develop partnerships with five? The view of community partnerships that underlies most scholarship on policing usually answers these questions pessimistically because it imagines that police decisions result from the pressures their partners bring to bear on them: if the pressures are skewed, so too will be the decisions. In that respect, this view of partnerships reflects what James March and Johan Olsen call the “exchange view” of politics, which has long been influential in both political science and popular thinking.

A close look at police practice, however, reveals more reason for optimism. Police-community dialogues *can* arrive at just outcomes in a real world of unequal demands. But for that to happen, police must accomplish three difficult tasks: They must focus the attention of their partnerships on the question of what is in the public good, they must investigate the needs and wants of social groups that are absent from these dialogues, and they must attend to what John Dewey calls the “methods and conditions of debate.” In this article I will develop this position by drawing on three case studies that illustrate a different vision of community partnerships from the one that dominates much of the research on the subject. This vision has much in common with what March and Olsen call the “institutional view” of democratic governance, but it also extends that view in important ways.

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Two Logics of Community Partnerships

The Exchange View

The exchange view of politics that underlies much scholarship about police-community partnerships rests on two assumptions: first, that public agencies should try to satisfy the preferences that citizens already hold and, second, that community groups are vehicles for making those preferences known.³ On the exchange view, police are neutral arbiters of the many demands that different interest groups raise, and they aim primarily to ensure that each segment of the public can mobilize and be heard.⁴ When they succeed, the chorus of demands that government hears will give an accurate reading of citizen preferences, and it will give public agencies the information they need to make decisions that best satisfy the public interest—which is seen simply as the sum of all private interests. But when they fail, the voice of the community will emphasize some interests at the expense of others, and for that reason police must reject the ideal of responsiveness. If some interests are never articulated at all, then the community groups that do organize are no longer “partners” but “squeaky wheels” demanding more grease, “vocal groups” that drown out the legitimate concerns of others, or even “chronic pains in the neck” that will not moderate their selfish demands. Many police departments view their community partners in precisely those terms, and as a result they treat community input less than seriously—perhaps by rejecting community input outright, perhaps by treating it dismissively, or perhaps by trying to manipulate it to their own ends.

The limits of the exchange view arise from the fact that the state can do more than accept or reject particular demands that groups make on it.

On this view, the conflict between equity and responsiveness can be avoided only in a world in which the entire public is organized—one in which every community has its own group to represent it so that the pressures and counterpressures that police feel will register the diverse preferences that actually exist in society. An effort to create that sort of world has defined many prominent

community policing programs, and researchers have supported that effort with the way they have framed their central questions. For example, in the early years of community policing, the Houston Police Department spent enormous amounts of time, money, and effort on community organizing, trying to improve participation in neighborhoods made up mostly of the poor, minorities, and renters.⁵ More recently, the Chicago Police Department has invested heavily in an elaborate system of beat meetings designed to create equal access to the police department throughout the city. The researchers who studied those reforms, in turn, spent a great deal of effort trying to figure out how well the CPD had succeeded, looking at demographic and other correlates of community participation. For them, the bottom-line question was: “Did all Chicagoans get involved?”⁶

Taken literally, the answer to that question in all these examples is invariably “no” (even though many agencies have had *some* success improving participation), and from the perspective of the exchange view that answer deals a fatal blow to the ideal of responsiveness. But of course it seems impossible that all of these community partnerships truly have no merit; and in fact later I will describe two community partnerships that faced these same problems of unequal representation and yet still arrived at just conclusions. That type of situation is central to understanding the value of community partnerships, but the exchange view offers no way of comprehending it, much less encouraging it.

The Institutional View

The trouble with the exchange view is that it does not capture all the richness of political action, and therefore it does not faithfully describe real police-community partnerships. The exchange view presumes that community partnerships will turn police into an inert object of community demands, and only community demands, so that police priorities will be the resultant of these various vectors of pressure. The only choice for police is whether to embrace that result or to reject it. But this picture of community input is misleading. Police organizations are not so inert, and properly-managed dialogues between police and citizens *can* direct the results of public deliberations away from pure self-interest.

The limits of the exchange view arise from the fact that the state can do more than accept or reject particular

demands that groups make on it. It can also legitimately influence the demands themselves by shaping and defending the norms that govern its relationships with citizens. Public officials do that when they clarify and debate what a public agency can and cannot do for citizens (for example, when police argue against citizen requests to crack down on loiterers on the grounds that loitering itself is not illegal) and also when they debate what sort of ideals can legitimately guide public actions (for example, when police insist that citizens must support their proposals with reference to justice and the public interest, not simply the neighborhood's own desires). Doing these things may mean redefining what citizens see as their interests,⁷ but it does not always need to. Instead, it can mean ruling out narrow self-interest as a basis for government decisions—accepting that the self-interest of a group is what it is, but insisting that public decisions may not be made on the basis of self-interest alone. Either way, private interests are not the basis for government actions; they must first be converted into public interests through a process of public deliberation.⁸

*Police are not simply conduits for the
community's will.*

From this viewpoint, community partnerships are not simply vehicles for individual groups to make their interests known. Instead, they are sites of public deliberation about the common good. At their best, they generate new information about social problems and about the capabilities of government and the community to solve them, and they serve as places where citizens and officials learn about the proper constraints of their own roles as well as those of their partners.⁹ The public officials who participate in them have a responsibility to ensure that these ideals of public deliberation are upheld. March and Olsen have outlined an "institutional view" of governance that recognizes these dynamics and even makes them a major function of state action.¹⁰

The institutional view does not presume that community input is always appropriate. But in making that judgment it focuses attention on a different set of norms from that of the exchange view. Regardless of whether the groups who work with police are representative of the broader public, it is important to consider the *quality* of their dialogues: the extent to which they are truly guided by appropriate norms and procedures, and thus whether

they represent effective deliberation about the common good (rather than the articulation and aggregation of individual interests). John Dewey makes this point most strongly, arguing that it is not the direct representation of every possible interest that is paramount, but the process of inquiry that forming a majority sets in motion:

Majority rule, just as majority rule, is as foolish as its critics charge it with being. But it is never *merely* majority rule. As a practical politician, Samuel J. Tilden, said a long time ago: 'The means by which a majority comes to be a majority is the more important thing': Antecedent debates, modifications of views to meet the opinions of minorities, the relative satisfaction given the latter by the fact that it has had a chance and that the next time it may be successful in becoming a majority. . . . The essential need, in other words, is the improvement of the methods and conditions of debate, discussion and persuasion. That is *the* problem of the public.¹¹

It is important to our idea of democracy not simply that the majority should rule, but that it should rule in a way that upholds these additional ideals—that public decision making should be *informed* decision making and that wherever possible it should rest on debate and persuasion rather than on numerical superiority alone. Only when it embodies those ideals, Dewey suggests, can decision making properly be said to represent the will of that imaginary body that we call "the public."

These ideas have gained only limited currency in academic literature on policing,¹² but they are crucial for understanding the way in which police should interact with community groups—and for properly appreciating the way in which some of them already do. By ignoring them, scholarship has misjudged the propriety of community input, and it may have directed effort to the wrong places in the commendable pursuit of equity. Most importantly, it has left police without an adequate account of what they must do to ensure the legitimacy of their dialogues with the community, and it has ignored the most noteworthy aspects of their practice.¹³

Police would need to perform many of the roles that the institutional view describes even if every possible interest *were* to be represented directly in their community partnerships. The most troubling aspect of the way some of the most committed proponents of community policing view partnerships is their belief that all the police need to do is listen to the community (albeit the *whole* community) to decide how they should act. But police cannot accept any community demand as final, even if it is the demand of the whole community. Police are not simply conduits for the community's will. They are also representatives of important social interests and guardians of important social functions. They may—and indeed they should—

engage the community in a dialogue; doing that is the heart of police-community partnerships, and police distort that ideal if they simply insist that their own views about what should be done must prevail. But as participants in a public deliberation, the police cannot and should not avoid taking their own positions on the matters that arise. They must come to their partnerships with a set of ethical commitments that helps them to participate in these dialogues and to shape them in appropriate ways. Without those commitments, there is a real risk that community partnerships will skew police priorities and undermine the public interest.

The Study

In the remainder of this article, I will examine three case studies of community policing to illustrate the institutional view in greater detail and to offer three amendments to it. The cases focus on individual partnerships in three cities (Seattle, Washington; Lowell, Massachusetts; and Fremont, California),¹⁴ and I have chosen to discuss them here because they reveal the limits of the exchange view and the ways in which it needs to be expanded.¹⁵ The Seattle case illustrates what happens when police

adhere to the exchange view and face the troubling choice between equity and responsiveness; I present it here for the benefit of comparison. But each of the other two cases reveals a police partnership that is patently unrepresentative of the broader public (in that clearly identifiable groups who have a stake in the debate are left out of it), and yet there are still good reasons to believe the results are equitable.¹⁶ Police in these cases accomplished that result partly by attending to the tasks that the institutional view suggests—particularly by paying special attention to “the methods and conditions of debate” and focusing attention on the common good. To be sure, the institutional view as political theorists have presented it does not capture every important feature of these cases. But its image of community partnerships is closer to the mark than the one offered by the exchange view, and it is easy enough to enrich it to give a fuller account. Thus, these two cases help to illuminate what the abstract ideals offered by the institutional view mean in practice, and they also reveal how that view can be expanded to give a more complete understanding of police-community partnerships.

Equity in Police Partnerships

From the exchange view perspective, the prospects for community policing in the real world are bleak, and police are faced with a dilemma. If police choose to build partnerships, they will almost inevitably sacrifice equity since invariably some interests are not represented; but if they defend equity, they must sacrifice their partnerships and any added effectiveness those relationships might bring. The dilemma is particularly troubling because it does not really involve a choice: police often cannot escape the demands of community groups; they can only drive them underground and hide them from public view.

Choosing Equity over Partnerships

That is precisely what happened for a time in Seattle’s Chinatown-International District area—largely because some of the police managers there took a narrowly exchange view of community partnerships, and that view gave them no way to cope with unrepresentative partnerships except to try (unsuccessfully) to ignore them.¹⁷ The trouble began at the outset of a nationally-sponsored project called the Community Action Project (CAP), which sought to forge a partnership between Seattle police and a

community development corporation in Seattle’s Chinatown-International District in order to improve safety in that area. The community development corporation (called the Seattle Chinatown-International District Preservation and Development Authority, or simply PDA) began the project by lobbying police for better coverage. In part this request simply meant more officers, but it also meant returning a bicycle cop to his old foot beat: The PDA felt that since the officer had taken to his bicycle, he had become *too* mobile—prone to patrol a nearby downtown hotspot called Pioneer Square instead of the Chinatown-International District area.

Police rejected these demands with such finality that the partnership itself became precarious. The Chinatown-International District, they declared, simply did not have as many calls for service as Pioneer Square and other parts of the precinct, and calls were the standard indicator police used to allocate manpower.¹⁸ PDA staff pointed out that whatever the calls showed, a 1992 plan had discovered a widespread public perception that the Chinatown-International District area was unsafe; and perhaps more important, they pointed out that its calls for

service were likely to be deflated by the local culture, since many District residents came from countries in which they might have to pay fees for police services and in which they simply distrusted state authorities.

Beyond this argument about the relative merits of the area's claims and those of the rest of the precinct, police eventually argued that the PDA did not represent everyone in the Chinatown-International District. In their view, it sought to advance the interests of developers without regard to the sentiment of residents. Precinct captain Tom Grabicki explains:

The people that tend to be the most vocal are the people that have their own interests at stake, and often it is a financial interest, and they want to use the police or police resources to affect their financial interest in a positive way. And I am not too sure they are overly concerned with police service delivery to the broader spectrum of the community. . . . I think the narrow slice of the pie will be represented and I think the broader community won't, to be quite frank.¹⁹

In particular, the District's large population of Asian elderly had no direct connection to the CAP partnership and the PDA, which sought to cultivate a "community of the heart"—Asian-Americans who had a connection to the area but did not necessarily reside there any longer.

Grabicki's own way of handling his concerns was to strike an independent posture: "I constantly have different groups of people trying to make their issue the most important issue in the precinct so that they can get more money in the form of overtime, they can get more officers, get more attention. So I'm doing a constant balancing act and I've got to be careful I don't slight anybody. I've got to be careful I don't give the squeakiest wheel all the oil." But that posture struck PDA staff simply as unconstructive. After an early project meeting, PDA staffer Michael Yee maintained: "His tone certainly was not as cooperative as the other officers that have been attending the last two days. If you had a person like him sitting there, it would bog us down fairly quickly if he didn't have a change in attitude, in his level of cooperation with the thing."

Unfortunately for the partnership, Grabicki's perspective was common within the department:²⁰ PDA head Sue Taoka, who had previously worked in the Mayor's office, reports, in casewriter John Buntin's words, "that she was used to being 'lectured' by the police department, with the emphasis on what it could not do, rather than having a 'real discussion' about how to solve problems." Grabicki himself claims to have backed-down on his concerns in the Chinatown-International District (although others in the SPD did not). But PDA staff never heard that

shift, and the tension over whose interests it was pursuing and how they fit into the context of the broader precinct led to paralysis within the partnership, which sometimes found itself blocked by opponents in the police department (for example, at one point a recalcitrant Lieutenant unilaterally transferred two officers who *did* spend time on CAP projects). As a result, all sides report that CAP had made no significant accomplishments by 1997, two years after it had begun. As one of the partnership's police *supporters* puts it, "You look back and you say, you've got 10, 12, 15 people meeting every other week for 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 months, plus you have one person who is working full-time, which is 1,000 hours or more. Okay, show me what you've accomplished with that time and effort and money, and it wasn't enough to justify our existence quite frankly." It is possible to argue that the police did in fact protect the overall public interest in this case. But it is hard to doubt that they sacrificed the partnership in trying to do so.

Choosing Partnerships over Equity

Over time Seattle did succeed in partly sidestepping these conflicts, developing a fruitful relationship among the PDA, SPD Sergeant Michael Meehan, and a two-officer team assigned to CAP that he had assembled. Despite resistance from almost everyone else in the precinct, Meehan and his officers identified with the Chinatown-International District's concerns and began to work with the PDA to address them. For example, the two officers helped deal with an arcade overrun by gang members by joining Yee in a meeting with the arcade's owner, securing help from the SPD gang unit, and training the arcade's private security how to deal with gang members. The same officers also helped the PDA carry out a wide-ranging strategy designed to handle concerns about public intoxication, mostly associated with a group of transients who kept a camp under an outlying freeway overpass.

In the process, however, they became increasingly isolated from the rest of the precinct, none of whose other officers would join them. More to the point, the three apparently ignored concerns that their attention to the Chinatown-International District left other more-deserving neighborhoods slighted, as well as the concerns that the PDA did not adequately represent the opinions of the entire District. In fact, when their crackdown on public intoxication displaced the activity elsewhere, the officers rejected the complaints that ensued: "[The officers] are thinking, we're doing our neighborhood, it's up to you guys to do your neighborhood," Meehan explains. "We can't baby-sit every neighborhood." In this way, as they

solidified their relationship with one community group, the CAP officers abandoned any pretense of directly serving a public broader than that group (even though they implicitly argued that the organization *as a whole* would do so by attending to each city neighborhood piecemeal; and even though they sincerely and perhaps properly believed that gains in such areas as effectiveness made the sacrifice of equity acceptable). Thus, although they eventually made the partnership work, in order to do so they had to retreat somewhat from concerns about equity.

The Seattle officers are far from alone: They express a sentiment that is common among police departments that have pursued community partnerships. For example, in order to advance partnerships and leverage scarce departmental resources, one police chief in Riverside, California openly retreated from the idea that all neighborhoods will get equal service, explaining: "I have a limited budget and the budget drives our department. I have limited resources. So, what are we going to do? Let's pick the battles that we need to fight, and those battles will be [for] the people and the communities that will step up, hand in hand with the police department."²¹ In this sort of example, police resolve the tension between the value of equity and partnerships—which, grounded in particular groups, have trouble representing all interests—at some expense to equity. They cope with the dilemma the exchange view creates for them by rejecting one important value altogether—just as other police like Lieutenant Grabicki reject the opposite one. It is not clear that they have any other choice: If community demands are what they are, and if they reflect an inequitable distribution of community organization, then the only question police can ask is whether the gains of the partnerships are worth the sacrifice in equity.

Keeping Both Values in Play

Police in Lowell, Massachusetts suggest how something like the institutional conception of community input can help resolve this dilemma in a more satisfactory way. The dilemma there arose in the city's Highlands neighborhood, where a well-connected neighborhood group sought to influence the location of a new precinct for the area. These substations played a central role in Lowell's community policing program, providing an anchor in each neighborhood for the substantial number of non-emergency foot patrol officers that the department began hiring to tackle neighborhood problems. When Lowell police sited their first precinct in the Centralville neighborhood, they had free rein in making the decision—"nobody knew what it meant," Lowell Police Chief Ed Davis

explains. So although the fire department offered an abandoned fire station on a side street free of charge, Davis was able to convince the city manager to spend \$600 a month in rent to put the station on a major thoroughfare, making it more visible and also more central with respect to the neighborhood's worst problems.

But after Centralville proved to be an enormous success, the department's siting decisions quickly came under widespread public scrutiny, and the department found itself pressured on all sides by different communities. Then-City Manager Robert Johnson explains the post-Centralville dynamics this way:

When [Centralville] opened, it was a matter of weeks—not months or years—I'm talking about a matter of weeks, when you knew of the positive effect and response from the people and from the business community and from the neighborhood groups. So now you get more money, and you can do one more. Who's going to get it? . . . It does become a political problem. And then when you decide who's going to get it, where does it go? Everyone wants it as close to them as they possibly can.

Gone were the halcyon days when Davis had more or less free rein in siting Centralville because "nobody knew what it meant," and the Chief became increasingly uneasy with the essentially reactive stance that this type of interaction with the community implied. He summarizes the feeling with an aphorism: "There's a saying in community policing, 'You can teach the bear to dance, but you can't necessarily tell it when to stop.' That was what happened with these community groups." Even beyond the precinct issue, Lowell's Chief simply worried that he had lost any control over the agenda—the dialogue with the community focused exclusively on issues that the groups themselves raised. "We were always reactive. We were always going to a community group to answer for a particular injustice or a particular problem that was observed by that group."

"There's a saying in community policing, 'You can teach the bear to dance, but you can't necessarily tell it when to stop.'"

In some cases Davis tried to win back partial control of the agenda and direct it toward broader public issues not by disengaging from the community-initiated dialogue—trying to return to the model of the Centralville decision—

but by engaging it proactively. The Highlands precinct siting is one example, for it became a focus of conflict between the department and a nearby neighborhood group. The problem was simple: The LPD wanted to locate the precinct in the largely Cambodian Lower Highlands part of the neighborhood, and the local Boy's Club had offered the department space in a building that lay at the center of many of the area's problems. But the community group, representing the predominantly-white Cupples Square neighborhood, argued that the new precinct should be located in *their* area of the Highlands. Well-connected in local politics, the group brought their concerns to a number of city councilors, and Davis began to feel pressure to change his mind about the location of the site.

Davis felt he was in the right in this case: "This was clearly just a small segment of the community," he maintains, "and it wasn't the Cambodian people who really needed the services. That's where people were actually dying." Davis turned to a local management professor for advice:

So she said, "Okay, well, it sounds to me like you have to put together a really good presentation that examines that data. So we'll go out and we'll take photos of the two locations and try to sell it to the group. And in addition to that, I think that you have to bring a different constituency to the meeting." So she went out and actively recruited the Cambodian community to appear at this meeting. So here you have this group of two hundred or so white lower-middle class individuals who are pretty politically savvy. And all of a sudden, fifty or a hundred Cambodian people come in and sit down at the meeting. They don't know what to do. The people at the meeting didn't know how to handle this. And then we walked in and we put on a really good presentation with data and photos of what the two locations looked like.

Going into the meeting, Davis had taken a hand vote to gauge support for the two sites, and he estimates that three-quarters of those voting preferred the Cupples Square location. But after the presentation—when the department presented crime statistics and other basic information about the two areas—and the discussion that followed, sentiment had switched, and the group overwhelmingly voted to go with the Boy's Club site. City manager Johnson, who attended the meeting with Davis, still remembers the event with astonishment:

I don't think I've ever seen a neighborhood group where you expect to go in and get the shit kicked out of you and people throwing rocks at you—and he went in there with such a positive approach, with statistics, and facts and figures, that the people basically said, "He's our expert. He's the leader of this thing. We've got to give him the support." And they did. And that

doesn't happen often, when people have a predetermined position. And they definitely had a predetermined position going in, no question about it.

Davis insists that he would have sited the precinct where the group wanted (and given the growing political pressure, he might have had no choice): "This wasn't an ego thing. I mean, if the community really wants something, even against my better judgment, I'll do it, because I'm here to serve the community." But he took this position on the understanding that he had a responsibility for the quality of his discussions with the community. He took seriously the idea that the community would help to decide where this precinct would go, but he also felt and acted on a belief that he had a duty to improve the methods and conditions of the debate that would lead to that decision. In the end, by focusing attention on an analysis of the merits of the two proposals, and by recruiting an under-represented constituency, he was able to come to a mutual agreement with the community that did take account of considerations beyond the self-interest of the Cupples Square group. In that way he preserved the LPD's commitment to serve a broader public while still maintaining its relationship with a particular group.

"Being responsive to the community" means neither passively accepting any demand an organized group makes nor simply rejecting these demands when police believe they are the product of an unrepresentative group.

Lowell's experience is not unique. Fremont police offer another example in which "being responsive to the community" means neither passively accepting any demand an organized group makes nor simply rejecting these demands when police believe they are the product of an unrepresentative group. Instead, they have taken an institutional view of the matter, recognizing the tools police have available for improving the methods and conditions of debate and focusing its attention on the common good.

One particularly dramatic example comes from an early community policing project known around the city as "4250 Central," after the apartment complex that became a citywide *cause célèbre* when a series of fires broke out there in 1994. That complex and several others in the Central

Avenue Corridor had become a growing concern in recent years, and the entire area had shown some signs of decline. Councilmember JoNelle Zager, who also lives in the area, recalls: "Guys would go up and urinate, they'd throw cans of oil over into people's pools, gunshots going off. Just a lot of things like that. And people got to a point where they felt unsafe and they were willing to move their families out of the area." In any case, after the fires, the Glenmoor Homeowner's Association—representing residents from an area that abutted the back side of 4250 Central—brought their concerns to the City Council and demanded action (as did the Centerville Coalition, a resident's group whose membership overlapped with Glenmoor).

In response, the city created an interdepartmental Centerville Action Team to deal with the immediate safety concerns at the complex (including both the fires and the drug activity many felt went on in the area) and eventually to create a long-term revitalization plan. Initially, the FPD's mandate, as per complaints from the community, was to deal with the problem at 4250. But Lieutenant Gus Arroyo, who got assigned to the project and spent several months working on it, soon found that the issue was more complicated than that. As he remembers it,

The interesting thing is that a lot of the things that were said to be going on at 4250 Central, once we started really looking at it and doing a scan and analysis, turned out not to be there. We were actually being sidetracked by perceptions, assumptions, and unconfirmed information [that] officers were putting out. Not that officers were trying to deceive, it's just that their perceptions were inaccurate as to what was actually happening. No one had looked into the complaints in depth. In discussions of 4250 Central, officers basically said, "Well, you've got a bunch of people in there, there's a lot of illegal activity, there's a lot of drugs, there's prostitution, there's a lot of illegal aliens—90% of the residents were Hispanic—and they are all uncooperative." That turned out not to be the case. A very small number of residents were found to be involved in drugs, no cases of prostitution were identified, no more than five to ten percent of the residents were a problem. The majority of the residents were very cooperative, as was the resident manager. The property owner, while somewhat eccentric, was also not uncooperative. Many of the problems and people causing problems turned out to have no connection whatsoever to 4250 Central. For some reason people believed, and even insisted, the complex and its residents were the problem, and I'm still not sure why.

Arroyo himself came to this conclusion in conjunction with Housing Department employee May Lee, whom he had consulted when he found that there were housing code issues and landlord-tenant problems at 4250. As the two spoke with residents, reviewed police data, and simply spent more and more time in the complex, they began

to feel that 4250—though not without its problems—was not entirely to blame for the area's difficulties. In particular, Arroyo spent a long period of time building trust with the residents (many of whom were Mexican immigrants, both legal and illegal), and he began getting their perspective on who was behind the problems. "Eventually, they started pinpointing a very small group of people," Arroyo remembers. "[They were] saying, 'Well, you know, [it's] the people in that apartment, and a bunch of people who visit, who don't even live here.'" At the same time, Arroyo's analyses of police data were finding that 4250 was not really a hot spot at all: "In order to put it in perspective, I... started looking at data in monthly increments, and then compared it to other apartments of the same size, and you could see that it was really no different from any other apartment of that same size." In particular, the rest of the Central Avenue area—including a number of other apartment complexes and a nearby commercial area—had problems at least as large as 4250's.

In some ways, community policing has meant taking a less responsive posture towards expressed community concerns—or at least a different posture that takes complaints seriously but not uncritically.

Finally, Arroyo tried to investigate some concerns about the residents themselves. As Arroyo remembers it, many complaints about the building portrayed it as an overstuffed, unsafe place to live. "Some officers were saying, 'Oh, there's nothing but drugs and ten, twenty people living in an apartment.'" He and May Lee decided to investigate that claim themselves:

We went apartment by apartment and interviewed each person. We found that of the forty-six apartments, forty-four were occupied by family groups: The husband, wife, kids. Sometimes they had in-laws living with them, or other relatives. The remaining two apartments were occupied by adult males—four shared one and five shared the other. Things were not at all like what we were told. So perceptions were just not right. The worst part about it, I think, is that officers fell for those perceptions and responded to complaints and calls for service with preconceptions and failed to analyze or check things out. There was so much talk about the problems at 4250 Central that I believe officers told themselves, "Well, we're getting complaints that these people are doing this, so they must be doing it." By not having done a proper analysis, we perpetuated a false premise.

Most important, Arroyo eventually confronted some of the community members who were complaining about 4250 with the information he had learned. The Lieutenant remembers one meeting with the Glenmoor group particularly well:

We said, "Look, the things that you are saying these people are doing, we don't believe they're the ones doing it." And the group says to me, "Well, how do you know this?" I said, "Well, have you ever met any of these people, or talked to them, or walked through the complex?" "No, we're afraid to do that." So I said, "Well, tell you what, why don't you walk through the complex with me and we'll take a look." And they agreed to do that. When they walked through the complex and saw us interacting with residents and talking to the kids who lived there, it was like their whole mind-set changed, and they realized and recognized that maybe they had been putting blame on people who didn't deserve to have it.

Arroyo began bringing that same message to many of the people in government and in the community who had their attention focused on 4250. The complex was not without its problems, and he and Lee worked hard to deal with those through eviction and enforcement. But the data and personal knowledge Arroyo had amassed showed that many other nearby areas deserved at least as much attention, and he and May Lee worked hard to get that message out.

We had to convince people that 4250 Central was not *the* problem. Because to the Glenmoor homeowner's association 4250 Central was, in fact, a real issue, that perception had to be changed. So it became a matter of doing presentations to different groups and saying to them, "Here's what the data shows, here's what we're seeing when we actually go out there, here's what officers have been saying, here's the calls for service and complaints, and here's what residents are saying. When we overlapped the information and removed what was claimed but had never been confirmed, perceptions began to change, and people were saying, "Well gee,

maybe we're wrong." We showed videotape and photographs of the complex and said, "Look, here's a typical apartment, here's the complex, here are some of the residents." They could see the complex was old but well-maintained, residents were pleasant, the kids did typical kid kinds of things. Eventually people began to say, "Hey, maybe we are overreacting and maybe we are laying blame on the wrong group here."

The story illustrates that in some ways, community policing has meant taking a *less* responsive posture towards expressed community concerns—or at least a *different* posture that takes complaints seriously but not uncritically. Fremont officers had for years taken neighborhood complaints about 4250 at face value, responding to them with heavy enforcement and saturation patrols. But Arroyo and Lee, by working closely with the residents of the complex—who themselves had *not* been organized—found that the story was more complicated, and they argued and supported that point forcefully against those who thought differently (rather than simply ignoring the demands that the community made). Backed by a situated analysis of the problem, and having improved the methods and conditions of the debate they were engaged in, Arroyo and Lee reframed the discussion about Central Avenue and redirected police resources to the areas that needed it. Many of the Corridor's problems were temporarily cleaned up within about six months through a combination of law enforcement, physical repairs, and evictions. More to the present point, the FPD was able to maintain its relationship with the Glenmoor group and respond effectively to its concerns, even though it disagreed with that group's views (not shared by the wider public) about the nature of a central problem it raised.

Partnerships and Public Deliberation

There is no doubt that the Chinatown-International District PDA, the Lower Highlands Group, and the Fremont homeowners are all "squeaky wheels" with the potential to skew police priorities: the nature of a community organization implies that. The question for police is how to react to them. During the events that I have reviewed here, Seattle evidences two extremes: the department mainstream rejected the squeaky wheel outright while its community policing minority cooperated with the group relatively unequivocally, to the point that outside concerns did not enter. But in Lowell and Fremont, police helped to

ensure proper consideration for the broader public interest in partnerships that had started out with a narrower focus on community concerns. These departments engaged their "vocal groups" in a dialogue that transformed their demands rather than subordinated them. They did so by reaching out to absent publics, however imperfectly; by ensuring that relevant information was considered; and by focusing debate firmly on the question of the public good: Where does this precinct belong? What in truth are this neighborhood's problems? They recognized that they could not be blindly responsive to community

demands because the police protect important values that individual communities will not. But they took this fact as advice about what ideals to inject into the debate rather than advice to break off the debate altogether.

Seattle's mainstream sought at first to justify its own view of the public interest by comparing call-for-service data across neighborhoods, trying to show that the Chinatown-International District's needs simply did not justify the resources for which the PDA had asked. But after the PDA pointed out good reasons why those data were inadequate, real inquiry stalled, for no one offered a mutually-acceptable way to gauge need. Whether the case offers evidence of the limits of inquiry or of a failure of imagination is an open question, for neither Fremont nor Lowell faced such an intractable disagreement. But the treatment of absent publics reveals a less ambiguous difference. All three cases confronted common problems of representation—the elderly Asian population absent from the PDA, the unorganized Cambodian population in Lower Highlands, and the Mexican-American population on which Fremont's homeowner association blamed the problems of the Central Avenue corridor. In Seattle, however, many of the police who were involved stopped after (rightly) pointing out the PDA's problems of representation. They did not, as in Fremont or Lowell, pursue even imperfect ways of gauging the absent public's sentiments. Problems of representation led them to question the legitimacy of the PDA-police partnership but not to look for ways to improve it. As a result, they faced a stark tradeoff between equity and their partnership—a tradeoff that Lowell and Fremont were able to soften.

By supporting inquiry into the true nature of neighborhood problems and by focusing attention on the question of the public good, police reframed the debates in which they were engaged.

The Lowell and Fremont stories have much in common with the institutional view, particularly the idea that properly-managed public deliberation may filter self-regarding, individualistic demands in ways that lead to public-regarding choices. By "improving the methods and conditions of debate"—particularly by supporting inquiry into the true nature of neighborhood problems and by

focusing attention on the question of the public good—police reframed the debates in which they were engaged. Davis, for example, shifted attention away from the question of where the Lower Highlands group wanted the precinct to be sited and instead forced them to ask where it *belonged*, given the needs of the entire neighborhood. Arroyo, for his part, did not simply "respond to" the complaints of the homeowners group about 4250 Central; instead, he used their concerns as a starting point for inquiry into the true nature of the area's problems. He consulted with community members throughout the process, but he also confronted them with new information they had not previously known. Thus, police in these two cases ensured that whatever direction their dialogues with the community took, they could not completely neglect the needs of the entire community that would be affected by their decisions. In that way, they were able to uphold the value of serving a broader public without undermining their partnerships with particular groups.

Nevertheless, at least three differences between the institutional view's idea of public deliberation and the Lowell and Fremont stories are worth noting, for they can help to enrich the sometimes-rarefied ideals put forth by political theory.

First of all, deliberation about the common good and the power of the better argument, though important elements in cases like Lowell and Fremont, did not work alone. Both departments made an effort to represent absent publics concretely, even to personify them in a way that makes it difficult to neglect their views. Indeed, although the differences between these departments and Seattle on the appeal to *reasons* is arguably slight, the differences on how they handled *absent publics* is large, with Seattle merely hypothesizing about them, Fremont learning their views and conveying them as an intermediary, and Lowell actually mobilizing them—concretely confronting the Lower Highlands group with those whose views they have not considered. Of course, Arroyo and Davis did not seek to organize disenfranchised groups *en masse* at the outset of their community policing efforts the way that Houston did in the 1980s. But they did feel a duty to try to consult them in particular cases in which their interests were clearly involved.²² Consequently, Lowell and Fremont did not entirely abandon the ideals of the exchange view (particularly the role it gives to the state in "leveling the playing field"); instead, they combined its best elements with those of the institutional view.

Second, the idea of deliberative democracy is, in keeping with the traditions of political theory, often (at its most concrete) presented as a question of appropriate

institutions: rules of debate, methods of selecting participants, and so on. The role of the individual is slighted. For example, Jürgen Habermas holds that "to the degree that practical reason is implanted in the very forms of communication and institutionalized procedures, it need not be embodied exclusively or even predominantly in the heads of collective or individual actors."²³ But it seems wrong to describe these stories only in terms of fixed institutions, for they involve coping with institutional failures, such as the failure of generic police-community meetings to elicit public-regarding motives. Chief Davis and Lieutenant Arroyo were driven by their own ethical commitments to try to reframe the debates with their communities. Their professional commitment to serve the broader public, not any abstract rules of public deliberation, ensured that relevant facts and the views of absent publics found their way into the deliberations. For them, sharing authority with the community did not mean turning decisions over to the majority among their partners but participating in and shaping a dialogue with them. One can imagine police with less integrity (or even just less awareness of their role) who would not have made the contributions they did, and whose engagement with the community would therefore have led to less happy outcomes even under the same "institutional framework."

Consequently, the cultivation of partnerships is not purely a question of institutions, at least in the common use of that term, but a question of professional ethics and practice. March and Olsen's institutional view makes room for that idea by describing how important the definition of officials' roles is. But many views of political theory that share their sympathies neglect these dynamics, and even March and Olsen have an unhelpful tendency to reduce the role of officials to the rules that govern their behavior rather than the ethical commitments they have made. The Lowell and Fremont cases demonstrate how valuable it is for police to make those commitments, and they show that there exist police who do in fact make them. The police in those cases have gone beyond the idea that community demands themselves can ever properly dictate police actions. They have pushed back at those demands (without simply ignoring them and substituting their own judgments for those of the community), anchored by their commitment to promote the public interest. Their experience suggests that if community policing aims to encourage more dialogue with the community, it must also cultivate particular ethical commitments in the police who facilitate that dialogue.

Unfortunately, the daily papers offer too many reminders that some police suffer from far more basic ethical

deficiencies than this one, so it may seem unrealistically hopeful to insist that the police adopt this principled stance. The examples of Lowell and Fremont show that there exist police who are up to the challenge. But there almost certainly exist police departments in which community partnerships would do more harm than good—whether by undermining equity when officers fail to uphold the responsibilities that I have described or, more dramatically, by opening up new outlets for police corruption. That, too, is an important implication of the idea that proper community partnerships rest on a particular ethical stance. In departments in which such a stance simply cannot be cultivated, community partnerships are deeply problematic.

Sharing authority with the community did not mean turning decisions over to the majority among their partners but participating in and shaping a dialogue with them.

Nevertheless, there are many places across the country in which this approach to policing has been legitimately chosen by local governments, and the examples of Lowell and Fremont show that we cannot automatically condemn that choice on the grounds that it can never promote the public interest. When police from those agencies come to professional associations, leadership training sessions, and police academies to learn how best to engage their community partnerships, the question for scholarship and education must be what message about these relationships to offer. The need for a strong ethical commitment to the principles I have described should be a central part of that message.

The third qualification to the institutional view that these cases suggest is that successful deliberation is not restricted entirely to the abstract level of reasons: in both the Lowell and Fremont examples, practitioners found agreement only by descending to particulars. Many of those who have written about deliberative democracy would accept this point. But public deliberation is sometimes seen as a way to strive for shared agreement on principles.²⁴ There are hints that that may have happened in Lowell, where the Cupples Square group may have come to embrace a commitment to the public interest

that had previously been weak or absent: in this sense, public deliberation truly helps to socialize individuals into their role as citizens and to shift their values. But the two sides may also simply come to view the particular case before them in new ways; the Fremont example in particular seems to fit with this sort of interpretation. In the end, agreement through deliberation probably rests on both of these processes—on deliberation over values *as well as* a less abstract debate over the meaning of particulars.²⁵

All three of these qualifications to the institutional view suggest that it is possible to focus *too* intently on the institutional dimensions of deliberation. It is possible, in other words, to see the process as an abstract one determined only by its rules, rather than a concrete one that is also shaped by the particular issues and participants involved. Police and community groups come to the table with ethical positions, and they use those positions to shape and invoke the norms that govern their deliberations. Moreover, the presence of once-absent publics can expand the range of considerations that the participants can imagine—even when they already intended earnestly to look beyond their own self-interests. Of course, if they are taken too far, these adjustments to the institutional view could easily undermine what is distinctive about it. The institutional view differs from the exchange view precisely in holding that norms and structures filter individual desires and actions—in holding that private interests never precisely determine public choices, since relatively durable rules and norms intervene between the two. But institutions can shape deliberation without determining it, both because the participants influence the institutions that in turn constrain them and because different participants use the institutions in different ways.

It has been a long time since social theory believed that culture and structures literally determined what individuals do: today those forces are seen as frameworks that influence how individuals act but still leave discretion, ambiguity, and room for change.²⁶ Overly strong readings of the institutional view risk ignoring these important developments in social theory.

Whatever its imperfections and its need for elaboration, the institutional view and the concept of public deliberation that is part of it can help to advance community policing by offering a metaphor of democratic practice as grounded in enlightened debate and inquiry—a metaphor that retains a commitment to a broader public interest without foreclosing the role for community partners. The effective practitioners in the cases I have reviewed have embraced this conception and made it part of the way they understand the world. By doing so they have enabled themselves to advance equity in the context of unrepresentative partnerships—the only context that is actually available in the real world.

If we accept the view of these practitioners, the partnerships that police build with citizens should not be seen only as channels of communication; they should also be seen as institutions. Neighborhood meetings, for example, are more than megaphones; they are sites of public deliberation, places where citizens and officials arrive at just and appropriate solutions to complex problems that neither side could solve alone. They facilitate the articulation of interests, but they also facilitate political justification, the creation of knowledge, and the civilization of identities. To advance equity and the public interest successfully, those who seek to develop community partnerships should aim to uphold all of these ideals in their designs.

NOTES

I would like to thank Martha Feldman, Mark Moore, and the anonymous reviewers for very helpful comments on an earlier draft of this article.

1 See, e.g., W. SKOGAN, *DISORDER AND DECLINE* (1990).

2 Of course, some people would dismiss the questions altogether and simply conclude that since it can never be representative, community input must be stopped. But the debate surrounding Theodore Lowi's proposal to that effect convinces me—as I think it has convinced many others—that this strategy is unrealistic. In reality, police (like all public agencies) cannot avoid becoming entangled with some of the community groups that mobilize, and pretending otherwise simply blinds us to their influence and undermines our ability to evaluate how it is handled. T. LOWI, *THE END OF LIBERALISM* (1979). For one version of the criticism that Lowi's proposal is

unrealistic, see Cohen & Rogers, *Secondary Associations and Democratic Governance*, in 20 *POL. & SOC'Y* 393 (1992).

3 J. MARCH & J. OLSEN, *DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE* (1995). March and Olsen give a more nuanced explanation of the exchange view than I have, emphasizing the importance of bargaining and exchange in finding Pareto improvements and of crafting policies in ways that attract a winning coalition (in *id.*, at 12 et seq.). I do not think that these subtleties affect the arguments in the text.

In criminology, this perspective reached its zenith in the 1970s when a group of academics analyzed community groups from (loosely speaking) the perspective of pluralist political theory—much of which arrived into police research *via* its critique by Mancur Olson. In its simplest form, pluralism is a special case of the exchange view in which groups serve as a channel through which

preferences are "aggregated" and communicated to government. Police "partners" become so many interest groups, subject to the illogic of collective action, which aggregate and articulate their members' preferences to the state. Jeffrey Henig's work on community crime prevention is an important example of this approach, and he has concisely stated the normative criterion that it presumes: that "those neighborhoods that are best-equipped to articulate and pursue their interests are also those with the greatest need." This perspective has exerted a lasting influence on important scholars such as Wesley Skogan, who has also adopted a perspective reminiscent of interest group pluralism, building directly on the research of Henig and others. Those who hold this view maintain hope that the chorus of articulated interests will be representative of the broader community so that it will direct government agencies to appropriate decisions. Classic treatments of pluralist theory include R. DAHL, *WHO GOVERNS?* (1961), and D. TRUMAN, *THE GOVERNMENTAL PROCESS* (1951). Olson's critique is found in *THE LOGIC OF COLLECTIVE ACTION* (1971). On the use of these ideas by scholars interested partly in policing, see esp. Henig, *Copping a Cop: Neighborhood Organizations and Police Patrol Allocation*, 7 *J. VOLUNTARY ACTION RES.* 75 (1978) (the quotation above is at 77); Rich, *A Political Economy Approach to the Study of Neighborhood Organizations*, 24 *AM. J. POL. SCI.* 559 (1980); and 7 *J. VOLUNTARY ACTION RES.* (1978), a special issue on this topic. Wesley Skogan built most directly on Henig's work in Skogan, *Community Organizations and Crime*, 10 *CRIME AND JUSTICE* (ed. M. Tonry & N. Morris, 1988); and W. SKOGAN, *supra* note 1.

4 This idea—that the state can and should try to level the playing field when political exchange begins inequitably—is a defining feature of egalitarian pluralism. See Cohen & Rogers, *supra* note 2.

5 Brown & Wycoff, *Policing Houston: Reducing Fear and Improving Service*, 33 *CRIME & DELINQUENCY* 71 (1987).

6 The quoted question is from W. SKOGAN & S. HARTNETT, *COMMUNITY POLICING: CHICAGO STYLE* 158 (1997). See also CHICAGO COMMUNITY POLICING CONSORTIUM, *COMMUNITY POLICING IN CHICAGO: YEARS ONE, TWO, AND THREE* (1994-1996).

7 As in Bennett, *Community Organizations and Crime*, 539 *ANNALS* 72 (1995).

8. One way to do that is to insist that citizens' demands must be reasonable ones—to insist on a certain kind of justification for the positions that groups take before they are taken into account. An example of what kind of justification might be required comes from Joshua Cohen, who advances the abstract criterion that legitimate reasons are those that treat other citizens as free and equal; see his *Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy*, in *THE GOOD POLITY* 17-33 (ed. P. Pettit & A. Hamlin, 1989). Regardless of the merits of this or any other particular criterion, Cohen and other political theorists typically fail to explain how their criteria will be implemented. I will suggest that police themselves (or state actors more generally) can play this role. Archon Fung offers a similar account, assigning the job of identifying "deliberative breakdowns" to the centralized components of administrative agencies; see his "Street Level Democracy: A Theory of Popular Pragmatic Deliberation and Its Practice in Chicago School Reform and Community Policing, 1988-1997," Ph.D. Dissertation, M.I.T. Department of Political Science (1998).

9 Mansbridge, *A Deliberative Perspective on Neocorporatism*, in 20 *POL. & SOC'Y* 493 (1992); Reich, *Policy Making in a Democracy*, in *THE POWER OF PUBLIC IDEAS* 123-56 (ed. R. Reich, 1988).

10 J. MARCH & J. OLSEN, *supra* note 3. March & Olsen's distinction between the exchange view and the institutional view echoes the one

made by Joshua Cohen between aggregative views and deliberative views; see his review of Robert Dahl's *DEMOCRACY AND ITS CRITICS*, in 5 *J. POL.* 221 (1991). The two dichotomies are not identical, but here I will proceed under the assumption that what Cohen calls the deliberative view is an important component of what March & Olsen call the institutional view and that March & Olsen's exchange view is essentially the same as Cohen's aggregative view.

11 J. DEWEY, *THE PUBLIC AND ITS PROBLEMS*, 207-08 (1927).

12 See Bennett, *supra* note 7, and Fung, *supra* note 8.

13 Some democratic theorists (including Theodore Lowi and Jürgen Habermas) argue that although this sort of public deliberation is important, it should take place in legislatures or social movements rather than in administrative agencies, whose role is to discover the most effective means to carry out the ends given to them by politics. Others, such as Joshua Cohen and Charles Sabel, have emphatically disagreed, and they have attempted to offer a justification for community input into administration. See T. LOWI, *supra* note 2; Habermas, *Further Reflections on the Public Sphere*, in *HABERMAS AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE* (ed. C. Calhoun, 1992); Cohen & Sabel, *Directly-Deliberative Polyarchy*, 3 *EUROPEAN L.J.* 313 (1997). I have nothing to add to this philosophical debate here except to note that those who oppose citizen input into administrative agencies need to contend with the evidence that I will present—that community partnerships in the agencies I examined *did* promote equitable outcomes as long as the police maintained a commitment to appropriate principles of public deliberation. A critic might dispute that evidence by challenging my assessment of the cases I discuss, showing why the outcomes are less satisfactory than I have maintained; or she might recount other partnerships that ended less happily even though the police *did* uphold the principles of public deliberation that I describe. Absent such evidence, I believe that Cohen and Sabel's account of political theory offers a more compelling picture of the proper role for public deliberation in policing than either pluralism or Lowi's civic republicanism. Cf. the discussion of case study methodology, *infra* note 15.

14 These cases are drawn from research done by myself and others. The Lowell and Fremont stories come from case studies of organizational reform in those cities, in which I interviewed and observed key people in the police departments and the community in order to understand how they tried to implement community policing—and especially how they tried to develop community partnerships. The Seattle story comes from a study of how a single partnership funded by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation developed in that city. The original case study was written by John Buntin based on his own interviews and observations, but I have since visited the city on my own and interviewed most of the people mentioned in this article. See Buntin, *Community Development and Community Policing in Seattle's Chinatown International District (Part A)*, and *The Community Action Partnership Begins (Part B)*, Case Program of the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1999.

15 Michael Burawoy articulates this approach to case study research, arguing that scholars should deliberately analyze cases that are anomalous from the viewpoint of existing theory and try to stretch or replace that theory in order to account for the anomaly. In following this method, of course, I make no claims about how representative my examples are of what happens in other places—only future work that explores the adequacy of my framework will be able to say anything about that. But I am predicting that places that properly design "the methods and conditions of debate" and the other things I describe will be able to reconcile an unrepresentative

mix of partnerships with equitable results. See Burawoy, *The Extended Case Method*, 16 *SOCI. THEORY* 4 (1998).

16 How, I will be asked, do I know if results are equitable? Some scholars starting from a roughly similar view of community input have tried to specify precisely and in advance of their research what an "ideal" debate and an ideal outcome would mean (e.g., Fung, *supra* note 8). I have not tried to do that here because I think questions of justice are situated judgments. That case has been argued most persuasively by Stephen Toulmin; see his *Equity and Principles*, 20 *OSGOODE HALL L. J.* 1 (1982); and A. JONSEN & S. TOULMIN, *THE ABUSE OF CASUISTRY: A HISTORY OF MORAL REASONING* (1988). Consequently, I will present my arguments about the propriety of particular outcomes alongside the cases themselves, leaving it for readers to judge whether they agree with my conclusions. I see no reason why it helps to present abstract evaluative criteria in advance rather than in tandem with the particulars of the situation, and several reasons why it hurts. In either case the key question is whether the reader accepts my interpretation of the events I describe—whether she accepts the criteria I have used to evaluate them and whether she believes I have applied those criteria in an appropriate way—and, of course, whether she trusts that I have described the events accurately and completely. Great difficulties arise from the fact that the answers to many of these questions hinge on our individual views about what a just and equitable outcome consists of: an intractable pluralist committed to a particular normative theory of what "the public interest" means will not be convinced by my discussion. In fact, that is exactly why I think relying too heavily on abstract evaluative criteria presented in advance is a bad idea, and why it is a good idea to be less theoretical in describing and assessing the outcomes in these cases. I believe that the fair-minded will agree with me that the events in Fremont and Lowell ended well (and in any case the lack of abstract evaluative criteria does not make it any more difficult for some readers to disagree), even if we cannot agree on the reasons why each of us has come to that conclusion. For that sort of possibility—agreement on particulars without agreement on the reasons behind them—see Sunstein, *Incompletely Theorized Agreements*, 108 *HARV. L. REV.* 1733 (1995); and A. JONSEN & S. TOULMIN, *THE ABUSE OF CASUISTRY*.

17 The Seattle case has evolved in promising ways since the events described here, and my analysis should not be read as a critique of the department or of the project I have described. I have written a more thorough and largely positive description of the Seattle project elsewhere, in Thacher, *The Community Security Initiative: Lessons Learned*, Working paper #00-05-15, Program in Criminal Justice

Policy and Management, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 2000.

18 If the point needs to be underlined, this competition for officers did lead to a reallocation of crime: increased police attention to Pioneer Square led to a series of police sweeps in 1992 and 1993, and many of that area's criminal population apparently moved to the Chinatown-International District—to the point, one police Lieutenant admits, that the District's crime statistics jumped markedly.

19 These complaints about the PDA circulated widely around the precinct. For example, PDA staffer Michael Yee recalls hearing them from a Lieutenant: "It was probably the second or third month in a row we were talking about it and being critical of the police department for not making the move back [to a foot patrol]. The Police Department kept asking us for why we wanted it and . . . at that meeting Lieutenant Sidney Caldwell [was] kind of getting snippy over the issue and a little heated and at one point she said, 'Well, Michael, I don't know about this, it seems like you're just coming up with this stuff to make Michael Yee's Chinatown here' . . . She thought I was just saying that for myself as what I wanted and not what the community wanted."

20 Much later on, Grabicki was replaced by a new precinct Captain with markedly different views: the critique I offer above does not necessarily apply to the Seattle Police Department in general or even the entire CAP. Moreover, even many of those like Grabicki who created tension in the relationship at its outset were clearly motivated by laudable goals. My argument is less with them than with the ideas about community input that the policing field has given them.

21 D. THACHER, *NATIONAL COPS EVALUATION ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE CASE STUDY: RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA* (1999).

22 Students of community participation have long recognized the wisdom of that strategy, which avoids the difficulties of stimulating participation far in advance of action—when the motivations for it are still abstract and distant. See A. ALTSHULER, *THE CITY PLANNING PROCESS* (1965).

23 J. HABERMAS, *BETWEEN FACTS AND NORMS* 341 (1996).

24 An example is Cohen, *A More Democratic Liberalism*, 94 *MICHIGAN L. REV.* (1994), as summarized in Sunstein, *supra* note 16.

25 See Sunstein, *supra* note 16.

26 See *THE NEW AMERICAN CULTURAL SOCIOLOGY* (ed. P. Smith, 1998).