The co-implementation of Compstat and community policing

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ABSTRACT

Over the last twenty-five years Compstat and community policing have emerged as powerful movements in U.S. police reform. Despite their importance, there are virtually no studies on how they interact when implemented in the same police organization. Based on field work in seven police agencies, this article provides the first systematic research on this co-implementation issue. In doing so it examines the reform literature to illuminate and clarify the key doctrinal elements of Compstat and community policing, including where they are similar and where they differ. Next it describes the patterns of co-implementation that emerged across different sites, including the finding that these reforms operated largely independently. This leads us to consider a broader theoretical explanation for why this should be the case and to provide a basis for enriching future research on the co-implementation of these reforms.

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Introduction

Over the last quarter century, American police have experienced two major reform efforts: community policing and Compstat (Bratton, 1998; Silverman, 1999; Skogan, 2004; Weisburd, Mastrofski, McNally, Greenspan & Willis, 2003; Willis, Mastrofski & Weisburd, 2007). Compstat is a highly focused strategic management system concentrating on reducing serious crime by decentralizing decision making to middle managers operating out of districts, by holding these managers accountable for performance, and by increasing the police organization's capacity to identify, understand, and monitor responses to crime problems (Henry, 2002; Weisburd et al., 2003). Community policing is characterized by a variety of justifications: strengthening public support for the police, building social capital, and of course, reducing crime, disorder, and fear of crime (Mastrofski, 2006). Its methods are similarly diffuse, frequently including community partnerships, problem solving, and the delegation of greater decision-making authority to patrol officers and their sergeants (Moore, 1992; Skogan, 2006a).

Both innovations have diffused rapidly (Skogan, 2006a; Weisburd et al., 2003) and researchers are still trying to determine what the effects of each of these reforms have been and their future prospects (Dabney, 2009; Weisburd & Braga, 2006). However, it is also important to know just how well they operate *together* in the same police agency. According to a national survey conducted in 2006, 59 percent of large police agencies (>100 sworn officers) are pursuing Compstat and community policing simultaneously, suggesting how they work together has significant implications for how policing is done in the U.S. (Willis,

Kochel & Mastrofski, Forth.). Based on the small amount of scholarship on this co-implementation issue, there appear to be three different perspectives: (1) Compstat and community policing work in unison, mutually supporting each other; (2) there are points of conflict, where pursuing one makes it hard to pursue the other successfully; or (3) they work independently, each having little consequence for the other.

The co-implementation issue

Compstat's supporters speculate that it complements and supports community policing and even improves it (McDonald, Greenberg, & Bratton, 2002, pp. 27, 55). According to this viewpoint, these reforms share the same focus on reducing serous crime and quality-of-life problems and the same policing approaches, including an emphasis on geographic decentralization. Where there is a disconnection between them, such as community policing's weakly developed internal accountability mechanism, the other reform is simply able to compensate.

A second group of researchers is less convinced they are so compatible. Wesley Skogan has noted the tensions between Compstat's centralized data-driven accountability system and the different currents that push community policing in the opposite direction. Community policing's focus on neighborhood problems and creative problem solving at the ground level are "at best" low priorities for Compstat (Skogan, 2006a, p. 99). Others have observed similar sources of conflict between these reforms (Willis et al., 2007).

Finally, it is possible that Compstat and community policing do not conflict because they operate more or less independently of each other. A review of the literature suggests this possibility has received little consideration, but it is consistent with the innovation diffusion literature, which argues that the prospect of an innovation's adoption has an inverse relationship to the degree to which its implementation

will disrupt existing structures and practices (Rogers, 2003). The independent-effect proposition comes from a derivative of this hypothesis—that *how* organizations implement an innovation will generally deviate as little as possible from established practice.

Using fieldwork data, this study provides the first systematic research on this co-implementation issue. It begins by identifying the key doctrinal elements of each reform to illuminate and clarify their relationship. Next it presents observations on how these reforms were co-implemented, including the major finding that they operated largely independently. This leads to the consideration of two theories on police organizations—technical/rational and institutional—to help explain *why* this should have been the case.

A comparison of the doctrines of community policing and compstat

The reform literature on Compstat (Maple, 1999; Silverman & O'Connell, 1999) and community policing (Skogan, 2006b; Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990) suggests there are reform elements where they are similar, and where they differ. In this section, we identity seven elements and assess where the respective doctrines stand on each. Doctrines are essentially theoretical abstractions about how things are supposed to work *and not how they actually do so*. We use them to help structure our inquiry into how these reforms actually operated. We begin with a table summarizing the main compatibility issue and then proceed by discussing each reform element in more detail (see Table 1).

One of the key distinguishing features of community policing and Compstat is the role of the community in defining the police mission. The former requires that those who are outside of the police organization play a key and continuous role in defining what the organization should be trying to accomplish (Roth, Roehl, & Johnson, 2004, p. 20). In contrast, Compstat emerged as a mechanism to focus and clarify *the* core mission of policing (McDonald et al., 2002). The community's role in deciding the nature of the police mission is seldom mentioned in the Compstat reform literature, except to note that there was a strong community desire for safer streets at a time (the early 1990s) when cities were experiencing a sudden increase in violent youth crime (Braga, 2003; Cook & Laub, 1998).

Another difference between the doctrines of these two reforms is the attention paid to accountability for performance. While information exchange is also valued, Compstat is foremost a method to hold middle managers accountable for knowing what is going on in the areas for which they are responsible and for devising timely, effective solutions (Bratton, 1998). By contrast, there is less concern, and certainly no detailed protocol, in the community policing literature for holding police feet to the fire of accountability (Skogan, 2006a).

Both reforms promote decentralizing decision-making authority, but they have pursued it to different degrees. Compstat has concentrated on the delegation of authority down to middle managers, primarily at the district/precinct commander level (Bratton, 1998). Community policing approaches have admittedly been quite diverse, but in general, there has been far more interest in decentralizing decision making much further down the organization (Maguire, 1997).

Community policing requires flexibility to meet the varying demands of diverse constituencies, while Compstat requires flexibility to put the key resources in the hands of the right people and to alter procedural routines to do what must be done to be effective in controlling crime (Silverman, 1999; Willis, Mastrofski & Weisburd, 2004). In practice, community policing has attempted to develop organizational flexibility by focusing on developing a stronger neighborhood-level focus in internal police operations (e.g., permanent beat assignments) and in reaching out to partner with neighborhood-level community organizations.

While important to both reforms, when it comes to the element of data-driven problem identification and assessment, there are some important doctrinal differences: (1) Compstat relies on statistics derived from a department's official record-keeping systems, while community policing solicits input from local residents to identify a broader range of minor crimes and social disorders; (2) Compstat empowers district commanders, along with crime analysts, to identify and analyze problems, while community policing places higher value on sergeants and patrol officers participating in the process; and finally (3) under Compstat, department responses are assessed at regular Compstat meetings by tracking enforcement activities while community policing advocates the use of additional measures to assess long-term success (e.g., citizen fear levels) (Peak & Glensor, 1999, 94-96).

Under both reforms, crime data are supposed to provide a basis for searching for trends and patterns and implementing innovative solutions to reducing crime and disorder problems (McDonald, 2000; Skogan, 2006a). However, where they differ to some degree is that Compstat assigns most of this responsibility to middle managers while the latter foresees a greater role for the rank and file and emphasizes the involvement of the community in the problem-solving process. Also, systematizing data collection and analysis is a core feature of Compstat, while community policing treats empirical inquiry as a more *ad hoc* process, designed to meet the needs of a specific problem.

Finally, both reforms attempt to make police operations more transparent, but their accountability mechanisms work in different ways. Under Compstat, departments are externally accountable to the degree that they provide stakeholders with accurate and timely information about how well they are accomplishing their official crime control mission (Silverman & O'Connell, 1999). External accountability, at least according to community policing doctrine,

Table 1
A comparison of the doctrines of Compstat and community policing

Reform Element	Community Policing	COMPSTAT
Mission	Broadening of police mission to include wide range of objectives	Focusing core mission on reducing crime
Internal accountability	Peripheral or nonexistent	Highest priority
Decentralization of decision-making	To lowest level in the organization	To middle managers (district commanders)
Organizational flexibility	Capacity to accommodate innovation and differing needs within communities	Compstat to reallocate resources for effective accomplishment of crime control objectives
Data-driven problem identification and assessment	Empirical analysis is expected and valued	Empirical analysis is essential
Innovative problem solving	Innovation is expected and valued	Innovation is expected and valued
External accountability	Police consult with community on objectives and progress toward them	Police publicize traditional crime statistics as measures of agency accomplishments

The darkest cells represent elements where the two reform doctrines show the greatest difference. The lightest cells are those where there are no appreciable differences. Those shaded in the middle are where there are some differences, but they are not great.

goes beyond providing citizens with information about crime reduction goals and standard crime measures. Under this model, citizens are an essential partner in contributing to police policies and practices, particularly in regard to their own neighborhoods.

Using the key reform elements identified above, we turn to analyzing how Compstat and community policing were implemented in the departments we visited. In evaluating this relationship, we assess their level of integration by applying a set of ordered-type response categories: not at all integrated, low, moderate, or high. By integration we mean the extent to which the distinctive elements of these reforms were tightly coordinated and mutually supportive (Barki & Pinsonneault, 2005). Our judgment of each individual element is the outcome of a two-step process: First, fully describing the doctrinal similarities and differences between these reforms outlined above, and second, applying this doctrinal framework to assess the level of integration we observed. At the end of our analysis section we apply a similar approach (although with different benchmarks) to consider whether the implementation level of each separate reform influenced their level of integration. Together these findings provide the basis for the theoretical discussion that follows.

Methodology

In 2006 we conducted a national mail survey of large municipal and county police agencies with 100 or more sworn officers according to the 2000 Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies (excluding sheriff's departments). Of the 566 agencies in this sample pool, 355 (63 percent) responded to the survey. Respondents were asked whether their departments had adopted Compstat and/or community policing and what form they took. To gain detailed knowledge on how these reforms worked "on the ground," we used our survey findings to identify seven large (>1000 officers), medium (500-999), and small (100-499) police agencies suitable for on-site fieldwork. The largest agency selected was the Los Angeles Police Department, CA (LAPD), followed by the Montgomery County Police Department, MD (MCPD). The two medium agencies were the St. Louis County Police Department, MO (SLC) and Colorado Springs Police Department, CO (CSPD). The three smallest were in Overland Park, KS (OPPD), Marietta, GA (MPD), and Cape Coral, FL (CCPD).[1] These were selected because they had reported that they had fully implemented both reforms; they had experienced a wide variety of successes and problems, and they were receptive to having a field researcher on site. They were also selected to achieve variation in size, organization, geographic distribution, and crime environment.[2] Our survey analysis broadened our understanding of this co-implementation issue, suggesting that police departments considered these reforms to be highly compatible, but it did not give us a useful context for understanding *why* this should be the case. The purpose of this article is to answer this question with an in-depth qualitative analysis of our on-site observations.

We conducted 5-day site visits during July 2006-June 2007. The research activities were: (a) observing department activities, community meetings (at the district level and neighborhood watch), and Compstat meetings at the department and district levels; (b) gathering documentation (including Compstat maps and crime data, strategic plans, annual reports, and press releases); (c) interviewing key decision makers in the operational chain of command through a semi-structured questionnaire; (d) interviewing and observing patrol officers during ridealongs; and (e) conducting 90-minute focus groups with six (on average) first-line supervisors. We told our on-site liaison the purpose of our project and our interest in interviewing those department members most likely to be familiar with these reforms' implementation and operation and thus best positioned to provide useful insights. We spent an average of 35 hours collecting data at each of our seven departments, and across sites we were able to conduct over 130 hours of interviews with 134

individuals, attend six Compstat and focus group meetings (at one site both meetings were canceled), and go on eleven ridealongs.

When we contacted participating sites in preparation for our visits, we stressed the importance of having the opportunity to interview at the very least those members of the department directly involved in the daily management and operation of these reforms. As a result almost half of all those we interviewed (43%) were conducted with district commanders and their executive officers (26%) and specialists assigned to community policing units (17%). Interviewees were asked to describe how the organization had implemented community policing and Compstat, the substance of their programs, their experiences of reform, and how these reforms worked together.

We also depended heavily on our on-site liaison for the focus groups whose purpose was to learn more about these reforms' influence on how sergeants made decisions and offered guidance on crime and disorder problems. The on-site liaison was responsible for contacting sergeants on our behalf and organizing when and where these focus groups were held. We told our liaisons that we were interested in hearing a broad range of experiences from first-line patrol supervisors about their experiences with Compstat and community policing. In terms of our final pool of participants, very few had been police officers for less than 8 years, with many participants having upwards of 20 years on the job. The number of patrol officers supervised by each sergeant also varied from a low of 5 to as many as 30 (although in this particular case, the sergeant was not in charge of a squad, but was a watch commander). The focus groups were generally scheduled during the morning of the last day of our visit (a Friday), conducted by a single on-site researcher, and, with participants' consent, were tape recorded. We requested that six to ten first-line supervisors attend (more would have been unwieldy) and an average of six participated in the focus groups (Krueger, 1994). Unfortunately one of the groups had to be cancelled due to scheduling issues and one was not taped due to a technical problem. Regarding the latter, the on-site research immediately typed up his written notes from the meeting in order to recall as much of the discussion as he could.

The on-site researcher took detailed notes and analyzed the content of his/her interviews and observations to identify any relevant themes that emerged (Lofland et al. 2006). The researcher focused on how each of the elements of Compstat and community policing operated together: mutually reinforcing, conflicting, or separate. Once this phase of the analysis was completed, the researcher looked for recurring themes or patterns, as well as articulated differences between them. Because the policing literature has not focused on the nature of the relationship between Compstat and community policing, this analysis was mostly inductive (although informed by our understanding of these reforms' key doctrinal elements). Working back and forth between the data and the patterns we observed and discussing findings with other field researchers helped verify that these were relevant and the placement of data was appropriate (Patton, 2002. p. 466). In the space provided we cannot present a comprehensive description of all our fieldwork accounts, and so our goal has been to identify the clear and consistent themes that emerged from our analysis. We refer readers interested in much lengthier descriptive details about the nature and extent of Compstat and community policing co-implementation to the full reports available from the funding agency (Willis, Mastrofski, & Kochel, 2010; Willis, Kochel, & Mastrofski, Forth.).

Finally, to help make our findings and judgments as accurate and even-handed as possible, we sent an earlier draft of our reports to the sites we visited. We asked them to respond to our portrait of how these reforms worked in their department at the time we visited, paying particular attention to any factual errors. While some disagreed with a few of our conclusions, all agreed that our descriptive account on which these conclusions were based was fair and accurate.

We note two limitations to our study. First, only one researcher was available to conduct each site visit. As a result, s/he had to rely on in-depth interviews rather than observation, as this was the most

efficient way to learn as much as possible in a short amount of time. Second, we were able to attend only 3 community meetings. The small number of community meetings was due to a number of factors including the nature of the department's community policing program (some did not hold regularly scheduled community meetings) and timing (Compstat meetings often did not coincide with when a community meeting was being held). Fortunately, we were able to supplement this small number of observations with what we learned from the interviews we conducted.

An assessment of co-implementation in seven police agencies

Mission

At our sites, department-level Compstat meetings served a variety of purposes. One of the most important was to establish the organization's commitment to its core value of crime control. This was frequently accomplished by focusing on a variety of traditional performance indicators—most commonly Part I crimes. At nearly all the department-level Compstat meetings we attended, crime statistics were projected before the audience on a large screen and were the basis for discussion. Oftentimes these included comparisons with the prior reporting period and year, and extra attention was focused on crime increases displayed as percentages (in most of the Compstat handouts we collected these were featured prominently in a "percentage change" column). When it came to crime spikes, district commanders generally told us that they needed to show top leadership that they were doing something to address the problem.

Some sites had attempted to broaden Compstat's focus to include some quality-of-life complaints (e.g., district commanders in Marietta selected one or two of these to report on briefly during Compstat) or some measures of the effectiveness of their community policing units (such as the OPPD's display of crime rate levels in city schools), but of the six Compstat meetings we attended, at none of them did we observe the systematic presentation and discussion of community policing measures. This does not mean, of course, that these departments did not support community policing (all the chiefs we interviewed articulated a staunch commitment to community policing), but without practical measures for results, top management was unable to evaluate rigorously the organization's community policing performance. In lieu of specific indicators, the value of community policing during these meetings was demonstrated by leadership having to ask district commanders directly about community policing strategies and tactics. Through their responses, district commanders showed their understanding of and commitment to community policing, but this *ad hoc* approach lacked the marquee billing afforded the tracking of crime rates at Compstat meetings.

Absent from the Compstat process was the hallmark of community policing: community participation. Several respondents suggested that community members were welcome to attend Compstat, but they did not mention that this invitation extended to their participation. We could identify very few local residents at the Compstat meetings we attended, and we did not observe them being called upon or volunteering to express community concerns. Despite the centrality of these meetings to police operations, they were not used as a structure for the police to "consult the community for guidance on purposes, priorities, policies, and practices" (Mastrofski, 1998, p. 165).

From a community policing perspective, little effort was expended on coming to grips with Compstat's narrow crime-control focus outside of the department. So, for example, at the few community meetings we were able to observe, Compstat was rarely brought up, and when it was, it was merely to highlight department successes in reducing crime, or as a means of reassuring residents that police were addressing a particular crime problem. While the former might have included a handout with one or two sentences on violent and property crime levels, community members were not presented with variations on the rich array of materials regularly produced for Compstat (including maps), nor did police share with residents the crime concerns and approaches discussed during the department's recent Compstat meeting.

In sum, Compstat's sharpened focus on serious crime through quantitative measures contrasted with the broader qualitative approach departments adopted to assess community policing, one where top management was left to form general impressions of community policing performance based on middle managers' responses. Since community policing was very weakly linked to Compstat's potentially powerful accountability mechanism, it is fair to assess mission clarification under these reforms as "not at all integrated."

Internal accountability

Our impression of accountability under Compstat based on our interviews and observations was that it was highest in the LAPD, where deputy chiefs, who had met earlier to examine crime data and decide what questions to ask at the upcoming meetings, determined the direction of the meeting by asking a salvo of specific questions about crime problems. In the other departments, senior command staff might raise a handful of questions, but for the most part district commanders exerted greater control over the meeting by choosing how to report on crime in their districts. Thus, by exercising much greater top-management control over the Compstat agenda, the LAPD demonstrated its attempt to shape police priorities more than did other departments, the latter giving middle managers a freer hand. Because the actions of districts commanders at the other sites were not subject to the same high level of scrutiny as those in the LAPD, accountability appeared to be experienced less intensely. Still, whatever form it took, requiring district commanders to report on crime in their beats tended to send a message that they were being held accountable for their performance. For example even in a department where accountability appeared weakest (the MCPD), we observed that district commanders were still asked to provide a slide that selected one crime trend in their district and to report briefly on the district response.

Unlike Compstat, community policing did not have a similarly centralized mechanism for measuring and providing consequences for performance. Our fieldwork revealed that the burden for community policing duties fell most heavily on district commanders and specialized community policing officers operating individually or in units.[3] In response to a question about how community policing operated in one of the smaller departments which had a separate community policing unit, we heard that responsibilities fell primarily on the district commanders: "They are the ones that hold zone [community] meetings, they are the ones who contact businesses, they are the ones who actually get e-mailed [by community members]."

In contrast to Compstat, which tried to tighten control between the district level and top management, accountability for community policing mainly occurred *within* districts and through regular face-to-face meetings with local residents. In most departments, district commanders and community policing officers attended monthly or quarterly community meetings where, we were told, high-ranking police officials were generally not present. Because the community policing accountability chain was effectively decoupled between top and middle management, it was generally less subject to top management's oversight and intrusion.

Community policing puts particular emphasis on pushing authority and responsibility down the rank hierarchy, so we were particularly interested in how sergeants and patrol officers experienced accountability under this reform. According to its supporters, a principal mechanism for this purpose is requiring that the rank and file attend and manage local beat meetings (Skogan, 2006b). Empowering officers to take personal ownership of their beats through this particular organizational structure was not something we observed. According to those we interviewed, occasionally sergeants and patrol officers may have attended the meetings described above, but they were not required

to take on the kind of leadership role assumed by district commanders. Thus it was permissible to sit to the side, or to address individual complaints in one-on-one interactions, as we witnessed in both the Los Angeles and Marietta Police Departments. As a result, those at the lowest levels of the organizational hierarchy were not an integral part of the process that helped strengthen the commitment of district commanders and community policing officers to local community needs.

Instead, accountability for community policing among patrol officers depended heavily on the influence of their immediate supervisor, the patrol sergeant. The many different styles of supervision, a topic raised by sergeants in our focus groups, imply wide variation in how accountability for community policing was experienced by rank-and-file officers (Engel, 2001). With Compstat top management uses sessions attended by large numbers of department leaders to clarify more uniform expectations for performance throughout the organization, but for community policing, performance at the rank-and-file level was based on a host of factors including sergeants' understanding of community policing and the value they placed on this approach. Moreover, even if they did regard community policing as important to daily operations, it would be difficult to hold their officers strictly accountable for its delivery. Perhaps the theme we heard most often when raising this issue with the focus groups was how any form of strategic decision making among the lower ranks was limited by the demands of the department's 911 response system. Almost universally, focus group members stated that calls for service undermined their capacity to direct their officers to engage in more focused community policing activities (such as problem solving). As one sergeant said, "Unless there is a specific problem that has to be tackled at a particular time in a particular way, it is a matter of getting to deployment assignments when you can and between calls for service."

In sum, our findings suggested that these organizations had adopted two different, not-at-all integrated models of shaping performance under these reforms. The community policing strategy for accountability was distinguished by its focus on guiding and supporting individual officer efforts when possible while giving district commanders broad discretion in deciding how to respond to community concerns. This is consistent with the philosophy of allowing key decisions to be made closest to the action. In comparison, Compstat sought to improve performance through a more traditional, top-down command-and-control approach.

Decentralization of decision making

A key feature of both reforms is decentralizing operational command to specific territories. Under Compstat, primary decision-making responsibility had been delegated to middle managers in charge of districts or precincts. Aside from the OPPD, the lowest-ranking officer with twenty-four-hour responsibility for a geographic area was a captain operating out of a district (usually three ranks above the bottom rank).[4] All the district commanders we spoke to reported that they possessed significant autonomy in managing their own districts.

The community policing movement shares this territorial imperative with Compstat, but opinions vary on whether community policing responsibilities should be assigned to specialists working independently or in units, or to generalist patrol officers. By and large, community policing reformers have stressed the benefits of de-specializing functionally (Moore, 1992)—while specializing to a greater extent territorially by devolving operational command to much smaller geographic areas than districts.

Most of those we interviewed endorsed decentralizing decision making to the ground level, but we did not observe the kinds of major changes that are intended to support a high level of territorial decentralization. In our interviews we would hear that patrol generalists were exposed to their department's community policing philosophy, given training, and assigned to geographic areas, but the sergeants in our focus groups indicated that the primary responsibility of patrol officers

was to respond to crime problems whenever and wherever they arose. The burden of responding to 911 calls meant that they could not be expected to work "autonomously at investigating situations, resolving problems, and educating the public" (Skogan & Hartnett, 1997, p. 6). These initiatives fell most heavily on the shoulders of specialist officers or units, who comprised only a very small proportion of all officers assigned to patrol (approximately 5-10% in our assessment based on department records). A high-ranking official at the OPPD illustrated this clear division of labor when he loosely characterized first-responders (patrol officers) as short-term problem solvers while community policing officers were responsible for longer-term solutions. He gave the example of having community policing officers deal with those mentally ill citizens who drained police resources by constantly calling the police. Similarly, a lower-ranking officer in the SLC noted that community policing officers were responsible for handling problems that "beat officers do not have time for."

Overall our observations and interviews suggested these reforms shared a territorial focus, but this had not advanced to the level that many community policing reformers have advocated. Since decision making was concentrated among mid-level managers at the district level and not devolved further to generalist patrol officers operating out of beats, we assessed the level of integration of this element as low.

Organizational flexibility

This element refers to a department's capacity to move resources to where a problem is and to change or disrupt department routines to do this. Flexibility under Compstat was achieved primarily by creating separate specialist crime units that were not bound to answer calls for service (unless other units were unavailable) and that could be moved either within or between districts in response to changing crime-trend priorities. These units were either assigned to each district (as was often the case in larger departments, like the MCPD), or operated out of headquarters, and they were engaged primarily in enforcement strategies, such as stake outs and making arrests. For example, in the SLC district commanders could call upon the Community Action Team (CAT), which was responsible, according to one informant, for performing "many tasks for the street," determined by "where crime statistics show the need is." These tasks included tackling robberies, drug dealing, and gang crime, and it was generally expected that the CAT would be responsible for making arrests and vehicle stops. Another stated that the CAT was aggressive and conducted 20-25 stops per night and made 2-3 felony arrests, including arrests for warrants or parole violations. Once a unit had been assigned, it played an important role in a district commander's overall crime reduction strategy. In the MCPD, district commanders could call upon the centralized PCAT (a mobile Police Community Action Team); in the OPPD it was the TAC (Tactical Support) squad. Similarly, district commanders in the MPD could call upon the Criminal Interdiction Unit (CIU) that dealt mostly with drug crimes, or the STEP (Selective Traffic Enforcement Program) unit whose primary focus was on traffic enforcement.

Flexibility under community policing is accomplished—at least in theory—through de-specialization, that is by making the beat officer a jack-of-all trades who is responsive to whatever crime and disorder problems may arise in a particular community. Thus community policing seeks to increase within-district flexibility. The cost to this approach is that it requires officers to work permanently in their beats so they have sufficient opportunity to learn about those who live and work there, as well as their beat's resources and problems. This necessarily reduces a department's capacity to shift resources *between* districts (Willis et al., 2007).

Contrary to the call of many community policing reformers for organizations described above, our sites took a similar approach to that pursued under Compstat. All of the agencies we visited had created individual specialist community policing officers or units either assigned to the districts or operating out of headquarters. While the

responsibilities of these units varied across sites, specialists assigned to these units told us that their primary function was to focus on activities commonly associated with community policing, including problem solving and community outreach. As a resource, they could be shifted from place to place as non-routine problems occurred, which freed up patrol officers to respond to calls for service.

During our visits, district commanders told us that they would call upon these officers or units to address minor offenses and instances of social or physical disorder, some of which might be persistent and affect significant numbers of people. Within this context, officers assigned to community policing units gave such examples as having to respond to complaints from local citizens and business owners about day-laborers congregating at a shopping area and having to mediate on-going neighborhood disputes that were difficult to resolve.

This functional differentiation helped ensure that organizational flexibility under these reforms operated largely independently as district commanders could match these different specialist units to a particular task. Where these reforms operated together was in their shared focus on mobilizing outside community resources to improve the department's capacity to respond to variations in its external environment. Top leadership and command staff across sites said they had worked hard to develop relationships with residents, business owners and building managers, and other city agencies. These partnerships provided district commanders with opportunities to exchange information and get outside groups involved in enhancing public safety. For example, stakeholders could be called upon to assist in responding to the crimes identified at Compstat (such as at a community meeting we observed where the district commander asked community leaders in a housing project to let residents know that any additional gang violence would result in a swift and firm police response). Similarly, district commanders and community policing units could call upon outside agencies (e.g., code enforcement, zoning inspectors, and public works) to help resolve complaints from local residents about minor crime and disorder problems, something that occurred at a district-level community meeting we attended.

To sum up, the creation of separate specialist enforcement and community policing units allowed organizational flexibility under these reforms to act in ways that were more or less independent of each other. Rather than following reform prescriptions for community policing and building within-district flexibility by placing a premium on keeping officers assigned to a given beat for a long time and buffering them from answering calls for service outside of this territory, sites had opted for a specialization approach. This helped departments minimize the potential conflict between (a) within-district flexibility (called for by community policing) and (b) between-district flexibility (called for by Compstat). Where both reforms were mutually reinforcing was in the willingness of district commanders to mobilize resources from outside the department. We assessed the level of integration of this element under these reforms as "low."

Data-driven problem identification and assessment

There are some important differences between these reforms regarding the types of data collected, who uses it, and approaches to evaluating agency performance. Our interviews with crime and intelligence analysts suggested that agencies had developed sophisticated record-keeping systems to support Compstat's focus on rapidly identifying when and where serious crime was occurring. The primary source of crime data was officer reports on individual crime incidents, and crime analysts paid particularly close attention to Part I crimes, generally recording information about where, when, and how the crime occurred which could then be disseminated electronically to district commanders.

We did not observe or hear about similarly sophisticated data systems in place to support community policing. In addition to responding to serious crime, this reform emphasizes the policing of problems (clusters of related incidents) that concern significant

numbers of people who live or work in an area. These often include concerns about minor crimes, physical decay, and social disorders (Skogan & Hartnett, 1997, p. 8). Traditional information systems of the kind used by Compstat are in many respects ill-suited for the purpose of identifying and learning about these concerns. The implication is that police departments must develop mechanisms for systematically identifying community problems, determining priorities, and documenting results, especially at the neighborhood level, but these kinds of mechanisms were not in place (Skogan, 2006b).

Furthermore, consistent with Compstat but not community policing's focus on decentralization, crime analysts and command staff reported that the responsibility for using crime data to make strategic decisions fell squarely on the shoulders of district commanders and their executive officers. In comparison rank-and-file officers were not major consumers of crime analysis. According to our focus groups, problem identification under Compstat was experienced mainly as a series of directives from above. These were conveyed from district commanders to sergeants, who then used roll call as an opportunity to tell patrol officers the major crime problems for their shift, including where they should go and the things they should be doing (e.g., getting out of cars, writing tickets, etc.). During one ridealong, a veteran police officer told us that a rookie would know very little about the department's Compstat program: s/he would be given information from a supervisor and directed to do something without knowing the reasoning behind the decision (a perspective echoed in our focus groups with sergeants). In short, officers were told about crime priorities in their districts, but they were not routinely included in the process of analyzing and discussing crime data.

Finally, just as data collection, analysis, and decision making under each reform operated largely independently, so did assessments of organizational performance. Each organization relied much more heavily on using traditional crime indicators to assess its overall performance over a fairly short period (e.g., change between reporting periods) than on broader community policing indicators measured over the longer term, including levels of unreported crime and community well-being (e.g., increased usage of an area, levels of neighborhood decay), fear, and citizen satisfaction (Peak & Glensor, 1999, 97).

To support our judgment of this element as not at all integrated, it helps to compare its operation to a vision of a program whose different components are more closely linked. The kinds of uniform standards and procedures for data collection that contributed to Compstat's capacity to scan for serious crime incidents in its environment would need to be revamped. Monthly public meetings could be used to identify and prioritize community problems which are then monitored at regular Compstat meetings. Closer integration would require that sergeants and patrol officers take the lead at these meetings in working with residents to define those problems which were of greatest concern and to analyze solutions. Finally, integration would seem to demand that long-term assessments using a wider range of evidence were routinely conducted by crime analysts to evaluate success.

Innovative problem solving

Under Compstat and community policing crime data are supposed to provide a basis for searching for and implementing innovative solutions. Operationally, innovative problem solving is closely associated with Herman Goldstein's problem-oriented policing (POP) model, and so this paradigm provides a standard for assessing how this element worked (Goldstein, 1990).

POP focuses on preventing as well as reacting to a wide range of disorders and community problems, including traditionally-defined crime. Ideally, this should involve consideration of a wide range of alternative strategies in addition to criminal law enforcement. Data are a means for selecting those strategies that promise the best chance of success as they help police identify the underlying conditions that may give rise to problems rather than just responding to individual incidents

as isolated events. Data should also be used to assess outcomes rigorously (Goldstein, 1990). To these principles community policing adds a specific emphasis on involving local residents directly in the POP process.

Overall, Compstat did more to reinforce each organization's traditional reactive response to crime, albeit more strategically, than it did to promote innovation. Command staff did tell us of some imaginative approaches that involved in-depth analysis, tailor-made responses, and focused follow-up assessments, such as Overland Park's 79th and Grant Revitalization Project and Marietta's Franklin Road Weed and Seed Strategic Plan, but these came in the form of occasional special projects.[5] Our interviews and observations of Compstat meetings suggested that district commanders used crime data somewhat like radar to improve the speed and focus of their response to events that had already occurred. They appeared to pay particular attention to upward shifts in crime trends for particular offense categories (e.g., burglaries) and geographic areas where crime was clustered (hot spots). After the problem had been identified, district commanders tended to select from a standard tool-kit of law enforcement responses and focus these on the specific times, locations, and offenders that presented the highest risk ("the surgical appliance of police resources," as one district commander put it). The strategies that were mentioned frequently—location-directed patrol, traffic enforcement, proactive arrests, and follow-up investigations—involved police using their traditional law enforcement powers. In paraphrasing Mark Twain, a respondent alluded to this enforcement-oriented approach to problem solving when he stated that under his department's Compstat model, "Enforcement is the hammer and everything looks like a nail."

In contrast to Compstat, the locus of innovative problem solving according to community policing doctrine should be further decentralized down the rank hierarchy (Moore, 1992, p. 103). Our focus groups and interviews suggested that sergeants encouraged patrol officers to problem solve as part of their regular duties but that organizational support systems had not been put in place that would have fully supported POP, such as assignment to problem-solving beat teams and intensive training in the problem-solving process (Cordner & Biebel, 2005, p. 155). This helps explain why most of the officers and supervisors we interviewed regarded problem-solving activities as synonymous with being individually "proactive" rather than as a collaborative process of identifying and prioritizing those problems of greatest concern to local citizens and of thinking and acting creatively to get at the source of the problem. This responsibility was assigned to community policing specialists, who were much more likely to respond in non-traditional ways by calling on other city agencies for help, or by making changes to the environment, in an attempt to address the underlying conditions that gave rise to the problem in the first place. At one site, for example, when asked to describe a recent problem-solving attempt, a community policing officer talked about a call he had received from a local resident regarding transients who were harassing a girl walking down an alley. With the help of members from the sex offender unit, the officer arrested one of the transients (who was a registered sex offender) and arranged with the owner of the alley to have it fenced off. Not only did this please the caller (according to the officer), his attempt to address one of the underlying causes of the problem by modifying the physical environment was designed to help prevent similar problems from re-occurring at this location in the future.

Finally, when it came to the problem-solving process, the role of the community was of a less active sort. While we often heard of departments distributing fliers to residents with information on how to improve home security and to present crime prevention tips at neighborhood watch meetings, we heard much less about a department's attempts to organize community residents for the specific purpose of setting priorities and then brainstorming, planning, implementing, and assessing solutions. In conclusion, while each organization had clearly sought to adopt several of POP's tenets, they did not work as a coherent or unified strategy suggesting that this element was not at all integrated.

External accountability

Finally, this element attempts to make police departments more transparent and accountable to the communities they serve. From a Compstat perspective, departments are largely accountable to their stakeholders to the extent that they share information on organizational strategies and performance. During our interview, LAPD's chief said that making crime statistics freely available on the web gave a degree of transparency to what the police were doing and was a key feature of Compstat. In fact, across sites it was customary for departments to make the up-to-date crime statistics produced for Compstat readily available. These data were posted on department web sites so that they could be accessed by members of the public. Some departments, for example the OPPD, also made it possible for residents to view crime maps which, in some cases, were also interactive.

The integration of this element under both reforms would seem to require a much greater level of community involvement. Under community policing, citizens are an essential partner in identifying and helping define police policies and practices. Police are accountable to the degree that they create collaboration with residents that is directly responsive to their concerns and that fosters an open dialogue on policies and practices (Mastrofski & Greene, 1993, p. 92).

As we noted earlier, due to timing and resource constraints, we were only able to attend community meetings at three sites. As a result our analysis of this element depends more on general impressions and on comments made during interviews than on direct observation of police-community interactions. Our findings are therefore speculative.

Based on our observations at these meetings and our interviews, some district commanders did introduce some Compstat-generated data at these gatherings, but they played a marginal role. For example, they could be used selectively to inform citizens about what the police were doing in response to a crime problem rather than to generate discussion and solicit feedback from community members. At a town hall meeting we attended at one site, a district commander mentioned that the number of larcenies had risen in the last quarter and that there were no patterns (although he did not present any specific crime statistics or invite comments). Similarly, at a monthly community meeting at another agency, the district commander briefly mentioned some official crime statistics to report on the district's Part 1 crimes. But we did not observe or hear of Compstat data being used as a catalyst to hear from external constituents on a district commander's priorities, or crime strategies. Based on our small number of observations, the different approaches for developing external accountability failed to operate in ways that were mutually supportive. This led us to assess this element as not at all integrated. Across sites, police agencies appeared to cede little control to the community in setting and meeting performance standards, and did not afford local residents the opportunity to exert real influence in evaluating department success and the opportunity to express their approval or disapproval directly. The Compstat data that were disseminated may have been important to citizens, but ultimately departments were not being judged on those things that community members had identified as mattering most to *them*. By and large, Compstat seemed to do more to try and bring decision making of community members in line with those of the police than in the other direction—a core goal of community policing.

In this section we have used the field work data from our site visits to assess the level of integration of these reforms. Overall, our findings from seven police agencies of different size and organization suggested that Compstat and community policing did not conflict because they were essentially stove-piped—operating side-by-side, one having little interaction or effect on the other. Thus for each of the reform elements the level of integration was generally very low, and remarkably this pattern was consistent across all seven police departments (see Table 2 for our summary and assessment).

These general patterns notwithstanding our above analysis also showed that in some instances the level of implementation of each

Table 2
A general cross-site comparison of reform elements under Compstat and community policing and assessment of their integration

Reform Element	Under community policing	Under Compstat	Level of integration
Mission	Highly visible focus on Part I crimes, especially at Compstat meetings	No systematic presentation or discussion of indicators of community policing performance	Not at all
Internal accountability	Occurs informally within districts and contingent on individuals, not structures	Based on internal, formal, and centralized performance system	Not at all
Decentralization of decision making	Territorial focus but primary decision making authority not devolved to sergeants or patrol officers at beat level	Territorial focus on districts delegation of decision-making authority to district commanders	Low
Organizational flexibility	Willingness to mobilize outside resources and community policing units in response to problems, but little focus on maintaining beat integrity for patrol officers	Willingness to mobilize outside resources, but flexibility largely due to moving patrol officers and specialist tactical units in response to serious crime issues wherever they arose	Low
Data-driven problem identification and assessment	Little capacity for identification and long-term assessment of broad array of community problems. Patrol officers not major consumers of crime analysis	Crime analysis focused on Part I crimes. Assessments of success rely on official crime measures and conducted over relatively short term	Not at all
Innovative problem solving	Little in-depth problem solving by patrol officers, and few structures in place for community involvement in problem-solving efforts	Problem solving primarily the responsibility of district commanders who continue to rely on traditional enforcement crime strategies	Not at all
External accountability	Community policing goals not established through systematic consultation with community members	Community members generally passive recipients of Part I crime statistics selected by agency	Not at all

reform was not uniform (internal accountability, for instance). It is possible then that the low level of community policing/Compstat *integration* that we observed was merely a reflection of the level of *implementation* of the two reforms. Perhaps where implementation of one or both reforms is weak, there is little conflict between them and hence there is little need for integration. Could this explain our findings? In light of this consideration, an important prelude to interpreting our results is to examine whether there is a relationship between the dosage or level of reform implementation and the level of reform integration. Put differently, does variation in how these reforms were implemented help explain variation in the dependent variable (level of integration)?

The relationship between reform implementation and integration

One of the limitations of survey research is the validity of measures derived from institutional surveys requiring a single respondent to make broad generalizations about such things as the level of implementation of a specific program or policy (Maguire & Mastrofski, 2000). While all the departments we visited reported fully implementing Compstat and community policing on our survey questionnaire, our fieldwork suggested that there was variation in their actual level of implementation on the ground.

In making this judgment, we first established a meaningful standard to measure against, one that was external to our sample. For Compstat we used the original NYPD model that Chief Bratton, one of its principal architects, also implemented in Los Angeles. Community policing is trickier as it changes according to the needs and desires of different

departments and their constituents. Here we derive our standards from Wesley Skogan's detailed description of community policing developed over several years through careful evaluation of the Chicago Police Department's model program (Skogan, 2006a). Next we examined our field notes for each department and systematically compared what we observed to these measures, making sure that we were consistent in our judgments. For each element we asked, "To what extent did a department rank high, moderate, or low in relation to our benchmark?" So, for example, if a department's Compstat program had a specific and highly visible crime reduction goal, we assessed this as "high" on mission clarification. A department that set a goal, but it did not involve an explicit crime reduction percentage from previous years' performances, was judged to be "moderate" in terms of this element. Finally a department that was merely committed to public safety, but did not establish a clear crime reduction objective or frequently measure its progress toward this goal would be ranked as "low." Below we provide a summary of the benchmarks we used for each individual element (see Table 3).

Our results show significant variation. Of the 98 cells in our matrix (Table 4), we rated 19 high, 52 moderate, and 17 low which raises some interesting side questions about the potential differences in how police departments rate the implementation of a program compared to researchers. In the case of Compstat it might be that the NYPD model, which has not been the object of a rigorous, disinterested empirical evaluation, provides an unfair standard of assessment as it is based largely on accounts by those who have some investment in promoting its benefits. Alternatively, it might be that police use very different standards for assessing implementation than researchers. Our brief analysis provides grist for future lines of inquiry. For our

Table 3
Benchmarks for assessing level of Compstat and community policing implementation at different sites

Reform Element	Community Policing	Compstat
Mission	- Broadening of police mission to include wide variety of objectives - Key role of community in defining police priorities	- Specific and highly visible crime reduction goal
Internal accountability	- Middle managers held strictly accountable for identifying and addressing community-related priorities	- Middle managers held strictly accountable for crime performance by leadership
Decentralization of decision making	- To lowest level in organization, especially patrol officers, in order to customize solutions to local problems	- To middle managers
Organizational flexibility	- Capacity to accommodate innovation and differing needs within communities resulting in strong neighborhood-level focus	- Capacity to reallocate resources for effective accomplishment of crime control objectives (putting resources in the hands of key decision makers)
Data-driven problem identification and assessment	- Systematic identification of crime and disorder problems by local residents and follow-up assessments of success - High value placed on rank-and-file officers participating in crime analysis	- Systematic identification of serious crime problems and follow-up assessments of success - High value placed on middle managers doing crime analysis
Innovative problem solving	-Innovation at lowest levels of organization expected and valued - Significant role of community in problem-solving process	- Innovation by middle managers expected and valued
External Accountability	- Police consult with community on objectives and progress toward them	- Police publicize traditional crime statistics as measures of agency performance

Table 4
Level of Compstat (CS) and community policing (CP) implementation by reform element at each site

	Los Angeles, CA		Montgomery County, MD		Colorado Springs, CO		St. Louis County, MO		Overland Park, KS		Cape Coral, FL		Marietta, GA	
	Assessment of level of CS and CP implementation (High, Moderate, Low)													
	CS	CP	CS	CP	CS	CP	CS	CP	CS	CP	CS	CP	CS	CP
Mission	Hi	Mod	Low	Mod	Mod	Mod	Low	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod
Internal accountability	Hi	Mod	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Mod	Low	Low	Mod	Low	Mod	Mod
Decentralization of decision making	Hi	Mod	Hi	Mod	Hi	Mod	Hi	Mod	Low	Low	Hi	Mod	Hi	Mod
Organizational flexibility	Hi	Mod	Hi	Mod	Hi	Mod	Hi	Mod	Hi	Low	:Low	Mod	Low	Mod
Data-driven problem identification and assessment	Hi	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod	Hi	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod
Innovative problem solving	Mod	Mod	Low	Mod	Low	Mod	Low	Mod	Low	Low	Low	Mod	Low	Low
External Accountability	High	Mod	High	Mod	High	Mod	Low	Mod	High	Low	Mod	Mod	High	Mod

current purposes however, it is sufficient to note that how strongly or how weakly each reform was implemented in each department was not related to how these reforms were integrated. For example, the average score of the LAPD across all elements was almost uniformly high on Compstat implementation and moderate on community policing compared to the OPPD which typically averaged much lower in terms of the implementation of both reforms. Despite these differences in implementation levels, these departments showed the same patterns of little-to-no integration. In our discussion we try to account for this independence.

Discussion: a theoretical understanding of co-implentation

Compstat and community policing are two highly-touted innovations, and yet there is little research on how they work together when implemented in the same police organization. Based on the literature, we identified three perspectives on this co-implementation issue (they work together, in conflict, or separately) and found that these reforms worked largely independently from one another. By operating these reforms in parallel, both our survey findings and on-site interviews and observations indicated that departments felt they could respond to a broader set of goals and to engage in a wider variety of tasks than if they had implemented just one reform (Willis, Kochel & Mastrofski, Forth.). Thus, they had an additive effect—one compensating for the limitations of the other in helping the organization respond more comprehensively to the diverse demands it confronted in its environment. This raises the interesting question of *why* these reforms operated separately at the sites we visited, and why the variation we observed in the level of implementation of each across the seven departments appeared unrelated to the level of integration. In the following discussion we speculate on theoretical explanations that might account for this pattern of findings.

Prior research has applied two different perspectives on organizations—technical/rational or contingency theory and institutional—to explain police reform in general (Crank 2003) and the operation of Compstat or community policing in particular (Burruss & Giblin, 2009; Willis et al., 2007). This suggests that these perspectives may be useful for providing a broader theoretical basis for understanding the organizational structures and activities we observed in co-implementing departments. This should point researchers toward interesting directions, including a more detailed and systematic application of these theories to this co-implementation issue.

Both models are premised on the notion that organizations respond to demands in their external environments that benefit themselves by acquiring resources and other forms of support (Scott, 1987). However, based on their differing assumptions about an organization's task environment, these perspectives suggest different explanations for why an organization adopts particular structures and practices, and the purposes they are supposed to serve. These differences would lead us to expect there would not be a high degree of integration between these two reforms, as each reform was responding to different pressures in the agency's task environment.

Furthermore, we might even expect that in response to these different pressures they might even conflict with one another.

According to the technical model, organizations act rationally in adopting structures and practices that evidence shows are the best suited to accomplishing technical objectives, such as crime control. We would expect Compstat to be adopted in ways that helped the organization respond to crime more effectively—using timely crime data, decentralizing decision making to district commanders, etc. Under the technical model, Compstat's creation and existence depends upon its capacity to contribute to the technical objective of crime control. Crime control is also key to community policing, but it is only one of several highly valued goals, not the least of which is incorporating the community into the very processes of making and executing police policy.

From an institutional perspective, the structures and practices of organizations are not only influenced by rational calculations and technical imperatives, but also the cultural features of their environments. Rather than being driven to perform efficiently, these organizations are judged according to how well they respond to the beliefs and preferences of powerful entities in their environment (Mastrofski, 1998). For police organizations, whether or not they appear legitimate is powerfully influenced by the views of key stakeholders or sovereigns. Should these pressures for innovation originate from different sources in the organization's institutional environment, we would not expect these reforms to naturally work in ways that are mutually reinforcing.

Compstat arose largely out of a management desire to make police organizations more responsive to the vision and direction of those top executives ultimately responsible for organizational performance. Greater management control, or at least the appearance of such control, is highly valued by top executives; it frames their capacity to hold the organization to high standards of performance and minimize the risk of misbehavior (Simons, 1995). Among the sovereigns for police executives are professional police organizations such as the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), and high-visibility, high-status police organizations that originated or adopted NYPD's hallmark Compstat program. Because these entities support Compstat, police departments are under pressure to adopt those features of Compstat that are most likely to satisfy the expectations of these important professional stakeholders. Adhering to the convention of holding regular crime control meetings with the impressive display of crime data gives a powerful impression that Compstat is up-and-running. The danger of adapting community policing to this Compstat model is that it will not resemble what Compstat is supposed to look like and therefore a department may lose Compstat's legitimating qualities.

Community policing arose from a different set of desires, including the need to reconnect the police to a variety of groups who had become alienated (Kelling & Moore, 1988). A rational response to these institutional pressures would be to implement community policing programs most likely to appeal to citizens, local politicians, and the press. This helps explain why the community policing programs we observed focused heavily on increasing the visibility of

each department's efforts to serve the community and responding to neighborhood concerns—widely regarded as principle features of community policing. The major point here is that community policing operated separately from Compstat because it appeared to be responding to a different set of pressures in the organization's institutional environment.

Finally, this theoretical approach can also help explain the lack of conflict we observed between Compstat and community policing. According to their separate doctrines, certain elements under these reforms are highly likely to conflict with one another. For example, Compstat's focus on shifting resources to when and where they are needed most would seem to conflict with community policing's commitment to assigning patrol officers to fixed beats and keeping them there to secure the confidence and good will of neighborhood residents and businesses. Indeed, similar kinds of conflict were observed in an earlier study examining these reforms in three police organizations. The agency that had done the most to infuse both reforms into its structures and practices, created an environment where the different approaches created conflict and dissension (Willis et al., 2007). Why did we not observe something similar at the seven departments we visited? The logic of this prior analysis would suggest that there would be some variation among our departments in terms of how integration worked. Presumably in those departments where each reform was more strongly implemented, Compstat and community policing would be more likely to hinder one another, and where only weakly implemented, this would not be the case. Our review of the level of implementation of each reform shows variation in level of implementation across departments, and yet this did not seem to affect their integration. In fact, both our survey findings and on-site fieldwork suggested that police officers regarded these reforms almost uniformly as complementary.

One explanation is that each organization had sought to *consciously* manage potential conflicts by implementing these reforms in ways that would ensure they worked independently. Deliberately concentrating decision making among middle managers thus avoided disruptions likely to result from decentralizing this power to different levels within the organization, while creating specialist community policing units, allowed an organization to be flexible while buffering it against the competing demand of keeping officers assigned to fixed beats. From a technical perspective the latter might be more effective for accomplishing desirable community policing goals such as encouraging in-depth problem solving. But our interviews lent little support for this explanation: none of those we interviewed stated that they considered their co-implementation efforts in light of these possibilities.

A more plausible explanation is that the lack of integration we observed was the natural result of each police organization implementing Compstat and community policing in ways that allowed it to buffer its technical core (the central means by which it performs its primary policing operations – routine patrol and investigations) (Mastrofski & Willis, Forth.). These departments tended to emphasize those structural characteristics of Compstat and community policing which were most likely to resonate with popular sentiments. In the case of the former, this included a focus on crime control, the spectacle of weekly performance evaluations, and the use of new and impressive crime analysis and mapping technologies. In the case of community policing, specialist community policing units demonstrated how each department was doing something to address community concerns even though existing structures were fundamentally unaltered in ways that may have strengthened the innovation technically. That is, there were very good institutional reasons for how these reforms were implemented: they continued to free up patrol to respond to calls for service, a core feature of the police role. Thus the natural outcome of buffering these organizations' technical core in order to minimize disruptions to existing structures and practices was for each these reforms to operate independently from one another.

This explanation for how Compstat and community policing were implemented is also consistent with the innovation diffusion literature mentioned earlier. This research suggests that organizations will tend to implement innovations in ways that are compatible with existing structures and practices, except under certain unusual conditions (Rogers, 2003, pp. 240-249). The unusual conditions that might reverse this connection would be compelling forces that create a crisis or perceived need (e.g., rising crime or increased fear of crime in the community), and hence pressure to seek much greater deviation from the old ways of doing things. Absent a compelling need to use department resources efficiently to meet crises, police administrators will have no particular incentive to integrate diverse reforms unless this can be accomplished easily. Although we do not have data that would test our explanation, it suggests a promising framework to employ in future empirical analyses of this and similar police reform efforts.

Conclusion

In an important essay on police organization, Albert Reiss, wrote:

The dilemma of modern policing seems to lie in determining whether to continue opting for rational, bureaucratic administration centering on crime events and their control or, rather to transform policing into a community and social problem-centered bureaucracy that is accountable to localized groups (1992: 94-5)

Our research suggests that one way police organizations may have sought to try to resolve this dilemma is by implementing Compstat and community policing in ways that allowed these reforms to function simultaneously but independently. By adopting a form of co-implementation that allowed Compstat and community policing to operate side-by-side, departments could respond to a broader set of goals and engage in a wider variety of tasks than if they had implemented just one reform. By operating them as systems mostly buffered from each other, the departments avoided having to confront in highly visible ways the dilemmas that would inevitably arise where the doctrines of the two reforms were at odds. That is, it makes perfect sense for police organizations to do this if the operant rule in adopting innovations is to select those aspects that require the least change from the *status quo ante* (Rogers, 2003; Weisburd and Braga, 2009). In contrast, a more integrated Compstat/community policing model would require much more radical changes to existing organizational routines, and such changes may have greater costs and risks and meet with considerable resistance from threatened parties.

Appendix A

A profile of participating departments

Police Department	Population[1]	Police Officers[1]		Part I Crime Statistics[1]		Community Indicators		Community Policing Start Date	Compstat Start Date
		Sworn	Civilian	Violent Crime	Property Crime	Median Household Income[2]	% Unemployed[3]		
Los Angeles, CA	3,879,455	9,393	3,292	787	2718	$44,445	4.7%	1990s	2003
Montgomery Co, MD	932,131	1,211	440	231	2484	$87,624	3.7%	1992	1995
Colorado Springs, CO	376,807	681	313	569	4797	$50,892	3.7%	1992	2003
St. Louis Co, MO	331,489*	753*	250*	124	1054	$53,186	4.5%	1991	1991
Overland Park, KS	165,975	240	54	200	2736	$68,404	3.9%	1995	2001
Cape Coral, FL	142,371	209	124	285	3447	$54,026	3.3%	2002	2002
Marietta, GA	63,228	136	32	633	4147	$40,645**	4.0%	1997	2000

[1]FBI (2006). *Crime in America.*
* These data were collected from the St. Louis County Police Department Fact Sheet (2004). The population is for the jurisdictions served by the police department.
[2]U.S. Census Bureau (2006). 2006 inflation-adjusted dollars.
**2000 data- Marietta's 2006 data were unavailable.
[3] Bureau of Labor Statistics, April 2007. For areas in a larger MSA area, these data are presented.

Notes

1. Terminology varied among sites. For convenience we use the term "Compstat" to refer to these programs at all departments. Similarly, we refer to each department's chief executive officer as "chief," to precinct commanders as "middle managers" or "district commanders," and to all geographic areas of command, as "districts," unless otherwise stated.

2. A profile of the participating police departments is in Table 1 of the Appendix.

3. Terminology varied across sites for those officers with a specialized community policing assignment. To minimize confusion, we refer to all these officers as community policing officers.

4. The OPPD was not divided into geographic areas of responsibility as called for by the doctrines of Compstat and community policing. The focus of operational command was the entire city and this responsibility fell to a commander in charge of an 8-hour shift. Consequently, in this discussion we focus on the other six departments that were decentralized geographically (unless specifically noted).

5. In the summer of 2004, the OPPD noticed a spike in calls for service and crime occurring in an area of six city blocks at whose center lay the street intersection of 79th and Grant. The department conducted an in-depth analysis to identify the nature and scope of the problems and launched a "multi-pronged" effort in response which included asking city and county agencies for help, and the organization of a series of neighborhood meetings for residents and landlords. The department established the goal of reducing calls for service by 25% in one year and two units of two officers were assigned to this area during each shift for its accomplishment. They were tasked with addressing specific crime problems and results were tracked over a twenty-month period. Police data showed that monthly calls for service had been reduced by 40% between August 2004 and March 2006 (Douglass & Sneller, 2007).

A similarly intensive approach for searching for and implementing innovative solutions to reducing crime and disorder problems was used by the MPD in its Franklin Road/Weed and Seed Strategic Plan. Through crime analysis and community surveys and discussions, the department identified four major problems (including crime at a local night-club), established short-term and long-term objectives, collaborated on solutions with city agencies, local businesses and residents, and selected strategies most likely to address the underlying conditions that gave rise to the problems in the first place (e.g., poor lighting, physical disorder, and lack of community involvement in crime prevention) (Campisi 2007).

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