The Connotations of Police Reform in North Minneapolis  
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Introduction

- As the United States continues to be divided between various ideologies, policing in America remains a volatile topic.
- Community policing is a term that is used very fervently. Its connotation is seemingly based on opinion. In its broadest sense, it relates to mutually beneficial relationship between law enforcement and citizens.
- “Order maintenance”, or the continual critiques to the particular range of acceptable behavior in a specified neighborhood, is paramount in the discouragement of deviant behavior.
- How a society comes to meet the ends to achieving a respectful, prosperous neighborhood looks different depending on who you ask.
- Police policy reform is a fundamental issue in achieving this vision.
- This research will focus on the attitudes and agendas of 3 major groups, as it concerns police reform: Law enforcement, organized advocacy groups, and the individualistic communities they serve, particularly, North Minneapolis.

Methodology

- Completion of courses 3101: Sociological Perspectives on the Criminal Justice System, as well as 4125: Policing America course, both instructed by Dr. Michelle Phelps.
- Next, I was accepted to join Dr. Phelps research team to better understand individuals’ knowledge and opinions, specifically pertaining to the Minneapolis Police Department and methods for police reform.
- Data collection has been a constant process, to include any observations made through attendance of various policing, advocacy, and community meetings. It also includes the gathering of information and analysis of various websites, social media postings, published material, as well as interviews with N. Minneapolis residents, themselves.

Preliminary Data

Police

- Crisis Intervention Training
  - Officers within the MPD will receive Crisis Intervention Training by the end of 2016.
- Implicit Bias Training
  - Officers in the MPD have received Fair and Impartial Policing (FIP) Training. The FIP training gives officers the tools to recognize their biases and work through the biases of others.
- Procedural Justice
  - The Department of Justice’s National Initiative for Building Community launched a three-day procedural justice training to strengthen the relationship between the criminal justice system and the communities it serves and protects.
- Use of Force
  - MPD proactively began to study its policies. The Commander found that the policy and training on Use of Force was good, but the MPD believes it can always improve.
- Body Worn Cameras (BWC)
  - BWC pilot program was rolled out in 2012 and became standard issue to all precincts by 2016. As of 2017, it has become new policy to have them operating on all interactions.

Advocacy Groups

Who Are They?

- Primary advocacy groups in North Minneapolis include: Black Lives Matter (BLM), Communities United Against Police Brutality (CUAPB), Neighborhoods Organizing for Change (NOC), Minnesota Governor’s Council on Law Enforcement, Minneapolis Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Although there are many active organizations, these are some of the more prominent parties.

What Do They Want?

- Advocating for a Community Policing module based on mutual respect
- Accountability of individual officers involved in misconduct
- Transparency between Law Enforcement and community entities
- Better cultural sensitivity, de-escalation, and use-of-force training for officers.

How Do They Communicate?

- Via their websites,
- Community and legislative meetings
- Protests such as the closing of the I-94 highways or 4th Precinct occupation.
- Members on the Governor’s Council on Law Enforcement.

Community Members

Who Are They?

- North Minneapolis residents have a high demographic of minorities as well as police interactions. This makes it a hot bed for policy reform and analysis.
- The area is representative of the many urban, inner city dwellings and can be compared to similar areas in other metropolitan areas.

What Do They Say?

- Although these are the opinions of individuals, the ideas of singular community members still hold ample amount of value and consideration.
- Themes include respect, transparency, and accountability. This translates to acting more as guardians, than warriors, and an overhaul of police culture.

What are Their Expectations?

- Most participants had faith in their community leaders to fuel the wheels of change.
- The easy access to technology has illuminated these previously overlooked issues.
- Some participants had a more negative outlook. They saw police misconduct as a systemic issue that they must learn to adapt to and live with. They believe that neither their generation, nor the next, will see a satisfactory resolution.

Implications

- The areas of concern and discrepancy seem to be similar among the groups. It would appear that identifying the problem is not the issue, but in fact the treatment of said issue, or the “how”, seems to be elusive.
- The data gathered by Dr. Phelps and other researchers will be used to further police reform. We hope the project will build bridges that allow for more meaningful police reform both in the criminal justice system as a whole, but more specifically on the day-to-day street level police interactions.