

POPULAR GOVERNMENT

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The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



Good News about Crime

Community Policing



Home School to
Public School



Group Effectiveness



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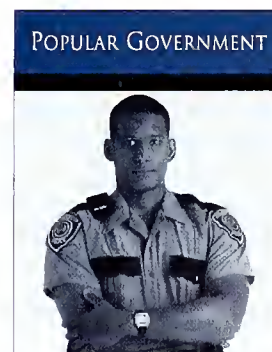
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On the cover Nationwide and statewide, the rate of violent crime has decreased in the mid-1990s. Several explanations are possible. Photograph © SuperStock, Inc. All rights reserved.





At Last, Some Good News about Violent Crime

Stevens H. Clarke



As recently as 1994, North Carolinians were so concerned about crime that the governor called a special legislative session on the problem. In that year and in the three following years, major legislative efforts emphasized sentencing changes and prison construction to incarcerate more offenders. Similar activity occurred in many other states.

Whether as a result of those legislative measures or for various other reasons, the per capita rate of serious violent crime has dropped in the mid-1990s, in North Carolina and in the United States. For young people the drop follows several years of rapid increase. For older people the drop is an acceleration of a long-term downward trend.

This article examines trends in violent crime in the United States and in North Carolina. It explains some basics of crime measurement and investigates the discrepancy between violent crime as measured by surveys of crime victims and violent crime as officially reported by police. The article concludes with a discussion of some possible explanations for the drop in the violent-crime rate.

Measurement of Crime

This article deals with four “serious violent crimes” (also called “violent index crimes”): criminal homicide (including murder and manslaughter except manslaughter by negligence), rape, robbery, and aggravated assault (an attack involving either a weapon or

substantial injury). The article also uses the term “total violent crime,” which is defined as serious violent crime plus simple assault (assault without a weapon or substantial injury).

In the United States, there are three systems for measuring violent crime: the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) Mortality Database; the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) system; and the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS).

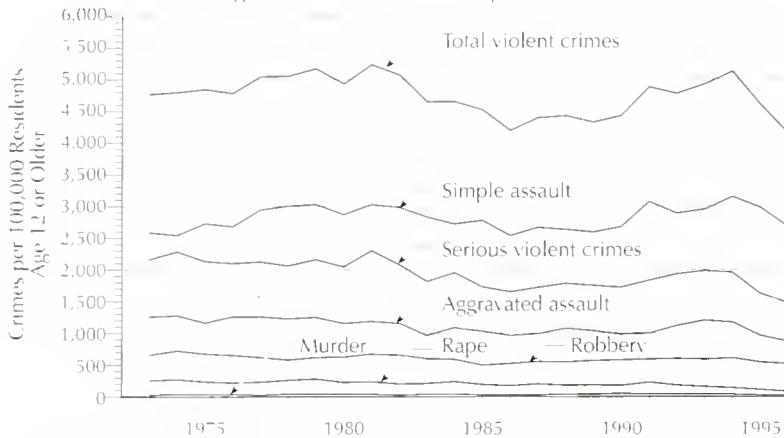
The NCHS Mortality Database. The NCHS Mortality Database incorporates the reports that medical examiners and physicians throughout the United States must submit concerning every death. “Trends in Murder” (see page 12) relies on the NCHS database—in particular on data maintained by North Carolina’s Chief Medical Examiner—as well as on police investigative data.

The UCR system. The UCR system—the system maintained by police—is based on crimes that victims or other observers report to police agencies. After receiving information about an alleged crime and investigating it, unless the investigation concludes that the allegation is unfounded, the police report the crime to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which compiles and publishes UCR data. UCR data are available for individual states as well as for the nation as a whole. Law enforcement agencies throughout the country use the same concepts and forms to make their reports, but they differ in their techniques and skills of receiving crime information from the public, investigating it, and reporting it to the UCR system. Also, in any single police agency over time, the system for receiving, investigating, and reporting information on crime may vary.

The author is an Institute of Government faculty member specializing in correctional law and criminology.

Figure 1

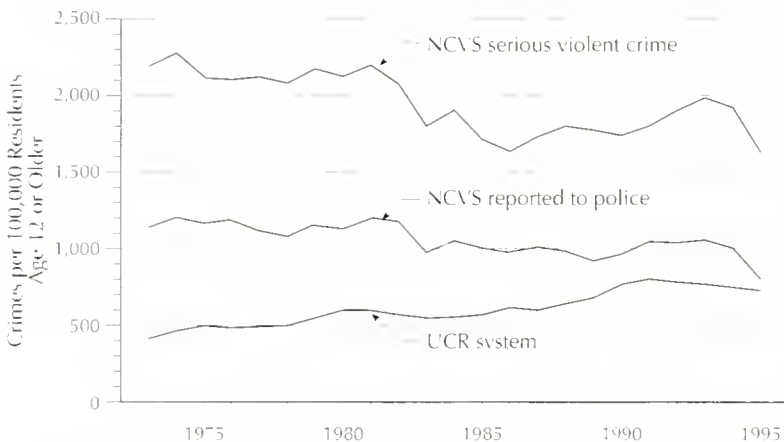
NCVS Violent-Crime Rates for U.S.
(Including Homicide from UCR System), 1973-96



Sources: Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports*; U.S. Bureau of the Census, National Crime Victimization Survey.

Figure 2

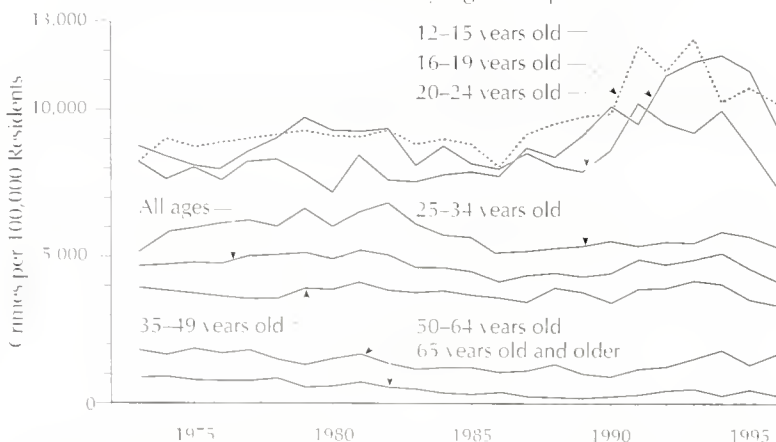
NCVS and UCR Rates of Serious Violent Crime for U.S., 1973-95



Sources: Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports*; U.S. Bureau of the Census, National Crime Victimization Survey.

Figure 3

Violent-Crime Rates in U.S., by Age Group, 1973-96



Note: Data include crimes of simple assault, murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, National Crime Victimization Survey.

The NCVS. The NCVS, conducted by the United States Census Bureau for the United States Department of Justice, began as a regular published series in 1973. A semiannual survey conducted in person and by telephone, it samples approximately 100,000 people age twelve or older in 56,000 housing units to determine whether they recently have been the victims of various types of crimes.¹ (The survey covers property crimes as well as violent crimes. This article is concerned only with the latter.) NCVS estimates are reported for the nation as a whole, not for individual states. The NCVS does not include murder. Also, it does not include violent crimes committed against children under age twelve² or robberies involving solely the property of commercial establishments (much less numerous than robberies of individuals).

Differences between the UCR system and the NCVS. There are important differences between the UCR system and the NCVS. The UCR system relies on many law enforcement agencies, whereas the NCVS always has been conducted by a single organization using essentially the same methods. The UCR system deals only with crime reported to and by the police, whereas the NCVS is designed to estimate the total number of violent crimes (with the exceptions noted previously), whether or not the victims report the crimes to the police.

The UCR system generally has reported fewer violent crimes than the NCVS has. One reason for the difference is that victims often do not inform the police about crimes.³ Another explanation is that the police do not report all the crimes that, according to the NCVS, victims say they have told the police about. Police may not be able to understand what a victim is saying, or they may lack the resources to investigate the victim's complaint or do the necessary paperwork.

There is good reason to believe that the NCVS provides more consistent information over time than the UCR system does. NCVS data have been collected in essentially the same way since 1973, using the same type of national sample. UCR data collection may vary from one police agency to another and may vary over time within any single police agency. Homicide is an exception to this last statement. The UCR system is believed to have reported homicide more completely and consistently than it has reported other violent crimes.

This article's crime data. In this article, to report violent crime per capita, I have converted the NCVS rates to rates of violent crime per 100,000 United

States residents age twelve or older. When NCVS rates are combined with UCR rates in the same figure, both exclude victims under age twelve. A note at the end of the article indicates sources of data.

National Trends in Violent Crime since the 1970s

National rates of violent crime from 1973 to 1994. According to UCR data on murder and NCVS data on the four other violent crimes, from 1973 to 1994, the rate of *total* violent crime varied, with no clear trend upward or downward. In 1994 it was 5,119 crimes per 100,000 persons, about what it had been in the late 1970s. However, the rate of *serious* violent crime (excluding simple assault) generally drifted downward from 1973 to 1994. It remained around 2,100 crimes annually per 100,000 persons until the early 1980s, then dropped until 1990. It then increased until 1994 but still remained below its levels of the 1970s. For serious violent crime, the rate in 1994—1,969 crimes per 100,000 persons—was lower than at any time in the 1970s. (See Figure 1.) The rates of the various offenses constituting serious violent crime also generally drifted downward during the 1973-94 period. (Murder is so much less frequent than the other violent crimes that it barely appears on the scale.)

Comparison of the national NCVS and UCR rates of serious violent crime (simple assault is excluded because the UCR does not include it) reveals a discrepancy (see Figure 2). The UCR rate (the bottom line in Figure 2) increased from the 1970s to the 1990s. During the same period, the NCVS rate (the top line) was much higher but was not increasing. In fact, it was decreasing during many years when the UCR rate was rising.

The NCVS estimated rate of serious violent crime that victims say they reported to police (the middle line in Figure 2) is substantially below the NCVS total because a large proportion of victims (for example, about 45 percent of robbery and aggravated assault victims) did not report their experience to the police. The rate of reported offenses, although lower than the NCVS total rate, followed the same pattern as the NCVS total rate, gradually decreasing from 1973 and dropping more sharply after 1993.

Why did the UCR violent-crime rate increase from the 1970s to 1992 while the NCVS rate did not increase? A likely explanation is that police were listening better to victims and improving their investigation

and official reporting of the crimes about which victims told them. As the police improved in these ways, the UCR rate gradually approached the rate based on the reports victims said they made to police (see Figure 2).

The improvement in police investigation and reporting of crime information may be due to growth in the number of police personnel and improvement in police systems of recording crime information and reporting it to the FBI.⁴ Also, the incentives for police to report what victims tell them may have grown, along with the public's perception that crime is a major problem.

National rate of violent crime after 1994. After 1994 the rate of serious violent crime dropped more sharply than in previous years, reaching 1,497 crimes per 100,000 United States residents age twelve or older by 1996. The rate based on the UCR system also declined in the 1990s, from 799 in 1991 to 719 in 1995 (see Figure 2). The drop in both rates was due to decreases in each component violent crime—aggravated assault, robbery, rape, and murder.

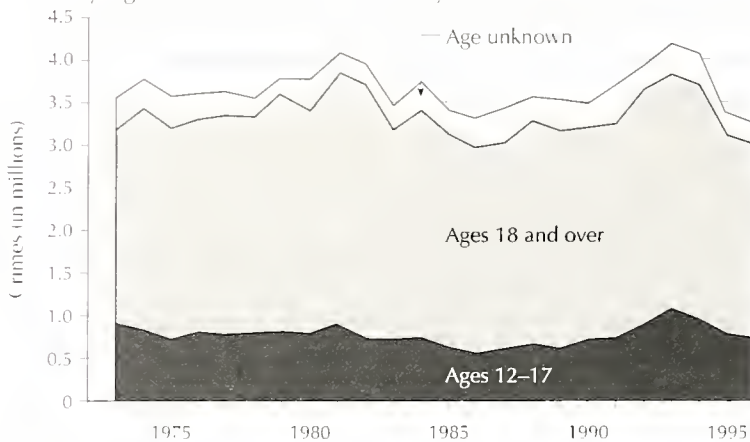
Involvement of young people in violent crime. Thus far this article has been considering violent-crime rates for youth and adults combined. Examination of the rates for people from ages twelve to twenty-four versus those for older Americans reveals very different patterns (see Figure 3). Young people are victimized by violent crime at a much higher rate than older people are. Also, for young people the rate of total violent crime began a rapid increase in the late 1980s that lasted into the early 1990s. After 1994 this surge ended and the rate dropped sharply. The sharp but temporary surge did not occur in the violent-crime rate for older people. Despite the drop for young people, the rate of total violent crime for teenagers (about 10,000 crimes per 100,000 teenagers) was still higher in 1996 than it had been in any year from 1973 to 1990.

That the violent crime rate among youth has dropped recently is certainly welcome news. However, no one knows whether the decline will continue.

Young people's involvement as *perpetrators* of violent crimes has decreased along with their involvement as victims. Their involvement as perpetrators can be approximated from the NCVS interviews, in which respondents estimate the age of those who have attacked them. According to the NCVS data, the number of serious violent crimes committed by youth ages twelve to seventeen increased in the late 1980s and early 1990s but dropped substantially afterward.

Figure 4

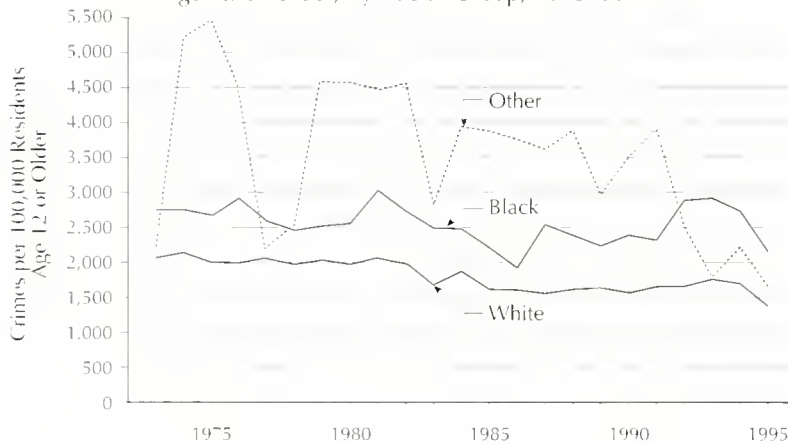
Number of Serious Violent Crimes in U.S.,
by Age of Offender as Perceived by Victim, 1973-96



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, National Crime Victimization Survey.

Figure 5

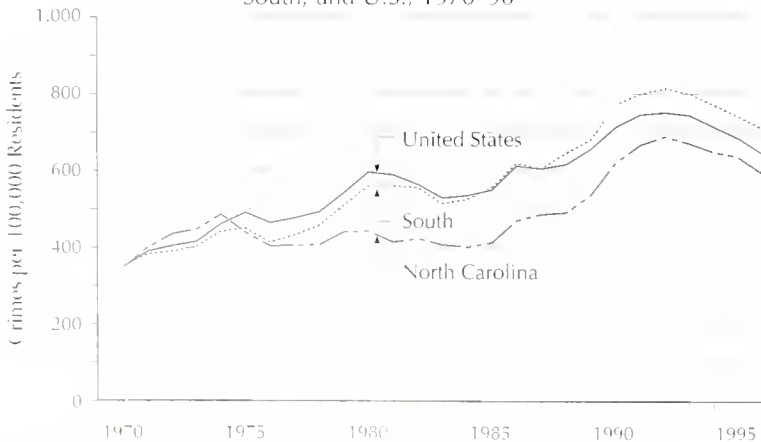
Rates of Serious Violent Crime in U.S., per 100,000 Residents
Age 12 or Older, by Racial Group, 1973-95



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, National Crime Victimization Survey.

Figure 6

UCR Rates of Serious Violent Crime for North Carolina,
South, and U.S., 1970-96



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports*.

from 1,107,700 in 1993 to 811,600 in 1995 (see Figure 4). The decline was not due to a decreasing population in this age group; the number of teenagers was increasing during that period, according to Census Bureau estimates.

Thus, just as the rate of violent crime against youth has recently decreased, so has the rate of perpetration of violent crime by youth. These coinciding trends reflect the fact that young people, if victimized, usually are victimized by other young people. In 1994, for example, 74.4 percent of assaults on victims ages twelve to nineteen, and 61.4 percent of robberies, were committed by offenders ages twelve to twenty, according to the NCVS.⁵

Victimization of minority groups by violent crime. African Americans and other minority groups more often are the victims of violent crime than white Americans are. Nevertheless, the rate of serious violent crime against these groups in the United States came down in the mid-1990s, just as it did for whites (see Figure 5). Whereas for whites the rate generally has remained below 2,200 crimes per 100,000, for blacks it generally has been closer to 3,000. (But note that, for both whites and blacks, the rate generally was declining from 1973 to 1991.) After a sudden surge in the early 1990s, the rate for blacks returned to 2,700, about the same level as in the 1970s. For other racial groups, the rate generally was higher and much more volatile, making it difficult to generalize. (The extreme fluctuation in this rate may reflect changing definitions or measurements of race membership as much as real changes in the phenomenon itself.) In any event, for these other minorities, the rate seems to have dropped substantially in the 1990s, reaching a lower level in 1995 (1,700 per 100,000) than at any time since 1973.

Comparative Trends: North Carolina, the Region, and the Nation

As noted earlier, NCVS data are not available for individual states. Thus for North Carolina the only available source of data on violent crime other than homicide is the UCR system. Comparing the UCR rate of violent crime in North Carolina with the UCR rates for the South and the entire nation shows generally similar trends. If a victimization survey were available for North Carolina, the victimization rate might bear about the same relationship to the state's UCR-based violent-crime rate as the NCVS rate does to the national UCR-based violent-crime rate.

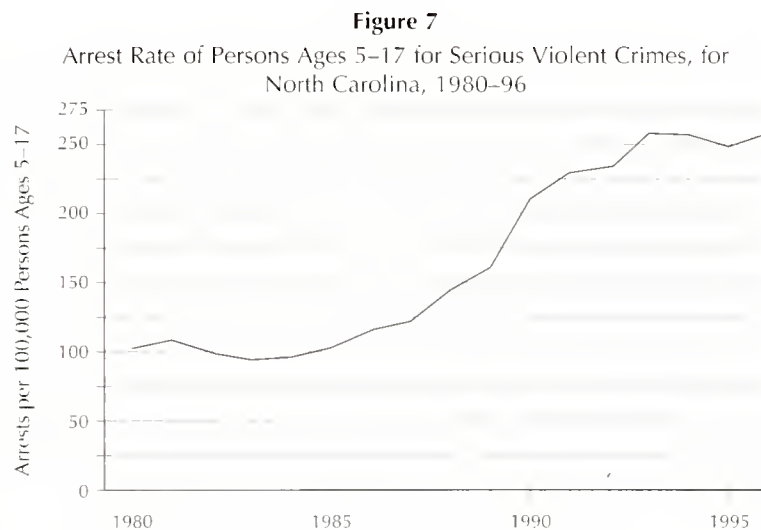
Starting in 1985, UCR rates of serious violent crime rose in the South⁶ and throughout the nation. North Carolina's rate rose as well, closely following the South's rate but remaining well below it. After 1992, as the other two rates began to decrease, so did North Carolina's. In 1996 North Carolina's rate was 588 per 100,000 residents, 17 percent less than the rate for the South (707) and 7 percent less than the rate for the nation (634). (See Figure 6.)

Involvement of North Carolina youth in violent crime. For individual states, data are hard to find concerning the ages of people involved in nonlethal violent crime.⁷ The State Bureau of Investigation in North Carolina reports some characteristics of persons arrested for various crimes. From 1980 to 1993, North Carolina's youth arrest rate (the number of arrests of persons under age eighteen for serious violent crimes, per 100,000 residents ages five to seventeen) more than doubled, from 102 to 259. In the 1993-96 period, the rate remained about the same. (See Figure 7.) An alarming development is that, in the mid-1990s, the youth arrest rate (around 250) is two-and-a-half times what it was in the early 1980s (around 100). On the positive side, if North Carolina follows the nation's recent downturn of youth involvement in violent crime, it would be reasonable to expect arrests of youth to decline in the near future.

A cautionary note: the trend in youth arrests may not accurately reflect a trend in youth involvement in violent crime. Nationally, violent crimes reported to police result in arrests only about half the time. Thus arrest data are missing for many crimes. Also, varying policies and practices from one law enforcement agency to another, and over time within the same agency, distort the reporting of arrests of young people, particularly juveniles.⁸ More arrests of juveniles may be the result of extra effort by the police rather than increased crime by juveniles.

Public Concern about Violent Crime

Fear of crime has diminished in some respects in recent years. For example, in the nationwide Gallup Poll, the proportion of respondents saying that they were afraid to walk alone at night in any area within a mile of their residence decreased from 45 percent in 1975 to 35 percent in 1997, and the proportion who felt unsafe at home at night dropped from 20 percent to 9 percent.⁹ In the Carolina Poll of North Carolina residents, a similar pattern emerged: the proportion



Source: State Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in North Carolina*.

responding that they were "very" worried that they or their families would become victims of crime dropped from 32 percent in 1992 to 22 percent in 1994.¹⁰

These changing attitudes may reflect the actual drop in the rate of serious violent crime, described earlier. On the other hand, each year from 1972 to 1997, about half of Gallup Poll respondents have said that there was more crime in their own area that year than in the previous year. Perhaps they were thinking of nonviolent crime or crime that did not threaten them personally.

Concern about crime as a public policy issue has recently become quite strong, even as the fear of personal danger has subsided. In the Gallup Poll's national survey concerning "the most important problem facing the country today," the percentage responding "crime" or "violence" never exceeded 5 from 1982 to 1992. The percentage in this category increased to 9 in 1993, then surged to 37 in 1994 and 52 in August 1995. By January 1997, though, it had dropped to 25. The drop may be the result of the decline in the rate of serious violent crime in the mid-1990s. Nevertheless, the proportion regarding crime as the most important problem was higher in 1997 than before 1993.

There are several possible explanations for the growing perception of crime as a major national problem. One is that the growth occurred soon after a period—from the late 1980s to the early 1990s—of increase in the rate of serious violent crime. The surge in violent crime among young people in the late 1980s, in particular, has been widely reported and

lamented. Another reason may be the many years of increased police (UCR) reporting of violent crime, as well as improvements in policing, growing numbers of arrests for violent crimes, and broadening news coverage of the crime problem. Whatever the reason for substantial numbers of Americans seeing crime as a major national problem, perhaps their concern has helped to ameliorate it.

Possible Explanations for the Recent Drop in Violent Crime

Several explanations are possible for the drop in the rate of serious violent crime: a shift in the age distribution; abating of the crack cocaine epidemic; innovations in law enforcement; and increased incarceration of offenders.

A Shift in the Age Distribution

There has been some speculation that the decrease in violent crime in the mid-1990s stems from a lessening number of youth in the population relative to older persons. This explanation is incorrect because, during the early 1990s, youth did not decrease in numbers. The estimated proportion of the national population ages ten to nineteen remained about 14 percent from 1990 through 1996.

During the next two decades, the age distribution of North Carolina's population is expected to continue changing as a function of the aging of the post-World War II baby-boom generation. This may reduce the overall rate of violent crime. As baby boomers grow older, the proportion of persons ages fifteen to twenty-four, who are at a high risk for involvement in violent crime, is expected to drop slightly, from 14.5 percent of the state's population in 1995 to 13.1 percent by 2020. Meanwhile, the proportion of persons age fifty or older, whose risk of involvement in violent crime is much lower than that of younger people, will grow steadily, from 26.7 percent in 1995 to 36.9 percent in 2020.

The aging of North Carolina's population tells nothing, though, about future involvement of youth in violent crime. If that involvement surges again as it did in the late 1980s and early 1990s—for example, if another phenomenon like the crack cocaine epidemic occurred—violent crime could continue to be a major concern for persons of all ages.

Abating of the Crack Cocaine Epidemic

The rise in the use of crack cocaine that began in the early 1980s is widely believed to be partly responsible for an epidemic of serious violence among young people, especially among impoverished minority-group members. The distinguished criminologist Alfred Blumstein explains the relationship this way:

An important feature of crack is its low price, which brought into the cocaine market many low-income people who could only buy it one "hit" at a time; this significantly increased the number of transactions in those drug markets. . . . In order to accommodate the increased demand, the drug sellers had to recruit a large number of new sellers. Juveniles were the natural source of supply for that labor market. They were probably willing to work more cheaply than adults. . . . But juveniles also tend to be daring and willing to take risks that more mature adults would eschew. The economic plight of many young urban African-American juveniles, many of whom see no other comparably satisfactory route to economic success or even sustenance, makes them particularly amenable to the lure of the drug markets. . . . These juveniles, like many other participants in the illicit-drug industry, are likely to carry guns for self-protection, largely because that industry uses guns as an important instrument for dispute resolution. . . .¹¹

Blumstein theorizes that, in response to teenage drug dealers' being armed, teenagers who are not involved in the drug trade arm themselves, either for protection or for enhanced social status. Thus an escalation begins: "as more guns appear in the community, the incentive for any single individual to arm himself increases."¹²

Following Blumstein's reasoning, if crack use were to decline, the armed violence that accompanies it would subside. Recent evidence indicates that crack use has declined. The University of Michigan conducts an annual survey for the National Institute on Drug Abuse on the prevalence of illegal drug use among high school seniors. This survey reveals that, from 1987 to 1992, the percentage of students who said they had ever used crack dropped from 5.4 to 2.6, and the percentage who said they had used it during the past year dropped from 3.9 to 1.5. There is some bad news as well: since 1992, students' crack use has increased, although not to pre-1990 levels.¹³

Another source of data also indicates a recent decrease in crack use closely connected with crime. In 1987 the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) began annually to measure illicit drug use among persons arrested for crimes in most large cities. Unlike the

survey of high school seniors, this measurement includes persons above high school age. The NIJ employs urinalysis to detect use of cocaine within the previous forty-eight to seventy-two hours. (The test does not distinguish crack from other forms of cocaine, but other research indicates that the source of a positive test usually is crack.) Of twenty-four large cities examined in a recent publication,¹⁴ ten showed a decline of at least 10 percent in cocaine use among arrestees of all ages, beginning in the early 1990s (the starting year varied among the cities) and continuing through 1996.¹⁵ For example, in Washington, D.C., the percentage of arrestees testing positive for cocaine dropped from more than 60 percent in 1989 to below 40 percent in 1996. In seven other cities, although the rate of detected cocaine use did not decline among arrestees of all ages, it did decline among youthful arrestees ages eighteen to twenty.¹⁶ Given that cocaine use usually begins at this age, the finding for the seven cities suggests that fewer people are becoming users and therefore that a decline in the rate for all ages can be expected soon. In five additional cities, the crack epidemic continued to rage, with detected rates in the 40–60 percent range.¹⁷

The NIJ's measurement indicated that two small cities exhibited no evidence of having experienced a crack epidemic.¹⁸ Therefore, perhaps some small cities will be spared. But the epidemic may simply arrive later in some small cities than it did in large cities. For example, the *New York Times* recently reported a surge of murders in Louisville, Kentucky, and Nashville, Tennessee, a substantial part of which police attribute to the spread of crack and other illegal drugs. Federal law enforcement officials interviewed by the *Times* reporter speculated that drug dealers in large cities had "reached a market peak, prompting them to stake out customers in smaller cities and escape turf wars that are thinning their ranks."¹⁹

News that crack use has apparently been decreasing in many parts of the United States is welcome. But there seems to be no clear answer to why it has decreased and whether the trend will continue.

Research in New York City, where crack use among youthful arrestees has been going down, helps describe the shape of a typical crack epidemic.²⁰ Use began among a small group who already were using other hard drugs and were looking for a better "high." Once crack caught on around 1984, it spread rapidly among hard-drug users. These users were then joined by youth around age eighteen, who experimented with crack. This swelled use of the drug to its maxi-

mum point. Around 1989, youth started to avoid crack use, and the epidemic went into its declining phase. The researchers are unsure precisely why youth began resisting crack use:

The coming of the decline phase [of the crack epidemic in New York] chronologically followed the implementation of aggressive anticrack policies [such as intensive policing and severe punishments for crack offenders], suggesting these policies may have helped contain this social conflagration by acting as a general deterrent to crack use. *It is not clear which of the myriad programs, if any, effected the decline in crack's popularity among youths or whether the crack epidemic started to fizzle out on its own. Further research on this topic is clearly needed.*²¹

Innovations in Law Enforcement

A full discussion of police management and tactics, and their possible effects on crime, is beyond the scope of this article. I deal briefly with two innovations in police practice that have recently received much public attention and been credited with reducing certain kinds of crime: community policing and problem-oriented policing.

Community Policing

The concept of community policing arose from the urban race riots of the 1960s, which several prestigious study commissions blamed in part on the police. The police were spending most of their time patrolling in radio cars and had lost contact with residents, the commissions said. Police were urged to get out of their cars and have more frequent, and more positive, interactions with citizens. Thus, in general, community policing means (1) the police increasing the quantity and the quality of their interactions with residents of a community, rather than just apprehending lawbreakers and responding to emergencies; and (2) the police seeking residents' notions of their needs and problems as a guide to policing strategies, rather than just following priorities set by police administrators. (For more information on community policing, from a different point of view, see "The Police Are the Public," page 18.)

Reviewers in a recent study for the United States Department of Justice²² found that the most promising aspect of community policing was its effect on "police legitimacy"—the public's sense that the police are respectful toward residents and are pursuing goals that address citizens' concerns. Research indicates that crime goes down as police legitimacy goes up. A study in Chicago, for example, found that community

Table 1
Community Policing Practices
Reported by Agency Heads, 1993

Practice	Percent Reporting Use
Patrol officers/deputies make door-to-door contacts in neighborhoods.	81
Citizens work with police to identify and resolve community or neighborhood problems.	73
Citizens participate in Neighborhood Watch Program.	72
Foot patrol is a specific assignment for patrol officers.	49
Agency conducts citizen surveys to determine community needs and priorities.	44
Citizens serve on neighborhood advisory councils concerning police policies and practices.	39
Agency's command or decision-making responsibility is tied to neighborhoods or geographically defined areas of its jurisdiction.	37
Agency has permanent, neighborhood-based offices or stations.	32
Citizens help develop policing policies.	21
Citizens help evaluate officer performance.	15

Source: Data from Mary Ann Wycoff, "Community Policing Strategies" (Washington, D.C.: Police Foundation, 1994, unpublished monograph), *passim*.

policing was most effective in preventing crime where people most strongly believed that the police were responsive to their concerns.

The Justice Department reviewers also looked at research on several kinds of programs that are considered forms of community policing, including Neighborhood Watch, community meetings, door-to-door visits, and police storefronts. Following are some highlights of the findings:

Neighborhood Watch, a program in which residents of a neighborhood observe activity and conditions and report problems to police, has not been effective. The main problem has been that, in the areas with the most crime—poverty-stricken areas—the residents are the most reluctant to organize. In middle-class areas, organization has been easier, but there is no indication that Neighborhood Watch has reduced crime, which already was relatively low.

Community meetings, in which police meet with neighborhood residents to learn about local crime patterns and get ideas on how to prevent crime, have had some success. In Chicago, residents of high-crime areas participated well in the meetings, and, after eighteen monthly gatherings, some kinds of crime had lessened.

Door-to-door visits involve police going to residents' homes to introduce themselves and develop a more personal acquaintance; to seek information (for example, who is carrying guns on the street); and to give information (such as how to guard against burglary). In some studies, door-to-door visits have had effects on crime, but the crimes primarily have been minor property crimes, and the program has tended to benefit middle-class homeowners rather than less-affluent minority groups.

Police storefronts in neighborhoods often are requested by residents and staffed by a mix of police and volunteers. So far, study of such programs has found no effect on crime.

Problem-Oriented Policing

Problem-oriented policing involves analysis of the characteristics and the immediate causes of specific crimes, and police activities to reduce or interfere with these causes. (Although problem-oriented policing and community policing are distinct concepts, the two may be combined and often are.) The Justice Department's reviewers examined research on two problem-oriented policing programs: reducing the carrying of concealed weapons in public; and evening curfews for juveniles.

Reducing the carrying of concealed weapons in public is based on the notion that carrying concealed guns illegally in areas where or during times when the risk of crime is high, makes violent crime more likely. Studies in Boston and Kansas City showed that targeted efforts to enforce concealed-weapon laws reduced gun carrying, increased seizures of illegally carried guns, and reduced crimes committed with guns.

Evening curfews for juveniles are intended to get youth off the streets and thereby to reduce crime both against them and by them. A preliminary NIJ study has found no consistent crime reduction across cities that have adopted curfews.

Effects of These Initiatives on Violent Crime

Although some programs that are considered community policing or problem-oriented policing are promising, on the basis of the Justice Department's review of research, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that programs of this type are primarily responsible for the downward trend in the rate of violent crime.

In particular, it is difficult to say whether community policing is responsible for the downward trend in serious violent crime. One reason is that the trend

began long before community policing. Another reason is that there is confusion about the meaning of community policing. Community policing is more a philosophy than a specific program. Many police managers believe that their agencies practice community policing, yet it seems to mean different things in different places. A study by the Police Foundation conducted in 1993-94 reveals the confusion.²³ Researchers questioned the heads of a random sample of 2,337 agencies across the country—municipal police departments, county police departments, and county sheriff's offices.²⁴ Ninety-eight percent of the 1,606 agency heads who responded agreed that community policing is "something that law enforcement agencies should pursue"; however, 47 percent agreed that "it is not clear what community policing means in practical terms."²⁵ Responses from 734 agencies reporting that they had been implementing community policing for at least a year indicate wide variation in actual practices. In most agencies whose heads report adoption of community policing, citizens work with police to identify neighborhood problems. However, few agencies have citizens help in developing their policies, a kind of participation that would seem to be central to the idea of community policing. Further, few have citizens assist in evaluating officers. Most agencies have patrol officers making door-to-door contacts, but fewer than half have specifically assigned foot patrol, neighborhood-based stations, or neighborhood-based command systems. (See Table 1.)

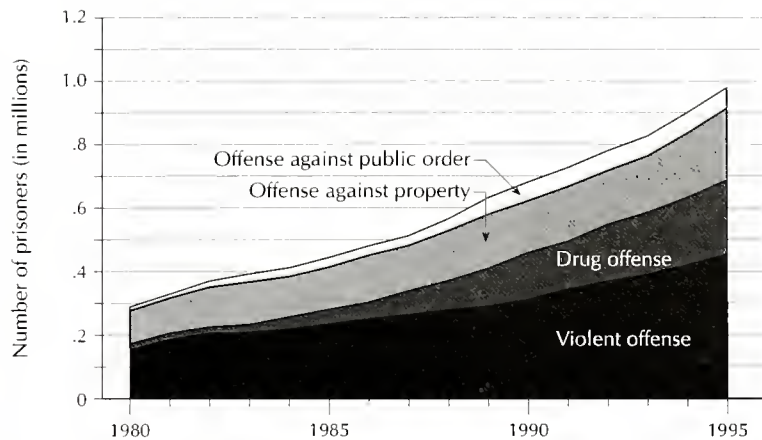
In a report released this year, the Police Foundation stated its view that community policing and problem-oriented policing have not yet made a strong case that they are effective in preventing crime. The foundation called for rigorous evaluation of these concepts:

Nearly every major police department, and most smaller ones, now boast some type of problem-oriented or community policing program. . . . The rhetoric of such programs has become a common part of the language of policing. . . . It is surprising how little

—continued on page 14

Figure 8

State Prison Population in U.S., by Type of Offense, 1980-95



Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Figure 9

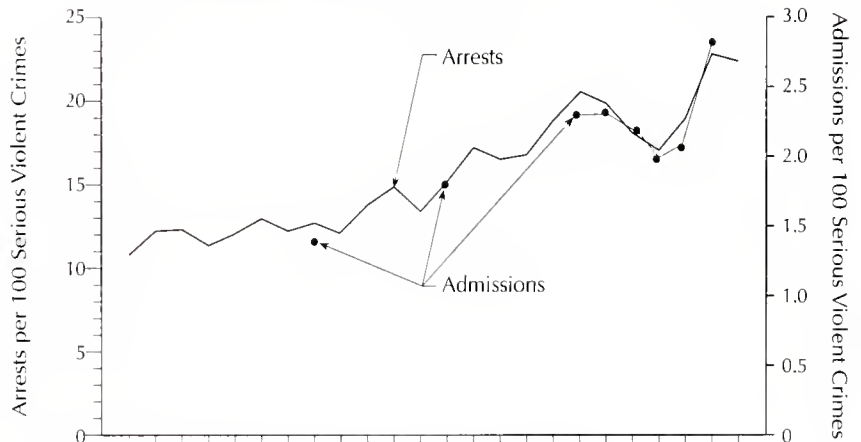
Imprisonment Rate and Rate of Serious Violent Crime for U.S., 1980-95



Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, National Crime Victimization Survey; U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Figure 10

Arrest Rate and State Prison Admission Rate for U.S., 1973-96

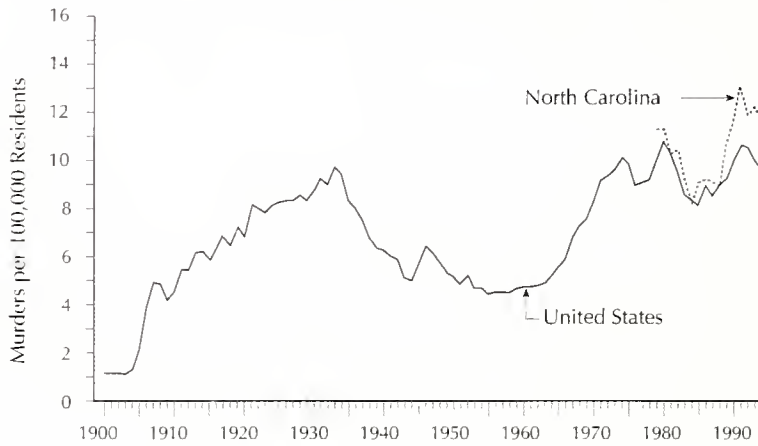


Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Trends in Murder

Figure 11

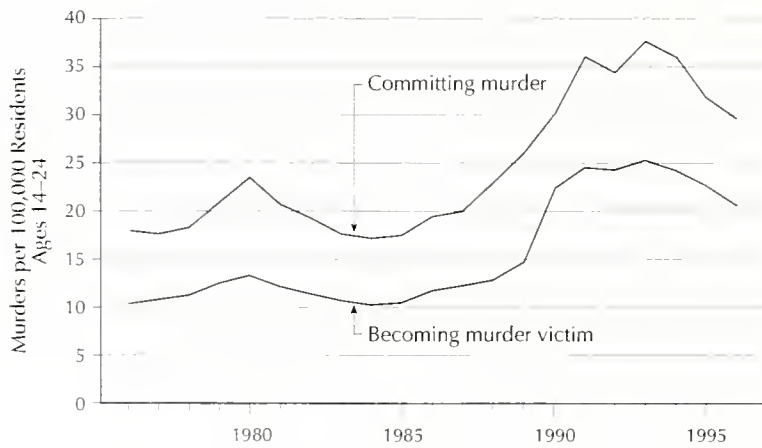
Murder Rates for North Carolina and U.S., 1900–1994



Source: National Center for Health Statistics Mortality Database.

Figure 12

Rates of Victimization by Murder and Committing of Murder, for U.S., 1976–96



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports*, Supplemental Homicide Reports.

Although the murder rate in the United States has declined in the last few years, it remains near its highest levels since the century began. Data from the NCHS Mortality Database indicate that the rate climbed from about 1 murder per 100,000 residents in 1900 to 9.7 in 1933. During the Great Depression, World War II, and the Korean War, the rate dropped, reaching a low of 4.5 in 1955. In the late 1950s, it began another surge, rising to 10.7 in 1980, a high for the century. It dropped during the early 1980s but increased again in the late 1980s, reaching 10.5 in 1991. From 1991 to 1994, it declined somewhat, dropping to 9.6 in 1994. (See Figure 11.) NCHS data are not available after 1994, but the UCR system, which records fewer murders than the NCHS database does (apparently because of underreporting by police),¹ indicates that the murder rate has continued to drop through 1996, from 9.8 in 1991 to 7.4 in 1996.

In the United States, young people are at a greater risk of being involved in murder than older people are. Nevertheless, for both groups, murder involvement has decreased recently. The rate at which young people ages fourteen to twenty-four become the victims of murder, and the rate at which they commit murder, both rose from the mid-1980s to 1991. This is not surprising because the killers of young people usually are young themselves. After 1991, both rates generally declined, although by 1996 they still were higher than at any time during the 1976–89 period. (See Figure 12.)

In North Carolina, as in the rest of the nation, the murder rate surged in the late 1980s, especially for youth, but declined sharply in the early 1990s. From 1979 (the earliest year for which data are available) to 1988, the North Carolina murder rate remained close to the national one. Also like the national rate, North Carolina's rate surged in the late 1980s, then generally dropped after 1991, reaching 11.5 in 1994. It was well above the national rate, 9.6, in that year. (See Figure 11.) UCR

data indicate that the North Carolina murder rate has continued to drop, reaching 8.5 by 1996.

Young men and teenage boys have a high risk of murder victimization compared with older people and females, and African-American males have a high risk compared with white males.² In North Carolina the murder rate for black males ages fifteen to nineteen soared in the late 1980s, reaching 103 per 100,000 in 1991. Thereafter it dropped sharply, reaching 63 in 1996. For black males ages twenty to twenty-four, the pattern was similar: a rapid increase to 127 in 1991, then a rapid decrease to 99 in 1996. Meanwhile, for white males ages twenty to twenty-four, the rate fluctuated from 12 to 22 during the 1990s without a consistent downward trend. For white males ages fifteen to nineteen, the rate generally has been higher in the 1990s than in the 1980s, reaching 10 in 1996—again without a clear downward trend. (See Figure 13.)

Youth can kill as well as be killed. Among all youth ages five to seventeen in North Carolina (both sexes and all races), both the “killer rate” (the number of youth suspected of having committed murder) and the victimization rate (from police investigative reports) increased rapidly in the late 1980s and early 1990s (see Figure 14). Since 1994, both rates have declined, although in 1996 they still were above their pre-1989 levels.³

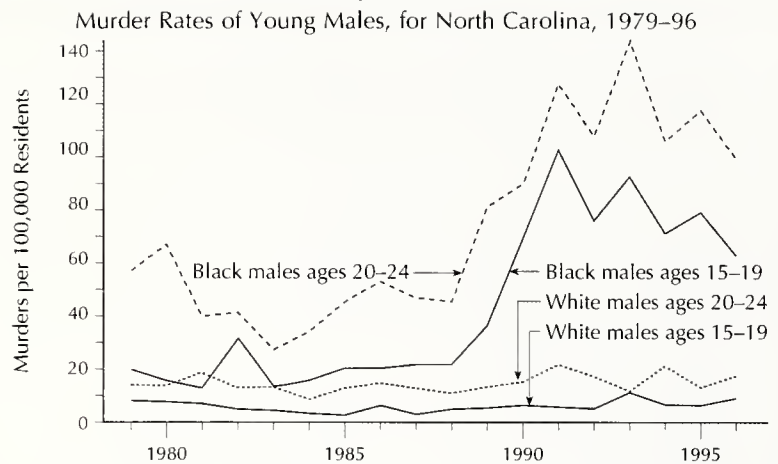
Notes

1. William M. Rokaw, James A. Mercy, and Jack C. Smith, “Comparing Death Certificate Data with FBI Crime Reporting Statistics on U.S. Homicides,” *Public Health Reports* 105 (Sept.–Oct. 1990): 447–55.

2. Stevens H. Clarke, “Murder in North Carolina,” *Popular Government* 61 (Summer 1995): 2–17.

3. The killer rate is sometimes higher than the victimization rate because, for example, some murders involve more than one killer, and some youth kill adults.

Figure 13



Source: North Carolina Medical Examiner's Office.

Figure 14

Murder Victims and Suspected Killers Ages 5–17, for North Carolina, 1976–96



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplemental Homicide Reports; State Bureau of Investigation.

—continued from page 11

empirical evidence there is in support of such innovations. . . . There has not been a single, major controlled study of problem-oriented or community policing, and only a handful of solid non-experimental evaluations. . . . It is time to see whether new innovations can stand up to rigorous evaluation efforts.²⁶

Increased Incarceration of Offenders

Another explanation offered for the drop in violent crime is that imprisonment of offenders has increased.²⁷ This explanation is based on two penological concepts, deterrence and incapacitation. Deterrence is the notion that (1) the fear of punishment keeps people from committing crime; and (2) increasing this fear will reduce the amount of crime. Incapacitation is the idea that crime is prevented by keeping potential repeat offenders behind bars or otherwise restrained from victimizing the public. In looking for evidence of deterrence and incapacitation, one can compare trends in imprisonment and violent crime.

The number of people incarcerated in state prisons for crimes more than tripled from 1980 to 1995, from 294,000 to 985,300. Adding those confined in federal prisons brings the 1995 total in prison to more than a million (1,078,445). Another half million (499,300) were in local jails. The fastest-growing segment of the state prison population has been drug offenders, whose numbers have increased nearly twelvefold since 1980. Violent offenders have increased by 168 percent, to constitute nearly half of the total (464,500 of 985,300) in 1995. (See Figure 8.)

Imprisonment of violent offenders has increased not only in absolute numbers but also in relation to the number of serious violent crimes. The number of violent offenders in state prisons, per 100,000 violent crimes,²⁸ has been growing since 1980, and the pace of the increase has accelerated since 1993. From 1980 to 1995, the ratio nearly tripled, from 4,045 prisoners per 100,000 crimes in 1980 to 12,071 in 1995.²⁹ (See Figure 9.)

The primary reason for the increase in imprisonment appears to be that police have become more effective. The extent to which offenders are imprisoned depends on whether they are caught (arrested); whether they are convicted; whether they are sentenced to prison; and how much time they actually spend in prison. Arrests per 100 serious violent crimes

more than doubled from 1973 to 1995, from 10.9 to 22.8 (see Figure 10). Other things being equal, more arrests means more convictions and more admissions to prison, and evidently that is what happened. Since 1980 the trend in the number of admissions to state prisons on sentences³⁰ for serious violent crimes, per 100 serious violent crimes, has closely followed the trend in arrests per crime (see Figure 10). The time actually served by those sentenced to prison for violent offenses does not appear to have increased during this period.³¹ Nevertheless, the increase in arrests and admissions has apparently driven up the number of offenders who have served time, relative to the number of crimes.

As the amount of imprisonment per violent crime has gone up, the violent-crime rate sometimes—but not always—has gone down. From 1980 to 1986, imprisonment per serious violent crime increased and the crime rate decreased. From 1986 to 1990, imprisonment continued to increase, but the crime rate remained about the same. From 1990 to 1993, imprisonment still increased, and the crime rate increased. Most recently, from 1993 to 1995, imprisonment increased sharply and the crime rate fell sharply. (See Figure 9.)

The comparison of the national crime rate and imprisonment per crime certainly lends support to the view that increased imprisonment is responsible for the drop in violent crime. But the comparison raises some doubts as well. Since 1980, imprisonment and violent crime have moved in opposite directions for eight years (1980–86 and 1993–95). For another seven years (1986–93), though, violent crime has either stayed at the same level or moved up as imprisonment has increased. Increased imprisonment may have had less effect on youth violence than on violent crime by older people. As explained earlier, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, while imprisonment for crime was increasing, youth involvement in violent crime was going up very sharply.

The data on imprisonment per crime and the rate of violent crime may be interpreted in a variety of ways. For example, increased imprisonment may have brought down violent crime. Or, when imprisonment and the violent-crime rate have moved in opposite directions, the two trends may be the result of some third factor—for example, a change in social attitudes resulting in both more vigorous law enforcement and greater disapproval of violence. Perhaps the most plausible interpretation is that increased imprisonment does indeed have an effect on violent

crime but other factors do too. For example, perhaps the crack epidemic (and the firearms that came with it) kept violent crime from going down from 1986 to 1993, especially among youth, despite rising imprisonment per crime. Perhaps imprisonment had more effect after 1993 because the crack epidemic had begun to abate.

If increased imprisonment does in fact reduce the violent-crime rate, it is a costly strategy. Building a prison "bed" (space for one inmate) in North Carolina currently costs from about \$19,000 (for a minimum-security facility) to \$32,000 (for a maximum-security facility). Because prisons last for many years, a much more important cost is the operating cost, currently averaging \$21,000 per bed annually. Some would say that imprisonment is well worth its cost if it prevents substantial amounts of crime. Whether imprisonment is the most cost-effective way of preventing crime is best reserved for a future article.³²

Conclusion

There is some good news about serious violent crime in North Carolina and the rest of the country. Nonlethal violent crime (rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) per capita generally has been coming down since the 1970s, and it dropped more sharply during the 1990s after a short period of increase. Murder per capita, which followed a different pattern before the 1990s, also has been dropping in the last few years.

More good news is that young people and minority groups, after experiencing an epidemic of violent crime that began about ten years ago, have not been excluded from the downturn in crime. Indeed, the downturn has affected young people more than older ones, and racial minorities more than white Americans.

Despite the good news, there is no reason to suppose that the violent-crime problem has been solved. A number of explanations for the drop in violent crime are possible, including abating of the crack epidemic, innovations in law enforcement, and increased incarceration of offenders. But no firm basis exists for asserting that these factors are responsible for the downturn in crime or that they will prevent another upturn.

There is every reason to continue the search for ways of preventing violent crime. The crack epidemic may be passing, but nothing guarantees that another such plague will not occur. The police may continue to improve their strategies, but they cannot be ex-

pected to eliminate deep-rooted causes of crime. Imprisonment may help to reduce violent crime, but it is a temporary solution at best. A country that values freedom as highly as the United States does cannot be comfortable with having more than 1.6 million people behind bars. Citizens and policy makers will want to find more long-term measures of crime prevention that will reduce the need to call on police and prisons when violence reaches crisis proportions.

Notes

Most of the data used in this article were taken from electronic sources. Some also came from print sources, some from individuals.

The data on (1) nationwide crime from the NCVS and the UCR system, (2) arrests, and (3) imprisonment came from the Web site of the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/>. Dr. Alan Beck of BJS supplied data on incarceration of violent offenders nationally. Figure 6, UCR violent-crime rates for North Carolina, the South, and the nation, came from *Uniform Crime Reports*, published annually by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The source of population estimates was the Web site of the United States Bureau of the Census, <http://www.census.gov/>. Arrest data for North Carolina came from *Crime in North Carolina*, published annually by the North Carolina Department of Justice, State Bureau of Investigation (SBI).

Data on crack and cocaine use came from the BJS Web site, as well as from the Web site of the National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse, <http://www.nida.nih.gov/NIDAHome.html>.

The main sources of North Carolina murder data were the computer files of (1) the North Carolina Medical Examiner's Office concerning homicide and (2) the FBI's Supplemental Homicide Reports (supplied by Professor James Alan Fox of Northeastern University, who formats these data for researchers' use). Julia Nipper of the North Carolina Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Information, supplied age-specific murder data for North Carolina in 1996.

Data on the Carolina Poll, conducted by The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, School of Journalism, were obtained from the Web site of the Institute for Research in Social Sciences, http://veblen.irss.unc.edu/data_archive/.

The figures in this article are based on the sources of data just listed, in most instances with additional computations by me.

1. The housing units are selected to represent a cross-section of the United States from which the total number of crimes can be reliably estimated. The sampled units are divided into six groups. The occupants of each group of units are interviewed every six months for three and one-

half years. Then the group is replaced by a new group. NCVS interviewers ask a variety of nontechnical questions about various types of crime victimization during the previous six months.

2. Few children under age twelve are victims of the kinds of crime discussed in this article.

3. The most common reasons that victims give for not reporting robberies and assaults are that the offender was unsuccessful in completing the crime; the offense was a private or personal matter; the victim believes the police do not want to be bothered, are inefficient, or are biased; the victim fears reprisal; and the victim regards reporting as too inconvenient or time-consuming. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1996* (Washington, D.C.: BJS, 1997), 225, table 3.34.

4. Michael R. Rand, James P. Lynch, and David Cantor, *Criminal Victimization, 1973-95* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1997), 3. The rise of the UCR crime rates may be the result of a long-term improvement in law enforcement that began as early as the 1950s. The number of police officers per capita and the per capita expenditure for law enforcement (adjusted for inflation) have increased in the United States. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Police Employment and Expenditure Trends* (Washington, D.C.: USDOJ, 1986). From 1980 to 1993, the number of county and municipal police increased by 19.6 percent (from 411,138 to 491,603), faster than the country's population, which increased by 14.4 percent (from about 225 million to about 258 million). U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1997* (Washington, D.C.: BJS, 1998), 31. In North Carolina the number of police per 100,000 state residents increased by 47 percent from 1975 to 1990 (from 185 to 272). Law enforcement training and equipment also have improved. One comparison of the NCVS and the UCR system attributes much of the growth in UCR crime to changes in "official police policy for founding or unfounding crime reports (deciding whether there is sufficient evidence to conclude that a crime has been committed) and for recording crime events." Scott Menard, "Residual Gains, Reliability, and the UCR-NCS Relationship: A Comment on Blumstein, Cohen, and Rosenfeld," *Criminology* 30 (1992): 109. (NCS stands for National Crime Survey, the former name of the National Crime Victimization Survey.) A recent book comparing the UCR system with the NCVS discusses organizational and technological changes that "have systematically reduced the pressures leading local [police] departments to avoid reporting or to downgrade incidents." Albert D. Biderman and James P. Lynch, *Understanding Crime Incidence Statistics: Why the UCR Diverges from the NCS* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1991), 75. The authors emphasize the role of increased specialization of the crime-reporting function and increased use of civilian (unsworn) personnel for defining and classifying crime complaints. In North Carolina the percentage

of civilian personnel in law enforcement agencies increased from 16 in 1975 to 23 in 1990. N.C. Department of Justice, State Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in North Carolina 1975 to 1990* (Raleigh, N.C.: NCDOJ, 1976-91).

5. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Criminal Victimization in the United States, 1994* (Washington, D.C.: BJS, 1995), 40.

6. As defined in UCR and Census Bureau data, the South comprises eight southern states (Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia), eight border states (Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas), and the District of Columbia.

7. To the consternation of criminologists, when people commit a crime, they do not leave behind a form indicating their age! Thus police do not usually report data such as age on the characteristics of violent-crime victims and perpetrators, with the exception of those involved in homicide. In homicide, perpetrators' characteristics more often are reported, probably because the investigation is more thorough.

8. See Joseph Neff, "Juvenile Crime Rates Misleading," *News & Observer* (Raleigh), Oct. 9, 1997, p. 1A.

9. The Gallup Poll results appear in U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1996* (Washington, D.C.: BJS, 1997), 114, 134. The Carolina Poll results were obtained from the Web site of the Institute for Research in Social Sciences mentioned in the general note on data sources at the beginning of the Notes section.

10. On the other hand, the percentage saying they were "somewhat" worried about victimization increased. The total of "very" and "somewhat" worried rose from 63 percent in 1992 to 72 percent in 1994.

11. Alfred Blumstein, "Youth Violence, Guns, and the Illicit-Drug Industry," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 86 (1995): 30.

12. Blumstein, "Youth Violence," 30.

13. National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse. Web site, <http://www.nida.nih.gov/NIDAHome.html>.

14. Andrew L. Golub and Bruce D. Johnson, *Crack's Decline: Some Surprises across U.S. Cities* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1997).

15. The ten cities were Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Philadelphia, San Diego, San Jose, and Washington, D.C.

16. The seven cities were Birmingham, Chicago, Fort Lauderdale, Kansas City (Mo.), Manhattan (New York City), Miami, and Portland (Ore.)

17. The five cities were Atlanta, Denver, Indianapolis, Phoenix, and St. Louis.

18. The two cities were Omaha and San Antonio.

19. Michael Janofsky, "Some Midsized Cities Defy Trend As Drug Deals and Killing Soar," *New York Times*, Jan. 15, 1998, p. 1.

20. Bruce D. Johnson, Andrew Golub, and Jeffrey Fagan, "Careers in Crack, Drug Use, Drug Distribution and Nondrug Criminality," *Crime and Delinquency* 41, no. 3 (1995): 275-95.

21. Johnson, Golub, and Fagan, "Careers in Crack," 290 (emphasis added).

22. Lawrence W. Sherman et al., *Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising: A Report to the United States Congress* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1997), obtained from the Web site of the National Criminal Justice Reference Service, <http://www.ncjrs.org/works/wholedoc.htm>.

23. Mary Ann Wycoff, "Community Policing Strategies" (Washington, D.C.: Police Foundation, 1994, unpublished monograph). The Police Foundation is a nonprofit organization in Washington, D.C., dedicated to innovation and improvement in policing.

24. The Police Foundation study sample was stratified, meaning that agencies of certain types or sizes were deliberately oversampled to be sure that reliable conclusions could be drawn about those kinds of agencies. The percentages reported here are weighted to compensate for this difference in sampling fractions. In other words, the percentages reported are an estimate for all agencies across the country.

25. Wycoff, "Community Policing Strategies," 29, 26-30.

26. Police Foundation, *Preventing Crime and Increasing Justice Through Policing: A Research Agenda* (Washington, D.C.: the Foundation, 1998), cited and quoted in *Criminal Justice Newsletter*, Dec. 15, 1997, p. 2.

27. Some examples of this line of thinking are as follows: (1) Morgan O. Reynolds, *Crime and Punishment in America: 1997 Update* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Policy Analysis Idea House, 1997). The National Center for Policy Analysis is a nonprofit organization; the publication was obtained from its Web site, <http://www.public-policy.org/>. (2) Michael Block and Steve Twist, "Order: The Real Infrastructure Issue," *Commentary* (Winter/Spring 1993): 2, 78-79. (3) American Legislative Exchange Council, *Report Card on Crime and Punishment* (Washington, D.C.: the Council, 1994). Michael Block and Steve Twist were major contributors to this publication.

28. Using a technique suggested by Dr. Alan Beck of the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Sta-

tistics, I estimated the average number of prisoners as a weighted average of the population (head count) at the beginning and the end of the year. I weighted the end-of-year head count twice as heavily as the beginning-of-year head count because the prison population, growing steadily, has tended to surge in the first six to nine months of the year and slow down later in the year.

29. The number of prisoners per crime is a rough estimate of the amount of "offender-years" of prison time actually spent per crime, one "offender-year" being one year served by a single offender. As the number of prisoners per 100,000 crimes increased from 4,045 to 12,070, the amount of imprisonment per crime went from 0.04 offender-years (14.6 offender-days) in 1980 to 0.12 offender-years (43.8 offender-days) in 1995. This may seem to be a ridiculously small amount of prison time, but it takes into account an offender's chances of getting caught, convicted, and sentenced to prison, as well as the actual time served by an offender who makes it all the way to prison. Many persons who commit violent crimes are never apprehended or never convicted and imprisoned.

30. These Bureau of Justice Statistics data include only admissions for sentences exceeding one year.

31. For example, the median time served in prison for robbery remained around twenty-five months from 1980 to 1995, and the median time served for aggravated assault approximately sixteen months. Reynolds, *Crime and Punishment*, table A-5.

32. Peter Greenwood, a noted criminologist with the RAND Corporation, compared a policy of crime-fighting through imprisonment—specifically, the "three strikes and you're out" law enacted in California—with several other strategies aimed at children, family life, and schooling. Reviewing and reanalyzing published research, Greenwood found that, in terms of serious crimes prevented per million dollars spent, three other approaches were more effective than the three-strikes policy: (1) monetary and other incentives to induce disadvantaged students to complete high school; (2) training and therapy for families of young school-age children who have shown aggressive behavior or begun to "act out" in school; and (3) monitoring and supervising of high-school-age youth who already have exhibited delinquent behavior. Peter W. Greenwood et al., *Diverting Children from a Life of Crime: Measuring Costs and Benefits* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1996). ☐

“The Police Are the Public”: Community Policing in North Carolina

Darl H. Champion, Sr.



The police at all times should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historical tradition that the police are the public and that the public are the police; the police are the only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interest of the community welfare.

—Sir Robert Peel, circa 1829¹

As George Kelling states, “A quiet revolution is reshaping American policing.”² At the center of the revolution is a concept called “community policing.” Illustrative of a paradigm shift that is moving policing from reaction to anticipation, community policing involves collaboration of police and citizens in identifying and solving problems in the community in order to improve the quality of life. Numerous law enforcement agencies across the country are becoming pioneers in community policing. This article defines community policing and describes the experiences of a city and a county in North Carolina that practice it. The article also offers a historical perspective (see page 20), some cautions, and some suggestions for successful implementation of the approach.

Community Policing Defined

“We recently started a police bicycle program, and we have just ordered baseball cards with our officers’ pictures on them. Are we doing community policing?”

The author is director of Criminal Justice Studies at Methodist College, Fayetteville, North Carolina.

This is perhaps the most frequently asked question about community policing. Many officers and citizens not actively involved in implementing community policing share the perception that community policing is a “feel good, soft on crime” approach.

Robert Trojanowicz and Bonnie Bucqueroux have offered one of the best definitions of community policing:

A philosophy and an organizational strategy that promotes a new partnership between people and their police. It is based on the premise that both the police and the community must work together to identify, prioritize, and solve contemporary community problems such as crime, drugs, fear of crime, social and physical disorder, and overall neighborhood decay, with the goal of improving the overall quality of life in the area.³

Community policing is holistic in its approach to crime. The philosophy requires that law enforcement agencies change their focus from responding to crime and calls for service, to creating a police and community partnership centered on crime prevention and problem solving. The assumptions are that (1) citizens are basically law abiding and want to work with one another and the police to reduce crime and improve their quality of life; and (2) citizens who are informed,

C.O.P. SHOP

PHONE 932-2917
(Community Oriented Policing)



Officer Tiffany Maner is involved in community policing through the Chapel Hill Police Department's precinct office in a popular shopping mall.

empowered, and moved to action are emancipated—they will come to believe that they have control of their communities.⁴

A Tale of Two Communities

Two North Carolina communities, Lumberton and Cumberland County, are experiencing the advantages of community policing. Lumberton is a prime example of a small city that has reengineered the delivery of police services. Cumberland County shows that even rural and suburban communities can benefit from the concept.

Lumberton

Fifteen years ago, when Mike McNeil became a police officer in Lumberton, citizens didn't know the officers who patrolled their area. Policing was primarily reactive; officers answered calls for service. The police did not collaborate with the public in identifying and solving problems. Managers discouraged police officers from stopping and spending time with citizens in the community.

Today when McNeil, a substation commander, walks the street, people know him by name. Police

Figure 1

Mission, Vision, and Core Values of the Lumberton Police Department

Mission Statement

The mission of the Lumberton Police Department is to maintain a high standard of quality of life for all of Lumberton's residents and visitors. This is accomplished by providing personalized police service throughout the city from decentralized community police stations. The police department strives to develop police service to meet unique neighborhood needs by combining law enforcement activities with progressive crime prevention strategies.

Vision Statement

To become a leader in the police profession demonstrated through our partnership with the community and high standard of quality of life for all the citizens of Lumberton.

Core Values

- We are accountable to the community for all that we do.
- We believe in providing personalized police service to our citizens to meet unique neighborhood needs.
- We believe that all members of the department should be provided with opportunities to reach personal and professional goals.
- We believe that in all circumstances, we shall treat each other and citizens with respect and dignity.
- We must change to meet the challenges of the present and future.
- As role models for our youth, we must provide innovative educational programs for tomorrow's leaders.

and citizens work together on problems in their neighborhood. It is not uncommon for citizens to stop an officer patrolling a beat and offer him or her something to drink or eat.

In Lumberton the impetus for community policing came in 1990, after the city experienced a riot. Many citizens accused the police department of not being responsive or sensitive to community concerns and needs. Local politicians and community leaders reacted by supporting a movement to community policing.⁵ In 1992, to ensure that the transformation would take place, they hired Harry Dolan, a police chief who embraced the community policing philosophy.⁶

The transition commenced with a redefinition of the Lumberton Police Department's mission, vision, and core values to ensure compatibility with the philosophy and the principles of community policing (see Figure 1).

Next, to empower officers, Dolan provided training

Historical Perspective on Community Policing

Community policing dates back to the 1820s, when Sir Robert Peel promoted the concept of a uniformed police force in London. At the center of his proposal were nine principles.¹ One of the most important was "The police are the public and the public are the police." This principle underpins community policing. It means that the police are paid to do what is the public's responsibility—police themselves.

In the mid-1800s, the Peelian model influenced many American law enforcement agencies to combine law enforcement and social service. Their officers offered such support as checking on the sick during epidemics, dispensing social service moneys, sheltering the poor, providing jobs for the unemployed, and working with juveniles in their communities.

In the early 1900s, the introduction of the automobile allowed police to cover larger areas and respond more quickly to emergencies. Police became reactive rather than proactive in solving problems.

The 1960s witnessed the emergence of a changing society, demonstrated in civil unrest, an increase in drug use, a deterioration of social and religious influences on the young, and technological advances. The police response was to increase specialization and centralization and to deploy increasing numbers of police in cars.

The advent of 911 in the late 1960s promised an even faster response to emergency calls. The result, however, was immediate dependence on and abuse of the system. Citizens came to rely on 911 whenever they needed the police; policing became incident driven.² Agency effectiveness was measured by response time to calls, arrest rates, and how often marked police cars were seen in neighborhoods. Individual officers were evaluated by the number of ar-

rests they made, their conformity to a strong chain of command, and their adherence to rigid procedures.

In the early 1970s, the Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment questioned the effectiveness of random routine patrol in preventing crime and reducing fear of crime. The introduction of directed patrol and problem-oriented policing followed. In directed patrol, officers allocate their shift time between answering calls for service and initiating police activities. With problem-oriented policing, they focus on solving community crime problems using the SARA model: scan, analyze, respond, and assess.

In the past fifteen years, a deterioration of neighborhoods throughout America, a proliferation of crack cocaine, an increase in youth violence, rising crime rates, and, most important, alienation of the police from the community have rendered the police and the community relatively ineffective in addressing serious problems. In response, law enforcement agencies have turned to community policing.

Notes

1. Edward Davis, "Professional Police Principles," *Federal Probation* 35 (March 1971): 29–34. The nine Peelian principles are (1) prevention of crime is the basic mission of police; (2) police must have the full respect of the citizenry; (3) a citizen's respect for law develops his respect for the police; (4) cooperation of the public decreases as the use of force increases; (5) police must render impartial enforcement of the law; (6) physical force is used only as the last resort; (7) the police are the public and the public are the police; (8) police represent the law; and (9) the absence of crime and disorder is the test of police efficiency.

2. Kenneth J. Peak and Ronald W. Glensor, *Community Policing and Problem Solving: Strategies and Practices* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1996), 145.

in community policing philosophy and procedures. All officers in the department received training because the first community police officers were to come from the department itself. It is important to note that community police officers *supplement*, not supplant, traditional patrol officers. Today there are sixty-two officers in the department (including patrol officers, detectives, juvenile officers, vice/narcotics officers, and school resource officers). Twelve patrol officers

have community policing assignments. In addition, ten detectives, juvenile officers, and vice/narcotics officers are permanently assigned to the substations. They perform community policing as needed.

Finally, Dolan made several organizational and personnel changes. First came alterations in the department's management structure: creation of a Quality Improvement Team to recommend improvements in police services and resolve conflicts in the

implementation process; and establishment of a Management Team, consisting of department managers and supervisors, to focus on current problems and long-range planning.

Second, the department moved to decentralize operations by creating four substations, the first opening in December 1993, the last in November 1996. (Department support staff, working in such areas as records and training, remained at the central headquarters.) The commander of each substation was a lieutenant, who in many ways became a "mini-chief." Community policing started with seven officers assigned to public housing areas within the territory covered by the four substations. Later five officers were added, one assigned to each of the four substations and one to a special downtown office.

Third, management delegated day-to-day planning to the individual community police officers at the substations. Decision making thus became decentralized.

Fourth, the community police officers (including the detectives, juvenile officers, and vice/narcotics officers who do community policing as needed) were organized into teams, with four officers providing service to one "community beat" (the area served by a substation) for twenty-four hours a day. Officers assigned to a team took a special pride in their beat, becoming concerned with and protective of it.⁷ The team interacted regularly and held periodic meetings with residents to discuss community problems, concerns, and solutions. Communication among officers increased because they were permanently assigned to a substation and thus had the opportunity for more interaction.

Initially, community police officers were primarily assigned to community policing duties, and patrol officers responded to 911 calls. Today the two types of officers are beginning to work together, both answering calls for service and performing community policing duties.

At first, many officers opposed or were ambivalent about community policing⁸—about 80 percent, by Dolan's estimate. Now about 70 percent support it. Even so, traditional officers still express some resentment of community police officers. When they see an officer sitting on a porch drinking tea with a citizen, they perceive the officer to be nonproductive instead of building rapport and a foundation for future cooperation with the community.

Although some officers still harbor negative attitudes toward community policing, attitudes are changing. This is attributed primarily to recruitment of new

officers who are open to community policing, and to a deeper understanding and appreciation of community policing among experienced officers.

In Lumberton the department emphasizes providing recruits with experience as traditional patrol officers before assigning them to community policing duties. According to Dolan, this allows them to experience the frustration of answering calls (often to the same residence) but having no control over the originating factors. They see that there is a better way of addressing the underlying problems—community policing.

After two years an officer may volunteer for assignment to community policing. The Management Team reviews the officer's application and determines his or her suitability.

Whereas traditional policing promotes specialization, community policing calls for generalization. This allows officers to respond in a timely manner to a broad range of neighborhood needs and problems. The Lumberton Police Department's past dependence on specialization limited the number of officers available to provide direct service. Today, adherence to the department's motto, "Generalize when you can, specialize when you must," has dramatically reduced specialization. For example, at one time the department had one full-time D.A.R.E. (Drug Awareness Resistance Education) officer. Today it has eight traditional patrol officers trained to offer D.A.R.E. instruction as needed. This strategy has allowed the department to expand D.A.R.E. from the high school into the elementary school and the junior high school without additional positions.⁹ The cross-training has benefited both the officers and the community—a win-win situation.

To succeed, community policing requires community involvement. In Lumberton, residents participate in such activities as the citizen police academy,¹⁰ organized community watch programs, block parties,¹¹ community cleanups, and a Police Explorers Program.¹² The department is currently creating a citizens' advisory committee for each of the four substations, which will assist the substation commander in prioritizing local problems.

The police department uses a number of strategies to keep the public informed: community meetings, local newsletters, and a locally produced television show called *Lumberton Police Chronicle*. In addition, the citizen police academy offers an excellent opportunity to educate the community about police work, especially community policing. Residents routinely

visit their neighborhood stations because the substations provide the same services as the headquarters.

The implementation of community policing in Lumberton has presented several major challenges to police and government leaders:

- *Officer resistance.* The department encourages all officers, even those on traditional patrol, to do community policing whenever they can. Officers who work in specialized units (for example, detectives, juvenile officers, and vice/narcotics officers) often feel threatened because community policing emphasizes generalization, not specialization. They may manifest resistance by complaining and showing no enthusiasm for community policing.
- *A significant commitment of resources (both personnel and equipment).* Community policing requires equipping several substations, whereas traditional policing calls for equipping only a headquarters. Further, community policing emphasizes decentralization and personalized service to the community, which necessitates additional personnel. In traditional policing, motorized patrol allows fewer officers to cover larger areas.
- *Loss of power over officers by command staff.* In community policing, officers are empowered to make decisions and network with government agencies to solve community problems. Many supervisors feel threatened by this situation.
- *Limited career opportunities.* The flattening of the command structure that accompanies community policing results in elimination of some supervisory and management positions. Fewer positions means less opportunity for advancement.

Amid all the challenges, the community policing experience in Lumberton is reported to have been very rewarding. During the 1997 North Carolina Cops-Link competition for the best community policing agencies in North Carolina, I had the opportunity to sit in on interviews between Cops-Link evaluators and community police officers, government leaders, and citizens from Lumberton. Each group felt that Lumberton's quality of life had improved since the implementation of community policing.

Some hard data support those perceptions. In 1996, statistics for Lumberton revealed a 20 percent drop in violent crime, a 27 percent drop in burglary, a 16 percent drop in larceny, and a 29 percent drop in vehicle

thefts. Whether these drops are due to community policing is unknown.¹³

The same year a survey of Lumberton residents by the Center for Urban and Regional Studies indicated the following:¹⁴

- About three-quarters felt that the police were doing either a very good job (41.0%) or a good job (33.0%) in dealing with problems in their neighborhood.
- About two-thirds felt that the police were doing either a very good job (40.0%) or a good job (27.4%) in working with residents to solve local problems.
- About four-fifths felt that police protection had improved in the preceding two years.
- About four-fifths felt that policing would be even better a year from then.

Cumberland County

In 1989, when John Sawyer joined the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office, he didn't know that he would be a part of history. In fall 1995 that agency became the first sheriff's office in North Carolina to implement community policing. Today, Sawyer reports, he has found his true vocation.

According to Sawyer, now a corporal, the biggest differences between traditional and community policing are autonomy and task identity. "Autonomy" is the opportunity to exercise personal initiative, judgment, and discretion in decision making; "task identity" is seeing a task through from beginning to end.¹⁵ To illustrate the differences, Sawyer uses the example of code enforcement, a valuable strategy for ensuring that communities do not become run down because of dumped trash, abandoned vehicles, and dilapidated housing. Research shows that, as neighborhoods deteriorate and residents become apathetic, criminals are attracted—the "broken windows" phenomenon.¹⁶ In traditional policing, Sawyer notes, officers typically do not address this phenomenon. Reporting code violations is someone else's job. In community policing, officers and residents collaborate to identify code violations in the community. Then, exercising their autonomy, officers work directly with the appropriate government agency. The result is less red tape and a faster correction of violations, thus improving the appearance and the quality of life in the community. In addition, officers have a sense of task identity, having initiated a task and followed it through to its conclusion.

One of the most significant changes that Sawyer has witnessed in Cumberland County is the rapport he is building with residents. In the past, he says, they retreated inside their homes when night came. Today, with community police officers present in their communities, they are returning to the streets after dark. When Sawyer walks the streets now, he is greeted with smiles and friendly hello's. This rapport has nurtured a freer flow of information between the public and the police—a key to effective crime prevention.

Community policing in Cumberland County began with the election of a new sheriff, Earl "Moose" Butler, whose goal was to develop innovative strategies for combatting crime and improving the quality of life in the area. Butler felt that the sheriff's office had lost touch with the citizens over the years. One contributing factor, in his estimation, was patrol cars, which permitted greater coverage and faster response but restricted the officers' contact with citizens. Butler was confident that community policing was the answer. Early in his administration, personnel from the office spent time studying community policing techniques in the Lumberton Police Department. Ultimately they decided to implement the approach in Cumberland County.

At present there are four substations in the county, located in both high- and low-crime areas. Their placement adheres to the premise that community policing addresses not only crime but also social disorder.

The sheriff's office has developed a long-range plan to provide each substation with full-service capability within five years, to include routine road patrol, community policing, civil processing, serving of warrants, and investigation of major crimes. The substations will be staffed daily so that local residents can file police reports or talk with officers about personal concerns. In 1997 the sheriff's office accomplished the first step with the opening of a full-service substation in the Eureka Springs area.

As a substation is created, community police officers survey local residents to determine their primary concerns and problems. They use this information to target problems and develop solutions, often in conjunction with government agencies and local residents. Some of the problems already identified and solved include abandoned vehicles, neglect of rental properties by landlords, drugs, and prostitution.

The sheriff's office has stressed citizen involvement in its community policing effort. Each substation has active community watch organizations. The benefits derived from the partnership between the community

police officers and the local citizens are reflected in comments from local businesses and community watch groups. For example, in letters to the sheriff's office, a local Realtor expressed gratitude for the office's involvement in monitoring a vacant house for vagrants who had been repeatedly breaking in; a community watch group praised the sensitivity of a community police officer; and a pastor thanked a community police officer for spending time with children in the community.

The sheriff's office has developed several community policing initiatives to involve citizens in improving the quality of life in their communities and to promote community pride and concern—for example, community cleanups, the Annual Christmas Bike Giveaway, and the 5 STARS (Students Taking Active Roles in Society) basketball program. Community cleanups engage local citizens in beautifying their neighborhoods. The Bike Giveaway involves residents in passing out bikes to needy families. In the 5 STARS program, officers and church members play basketball with children aged five to fifteen while talking about self-esteem and decision making.

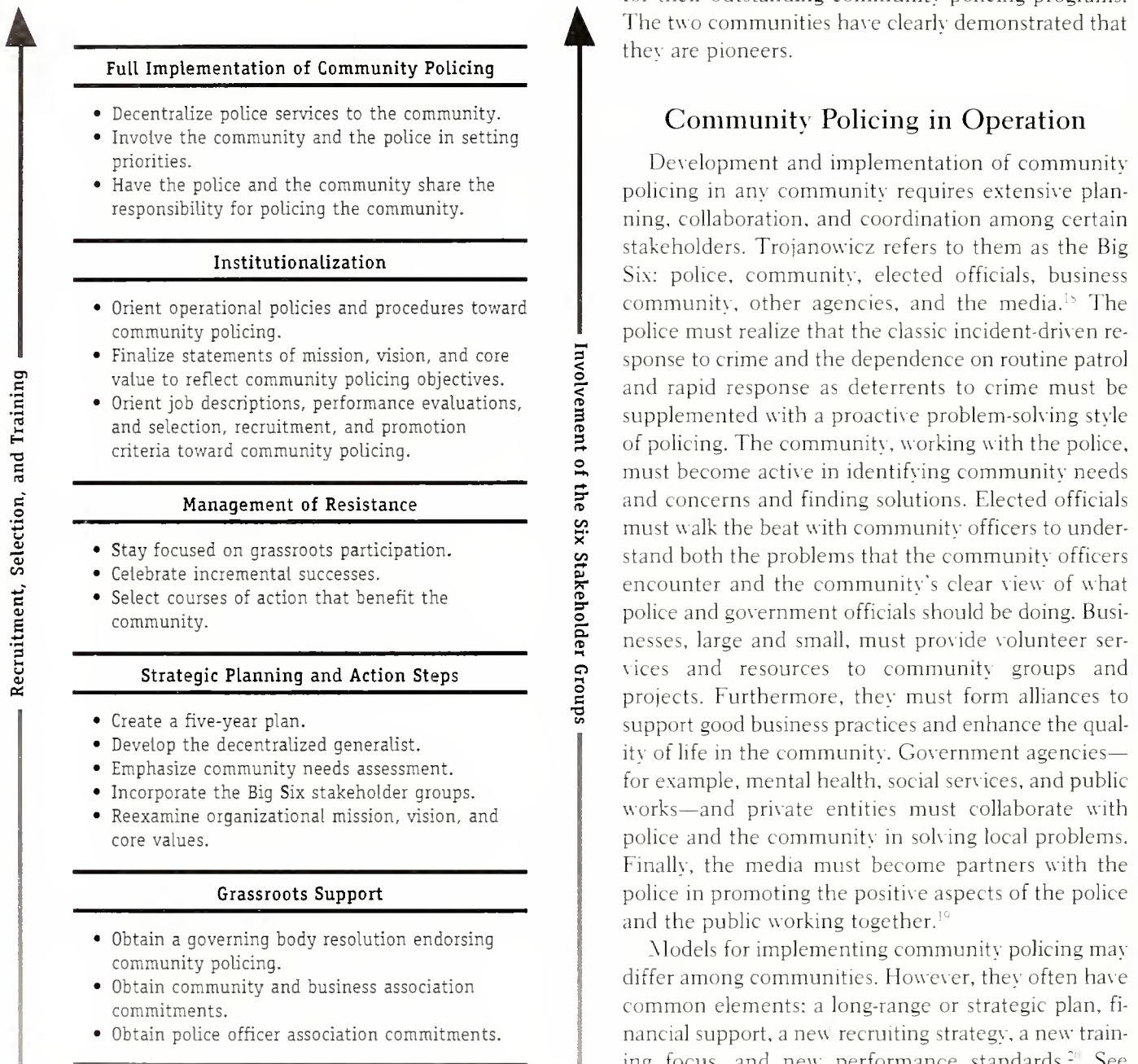
More initiatives are in the planning stages. A lunch program will bring community police officers to local schools to eat lunch with the children. They will talk about civic responsibility and the role of law enforcement officers. In CCARE (Cops Checking Area Resident Elderly), officers and local citizens will check on elderly persons who live in their neighborhood.

A fall 1996 survey of residents in the community policing areas of Cumberland County revealed the following information about the effectiveness of the program:¹⁷

- About two-thirds were aware that community policing operated in their neighborhood, and about nine-tenths of those who were aware wanted it to continue.
- About two-fifths said that their opinion of the sheriff's office had improved in the preceding year.
- About three-fourths said that, when they had reported problems in the past year, the response of the sheriff's office was good or excellent.
- One-quarter said that they felt somewhat safer since community policing began.
- One-quarter reported that their neighborhood had become a better place to live in the preceding year.

The results of the surveys in Lumberton and

Figure 2
Community Policing Implementation Model



Source: Lumberton Police Department, Lumberton, N.C.

Cumberland County have encouraged law enforcement personnel and citizens. The two law enforcement agencies are committed to finding new and better ways to serve the public. The boundaries to which they can go with community policing appear to be restricted only by the degree of creativity, resourcefulness, commitment, and collaboration of the police and the community.

In recent years the North Carolina Cops-Link Program has recognized both law enforcement agencies for their outstanding community policing programs. The two communities have clearly demonstrated that they are pioneers.

Community Policing in Operation

Development and implementation of community policing in any community requires extensive planning, collaboration, and coordination among certain stakeholders. Trojanowicz refers to them as the Big Six: police, community, elected officials, business community, other agencies, and the media.¹⁵ The police must realize that the classic incident-driven response to crime and the dependence on routine patrol and rapid response as deterrents to crime must be supplemented with a proactive problem-solving style of policing. The community, working with the police, must become active in identifying community needs and concerns and finding solutions. Elected officials must walk the beat with community officers to understand both the problems that the community officers encounter and the community's clear view of what police and government officials should be doing. Businesses, large and small, must provide volunteer services and resources to community groups and projects. Furthermore, they must form alliances to support good business practices and enhance the quality of life in the community. Government agencies—for example, mental health, social services, and public works—and private entities must collaborate with police and the community in solving local problems. Finally, the media must become partners with the police in promoting the positive aspects of the police and the public working together.¹⁶

Models for implementing community policing may differ among communities. However, they often have common elements: a long-range or strategic plan, financial support, a new recruiting strategy, a new training focus, and new performance standards.²⁰ See Figure 2 for a model developed by Dolan and used by the Lumberton Police Department. Dolan explains the model as follows.

Grassroots Support

An agency lays the foundation for community policing by obtaining grassroots support. Target groups are local politicians, business people, and police associations.

Strategic Planning and Action Steps

Next the agency develops a strategic plan along with action steps. The recommended time frame for this plan is five years. At this point the stakeholder groups are incorporated into the implementation process. See Figure 3 for a strategic planning model. Strategic planning is an ongoing effort that responds to organizational and environmental changes.

During this phase the stakeholders clarify agency values; rewrite mission statements to conform to the philosophy of community policing; identify community needs; convert needs to goals; establish objectives for each goal; formulate action plans to achieve objectives; and identify evaluation strategies. Evaluation is a critical component. When the community survey conducted in Cumberland County revealed that only 17 percent of the residents knew their community police officer, the sheriff's office immediately set out to devise new strategies to improve communities' familiarity with their officers.

Also during strategic planning, the stakeholders redefine the role of the community police officer from specialist to generalist and reengineer the organization to deliver community police services. The agency's mission and organizational structure must provide for deploying resources in response to emergencies but direct a preponderance of resources toward preventing crime and solving community problems that generate exhausting demands on the police.

Reengineering involves establishment of community police stations, among other tasks. The decision to establish a station in a neighborhood should be the result of an agreement between the law enforcement agency, the governing body, and the community. Once a community police station is operational in a neighborhood, it sends a strong message of commitment. It brings police service directly to the community, where that service is needed most. The Lumberton Police Department plans to go a step farther, making its substations "community network centers" that also provide social, mental health, and various other city services.

Management of Resistance

As law enforcement agencies shift their emphasis from overdependence on the criminal justice system to establishment of programs such as community action groups and youth activity teams, classic signs of resistance to change emerge. Law enforcement is no

Figure 3

Strategic Planning Process

- Step 1. **Input:** the foundation for the planning process consists of extensive input from all segments of the community, which have opportunities to contribute to future planning.
- Step 2. **Outcomes:** desired or expected outcomes from [community oriented policing and problem solving] are identified based upon the input received in Step 1.
- Step 3. **Activities and Strategies:** activities and strategies needed to achieve desired outcomes are developed.
- Step 4. **Current Resources:** a thorough examination of current resources is done to determine if they are being used in the best manner or if some are no longer needed.
- Step 5. **New Resources:** new resources that are necessary to accomplish collectively identified strategies are identified and prioritized. New needs of lower priority may be moved to future years, depending upon available funds.
- Step 6. **Implementation:** strategies and activities are implemented. This implementation may be a program of short duration (1 year or less), long duration (1-5 years), or indefinite duration (beyond 5 years).
- Step 7. **Measurement:** actual outcomes of strategies and activities are measured for evaluation.
- Step 8. **Program Evaluation:** the actual and expected outcomes are compared and evaluated. Did the strategies accomplish the desired outcomes? Was the program effective, or should it be changed?

Source: From Tom Potter, "Strategic Planning and Community Policing," in *COPPS: Community Oriented Policing and Problem Solving* (Sacramento, Calif.: California Department of Justice, Attorney General's Office, Crime Prevention Center, 1992), 64.

different from any other profession that must cope with change. Like other professionals, police get set in their ways and find it difficult to see the wisdom of doing things differently.

One strategy to reduce resistance is to implement community policing in increments rather than attempting a conversion all at once. Small steps will have an immediate impact on the community.

Another strategy for managing change is to celebrate success at each stage of implementation. In the process, the agency should emphasize collaboration among the six stakeholder groups.

Institutionalization

The next stage is institutionalization. At this point the agency has accomplished the transition. Goals and objectives reflect the mission, vision, and core value

statements of community policing. Job descriptions, performance evaluations, and recruitment, selection, and promotion criteria are all oriented toward community policing, as are operational policies and procedures.

Full Implementation of Community Policing

Citizens realize that the community policing philosophy has been implemented when they witness the placement of police substations in their neighborhoods, designed to deliver personalized police services. At this stage, citizens assist in setting priorities through regular dialogue and participation with community police officers and the local management team. The clearest indication that community policing is working is evidence that citizens, elected officials, the business community, helping agencies, and the media are accepting individual and collective responsibility for the plight of their neighborhoods.

Critical Factors

The two factors especially critical throughout implementation of community policing are involvement of the six stakeholder groups and recruitment, selection, and training of officers.

By involving the six stakeholder groups, an agency creates partnerships and empowers people.

Although community policing programs have been in place in some agencies for a decade, it is becoming uncomfortably clear that law enforcement agencies are not recruiting officers who are adept at performing community policing tasks. Moreover, they have yet to adopt and use uniform criteria for selecting persons for community policing assignments. Most new officers entering the profession want to "help people." However, they tend to prefer general patrol duties over public speaking, creative problem solving, and networking with community and government organizations. Newly appointed officers who do not possess personal traits and characteristics compatible with community policing quickly grow frustrated, causing resistance.

Recruitment and selection of the right people creates fertile ground for training. Training itself must focus on the skills crucial to successful community policing: planning and organizing, problem solving, critical thinking, and interpersonal communication.

Some Words of Caution

Although community policing holds great promise, there are some concerns and criticisms, perhaps best stated as questions that police and community leaders must ask:²¹

- *Can community policing be successful in disorganized communities?* Agencies often use community policing in communities that are poor, full of transients, crime ridden, and predominately minority.
- *Should police be involved in noncriminal activities such as removing abandoned cars and cleaning up garbage?* Will police become advocates instead of crime fighters?
- *Does the concept violate the political neutrality of police?* By its nature, community policing promotes police and citizen interaction and collaboration on issues of common concern. Many of these issues focus on community norms. Should police influence the definition of community norms?
- *Can community policing work when it cannot cure the underlying social problems of crime and disorder?* Should police take on the role of social worker?
- *Does the concept require too much officer discretion?* Will this increased discretion be used wisely, or will police use it to further the interests of the majority in the community at the expense of those whom the community dislikes?
- *Is this just a faddish, costly gimmick?* Is community policing nothing more than a trendy buzzword or a temporarily high-profile program?
- *Do officers possess the intellectual capacity and the temperament to sustain community policing?* Community policing requires skills not emphasized in traditional policing—critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and interpersonal communication.
- *Can law enforcement agencies change from within?* Community policing requires changes in philosophy, mission, organizational structure, management style, and personnel. These do not come easily.
- *Can and will adequate evaluations of community policing be done?* In the past, evaluation of community policing has been less than impressive. Problems in methodology and statistical analysis

have prevented a conclusive argument that community policing works.

Failure to address these questions will jeopardize development and implementation of any community policing program. In *Community Policing and Problem-Solving: Strategies and Practices*, Kenneth Peak and Ronald Glensor speak to the questions in great detail. They think that community policing, "when initiated and practiced in a thoughtful and appropriate manner, meets these concerns."²²

A Framework for Success

Dolan offers the following suggestions to a law enforcement agency that wants to try community policing:

- *Educate yourself and the community on the concept of community policing.*²³ Visit and talk with officials in communities that have successfully implemented the strategy. Consult with experts on the subject.²⁴ Law enforcement agencies have to break with traditional isolationism and try innovative ideas.
- *Build grassroots support among local government leaders and residents.* Involve community and political leaders throughout the process. Let them become stakeholders in community policing, and they may support you when you need them most.
- *Develop an organizational culture that promotes and supports community policing.* Some law enforcement agencies have instituted Total Quality Management as a strategy to develop a positive organizational culture.²⁵
- *Go slowly!* Implement in increments and evaluate as you proceed. Community policing is a philosophy, not a program. In most cases, changing policing's current incident-driven response to a community-oriented partnership will take ten to twenty years.
- *Most important, model roles that you expect to see.* Chiefs and managers must walk the beat, demonstrating that what officers are doing is important and that they are all in the transformation together.

In the North Carolina publication entitled *Community Oriented Policing: What It Is, Why It Works, How to Get Started*, the following statement appears:

Given the relative newness of community policing, its full potential is yet to be known. The early evidence suggests that [community oriented policing] may be most effective in improving citizen/police relations and in increasing job satisfaction among officers. Its impacts on the fear of crime and crime rates are more uncertain. Based on initial experiences in North Carolina agencies, however, the evidence is encouraging that community policing can and will reduce both the fear of crime and actual crime.²⁶

Community policing holds great promise. The partnerships developed between the police and the public have the potential to improve the quality of life for the citizens of North Carolina. More important, the responsibility for community crime prevention will be shifted back to where it belongs—in the community.

Notes

1. W. L. Melville Lee, *A History of Police in England* (London: Methuen, 1901), chap. 12.

2. George L. Kelling, "Police and Communities: The Quiet Revolution," in *Perspectives on Policing*, no. 1 (Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Justice, 1988), 1-7.

3. Robert Trojanowicz and Bonnie Bucqueroux, *Community Policing: How to Get Started* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Anderson, 1990), 2.

4. Community policing is rooted in normative sponsorship theory and critical social theory. For additional information on normative sponsorship theory, see C. Sower, *Community Involvement* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957); on critical social theory, see B. Fay, *Social Theory and Political Practice* (London: George Allen and Unwin Publishers, 1984).

5. Additional information regarding the community policing experience in Lumberton can be found in a report by the Center for Urban and Regional Studies, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, entitled *Community Oriented Policing: The North Carolina Experience*, published in December 1996.

6. Dolan recently became chief of police in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

7. This protectiveness is rooted in the principle of "territorial imperative," a concept developed by Robert Ardrey in *The Territorial Imperative* (New York: Dell Publishers, 1966).

8. For a detailed discussion of resistance to community policing, see Harry Dolan, "Coping with Internal Backlash," *Police Chief Magazine* 61 (March 1994): 27-32.

9. A 1994 study of D.A.R.E. programs in six states and British Columbia cast doubt on D.A.R.E.'s effectiveness.

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See "DARE Not Effective in Reducing Drug Abuse, Study Finds," *Criminal Justice Newsletter*, Oct. 3, 1994, pp. 6-7.

10. The citizen police academy is a program offering classes that local residents can attend to learn about the functions and the operation of the police department.

11. Block parties are gatherings of police and citizens to build partnerships. They may be cookouts, educational workshops, or just concerts by a police D.A.R.E. band.

12. The Police Explorers Program is a Boy Scout troop sponsored by the police department.

13. A review of the crime statistics in five North Carolina cities implementing community policing from 1992 to 1995 revealed that crime dropped sharply in Asheville; increased slightly (mainly to property crimes) in Greensboro, Lumberton, and Morehead City; and leveled off or declined in targeted areas in Greensboro and Whiteville. William M. Rohe, Richard Adams, and Thomas A. Arcury, *Community Oriented Policing: What It Is, Why It Works, How to Get Started* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Center for Urban and Regional Studies, Jan. 1997), 13.

14. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Center for Urban and Regional Studies, *Neighborhood Resident Survey: Results in Lumberton* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: the Center, 1996), 1-17.

15. Denis Umstot, *Understanding Organizational Behavior*, 2d ed. (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing Co., 1988), 168.

16. James Q. Wilson and George Kelling, "Broken Windows," *Atlantic Monthly*, March 1982, pp. 29-38.

17. North Carolina Justice Academy, "Cumberland County Community Policing Citizen Survey: Final Report, April 1997" (the Academy, Salemburg, N.C.), 1-14.

18. Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, *Community Policing*, 2.

19. Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, *Community Policing*, 21-25.

20. Rohe, Adams, and Arcury, *Community Oriented Policing*, 24-27.

21. Kenneth J. Peak and Ronald W. Glensor, *Community Policing and Problem-Solving: Strategies and Practices* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1996), 259-71.

22. Peak and Glensor, *Community Policing and Problem-Solving*, 271-83.

23. For guidance in development and implementation of community policing, see Rohe, Adams, and Arcury, *Community Oriented Policing*; and Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, *Community Policing*.

24. Additional information can be obtained from Dr. Darl H. Champion, Sr., Director, Criminal Justice Studies, Methodist College, at (910) 630-7050; Chief Harry Dolan, Grand Rapids (Mich.) Police Department, at (616) 456-3364; or Mr. Tommy Edwards, North Carolina Justice Academy, at (910) 525-4151.

25. For additional information on how to implement community policing successfully, see Randall Aragon and Richard E. Adams, "Community-Oriented Policing: Success Insurance Strategies," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* 66 (Dec. 1997): 8-17.

26. Rohe, Adams, and Arcury, *Community Oriented Policing*, 13. 

Legal Issues in Transferring from Home School to Public School

Lauralyn E. Beattie



Lorraine Hoyt remembers well the day her two-year-old daughter Joanna began to read labels on moving boxes. By the time Joanna was four, she had read much of the Little House on the Prairie series and was writing her own stories. Lorraine remembers equally poignantly the day Joanna came home from school in tears, despairing of her friends being able to understand her games. Soon afterward, Lorraine decided to keep Joanna home from school permanently.¹



Always deeply religious, Matthew's parents recall their own parents' battles with the teachings of public school science teachers and the threats of pop culture. The first time eight-year-old Matthew came home singing verses of pop star Madonna's "Like a Virgin," Matthew's parents decided to keep him home.²



Aware that private school is financially out of reach, the parents of ten-year-old Rachelle have joined a small but growing number of black Baltimore families who have chosen to school their children at home. Their

choice is a pragmatic one—they worry about the low academic standards at inner-city schools. Last year, students at the school Rachelle would attend earned the lowest reading scores in the state on Maryland's annual assessment test. "There are some outstanding teachers in the city," Rachelle's father says, "so I don't turn my nose up at public education. It served me well. But what they're confronted with confounds them—their hands are often strapped." Rachelle's father, a doctoral student at Coppin State College, owns more than 5,000 books. Rachelle, he says, has lots to read at home.³



These stories demonstrate a phenomenon that the popular media have deemed a "national trend."⁴ In the flurry of conversation about educational alternatives, more and more families each year are electing to teach their children at home. In North Carolina alone, about 14,000 students attended 9,381 registered home schools during the 1996-97 school year. This figure is particularly astonishing because it represents almost a 400 percent increase since the early part of the decade, when state records showed only 1,911 home schools.⁵

As the number of students educated at home continues to rise, so does the number of potential conflicts between home school families, the state, and the public school system. This article addresses an important facet of that complicated relationship: the legal

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interaction between North Carolina public school boards and home school families when home school students wish to enter or reenter the public school system. The article first reviews the law governing home schools in North Carolina. It then discusses what the law allows or requires for home school transfers. Finally, in the absence of comprehensive statewide data, it describes the current practices of some North Carolina school boards with regard to home school transfers.

Legal History of Home Schooling in North Carolina

The relationship between the State of North Carolina and home schooling parents has changed dramatically in the last two decades. Until the mid-1980s, state laws were silent on home schooling, and state authorities sought to prohibit the practice through rigorous enforcement of the compulsory attendance laws.⁶ A 1985 case, *Duro v. District Attorney*,⁷ marked the height of North Carolina's opposition to home schooling. In *Duro* a North Carolina father refused to send his children to public school because he did not wish to expose them to religious views different from his own.⁸ He sued the state in federal court, asserting that the rigid compulsory attendance laws violated his First Amendment right to the free exercise of religion.⁹ The district court agreed and granted *Duro's* motion for summary judgment.¹⁰ But the Fourth Circuit Court rejected this finding, holding that the "state demonstrated an interest in compulsory attendance which [was] of sufficient magnitude to override *Duro's* religious interest."¹¹ The effect of *Duro* was a ban on home schooling in North Carolina.

A dramatic shift occurred two years later, however, when the North Carolina Supreme Court interpreted the state's compulsory education statute. In *Deacon v. State*,¹² a case of virtually identical facts, the court held that a home school might qualify as a private school under the state's nonpublic school statutes.¹³ The court openly requested that the legislature consider the issue: "Whether home instruction ought to be permitted and if so, the extent to which it should be regulated, are questions of public policy which . . . [the] legislature may want to consider."¹⁴ The General Assembly did consider these questions and in 1988 passed a general statute to permit home schools.¹⁵

Currently, North Carolina defines a home school as "a nonpublic school in which one or more children of

not more than two families or households receive academic instruction from parents or legal guardians, or a member of either household."¹⁶ Parents choosing to school their children at home must elect to operate either as a private church school or a school of religious charter under Part 1 of the nonpublic school statute, or as a qualified nonpublic school under Part 2 of the statute.¹⁷ Regardless of the choice, any adult providing instruction must hold at least a high school diploma or its equivalent.¹⁸ Home schools also must maintain regular attendance and immunization records and administer at least one "nationally standardized test or other nationally standardized equivalent measurement . . . in the areas of English grammar, reading, spelling, and mathematics"¹⁹ each year. With these few exceptions, the statute explicitly exempts home schools from laws regulating education.²⁰

Transfers of Home School Students to Public Schools

The comparative lack of government regulation and standardization of home schools may create problems when a home school student wishes to enter or reenter the public school system. This section reviews statutory and case law to determine what conditions a school board may impose on such a student.

Statutory Law

When a student transfers into a North Carolina public school from any outside institution, the principal has the authority to "grade and classify" that student.²¹ Basically this means that the principal has the authority to decide what grade the student should join and whether or not the student's grades from the previous school should transfer.

Principals faced with home school transfer students have somewhat more limited authority. In 1996 the North Carolina General Assembly acted to protect these students, amending the section of the state education statute on "powers and duties of the principal" to provide as follows:

The principal shall have the authority to grade and classify pupils except that a principal shall not require additional testing of a student entering a public school from a school governed under Article 39 of this Chapter if test scores from a nationally standardized test or nationally standardized equivalent measure

that are adequate to determine the appropriate placement of the child are available.²²

The statute addresses concerns that some public schools were subjecting home school transfer students to a much greater degree of testing and evaluation than they required of transfer students from more typical schools. The new law was designed to "reign in abuse" and ensure that home school students are treated "fairly."²³

Yet the amendment still leaves much discretion to school principals. The statute requires principals to place home school students on the basis of standardized test scores but *only* if they believe that an individual's standardized test scores are an "adequate" tool for determining placement. Principals seem to be free to require further testing of students if they can make the case that existing test scores are inadequate.²⁴ Further, the new law says nothing about how schools should award credit for previous work, manage the transfer of grades, or determine when a student has completed graduation requirements.

Case Law

A search for case law in this area uncovered only one case, addressed by the Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. Although this court does not make law for North Carolina, the court's reasoning warrants attention for its potentially persuasive effect on future federal and state court decisions that would be binding.

The Vandiver Decision

In *Vandiver v. Hardin County Board of Education*,²⁵ Brian Vandiver and his parents contested Kentucky's requirement that students entering public school from "nonaccredited secondary schools" pass equivalency exams to gain credit toward graduation.²⁶ After behavioral and academic difficulties forced Brian to repeat the ninth grade, Brian's parents, self-described "spirit-filled, born-again Christians," chose to school Brian at home through a religious education program.²⁷ According to his parents, Brian showed significant improvement during the year of home study and completed the tenth grade. He returned to public school for the eleventh grade.²⁸ Controversy arose when school officials, pursuant to the Kentucky statute, refused to give Brian credit for the work he had completed at home unless he passed equivalency exams for tenth-grade classes. Brian challenged the Ken-

tucky law in federal court, alleging that the law amounted to a denial of equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution and an infringement of his right to the free exercise of his religion under the First Amendment.²⁹ After the United States District Court for the Western District of Kentucky dismissed his claims, Brian appealed to the Sixth Circuit Court.³⁰

Initially, Brian argued that enforcement of the equivalency-exam requirement violated his Fourteenth Amendment right to equal protection because the school system allowed students from other nonaccredited private schools to gain credit through a "probationary placement" method.³¹ The court dismissed this argument. It held that the state's higher testing requirements for home school students were constitutional because they were rationally related to the state's legitimate interest in setting uniform standards for advancement and graduation. That is all the constitution requires, the court held, because home school students do not compose a "suspect class." If they did, the constitution would require a greater showing of need for the requirements than their merely being rationally related to a legitimate state interest.³²

A unique factual development provided the court with further basis for rejecting Brian's claim that he had been denied equal protection.³³ Brian's high school principal testified that, when school officials decided to give credit to other transfer students at issue in this case, they believed that those students had transferred from an accredited private school. Their decision (which potentially violated the Equal Protection Clause, in light of their refusal to give Brian credit) was based on a mistake of fact. Nevertheless, the court noted,

we see nothing in the equal protection clause which requires us to compound the principal's error by forcing the school district to grant a similar exception in Brian's case now that the error has been discovered. The error does not detract from the validity of the state's or the school district's equivalency test requirement, and the equal protection clause was not designed to remedy inadvertent distinctions, even among similarly situated persons.³⁴

Notably, however, this language does not make clear whether the court actually considered Brian to be "similarly situated" to (in the same position as) transfers from nonaccredited private schools. Although the language *suggests* that it did, when the court went on to discuss Brian's rights under the

First Amendment (versus his rights under the Equal Protection Clause), it made a contrary comparison. In determining whether religion played a role in the school board's decision to impose an equivalency exam rather than a probationary placement, the court compared Brian solely with other home school students. Noting that Brian was the only student to transfer from a home school environment, the court refused to find evidence of religious discrimination "absent evidence that transferees from nonreligious home schools were provided an 'exemption' that Brian was not. . . ." ³⁵ It made no mention of students from nonaccredited private schools.

Brian also argued that the equivalency-exam requirement violated his right under the First Amendment to the free exercise of religion because the tests imposed "a bigger burden than the Lord would want [him] to carry."³⁶ Pursuant to significant precedent, the Sixth Circuit Court accepted Brian's religious beliefs as sincere³⁷ but rejected his claim.³⁸ In making its determination, the court relied heavily on the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Employment Division, Department of Human Resources v. Smith*. Before *Smith*, government actions that significantly burdened a religious practice were subject to strict scrutiny. That is, to be constitutional, they had to be justified by a compelling government interest.³⁹ The 1990 *Smith* decision reconsidered this position and eliminated such intense scrutiny from cases involving the Free Exercise Clause and religion-neutral government practices. Specifically the Court held that "generally applicable, religion-neutral laws that have the effect of burdening a particular religious practice need not be justified by a compelling government interest."⁴⁰ After *Smith*, laws of general applicability that are not directed at specific religious practices are simply not subject to free-exercise challenges.⁴¹ In *Vandiver* the Sixth Circuit Court found that Kentucky's regulation of public school testing was a valid and neutral law of general applicability within the meaning of *Smith*.⁴² Brian's free exercise claim was "presumably precluded."⁴³

Vandiver's Implications

North Carolina courts may find the Sixth Circuit Court's reasoning appealing because it is consistent with a "compromise" approach that North Carolina policy makers have taken toward other home school issues. North Carolina has compromised, for example, on the controversial issue of teachers' qualifications. Several states require that home school educators be

certified teachers or possess a baccalaureate degree.⁴⁴ Others do not address teachers' qualifications at all outside the public school context.⁴⁵ By requiring that home school educators possess a high school diploma or the equivalent, North Carolina falls squarely in the middle of this continuum.

Similarly, on the issue of testing requirements, some states require standardized tests and enforce a mandatory minimum score.⁴⁶ Other states make testing optional or do not require it at all. North Carolina requires some testing (the precise form being up to the parents) but does not insist on a minimum level of performance.⁴⁷

North Carolina also takes an intermediate approach to the registration of home schools. Although the state does require registration, it does not mandate site visits, as some states do.⁴⁸

Of course, North Carolina statutes reflect the decisions of legislators, not judges. However, when interpreting statutes, courts try to defer to the legislature. Consequently, North Carolina courts may find something like the position upheld in *Vandiver* appealing. The Kentucky decision allowed Brian to return to school and proceed toward graduation with his class under certain manageable conditions. It did not allow him to return to school without restriction, but it did not restrict his return to the place he had left. Such an approach seems a compromise position analogous to North Carolina's approach to other home schooling issues.

The *Vandiver* court's resolution of the equal protection argument also may be relevant to North Carolinians.⁴⁹ In the equal protection context, the important question is, When a court is deciding whether home school students are being treated equally—that is, fairly—with whom should it compare them? Students from accredited private schools? Students from nonaccredited private schools? Merely other home school students? Conversations with representatives of North Carolina school systems (discussed later) suggest that North Carolina schools may treat home school transfers very differently from "ordinary" transfers (that is, transfers from other public or private schools), creating possible cause for equal protection challenges. The Sixth Circuit Court's opinion is important because its reasoning suggests that home school students may not be similarly situated to other transfer students. According to the *Vandiver* court, home school students are *certainly* not similarly situated to students from accredited schools and *may* not be similarly situated to students from nonaccredited

private schools.⁵⁰ If the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals or a North Carolina court were to adopt this narrow definition of "similar situation," home school students would be unlikely to succeed with equal protection challenges.

The Law in North Carolina

Let us return to the original question: What may a principal require of a child transferring from a home school to a public school? To begin, it is clear that public schools must accept such students. State law recognizes home schooling as a valid method of education, one that fulfills the requirements of the compulsory education statute.⁵¹

But once a school has accepted a home school student, state law grants the principal considerable latitude in how he or she handles the student's placement. The principal must place a transferring student according to already available achievement tests as long as such tests are an "adequate" placement tool.⁵² Yet a principal may state a reason that existing scores are "inadequate" and use any placement measure that he or she believes is warranted. The statute offers no guidance. Neither does the statute offer assistance with how the principal ought to award credit or translate grades. Such decisions are left to the principal's discretion.⁵³

Finally, the *Vandiver* decision suggests that a student's ability to challenge a principal's discretion might be limited. Should North Carolina courts be persuaded by this decision, school boards likely would avoid liability simply by ensuring that all home school students are treated similarly and that the district employs generally applicable, religion-neutral standards for the assignment of credit, grades, and placement.⁵⁴

Practices in Some North Carolina School Districts

Given the evolving nature of this issue, reviewing how some North Carolina schools and school boards actually deal with it may be useful. Telephone interviews with administrators in a handful of school districts around the state suggest the following conclusions: (1) home school transfers are a small but growing issue; (2) most systems assess such transfers on a case-by-case basis, although a minority have formal policies; and (3) a sizable number of districts use results of end-of-course examinations to place students

rather than relying on national achievement test scores.⁵⁵

The four areas of greatest controversy appear to be placement policies, assignment of credit toward graduation, transfer of home school grades, and the comparative treatment of students transferring from more typical private schools.

Placement Policies

For North Carolina school districts with incoming home school students, placement is the most troublesome issue. School districts vary in their approach, falling along a continuum from those that employ very limited testing to those that always require additional testing.

A number of North Carolina school systems require very little beyond what the home school provides. One of the few written policies in the state illustrates this approach, asking principals to place high school students on the basis of work documented at their home school:

Students who have been taught in a home school or non-accredited private school and enroll in the [ABC District Schools] must submit a transcript documenting work completed, a syllabus for the work completed, any available test scores, verification of registry as a home school, and any other documentation which will assist, if it applies. If this material is not submitted, credit will not be awarded for the course work completed in the home or non-accredited private school.

This district's superintendent further noted that placement is at the principal's discretion.⁵⁶ When documentation is incomplete, a school may use an end-of-course test and the chronological age of the student to help determine placement. The district tries to place students according to their parents' recommendation because the administration believes that parents generally have the best insight into their children's abilities. The school district then monitors home school transfer students carefully and makes adjustments in placement if necessary.

A Triangle school district has adopted a similar approach. Confronted with a home school transfer student a few years ago, one administrator from this district contacted a number of state officials and concluded that district personnel should begin the transfer process by carefully reviewing any documentation provided by the home school. If they found this documentation inadequate, the principal could, at her

discretion, administer tests to determine placement. A second administrator from this school system added that the district had found most home school parents to be very fair: "They're generally not trying to get their child into a higher grade than he or she deserves." At the elementary school level, the schools were usually able to come to an agreement with parents about placement.

Most of the school district personnel contacted for this research reported that their district handled home school transfers on a case-by-case basis. Like the school officials mentioned earlier, representatives from these districts emphasized that, under state law, placement decisions are left to the principal's discretion. One administrator noted that her district had considered a formalized policy but had "stayed purposely flexible" to accommodate the differing needs of the home school population. This school district generally places students according to their parents' wishes and adjusts the placement only if the child struggles. When principals do need to determine placement, they examine any work records and administer an end-of-course test if necessary. Generally, this official added, "our schools only test if they can't get a feel for what work the student has done." A neighboring superintendent reported a similar "situational" approach. The principals of that district review attendance records, progress reports, transcripts, and national achievement test scores supplied by the home school. If these documents are not sufficient for placement, the principals often administer an end-of-course exam.

On the other end of the placement continuum are school districts that require additional testing for any placement. Faced with a recent influx of home school students, one principal reported that, although his high school has no official policy, it always tests incoming home school students. A guidance counselor administers an end-of-course test for any subject for which the state requires one. For courses with no end-of-course exam, the school has been developing a school-made subject test. If there is no way to test students in a given subject, "as a last resort," the principal will place the student according to the home school transcript and an interview with the parents. Another district's written policy dictates similar requirements:

Students who have been taught in home school and later decide to enroll in the [XYZ County Schools] must meet the following requirements in order to receive credit for the instruction they received in the home school. . . .

Students must achieve a passing score on the state's end-of-course test in all subjects in which the test is available. . . . The [XYZ County Schools] will develop a local placement test or designate an appropriate standardized test for assessing achievement in all other courses listed in the Standard Course of Study.

[An XYZ County Schools] diploma will be awarded only to those students who complete one year in the [XYZ County Schools] and who meet all graduation requirements specified by the [XYZ County Board of Education].

This policy is interesting for two reasons. First, it predates the 1996 statutory amendment, which forbids schools from requiring additional testing if existing measures are adequate. Whether the policy conforms to the amendment is unclear. Perhaps the district's principals determine in each case whether a home school student's achievement tests are an adequate mechanism for placement, or perhaps they apply the policy only to students who do not present achievement test scores. Second, the policy's requirement of one year's residence imposes a significant burden. This seems contrary to the intent of the 1996 amendment—namely, that home schools be treated as equal and adequate educational units.

Credit

The issues of credit and placement are closely intertwined. Of the school officials contacted for this article, all those who had contemplated the issue assumed that "parents follow the required curriculum." Most officials were willing to assign credit for classes that were prerequisites to the level at which they placed the student (for example, they would give a student placed in algebra II credit for algebra I). A few officials varied from this approach, assigning credit based on the student's score on the end-of-course exam (see the policy of the XYZ County Schools, above). Finally, by law, credit is assigned at the principal's discretion and can be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.⁵⁷

Grades

Two approaches were common among the school systems that had considered the transfer of home school grades. The districts with more developed policies tended to use the pass/fail method. One written policy provides as follows:

Credit and grades earned in home schools or non-accredited private schools will be recorded on the student's transcript as pass or fail and designated as Home Schooled (HS) or Private Non-Accredited (PNA) on the transcript, with no curriculum level or course weight considered.

Class rank for students transferring from a home school or non-accredited private school will be calculated on the basis of all grades earned after enrollment in the [ABC District Schools].

Schools with less-developed policies seemed more receptive to home school assessment. Some were willing to recognize grades that students had received in their home schools. As one guidance counselor commented, "If grades are written down and look legitimate, [the student] gets the grade." As he does with transfers from more traditional schools, the administrator who uses this "direct transfer" approach creates a cumulative file for the entering student that recognizes all grades and credits earned at the home school and the public school.

Traditional Transfers

Without exception the North Carolina school administrators interviewed for this article reported that when accepting transfers from accredited private schools and out-of-state public schools, they follow the recommendation of the sending school. Generally, they transfer grades and take placement recommendations at face value, they do not retest these transfer students, and they create cumulative files recognizing the student's work at the sending school and the recipient school.

School administrators rarely seemed to think that the practice of treating home school students differently from other transfer students warranted explanation. Those who did attributed their distinct treatment of home school transfer students to difficulties with home school documentation and the confidence that students at accredited schools had followed a standard curriculum and undergone regular testing.

Conclusion

How best to accommodate home school transfer students is a small but growing issue. The law recognizes home schooling as a valid educational option. Home school students who wish to transfer to public schools must be allowed to do so. Nonetheless, once

such students are inside the schoolroom doors, the law grants school officials tremendous discretion over how to integrate them into the classroom. School officials should use this discretion with care, employing their experience and resources to ensure that the expanding relationship between home school parents and school boards best serves the educational needs of all children.

Notes

1. See Lynn Schnaiberg, "Staying Home from School," *Education Weekly*, June 12, 1996, p. 30.
2. Matthew's story is fictional, intended to portray a child educated at home for religious reasons.
3. Schnaiberg, "Staying Home," p. 28.
4. Anita Manning, "Life in '94 Will Offer Glimpse into Next Century," *USA Today*, Dec. 22, 1993, p. 1D, cited in Lisa M. Lukasik, "The Latest Home Education Challenge: The Relationship Between Home Schools and Public Schools," *North Carolina Law Review* 74 (1996): 1914.
5. Rod Helderedge, director, North Carolina Division of Nonpublic Education, telephone interview, Oct. 23, 1997. An arm of the governor's office, the North Carolina Division of Nonpublic Education is responsible for registering and supervising the state's home schools. See also Division of Nonpublic Education (visited Nov. 8, 1997) at <http://www.gov.state.nc.us/dnpe>.
6. Charles J. Russo, Patricia M. Lines, and William M. Gordon, "Home Schooling in North Carolina," *School News* 22 (Summer 1991): 13-14.
7. *Duro v. District Attorney*, 712 F.2d 96 (4th Cir. 1983).
8. See *Duro*, 712 F.2d at 97.
9. See *Duro*, 712 F.2d at 96.
10. See *Duro*, 712 F.2d at 96.
11. *Duro*, 712 F.2d at 96.
12. *Delconte v. State*, 313 N.C. 384, 329 S.E.2d 636 (1985).
13. See *Delconte*, 313 N.C. 384, 329 S.E.2d 636.
14. *Delconte*, 313 N.C. at 403, 329 S.E.2d at 648.
15. See N.C. Gen. Stat. [hereinafter G.S.] §§ 115C-563 through -565.
16. G.S. 115C-563(a).
17. See G.S. 115C-563(a).
18. See G.S. 115C-564. The statute also requires that the adult providing instruction in a home school be a parent, a legal guardian, or a member of one of the two households. Presumably this means that parents may not hire an outside teacher to teach their children at home. See G.S. 115C-563.
19. G.S. 115C-564, citing G.S. 115C-549, -557.
20. G.S. 115C-565.
21. G.S. 115C-288(a).
22. G.S. 115C-288(a) (amended 1996).
23. David Mills, educational consultant, North Carolina Division of Nonpublic Education, telephone interview, July 14, 1997.
24. This adequacy requirement may be a relatively low hurdle for a number of reasons: (1) the term "adequate" is

undefined and presumably left to the principal's discretion; (2) significant criticism has been levied against national achievement tests as evaluative mechanisms; and (3) local educators report that national achievement tests are not sufficiently correlated with the subject matter of high school courses to serve as effective placement tools.

25. *Vandiver v. Hardin County Board of Education*, 925 F.2d 927 (6th Cir. 1990).

26. See 704 Ky. Admin. Regs. 3:307.

27. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 929.

28. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 929.

29. Brian's parents, Ronald and Kathy Vandiver, also sought relief under the federal constitution and 42 U.S.C. § 1983 (1994). The court held that Kentucky's one-year statute of limitations barred their claims arising from events in fall 1987. Further, the court barred their claims arising from events after July 1, 1988. On that day Brian Vandiver attained legal majority (age eighteen), and Ronald and Kathy Vandiver lost their standing to sue. Consequently the Sixth Circuit Court considered only the claims of Brian Vandiver. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 930.

30. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 929.

31. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 931.

32. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 931.

33. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 931.

34. *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 931.

35. *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 934.

36. *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 934.

37. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 934.

38. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 934.

39. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 932.

40. *Employment Div., Dept. of Human Resources v. Smith*, 494 U.S. 872, 881 (1990).

41. See *Smith*, 494 U.S. at 881. Notably, in 1993 Congress enacted the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in direct response to the *Smith* decision. The act essentially restored strict scrutiny to free exercise claims. It prohibited federal and state governments from "substantially burdening" a person's exercise of religion even if the burden results from a rule of general applicability, unless the government can demonstrate that the burden "(1) is a furtherance of a compelling government interest; and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest." 42 U.S.C. § 2000bb-1 (1993). Last summer, however, the Supreme Court invalidated the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, finding that it was not a proper exercise of Congress's enforcement powers. See *City of Bourne v. Flores*, 117 S. Ct. 2157 (1997). Consequently, *Smith*—as well as *Vandiver*—remains good law.

42. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 932.

43. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 932. In dicta the court suggested that parents' right to direct the education of their children may not fall within the *Smith* holding; a law impos-

ing on such a right may still be subject to strict scrutiny. If a child expresses a strong interest in religious education, this interest also may be protected by strict scrutiny. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 932-33, citing *Wisconsin v. Yoder*, 406 U.S. 205 (1972), *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, 268 U.S. 510 (1925). The Kentucky statutes, however, did not affect access to religious education. They merely required testing on a student's return to public school. The *Vandiver* court concluded that objections to test taking, even those based on religious beliefs, did not represent a conflict with the constitutionally protected rights defined in *Yoder* and *Pierce*.

44. These states include Alabama, Iowa, Michigan, New Mexico, North Dakota, and South Carolina. See Donald Henderson, Eugene L. Golanda, and Robert E. Lee, "Legal Conflicts Involving Home Instruction of School-Aged Children," *Education Law Reporter* 64 (1991): 1002; see also Charles Russo, "Home Schooling: A Legal Update," *Updating* 28 (1997): 11; *People of the State of Michigan v. DeJonge*, 449 N.W.2d 899 (Mich. App. Ct. 1989) (holding that state's teacher certification requirement for home schools was constitutional).

45. Hawaii and Wisconsin are among these states. See Russo, "Home Schooling," 11.

46. See Russo, "Home Schooling," 16.

47. See G.S. 115C-564.

48. See Henderson, Golanda, and Lee, "Legal Conflicts," 1010-11.

49. Equal protection claims are important because they are available to all home school families. First Amendment arguments are limited to families who educate at home for religious reasons.

50. See *Vandiver*, 927 F.2d at 931, and note 49. The Sixth Circuit Court's opinion is vague about the status of students transferring from nonaccredited private schools. This lack of clarity may diminish the decision's authority in the Fourth Circuit.

51. See G.S. 115C-547.

52. See G.S. 115C-288(a).

53. Many school boards have an interest in these issues and may wish to create a districtwide policy that principals would be required to enforce. Given the statutory language about "principal discretion," it is unclear whether such school board policies would be permissible.

54. See *Vandiver*, 925 F.2d at 932.

55. I talked to a number of North Carolina school officials in the course of this research without knowing that I would publish my findings. Consequently I did not ask the people with whom I talked for permission to make their comments public. For that reason I do not identify the officials who shared their perspectives with me.

56. See G.S. 115C-288(a).

57. See G.S. 115C-288(a). ☐

A Model for Improving a Group's Effectiveness

Margaret S. Carlson



A city manager has formed a committee to recommend ways of meeting an increased demand for services resulting from the city's rapid population growth. Members of the committee are employees from planning, housing inspection, and public works—the departments most affected by the growth. The manager has emphasized that he wants the group to be creative, focusing on better use of existing resources and greater cooperation among departments rather than asking for more money. Now he is unhappy with the group's progress. Individual members have complained to him that the group is nowhere near producing recommendations and that members even disagree about what they have been charged to do.

The manager calls in an organizational development consultant to do some team building with the group. The consultant works with the group for a day, using various exercises and activities designed to illustrate how groups can make better decisions than individuals and to help members communicate more openly with one another. The group members' reactions to the session are mixed. Some think it was extremely valuable; others think it was fun but are not sure of its relevance; still others complain about wasting their time on "touchy-feely stuff."

Checking back a month later, the manager finds that nothing has changed. The group still is having difficulty

developing recommendations, and members are becoming increasingly frustrated with their task.

What is going on here? What problems is the group experiencing, how might it address them, and—perhaps more important—could it or the manager have prevented them? This article describes a model of group effectiveness, explains how to employ the model to diagnose and remedy specific group problems, and discusses how to use the model to support continuing group development.¹ The strength of the model lies in its depiction of a work group as a complex system whose success (or failure) depends on many variables. Frequently, managers and consultants have particular strategies that they believe will help members of a group work together effectively. For example, a manager may think that the secret is to get the right people to participate, and a consultant may claim that training all members in problem-solving skills will ensure success. Both views have some validity. However, there is no one "cure" for an ailing group—and no "vaccination" to prevent a group from having problems! Just as medical treatment varies according to the physician's diagnosis of the patient's problem, the recommendations to improve a group's effectiveness depend on the purpose of the group, the nature of its goals, and the difficulties it is experiencing. And just as good health care emphasizes prevention as well as treatment, a group that pays attention to the elements of group effectiveness early on can avoid problems later.

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Researchers have studied groups in great detail in both laboratory and field settings, but most of them merely seek to explain why groups act the way they do. Research findings offer little guidance on how groups might become more effective, although specific guidance often is precisely what those who work in groups need. The model of group effectiveness described in this article focuses on more than *understanding group behavior*; it suggests ways to *improve group functioning*.² For example, understanding that some group members typically are more oriented to the task while other members prefer to attend to group communication and decision making is not enough. To be effective, a group must spend time talking about both what it needs to do (task) and how it wants to do it (process). This model is useful both for diagnosis (determining the source of a group's problems) and intervention (improving the way the group does its work).

Scope of the Model

The group effectiveness model applies to organizational work groups, as defined by the following attributes:³

1. They are real groups, with boundaries, interdependence among members, and differentiation of members' roles. This means that it is possible to distinguish group members from nonmembers, even if membership changes over time.
2. They have one or more tasks to perform, and the group is held collectively responsible for the product.
3. They operate within an organizational context, so the group must manage relationships with other individuals and groups in a larger social system.

This definition includes many types of work groups—for example, a citizen task force making a recommendation to the county commissioners, a street-cleaning crew, and a group of employees charged with drafting a new safety policy. However, it does not include social groups, reference groups (for example, a national fraternity, a religious denomination, or a professional association), or individuals who report to the same manager but have no group tasks to perform.

Definition of Group Effectiveness

Assessing a work group's effectiveness can be tricky. Consider a group that writes a proposal for federal funding to improve children's health in a particular region of the state. Would the group's effectiveness be determined by whether the proposal was funded? What if the proposal was funded but the group had such difficulty working together that the members resolved never to collaborate again? Recognizing that effectiveness has several components, the group effectiveness model uses the following three criteria:⁴

1. The group delivers services and/or products that meet or exceed the performance standards of the people who receive and review them. It is not sufficient for a group to evaluate and be satisfied with its own work. The clients—those who receive the products or services—must decide whether the output is acceptable.
2. The group functions in a way that maintains or enhances the ability of its members to work together in the future. Many people can remember being a member of a group that burned out in the process of completing its task. That is, the group got its job done, but the effort strained relationships among members so much that they could not work together effectively anymore. Although some groups may come together for only one task, most groups must work together over time—or at least the members must work with one another in other contexts, as part of their jobs—and it is important to maintain productive relationships.
3. On balance, the group experience satisfies rather than frustrates the personal needs of group members. Most work groups are not (explicitly) concerned with meeting members' needs for personal development; they exist to accomplish a task or a set of tasks. However, people do hope to meet certain individual needs through the group experience—for example, the need for achievement or recognition. If this does not happen, they are not likely to continue their contributions to the group.

These three criteria work together, especially over time. Group effectiveness is a continuum, not an all-or-nothing phenomenon. A group may be functioning well by the first criterion (for example, the organization's customers are impressed with the speed and the ease of the new billing services) but suffering by

the second and third criteria (for example, members are blaming one another for delays in accomplishing the group's work, and people are asking to be transferred out of the department because working conditions are so tense). This model proposes that, because of the interdependence of the criteria, the quality of a group's product is likely to drop over time if all the criteria for effectiveness are not met.

Elements of the Model

Three factors contribute to a group's ability to meet all three criteria for effectiveness: organizational context, group structure, and group process.⁵ These factors and their constituent elements interact to create a complex organizational system (see Figure 1).

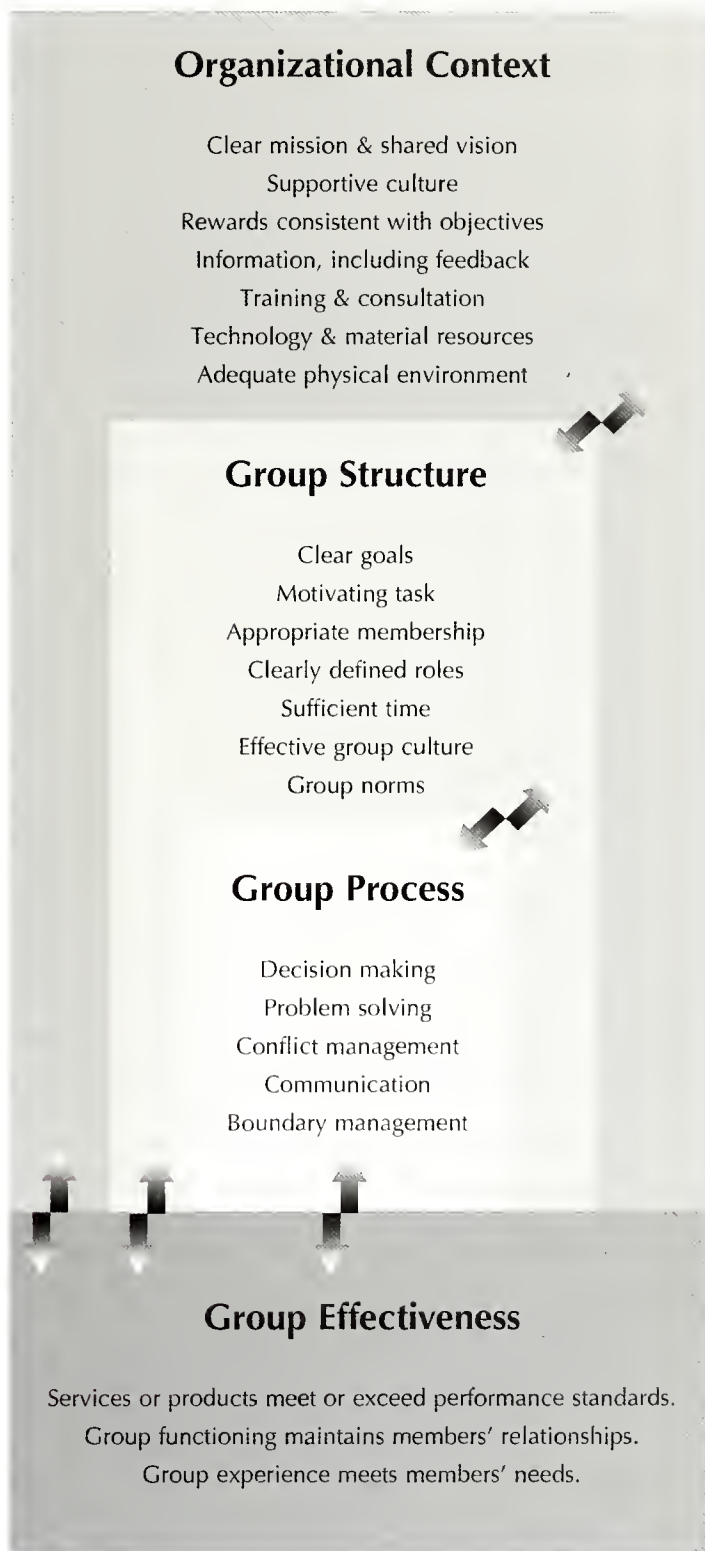
Organizational Context

Organizational context includes aspects of the larger organization that influence the group but are not within the group's control. A work group does not exist in a vacuum. Studies indicate that organizational factors have a significant effect on a group's functioning.⁶ Following are seven important elements of organizational context:

Clear mission and shared vision. This element answers the questions "Why do we exist?" (mission) and "What do we want to become?" (vision). A group must understand its purpose within the larger organization, including what the organization expects as the group's product and how the group's work contributes to the organization's mission. In the example at the beginning of this article, part of the committee's confusion about its task may result from the city government's lack of clarity about how it plans to respond to the rapidly increasing population.

Supportive culture. Organizational culture is the set of values and beliefs that employees of an organization generally share. It represents "strategies for survival" that have worked well in the past and that employees believe will work in the future.⁷ A work group often develops its own culture (see "Effective Group Culture" under "Group Structure"), but a group also must work within a supportive organizational culture to be successful. For example, an interagency task force whose members come from various state agencies may have trouble getting the information it needs to do its work if the organizational culture of the members' agencies discourages sharing information across agencies. By contrast, a

Figure 1
Group Effectiveness Model



Source: Adapted with permission from *The Skilled Facilitator: Practical Wisdom for Developing Effective Groups*, by Roger M. Schwarz (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994), 34. © 1994 by Jossey-Bass.

city team charged with creating new nonfinancial rewards for high performers may have an easy time coming up with options if the city's top management encourages creative problem solving and innovation.

Rewards consistent with objectives. The presence of this element in the model is not intended to give the impression that groups need the lure of an extrinsic reward to do their work. Indeed, much research supports the view that a significant performance challenge, not the promise of a reward, is what energizes a team.⁷ However, because rewards are a way for an organization to send a message about valued types of behaviors, it is important to determine whether the organization is using rewards to support or undermine a group's work.

There are two critical aspects to rewarding a group in a way that is consistent with the group's objectives. First, to prevent the group's placing too much emphasis on a lesser goal, the organization should be sure that it is rewarding the overall objective. For example, rewarding a group for increasing the number of housing inspections completed per week may cause the group to focus on speed when the organization actually wants more thorough inspections with fewer errors. Second, the rewards should focus on group—not individual—behavior. Rewarding individuals according to some assessment of who contributed the most to a group product can create destructive conflict and competition among group members.⁸

Information, including feedback about performance. Key information needed by a group includes what limits it must observe, what resources are available to it, who will review its product, and what standards the reviewer will use.¹⁰ For example, has the organization tried to solve this particular problem before? If so, what strategies were used, and how were the results evaluated? It is discouraging for a group to work hard on a task and then discover that its proposed solution is too expensive, does not meet the client's criteria, or does not comply with the law.

Training and consultation. Even if its members are carefully selected (see "Appropriate Membership" under "Group Structure"), a work group may not have all the skills or information it needs to do its work. For example, a team assigned to reduce the number of errors in clients' water bills may be having trouble determining the cause of the problem and need some training in basic problem-solving techniques (such as distinguishing symptoms from root causes and gathering data to test alternative solutions). Or the team may not know what license it has to change the exist-

ing billing system and may need outside assistance, such as consultation with the manager to learn the scope of its authority.

Technology and material resources. Groups use technology to transform raw materials into products or services. Material resources include tools, supplies, and raw materials the group needs to complete its product.¹¹ For example, access to a computer would greatly enhance a group's ability to compile and analyze data from a citizen satisfaction survey. Even simple materials like a newsprint pad and easel can contribute to a group's effectiveness, particularly if the members don't work in an office setting. Line maintenance crews for Florida Power & Light carry pads and easels on their trucks so that they can hold meetings with a minimum of disruption and travel time.¹²

Adequate physical environment. Work groups can meet in many locations: in a conference room, around a lunch table, under a shade tree, even in a "virtual" environment on an electronic bulletin board. However, they do need to meet somewhere, ideally in a space that balances the need for coordination and the need for privacy.¹³ As a general rule, the more members are physically separated from one another, the more effort must go into coordinating their activities. When the group does come together, it should have a setting that minimizes outside interruptions and allows it to focus on its work.

Group Structure

The structure of a group is not concrete and visible like the structure of a building. Group structure may be defined as the relatively stable characteristics of a group, such as membership, roles, and task.¹⁴ Group structure results from group members continually interacting in certain ways and thus is closely related to group process.¹⁵ Like organizational context, group structure includes seven important elements:

Clear goals. To map out how it will do its work and measure its progress, a group should have specific, unambiguous goals. This clarity is important whether the group has the authority to set its own goals or whether it receives goals from the larger organization. Organizations commonly fail to give clear direction when they create groups,¹⁶ perhaps because they are trying to get away from the hierarchical, directive style present in many organizations. Giving clear direction is not dictatorial, for only with clear guidance on or-

ganizational priorities can a group make the myriad decisions it must make in the course of its work. One way to think about the role of externally imposed goals is that a group has the right to expect direction on *what* needs to be done but also should have considerable freedom to determine *how* to do the task.

A motivating task. A group is likely to work hard on a task if the task is engaging. It may work especially hard on a task when the following conditions are present:¹⁷

1. The group task requires members to use a variety of high-level skills.
2. The group task is a whole and meaningful piece of work, with a visible outcome.
3. The outcomes of the group's work on the task have significant consequences for other people.
4. The task provides group members with substantial autonomy in deciding how they do the work. In effect, the group "owns" the task and is responsible for the work outcomes.
5. Work on the task generates regular, trustworthy feedback about how well the group is performing.

If these conditions are absent, the originator(s) of the group may need to redesign the task, rather than exhorting members of the group to "work harder."

Appropriate membership. Having appropriate membership in a work group means having both the right number of people to complete the work and the right mix of necessary skills, knowledge, and experience among the people. Several kinds of problems are a common result of people being assigned to groups for reasons other than their ability to contribute to the task (for example, because of their position in the organization or the community). This practice frequently creates a group that is larger than the task demands, increasing the coordination costs among members.¹⁸ Also, members may not have the requisite skills, or they may be so overloaded with other work (and with membership in other groups) that they cannot devote the time and the energy that the group's work requires.

Clearly defined roles. "Role behavior" refers to the recurring actions of individuals interacting with one another to produce a predictable outcome.¹⁹ Roles give order and predictability to a work setting as people "play their parts." An individual may hold different roles in different settings. For example, an employee may be a supervisor in one setting and a subordinate in another. Because roles represent a set

of expectations about an individual's behavior, group members need to understand their own roles and those of other members in order to do their work effectively. A job title alone does not fully convey a group's expectation of a role. For example, what are all the things expected of a committee chairperson? A group facilitator? A group member? The answers to these questions will vary according to the expectations of group members, so it is a good idea for group members to clarify roles when—or ideally, before—the group begins its work.

Sufficient time. A group needs two kinds of time to complete its task: performance time and process time.²⁰ The group prepares and produces its product during performance time. It reflects on how it can improve its performance during process time. Groups typically underestimate the amount of both kinds of time they need to complete their work. They give especially short shrift to process time.

A new group should allow extra process time. When members don't know one another or have never worked together before, completing a group task takes longer because members are focusing on individual as well as group needs.²¹

Effective group culture. Group culture is the set of shared values and beliefs that guide members' behavior.²² In a group with a strong culture, the members act in ways that are consistent with the group's shared values and beliefs. For example, a group that places a high priority on continuous learning will study previous attempts to perform tasks similar to its assigned one in order to analyze past mistakes and improve future performance. A strong culture can be an asset to a group if the values and beliefs are consistent with principles of group effectiveness. However, if the culture endorses values that are not conducive to effective group functioning—for example, if the group believes that top management should identify and solve all problems—a strong culture can be more of a hindrance than a help.

Group norms. Norms are expectations about how people should or should not behave, expectations that are shared by all or many group members and are closely linked to the group's culture.²³ Norms are a way to increase the predictability of group members' behavior and integrate members into the group.²⁴ Examples of group norms are having the newest member of the group take minutes of the meeting, beginning the meeting ten to fifteen minutes past the posted starting time, and waiting for the group leader to express an opinion on an issue before expressing

one's own views. Norms are often implicit rather than explicit. The quickest way to discover a group norm may be to (1) violate it or (2) ask a new member of the group what the norms are, for new members are highly attuned to how the group interacts. Like group culture, group norms do not always promote effective behavior. A group can benefit from having an explicit discussion of its existing norms and its desired norms.

Group Process

Structure includes the *what* and the *who* of a group; process is the *how*. For example, how does the group make decisions? How does it handle disagreements? How does it share information about its work with people outside the group? Group process consists of five key elements:

Decision making. A group makes many decisions in the course of its work, including how to approach its task, how to choose among alternatives, and how to decide who will be involved in making and implementing decisions. One of the most important decisions a group makes is the "meta" decision of how to make all these decisions (for example, by consensus or by majority rule). Research indicates that groups that use systematic decision-making processes are much more likely to be effective than groups that do not.²⁵ Systematic decision-making processes are disciplined ways of collecting information, evaluating alternatives, and agreeing on a course of action. Groups often find it helpful to have a facilitator assist them in learning and applying decision-making skills consistently, particularly because groups have a tendency to revert to old—and less effective—habits when confronted with tight deadlines.

Problem solving. A "problem" may be defined as a situation or a condition in need of improvement.²⁶ Problem-solving skills are closely related to decision-making skills, discussed earlier. However, problem solving usually is defined more narrowly than decision making. Although most groups would agree that they need to make decisions as part of their work, not every group sees itself as needing to solve problems, perhaps because a "problem" often is perceived as something to be remedied quickly. Like decision making, problem solving benefits from the use of a systematic process. The specific steps may vary, but the basic elements of a problem-solving process usually include identifying the problem, determining its cause, agreeing on criteria for an acceptable solution, generating

potential solutions, selecting a solution, implementing it, and evaluating the results.

Groups often encounter difficulties when they are attempting to solve problems. A common pitfall is that they begin discussing possible solutions before agreeing on the nature of the problem. Or some members of the group may still be debating the cause of the problem while others are evaluating possible courses of action to remedy the situation. Effective groups monitor their discussion to ensure that all members are focusing on the same step of the problem-solving process at the same time.

Conflict management. Different viewpoints are a fact of life for work groups: organizations use groups instead of individuals when a problem requires a mix of skills, knowledge, and experience that is not likely to reside in one person. The goal is not to get everyone to think or behave in the same way but to manage a group's differences so that members can use their diverse views to respond in creative, productive ways. As with most of the elements in the group effectiveness model, members should discuss their preferred methods for resolving conflict before a specific conflict arises, for it is more difficult to have such a discussion after people are deeply invested in a particular view or position.

Communication. Communication—exchanging information in a way that conveys meaning—is the one process that cuts across all others.²⁷ An expert in group dynamics suggests that an observer use the following questions to track some of the most important communication processes in a group: Who communicates? How often? For how long? Who communicates to whom? Who talks after whom? Who interrupts whom?²⁸

It also is important to note what people are—and are not—talking about in a group. Groups often have undiscussable issues—"important issues relevant to the group's task that members believe they cannot discuss openly in the group without negative consequences."²⁹ Undiscussable issues may include a group leader's defensive reaction when others disagree with her, or a member's failure to complete his assignments between meetings. To work together effectively, groups must learn how to discuss such issues.

Communication may be nonverbal as well as verbal—say, one group member looking around the room instead of at the speaker, or another group member leaning forward in his chair to emphasize a point. Many communication problems occur in groups because people misunderstand other members' verbal

and nonverbal messages, fail to check whether they have correctly interpreted the messages, and then respond on the basis of their untested inferences. For example, Sue may interpret Frank's pencil tapping as impatience and cut her comments short, thereby omitting valuable information from her report. By altering her behavior without checking whether her inference is correct, Sue may reduce the group's ability to complete its assignment successfully. Additionally, if she believes that Frank does not value her ideas, her relationship with him may suffer.

Communication is such an important part of a group's process that groups should try to increase their effectiveness by adopting a set of ground rules. Examples of ground rules include testing assumptions and inferences, sharing all relevant information, staying focused, and being specific.³⁰

Boundary management. All work groups exist in some type of organizational environment; therefore, one of a group's primary tasks is to manage its relationship with that environment.³¹ "Effective work groups manage their relationships with the larger organization by simultaneously differentiating themselves from and integrating themselves into the larger organization."³² Boundary management includes obtaining the resources the group needs to do its work and sharing information with others about the group's work (a particularly important activity when others in the organization receive and evaluate the group's services or products—see the first criterion under "Definition of Group Effectiveness"). This element also includes managing members' entry into and exit from the group.

Applications of the Group Effectiveness Model

The following examples illustrate how groups can use the model to diagnose their problems and devise strategies to improve their functioning.

Scenario 1 (the Opening Scenario Revisited)

In the opening scenario, a city manager has formed a committee of employees from three departments to submit recommendations on how to meet an increased demand for city services. The manager wants the group to make better use of existing resources, not ask for more money. Now he is unhappy with the group's progress. It is nowhere near producing recom-

mendations, and members even disagree about what they have been charged to do. A team-building session conducted by an organizational development consultant draws mixed reactions from the group and produces no noticeable change in its functioning.

Applying the model. The committee is unclear about both the scope of its task and the degree of its autonomy. Members are not sure whether they should assume that the current services and organizational structure will remain the same or whether they may recommend significantly changing certain services or even eliminating some departments. In addition, they do not possess the skill to analyze the financial implications of their options. Most members of the committee are not familiar with basic data-gathering techniques. Further, they are having difficulty agreeing on the current situation (that is, identifying the gap between the demand for services and the organization's ability to meet the demand) and determining how to evaluate alternatives. As a result, much of the group's discussion has consisted of members trying to convince one another why their various theories and suggestions are correct, on the basis of their own beliefs and inferences. Because only three departments are represented—planning, housing inspections, and public works—the members have not considered options involving other departments. Finally, the group is concerned that the task is too big to be completed in the six weeks given by the city manager. The members are unable to meet more than one hour per week, being swamped with regular duties.

The consultant's team-building exercises do not help the group because the group's problems are rooted in structural factors—lack of clarity about the scope of its task and its degree of autonomy—not group process. Research findings confirm that attention to group process will not improve a group's effectiveness when structure is inadequate or organizational support is lacking.³³

The committee meets with the city manager to clarify the scope of its task and its authority. The manager says that he wants the committee to consider all options, including comprehensive changes in how services are provided and work is structured. He concedes that increased funds are not completely out of the question, but he verifies that the city council is not going to increase taxes and probably will not agree to add personnel, at least not until the committee can show that it has tried other options. The manager agrees that the group members need to learn how

to gather and analyze information about service levels, and he arranges for a person from the local community college to provide training on quality-management techniques. Finally, given the ambitious charge that he has presented to the committee, he agrees to add a staff member with skills in financial analysis, extend the deadline six months, and temporarily relieve the members of some of their other job responsibilities so that they can make the committee's work a priority.

Scenario 2

The county commissioners have created a task force to investigate and recommend new ways to reach citizens through information technology (for example, a county government Web site). The task force consists of fifteen members, including representatives from the local economic development commission, the schools, a citizens "tax watch" group, and a local senior citizens group. Several local government staff, including the director of information services, also are members. The task force has met monthly for six months and is having great difficulty completing its task. Some of the members never have used a computer, while others are comfortable with information technology and spend much of the group's meeting time explaining the field to the less-experienced members. As the deadline nears, the county director of information services drafts a list of recommendations, which the task force rubber-stamps and sends on to the commissioners. Many of the members are frustrated by the experience and unhappy about how much time they have spent on the task relative to how little they have contributed to the product.

Applying the model. This task force suffers from a lack of appropriate membership in two ways: it is too large, and most of the people do not have the requisite skills or experience to be contributing members. Frequently, public-sector agencies (or in this case, boards) want to include a cross-section of the organization or the community when they are creating a group. Although broad representation is a valid interest, it must be weighed against the coordination costs incurred with each new member. Also, many members of this group lack a basic familiarity with information technology. In a group with a longer life, training and consultation can overcome this lack, but the task force cannot afford the time to bring members up to speed.

Scenario 3

A nonprofit agency that administers Head Start and numerous other programs for a two-county area has been growing rapidly. Staff are experiencing great stress and complain of not being able to manage all the issues and resources coming their way. The agency director suggests that they try Total Quality Management or some other organizational development process to help them deal with problems more effectively and work better across service-area boundaries. Some in the group feel that this would just take time away from work. They are not convinced that a problem-solving process is the right place to start.³⁴

Applying the model. When an organization is considering embarking on a major change effort, going through the group effectiveness model and discussing how current work processes affect each element can be helpful. When staff of the nonprofit agency discuss the model, one person comments that, as he sees them, the three major barriers to change in the agency cut across the three factors in group effectiveness: information (organizational context), clearly defined roles (group structure), and communication (group process). He thinks that if staff start addressing these issues, they will make significant improvements. Staff agree that they could start at several places in the group effectiveness model but feel comforted by the fact that the elements are interconnected. Regardless of where they start, they believe that they will eventually address all the elements. They decide that a problem-solving process is probably not the most important place to start. They will meet again to discuss the elements further and choose one or two priority areas to address in the coming year. In general, they say that they find working from the model incredibly freeing: developing their organization is not an either-or choice of learning a problem-solving process or continuing to work as they currently do.

Summary

The group effectiveness model described in this article is an essential tool for people who are responsible for creating work groups. It also can be valuable to anyone who participates in work groups. The elements of the model provide a checklist that managers can use to make sure groups obtain the support they need to do their work. As groups play an increasingly important role in how organizations do their work,

managers must do what they can to create the conditions for group success.

Notes

1. This group effectiveness model is outlined in Roger M. Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator: Practical Wisdom for Developing Effective Groups* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994), 20-36. The model relies extensively on two works: J. Richard Hackman, "The Design of Work Teams," in *Handbook of Organizational Behavior*, ed. Jay W. Lorsch (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1987), 315-42; and Eric Sundstrom, Kenneth P. De Meuse, and David Futrell, "Work Teams: Applications and Effectiveness," *American Psychologist* 45 (Feb. 1990): 120-31.

2. Hackman, "Design of Work Teams," provides a good summary of the descriptive research on group behavior and effectiveness. It also articulates the need for a normative model of group effectiveness.

3. J. Richard Hackman, ed., *Groups That Work (and Those That Don't)* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), 5-7; Hackman, "Design of Work Teams," 322-23.

4. See Hackman, "Design of Work Teams," 322-23; Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator*, 21-22.

5. Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator*, 22.

6. For a discussion of studies that have demonstrated the effect of organizational context on group effectiveness, see Sundstrom, De Meuse, and Futrell, "Work Teams," and Ruth Wageman, "Critical Success Factors for Creating Superb Self-Managing Teams," *Organizational Dynamics* 26 (Summer 1997): 49-61.

7. Daniel R. Denison, *Corporate Culture and Organizational Effectiveness* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1990), 2.

8. For a detailed discussion of the importance of a specific performance challenge, see Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith, *The Wisdom of Teams: Creating the High-Performance Organization* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993).

9. See Hackman, "Design of Work Teams," 325-26. For an excellent article on the power of rewards, see Steven Kerr, "On the Folly of Rewarding A While Hoping for B," *Academy of Management Journal* 18 (1975): 769-83.

10. See Hackman, "Design of Work Teams," 330.

11. Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator*, 35-36.

12. Trainer Doug Gorham uses this example in training provided by Qualtec, formerly a division of Florida Power & Light.

13. Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator*, 36.

14. Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator*, 29.

15. Floyd H. Allport describes the concept of group structure in "A Theory of Enestrucence (Event Structure Theory): Report of Progress," *American Psychologist* 22 (Jan. 1967): 1-24.

16. For a good description of the importance of giving clear direction to a team, see Susan Albers Mohrman, Susan G. Cohen, and Allan M. Mohrman, Jr., *Designing Team-Based Organizations* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995).

17. Hackman, "Design of Work Teams," 324.

18. Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator*, 30.

19. For a comprehensive discussion of roles, see Daniel Katz and Robert L. Kahn, *The Social Psychology of Organizations* (2d ed.) (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1978).

20. Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator*, 31.

21. Edgar H. Schein discusses the issues involved in group formation in *Process Consultation: Its Role in Organizational Development*, vol. 1 (2d ed.) (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1988).

22. Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator*, 31.

23. Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator*, 32.

24. Katz and Kahn, *Social Psychology*.

25. Mohrman, Cohen, and Mohrman, *Team-Based Organizations*, 251.

26. Michael R. Kelly, *Everyone's Problem Solving Handbook: Step-by-Step Solutions for Quality Improvement* (White Plains, N.Y.: Quality Resources, 1992), 155.

27. Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator*, 25.

28. Schein, *Process Consultation*, 21-27.

29. Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator*, 26.

30. For more information, see Roger M. Schwarz, "Ground Rules for Effective Groups" (rev.) (Institute of Government, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1994).

31. Deborah L. Gladstein discusses the importance of boundary management to a group's effectiveness in "Groups in Context: A Model of Task Group Effectiveness," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 29 (1984): 499-517.

32. Schwarz, *The Skilled Facilitator*, 27.

33. Hackman, *Groups That Work*, 498.

34. Special thanks to Anne Davidson for providing this example. ☐

Book Reviews

Public Participation

Involving Citizens in Community Decision Making: A Guidebook, by James L. Creighton. Program on Community Problem Solving, 1992. 223 pages. \$30.00 paperback.

Public Participation in Public Decisions: New Skills and Strategies for Public Managers, by John Clayton Thomas. Jossey-Bass, 1995. 235 pages. \$26.95 hardback.

Dealing with an Angry Public: The Mutual Gains Approach to Resolving Disputes, by Lawrence Susskind and Patrick Field. Free Press, 1996. 256 pages. \$25.00 hardback.

John B. Stephens

"I know people care about what happens in our parks, but if we have a public hearing, we'll only hear from the whiners, not from the people who like things the way they are."

"Let's form an ad hoc advisory group to make recommendations on this problem."

"Citizens only want to vent their anger; they never want to get the facts before they make up their minds."

Local government elected officials and public managers face many challenges in providing fair and accurate information to citizens and in responding effectively to the concerns of businesses, neighborhoods, and individual citizens on a variety of issues. Sometimes when they most need public input, they cannot find interested citizens. Other times, a seemingly routine decision creates a firestorm of angry people.

There are many materials and studies on public participation (for a sampling, see Carolyn Gray and Stuart Langton, *A Public Participation Bibliography*).¹ For this review I have chosen three recent, very different books

with contrasting but complementary strengths and weaknesses. I focus on what will most help public officials bolster their ability to interact effectively with citizens on policy matters.

Briefly, John Clayton Thomas's *Public Participation in Public Decisions* is the most systematic and research-based contribution. Thomas provides a very structured decision-making process for seeking and handling public input. Lawrence Susskind and Patrick Field's *Dealing with an Angry Public* presents extended case studies and applies a "mutual gains" approach to consensus decision making on principles of public participation, handling public disputes, and leadership issues. However, James L. Creighton's *Involving Citizens in Community Decision Making*² is the best resource because of its focus on local government, its artful movement from concepts to applications, and its coverage of topics of the greatest practical concern to local government officials.

A Handbook for Applying Ideas to Concerns

Involving Citizens is a well-balanced handbook for applying ideas about

public participation to specific concerns of government officials and community activists. It offers good, brief descriptions of complex topics (for example, how communities become polarized, how to define the "public" for an issue, and how to assess health and safety risks in a public forum). In addition, the guidelines come alive in medium-length case illustrations (for example, landfill siting and low-income housing policy). Creighton's guidebook is comprehensive and clear, and he keeps jargon to a minimum, promptly explaining terms as needed.

Involving Citizens contains some clear biases toward changing traditional political culture. In general, Creighton favors public participation over administrative control, innovation over tradition, and less formal exchanges over more formal decision making. On the last point, he views *Robert's Rules of Order* as assuming that adversarial positions and divisive voting are integral elements of public debate, and reinforcing them. Creighton does not propose changing every government board into an open-ended consensus-seeking group. However, he calls on elected and appointed officials to lean toward participation rather than assuming that the public will not be interested in or able to understand complex issues.

Creighton focuses on practical concerns: preparing a plan for public participation, defining the roles of managers and elected officials, and designing and conducting public meetings. Also in a practical vein, he offers nine formats for public meetings. I think that examining the different formats will help North Carolina government officials rethink the adversarial approach implicit in this state's public hearings.

Creighton devotes a full chapter to

working with advisory groups. His guidelines for the chairperson of an advisory group are good for any body in which there is shared power or at least an interest in seeking agreement among group members.

Like Susskind and Field (described later), Creighton recognizes that public participation is intimately tied to media relations, decision making, and leadership. His section on the media is well suited to the needs of local government officials. He succinctly presents guidelines for working with reporters: respect the media's professional obligations, protect your credibility, be responsive, build a relationship, and explore common interests. His analysis and recommendations have a local news orientation, and he covers better than Susskind and Field how the media judge newsworthiness and seek balance, given the limited time and expertise that reporters bring to most stories. In contrast, Susskind and Field's attention to media relations is better suited to private industry and state or federal government.

For those who enjoy and learn from flowcharts and outlines, *Involving Citizens* will be a delightful resource. Creighton's flowchart uses questions to help managers employ a six-point planning outline in their decisions on public participation.

One of the guidebook's most useful sections is how to relate concerns about public participation to authoritative decision making. Creighton explains six common stumbling blocks in changing from a more traditional, bureaucratic form of decision making to a more participatory one: too narrow a definition of the problem; government agency advocacy of a particular approach; consideration of limited alternatives; stacking of evaluation criteria; lack of time; and lack of visibility.

Finally, Creighton provides a fine summary of dealing with different per-

ceptions of risks in deliberations on public issues (for example, the health and safety risks of different standards). Through good, brief examples and discussion, he condenses a lot of complex material on the economic costs of levels of safety and on the irrational ways in which most people think about risks.

A Good Blend of Theory and Practice

Thomas's *Public Participation* is grounded in public administration theory and is the result of the author's analysis of forty-two instances of decision making on public participation. Thomas's central question is an important concern for public managers: How do I know when and how to involve the public in a decision? He presents an Effective Decision Model of Public Involvement to guide public managers in dealing with citizen input. Thomas argues that the uniqueness of his book lies in its linking theory to practice, and values to decision making. Overall, he does a good job of that.

Busy public managers would be wise to read the last chapter first: "Public Involvement and the Effective Public Manager." In it Thomas summarizes his largely academic earlier chapters and arguments in a list of twelve "dos and don'ts." His most important recommendation is that managers *anticipate* issues rather than let issues be imposed from elsewhere. Thomas's research indicates that the single largest factor in successful involvement of the public is the manager's getting ahead of the wave rather than being swamped by it. For local government administrators, this advice is easier said than done. It requires a careful balancing of deference to elected officials on political priorities with a demonstration of initiative and sensitivity to a community's way of doing things.

The book does not fulfill its title's

promise of *skills* for public managers. Thomas's flowchart for decision making is useful, but skill development requires materials and instruction beyond his book.

Among the three books, *Public Participation* reflects the most concerted effort to explain why choices about involvement of the public are particularly vexing for public managers. Thomas argues that a more educated and active citizenry, increased demands for more responsive government, and a desire for greater community control have combined to challenge traditional forms of representative government. He contends that the traditional division between "administration" and "politics" is no longer meaningful for the actual work of public managers. Thomas recognizes that managers have legitimate concerns about protecting their autonomy in order to set policies based on regulatory requirements, scientific standards, or proper administrative principles. Thomas gives greater credence than Creighton to administrators' expertise and responsibilities, which may outweigh the importance of public opinion and support for certain policies. In short, Thomas argues that public input is neither good nor bad in itself; whether or not a manager seeks it should be a function of the kind of problem to be solved or policy to be created.

Thomas's Effective Decision Model begins with four questions for public officials:

1. What are the quality requirements for this decision?
2. Do I have sufficient information?
3. Is the problem structured?
4. Is public acceptance necessary for implementation and unlikely without involvement?

Thomas does a good job of illustrating how various answers to these questions lead to different decisions on how much public input to seek, ranging

from none (he refers to this as making an "autonomous managerial decision") to some (while retaining full decision-making power). To test his model, Thomas draws on forty-two instances of decision making about public involvement, drawn from thirty cases (some involving more than one decision). Although the cases are useful, they are not always easy to follow with respect to applying the four questions.

Thomas uses three more questions to determine whether a situation calls for a greater or lesser level of public involvement:

1. Who is the relevant public?
2. Does the relevant public agree with the agency's goals?
3. Is conflict on the preferred solution likely within the relevant public?

Thomas's use of a decision-making flowchart and case studies is moderately helpful in applying these questions to specific situations.

Thomas specifically addresses differences between involving the public by only providing information to citizens and involving the public to build acceptance for a decision or a policy. He identifies advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to and techniques of giving information and building agreement. To his credit, he goes farther by examining the need for and advantages of building strong relationships with citizens in the long run. Thomas summarizes some new forms of public involvement, such as ombudsman offices; action centers (common in North America's large cities); and "coproduction," an arrangement in which government and citizen-beneficiaries of government programs share responsibility for program implementation. Although "coproduction" may sound strange, Thomas's examples are familiar to most people active in local government: public-private partnerships for education and for crime prevention. To reap the benefits of

coproduction, Thomas points out, citizens must act in certain ways (for example, in crime prevention, volunteering for a Neighborhood Watch), and government officials must support coordinated citizen efforts.

Thomas claims that his book addresses the needs of nonprofit and private-sector managers, civic leaders, citizen groups, and scholars of public management, but the book is most applicable to elected and top-level appointed local government officials. Those other audiences may find it useful to read what Thomas recommends for government leaders, but the author's primary concern is to help harried government officials use public participation effectively.

The Mutual Gains Approach

Dealing with an Angry Public builds on Susskind's prominent work on resolution of public policy disputes.⁵ In this book, Susskind and Field apply the consensual approach to broader public relations, management, and leadership issues. The centerpiece of the book is six principles that constitute a mutual gains approach to resolving public controversies (pages 37-38):

1. Acknowledge the concerns of the other side.
2. Encourage joint fact finding.
3. Offer contingent commitments to minimize impacts if they do occur; promise to compensate for knowable, but unintended, negative impacts.
4. Accept responsibility, admit mistakes, and share power.
5. Act in a trustworthy fashion at all times.
6. Focus on building long-term relationships.

Addressing government officials and business leaders, Susskind and Field apply the principles to diverse situations of citizen and consumer anger. They examine two infamous acci-

dents (the malfunction at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant in Pennsylvania and the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska). They also present cases of purported public health risks (silicon breast implants and the use of the alar pesticide on apples) and value conflicts (medical experimentation on animals and a public utility-Indian confrontation in Canada) that business and government officials face. However, they discuss in detail only one conflict involving local government officials: environmental hazards at a former plastics plant being redeveloped as a shopping mall.

Susskind and Field do a fine job of contrasting traditional responses with mutual gains responses as a conflict develops. However, the book's dearth of examples of conflicts common to local government is surprising, given that for several years Susskind and his colleagues have presented seminars on dealing with an angry public to a total of 1,500 public- and private-sector managers. Susskind and Field's contribution would have been stronger if it had offered examples of how workshop participants had applied the mutual gains precepts to more nuts-and-bolts issues in local government (land use, social services, and so forth) rather than to so many medical and large-scale environmental disputes.

The authors of *Dealing with an Angry Public* wisely recognize that "managing" the public has implications for media relations and for organizational leadership in general. They address common fallacies about the media. They argue that, despite the attention given to putting a favorable spin on an event, almost every effort at manipulation will eventually cost more than any short-term gain. Susskind and Field believe that looking to the media's basic interest—that is, timely, reliable information—can make a mutual gains approach work in media relations. Specifically the authors advise, "Tell what

you know and what you don't know" (that is, never speculate or guess); give your spokespeople "the information and authority to state their views openly"; and "convince the media they have an educative role" (pages 205-13). On the last point, the authors note some examples of "public journalism"—instances in which the media have focused on reporting potential solutions, not just giving extravagant publicity to a problem or a scandal.

Ultimately, though, Susskind and Field fail in their attempt to apply the mutual gains approach to media relations. The main reason is that they do not adequately address the problem of how news is currently defined. Problems, conflict, pain, injustice, and, of course, violence grab the headlines. Pleasant stories, although not ignored, are usually not page-one material. Susskind and Field argue that the media can do more, and *should* do more because the public is angry at them too! However, most events deemed newsworthy involve torment and confrontation. Creighton's guidebook is better focused on the day-to-day concerns of local media and government.

In their final chapter, Susskind and Field present a vision of "principled leadership" consistent with the mutual gains approach. The authors offer clear examples, but they do not present their general guidelines—be honest, do the right thing, and inspire trust—effectively. They stress that mutual gains leaders have to be willing to share information and truly to listen well. They say that mutual gains leaders "are likely to value" nine principles, but the principles are so general as to be like cotton candy—sweet and unfulfilling (for example, "integrity as much as success, truth as well as efficacy, both emotion and reason"—page 232). The authors deem Peter Johnson's tenure as director of the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) a long-term success in dealing

with public opponents and complex disputes. Alas, even in the BPA example, Susskind and Field barely touch on the important ramifications of Johnson's leadership and organizational values.

Public Participation and Partisan Politics

My main criticism of all three books is the authors' inability to say straightforwardly that public participation almost always is intertwined with partisan politics. Creighton talks about "the elected officials' role," Thomas about "anticipating issues," and Susskind and Field about leadership—all of which collide with partisan concerns of elections, power, and control. The next frontier for theoretical and practical literature on public participation is how facilitative, "shared power" public involvement processes can affect underlying partisan contests.

In brief, much of the concern about public participation stems from the decline of political parties as mechanisms to aggregate interests into clear agendas and choices at election time; citizen alienation from and distrust of government; and the ways in which new interest groups challenge traditional means of control. Behind these symptoms lie trends toward greater influence by women, minorities, environmental activists, and conservative Christian groups. These trends are shifting some power away from the predominately male, white, secular, and corporate networks of influence.

The biggest challenge for effective, local civic leaders (elected and volunteer) is how to strengthen intermediate groups and processes to supplement partisan win-lose activism. In many instances, neighborhood groups, chambers of commerce, and other voluntary organizations are important intermediaries for turning individuals' needs and


ideas into goals and policies supported by a community consensus. At the juncture of "partisan advantage" and "the common good," I see some interesting work coming through innovative mixtures of strategic planning and visioning. Those processes bring people together in a new group to try to outline a community's future. The long-range challenge is how to make planning sufficiently concrete—through coordinated government, business, religious, and nonprofit work—to implement a community's vision.

In summary, Creighton, Thomas, and Susskind and Field offer contrasting but, for the most part, complementary approaches to one of the most pressing difficulties faced by elected local officials and top government administrators: beyond elections, how can people be more involved in their government? Creighton has written the best, most immediately usable book for local government officials. Thomas, and Susskind and Field, provide analyses and guidance that fill out the picture.

Notes

1. Gray and Langton prepared the bibliography in 1995 for the International Association for Public Participation (IAPP). It can be ordered from IAPP, P.O. Box 10146, Alexandria, VA 22310, phone (800) 644-4273, fax (703) 971-0006, e-mail address iap2hq@pin.org.

2. The book can be ordered from the Program on Community Problem Solving, 915 Fifteenth Street NW, Suite 601, Washington, DC 20004, phone (202) 783-2961, fax (202) 347-2161, e-mail address depeps@aol.com.

3. For example, see Lawrence Susskind and Jeffrey Cruickshank, *Breaking the Impasse: Consensual Approaches to Resolving Public Disputes* (New York: Basic Books, 1987). 

At the Institute

Terry Sanford's Early Ties to the Institute of Government

In 1941 Albert Coates, the Institute of Government's founder and first director, hired two third-year law students with money from his own salary. The Institute was then a year shy of becoming part of the university, and Coates was relying partly on students to keep his privately funded school for public officials alive.

One of those law students was Terry Sanford. He worked at the Institute initially for a year, then for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, before enlisting in the army as a combat paratrooper.

After the war Sanford returned to the Institute. He promptly located barracks formerly occupied by U.S. Army soldiers, to be used by the Institute's schools for State Highway Patrol officers, police, and sheriffs. By this time a faculty member, Sanford began teaching in these and other Institute programs.

In 1947 the North Carolina Police Executives Association made Sanford an honorary member in recognition of his teaching "for the benefit of all law enforcement officers of North Carolina." In that same year, Sanford published a small guidebook from lecture notes, called *The Law Relating to Fingerprints*.

It was not long, however, before Sanford's political aspirations necessitated a second break from the Institute.

"Mr. Sanford was very fond of Mr. Coates, and there was mutual respect, but if you wanted to go into politics, the Institute was not an appropriate place," said Henry Lewis, former direc-



Student counselors for the 1941 Boys State Program, conducted by the Institute of Government. Sanford is standing in the middle of the back row.



Terry Sanford in 1942

tor of the Institute, who worked with Sanford in the late 1940s.

Sanford left in 1948 to start a law firm and to launch a political career, which eventually included serving as state senator (1953-55), governor (1961-65), and U.S. senator (1987-93).

As a client, however, Sanford still relied on the Institute's assistance.

During his governorship, Sanford asked his former colleagues to help with several initiatives. In 1965, to ensure the survival of a state government intern program for college students that he had started in 1962, he proposed that the Institute take over its

administration. The Institute did so and has continued the program, this summer placing twenty-one interns in various government offices, primarily in Raleigh.

Also during his governorship, Sanford hired George Esser, an Institute faculty member of seventeen years, to direct the North Carolina Fund. A five-year catalyst that changed the face of philanthropy in North Carolina, the fund served as a national model in fighting poverty.

Sanford asked faculty member John Sanders to serve as secretary to the commission that proposed the current community college system and other changes in higher education in the state. Other faculty members helped the governor in various ways in the early 1960s, from establishing a Training Center on Delinquency and Youth Crime to producing a report on automobile accidents for a safety-conscious North Carolina General Assembly.

"He had a good eye for talent," said Sanders. "He surrounded himself with creative, thoughtful people who came up with fresh new ideas. He could put the right people in the right places and put many of their ideas into effect. The School of the Arts is the best example of that approach."

—Jennifer Litzen Hobbs

At the Institute

Whisnant Joins Institute Faculty

Richard B. Whisnant, a native of Winston-Salem, joined the Institute of Government faculty in January as an associate professor of public law and government, focusing on environmental law. Whisnant comes to the Institute from the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, where he served as general counsel for five years.

"Environmental law is complex and getting more so," Whisnant said. "Environmental standards increasingly depend on the unique features of different places. And each level of government adds its own variations. Sensing where the law is going next is almost as important as knowing its present contours."

Whisnant's current projects include teaching in several Institute courses and writing an article for *Popular Government* to help explain the new "brownfields" statutes—laws dealing with cleanup of contaminated property to encourage urban redevelopment.

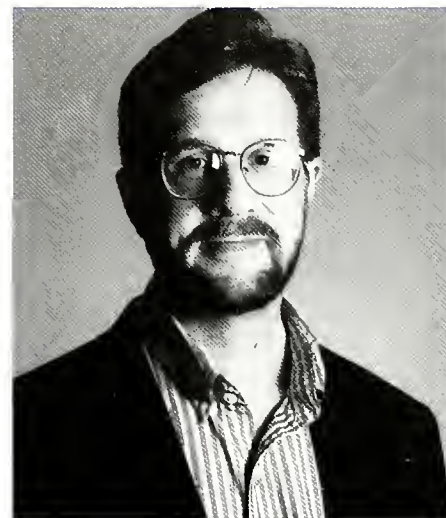
Whisnant said his overall objective is to make environmental law more understandable "so that the whole system can work better." He plans to use

new electronic tools such as digital text, graphics, audio, and video to help explain environmental laws to a wider audience. Another goal is to connect Institute clients to university colleagues working on environmentally related issues in such fields as law, public health, science, and public policy.

An alumnus of UNC-CH at the bachelor's level, Whisnant continued his education at Harvard University, earning a master's degree in public policy and a law degree with distinction. At Harvard Law School, he served as an editor of the *Harvard Law Review*. One of his responsibilities in that role was to oversee the journal's review of toxic waste litigation.

Whisnant's early work experiences broadened his awareness of corporate and public environmental interests. As a law student, he served a clerkship with the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund in Juneau, Alaska, and Washington, D.C. Then, as a new graduate, he advised business clients of the environmental practice group at Robinson, Bradshaw & Hinson, a law firm in Charlotte.

"I am now at a point in my career where I can understand the perspectives of local governments, private corporations, regulatory agencies, and environmental interest groups because



Jim Webb

Richard B. Whisnant

I have represented all these points of view," Whisnant noted. "I am delighted to have the opportunity to communicate this understanding as I teach, research, write, and counsel at the Institute."

"Richard brings excellent experience to the Institute," said Michael R. Smith, Institute director. "His work as general counsel involved him in nearly all the environmental issues facing North Carolina governments. As a faculty member, he will help explain and give advice on the state's environmental laws with a high level of understanding and expertise."

—Jennifer Litzen Hobbs



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The main entry to the Knapp Building (below) will become the west wing of the new forecourt. The architect's drawing (left) shows the new entrance, which will face north. Preparation of the foundations for the expansion has begun with the excavation of many tons of solid rock (bottom).

A Note from the Director

Renovation and Expansion of Knapp Building Under Way

I am delighted to report that major renovation and expansion of the Institute's long-time home, the Joseph Palmer Knapp Building, began in May. It will continue until late 2000 (see calendar below).

The help of the Institute's clients, friends, and supporters was invaluable in securing more than half of the \$16.1 million in legislative funding for the construction project. The General Assembly committed \$5.5 million last fall and is expected to appropriate the balance during the 1998 legislative session.

During construction, parking will be available only at the visitors' lot on Highway 54. Because of this and other inconveniences of construction, the Institute will hold nearly all its programs at other sites. Faculty and staff will be out of the building more frequently and may be harder to reach. However, the Institute is committed to maintaining the highest-quality teaching, consulting, and writing during this time. In fact, the construction offers the Institute an opportunity to take programs closer to you.

For more information about the project, contact Pat Langelier, associate director for planning and operations, (919) 962-8036; or Tom Thornburg, associate director for programs (919) 966-4377; or visit the Institute's Web page at <http://ncinfo.iog.unc.edu>. The Institute welcomes your suggestions about good, inexpensive sites around the state for programs. Please communicate them to the IOG faculty or staff with whom you work, or contact Tom Thornburg at the number given above.

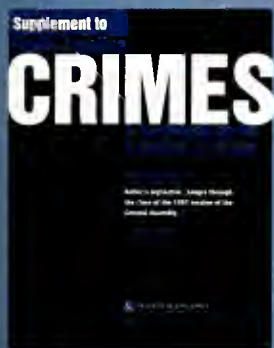
Michael Smith
Michael Smith



Construction Calendar

May–October 1998	Site work and underground utilities
November 1998–November 1999	Construction of new wings of Knapp Building
December 1999	Move of all IOG employees into new wings so that renovation of old building can begin
January–August 2000	Renovation of old building
September 2000	Occupation of new and renovated Knapp Building

Off the Press



Supplement to North Carolina Crimes: A Guidebook on the Elements of Crime Fourth Edition

1998

Edited by Robert L. Farb

\$10.00*

Explains statutory revisions of offenses discussed in the fourth edition, appellate court cases that change or clarify the case law concerning those offenses, and significant new statutory offenses. Headings and page number references to the fourth edition are provided throughout so that the reader may readily find the corresponding topics in the fourth edition. Contains a descriptive-word index and directory of statutes.

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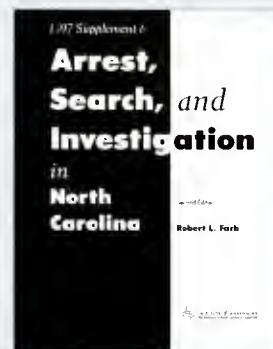
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1997 Supplement to Arrest, Search, and Investigation in North Carolina

Robert L. Farb

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Explains new legislation and appellate cases since publication of the second edition of *Arrest, Search, and Investigation in North Carolina*. Subheads and page cross-references allow readers to refer to the second edition as needed.



Wildlife and Boating Regulation: Local Legislation

Spring 1998

Compiled by Ben F. Loeb, Jr.

Please call for price information.

Summarizes local acts governing wildlife and boating regulations. The material is organized alphabetically by county in a loose-leaf format.



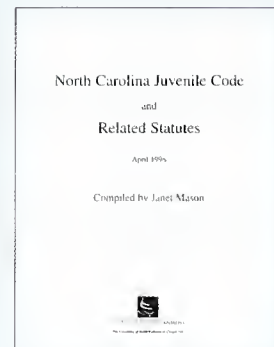
North Carolina Juvenile Code and Related Statutes

April 1998

Compiled by Janet Mason

\$25.00*

Establishes the district court's jurisdiction over delinquent, undisciplined, dependent, and abused and neglected juveniles. Reflects actions of the North Carolina General Assembly through the end of the 1997 session.



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. . . and at the same time
to preserve the form and spirit of
popular government . . .

—James Madison
The Federalist, No. 10

