

Crime and Public Safety: Insights from Community-Level Perspectives on Social Capital

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Research has long shown that crimes involving interpersonal violence are more frequent in socially and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. Drawing on the concept of social capital, recent work has attempted to unpack why this is so and what might be done to improve the level of safety in poor communities. In this chapter, I assess the state of current knowledge on the relevance of social capital to the known facts about crime and public safety, including theoretical formulations on what social capital means at the neighborhood level, criticisms of the concept, and proposed revisions. I then review research attempting to measure key aspects of social capital and related constructs such as informal social control, collective efficacy, institutional support, and intergenerational ties. I pay special attention to the role of local institutions in fostering public safety, especially the integration of formal institutions of social control like the police with informal actions by community residents. Finally, I discuss some promising research and intervention efforts that attempt to put social capital to work in reducing crime and disorder.¹

FACTS ON CRIME AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The first thing to know about predatory crimes is that they are disproportionately concentrated geographically.² Earlier, in the last century, Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay (1969 [1942]) demonstrated that high rates of delinquency persisted in the same areas over many years, regardless of population turnover. More than any other, this finding led them to question highly individualistic explanations of delinquency and to focus on the processes by which criminal patterns of behavior were transmitted across generations in areas of poverty, instability, and weak social controls (see also Bursik 1988). To this day, research has demonstrated that crimes are not randomly distributed in space. Rather, they are disproportionately concentrated

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in certain neighborhoods and "places" (for example, taverns and parking lots). Ecologically oriented criminologists have dubbed these areas "hot spots" of predatory crime (Sherman, Gartin, and Buerger 1989; Sherman 1995).

It follows that the goal of community-level research is not to explain individual involvement in criminal behavior, but to identify characteristics of neighborhoods and places that lead to high rates of crime.³ The neighborhood-level perspective that I explicate heeds this goal and in so doing emphasizes rates of crime *events* more than the production of offenders. The "routine activities" perspective in criminology (Cohen and Felson 1979) provides the insight that predatory crime requires the intersection in time and space of three elements—motivated offenders, suitable targets, and the absence of capable guardians to prevent the event. The underappreciated lessons from this perspective are that a motivated offender is not sufficient to produce a crime and that illegal activities feed on the spatial and temporal structure of routine legal activities (transportation, work, shopping, family household configuration). Routine-activities models thus train an analytic eye on the explanation of crime events, assuming a pool of motivated offenders. This approach may seem like a radical departure for those accustomed to thinking about individual offenders, but it makes sense when operating at the level of the community. Indeed, it is logically possible to have no variation across neighborhoods in the prevalence of offenders but a high concentration of the manifestations of their behavior (crime events) in a few neighborhoods (for example, because of low social control or opportunities).

I focus for the rest of this chapter on an *event-based, neighborhood-level perspective* on crime and public safety. I take seriously, in other words, how neighborhoods fare as *units of control, guardianship, and socialization* over their own public spaces with respect to crime. The unit of analysis becomes the neighborhood, and the phenomenon of interest the crime events within its purview. The policy implication, to be explored later, is that we can have some influence over the incidence of crime without necessarily changing the propensity of offenders (see also Stark 1987). From a sociological view, I would add that we should not be solely concerned with questions about individuals, such as whether it was Sally or Joe who committed a criminal act, but with the distribution of acts. Individuals, we should remind ourselves, are replaceable.

Defining Local Community

It is useful to begin by considering how neighborhoods have been defined for the purposes of empirical research. A traditional and well-worn definition of neighborhood is an ecological subsection of a larger community—a collection of people and institutions occupying a spatially defined area that is conditioned by a set of ecological, cultural, and political forces (Park 1916, 147–54). Robert Park claimed that the neighborhood was the *basis of social and political organization*, although not in a formal sense. He overstated the cultural and political distinctiveness of residential enclaves, but he recognized that neighborhoods are ecological units nested within

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For example, most cities contain *local community* or *city planning* areas that have reasonable ecological integrity. Although large, these areas often have well-known names and borders, such as freeways, parks, and major streets. Chicago, the site of much neighborhood research, has seventy-seven local community areas (averaging about forty thousand residents) that were designed to correspond to socially meaningful and natural geographic boundaries. Some boundaries have undergone change over time, but these areas are widely recognized by administrative agencies and local institutions. *Census tracts* refer to smaller and more socially homogeneous areas of roughly three thousand to five thousand residents; their boundaries are also usually drawn to take into account major streets, parks, and other geographical features. A third and even smaller area approximating the layperson's concept of a neighborhood is the *block group*—a set of blocks with approximately one thousand residents. Although each of these ecological units of analysis has been used successfully in empirical research, it remains the case that administratively defined neighborhoods offer imperfect and often artificial boundaries.

NEIGHBORHOOD DIFFERENTIATION AND CRIME RATES

After a hiatus in ecological research during the middle of the twentieth century, the past several decades have witnessed a sharp increase in research on variations in urban crime rates.⁴ Although many factors have been studied, the following stand out on theoretical and empirical grounds.

Poverty, Inequality, and Residential Instability

Neighborhood-based studies have always been motivated by the concentration of violent crime in areas characterized by poverty and economic inequality. The majority of studies in recent years have attempted to estimate the explanatory role of economic structure independent of related factors such as population composition. Overall, the results are mixed: some studies show a direct relationship between poverty and violence, whereas others show a weak or insignificant independent relationship (Sampson and Lauritsen 1994). Some evidence also suggests that the effect of poverty is conditional on neighborhood instability. For example, Douglas Smith and Roger Jarjoura (1988) discovered a significant interaction between mobility and low income in explaining violence across fifty-seven neighborhoods in three cities. Mobility was positively associated with violent crime in poorer neighborhoods but not in more affluent areas. They concluded that communities characterized by both rapid population turnover and high levels of poverty have significantly higher violent crime rates than either mobile areas that are more affluent or poor areas that are stable.

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Consistent with this finding, one of the fundamental claims made by Shaw and McKay (1969 [1942]) was that population turnover had negative consequences for the social control of delinquency. A high rate of mobility, especially in areas of decreasing population, was inferred to increase institutional disruption and weaken community controls. The research on mobility is not as extensive as that on economic status, but it has been revealing. Richard Block's (1979, 50) study of Chicago revealed large negative correlations between residential stability and the violent crimes of homicide, robbery, and aggravated assault. Nationally representative victimization data also show that residential mobility has significant positive effects on rates of violent crime (Sampson 1985). After adjusting for other neighborhood-level factors, rates of violent victimization for residents of high-mobility neighborhoods are at least double those for residents in low-mobility areas.

Ralph Taylor and Jeanette Covington's (1988) study of poverty, instability, and violent crime (murder and aggravated assault) paints a similar picture. They examined ecological changes in economic status and family status for 277 Baltimore neighborhoods in the period 1970 to 1980. These authors hypothesized that neighborhoods experiencing declines in relative economic status and stability should experience increases in violence (561). In support of this notion, they found that the increasing entrenchment of urban poverty among disadvantaged minority areas was linked to increases in violence. Especially in neighborhood contexts of poverty, then, residential instability appears to have important consequences for violence.

Heterogeneity and Racial Composition

Although race-ethnic heterogeneity has been accorded a central role in ecological theory (see, for example, Kornhauser 1978), rates of interpersonal violence are generally higher in predominantly black and foreign-born areas than in areas of maximum ethnic heterogeneity. For example, Shaw and McKay's early research (1969 [1942], 155) showed that the delinquency rate in areas with over 70 percent black and foreign-born was more than double the rate in more heterogeneous areas (for example, 50 to 59 percent). Later research on violence has thus tended to focus on racial isolation and segregation. A consistent finding has been that the percentage of blacks in a neighborhood is positively correlated with rates of violence. It is questionable, however, whether there is an *independent* relationship of racial composition with rates of violence, especially since in American cities the percentage of blacks in a neighborhood is strongly related ecologically to the concentration of poverty (Wilson 1987; Land, McCall, and Cohen 1990). Several studies find a sharply attenuated effect of racial composition on rates of violence once family structure and socioeconomic factors are accounted for (Sampson and Lauritsen 1994). Others have found that the percentage of black residents is so strongly associated with poverty that it forms part of an ecologically valid dimension of *concentrated disadvantage* (Land et al. 1990). By contrast, the concentration of Latino Americans is separable from a poverty dimension and is positively, although modestly, related to rates of crime and violence (Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls 1997).

Housing and Pop

Recent research has found that the percentage of single-family and strong predicted in San Diego. Land area in single-family households also has increased. As Roncek (1990) notes, the relatively large in population density and apartment housing are common living space in urban areas. Studies concerned for them report a significant increase in population per square mile) and

Family Structure

The community-level effects are largely ignored in the literature. Shaw and McKay (1969) found a consistent pattern has been found of violence and broken families (Land et al. 1990; Saegert et al. 1990). Single-headed families, like those with poverty and has of concentrated disadvantage

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Although the empirical research on neighborhood-level effects is the most important question, the mechanisms are the mechanisms that connect concentrated poverty, family structure, to higher rates of violence. The questions that studies have asked those working in the field, and, relatedly, the research

Community social capital and community structure are effective social controls

Housing and Population Density

Recent research has highlighted the role that the physical structure and density of housing may play in understanding patterns of violent crime. Dennis Roncek (1981) found that the percentage of units in multi-unit housing structures was a consistent and strong predictor of block-level variations in violent crime in Cleveland and San Diego. Land area in acres, population size, and the percentage of single-individual households also had significant effects on violence, despite age and race composition. As Roncek (1981, 88) summarizes: "The most dangerous city blocks are relatively large in population and area with high concentrations of primary individuals and apartment housing." He argues that as the number of households sharing common living space increases, residents are less able to recognize their neighbors, to be concerned for them, or to engage in guardianship behaviors (88). Relatedly, several studies report a significant association between population concentration (persons per square mile) and violent crime net of social and economic variables.

Family Structure

The community-level association between family structure and rates of crime, largely ignored in the early ecological research on delinquency exemplified by Shaw and McKay (1969 [1942]), has been the subject of many studies of late. A consistent pattern has emerged: there is a large and positive relationship between rates of violence and both the percentage of female-headed families and divorce rates (Land et al. 1990; Sampson and Lauritsen 1994). However, the percentage of female-headed families, like the percentage of black residents, is strongly correlated with poverty and has often been conceptualized as part of an underlying construct of concentrated disadvantage (Sampson et al. 1997).

THEORIES OF COMMUNITY SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Although the empirical evidence summarized earlier points to a number of neighborhood-level correlates of crime, it does not answer what is potentially the most important question. Namely, *why* does local community structure matter? What are the mechanisms and social processes that help explain why factors such as concentrated poverty, family disruption, residential mobility, and racial segregation lead to higher rates of violence? How do we measure community processes? It is to these questions that students of crime have increasingly turned their attention, especially those working in the classic Chicago-school tradition of social disorganization theory and, relatedly, the more recent but conceptually linked social capital paradigm.

Community social disorganization has been conceptualized as the inability of a community structure to realize the common values of its residents and maintain effective social controls (Kornhauser 1978; Bursik 1988; Sampson and Groves 1989).

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Social control refers to the capacity of a social unit to regulate itself according to desired principles—to realize *collective*, as opposed to forced, goals (Janowitz 1975, 82, 87). This conception is similar to Charles Tilly's (1973) definition of collective action—the application of a community's pooled resources to common ends. Common ends include the desire of community residents to live in safe environments free of predatory crime and in neighborhoods characterized by economic sufficiency, efficacious schools, adequate housing, and a healthy environment for children. The capacity to achieve such goals is linked to both informal role relationships established for other purposes and more formal, purposive efforts to achieve social regulation through institutional means (Kornhauser 1978).

Contrary to what is sometimes inferred, a social-control framework does not require population or cultural homogeneity. Diverse populations can agree on common goals, such as safety for children. Yet social conflicts can and do rend communities along the lines of economic resources, race, political empowerment, and the manner in which criminal justice agents control crime. It is around the distribution of resources and power, in other words, that conflict usually emerges, not the content of core values (Kornhauser 1978). According to Philip Selznick (1992, 369), the goal of community is therefore the reconciliation of partial with general perspectives on the common good. This conception of social control allows the analyst to problematize the internal homogeneity of a community and yet still focus on the variable forms of social organization, both formal and informal. Moreover, I focus on variations in social organization across ecological units of analysis rather than elevating solidarity or identity to the major definitional criteria. Like Tilly (1973, 212), that is, I "choose to make territoriality define communities and to leave the extent of solidarity problematic." In this framework, dimensions of local social organization are analytically separable not only from sources of variation (for example, racial segregation, concentrated poverty, instability) but also from possible social outcomes.

Networks, Social Capital, and Collective Efficacy

The social-control approach to community is related to what John Kasarda and Morris Janowitz (1974, 329) call the "systemic" model—a view of the local community as a complex system of friendship and kinship networks and formal and informal associational ties rooted in family life, ongoing socialization processes, and local institutions. The systemic dimensions of community social organization include the prevalence, interdependence, and overlapping nature of social networks (for example, the density of acquaintanceship; intergenerational ties; network overlap), local participation in formal and voluntary organizations, and the span of collective attention that the community directs toward local problems (Sampson and Groves 1989).

The systemic model of social control is compatible with recent formulations of social capital.⁵ As elaborated in this volume, social capital is defined largely by its functions—it is created when the structure of relations among persons facilitates action, "making possible the achievements of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible" (Coleman 1988, 98). By contrast, physical capital is embodied in

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observable material form, and human capital is embodied in the skills and knowledge acquired by an individual. Social capital is less tangible, for it is a social good embodied in the relations between persons and positions (Coleman 1990, 304). Robert Putnam (1993, 36) defines social capital even more broadly as "features of social organization, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit." Whatever the specific formulation, social capital is not an attribute of individuals but rather a property of the structure of social organization (Coleman 1990; Bourdieu 1986).

The connection of social disorganization and control theory with social capital is thus clear: local communities high in social capital are better able to realize common values and maintain the social controls that foster public safety. For example, neighborhoods characterized by an extensive set of interlocking social networks and voluntary associations are facilitated in the informal social control of public spaces. The fact that juveniles commit much crime means that intergenerational networks are critical. When parents know the parents of their children's friends, they can observe the child's actions in different circumstances, talk to each other about the child, compare notes, and establish norms (Coleman 1988). Such intergenerational closure of local networks provides the parents and children with social capital of a collective nature. One can extend this model to closure among social networks involving parents and teachers, religious and recreational leaders, businesses that serve youth, and perhaps even juvenile court personnel (Sampson et al. 1999; Sampson 1999).

Social networks and closure are not sufficient, however, to understand local communities. Networks are differentially invoked, and dense, tight-knit networks may impede social organization if they are isolated or weakly linked to collective expectations for action. At the neighborhood level, the willingness of local residents to intervene on behalf of public safety depends in large part on conditions of mutual trust and shared expectations among residents. In particular, one is unlikely to intervene in a neighborhood context where the rules are unclear and people mistrust or fear one another. It is the linkage of mutual trust and the shared willingness to intervene for the common good that defines the neighborhood context of what my colleagues and I have termed *collective efficacy* (Sampson et al. 1997). Just as individuals vary in their capacity for efficacious action, so too do neighborhoods vary in their capacity to achieve common goals. Moreover, just as self-efficacy is situated rather than global (one has self-efficacy relative to a particular task or type of task), neighborhood efficacy exists relative to collective tasks such as maintaining public order.

I thus view social capital as referring to the resources or potential inherent in social networks, whereas collective efficacy is a task-specific construct that refers to shared expectations and mutual engagement by residents in local social control (Sampson et al. 1999). Moving away from a focus on private ties, the term *collective efficacy* is meant to signify an emphasis on shared beliefs in a neighborhood's conjoint capability for action to achieve an intended effect, and hence an active sense of engagement on the part of residents. As Albert Bandura (1997) argues, the meaning of efficacy is captured in expectations about the exercise of control that elevate the "agentic" aspect of social life over a perspective centered on the accumulation of "stocks" of social resources. This conception of collective efficacy is consistent

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with the redefinition of social capital by Alejandro Portes and Julia Sensenbrenner (1993, 1323) in terms of "expectations for action within a collectivity."

Institutions and Public Control

A systemic-based model of social capital and collective efficacy should not ignore institutions, nor should it overlook the wider political environment in which local communities are embedded. Many a community exhibits intense private ties (for example, among friends and kin) and yet still lacks the institutional capacity to achieve social control (Hunter 1985). The institutional component of social capital is the resource stock of neighborhood organizations and their linkages with other organizations, both within and outside the community. Ruth Kornhauser (1978, 79) argues that when the horizontal links between institutions within a community are weak, the capacity to defend local interests is weakened.

Vertical integration is potentially more important. Robert Bursik and Harold Grasmick (1993) highlight the importance of *public control*, defined as the capacity of local community organizations to obtain extralocal resources (such as police and fire services, or block grants) that help sustain neighborhood social stability and local controls. Albert Hunter (1985) identifies the dilemma of public control in a civil society. The problem is that public control is provided mainly by institutions of the state, and we have seen a secular decline in public (citizenship) obligations in society accompanied by an increase in civil (individual) rights. This imbalance of collective obligations and individual rights undermines social control and, by implication, social capital. According to Hunter, local communities must thus work together with forces of public control to achieve social order, principally through an interdependence between private (family), parochial (neighborhood), and public (state) institutions such as the police and schools.

Metropolitan-Wide and Spatial Inequality

Research on the political economy of American cities has shown that structural differentiation—related to vertical integration—is shaped, both directly and indirectly, by the extralocal decisions of public officials and businesses. For example, the decline and destabilization of many central-city neighborhoods have been facilitated not only by individual preferences, as manifested in voluntary migration patterns, but by government decisions on public housing that concentrate the poor, incentives for suburban sprawl in the form of tax breaks for developers and private mortgage assistance, highway construction, economic disinvestment in central cities, and haphazard zoning on land use (Logan and Molotch 1987; Massey and Denton 1993).

The embeddedness of neighborhoods within the larger system of citywide spatial dynamics is equally relevant (Sampson et al. 1999). Recent research on population change shows that population abandonment is driven as much by spatial diffusion processes (for example, changes in proximity to violent crime) as by the internal char-

acteristics of neighborhoods. Decisions are often made in response to what is happening in the neighborhood relative to the relative local characteristics. Spatially, it is more likely, mainly from the perspective of the artificial boundaries of the neighborhood level perspective on neighborhoods and the importance of spatial characteristics to areas high in collective characteristics.

ASSESSING SOCIAL CAPITAL

A new generation of researchers is beginning to examine the community level of social capital just noted. I provide a review of the literature on public safety, especially social capital to structural violence.

Ralph Taylor, Stephen J. Morenoff, and I examined the role of social capital in violent crime (Taylor et al. 2001) in Baltimore. Using a block-level measure of social capital, we found that block-level measures of social capital were associated with lower rates of violent crime. This finding is consistent with the theory that social capital is a resource that can be used to control public space. A similar pattern emerged in a survey-based study of the mid-1980s. Although the significant negative relationship between social capital and rates of organization was not statistically significant.

Drawing on data from the Project on the Inner City in Groves and I (Sampson et al. 1999) supervised teenage pregnancy and violence. Significant negative participation by residents in stranger violence. Community organization were shown to be associated with higher status, residential mobility, and higher rates of

acteristics of neighborhoods (Morenoff and Sampson 1997). In particular, housing decisions are often made by assessing the quality of neighborhoods relative to what is happening in surrounding areas. Parents with young children appear quite sensitive to the relative location of neighborhoods and schools in addition to their internal characteristics. Spatial diffusion processes for dimensions of social capital are even more likely, mainly because social networks and exchange processes unfold across the artificial boundaries of analytically defined neighborhoods. A neighborhood-level perspective on crime cannot afford to ignore the relative geographic position of neighborhoods and how that bears on internal dimensions of social capital. The importance of spatial externalities is shown by the finding that ecological proximity to areas high in collective efficacy bestows an advantage above and beyond the structural characteristics of a given neighborhood (Sampson et al. 1999).

ASSESSING SOCIAL CAPITAL AND COLLECTIVE EFFICACY

A new generation of research has emerged in the last fifteen years that attempts to examine the community-level dimensions of social capital and collective efficacy just noted. I provide a brief review of studies that have focused on crime and public safety, especially those that have tried to connect aspects of neighborhood social capital to structural characteristics.

Ralph Taylor, Stephen Gottfredson, and Sidney Brower (1984) studied variations in violent crime (mugging, assault, murder, rape) across 63 street blocks in Baltimore. Using interviews with 687 household respondents, they constructed block-level measures of the proportion of respondents who belonged to an organization to which coresidents also belonged, and the proportion of respondents who felt responsible for what happened in the area surrounding their home (1984, 316). Both measures were significantly and negatively related to rates of violence, exclusive of other ecological factors (320). These results support the hypothesis, consistent with social capital theory, that organizational participation and informal social control of public space depress the incidence of violent events in urban areas. A similar pattern emerged in Ora Simcha-Fagan and Joseph Schwartz's (1986, 683) survey-based study of 553 residents of 12 neighborhoods in New York City during the mid-1980s. Although the number of neighborhoods was small, they found a significant negative relationship between the rate of self-reported delinquency and rates of organizational participation by local residents.

Drawing on data collected in Great Britain in 1982 and 1984, my colleague Byron Groves and I (Sampson and Groves 1989, 789) showed that the prevalence of unsupervised teenage peer groups in a community had large effects on rates of robbery and violence by strangers. The density of local friendship networks had a significant negative association with robbery rates, while the level of organizational participation by residents was linked to significantly lower rates of robbery and stranger violence. Central to present concerns, variations in community social organization were shown to mediate in large part the effects of community socioeconomic status, residential mobility, ethnic heterogeneity, and family disruption. Namely,

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mobility had significant inverse effects on friendship networks, family disruption was the largest predictor of unsupervised peer groups, and socioeconomic status had a positive effect on organizational participation.

In a more recent study from the United States, Delbert Elliott and his colleagues (1996) examined survey data from neighborhoods in Chicago and Denver. A multi-level analysis revealed that a measure of "informal control" was significantly and negatively related to adolescent problem behavior in both sites. As with the British results, informal control in neighborhoods in these two cities mediated the prior effects of neighborhood structural disadvantage: declining poor neighborhoods displayed less ability to maintain social control, and they in turn suffered higher delinquency rates.

A research program in Chicago (Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods) has as its primary objective the study of criminal behavior in local community context. A major component of this study was a community survey of 8,782 residents of 343 Chicago neighborhoods in 1995. My colleagues and I (Sampson et al. 1997) developed a two-part scale from this survey to examine rates of violence. One component was shared expectations about "informal social control," represented by a five-item Likert-type scale. Residents were asked about the likelihood ("Would you say it is very likely, likely, neither likely nor unlikely, unlikely, or very unlikely?") that their neighbors could be counted on to take action if: (1) children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner, (2) children were spray-painting graffiti on a local building, (3) children were showing disrespect to an adult, (4) a fight broke out in front of their house, and (5) the fire station closest to home was threatened with budget cuts. The second component was "social cohesion," measured by asking respondents how strongly they agreed (on a five-point scale) that "People around here are willing to help their neighbors"; "This is a close-knit neighborhood"; "People in this neighborhood can be trusted"; and (reverse coded) "People in this neighborhood generally don't get along with each other"; and "People in this neighborhood do not share the same values." Social cohesion and informal social control were closely associated across neighborhoods ($r = .80$), suggesting that the two measures were tapping aspects of the same latent construct. We combined the two scales into a summary measure of "collective efficacy" with very good aggregate-level reliability (.85).

Using this measure, we found that collective efficacy had a strong negative relationship with the rate of violence in the neighborhood, controlling for concentrated disadvantage, residential stability, immigrant concentration, and a set of individual-level characteristics (age, sex, socioeconomic status, race-ethnicity, homeownership). The results showed that, whether measured by official homicide events or violent victimization as reported by residents, neighborhoods high in collective efficacy had significantly lower rates of violence. This finding held up even when controlling for prior levels of neighborhood violence that may have depressed later collective efficacy (for example, because of fear). In this model, a two-standard-deviation elevation in collective efficacy was associated with a 26 percent reduction in the expected homicide rate (Sampson et al. 1997, 922). Concentrated disadvantage and residential stability were also strongly related to collective efficacy in theoretic-

cally expected direction of disadvantage when collective efficacy (study and the possible efficacy), causal effects consistent with the inference *in part* through

Although there are studies (see Sampson) the notion that neighborhoods shared expectations, identities, attenuated social capital base, and local control with an increased risk of crime. Moreover, the community social organization (although not determined) social capital and control of disadvantage, racial segregation, dense population co-

EFFECTS OF CRIME

It is important to recognize the role of crime control on communities. We have seen how the loss of these "feedback" mechanisms from community life; crime; a decline in trust; deteriorating social control; and isolation. For example, crime, local networks, crime may also be accounted for inner-city areas "lapse" and a weakening of communities, in turn crime rates in the United States missed "suspects" in

Although the number of crimes generates fear in community life (Skogan) concerns about safety have been noted by Robert Bursik (1986, 1992) comes of urban change

cally expected directions (t -ratios = -10.74 and 5.61 , respectively), and the association of disadvantage and stability with rates of violence was significantly reduced when collective efficacy was controlled. Because of the cross-sectional nature of the study and the possibility of reciprocity (for example, crime may reduce collective efficacy), causal effects could not be determined. Nonetheless, the patterns are consistent with the inference that neighborhood structural characteristics influence violence *in part* through the social mechanism of collective efficacy.

Although there are serious methodological limitations to neighborhood-level studies (see Sampson and Lauritsen 1994, 75–85), their cumulative results support the notion that neighborhoods characterized by mistrust and perceived lack of shared expectations, sparse acquaintanceship and exchange networks among residents, attenuated social control of public spaces, a weak organizational and institutional base, and low participation in local voluntary associations are associated with an increased risk of interpersonal crime and public disorder within their borders. Moreover, the data are consistent in suggesting that these dimensions of community social organization and collective action are systematically influenced (although not determined) by neighborhood structural differentiation. In particular, social capital and collective efficacy appear to be undermined by the concentration of disadvantage, racial segregation, family disruption, residential instability, and dense population concentration.⁶

EFFECTS OF CRIME AND CRIME CONTROL ON SOCIAL CAPITAL

It is important to recognize that crime and its consequences—such as fear or reactionary crime control measures—may themselves have important reciprocal effects on communities. Wesley Skogan (1990) has provided an insightful overview of some of these “feedback” processes, including: physical and psychological withdrawal from community life; a weakening of the informal social control processes that inhibit crime; a decline in the organizational life and mobilization capacity of the neighborhood; deteriorating business conditions; and changes in the composition of the population. For example, if people shun their neighbors and local facilities out of fear of crime, local networks and organizations have fewer opportunities to take hold. Street crime may also be accompanied by residential out-migration and business relocation from inner-city areas. In these ways, predatory crime can lead to demographic “collapse” and a weakening of the informal control structures and mobilization capacity of communities, in turn fueling further crime and mistrust. The rapid increase in crime rates in the United States starting in the mid-1960s may therefore be one of the missed “suspects” in the concomitant decline of social capital (Sampson 1999).

Although the number of empirical studies is relatively small, there is evidence that crime generates fear of strangers and a general alienation from participation in community life (Skogan 1986, 1990; Rosenbaum et al. 1998). High crime rates and concerns about safety have also been linked to population out-migration. For example, Robert Bursik (1986, 73) found that delinquency rates are not only one of the outcomes of urban change but an important part of the process of urban change. Studying

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Chicago neighborhoods, he observed that "although changes in racial composition cause increases in the delinquency rate, this effect is not nearly as great as the effect that increases in the delinquency rate have in minority groups being stranded in the community." In a study of forty neighborhoods in eight cities, Wesley Skogan (1990) found that high rates of crime and disorder were associated with higher rates of fear, neighborhood dissatisfaction, and intentions to move out. Because of its connection to the perceived inhabitability and incivility of urban neighborhoods, predatory crime thus bears rather directly on our understanding of social capital.

Is Crime Control *Social Control*?

I would be remiss not to underscore as well the unintended and possibly negative consequences of some crime control efforts with respect to the destruction of social capital in urban communities. Incarceration presents a particularly vexing dilemma. Although dangerous and violent offenders surely need to be removed from the community, the widespread increase (roughly a doubling) in the incarceration rate for nonviolent crimes in recent decades may turn out to be counterproductive over the long run. Prison admissions data also indicate that African American males have borne the brunt of increased incarceration, especially for drug crimes (see Tonry 1995; Sampson and Lauritsen 1997).

The removal of young males from vulnerable communities serves to undermine key aspects of local social capital. Elsewhere (Sampson 1995) I have gone so far as to argue that incarceration may *increase* violence through a negative feedback loop: the removal of young males decreases the sex ratio (males per female), and that decrease in turn indirectly increases violence through its effect on family disruption. As Dina Rose and Todd Clear (1998, 450–51) note, every person entering a prison is exiting a neighborhood. This removal may achieve a safety objective, but in the case of nonviolent prisoners (usually drug offenders), removal is not solely a positive act because it imposes losses on family and community networks. Contrary to what we often hear, most offenders have legal employment, and many are involved in the support of children and families. A record of imprisonment also has negative consequences for a released offender's employment prospects, and that negative impact, again, may indirectly serve to increase future crime. The available evidence estimates the costs of imprisonment in terms of earnings potential and employability to be quite large, even after controlling for individual characteristics (Freeman 1991; Western and Beckett 1999).

I am not suggesting that incarceration is always unnecessary, undeserved, and ineffective as a form of crime control, and I recognize full well that the romanticization of the criminal has led to serious intellectual errors among sociologists. I am simply arguing that we need to give equal consideration to the potential negative consequences of our current addiction to incarceration for employment, family structure, and ultimately the reserve of human and social capital in local communities. After all, most offenders will be released from prison (Rose and Clear 1998). Their stigmatization and marginalization from the very segments of society

that sustain desistance are often ignored at society's expense.

Perhaps the risk of alienation is more apparent and immediate when police use stop and frisk for weapons and alienation among the community. To the extent that trust in the police is undermined, the police's ability to work with the community is undermined. For example, the police's focus on minor offenses (minority) civilian ire may undermine the police's ability to work with the community (Body-Gendrot 1998).

The perceived legitimacy of the police may appear to want is not always shown that more than a decade ago (Reiss 1970). This is the case for police as proactive crime control in neighborhoods where crime is rampant. The police of the inner city do not always top down that treats the community with insight of social capital. To the need to prove the police and the police's ability to work with the community.

THEORETICALLY NOT PEOPLE

The general implication of trying to change the day events grounded in a social capital perspective is that an important goal is to build institutions, and extend and ameliorating the community resource inequality, and the ability (Sampson 1999) to harness social capital (for example, through

The general implication of my analysis is that there is an important role for policy in trying to change the dynamics of places rather than people. By focusing on everyday events grounded in the ecological spaces of our local communities, I believe that a social capital perspective offers plausible and realistic insights. Perhaps the most important goal is bringing together resident-based informal social control, local institutions, and extralocal (public) control as equal partners, while at the same time ameliorating the constraints imposed by structural differentiation in the form of resource inequality, racial segregation, concentrated poverty, and residential instability (Sampson 1999). Because other chapters in this volume are focusing on ways to harness social capital to address the "structural inequality" part of the story (for example, through housing authorities, community development corporations

THEORETICALLY GROUNDED POLICY: CHANGING PLACES, NOT PEOPLE

The perceived legitimacy of law enforcement is thus crucial, for what citizens appear to want is not fewer police, but police of a different kind. The evidence has long shown that more than nine in ten police-citizen encounters derive from citizen calls (Reiss 1970). This is a fact with deep implications, for it exposes the myth of the police as proactive crime control agents. Moreover, it exposes the fact that citizens are behind the demand for police services, especially in low-income, minority neighborhoods where crime rates are high (Skogan and Hartnett 1997, 117). Yet residents of the inner city do not want racist police, or a hierarchical form of policing from the top down that treats residents merely as passive recipients of a "crackdown." The insight of social capital theory for crime control policy, to which I now turn, points to the need to proffer innovative strategies that increase true partnerships between the police and the public.

Perhaps the risk of undermining social capital through crime control is more apparent and immediate when we examine the police. Heavy-handed attempts by police to reduce crime (for example, through "zero tolerance," or aggressive search and frisk for weapons even in the absence of probable cause) may breed cynicism and alienation among local residents toward the idea of private-public cooperation. To the extent that trust in the police is undermined by the excessive use of force and a siege-like mentality, the ability of the police to work with the local community is undermined. For example, there is anecdotal evidence that a strict police crack-down on minor offenses and the apparently unjustified shooting of an unarmed (minority) civilian in New York City may have seriously jeopardized the ability of the police to work as an equal partner with many minority neighborhoods (Wilgoren and Thompson 1999). It is also reported that among marginalized groups in European cities, fear and alienation from police authority undermine the ability of the community to aid in its own protection through mutual cooperation (Body-Gendrot 1998).

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Social Capital and Poor Communities

[CDCs], public health organizations, or organized labor), I limit my attention to policy-related ideas that are tied directly to crime and public safety and that do not rely excessively on formal mechanisms of control (such as incarceration and arrest) that may erode social capital.

It is important to begin, however, on a note of caution. The evidence shows that community-level interventions are notably hard to implement and have achieved only limited success in the areas that need them the most—poor, unstable neighborhoods with high crime rates (Hope 1995; Skogan and Hartnett 1997). “One-shot” or short-run interventions that try to change isolated or specific behaviors without confronting their common antecedents are highly susceptible to failure. Moreover, I have argued elsewhere (Sampson 1999) that community-level interventions to increase neighborhood “self-help” and local voluntarism have succumbed to the lack of organization they seek to supplant. The paradox is that self-help strategies for “community” give priority to the very activities made difficult by the social isolation of residents in unstable and economically vulnerable neighborhoods (Hope 1995, 24, 51). Thus, neglecting the vertical connections (or lack thereof) that residents have to extracommunal resources and sources of power obscures the structural backdrop to community social organization. The importance of institution-based approaches to social capital articulated by other authors in this volume should be seen as complementary rather than in opposition to the approaches explicated here.

Even if we fully account for the wider structural context within which local communities are embedded, neighborhood interventions will fail unless they pull the appropriate internal levers of change. Seeking to penetrate the private world of personal relations and re-create a mythical past when everyone knew their neighbors is a recipe for failure (Sampson 1999). In fact, community interventions seem to fail the worst when the major thrust is to change individual behaviors by promoting friendships among neighbors (Hope 1995). To focus on resurrecting local friendships reflects nostalgia for a village life that is long gone from most cities (Skogan 1990, 156). For better or worse, in many neighborhoods, neighbors are acquaintances or strangers rather than friends, living out what M. P. Baumgartner (1988) calls “moral minimalism.” Where local friendship ties are strong, they result not from government intervention but from natural processes induced over time by factors such as residential stability and the density of families with children (Sampson et al. 1999). The policy framework I propose recognizes the transformed landscape of modern urban life, holding that while social capital may depend on a working trust, it does not require that my neighbor or the local beat cop be my friend.

Identify Neighborhood “Hot Spots” for Crime

A beginning area of promise is simple yet powerful. Drawing on community theory and advances in computer mapping technology, safety-enhancing strategies can be more effective if they are implemented using information on ecological hot spots (see also Reiss and Roth 1993, 17). In Chicago, for example, Carolyn Block (1991) has pioneered the use of what is termed an “early warning system” for gang homicides.

By plotting each hot spot and using a clustering procedure, police can identify neighborhood crisis areas and rapidly disseminate information about them, reducing the opportunity for trouble. Hot spots can be used to reduce the opportunity for crime (Sherman et al. 1989), as differential patrol and the swift removal of vacant lots can provide a level response that is more effective than targeting individuals or places that disproportionately stave off “epidemics.”

I would argue here that the information available to the “experts”—and the information available to the level of information should be made available to local residents who knew when and where that they would most likely find ways that go well beyond the research is that their chances of victimization are most of the time (Shaw and Mckay 1942). Those having the highest crime’s distribution are not necessarily such knowledge far outnumber perpetration in responding.

Reduction of Social Capital

A concern with crime is also on the visible side (Sampson 1990). To foster a climate of order, consider a number of factors: litter, vandalized cars, and drug use, and proscribing licensing and other measures whereby residents are brought to city author

By plotting each homicide incident and using sophisticated mapping and statistical clustering procedures, the early warning system allows police to identify potential neighborhood crisis areas at high risk for suffering a "spurt" of gang violence. With rapid dissemination of information, police can intervene in hot spots to quell emerging trouble. Hot spots may also be modified or put under periodic surveillance to reduce the opportunities for crime to occur. Lawrence Sherman and his colleagues (Sherman et al. 1989, 48) have reviewed "hot spot" neighborhood interventions such as differential patrol allocations by place, selective revocation of bar licenses, and swift removal of vacant crack houses. The idea of hot spots suggests a neighborhood-level response that in the end may be much more effective than policies that simply target individuals or even families. By responding proactively to neighborhoods and places that disproportionately generate crimes, policing strategies can more efficiently stave off "epidemics" of crime and their spatial diffusion.

I would argue here, however, for a bolder and more comprehensive strategy. To date, information technologies have been used as tools mainly and perhaps only for the "experts"—namely, the police. True to the notion that social capital is fundamentally a leveling process that entails civic participation, I do not believe such information should be made available to the police alone. With the rapid spread of technology, crime data and even the mapping of hot spots could, in principle, be made available to local residents and community-based organizations. If residents knew when and where incidents were occurring, in more or less real time, I predict that they would mobilize to prevent further incidents in innovative and effective ways that go well beyond police power. Moreover, one lesson we have gained from the research is that residents consistently overestimate the incidence of crime and their chances of victimization. Even in a high-crime area, most of the area is safe most of the time (Sherman et al. 1989). As Shaw and McKay (1969 [1942], 180) long ago argued, "The dominant tradition in every community is conventional, even in those having the highest rate of delinquents." Knowledge about the realities of crime's distribution and frequency might be alarming to residents at first. But ultimately such knowledge could be empowering: by signifying to residents that they far outnumber perpetrators, the crime numbers could enhance local collective efficacy in responding proactively.

Reduction of Social Disorder

A concern with crime and public safety should focus not just on serious crimes but also on the visible symbols of disorder that generate fear among residents (Skogan 1990). To foster a climate of safety, public order, and social organization, we should consider a number of collective strategies: cleaning up physical incivilities such as litter, vandalized cars, broken windows, and drug needles; removing or rehabilitating abandoned housing; "picketing" or protesting unwanted public drinking, drug use, and prostitution; promoting neighborhood-generated referenda on bar licensing and other zoning issues; and creating "graffiti patrols" and "phone trees" whereby residents keep a log of new incidents of disorder and promptly report them to city authorities (see Carr 1998).

Social Capital and Poor Communities

There is limited evidence on the effectiveness of these strategies, although neighborhood-based interventions that target physical signs of decay (abandoned buildings, graffiti) have been found to increase perceptions of safety and public order (Hope 1995, 59). The available evidence also suggests that neighborhood watch programs targeted specifically to crime are largely ineffective (Rosenbaum et al. 1998), and thus a broader focus on informal social control and public order seems warranted.

Changing Routine Activities

A concern with ecology and place suggests another frequently overlooked mechanism in discussions of neighborhood effects—how land-use patterns and the ecological distributions of daily routine activities bear on crime (Sampson, 2001). For example, the location of schools, the mix of residential with commercial land use (strip malls, bars), public transportation nodes, and large flows of nighttime visitors are land use patterns that organize how and when local youth come into contact with their peers, with adults, and with nonresident activity. As noted earlier, the routine-activities perspective (Cohen and Felson 1979; Felson 1987) assumes a steady supply of motivated offenders and focuses instead on how targets of opportunity and sanctioning mechanisms combine to explain criminal events. This strategy has appeal in crime control, for it does not force on the local community the burden (and misplaced hope) of changing offenders. Rather, it provides insights into how to organize activity patterns to reduce the probability of crime events.

For example, not only do mixed-land-use neighborhoods offer greater opportunities for expropriative crime, they offer increased opportunity for children to congregate outside their homes in places conducive to peer-group influence (Stark 1987). Seemingly prosaic, an intriguing finding from criminology is that the incidence of delinquency is predictable from proximity to a McDonald's restaurant (Brantingham and Brantingham 1984). Big Macs are not the problem, of course; the unsupervised activity space and peer contagion is (Sampson, 2001). Because illegal and deviant activities feed on the spatial and temporal structure of such routine legal activities (transportation, work, entertainment, and shopping), the ecological distribution of situations and opportunities conducive to crime offers a strategic site for intervention. In particular, neighborhood strategies to monitor the ecological placements of bars, liquor stores, strip-mall shopping outlets, subway stops, and unsupervised play spaces promise to play an important role in controlling the distribution of high-risk situations for crime events.

From Policing Community to Community Policing?

No discussion of social capital and public safety is complete these days without confronting the seemingly ubiquitous demand for, and consumption of, community policing. The theory of community policing emphasizes the establishment of working partnerships between the police and the community to reduce crime and

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The evidence so far ficial consequences. sider the legitimacy As argued earlier, t predominantly min ative efforts will fai It is a myth, for exar hand with a tolerar

enhance security. Most community-policing efforts have focused their attention on the problems that lie behind crime incidents (such as drug markets or disorderly bars) rather than on crime only (Moore 1992, 99). Although sparse, there is evidence that community-policing efforts to help residents solve local disorder and crime problems are working in many large U.S. cities. For example, Wesley Skogan and Susan Hartnett (1997) report large declines in social disorder and crime in a quasi-experimental evaluation of community policing in Chicago.

Community policing, at least in theory, is obviously relevant to our concern with social capital because one of its explicit goals is to foster greater civic involvement by residents in the general life of their neighborhoods. Indeed, one of the major goals of community policing is for the police to spark among residents a sense of local ownership over public space and a greater desire to exercise informal social control. The organizational strategy designed to accomplish this outcome is the "beat meeting"—a regularly scheduled meeting of the police with the residents of their beat. In the language of the Chicago Police Department, "Beat meetings ensure community input in the problem-solving process" (quoted in Skogan and Hartnett 1997, 110). Do they work? Early evidence from the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) suggests that beat meetings are one of the most visible and unique features of community policing. About twenty-five residents and five officers attended per meeting, with attendance highest in African American and minority neighborhoods. Skogan and Hartnett's evaluation (1997, 160) estimated that residents turned up on almost fifteen thousand occasions to discuss local problems with the police.

To be sure, the news is not all rosy. Skogan and Hartnett (1997, 125, 130) also found that the police took the lead in almost all beat meetings. Despite much prodding, it was difficult to sustain resident input and to induce collective problem-solving among residents. Still, the representation of Chicago residents in local problem-solving increased overall. From my perspective, perhaps the most important finding in this regard was that participation increased most in areas that had previously been missing at the table—low-income, minority, and unstable areas. As Skogan and Hartnett concluded, "By creating relatively uniform opportunities for participation, CAPS took the first step toward mobilizing wider participation among all segments of the community" (160). The beat meeting is therefore of interest because it serves to trigger just the sort of civic involvement that social capital theorists promulgate for poor communities.

Co-Creating Legitimate Social Order

The evidence so far seems to show that community policing has had mostly beneficial consequences. Yet, from the perspective of social capital, we need also to consider the legitimacy of community policing and its specific means of enactment. As argued earlier, to the extent that the police are mistrusted, particularly in the predominantly minority communities that bear the brunt of violent crime, cooperative efforts will fail even though all residents share a desire for lower crime rates. It is a myth, for example, that African American mistrust of the police goes hand in hand with a tolerance of deviance and violence. In our study of 8,782 residents of

Social Capital and Poor Communities

343 neighborhoods in Chicago, we found that, contrary to stereotypes, African Americans and Latinos are in fact *less* tolerant of deviance and violence than whites are (Sampson and Bartusch 1998). At the same time, neighborhoods of concentrated disadvantage displayed elevated levels of cynicism toward the criminal justice system, dissatisfaction with police, and toleration of deviance unaccounted for by sociodemographic composition and crime-rate differences. Because of the ecological concentration of blacks in poverty areas, concentrated disadvantage helps explain why African Americans are more cynical about law and dissatisfied with the police. Neighborhood context is thus important for resolving the seeming paradox that estrangement from legal norms and agencies of criminal justice, especially by blacks, is compatible with the personal condemnation of deviance.

An intriguing example of "inner-city" community partnerships with the police that address the legitimization role is found in Boston. Although not developed under the rubric of community policing, the Ten-Point Coalition was formed by a group of inner-city Boston ministers in the early 1990s to deal with a sharply increasing problem of youth violence. As Jenny Berrien and Christopher Winship (1999) observe, a long-standing problem in the minority communities of Boston (and elsewhere) was a lack of trust and working relationship between the police and residents. When violence began to rise, residents faced a profound conflict—they wanted safe streets for their children, but they also objected to having their sons hauled off to jail en masse. Heavy-handed police tactics (such as aggressive search and frisk procedures targeted at black males) only made matters worse. As a result, it became difficult in Boston and many other inner-city communities to reach a consensus on what constituted legitimate and constructive police activity.

The key to Boston's Ten-Point Coalition was to create what Berrien and Winship (1999) term an "umbrella of legitimacy" under which the police could work. Rather than shut out the police, religious leaders in Boston's black community demanded change and essentially became an *intermediary* institution between the police and the community, adjudicating between conflicting goals and providing legitimacy for proper police activities. They asserted that inner-city residents wanted not fewer police but a different kind of police (see also Meares and Kahan 1998). The ministers took responsibility by insisting on social order among local youth as well as non-abusive, non-racist methods on the part of the police; only with the latter came the former. No one but the religious leaders had the local social capital and legitimacy in the eyes of inner-city residents to lead this high-stakes effort. Evaluation of the success of the Ten-Point Coalition is still ongoing, but Berrien and Winship (1999) make a convincing case that much of the large drop in the youth violence rate in Boston in the mid-1990s was attributable to the working partnership between the police and the public that was brokered by local ministers.

A similar and equally intriguing example of police-church alliance is found on the West Side of Chicago, an area long characterized by high rates of violent crime, drug dealing, and physical decay. The traditional law enforcement response to crime on the West Side was the arrest, removal, and harsh sentencing of local offenders. Tracey Meares and Dan Kahan (1998) describe a recent shift in drug enforcement policy to one that is more sensitive to local norms of order. Drug markets flourish because of

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It is difficult to imagine capital to work.

Building Intergenerational

As described earlier, the ability of adults to support

demand, much of which comes from outside the inner city—often from outside the city itself in the form of suburban white buyers. “Reverse stings” recognize this imbalance and take a more democratic approach to crime control by targeting the buyer as well as the dealer. As Meares and Kahan argue, the old “buy-bust” strategy limited sanctions largely to inner-city neighborhoods, whereas the reverse sting parcels sanctions out among numerous communities that are more likely to contain the social buffers that can blunt and absorb them (817). The high visibility of the reverse sting erodes the skepticism of residents and works toward breaking the stigmatizing connection between race and criminality.

Perhaps more central to the concerns of this chapter, Meares and Kahan (1998) describe the emergence of a “working trust” between the police and residents of Chicago’s West Side in the creation of zones of safety. In addition to the reverse sting, residents supported juvenile curfews and the policing of minor disorders, largely because of the leadership role of the local police commander, who was a longtime resident. In fact, the police commander led a prayer vigil to protest the drug dealing and crime in the community. More than one thousand residents participated, and in groups of ten they marched and reclaimed the street corners where drug dealers had previously dominated. Following the prayer vigil, more than seven thousand residents retired to a local park for a celebration. Such a police-church event is surely controversial, but from the perspective of social capital theory coupled with the undisputed strength of the black church as a site for collective-action strategies (Pattillo 1998), the Chicago alliance is a fascinating development that bears watching. Note also how Meares and Kahan’s (1998) main conclusion echoes that of the Boston case: participation by residents in a newly constituted and legitimized community policing effort was in itself an action that increased community solidarity.

The road to institutional integration between the police and the church has been paved on Chicago’s West Side. . . . The newly formed connection between the church and the police has produced new species of social capital that can be directed toward violence control: The police have access to new sources of information that can assist them in criminal investigations, and church leaders have been assured of greater police responsiveness to the crime affecting their congregants. Church leaders are now even playing an active role in recruiting and screening police academy applicants from their congregations. (Meares and Kahan 1998, 829)

It is difficult to imagine a more direct example of putting neighborhood social capital to work.

Building Intergenerational Ties

As described earlier, a major dimension of neighborhood social control is the ability of adults to supervise and support safe activity patterns of adolescent and child

peer groups. In particular, creating safe spaces for youth to "hang out" and play is important for counteracting the fear and perceived vulnerability that leads many youths to join gangs for protection and flee whenever possible their neighborhoods of residence. Policies to encourage adult connections to peer groups include organized supervision of leisure-time youth activities, parent surveillance and involvement in after-school and nighttime recreational and educational programs for youth, and adult-youth mentoring systems. The key to these measures is positive intergenerational connections between youth and adults in the community through informal and volunteer efforts. Stricter sanctions, such as nighttime curfews for children in public areas and stricter enforcement of truancy and loitering laws, should be considered in concert, but I would stress the greater importance of the informal social controls that arise naturally and positively from ongoing social interactions.

The evidence on such "intergenerational" interventions is mixed, but a recent evaluation of youth-oriented development programs concluded that adult mentoring holds promise. Based on their review of the only "rigorous" evaluation of a youth mentoring program, Jodie Roth and her colleagues (1998, 436) argue that the evaluation "provided evidence for the value of caring relationships between adults and youth created and supported by programs." Mentors who did not attempt to change their mentee but rather attempted to build a trusting and supportive relationship that was driven by the interests of the youth were the most likely to be successful. This finding suggests how the juvenile court might better respond to wayward youth and is consistent with the emphasis in this chapter on social supports through intergenerational closure rather than punitive prison terms.

CONCLUSION: SOCIAL CAPITAL AND THE "GOOD" COMMUNITY

The promise of social capital, in my view, is that it reaffirms the importance of thinking about collective ways to approach social problems. Too often our policies and theories are reductionist in nature, looking to change only individuals. The neighborhood perspective presented here suggests nearly the opposite. It is not that individuals or individual characteristics are unimportant, but rather that much can be learned, and possibly changed, by focusing on events in their community context. I hope to have provided some new ways of thinking about crime and public safety from a neighborhood-level perspective on collective efficacy and social capital.

That said, I nonetheless think it is important to conclude by emphasizing caution in neighborhood-based policies. First, the evidence on neighborhood effects is mixed and complex (Mayer and Jencks 1989). Research has only recently begun to measure directly the social mechanisms hypothesized to explain neighborhood effects (Sampson et al. 1999). Methodological issues, such as differential selection or compositional effects, measurement error, shared method variance, and simultaneity bias, represent serious challenges to drawing definitive conclusions on the role of neighborhood context (Duncan and Raudenbush 1999). Neighborhoods are also more heterogeneous internally and thus less monolithic than commonly believed (see also Cook et al. 1997).

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Second, I would caution against falling too far into the trap of local determinism. Part of the appeal of "community" is the image of local residents working collectively to solve their own problems. The ideal of residents joining forces in order to build community and maintain social order is largely a positive one, but this is not the only or even the most important ideal. What happens within neighborhoods is shaped by extralocal social forces, the wider political economy, and citywide spatial dynamics (Sampson et al. 1999). In addition to encouraging communities to mobilize through self-help strategies of informal social control, we need to propose aggressive strategies to address the larger social-ecological changes that have battered many inner-city communities. The specific nature of such efforts is beyond the scope of this chapter. Nevertheless, policies at the political and macrosocial levels are extremely important; recognizing that community social action is possible does not absolve policymakers of the responsibility for seeking equality of opportunities among neighborhoods (Sampson 1999).

Third, there are obvious limits to neighborhood-level social capital. As Portes (1998) notes, proponents of social capital tend to gloss over its potential downside—social capital can be drawn upon for negative as well as positive goals. Moreover, achieving common goals in a diverse society is not easy and has proven problematic in an age of individual rights (Selznick 1992). In the pursuit of informal social control and collective goods, there is the danger that freedoms will be restricted unnecessarily—that individuals will face unwanted and even unjust scrutiny. For example, surveillance of "suspicious" persons in socially controlled communities can become wholesale interrogation of racial minorities (Skogan 1990). Suppose further that a community comes together, with high social capital, to block the residential entry of a racial minority. As Thomas Sugrue's (1996) poignant research on postwar Detroit has revealed, neighborhood associations were the social capital vehicles exploited by whites to forcibly keep blacks from moving into white working-class areas (for example, by means of arson, threats, or violence). Such exclusion prompted Gerald Suttles (1972) to warn of the dark side of "defended neighborhoods."

We must therefore balance concerns for the collective with a concern for social justice and the realization of truly non-exclusive public goods. For this reason, I have focused on widely expressed and shared desires for neighborhoods—most notably, public safety and freedom from violent crime. My strategy relies on shared values for safe communities that are held by all race and class groups (Sampson and Bartusch 1998). Nonetheless, the pursuit of common goals must proceed cautiously and with respect for individual rights, diversity, and limits on state power. Fortunately, legal justice and community are not the antinomy that common wisdom suggests (Selznick 1992). The constitutional law tradition has long been concerned with balancing individual rights against the need to promote the health and safety of communities. The very notion of police power suggests the tension, long recognized by the Supreme Court, between individual rights and the pursuit of social order (Gillman 1996). Integrating the notion of social and legal justice with neighborhood social capital is a welcome and necessary move (Sampson 1999).

Social Capital and Poor Communities

It seems fitting to close, then, by reflecting on the essential features of social capital that characterize the "good" community. I would argue that the good community, at least with respect to public safety, is one that is created not through domination, marginalization, exclusion of outsiders, and reliance on threat by agencies of formal control. Rather, the good community is one where the legitimacy of a just social order comes from the mutual engagement—indeed negotiation—of residents and local institutions with agencies of law enforcement (Meares and Kahan 1998). It is instructive in this regard to recall Albert Hirschman's (1970) classic work on the options available to persons in organizations—exit, voice, and loyalty. Residents of American neighborhoods have long employed the exit option, often to the detriment of social capital. Loyalty has been used as well, but often in an exclusionary manner (as in the racially defended neighborhood). The logic of this chapter suggests that the success of a social capital approach to community safety is tied ultimately to the equitable implementation of voice.

NOTES

1. This chapter draws on the detailed review of neighborhood-level studies in Sampson and Lauritsen (1994) and the theoretical framework presented in Sampson (1999, 2001) and Sampson, Morenoff, and Earls (1999). I focus primarily on studies that make inferences about "neighborhoods" or "local communities" within urban areas. Cities and metropolitan areas are large, highly aggregated, and heterogeneous units with politically defined and hence artificial ecological boundaries. Although the operational units typically used to represent neighborhoods (for example, census tracts, wards, block groups) are imperfect substitutes, they have more ecological and social integrity (for example, natural boundaries, socioeconomic homogeneity) and are more closely linked to the social processes theorized to produce crime than cities or metropolitan areas.
2. This statement does not necessarily apply to so-called white-collar crimes and organizational deviance. In a global world, an interesting question is where such acts may be said to occur. Perhaps even more interesting would be an inquiry into social capital "at the top of the firm" (Burt 1992) and the nature of its relationship with organizational malfeasance. Although such an intellectual undertaking merits attention, it is well beyond the scope of my charge.
3. This level of inquiry is often misunderstood as an assertion that individual characteristics are unimportant. Nothing could be further from the truth. The job of neighborhood-level theory is not to explain individual differences in crime, just as individual-difference theories should not be required to explain, say, cross-national differences in crime rates.
4. Most ecological research has been forced to rely on official statistics (such as police and court records) that may be biased because of nonreporting or discrimination by the criminal justice system. To address these problems, many studies limit the domain of inquiry to offenses reported rather than arrest data and to serious predatory crimes, such as homicide, robbery, and burglary, toward which police biases appear to be minimal. A wide-ranging body of research shows that, for serious crimes found in incident-level reports of offenses known to the police, police bias and underreporting are either small or unrelated to community variables of interest. Moreover, self-reported offense behavior and victim-

ization experiences have a general convergence of c
unofficial rates of viol

5. It is tempting to argue that social capital has merely reinvented sociology on voluntary friend-kinship networks (Putnam 1982). Similarly, although others have explored many dimensions of social capital, there is something to be learned from the dimensions of social capital that are necessary for social control.
6. Again, a neighborhood-level approach to the individual level. For example, neighborhood-level control such as observation and taking responsibility (Kanter and Gottman 1989). This conceptualization of social capital does not require a high level of social capital. Similarly, a high level of social capital has been hypothesized for collective supervision within neighborhood

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ization experiences have been brought to bear on the validity of official statistics. A general convergence of community-level findings has been achieved between official and unofficial rates of violence (Sampson and Lauritsen 1994).

5. It is tempting to argue that the current fascination in the social sciences with social capital has merely reinvented the urban sociological wheel. Indeed, the literature in urban sociology on voluntary associations, organizational participation, local social bonds, friend-kinship networks, and neighborhood activism is rich and voluminous (Fischer 1982). Similarly, although using different language, theorists of social disorganization have explored many of the processes emphasized by modern social capital theory. Still, there is something to be gained by a disciplined effort to explicate the neighborhood-level dimensions of social capital, especially the concepts of working trust and shared expectations for social control (as discussed later in this chapter).
6. Again, a neighborhood-level perspective does not assume homologous relationships at the individual level. High prevalence rates of female-headed families with children, for example, have been posited to facilitate crime by decreasing networks of informal social control such as observing or questioning strangers, watching over each other's property, and taking responsibility for supervision of general youth activities (Sampson and Groves 1989). This conceptualization focuses on the communitywide effects of family structure and does not require that it is the children of single parents that are engaging in crime. Similarly, a high level of residential instability and single individuals in a neighborhood has been hypothesized to undermine the closure of social networks and thus the ability for collective supervision of children—without a corresponding prediction of whom *within* neighborhoods is more or less likely to commit a crime.

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The discussion of income concentration, social ties and social capital, and the role of social capital in inner-city development, without paying sufficient attention to market rules, individual agency, and the view, with social capital, through political action and potential in inner-city development, in concert with other factors, and economic development.

HOW SOCIAL CAPITAL

To appreciate the role of social capital, it is necessary to shed some light on the social capital offered by traditional markets that take the form of social capital in quality and price of goods and services, and the role of social capital in promoting a product or service through the building up of social capital in the subgroup. This building up of social capital is a selling point as pr