**Policing Media Mentions**

### *Reforming the police through procedural justice training: A multicity randomized trial at crime hot spots (Weisburd, David).*

This paper has 41 citations, excluding Twitter and Facebook. The title, author, and text from such mentions is below.

A controlled experiment focuses on improved policing method, John Timmer (<https://arstechnica.com/science/2022/03/a-controlled-experiment-focuses-on-improved-policing-method/>)

Over the last few decades, there's been a heavy emphasis on techniques that fall under the concept of "proactive policing." These generally involve identifying the areas of a city that have the highest crime rates and applying more aggressive policing in those locations. While there have been some successes, the approach has often bred resentment, as methods like stop-and-frisk policing generated antagonism between the police and the communities they were meant to help.

In a 2018 report on proactive policing, the US's National Academies of Science examined approaches meant to keep intensive policing from creating friction with communities. The report found that one promising technique, called "procedural justice," lacked evidence of efficacy—we couldn't tell whether it consistently reduced crime and/or improved community relations.

So, some of the people behind the National Academies report decided to change that, running their own controlled study on procedural justice in three US cities. The results aren't decisive, but they suggest the technique might reduce crime and community friction.

By the books

Procedural justice applies to far more than policing, but its basic principles have an obvious use. The basic idea is that any process, including policing, should be transparent enough that everyone involved believes that things are handled fairly. When applied to policing, this includes the respectful treatment of people targeted by it. In practical terms, the paper's authors say it involves the police demonstrating neutrality and trustworthy motives, while respecting those in the community and allowing them a chance to voice concerns.

To find out whether this approach is effective, the research team worked with the police departments in two large US cities (Phoenix and Houston) and one smaller city (Cambridge, Massachusetts). Using crime data, the researchers and police identified crime "hotspots" in residential neighborhoods and assigned officers to do intensive policing in those areas.

At random, some of those officers were chosen to undergo intensive, 40-hour training on the use of procedural justice in policing. Prior to the onset of the study, residents of those hotspots were surveyed on their attitudes toward police; the survey was repeated after the study period as well. During the policing period, all the officers had a researcher ride along for at least one shift to evaluate how well the police implemented their training.

Finally, changes in crime rate compared to the pre-experiment baseline were calculated.

It seems to work (with caveats)

One thing that clearly works is the training. Officers who went through it were much more likely to allow community members to have their say in disputes, displayed more respectful behavior, and were better at indicating neutrality in their interactions. (Or at least those interactions that a researcher observed.) One of the caveats to this study is that the officers could have been more careful about using procedural justice approaches when they knew they were being watched. But at least it was clear that officers knew how they should act.

But arrest statistics suggest that this difference persisted even when the police weren't observed, as arrest rates among officers who received the training dropped by more than 60 percent. This indicates a far less aggressive approach to the community, despite the enhanced presence of officers in the neighborhoods. The areas where officers had undergone procedural justice training also saw crime drop by 14 percent compared to areas where other police were assigned for intensive policing.

The one thing that wasn't clearly improved was how the community viewed the police. In areas where police untrained in procedural justice were assigned, community surveys indicated that people viewed the police as harassing community members and using unnecessary force. This didn't happen in areas where the officers had received the training, but overall community views of the police didn't budge.

While collectively these tests were able to reach statistical significance on most measures, the study was too small to do effective city-to-city comparisons, or to break out numbers based on crimes. The pandemic also started after the tests wrapped up, which dramatically reduced the response rate for follow-up surveys, so the community attitudes should be taken with a grain of salt.

Still, the work provides some reasonably solid evidence that the approach makes for effective policing and may ultimately shift community attitudes, if given enough time. While we'll want to see repetition before pushing for extensive policy changes, it's refreshing to see researchers responding to a lack of information on such an important topic by doing the hard work needed to change the situation.

Police training emphasizing fairness can reduce crime and foster more positive interactions, Mihai Andrei. (<https://www.zmescience.com/science/psychology-science/police-training-emphasizing-fairness-can-reduce-crime-and-foster-more-positive-interactions/>)

Interactions between police and the community are not always peaceful and pleasant, to put it mildly. In the US, particularly, police violence has emerged as a major problem, with one 2021 study noting that the burden of fatal police violence is an "urgent public health crisis in the USA." According to a new published paper, this burden can be improved by training police officers in procedural justice.

Image in public domain.

Procedural justice is a concept that deals with the idea of fairness in resolving disputes. It's a concept that can be applied in several settings, from corporate settings to education to police enforcement. The concept is based on four components of fairness:

giving people a voice;

showing neutrality;

treating people with respect;

showing trustworthy motives.

To see whether procedural justice could help foster a better police force, 28 police officers were randomly assigned to one or two groups: one group followed standard operating procedures, while the second group received an intensive, 40-hour course in procedural justice. The officers were then allocated randomly to 120 crime hot spots in the three cities and studied for an average of nine months in each site.

The researchers then used multiple sources of data to see how well this training course worked, including self-reported officer surveys to analyze how the training influenced attitudes, systematic social observations to examine police behavior in the field, and pre- and post-training household surveys to assess attitudes towards the police. The researchers also measured the impact on crime and arrests.

Remarkably, although officers trained in procedural justice made fewer arrests than the control group, crime also decreased in these areas, and the community's attitude towards police also improved.

"We found a significant relative 14% decline in crime incidents in the PJ hot spots during the experiment," the researchers note in the study. "This randomized trial points to the potential for PJ training not simply to encourage fair and respectful policing but also to improve evaluations of the police and crime prevention effectiveness."

The findings are good news for the police and community leaders, because they show ways through which crime can be reduced while also simultaneously improving police-community relations.

The study comes in an area where there is relatively little research, but plenty of room for improvement, the researchers conclude.

"There are only a small number of randomized experiments examining the influence of police training, and even fewer that look at effects of training on both officer behavior and community perceptions. This study adds to the evidence base for procedural justice training and expands our understanding of how training impacts interactions between police and the public. We view our findings as important for efforts to enhance both fairness and effectiveness in policing," said Cody Telep, associate professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Arizona State University, and one of the authors of the study.

The study was published in PNAS.

Study: Intensive, specialized training of police officers leads to reduced crime, fewer arrests and more positive interactions and community evaluations, Jane-Mott Palmer (<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/study-intensive-specialized-training-of-police-officers-leads-to-reduced-crime-fewer-arrests-and-more-positive-interactions-and-community-evaluations-301512797.html>)

ARLINGTON, Va., March 29, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- Scientists at the National Policing Institute, George Mason University, Arizona State University, and University of Pennsylvania conducted a study with joint support from Arnold Ventures and the National Policing Institute. The study has now been published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), an independent, non-profit, multidisciplinary publisher of the world's top scientific research.

Can training police officers in procedural justice reduce crime and improve the community's perceptions of the police? An intensive, randomized controlled trial conducted in high-crime places (or "hot spots") produced evidence that training officers to operate according to the principles of procedural justice changed officer behavior, reduced arrests, and reduced crime. Perceptions of the police on the streets where these officers worked also improved during the study. The findings are good news for police, community leaders, and others who seek ways to reduce crime while simultaneously improving police-community relations.

Procedural justice is based on four components of fairness and equality: giving people a voice, showing neutrality, treating people with respect, and showing trustworthy motives. Observations of officer-community interactions found that trained officers were significantly more likely to behave in procedurally just ways.

For leaders who are looking for ways to control crime while also improving relations between the police and the community, the study's findings provide important information about a strategy that can be implemented broadly.

"This significant scientific experiment confirms that it is possible to simultaneously reduce crime and improve police-community relationships through improved training and supervision. Further, this intervention—procedural justice training to improve officers' community interaction skills—is especially powerful because it can benefit all officers and improve police-community interactions generally. We owe a debt of gratitude to the officers, supervisors and agency leaders in the study who cooperated fully with data collection and all the experimental conditions. Their willingness to engage and support the scientific process is emblematic of their commitment to improved policing," said Jim Burch, President of the National Policing Institute.

"As our nation continues to grapple with the social impacts of the pandemic and a spike in homicides, it is critical that we build a body of evidence about what works to reduce community violence," said Walter Katz, Vice President of Criminal Justice at Arnold Ventures. "This research shows that public safety and policing that is respectful of all community members are interconnected goals. Police departments across the country should learn from these results and require high-quality procedural justice training as a core component of any hot spot crime reduction program."

"The release of this research comes at an extremely pertinent time when many across the country are taking a closer look at police training," said Ann Ardis, Dean of George Mason University's College of Humanities and Social Sciences. "Professor Weisburd's work in partnership with the National Policing Institute and Arnold Ventures adds high-value scientific evidence to the national conversation around policing."

"There are only a small number of randomized experiments examining the influence of police training, and even fewer that look at effects of training on both officer behavior and community perceptions. This study adds to the evidence base for procedural justice training and expands our understanding of how training impacts interactions between police and the public. We view our findings as important for efforts to enhance both fairness and effectiveness in policing," said Cody Telep, Associate Professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Arizona State University, and one of the authors of the study.

The multi-year study was conducted in three cities: Tucson, Arizona; Houston, Texas; and Cambridge, Massachusetts. In those cities, more than 1,000 hours of observations and more than 1,500 surveys of residents helped to confirm how the training of officers impacted outcomes. Across the three study sites, 28 police officers were randomly assigned to two groups: the intervention group, which received 40 hours of intensive training in procedural justice concepts and the practical use of the approach, and the control group, which received no procedural justice training and followed standard operating procedures. The officers were allocated randomly to 120 crime hot spots in the three cities and studied for an average of 9 months in each site.

The study team collected a variety of data: self-reports before and after the training to assess whether the training influenced officer attitudes; systematic observations of officers to understand how the training impacted officer behaviors while interacting with the community; arrest data to assess law enforcement actions; household surveys before and after the training to assess resident attitudes toward the police; and official crime reports.

Read "Reforming the Police Through Procedural Justice Training: A Multicity Randomized Trial at Crime Hot Spots," by David Weisburd, Cody W. Telep, Heather Vovak, Taryn Zastrow, Anthony A. Braga, Brandon Turchan. https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2118780119.

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SOURCE National Policing Institute

**Note: This same article was published 33 more times using the PRNewswire service**

Tucson played pivotal role in study on fairness in policing, Caitlin Schmidt and Jamie Donnelly (<https://tucson.com/news/solutions/tucson-played-pivotal-role-in-study-on-fairness-in-policing/article_286a66b2-b083-11ec-9418-d7045a6d5d9d.html>)

Researchers say a recent study that included Tucson police officers could be a step toward improving relationships between law enforcement and the people in the communities they serve.

Tucson was one of three sites that participated in the study on the effects of procedural justice in policing. Procedural justice involves fair and respectful treatment of people by giving them a voice, showing neutrality, treating them with dignity and respect and being trustworthy in one's motives.

The study analyzed the effects of providing procedural justice training to police officers who patrol high-crime areas, which researchers believed would result in police treating people more respectfully and improving their own behavior.

The theory proved correct in Tucson and the two other study sites — Houston and Cambridge, Massachusetts — but researchers say that if it weren't for the initial success in Tucson, the study could have been shut down.

Cody Telep, an associate professor in ASU's School of Criminology and Criminal Justice conducted the study along with researchers from George Mason University and University of Pennsylvania. He said the study was guided by general concerns expressed by scholars about how police departments' efforts to reduce crime may do that, but they could also damage trust.

"You don't want to be sacrificing police trust for crime control effectiveness," Telep told the Star. "Our study focused on strategies to build trust simultaneously."

The groundwork

During the study's run in Tucson, which took place from July 1, 2017, through March 31, 2018, Telep and others were testing to see if the training and treatment could be delivered as intended.

Eight TPD officers were selected after TPD put out a request for volunteers, then split into pairs based on background, including race and ethnicity, gender and experience. They were then split into two groups, one that would be trained in procedural justice while the other went without the training.

The procedural justice group went through 40 hours of training over the course of five days, after which each group of four was assigned a citywide patrol area identified as a hot spot, or an area in which crime has been identified as higher than others.

The trainings covered topics like police legitimacy, the importance of historical context in understanding trust in police, working with diverse populations and those with behavioral health problems and applying procedural justice to hot-spot policing tactics.

"We told them to go into these 20 streets and focus on reducing crime and building trust through procedural justice in any interaction," Telep said of the study group.

Fewer arrests,

decline in crime

Researchers wanted officers to be thinking about giving people a voice, telling their side of the story, being active listeners, being transparent in explaining how they were making decisions, treating people with dignity and respect and demonstrating that they care. Over the course of the study, officers also received refresher trainings and had frequent check-ins with supervisors to make sure they were using what they learned in the field.

"We talked a lot in training about how it might be easier to use with someone who's being nice back or in a casual conversation, but that it should be used all the time," Telep said, adding that the use of procedural justice principles could also de-escalate a potentially volatile situation.

The other four officers were told to just go out and reduce crime in their 20-block area and were not given any information about procedural justice, instead receiving a half-day training on hot-spot policing tactics and project data collection.

"We didn't expect officers would be treating people disrespectfully, but we didn't tell them to emphasize any previous training they may have had or use it in the field," Telep said.

Officers on both sides of the experiment participated in ride-alongs with trained observers whose job it was to "rigorously assess" the officers' behavior and work in the field.

"We saw a lot fewer arrests in the procedural justice group, which we were surprised about," Telep said. "We didn't tell officers to stop arresting people, but … officers felt like sometimes arrest was not a useful tool when trying to build trust in the community."

TPD Assistant Chief Kevin Hall was also surprised about the decline in arrests but said that as TPD does more work that shows the vast majority of violence occurs in a very small number of places, it makes a lot of sense that some of the most effective strategies don’t have to be arrests.

“Sometimes it’s just changing the environment,” Hall said.

The procedural justice hot spots also saw less crime over the course of the experiment than hot spots focused on by the control group, with the study showing a 14% relative decline in total crime incidents in the procedural justice group hot spots compared to the standard-condition hot spots.

"That helps reinforce the idea that you can implement effective strategies that have effects on crime and focus on procedural justice at the same time," he said.

Community response

to police interaction

Along with fewer arrests and less crime, results showed that the procedural justice group officers were significantly more likely to give people voice, show neutrality and demonstrate respectful behavior while interactions involving the standard conditions group were significantly more likely to include disrespectful behavior.

One important piece of the study was talking to residents and gauging their response to officers' behavior, Telep said.

On each of the 40 streets patrolled, researchers spoke with seven to 10 people before and after the study, surveying them about their views on police, the community and crime, specifically asking whether they believed that the police harass or mistreat people on their street or if they believed the police on their block use more force than necessary.

"There were no big changes in police legitimacy or police trust, so (procedural justice) doesn't seem to be impacting the perception of legitimacy at all," Telep said. "But the hot spots with procedural justice-trained officers perceived less use of excessive force and were less likely to perceive that police were harassing or mistreating people on the block."

Telelp said it was tough to test the widespread effectiveness of procedural justice in policing in Tucson, since they studied only four officers working 20 streets, and those officers could work only a certain number of hours during the week.

Before study, TPD officers had already received an eight-hour training that touched on procedural justice, but the study's results have made department officials reconsider how they implement procedural justice and how they back that up with what the officers are doing, Hall said.

“We're trying to be more specific about what officers do. We're trying to figure out what works best (engagement, education or enforcement,) or if it's a combination of all three," Hall said. "But in all three of those, procedural justice can be woven in and have a greater impact in everything the officers do, not just their engagement with the community, victims, offenders and business owners.”

When it comes to building trust and a relationship with Tucson’s community, Hall said “it’s nonstop but worth the effort.” He said police need to be accessible and make it as easy as possible for the community to come to them.

“We believe deeply in building those relationships,” Hall said. “I think everything that we do, from crime reduction to crime prevention, to public safety and infusing wellness and health into communities has to be built on that foundation of trust and legitimacy that comes out of procedural justice.”

Beyond the study

After the study's viability proved successful in Tucson, researchers received full funding to move forward in Houston and Cambridge, where Telep said they saw similar impacts.

"Tucson Police Department was essential to the overall project," he said.

While Telep thinks this approach would be difficult to implement department-wide, due to logistics and funding for training and reinforcement, he believes it's a good fit for certain specialty units that focus on crime control.

"We view this as one step in the efforts to change and improve relationships between police and citizens in the community," he said. "We didn't go into this expecting this was the answer, but rather one important first step and one where we see important evidence that training and reinforcement of training can have effects."

Telep and others are still in discussion about what to do with the training curriculum they developed for the study, along with what's next for the research.

"It's easy to say when you're not the one concerned with manpower hours and having to take all the calls, but spending an extra five to 10 minutes with a person, hearing their concerns and trying to help them find solutions to their problems is really useful," Telep said. "But that's difficult with the way patrol is set up in most cities. It's rare that you'll get the same officer twice, and there's not much time for a follow-up."

Innovations in training with a focus on tactics other than use of force is especially important with the changing role of police, Chuck Wexler, director of the Police Executive Research Forum said during last month's Harry Frank Guggenheim Symposium on Crime in America at John Jay College.

"The training police are getting now is not preparing them for the challenges they face. It has to be blown up and really rethink it," Wexler said. "I don’t think it’s fair to cops going out on the street today to hold them to one standard and to train them at a different standard."

In addition to more training on de-escalation, problem-solving and other tactics that don't involve force, departments also need to look at the way they're recruiting and make sure they're engaging the types of people that want to do the job the way that's required today.

"I go back to this notion that the police are doing too much, I get it, on one level," Wexler said. "But on the other level, helping a homeless person, helping someone get into an addiction program who has been addicted, to me, that's what the noble parts of policing."

Along the same vein, TPD's Hall said his biggest takeaway from the study was that police don't need heavy-handed enforcement to get results.

“We're really diving down and figuring out what are cops doing when they're in those hot spots. Because quite frankly, there's a national narrative about is it over policing? Or is it under policing? And how do you get that balance?" Hall said. "I think this adds to the conversation that maybe there's a balance in what we train the officers to do and how to act."

Violence declined at three of Denver’s five crime “hot spots,” but shootings still on the rise citywide, Elise Schmelzer (<https://www.denverpost.com/2022/10/23/denver-police-hot-spots-shootings-homicides/>)

When Denver police Cmdr. Brad Qualley drives through the area around South Federal Boulevard and West Alameda Avenue, it’s the things that are no longer there that stand out to him.

The bus stop next to Bungalow Liquors isn’t surrounded by loiterers and drug dealers anymore. A grassy spot near the Walgreens is empty. Broken down and stolen cars no longer line South Hazel Court. Graffiti still marks apartment walls, but there’s less than there used to be.

“As we’re sitting here now, I don’t see anybody,” said Qualley, who has worked in District Four for 12 years. “It was a highway of people, all the time. If you would’ve come out here in December — there’s still work to do, but it’s so much different than it was.”

His officers are also responding less frequently to shootings in the area — one of the successes of the Denver Police Department’s hot spots policing program. For more than a year, a team of officers has focused on the five-block radius around the intersection, which was identified as one of the most violent in the city in 2020. That year, police recorded 49 homicides and shootings in the vicinity. Through Aug. 31 of this year, there have been seven.

Homicides and shootings have fallen substantially over the last two years in three of the five crime “hot spots” identified in 2020 by Denver police. Former Chief Paul Pazen announced the program in May 2021 as part of a plan to mitigate a wave of homicides and shootings. Through the program, police focused on those areas and worked with community organizations as well as other city agencies to make the locations less receptive to criminal behavior.

City leaders, including the mayor, have dubbed the program a success, but violence hasn’t improved at two of Denver’s hot spots and the successes at the three others are not enough to mitigate the rising number of shootings citywide.

The five hot spots — Colfax Avenue and Broadway; Alameda Avenue and Federal Boulevard; Colfax and Yosemite Street; Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Holly Street; and 47th Avenue and Peoria Street — make up less than 2% of the city’s landmass but accounted for approximately 26% of homicides and 49% of aggravated assaults in 2020, according to the department.

Hot spots policing is a well-studied strategy that involves focusing police resources in the small geographic areas where violence is most concentrated and attempting to disrupt it, said David Weisburd, a professor at George Mason University and executive director of the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy, who has been studying hot spots policing for decades.

That doesn’t just mean arresting people or increasing police presence, but also looking at lighting and working with nearby businesses and housing complexes to identify the origins of the problems. Sometimes the source of problems can be narrowed to a single block, a gas station or a bar, he said.

“The evidence is pretty strong that hot spots policing reduces crime,” Weisburd said, though he noted the extent of the success depended on how a program is implemented.

Pedestrians prepare to across on Federal Blvd. by Alameda Ave. in Denver, Colorado on Wednesday, October 19, 2022. (Photo by Hyoung Chang/The Denver Post)

A pedestrian prepares to cross on Federal Boulevard at Alameda Avenue in Denver on Wednesday, October 19, 2022. (Photo by Hyoung Chang/The Denver Post)

Along with the Federal and Alameda area, violence has subsided around the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and North Holly Street in Park Hill as well as around East 47th Avenue and Peoria Street in Montbello, according to Denver Police Department data.

The number of homicides and non-fatal shootings around the Holly Street intersection fell from 20 in 2020 to three in the first eight months of 2022. At Peoria and 47th, the number of incidents fell from 37 to five.

Shootings and homicides remain consistent at the hot spot at East Colfax and Yosemite Street, but worsened around the intersection of Colfax and Broadway.

Denver police recorded 18 shootings and homicides at the East Colfax hot spot in the first eight months of 2022, compared to 20 in the same time period in 2020. At the downtown hot spot, the number of shootings and homicides increased from 28 in the first eight months of 2020 to 58 in the same time period this year.

Denver is on pace to record fewer homicides in 2022 than in the two previous years, but the number of non-fatal shootings remains similar. The 68 people killed in homicides through Oct. 19 of this year is fewer than the same time period in 2020 and 2021, when the city recorded 82 and 76 homicide victims, respectively.

But the number of non-fatal shootings so far this year in Denver is higher or on par with the same time period during the two previous years. At least 239 people have been injured in shootings so far this year, compared to 250 in the same time period in 2020 and 190 in the same time period of 2021.

New Denver police Chief Ron Thomas said the continued violence citywide is not necessarily a sign that the increased focus on the five areas is simply pushing the violence elsewhere.

“Working with other city partners and community organizations in those hot spots, it doesn’t push it elsewhere,” he said. “I’m not flooding an area with police officers to move a problem elsewhere, they’re embedding themselves in the community to change the dynamics of an area so that they’re not hot spots for crime.”

Fewer gunshots, fewer broken cars

In southwest Denver, a dedicated team of five officers and a sergeant have focused on the five-block radius around Federal Boulevard and Alameda Avenue, said Qualley, the District Four commander.

That team and the district’s community resource officers spoke with business owners and residents in the area to identify problems, like the broken-down cars on Hazel Court. People were using the cars as spots to sell and use drugs, as well as a place to sell guns, Qualley said.

“A large majority of them were coming to the area because it was historically known — if you need whatever, come here,” he said.

The hot spots program builds on work already underway through a community-based crime reduction program in the Westwood neighborhood that Denver police convened under a federal grant. In that program, Denver police brought together multiple community organizations to work together on social needs in the area, like housing and employment, in an effort to combat crime.

The groups host community events in the summer — when criminal activity tends to be higher — to help connect people to services, said Jamie Roth, assistant director of impact strategy with Mi Casa Resource Center, which is part of the program.

“It’s a way for Westwood partners to work more effectively together,” she said.

Mimi Ye, who manages the Far East Center at the intersection of Federal and Alameda, said police have built stronger relationships with her and other business owners in the shopping center over the last year. The police department helped her apply for a grant to buy more security cameras and improve lighting, she said.

She noticed officers in the area more frequently over the past year. One officer even called her one night when he realized she hadn’t clasped the lock on the store that her family runs.

“We’ve built a really strong partnership that if I need something or have an issue and I can reach out to them,” she said. “Before we didn’t feel that kind of confidence that we could do something like that.”

Ye’s mother, Fawn Luong, has owned and operated Truong An Gifts in the center for 34 years. Sometimes when someone walks in that Luong feels could cause problems she asks all her employees to go outside for their own safety. But she generally feels safe in the neighborhood where she’s worked for decades.

“People say this area isn’t safe,” Luong said. “I say everywhere isn’t safe.”

How do the people who live and work near the intersection of Federal and Alameda feel about the hot spots policing program? Many of them didn’t know it was happening.

Franky Moreno, 23, grew up in a house near the intersection and said he noticed an increase in gunshots and general chaos in 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic began. The gunshots have subsided somewhat, he said, but otherwise, things seem pretty much the same.

He feels generally safe in his neighborhood.

“I just don’t like walking around super late at night,” he said.

Amalia Vargas said she didn’t know that she lived in a hot spot or that police were doing anything different in the neighborhood. She did notice, however, that there were fewer RVs and broken cars on the streets around the house where she’s lived for 17 years. She generally feels safe in the neighborhood — in part because of the iron bars on her windows and door.

Hiep Thai has run Viet’s Restaurant in the Far East Center for 15 years and said crime is better than it used to be when he started the restaurant, in part due to improved lighting and also because of Ye’s management. There are sometimes problems, he said, but it’s never a big deal.

“People acting stupid can happen anywhere,” he said.

A return to broken windows policing?

When Pazen announced the program in 2021, critics said it would be a return to “broken windows policing,” which is the idea that making a large number of arrests for even the smallest infractions — like breaking windows — would improve crime in an area. Increasing police presence in already-marginalized communities would decrease trust, the critics said.

But a well-implemented hot spots policing should do the opposite, said Weisburd, the George Mason University professor. Investigating what makes a small geographic area attract crime and targeting the people committing high-level offenses should lower crime without impacting the broader neighborhood. Whether a hot spots program improves or worsens police legitimacy depends on how it is implemented, Weisburd said. There will be negative consequences if officers act disrespectfully or simply flood the area with arrests.

“If the police come in like an invading army, some of these problems can be exacerbated,” he said.

It’s difficult to examine whether that’s the case in Denver because the department could not provide the citywide number or types of arrests made in connection to the hot spots program. In District Four, police have made 218 felony arrests, recovered 63 illegally possessed firearms and recovered 105 stolen vehicles, according to department data.

Weisburd conducted an experiment from 2017 to 2020 in which teams of police officers were assigned to a total of 120 crime hot spots across three cities. Half of the teams received 40 hours of training about building trust and procedural justice while the other half did not. The researchers found that the trained officers made fewer arrests than the untrained ones, but that crime fell more in the trained officers’ hot spots. Surveys of residents found that those in the trained officers’ hot spots “were significantly less likely to perceive police as harassing or using unnecessary force” though there was no significant difference in attitudes of police legitimacy.

“The programs that increase patrol are good, but programs that go beyond that, those show larger impacts,” Weisburd said.

While District Four has a team dedicated to the program, the hot spots in other police districts are managed by officers as part of their regular duties, according to the department.

Qualley agreed that simply rounding people up wouldn’t fix the underlying problem. He’s participated in those types of operations in his 30 years as a police officer and they were ineffective, he said.

Denver records highest number of homicides since 1981 — again — as arguments, domestic violence, drugs fueled killings

“It’s not just putting officers there and doing a lot of heavy, targeted enforcement,” he said of the hot spots program. “There is enforcement, for sure. But it’s trying to do something more sustainable. I can’t have police resources there all the time — we have responsibilities to the whole district.”

Since the launch of the program, the Denver Police Department has identified three more hot spots to focus on: West Mississippi Avenue and South Lipan Street; West 14th Avenue and North Federal Boulevard; and East Dartmouth Avenue and South Havana Street.

With the area around Federal and Alameda calmed down, Qualley shifted his team to focus on Mississippi and Lipan. The team will continue doing “maintenance” at the old hot spot, he said, but he believes the environmental changes and the relationships built by the team will help keep the area calm.

“It’s working with those folks to be our eyes and ears,” he said. “We know things change — as soon as we leave it changes.”

Editorial: Memphis gave hotspot policing a bad name. Can Houston redeem it?, The Editorial Board. (<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/opinion/editorials/article/memphis-houston-hotspot-policing-17759661.php>)

Fifteen minutes.

That’s how long Assistant Chief Thomas Diaz of the Harris County Sheriff’s Office believes it should take for one of his deputies to deter criminal activity on a given day, even in a high-crime area.

It shouldn't necessarily require ripping and running through apartment complexes, armed to the teeth, coated in armor. Or busting down doors. Or high-danger traffic stops where suspects are likely to have drugs and guns.

Although that's still part of the job, Diaz says that often, fighting crime, even in the toughest Harris County neighborhoods, can just mean one or two deputies in a patrol car, keeping vigilant watch over a neighborhood.

This is an intriguing and hopeful facet of Harris County’s version of “hotspot” policing: a data-driven crime reduction and traffic safety unit operating on the familiar axiom that most crime in a given city occurs in roughly 6 percent of its area. Focusing on these hotspots or microzones is not a novel strategy – most police forces in major cities employ it in some fashion – though the results and tactics vary wildly.

When done right – Dallas being a notable example – hotspot policing can lead to lower crime rates, fewer arrests, and generally more respectful, constructive interactions with the community. When done wrong, as the world saw a week ago with the savage beating of 29-year-old Tyre Nichols by five Memphis police officers, the consequences can be catastrophic and irreparably damage a police force’s reputation and trust within the community.

The Memphis officers were members of a specialized crime reduction unit – nicknamed Scorpion, since disbanded – tasked with getting a handle on rising homicide rates and reckless drivers in the most dangerous corners of the city. Memphis Police Chief Cerelyn Davis, who also oversaw a controversial street crime reduction unit in Atlanta, explained the squad's philosophy in November 2021: “We all have that understanding about being tough on tough people.”

The Scorpion unit lived up to that billing. Residents accused them of hiding out in unmarked cars, using violent tactics, and mass pullovers under dubious pretenses with the hope of racking up arrests. Notably, it's still unclear why officers felt justified to pull over Nichols in a traffic stop before they beat him to death.

Harris County’s 15-minute patrols are part of a more humane approach the sheriff’s office’s is testing. The condensed time frame is based on a policing theory known as the Koper Curve, named for Christopher Koper, a researcher at George Mason University who posited that police forces can maximize crime- and disorder-reduction in hot spots by making proactive, 10-15 minute stops at these locations on a random, intermittent basis. Data shows that the likelihood of criminal behavior occurring within 30 minutes after a police drive-through drops from 16 percent to 4 percent.

“People have gotten used to us being there and have brought things to us like, ‘Hey, we would like to talk to you about X, Y, or Z,’ whether it's to report a crime, family violence or anything else,” Diaz told the editorial board.

Some residents in high-crime neighborhoods such as Cypress Station, in north Harris County, seemed to confirm this last week when a member of the editorial board visited.

"I feel like they could be around more," America Bailey said as she pushed her daughter in a stroller along a cold, wet street Thursday afternoon. "The hotspot units are not helping this area enough."

Of course, the stationary patrols are not necessarily representative of the crime reduction unit’s larger tactical strategy. For one thing, “high danger” traffic stops – which led to 7 percent of all fatal police shootings nationwide last year – are still a pillar of the squad’s responsibilities. The unit is charged with proactively policing high-crime unincorporated parts of the county such as Cypress Station, Woodforest and Aldine, and assists federal and state law enforcement partners in executing high-level search and arrest warrants.

### *A randomized control trial evaluating the effects of police body-worn cameras (Yokum, David).*

This paper 23 media mentions, excluding Twitter and Facebook. The title, author and text of each media mention is below.

El eterno ciclo de violencia policial en EEUU: ¿Han servido las medidas y protestas?, Argemino Barro. (<https://www.elconfidencial.com/mundo/2020-05-30/han-servido-las-protestas-del-black-lives-matters-en-eeuu_2617275/>)

En 2014 se multiplicaban las protestas en EEUU tras el asesinato de un adolescente negro desarmado a manos de un policía. Cinco años después, este tipo de muertes se mantienen a niveles idénticos

Por Argemino Barro. Nueva York

30/05/2020 - 13:30 Actualizado: 31/05/2020 - 12:57

Agosto de 2014 fue el 'Verano de la Ira' en Estados Unidos. El asesinato de un adolescente negro desarmado, Michael Brown, a manos de un policía blanco en Ferguson, Misuri, desencadenó una serie de protestas que se extendieron por todo el país y abrieron un nuevo capítulo en la lucha por los derechos civiles: la movilización para reducir la brutalidad policial y su palpable sesgo racista. En los meses siguientes, otras muertes igualmente sospechosas de racismo alimentaron las llamas, y el 'Verano de la Ira' se convirtió en 'Otoño' y luego en 'Invierno de la Ira'. Eric Garner, Freddie Gray, Philando Castile, Sam Dubose, Terence Crutcher, Alton Sterling. Los asesinatos de jóvenes negros en circunstancias cuestionables no eran nada nuevo, pero las cámaras de los teléfonos móviles y las redes sociales sacaron a flor de piel los más violentos abusos. La marea de indignación en las calles, reflejada en los medios de comunicación y adoptada por algunos políticos, tuvo consecuencias prácticas. Los departamentos de policía más grandes del país obligaron a sus agentes a llevar cámaras en el uniforme, con intención de grabar todas sus interacciones con sospechosos. A finales de 2015, el 95% de las grandes comisarías habían adoptado esta medida, según datos publicados por el diario The New York Times.

Otras disposiciones pasaron por diversificar el cuerpo. A más agentes negros o latinos, decía la teoría, más posibilidades de romper los comportamientos racistas. Muchos departamentos emprendieron políticas de inclusión y mejoraron el entrenamiento de sus agentes: les enseñaron a detectar casos de enfermedad mental y a cómo proceder al respecto, y a favorecer las técnicas de disminución del conflicto antes que el uso de la fuerza. También se frenó la distribución y el empleo de materiales militares por parte de los agentes, que en aquel 'Verano de la Ira' de Ferguson recordaban, más que a un cuerpo de policía, a los invasores de Irak.

Las muertes se mantienen

Ha pasado más de un lustro, sin embargo, y las muertes a manos de la policía se mantienen a niveles idénticos, con una estabilidad pasmosa: entre 2013 y 2019, cada año ha habido un mínimo de 1.071 y un máximo de 1.142 muertes causadas por agentes, según los datos de Mapping Police Violence. Los afroamericanos siguen teniendo tres veces más posibilidades que los blancos de ser matados por un policía. La absurda muerte de George Floyd, de 42 años, este martes en Mineápolis, ha vuelto a desatar la ira en las calles, extendiéndose por diferentes ciudades del país. Un hombre de 19 años ha fallecido esta madrugada durante las protestas en Detroit por la violencia policial. “Ser negro en EEUU no debería de ser una sentencia de muerte”, dijo el alcalde de la ciudad, Jacob Frey. “Durante cinco minutos vimos a un agente blanco presionar su rodilla en el cuello de un hombre negro. Cinco minutos. Cuando oyes a alguien pedir ayuda, se supone que le tienes que ayudar. Este agente fracasó en el sentido humano más básico”.

Policías en Mineápolis, EEUU. (EFE)

Las palabras de Frey y el despido de cuatro agentes presentes en la escena del crimen no evitaron las protestas, que desde la noche del miércoles se han tornado violentas y se han reproducido en otras ciudades del país. Como en Ferguson, pero con abundancia de mascarillas médicas y cierta distancia social, el tumulto de Mineápolis ha prendido fuego a unos 170 negocios y a una comisaría de Policía. Los agentes han usado gas lacrimógeno y balas de goma contra los manifestantes.

¿Por qué no ha cambiado nada?

La 'Primavera de la Ira' da sus primeros compases, los activistas circulan su mensaje y los estudiosos analizan por qué seguimos encerrados en el mismo ciclo de brutalidad policial y prejuicios raciales. ¿Qué ha pasado con aquellas medidas y buenas intenciones que empezaron a ser desplegadas hace ya cinco años? Según Jennifer Cobbina, profesora de justicia penal en la Universidad Estatal de Michigan, la mayor diversidad en el cuerpo de policía no tiene un gran efecto en la reducción de la violencia o los comportamientos racistas. La mitad de los policías de Baltimore son afroamericanos, por ejemplo, pero su departamento, según un informe de la Fiscalía General de EEUU, sigue cometiendo abusos: entre ellos “un índice desproporcionado de paradas, registros y detenciones” ilegales de afroamericanos. Dice Cobbina que la cultura policial, muchas veces violenta y bien enraizada, puede más que las diferentes sensibilidades de los agentes. “Los nuevos reclutas aprenden a hacer el trabajo policial observando las prácticas de sus colegas, internalizándolas y ejecutándolas”, escribe. “Los agentes de color no están exentos de este proceso”. Samuel Sinyangwe, co-fundador de Campaign Zero, una iniciativa para terminar con la brutalidad policial en EEUU, dice que muchas de las medidas de los últimos años no tienen sentido. “Todo lo que probablemente hayas escuchado es una mentira”, dijo el pasado octubre. “Específicamente, las ‘soluciones’ más debatidas contra la violencia policial no ofrecen ninguna evidencia de efectividad. Por ejemplo, las cámaras adosadas al cuerpo no reducen la violencia”. Las ‘soluciones’ más debatidas contra la violencia policial no ofrecen ninguna evidencia de efectividad. Por ejemplo, las cámaras adosadas al cuerpo no reducen la violencia Un estudio de la Academia Nacional de Ciencias, con 2.224 agentes de Washington D.C. monitorizados durante 7 meses, concluyó que el uso de cámaras en el uniforme no tenía impacto en las prácticas policiales. "Nuestros resultados indican que las cámaras no afectaron significativamente al comportamiento policial en un rango de desenlaces, incluyendo las quejas y el uso de la fuerza". Los cursos de formación para desbaratar prejuicios, según Sinyangwe, “varían en calidad y raramente desembocan en cambios de responsabilidad o toma de decisiones”.

Lo que sí está funcionando

Más allá de estas medidas, habría otras que sí funcionan. Un ejemplo son las mayores restricciones al uso de la fuerza. Los departamentos de policía que han prohibido maniobras de estrangulamiento o que obligan a sus agentes a usar una serie de mecanismos antes de recurrir a la violencia, han visto un claro descenso de las muertes. San Francisco aplicó estas medidas en 2016. Tres años después, las muertes a manos de agentes descendieron un 30%. Otra solución es la desmilitarización de los cuerpos policiales. Como sucedió en Ferguson, no es extraño ver a los agentes estadounidenses moverse en carros blindados o llevar lanzagranadas, rifles de asalto o escopetas de francotirador. Una militarización, posibilitada por el Pentágono, que según este estudio de SAGE Journals incrementa las probabilidades de que la policía se comporte violentamente. Por el contrario, aquellos estados que han decidido desmilitarizar el cuerpo, por ejemplo Montana, han visto una clara reducción de las muertes y las agresiones. No es raro ver a los agentes llevar lanzagranadas, rifles de asalto o escopetas de francotirador. Una militarización que incrementa las probabilidades de que la policía se comporte violentamente La profesora Jennifer Cobina recomienda aliviar la desconfianza que muchas veces separa a los agentes de los vecindarios en los que operan. Habría que establecer, dice, diferentes canales para que los policías puedan acercarse a la comunidad y aclarar “las tensiones, quejas e ideas equivocadas”. Samuel Sinyangwe pide que se renegocien los contratos de responsabilidad policial. Una manera de evitar que algunos departamentos limpien expedientes e incluso vuelvan a contratar a agentes que pocos años antes habían sido despedidos por mala conducta. Otra manera es usar la tecnología de datos para seguir en detalle qué agentes o unidades incurren en malas prácticas y así poder prevenirlas de raíz. En Portland, estado de Oregon, se ha dado un mayor papel a los psicólogos a la hora de responder a determinadas llamadas de emergencia. A veces las personas que sufren una crisis y montan un escándalo necesitan ayuda psicológica, antes de que aparezcan directamente los policías con sus esposas y su coche patrulla. Esta política también ha logrado reducir los episodios violentos. Otros expertos recuerdan que no todo es violencia gratuita y racismo, y que en un país con graves niveles de pobreza y 270 millones de armas en circulación los policías van a tener que desenfundar en ocasiones, y a veces apretar el gatillo. La comunidad afroamericana también es donde inciden las mayores lacras de pobreza, drogadicción y delincuencia, lo que tiene su reflejo en el trabajo policial. Mientras, la ciudad más grande de Minesota prueba en sus carnes la ira y el fuego. “Las imágenes de Mineápolis ahora mismo son increíbles”, afirmaba el periodista de la CNN Omar Jimenez. “Miles en las calles, una comisaría de policía en llamas, fuegos artificiales lanzados contra esas llamas. Todo mientras esperamos a si se presentarán o no cargos contra los agentes implicados en la muerte de George Floyd”. Jimenez, de raza negra, fue detenido poco después, en directo, por la Policía.

Cameras Won’t Stop Police From Killing, Farhad Manjoo (<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/03/opinion/george-floyd-video-police.html>)

Body cams have turned brutality into spectacle.

A chilling word keeps coming to mind this week, like a scratched-up record stuck on a lazy loop in my tweet-addled brain. Impunity.

If you can bear it, watch one of the videos of George Floyd’s death last week at the hands of the Minneapolis Police Department. Focus on the eyes of Derek Chauvin, the officer who has been charged with murder and manslaughter for pressing his knee into Floyd’s neck for a torturous eight minutes and 46 seconds.

At several points, Chauvin makes smirking eye contact with the camera. He even halfheartedly reaches for what looks like pepper spray when the phone-wielding bystanders get a bit rowdy in their insistence that Floyd is dying before their eyes. But the presence of the bystanders doesn’t stop him; it’s almost as if Chauvin knows nothing can touch him. Impunity is the only word I can think of for it.

Keep a close eye, too, on Tou Thao, Chauvin’s partner, who engages with the crowd in the manner of a security guard at an amusement park. As Chauvin pins Floyd down, Thao is almost polite in his colloquy with the people recording the scene. It’s as if he knows he’s going to be all over social media later, so he’s going to play it cool.

I’ve watched the Floyd videos at least a dozen times, and every time, it’s Thao’s composure that stiffens the hairs on the back of my neck. Thao comes off as completely unashamed of the misconduct he witnesses and, with his silence, encourages, in full public view.

Cameras were supposed to eliminate this sort of horror. Here, they hardly make it better.

Ever since the beating of Rodney King in Los Angeles in 1991, America has been flooded with videos — captured by bystanders and by law enforcement officers on dashboard and body cams — that have highlighted the routine abuse and killing of unarmed black people at the hands of the police.

As these cameras have become ubiquitous, we have gotten a better picture of the scale of the horror. At times, as in the death of Eric Garner on Staten Island in 2014, bystanders have managed to capture the precise moment at which police misconduct becomes fatal.

Yet in the Garner video, the police try to push the camera away. The cops seemed at least embarrassed by it.

What’s particularly nauseating about the Floyd videos is that the officers know they’re being watched, yet they are not deterred and don’t even seem bothered by the cameras. A similar shamelessness was on display in the innumerable clips showing police officers brazenly assaulting protesters and journalists during protests this weekend.

As I scrolled through endless collections of these online, I found it hard to escape the conclusion that America’s police forces are not just unfairly brutal — they also do not seem to care anymore about being caught on tape.

While videos have catalyzed protest movements like Black Lives Matter, documenting police misconduct in America has had little effect in reducing it.

Not long ago, many reformers saw video as a key way to improve policing. In 2014, after the killing of Michael Brown by the police in Ferguson, Mo., the Obama administration allocated funds to help police departments purchase tens of thousands of body cameras. Even some civil liberties groups endorsed the idea.

The theory was simple: If there were bad cops on the force, body cams would root them out and make it easier to prosecute them.

But it hasn’t worked out that way. One major study of body cameras in American policing, which followed more than 2,000 officers in Washington, D.C., found that the cameras did little to alter police behavior. Officers equipped with cameras used force and faced complaints from civilians at rates similar to those for officers who didn’t have cameras.

What’s more, in several high-profile cases, jurors were reluctant to convict, even with eyewitness and body-cam videos capturing wrongdoing. In 2015, Michael Slager, a police officer in North Charleston, S.C., who had been caught on video shooting a black man named Walter Scott multiple times in the back, was charged with murder. The trial ended in a hung jury when a lone juror declared himself unable to convict. (Slager later pleaded guilty to the federal crime of violating Scott’s civil rights and was sentenced in 2017 to 20 years in prison.)

One problem is that video is often open to interpretation — where critics of the police see clear brutality, jurors who are inclined to give police officers the benefit of the doubt may excuse as sins actions in the heat of the moment.

There are also a hodgepodge of policies governing body cameras. Different states have different rules about when officers are supposed to turn them on and who gets access to the video when there are questions about officers’ conduct. In some cases, officers equipped with body cameras have conveniently neglected to turn them on. On Monday, the mayor of Louisville, Ky., fired the city’s police chief after discovering that two officers involved in the fatal shooting of a black business owner had not turned on their body cameras.

What happens when, time and again, law enforcement officers are recorded brutalizing citizens but left unpunished? I worry that police violence will become even more normalized, turning into a crude spectacle that loses even the ability to shock. How else to explain the orgy of violence on display this weekend? A small selection:

Here are Atlanta police officers breaking into a car and attacking two young people.

Here are members of the National Guard and the Minneapolis Police Department firing paint rounds at people on a residential street.

Here is a New York Police Department vehicle ramming a crowd of protesters in Brooklyn.

And here are two Australian journalists brutalized by the police in Washington, D.C. — one of many incidents in which members of the news media appeared to have been deliberately targeted by the police.

“The whole world is watching” is what American pundits might say to China’s leaders when they round up Uighurs to send to re-education camps, or to Vladimir Putin of Russia when he banishes dissidents to an Arctic military base.

The phrase applies to our country, too. The whole world is watching and has been for decades. Yet little changes, because merely watching is not nearly enough.

**Note: This article appears three more times in local outlets**

How to actually stop police brutality, according to science. Stephanie Pappas. (https://www.foxnews.com/science/how-to-actually-stop-police-brutality-according-to-science)

Cities across the U.S. have been rocked by nightly protests against police brutality following the May 25 killing of a Black Minneapolis man named George Floyd by a White police officer.

And as videos proliferate of police arresting or tear gassing seemingly peaceful protestors, the issues raised by the protestors seem more insurmountable than ever. But researchers and activists say that solutions are no mystery: Evidence-based changes to policy around policing can reduce deaths at the hands of the police. These steps alone can't end racism overnight or erase the myriad inequalities in American society, but they can save lives.

Here's what the science says on how to combat police bias and killings: This is not a comprehensive list of suggested reforms, or even of suggested reforms that have been researched. And some ideas, such as defunding police departments, have yet to be thoroughly studied because they have not been tried on a widespread basis.

1. Track the problem

There is no comprehensive government clearinghouse for data on police killings or police use of force. After the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014, several private and nonprofit groups began keeping their own databases. These include Mapping Police Violence, an effort led by data scientist and activist Samuel Sinyangwe, Fatal Encounters, a catalog by journalist D. Brian Burghart, and efforts like the Washington Post's Fatal Force database.

Related: The fury in US cities is rooted in a long history of racist policing, violence and inequality

Thanks to databases like these, it's clear that Black people are killed at a disproportionate rate by police officers, making up 24% of deaths despite being only 13% of the population, according to Mapping Police Violence. But the databases rely on media reports of deaths, not police department, city, state or government data, for the simple reason that many police departments are not forthcoming with this information.

"Data on policing is notoriously terrible," said Casey Delehanty, a political scientist at Gardner-Webb University in North Carolina. "It's very spotty. It's unreliable and often inaccurate, and this has really precluded a lot of study and understanding and also accountability in real-time of local, state and federal police."

Even when the government does keep data, it's incomplete and often held on laughably out-of-date technology. In the summer of 2019, Delehanty embarked on an effort to get raw data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reporting Database. The email provided by the FBI for researchers to request data bounced back. The phone number for researchers led to a phone tree that automatically hung up after Delehanty picked the academic option. He finally reached a person by using the field office's media line, only to learn that the only way to get the data was by mail, on a CD (compact disk). After a few weeks of waiting, the CD arrived and Delehanty dug out a computer that still had a CD-ROM drive. The data was in an old, rarely-seen format (a fixed-width delimited text file) without the necessary file that would automatically define the data columns. It took days to define the columns by hand, Delehanty said.

Sometimes, incompetent data management by the government means that information just doesn't exist. Edward Lawson, Jr., now a data analytics researcher for the state government of South Carolina, once tried to find out from the Defense Logistics Agency, part of the Department of Defense, how much military equipment was being sent to police departments around the country. He learned that prior to mid-2014, the agency had simply been updating each quarter's information in the same document, erasing and rewriting whatever inventory had been transferred the previous quarter.

"Before the later part of 2014, there were no records that existed," Lawson told Live Science.

Police department data should be accessible through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), which allows citizens to request records from public agencies. But FOIA requests often come up empty, in many cases because police decide they simply do not want their department's data scrutinized. On Twitter, one data scientist who used to work on police use-of-force research wrote that some departments are forthcoming. Others ignore requests, deny them summarily or ask for enormous fees — such as a deposit of $1 million — to release records.

Some state laws make transparency more difficult. For example, Section 50-a in New York state seals personnel records for police officers, keeping complaints or histories of misconduct secret.

2. Demilitarize

For decades, police departments have been gradually adopting more and more gear from the U.S. military. Departments get this gear in a variety of ways, but one common route is the 1033 program, which provides free surplus military gear to departments for the cost of shipping. Some of this gear is innocuous, Delahanty told Live Science — filing cabinets, gloves, binoculars and other run-of-the-mill supplies that departments would otherwise have to buy on their own. But departments have also received equipment such as grenade launchers, bayonets and mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles (MRAPS), which are military trucks designed to take blows from improvised explosive devices in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Related: 13 Significant protests that changed the course of history

Both Delehanty and Lawson have found that police departments with more military equipment from the 1033 program kill more people. In a paper published in Political Research Quarterly in 2015, Lawson and his colleagues found that in all 50 states between 2014 and 2016, the number of police-involved deaths rose with militarization, as measured by the value of the equipment sent to a department via the 1033 program, even after controlling for factors such as population numbers, poverty, race and violent crime. In 2017, Delehanty and colleagues reported in the journal Research & Politics that in four states where they had records (Connecticut, Maine, Nevada and New Hampshire), military equipment via the 1033 program was linked with more killings by police. In a given year, a department with no 1033 requisitions could expect 0.287 killings of suspects, on average, Delehanty found; those with the max expenditure could expect 0.656 killings, more than twice as many.

It's likely that departments with a militaristic, us-versus-them mindset seek out more military equipment, Lawson said. But Delehanty's findings hint that the cycle can feed on itself, with more military equipment encouraging a more violent force. By comparing departments over time, he and his colleagues found that the annual change in military equipment could predict a department's suspect deaths in the next year. A department with no new equipment in a year could expect 0.068 fewer suspect deaths in the following 365 days. A department with the most new requisitions could expect 0.188 more deaths. The researchers even found a similar increase in police killings of dogs, suggesting that cops weren't necessarily gearing up for big, casualty-heavy raids with their requisitions. They were simply becoming more violent in general.

The protests have led to renewed calls to end or restrict the 1033 program. In 2015, President Barack Obama put some limits on the program via executive order. President Donald Trump repealed that executive order in 2017. Now, Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii), has said he plans to introduce legislation to end the 1033 program entirely, The New York Times reported.

3. Change police culture

Training is often cited as a way to reduce racial biases among police officers and encourage de-escalation. Some training methods have evidence to back them up. For example, training in procedural justice, which focuses on fairness, was shown in one randomized experiment to reduce police officers' likelihood of ending encounters with arrests or using force, according to a 2018 study published in the journal Criminology & Public Policy. But training is a nebulous concept with little oversight, and departments don't necessarily turn to evidence-based programs. In 2017, for example, Fox 9 reported that the St. Paul Police Department's "main attraction" in its annual equity training was watching the children's movie "Zootopia." There are also questions about the efficacy of methods like implicit bias training, in part because of a lack of standards for these training methods and in part because the lessons may not translate to stressful circumstances, as The Atlantic reported in 2017.

There are regulatory ways to change police culture. A report by Sinyangwe released in 2016 for the Use of Force Project found that in departments that adopt more of eight policies that limit how police can use force the police kill fewer civilians. For the report, Sinyangwe looked at records from 94 of the nation's largest municipal police departments.

These policies include:

1. Requiring officers to de-escalate before using force;2. Using guidelines defining the types of force that can be used to respond to specific situations;3. Restricting or banning chokeholds and strangleholds;4. Requiring a verbal warning before using deadly force;5. Prohibiting officers from shooting at moving vehicles except in extreme circumstances;6. Requiring officers to exhaust other options before resorting to deadly force;7. Establishing a duty by officers to intervene if one of their colleagues is using excessive force;8. Requiring officers to report all uses of force or attempted use of force.

Departments with four or more of these policies in place had 38% fewer police-involved killings per arrest than those with one or none, Sinyangwe found.

Police union contracts are also associated with police violence, mainly because contracts can be written to make it very difficult to fire or discipline officers for misconduct. A 2018 thesis by Oxford University graduate student Abdul Rad found that U.S. cities with more police protections had higher rates of police abuse, even when controlling for variables like racial demographics and crime rates.

In some cases, drastic measures are needed. After a major police-corruption scandal in 2010 and persistently high crime in Camden, New Jersey, the city decided to entirely disband its police department in 2013, starting a new department with an emphasis on community policing. This means policies are put in place to reduce the use of force and increase accountability, as well as to build trust between police and the community, according to CityLab.

4. Invest in alternatives

Community policing is an alternative to the "Broken Windows" style policing that cracks down hard on minor infractions, flooding neighborhoods with police enforcement.

"The idea was, after you flood these neighborhoods, you also flood them with social welfare programs," Lawson said. "We got the flood of police, but we never got the flood of social welfare, so we ended up having these kind of occupation zones where the police are acting like an occupying army."

Related: What's the difference between race and ethnicity?

Research shows that more comprehensive investments in communities pay dividends. A 2017 study published in the journal American Sociological Review found that across more than 250 cities, a greater number of nonprofit organizations was linked to declines in crime. For every 10 organizations in a city of 100,000 people, the murder rate dropped 9% and the violent crime rate went down 6%, the researchers reported. A similar study published in the journal Urban Affairs Review this year used Denver as an example and found that a higher density of nonprofits in an area was linked to lower crime, even after controlling for demographics and other factors.

Police are often the first to respond when someone with mental health issues is in crisis, and some evidence suggests that as many as 1 in 4 of those killed by police are mentally ill. , So some police departments have launched Crisis Intervention Teams (CITs), which consist of specially trained officers who work to get mentally ill individuals into treatment rather than escalating into a potentially violent encounter. The first of these programs, in Memphis, started in the late 1980s after police killed a mentally ill Black man who was cutting himself with a butcher knife. Research on CITs is challenging because different departments commit different levels of training and effort into their programs; but some evidence suggests that having a CIT in place results in less frequent use of SWAT (special weapons and tactics) teams, according to a 2008 review.

Some places have gone even further, taking police out of the mental-health response equation. In Eugene, Oregon, a 911 diversion program called CAHOOTS redirects calls about mental health-related issues to a team of mental health professionals and medics, rather than to police. Program staff also reach out to the city's homeless, giving out supplies and referring people to medical care, according to The Bend Bulletin.

5. Instill oversight

Independent and civilian oversight of police departments can go a long way toward reducing bad behavior. A 2015 study in the journal Police Quarterly found that departments that had citizen complaint investigations reviewed by an outside citizen agency were more likely to find that the complaints had merit, rather than dismissing them without consequence. (The study also found that Black complainants were more likely than those of other races to have their complaints dismissed.)

Federal investigations of police shootings can also reduce police killings, according to a 2017 investigation by VICE News. The news agency reviewed data on police shootings and found that Department of Justice intervention reduced police shootings by an average of 27% in the first year and up to 35% in subsequent years.

Another form of oversight involves citizen watchdogs. This aspect of policing the police has grown organically with the rise of video-enabled smartphones. Interestingly, research suggests that wearing body cams does not reduce police violence directly. But knowing that police officers could be wearing body cams but are choosing not to activate them might alter the public's opinion of police behavior, said Fabian Neuner, a political scientist at Arizona State University.

Meanwhile, having bystander video of police killing suspects appears to be altering the conversation on police racial bias and brutality. After the Michael Brown Jr. shooting in 2014, Neuner and his colleagues Hakeem Jefferson and Josh Pasek found a wide gap between Black people and White people in America as to whether the officer should have been charged and even over basic facts of the case. For example, 91% of Black Americans in the study thought the officer probably or definitely should have been charged, compared with 42% of White Americans. Meanwhile, 23% of White respondents thought Brown had a weapon, compared with 4.4% of Black respondents.

By contrast, the killing of George Floyd seems to have elicited a much more unified response. According to a YouGov poll, 78% of Americans believe the officer that killed Floyd should be charged.

"The debate is more about whether the charges even go far enough, so really the window of discussion has shifted," Neuner told Live Science.

The reasons for the differences aren't entirely clear, but the video evidence of Floyd's death probably plays a role, Neuner said. The protests are likely having an impact, too.

"I'm sure that when it comes to the debates for this [election] cycle, that policy reform is going to be a big part of that," Neuner said. "I think it's really about driving that conversation."

What Maine can do to reduce police violence, Charlotte Warden, Jordan LaBouff. (<https://bangordailynews.com/2020/06/08/opinion/contributors/what-maine-can-do-to-reduce-police-violence/>)

As our country cries out in mourning and pursuit of justice for George Floyd and the other black lives taken by police, many are looking for practical, policy-based solutions. Black researchers and activists have worked for decades to stop police violence. If we listen to and support their work, we can prevent police violence, especially against communities of color.

White leaders often treat police violence as an individualized problem, suggesting body cameras and bias training in hopes of solving the problem of the “bad cop.” But systemic police violence is not an individual problem, and evidence shows that body cameras and trainings do not limit police violence. The problem is not with individual officers, but instead with the system of modern American law enforcement itself.

This means that individual communities and the state of Maine can use evidence-based policy approaches to reduce police violence, especially against black, brown, and indigenous citizens.

First, shifting funding to community organizations is the most effective way to reduce police violence. Decades of careful research across more than 250 U.S. cities shows that community nonprofits focusing on crime and community life are vital to reducing crime and violence. For example, researchers estimate that every 10 such organizations in a city of about 100,000 residents is associated with a 9 percent reduction in murder rates and a 4 percent reduction in property crime. City and state governments can shift funding from policing to community organizations, such as Racial Equity & Justice and the Peace and Justice Center of Eastern Maine in the Bangor area, to reduce crime and save lives.

Second, along with shifting funding, clear and explicit use of force policies may reduce police violence. In an analysis of eight different use of force policies (e.g., requiring specific de-escalation practices and verbal warnings, prohibiting choke and strangleholds, requiring intervention by bystanding officers to stop peers from using excessive force) each one was associated with a 15 percent reduction in killings by police and a reduction in police being assaulted or killed themselves. Although some departments with clear policies still had extremely high rates of police violence, departments with the clearest policies had the lowest levels of violence on average. Police departments, and city and state governments, should use this model for an evidence-based use of force policy that could save both citizen and police lives.

Finally, preventing militarization of local police may reduce police violence. The U.S. Department of Defense 1033 program makes excess military weapons and equipment available to local law enforcement agencies. Systematic studies show that departments that receive more military equipment have more black, brown and indigenous civilian casualties and other kinds of police violence than those with less. Police departments and city and state governments can prohibit the use of the 1033 program and stop militarization in order to save lives.

Although it’s easy to feel helpless in the wake of so much suffering, there are specific policy options that will help reduce police violence. Maine’s elected leaders — both at the state and municipal level — should be joined by law enforcement agencies at all levels to work toward these changes. Yet, Maine’s law enforcement agencies are testifying in opposition to some of these very policy proposals in the state Legislature. Law enforcement members must become our partners in enacting policies based on research that can reduce the systematic application of police violence on black, brown and indigenous Americans.

Charlotte Warren represents District 84 in the Maine House of Representatives and is the House chair of Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. Jordan LaBouff is an associate professor of psychology and honors at the University of Maine in Orono. He is a member of the Maine chapter of the national Scholars Strategy Network.

Defund the police for safer, healthier and sustainable black communities, Judy Lubin. (<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/defund-the-police-for-safer-healthier-and-sustainable-black-communities-2020-06-09>)

The Minneapolis City Council’s announcement that it has decided to disband the city’s police department and transition to a new model of public safety may come as a surprise to many, but the decision represents the coalescing of ideas stemming from organizers and activists about what to do about the seemingly intractable issue of police brutality against black people and communities.

It is increasingly clear that policing will not change without radical transformation of the system of policies, culture, practices and protections that allow police to operate with so much power and little accountability for the harm their actions impose on black people.

Nearly six years after the death of unarmed 18-year old Michael Brown by Ferguson, Mo. police officer Darren Wilson catalyzed the Black Lives Matter movement, demands to defund the police and reimagine public safety have been amplified after the heart-wrenching murder of George Floyd. In the wake of the massive protests sparked by Floyd’s death, the push to defund the police is gaining traction as an alternative to a reform strategy focused on limiting the use of force and increasing transparency and accountability for police misconduct.

Inadequate reforms

Many of the reforms pushed after Ferguson have proven inadequate in the face of a policing system rooted in a history and culture of anti-black racism and violence. There are a string of reports from the last decade from federal agencies warning that white supremacists have infiltrated police departments and just last year the Plain View Project exposed thousands of racist Facebook posts and comments by more than 3,500 active and former police officers across the country.

Following Ferguson there were widespread calls for adoption of body cameras by police departments. Cameras were supposed to reduce uncertainty about what happened during police-citizen encounters, increase transparency and decrease use of force. In fact, police killed more people last year than they did in 2014 and research shows that body-worn cameras do little to change police behavior.

The Trump administration effectively put a halt to Obama-era reforms, which were often met with resistance from police unions and rank-and-file officers. There is a fierce urgency to end racist police violence but reforms to-date have been too slow and unable to break through the protections that help police officers avoid accountability. According to a report by the Marshall Project, the Minneapolis police department continued to allow the practice of chokeholds and failed to implement recommendations from federal officials to get rid of bad officers including those like Derek Chauvin who had multiple complaints against him.

The casual way in which Chauvin pressed his knee into George Floyd’s neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds, with one hand in his pocket and not one of his fellow officers doing anything to stop him, makes the “one bad apple” argument untenable. The notion that there's just one rotten apple in the bunch has been debunked as Americans witnessed police departments across the country use violent force against peaceful protestors marching for justice for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade and other victims of police violence.

Defunding the police is a process of divesting from policing and investing in what communities truly need for health and safety.

Part of a set of demands from movement organizations including Movement for Black Lives, Black Youth Project 100, Black Lives Matter Global Network, and Minneapolis-based Black Visions Collective, defunding the police is a process of divesting from policing and investing in what communities truly need for health and safety. In the past 30 years, municipalities have reduced budgets for housing, health and social safety net programs while city police budgets have steadily increased. Instead of focusing on resources to address poverty, unemployment, homelessness and social problems associated with these structural inequities, municipalities are investing in criminalizing black communities.

According to an analysis by the Center for Popular Democracy of 12 municipal budgets including Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Oakland and Minneapolis, cities are spending more on law enforcement than on health and mental health, education, youth development, workforce development, and public transportation services. In the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, the pattern continued, with cities such as Los Angeles and New York City proposing increases to their police budgets while cutting social services and programs. The mayors of both New York City and Los Angeles have now made small but important concessions in the face of calls to defund the police.

Defunding the police is rooted in a vision in which punitive systems are replaced with systems grounded in community care. Defunding the police is part of a broader abolitionist movement led by black women activists and scholars which aims to dismantle the prison industrial complex that profits from surveilling, fining, arresting and imprisoning black and brown people.

‘More policing and more prisons have not reduced crime’

The renewed national conversation about police violence has opened a window for elected officials and community members to consider a range of abolition strategies designed to reprioritize budgets and spending, reduce the militarization of police departments, shift power to marginalized communities and reduce the need for police altogether.

The Minneapolis City Council has announced that it will partner with community members to undergo a thoughtful and intentional process to build a new crisis and emergency response system. Local governments across the country should follow suit and start a public process of examining and testing models of safety that comes from providing livable wage jobs and housing for all, safety from access to affordable health and mental health services, safety from community-wealth building, and safety rooted in a respect for the dignity and humanity of all people including the most marginalized community members: black; indigenous; LGBTQ; formerly incarcerated, and those who are homeless or use drugs.

More policing and more prisons have not reduced crime, and police reform efforts to-date have fallen short in ushering meaningful change in the generations-long fight against anti-black police violence. Police killings are deadly manifestations of a broader context of unchecked power, abuse and harassment that black communities endure daily. Nearly every black-led uprising in American cities has been sparked by police brutality. To end this destructive cycle of American history, justice in this moment includes moving toward a new vision of public safety that builds safer, healthier and sustainable black communities.

Police Forces Keep Saying Body Cameras Are the Answer. Experts Say Otherwise, Jillian Kestler-D’Amours. (<https://www.vice.com/en_ca/article/dyz77w/police-forces-keep-saying-body-cameras-are-the-answer-experts-say-otherwise>)

As calls to 'defund the police' get louder, police and governments are suddenly very open to body cameras. Critics say they won't address anti-Black racism and are a distraction.

By Jillian Kestler-D’Amours

June 11, 2020, 8:32am

Justin Trudeau touted the virtues of police body cameras, saying they are something that Canada “need(s) to move forward with,” while the RCMP has promised to outfit some officers with them. Montreal Mayor Valerie Plante says she wants them “as fast as we can,” while outgoing Toronto Police Chief Mark Saunders says they are “critical.”

Police body-worn cameras are being pushed as an answer to the recent police killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor in the United States, which sparked mass anti-racism protests across that country, as well as in Canada.

But while some politicians and police departments are pushing for the use of body cams to ensure more accountability and reduce the use of force, there is little evidence to show that the technology will have a positive effect on policing.

“I don't understand what seeing more of us die is going to do if the police have already shown us that they are unwilling to change their practices,” said Sandy Hudson, a community organizer who co-founded Black Lives Matter Toronto, during a debate on CTV this week.

“I don't want to see more of us dying. I want the police to stop killing us.”

Community advocates, rights groups, lawyers, and other experts also question whether body cams are the right thing to focus on, when anti-Black racism and other systemic issues that lie at the heart of police violence go unaddressed.

“I haven’t seen any proof elsewhere of how having body (cameras) has contributed to diminish incidents of police violence or police brutality,” said Marlihan Lopez, coordinator at Concordia University’s Simone de Beauvoir Institute and one of the organizers of a recent anti-Black-racism demonstration in Montreal.

“They’re going to be in the hands of officers, so personally I don’t see how this could be a strategy or an option to combat police violence.”

In 2016, a University of Cambridge survey of about 2,000 police officers in the U.S. and U.K. found that complaints against police dropped dramatically when cameras were used. Researchers attributed that decrease to “the ‘digital witness’ of the camera” improving the behaviour of both police and citizens.

But a more recent study of the effects of body cams on more than 2,200 police officers in Washington, D.C., found that “cameras did not meaningfully affect police behaviour on a range of outcomes, including complaints and use of force.”

Daniel Lawrence, a principal research associate at the Urban Institute’s Justice Policy Center in the US capital, said the procedures around body cams are critical, from when officers need to turn the cameras on, to how regularly the footage is reviewed and whether police are held accountable after those reviews.

Lawrence said people in the U.S. have come to expect police to wear body cams—and not using them can lead communities to question whether police are trying to hide what is really going on.

“It’s not a panacea for fixing police-community relations, not at all,” he said. “I would say that the benefit of body-worn cameras is that it can hold officers accountable.”

But capturing police killings on film does not guarantee accountability.

The killing of Eric Garner, the 43-year-old Black man whom police held in a chokehold on a New York City sidewalk in 2014, was filmed “and the officer wasn’t even indicted, let alone convicted,” said Joshua Sealy-Harrington, a lawyer at Power Law, a Canadian law firm.

“So there’s understandable apprehension by movements who have engaged with questions like body cameras and police defunding for a long time, to say that this is a small band-aid solution, and one that’s not going to get us there.”

Howard Henderson, founding director of the Center for Justice Research at Texas Southern University, also pointed to the fact that the Minneapolis police officer who kept a knee on George Floyd’s neck for almost nine minutes, killing him, knew he was being filmed.

“And he didn’t change his behaviour, nonetheless. So, it’s like okay, do cameras make a difference?” Henderson said.

He said that “the greatest deterrent for police misconduct and the best use of the body cameras is when it’s coupled with an eradication of qualified immunity,” which shields government officials from personal liability for actions taken on the job as long as they do not violate a “clearly established” constitutional right.

Henderson said that if body cameras are already deployed—as they are in police departments across the US—the focus should be on how the cameras can help ensure more police transparency and accountability.

Henderson pointed to better hiring practices, training, and a general cultural shift around the role of police, as well as more funding for communities in general, as other needed measures to improving police accountability.

Still, there are concerns that body cams will lead to more police surveillance of vulnerable communities, said Toronto-based lawyer Caryma Sa’d, and questions persist about whether their price tag is worth it.

Montreal police estimated last year that it would cost $17.4 million to equip 3,000 frontline officers with body cameras over a nearly five-year period, and an additional $24 million per year (about 4 percent of the Montreal force’s total 2018 budget) to maintain the program.

“The amount of money it will take to effectively run that program means that we are going to have to increase police budgets, put more resources at the hands of an institution that is failing so many citizens, and just trust that the end result will be worth it,” Sa’d told VICE.

News

Two Canadian Police Officers Have Been Charged After Killing Potential Witness

MACK LAMOUREUX

06.09.20

Sealy-Harrington added that beyond doubts about their effectiveness, police use of body cameras gets to the heart of questions about how communities want policing to function, and if they want police, in their current form, at all.

“Rolling out body cameras is a vision of repairing police as they currently exist,” he said. Worse, actually, “the rolling out of body cameras could expand the police state,” he said.

Over the past weeks, calls for cities to defund their police departments—and put the money towards social programs and support for Black and other communities of colour that have been harmed by over-policing—have grown in Canada and the U.S.

Defunding police “isn’t really about fixing the police, it’s a matter of how we imagine our society,” said Sealy-Harrington, adding that pumping millions of dollars into body cameras is the opposite of defunding.

Follow Jillian Kestler D'Amours on Twitter.

Canada should enshrine police body cameras into law, Robert Diab. (<http://theconversation.com/canada-should-enshrine-police-body-cameras-into-law-140611>)

The police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis set off an explosion of protests around the world. The spark that lit the fire was the video of his slaying.

Some doubt that cameras are effective in curbing police violence, as the lead officer in this case proved — he knew he was being filmed by a bystander, but he kneeled on Floyd’s neck anyway for almost nine minutes. Yet the reaction to Floyd’s death shows that cameras can make police conduct more transparent and potentially accountable — depending on how they’re used.

Chantel Moore is shown in this undated photo posted on a GoFundMe memorial page. The 26-year-old Indigenous woman was shot dead by police in Edmundston, N.B. THE CANADIAN PRESS/GoFundMe

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has expressed support for wider use of body cameras by police in Canada, and committed to help fund the cost as a video emerged that showed police brutality against a First Nations chief in Alberta and following the fatal police shootings of two Indigenous people in New Brunswick.

Research into body cameras points to the need for more than policy alone. To tackle the issue effectively, Parliament should amend the Criminal Code to set out rules about how and when police should use cameras.

Analysis of the world, from experts

Without rules being codified in federal law, police across Canada will use cameras inconsistently and unpredictably — hindering their potential to make police more accountable and to curb the use of excessive force.

Cautionary tales from earlier studies

Studies support the potential benefits of using body cameras, but debate continues over how to use them effectively.

Read more: Watching the watchers: Police use of body cameras needs to be monitored

Body cameras correlate with lower rates of police use of force and fewer complaints about conduct — though some argue the reductions are not significant. Leaving police with control over when and where to use cameras often leads to selective and self-serving use.

Forces across Canada have conducted several pilot programs over the past decade, but only Calgary police have formally adopted cameras. Other forces encountered two common issues.

A member of the Vancouver Police Department wears a chest mounted camera as he oversees the takedown of a tent city in downtown Vancouver in October 2014. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Jonathan Hayward

It is costly to equip officers with cameras and to store and manage the copious volume of data those recordings would generate. But equally crucial is the uncertainty over when and where police should be obliged to turn on their cameras, and what happens if they don’t.

Should police capture every encounter with civilians while on duty? Or only when questioning or detaining suspects? If they fail to do so, or make a judgment call not to record or to stop recording, do they violate a citizen’s rights to a fair trial under Canada’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

Trudeau’s proposal would help address the funding question, but leave considerable uncertainty around when to use body cams. To be effective, control over the use of body cameras must be taken out of the hands of individual officers, where it’s ripe for abuse. Police need to follow a uniform playbook, set out in law.

Less discretion, more consistency

Those laws can take one of two forms. States like Illinois require officers to record “at all times on duty.” This general approach would be onerous, resulting in too much data and effort to manage it.

South Carolina takes a better approach by mandating camera use in specific situations. Under their law, police must record when detaining suspects for impaired driving — from the moment a police car’s lights go on to the time a breath sample is taken.

An RCMP officer performs a breathalyzer test on a driver during a roadside check in Surrey, B.C., in September 2010. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Darryl Dyck

Federal law in Canada should mandate police camera use in three cases — any time police conduct an arrest or a detention of more than a brief duration, when they carry out a residential search and when they pull a person over for impaired driving.

Privacy concerns will arise in sensitive, intrusive situations. In those cases, police should be required to seek consent and not record anything sexually invasive.

There should also be laws to address what happens to the video that police record and when they fail to record when mandated. A failure could form the basis for a challenge under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, possibly resulting in a stay of prosecution.

Body-cams as a tool of justice

As recent events in the United States and Canada have made clear, body-cam use is no guarantee against police brutality.

A body camera is seen on a Los Angeles Police Department officer in January 2015. (AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes)

There may even be a danger that greater exposure to police violence will desensitize us to it. But as George Floyd’s death demonstrates, capturing police conduct on video can still lead to greater accountability.

Trudeau should be lauded for supporting body-cam use in Canada. Making it law would make cameras a tool of justice. Leaving it up to police would make them another weapon for potential abuse.

**Note: This article appears 4 more times.**

"Once a year weekend course, that can't be it", Von Katja Ridderbusch (<https://www.welt.de/wissenschaft/article210167603/Polizeigewalt-in-USA-Neue-Strategien-zur-Deeskalation.html>) (Translated article from german)

In the United States, African Americans are disproportionately killed in police operations. Experts are now developing training programs for more self-control and de-escalation. That's how it's supposed to work.

Ahen a white police officer shot and killed 18-year-old unarmed African American Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, in August 2014, as a wave of protests swept the city and later the country, D. Brian Burghart became a sought-after man.

TV stations from all over the world interviewed him, and researchers sought his help. "That was my 15 minutes of fame," says the former journalist and data scientist.

Since then, these moments have been repeated at regular sad intervals - mostly when an African American dies in a fight with the police. Most recently, when George Floyd choked under a police officer's knee in Minneapolis and Rayshard Brooks was hit by two bullets in the back and died shortly thereafter.

Actually, Burghart prefers to work in the dark than in the spotlight. In 2012, he launched a website that compiles incidents of fatal police violence in the United States since 2000. " Fatal Encounters " is the name of the project, fatal encounters.

America is choking on violence

After that, more than 1,000 people die at the hands of the police in the United States every year. More than 28,100 deaths in 20 years. 26 percent of the victims - one in four - are African American, although blacks make up only 13 percent of the American population. "The data speak a clear and unambiguous language," says Burghart.

The deaths of Floyd and Brooks have sparked a fundamental debate about systemic racism and social justice in the United States. Sociologists and criminologists have long been evaluating the available data and researching how police violence could be reduced.

At the top of the list of measures currently under discussion is a reform of police training. The requirement is not new, says Justin Nix, a professor of criminology at the University of Nebraska in Omaha. De-escalation and awareness training to overcome prejudice has been around for decades and is conducted in many of the 18,000 police departments in the US.

However: It depends on the type and depth of the training. "Holding a weekend course once a year, that can't be it," says Nix. Police officers must be trained regularly, practically and sustainably. As in a randomized control study that Scott Wolfe, a criminologist at Michigan State University, recently conducted with colleagues from two police departments.

With the police in Lafayette, a South Carolina city with a large black population, and with the police in Tucson, Arizona, where almost 42 percent of the residents are Hispanic.

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In both authorities, a group of police officers was subjected to six months of intensive social interaction training: which verbal and non-verbal means of de-escalation can be used in which situation, how does a police officer maintain self-control and resist the reflex to immediately use a deadly weapon ?

The results, which will soon be published in the journal Criminology & Public Policy , inspire hope. "Police officers who have undergone the training place greater value on procedural fairness - on fair communication with citizens," says Wolfe. After the training, some of the test persons also showed more self-control in action, reports Wolfe - "and resorted less quickly to violence as a first resort".

Unlike in Germany, the use of firearms is the focus of police training in the USA, says Anne Nassauer, professor of sociology at the John F. Kennedy Institute for American Studies at the Free University of Berlin and guest researcher at Yale University in New Haven (Connecticut).

“Among other things, because significantly more people in the USA own a firearm and the police have to assume that a person is armed and, if in doubt, shoots quickly. But also because the police as a whole are being trained more to use their firearms.”

How Cities Generate Violence

Many of the cases in which African Americans die in police encounters follow a similar pattern: they resist arrest or attempt to flee, and the police officers take up arms and fire.

This is what happened at Brown in Ferguson in 2014 and at Brooks in Atlanta just under two weeks ago. Various models of violence prevention suggest that police officers should be given more training in the graduated use of alternative, non-lethal weapons - from tasers and rubber bullets to batons and pepper spray.

America's Perfect Storm

Studies also show that racist stereotypes reduce the inhibition threshold for violence. "Many police officers feel more threatened by a black person," says Nassauer. The researcher refers to the Iconic Ghetto theory developed by the American sociologist Elijah Anderson: the association that African Americans come from a criminal inner-city ghetto and therefore pose a greater risk.

In November 2014, for example, the police dispatcher in Cleveland (Ohio) reported that an African-American man was handling a gun in a park and issued code one, the highest danger level.

In fact, it was the 12-year-old boy Tamir Rice, who was out with a toy gun. The patrolman who was the first to arrive immediately opened fire. The boy died a day later.

Effective training to break down racist prejudices and thought patterns should not be content with simply pointing to abstract racism, stresses Nassauer. Rather, it has to run through concrete situational scenarios and help police officers to "break open and question the mechanisms of their perception".

Researchers also consider the demilitarization of police units to be an important measure to prevent violence. It is intended to counteract the so-called 1033 program, part of a law that President Bill Clinton signed into law in 1997.

It stipulates that the Pentagon will turn over surplus material - from armored vehicles and helicopters to grenade launchers, bayonets and assault rifles to gas masks - to the police free of charge.

A 2017 study by Gardner-Webb University in North Carolina concluded that "there is a significant correlation between the transfer (of military equipment) and the number of deaths in a police operation involving the use of firearms".

The authors conclude that ending the program and recalling military equipment will result in "fewer police killings." But the chances of that happening are slim right now. President Barack Obama restricted the program by presidential decree in 2015, and his successor Donald Trump lifted the restriction again.

"I have bad news for racists"

The slogan "Defund the Police" -- calling for police budget cuts -- evokes a knee-jerk fear in many of an increase in crime, says Nix. But that doesn't necessarily have to be the case.

“If budgets are strategically cut and funds are systematically redistributed, this can also lead to the police being deployed more heavily in areas where they are really needed – and to experts taking over in other areas who are better suited to the respective situation .”

For example: If people with mental illnesses - such as schizophrenia , psychoses , alcohol and drug addiction - become publicly conspicuous, the police are usually called as first aiders, "because there is no other contact point," says Nix.

But police officers are often hardly trained in dealing with the mentally ill, misinterpret their reactions, and the situation escalates. According to the Washington Post, 25 percent of people killed in police operations every year -- more than 250 people -- have a mental illness.

On the other hand, expectations that the use of body cameras would reduce fatal police operations have not been fulfilled, says Nix.

After all , studies examining the effect of bodycams have shown that there are fewer complaints about police officers. The researcher says that could be because police officers are behaving more professionally or because citizens are reluctant to file irrelevant complaints.

Activists have taken over a police station: the word "police" has been replaced here with "people".

PROTEST ZONE IN SEATTLE

The dream of the police-free zone ends with gunshots

Bodycams can also help reconstruct the course of a police operation step by step, as is the case with Brooks, who was shot dead by Officer Garrett Rolfe on June 12 in Atlanta.

Brooks had blocked the passage to a fast food restaurant with his car when he - apparently intoxicated - fell asleep at the wheel. Rolfe questioned Brooks for a good 40 minutes, the conversation was calm and professional.

When Rolfe finally wanted to arrest Brooks after a breath test and take him to the police station, Brooks fought back, attacked Rolfe and his colleague, stole a taser and pointed the gun at Rolfe, who then fired several shots at the fleeing Brooks.

Brooks died in hospital shortly thereafter; the prosecutor brought murder charges against Rolfe.

Under public pressure, President Trump has now signed an executive order on police reform, which the Democrats, however, described as too weak and vague.

While the order restricts the use of the stranglehold that killed Floyd and requires the sharing of information between law enforcement agencies, it does not facilitate prosecutions of officers who use excessive force.

In addition to the lack of political will, the enormous demographic, social and administrative diversity of the USA also poses a huge challenge for effective police reform, says criminologist Nix.

We are no less racist than the US

Each of the 18,000 police departments in the country works in a different community that has different problems. The central government must provide a clear framework. "But policing reform in Los Angeles looks different than policing reform in New York or Atlanta."

Nevertheless, despite all the hurdles, "the window for far-reaching reforms is currently more open than ever," Nix continues. "And as a country, we have to seize this opportunity."

Body Cameras Don’t Make Police More Accountable, Jennifer Doleac. (<https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/body-cameras-don-t-make-police-more-accountable-1.1472518>)

(Bloomberg Opinion) -- The death last spring of George Floyd has led to calls for greater accountability for police, appeals that are both reasonable and familiar. One way departments have responded to earlier such demands, following similar such incidents, has been to adopt body-worn cameras — and the results have been decidedly mixed.

Body cameras are typically turned on at the beginning of any interaction with civilians. The idea is that recording officers’ interactions would lead to better behavior. If officers know in the moment that what they are doing is wrong, then knowing that the camera is recording them could deter such behavior.

The cameras themselves are cheap, but storage and the redaction of footage (for when release to the public is necessary) is expensive. Private companies have made a bundle from local officials’ desire to address citizens’ concerns.

Did the public get anything for this investment? This is a rare instance where there is a lot of research. Many cities rolled out body-worn cameras as a randomized controlled trial — assigning some officers to wear cameras and others not. By comparing otherwise identical officers with and without cameras, researchers were able to measure the impact of the cameras themselves.

In many places, the researchers found, civilian complaints against officers went down. But this could be due to a decline in more frivolous, unsubstantiated complaints and doesn’t necessarily reflect a change in police behavior. In some places, use of force by officers went down, while in others it went up (perhaps because officers believed the video would show the facts were on their side). In still other places, there was no effect at all. In some places assigning officers to wear cameras led to an increase in assaults against those officers; this could be because the cameras themselves caused confrontations to escalate, or because the officers were more hesitant to defend themselves when they were being recorded.

All in all, the research does not point to a definitive conclusion — except maybe that body cameras alone do not lead to better officer-citizen interactions.

One question is why this technology, which sounded so promising initially, didn’t have the intended benefits. It could be that most officers who use unnecessary force do so because they genuinely fear for their physical safety — even if, in retrospect, it appears they were overreacting. In other words, the unnecessary use of force might not be malicious. If someone fails to keep their cool in a stressful situation, then cameras alone are unlikely to deter officers’ behavior, because that behavior isn’t a really a choice.

There is another argument for the use of body cameras: Even if they don’t always deter bad behavior, they can tell departments where to direct their attention. In some cases, additional training could be helpful. Yet policing is difficult and dangerous work, and it isn’t for everyone. Some people won’t change their behavior no matter how much training they receive. These people should not be police officers.

Could cameras at least help identify those people? Possibly. But as it turns out, identifying problem officers is not difficult. Past complaints predict future bad behavior. Even if police departments had the capacity to watch tens of thousands of hours of body-worn camera footage — and they don’t — such scrutiny would be of marginal utility in helping them figure out who needs training, reprimanding or firing. Their data on citizen complaints provide the information they need.

This leads to the question of why they’re not using it. After all, officers who receive a lot of complaints don’t necessarily face bad consequences. Similarly, video evidence of bad behavior doesn’t lead to bad consequences. In fact, even a viral video of a police officer killing someone who posed no threat does not always result in charges filed against that officer, or lead to that officer losing their job. (And in instances where officers do lose their jobs, it appears relatively easy for them to simply move to another department.) In short, bad behavior has few costs for police officers.

Police departments should be encouraged to experiment with different interventions, even if unions resist. Police chiefs need to address bad behavior before it does even more damage. When officers behave badly on the job, they should face consequences — just like employees in any industry. What exactly should happen to them — should they get more training or mentoring, or punishment, or lose their badge and gun? — is the crucial question, and it’s one for which body cameras don’t provide an answer.

As an economist, I love data. I also believe strongly in the power of incentives. Body-worn camera programs are an expensive attempt to find a way to build trust between police officers and their communities. Video footage alone can’t do that, however, if there are no consequences for the bad behavior it reveals.

This column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial board or Bloomberg LP and its owners.

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Racially Biased Policing: Can It Be Fixed?, Chris Woolston (<https://www.discovermagazine.com/mind/racially-biased-policing-can-it-be-fixed>)

The killing of George Floyd by a white police officer in Minneapolis shook the nation and set off massive protests around the world over the last few months — putting unprecedented attention on racial bias in law enforcement. For Phillip Atiba Goff, a social psychologist at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, the tragedy hit especially close to home.

A Black man in a historically white field, Goff has been using every tool at his disposal — research, data and personal persuasion — for well over a decade now, to prevent unequal and unjust treatment of minorities at the hands of police. He has personally worked with police departments in dozens of US cities, including Minneapolis. The knee on Floyd’s neck and the acts of police violence in Kenosha, Wisconsin, and elsewhere served as sobering reminders that his work was far from over. “This is what I do with my life,” he says. “The goal is fewer dead Black people and fewer Black folks in the hospital.”

Goff is the cofounder and CEO of the Center for Policing Equity (CPE), a national coalition of criminal justice scholars, law professors and former police officers. Part research hub, part advocacy organization and part boots-on-the-ground reform squad, the CPE is in the middle of one of society’s most pressing issues. By some estimates, police kill about 1,000 people annually, and those deaths aren’t evenly distributed. Black men are about 2.5 times more likely than white men to die at the hands of the police, according to a 2019 analysis in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

To understand police behavior, Goff and his colleagues combine real-world data with insights from the fields of social psychology and criminal justice. The CPE, founded in Los Angeles and now based at Yale, has worked directly with more than 60 police departments across the country to help them evaluate — and in some cases, radically adjust — their treatment of African Americans and other people of color. Invariably, its investigations show room for improvement. A 2016 CPE report on combined findings from 12 departments around the country found that Black citizens were more than 3.5 times more likely than white citizens to be subjected to police force, ranging from bodily contact to pepper spray to shootings.

“I tell chiefs we’re going to find disparities no matter what they’re doing because disparities exist in everything we do in this country,” says Krista Dunn, a former deputy police chief in Salt Lake City who is now the CPE’s senior director of law enforcement relations. “They have to be able to accept that if they want to work with us. The science is the science.”

A few police chiefs have given Goff a nickname: “Dr. Racism.” For him, it’s a badge of honor. He was one of the first scholars to acknowledge that the unequal treatment of minorities at the hands of police was a problem worth studying. “We have people who have spent their entire lives studying policing and crime,” he says. “When you ask them about race, they say, ‘I don’t have anything interesting to say about race.’ That’s not just an indictment of the data. That’s an indictment of the field and the people in it.”

Goff brought something new to the study of criminal justice partly because he himself was something new, says Kevin Drakulich, a criminal justice researcher at Northeastern University in Boston. “There’s a real benefit to a diversity of perspectives that expands the kinds of questions we ask.”

Growing up in the suburbs of Philadelphia, Goff says he learned quickly that some cops seemed to have it in for Black people. “I figured there were some good cops and some bigots,” he says. As a scholar, he looks beyond those simple descriptions to explore the root causes of excessive force against minorities. As he and his coauthors describe in the Annual Review of Law and Social Science, cops who are inexperienced, under-trained, unsupervised and stressed out are the most likely to lash out at vulnerable people.

Goff’s embrace of data and research undoubtedly changed policing, says David Harris, a law professor at the University of Pittsburgh and the author of A City Divided: Race, Fear and the Law in Police Confrontations (Anthem Press, 2020). “The Center for Policing Equity has been one of the most impactful organizations for police reform,” he says. “The sheer force of [Goff’s] charisma and personality, along with [CPE cofounder] Tracie Keesee, got a whole bunch of police departments to sign up for their approach.” The police, Harris says, deserve some of the credit. “A generation of leaders coming to the top are saying, ‘We see we have problems. Maybe we should allow researchers to work with us.’”

The Center for Policing Equity has addressed a variety of policing issues at departments across the United States, including these notable examples. (Credit: Knowable Magazine)

Indeed, Goff doesn’t have to file lawsuits or otherwise push to investigate police departments. Chiefs invite him to investigate their departments’ arrest records, use of force and overall engagement with minorities. Some chiefs, Goff says, are already aware that they have serious issues within their ranks. “They tell me behind closed doors that they have some bigoted officers,” he says. “And they have new officers who never should have made it out of the academy. They want me to solve the problem.”

But Goff says his focus isn’t on erasing racist attitudes. Instead, he tries to understand the law enforcement culture, policies and practices that can turn bias into action. “I really don’t care what kind of internal attitude you’ve got, as long as it never becomes a behavior,” he says. Besides, he adds, accusations of racism can backfire. A 2019 survey of 784 police officers conducted by Goff and colleagues found that cops who were concerned about being labeled racist or having their legitimacy questioned were also more likely to endorse violence and coercion against civilians. The authors concluded that officers who feel negatively stereotyped are apt to use violence to regain a sense of control.

The best way to prevent the racist behavior of police officers is to avoid the type of situations that can bring them to light in the first place, Goff and his colleagues say. The CPE’s investigations have found that potential triggers can vary from place to place: too many high-adrenaline foot pursuits in Las Vegas, too many encounters with mentally ill people in Seattle, too much immigration enforcement in Salt Lake City. “American policing is hyper-local,” Harris says. “You can’t expect the Department of Justice to just tell all the police departments to take one approach.” In his view, the CPE’s city-by-city method is the best — though not a perfect — way to understand and address the issues.

Police chiefs who reach out to the CPE are eager to understand what’s going on in their own departments, Dunn says. “They always tell me that they can’t fix what they don’t know.” The data are often scattershot and shoddy, but CPE’s experts can still spot important trends. A 2016 review of the Austin Police Department in Texas, for example, found that Black drivers were about four times more likely than white drivers to be pulled over and arrested. Officers used force against Black people at a rate roughly three times higher than Hispanics and six times higher than whites. (A spokesperson for the department declined to comment.)

In California, the Berkeley Police Department invited the CPE to investigate its force in 2015. “We had years of data but no robust analysis,” says Berkeley Police Chief Andrew Greenwood, who was a captain at the time. “CPE has always been interested in looking at science and data to understand what’s going on and how best to police. It’s a big task.”

The CPE’s Berkeley report, published in 2018, found that Black drivers were 6.5 times more likely than white drivers to be pulled over by the police. Once stopped, Black drivers were four times more likely to be searched. However, once police search a vehicle, white drivers were about twice as likely as Black drivers to be arrested, suggesting that the bar was lower for pulling over Blacks than whites. “There’s something going on there,” Dunn says. “But we don’t know why they were stopped. It warrants further investigation.”

In a study by the Center for Policing Equity, Black and Hispanic drivers in Berkeley were more likely than white drivers to be pulled over. Rates were calculated based on Berkeley Census data; the demographics of people driving through the city may differ, the report noted. (Credit: Knowable Magazine)

The report caused a bit of a stir in Berkeley, but there are no hard feelings. “Goff is a good dude,” Greenwood says. “He reached out to me with some nice encouraging words the night of the George Floyd riots.” The respect between the CPE and the Berkeley department goes both ways. Greenwood is the “cream of the crop,” says Dunn, who led the CPE’s Berkeley investigation. “He has been 100 percent committed since Day One.” The relationship continues, and the CPE plans to complete a new report on Berkeley next year.

Greenwood does have some quibbles with the 2018 report: He notes that the calculations were based on Census data for Berkeley itself, which is less diverse than the surrounding area and the tens of thousands of people who pass through each day. Still, he took the results seriously. He says that the Berkeley Police Department is ramping up efforts to better understand racial disparities, including the outsized rates of pulling over Black drivers. Among other things, the department plans to start collecting data on the perceived race of a driver before a stop.

The CPE report on the Berkeley department found relatively few instances of force used against anyone of any race: There were 14 documented blasts of pepper spray and 28 swings of a baton from 2012 to 2016. Notably, until one event in July, Berkeley police hadn’t fired a single shot at a suspect since 2012. (No one was injured in the recent shooting.) “Their use of force is really low,” Dunn says. “It’s a testament to their training, their policies and their culture.”

The department has high standards: It requires new officers to have at least two years’ worth of college coursework in police science, psychology or a related field. Once hired, officers undergo crisis-intervention training that teaches how to de-escalate situations before they get too heated. As an extra layer of supervision, Greenwood says he reviews all body-cam footage after any use of force.

Body cameras and cell phone videos have definitely brought some bad behaviors to light, Goff says. But videos have their limits, as the CPE and others have found. A 2019 randomized control study involving more than 2,200 police offers in Washington, DC, reported that wearing a body camera didn’t meaningfully change behavior, including the use of force, over seven months or more. And a 2015 survey of Black Baltimore residents by members of CPE found that body cameras did little to improve trust in the police. Many residents felt traumatized after seeing video of encounters that ended in death and violence, the report found, especially when police were never punished.

De-escalation training, patience and supervision — the practices and approaches that seem to be working in Berkeley — could go a long way toward improving the cultures of police departments across the country, Goff says. “When we can direct behaviors, we’re removing discretion, and we’re reducing the number of decisions you have to make.” The goal, he adds, “is to create human management systems that short-circuit or interrupt the risk factors for engaging in discriminatory behaviors.”

Any attempt to rid a person — or a department — of bias would likely fail, says Kimberly Kahn, a social psychologist at Portland State University who has collaborated with Goff on several studies. She notes that racial-sensitivity training programs, popular with departments throughout the country, have never been shown to change behavior dramatically. “It’s a good step, but there’s no training that magically takes away these biases,” she says. “They are so ingrained.” (Anyone can explore their own implicit biases with this online test developed by Harvard researchers.)

Over the years, Kahn and other researchers have conducted video-game-like shooting simulations that consistently show participants — both police officers and civilians — are generally quicker to pull the trigger when confronted with a Black face. They are, for example, more likely to mistake a wallet or a cellphone for a gun if it’s held by a Black man, and the darker the face, the greater the fear and the greater the chance for mistakes.

Though bias may run deep, biased actions can be minimized through practice and training, research suggests. A 2005 study of 50 police officers in Florida found that they were more likely to “shoot” unarmed Black men than white men in a simulation, but that bias faded after repeated practice with the program. Experienced cops also tend to show more restraint in the streets. A 2004 study of a police department in Southern California found that officers aged over 40 with more than five years of experience are less than half as likely as younger, relatively inexperienced cops to be investigated for excessive force.

To better understand the big picture, Goff and colleagues at the CPE are compiling statistics from their investigations into a National Justice Database. As more data come in, police departments could see how they stack up and where they need to improve. With no federal database that tracks use of force or even fatalities, such comparisons are now difficult. By showing chiefs the reality of racial disparities in their own ranks, the CPE is laying the groundwork for reform, Harris says. “When we look back in 10 or 20 years, we’ll see the center as one of those places where new thinking and new leadership began to take hold, even if there were some colossal failures along the way.”

After all of his work — the scholarly research, the data deep dives, the hours of conversation with police chiefs and officers — Goff said the death of George Floyd was a “gut punch.” The location, Minneapolis, only added to the pain. Goff and his team had visited the Minneapolis Police Department in 2015, and for a while it seemed like a success story. With input from the CPE, the city had provided more social workers to engage with the homeless and the mentally ill, leaving the police to other tasks. Goff discussed the Minneapolis experience in a 2019 TED Talk titled “How We Can Make Racism a Solvable Problem — and Improve Policing” that has been viewed more than 2 million times.

In Minneapolis, “we made real changes, not just in the policy and training but in the culture,” Goff says. That progress clearly wasn’t enough to save Floyd or erase bias-driven behavior in the department. A New York Times analysis found that, in the years since the CPE intervention in 2015, Minneapolis police were at least seven times more likely to use force during encounters with Black citizens than with white citizens. “Nobody who does this work ever feels that it’s sufficient to address the scale of the problem,” Goff says. “You have to fail every day, and you get up and try to do it better the next day.”

The days ahead look promising. In the wake of the Floyd killing, Dunn says that she has received a flurry of queries from police departments seeking help. And in recent months, the CPE has received several large donations to support its work, including $1 million each from YouTube and Reed Hastings, the founder of Netflix.

More important, Goff says the protests led by Black Lives Matter and other activist groups — over Floyd’s death and the shootings of other Black Americans like Breonna Taylor and Jacob Blake — have sharpened the focus on the racially problematic history of policing in the US, forcing departments everywhere to think about new approaches. And the CPE will be there to help show the way. “If there’s ever a new world where we can reimagine how public safety looks,” Goff says, “it will be because the protests made us do it.”

ACLU of R.I. calls on Providence Police Department to enforce stronger compliance of body camera policy, Corey Gelb-Bicknell. (<https://www.browndailyherald.com/article/2021/01/aclu-of-r-i-calls-on-providence-police-department-to-enforce-stronger-compliance-of-body-camera-policy>)

The American Civil Liberties Union of Rhode Island wrote a letter on Jan. 15 to Providence Chief of Police Hugh Clements Jr. and Commissioner of Public Safety Steven Paré imploring them to take actions that “ensure stronger compliance” of the Providence Police Department’s body camera policy.

Though the PPD is working to increase compliance, researchers and external reviewers emphasize that body camera activation may be more useful for providing evidence than for preventing police misconduct.

The PPD’s body camera policy requires officers to activate their cameras whenever there is “reasonable suspicion that someone is or may be involved in criminal activity,” when force is being used and when investigating potential illegal activities, such as traffic stops and building searches, according to the Providence Journal. The policy was implemented four years ago.

But according to the ACLU of R.I.’s letter, written by its Executive Director Steven Brown, many police officers failed to activate their body cameras in three of the most publicized instances of alleged PPD misconduct over the past year, including three officers involved in Jhamal Gonsalves’ moped crash Oct. 18, which left Gonsalves in a two-month coma. Gonsalves remains in long-term care. In each of these instances, Brown wrote that “no officer received anything more than a verbal reprimand for this blatant violation of departmental (body camera) policy.”

“The body camera policy is regularly flouted, violations are rarely punished and the transparency these cameras are supposed to provide the public is undermined,” Brown wrote. He added that he believes the 20 body camera activation violations, which had been reported between January 2018 and June 2020, underrepresented the actual number of violations due to what he believes is an “extremely lacking” auditing process.

In response to the letter’s allegations of insufficient discipline following violations, Clements told The Herald that the department utilizes a range of disciplinary actions depending upon the circumstances of the incident. The department takes into account whether the violation was repeated and whether the incident was abrupt or life-threatening, among other factors. Officers have been suspended in the past for violating the policy, he added.

The Providence Department of Public Safety conducts “regular internal audits and compliance checks” for body cameras, Public Information Officer for the Providence Department of Public Safety Lindsay Lague wrote in an email to The Herald.

According to Clements, the police department’s auditing process has shown a body camera activation compliance above 90 percent. Clements believes that 90 percent is “very good,” but hopes to improve.

Body camera activation played a crucial role in the investigation of another incident of police misconduct cited in the ACLU of R.I.’s letter. Providence Police Sgt. Joseph Hanley allegedly punched, kicked, taunted and kneeled on the neck of handcuffed suspect Rishod Gore during his arrest in April 2020, according to a report released by the Providence External Review Authority. The PERA is responsible for investigating officers in the Providence Police Department for allegations of misconduct, according to their website.

While three officers were on the scene, only one — not Hanley — had activated their body camera, according to the ACLU’s letter. PERA’s report stated that they were only able to document these violations from the single active body camera video, as well as a civilian recording.

Jose Batista, former executive director of PERA, said that he was fired for releasing the body camera video and civilian recording of Gore’s arrest to the public despite a vote from the PERA board to withhold public release of the evidence because Hanley’s criminal trial was still underway. Batista told The Herald that such body camera footage could bring “the ugliness” of police misconduct to the public’s view.

Batista wrote in an op-ed in the Providence Journal after his firing: “I was willing to bet a $90,000 salary that allowing the public to know and confront the full facts about what took place on the night of April 19, 2020, would sooner yield more meaningful, efficient and permanent justice versus the one-count misdemeanor complaint produced by our law-enforcement apparatus behind closed doors.”

Still, Batista warned that compliance with the body camera policy alone would not resolve instances of police misconduct. “Body cams are not stopping violence, not stopping killings and shootings,” he said, but they do “collect more evidence.”

Brown echoed the sentiment. “The use of police body cameras is not a panacea,” he told The Herald. “But it certainly is a big step forward. It provides some evidence that can be used to try to figure out exactly what happened in any given case.”

A 2019 study, conducted by Director of The Policy Lab at Brown David Yokum and others, randomly assigned body cameras to half of the officers in the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, D.C. to investigate whether officers would be less likely to act inappropriately in the “heat of the moment” if they knew they were being filmed, according to Yokum. Researchers found that police body cameras “did not meaningfully affect police behavior on a range of outcomes, including complaints and use of force.”

Yokum believes that a variety of factors could explain their results, such as the possibility that live filming is not enough to significantly mitigate aggressive behavior by police. Another possibility is that the use of force by police officers could have been justified by the circumstances in most cases, Yokum said.

He added that companies are developing new body cameras that will activate automatically for officers, which could reduce the department’s alleged noncompliance in the future.

While there was not a basis for the ACLU to pursue legal action against the department for the alleged lack of adherence to the body camera policy, Brown said that a lawsuit could theoretically be filed for individual cases.

“Whether it has been deliberate or inadvertent is unclear on some of the occasions,” Brown added. “But it indicates that there's a serious problem that needs addressing.”

A jury found a police officer guilty of killing George Floyd. Everything, now racism and police violence in the USA are defeated?, Scott Olson. (<https://meduza.io/feature/2021/04/24/sud-prisyazhnyh-priznal-politseyskogo-vinovnym-v-ubiystve-dzhordzha-floyda-vse-teper-rasizm-i-politseyskoe-nasilie-v-ssha-pobezhdeny>)

**Note: This article was translated from Russian**

On April 20, 2021, a jury found former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin guilty of killing African-American George Floyd. And while the verdict was generally received with a mixture of joy and relief in the US, many questions related to racism, police accountability to the public and police abuse of power remain open. Meduza asked Yan Veselov , editor of the One Big Union telegram channel, to look into what exactly led American society to this verdict — and what the consequences would be.

What happened?

On May 25, 2020, in the largest city of Minnesota, Minneapolis, the police received a telephone complaint about a man who behaved inappropriately and paid in a store with a counterfeit $20 bill. Two policemen arrived at the call: Alexander Kyeng and Thomas Lane . Across the street from the store, whose owner called the police, they found the suspect, 46-year-old African American George Floyd, in a parked car, asked him to get out of the car and handcuffed him.

They were soon joined by police officers Tu Tao and Derek Chauvin , who assumed command. Together they put Floyd in a police car, although he complained of claustrophobia and feeling unwell. Apparently, Floyd was able to get out of the car and fell near her. Then Chauvin pinned down his neck with his knee, while Kyung and Lane held his legs and torso. Floyd several times asked Chauvin to remove his leg from his neck, repeating that he had nothing to breathe and he was about to die. The police called an ambulance, but continued to hold Floyd in this position even after he stopped moving and showing signs of life. Chauvin squeezed Floyd's neck with his knee even after the arrival of the doctors. Floyd died in the ambulance on the way to the hospital.

A frame from a video of the detention of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, which was filmed on a mobile phone and posted on Facebook by one of the eyewitnesses of the incident, a resident of Minneapolis Darnella Fraser. She was a witness for the prosecution at the trial.

Two autopsies were soon performed, one by a local pathologist , and the second by an independent one , at the request of Floyd's relatives. The autopsy experts agreed that death was due to a lack of oxygen due to severe compression of the neck. Pathologist Andrew Baker, who conducted the initial autopsy, also pointed to chronic heart disease and Floyd's blood levels of the drugs methamphetamine and fentanyl, but considered that they only aggravated Floyd's condition, and were not the cause of death.

It was initially reported that Chauvin kept his knee on Floyd's neck for 7 or 8 minutes and 46 seconds , but according to the published videos from police body cameras, it appears that the number of 9 minutes and 30 seconds is more correct. A press release posted on the Minneapolis Police website initially did not say a word about this, but only said that Floyd was handcuffed and died of medical complications. It is possible that Floyd's death would not have attracted public attention if it were not for several videos that were filmed by witnesses to his detention, including African-American Darnella Fraser (her Facebook stream is considered the most detailed testimony).

The result was a wave of mass protests in hundreds of cities in all states; some of them escalated into clashes with police and riots. On May 26, all four officers involved in the arrest were fired , and two days later the FBI opened its own investigation . Initially, Derek Chauvin wanted to make a deal with the investigation and plead guilty to murder in exchange for a 10-year prison term, but Attorney General William Barr, appointed by President Trump, refused to conclude a deal .

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

In the United States - mass protests and riots: the police killed an African American. Minneapolis is on fire, troops have entered there

In terms of violence at mass protests in the United States, 2020 is catching up with the record year 1968. Demonstrations have been going on for three months - and are unlikely to end anytime soon

“We are of the same race. Of the human race” The police themselves joined the protests against police violence in the United States. Mass actions are now taking place throughout the country

The same injustice that great-grandparents fought For almost two weeks now, America has been gripped by protests. Meduza report from Washington

How Derek Chauvin's Trial Went

In the end, Minnesota authorities charged Chauvin with three counts of third-degree murder , second-degree manslaughter , and second-degree negligent homicide , and released him on bail of one million dollars. Three other former police officers have been charged with aiding and abetting the murder, and their trial is scheduled for August 23, 2021. Floyd's family also filed a civil lawsuit against the Minneapolis authorities, and the city administration agreed to pay $27 million in compensation to the relatives of the deceased, the largest amount in US history in such a case.

The trial of Derek Chauvin began on March 8, 2021 and will last until April 20. For the first time in Minnesota history, it was televised in its entirety live; the audience was about 23 million people. 12 people and 3 reserve jurors were selected for the anonymous jury . At the same time, people with a clearly formed position on the police and protests against their actions were excluded. At the selection stage, two jurors were challenged due to their position on compensation for Floyd's family, and one juror was expelled on the basis that he lived in the area where Floyd was killed.

The court heard the testimony of 45 witnesses: 38 for the prosecution and 7 for the defense. Chauvin himself refused to testify, citing the 5th Amendment to the Constitution, which allows you not to testify against yourself. In addition to Darnella Frazier and other first-hand witnesses to Floyd's murder, the prosecutor brought in the local police chief, who said that Chauvin had grossly violated the rules of arrest, two medical experts who claimed that there was no evidence of Floyd's death from a drug overdose, and an autopsy pathologist, who confirmedthat the main cause of death was the effects of strangulation. The defense side, in turn, tried to prove through questions to witnesses that Floyd was very aggressive, the actions of the policemen were correct, and death was caused by a combination of different factors, and not by strangulation.

After almost two months of court hearings, the jury unanimously found Chauvin guilty on all three counts. The punishment for him will be determined at a separate court session in a few weeks, but according to the articles presented, he faces approximately 12.5 years in prison . True, the term may increase to 40 years in prison if the presence of aggravating circumstances is established . In addition, Chauvin has the opportunity to appeal.

And what, police violence in the US is over?

Chauvin's verdict was largely met with approval. A large rally was held outside the courthouse in Minneapolis, which critics considered to be pressure on the jury. US President Joe Biden, who said he was praying "for the right verdict," and Democratic Congresswoman Maxine Waters , who called to protest if Chauvin was acquitted, were also criticized for this . In general, public opinion in the United States was clearly not on the side of Chauvin: according to a Morning Consult poll , only 7% of respondents believed that Chauvin should be found not guilty, and according to Ipsos , no more than 15% of respondents supported the acquittal.

However, news of Chauvin's sentencing was overshadowed by more incidents of police violence. In a suburb of Minneapolis, about 15 kilometers from the place where Floyd died, police shot and killed another African American , Donte Wright. His car was pulled over, presumably because of an air freshener hanging from the rearview mirror (it's illegal in Minnesota ). The police tried to detain Wright, but he resisted, tried to get back into the car and was killed . According to police, the officer mistook the gun for a stun gun and shot Wright.

The reaction to the incident was mass protests, which in some places escalated into the looting of stores (about 20 outlets were affected). True, the police mostly dispersed people who had gathered near the police headquarters. Toward night, on the orders of Democratic Governor Tim Walz, the National Guard was brought in. The reporters who covered the protests got it: they were severely detained and sprayed with tear liquid on their faces. The local court even issued a ban on arrests and the use of special equipment against journalists.

On the same day that the jury returned a verdict on Derek Chauvin, in the capital of Ohio, Columbus, a police officer who arrived on a call about a domestic conflict killed 16-year-old black girl Makia Bryant by shooting her four times. Bryant had a kitchen knife in her hands and threatened another woman with it. After the video from the body camera of a police officer was published , a discussion flared up again on the topic of whether it is possible to somehow stop such conflicts without the use of firearms.

And on April 16, a video of police harassing 13-year-old Adam Toledo in Chicago was released . Judging by the footage, the teenager had a pistol with him, and although Toledo threw it away, stopped and raised his hands at the request of the policeman, he still shot at him, mortally wounding him.

What is wrong with the American police?

According to a database maintained by the Washington Post since 2015, police in the United States kill approximately 1,000 people a year. While the vast majority of the 5,000 killed by police were carrying firearms , about 400 were unarmed. Among them are quite high-profile murders of blacks , like Eric Garner , 12-year-old Tamir Rice or Breonna Taylor .

NPR estimates that since 2015, 135 unarmed African Americans have been killed by police officers. Of these, only in 13 cases were police officers charged with premeditated murder and in 7 with manslaughter. Only four people were found guilty - two for each article. 33 murders ended in forced or voluntary dismissal, but three of those fired went back to work in the police, and 5 in other law enforcement agencies. Although African Americans make up only 13% of the US population, they account for 27% of police killings, and in the case of killings of unarmed people, the figure reaches as much as 35% .

But the rarity of police convictions is not just about race. According to one study , between 2005 and 2019, 104 police officers were charged with murder in the line of duty. 34 were found guilty, of which only 4 of premeditated murder, 18 more of unintentional murder.

Looking at the statistics by race, among non-black police officers, 29 were found guilty (for killing 19 blacks and 10 other races) and 38 were acquitted (for killing 21 blacks and 17 victims of other races). At the same time, African American police officers were convicted in 6 cases (3 black victims and 3 other races) and acquitted in 7 (all 7 victims were African Americans). A recent article in Vox cites data showing that a total of 139 police officers were charged and 42 convicted (7 of them for premeditated murder).

Why is this happening? One of the reasons is related to the doctrine of the so-called "qualified immunity" , which severely limits the ability of citizens to file lawsuits against law enforcement officials for violations of their rights. In order to be able to sue the police, it is necessary to prove that, firstly, the police used excessive force, and secondly, (and here is the craziest part) in the practice of the court there must be a similar precedent in which the court decided not in favor of the police. And the degree of similarity of the case should be extremely high, sometimes down to the position of the hands and other small details of the circumstances of the detention.

This does not mean that the illegal actions of the police go completely unpunished - rather, the responsibility for them is shifted to the taxpayers. It was mentioned above that the Minneapolis authorities paid the Floyd family 27 million as compensation on the lawsuit. This practice is not at all unique : over the past 10 years, the authorities of 31 American cities have paid more than three billion dollars in compensation for police actions.

Police violence is also associated with internal law enforcement practices. According to a report by researchers from the University of Chicago on approaches to the use of police violence in the United States, none of the police departments in America's largest 20 cities have officially established standards for the use of violence against detainees and suspects that meet the level of international human rights organizations.

A 2006 US Department of Justice report stated that police academies allot about 60 hours for weapons training and another 50 hours for self-defense courses. But only eight hours are spent on resolving conflicts through diplomatic means. A similar 2016 report found that on average 168 hours were spent on courses related to the use of force, only 16 hours on handling non-lethal weapons (and 12% of academies do not teach this at all), and nine hours on conflict resolution. (there are no such courses at all in 18% of academies).

Is it true that the US wants to abolish the police? And who will replace them? We exhaustively answer these (and other) questions about why Americans have stopped loving their police

Minneapolis activists have turned an empty hotel into a homeless community with no police. Many were delighted with the experiment, but it did not last long

And what to do with it?

In addition to the abolition of the aforementioned “qualified immunity” for police officers, which will allow citizens to actively sue law enforcement officers who violate their rights, there are quite a few proposals to reduce unjustified police violence and increase their accountability to the population.

In March 2021, the lower house of the US Congress passed the George Floyd law (although the chances of its successful passage through the Senate are rather small). It abolishes "qualified immunity", prohibits "racial profiling" and the use of asphyxiation by police during arrests. All federal law enforcement officers are going to be required to wear body cameras. Although studies show that they have no effect on the use of forcepolice officers, cameras allow at least to record offenses, and not rely on the testimony of law enforcement officers. There have also been proposals to revive the federal Justice Department's program of oversight of "troubled" urban police departments, which was launched under President Barack Obama and began to wind down under Donald Trump.

Since the federal government in the US has very little influence over state and city law enforcement, the main reform effort should come from there. Since May 2020, a number of states have adopted about 140 police-related laws. They also mostly involve legal immunity for police officers, body cameras, bans on chokeholds, and restrictions on searches that can be carried out without notice.

In addition, there are often proposals to standardize and improve police training programs with an emphasis on conflict resolution skills without the use of lethal weapons, create a single database of employees who commit offenses in order to deprive them of the opportunity to get similar positions in other cities or other law enforcement agencies, redistribute funding from the police in favor of other social services, or limiting the powers of the police (for example, a ban on non-traffic stops) or transferring these powers to other services. The high influence of police unions is also considered one of the problems., who not only achieve high salaries and pensions, but also create a system of collective responsibility among the police, making it difficult to dismiss colleagues who break the law.

### *Exploring the Potential for Body-Worn Cameras to Reduce Violence in Police-Citizen Encounters, (White, Michael D.*)

Body cameras on French police officers: what the experience of the United States and Canada teaches us, Fabrice Lollia. (<https://theconversation.com/cameras-corporelles-sur-les-policiers-francais-ce-que-nous-apprend-lexperience-des-etats-unis-et-du-canada-152731>)

**Note: This article was translated from French**

The introduction in France of portable cameras within the security forces (police, firefighters) is topical . Its implementation, scheduled for next summer, aims to improve citizen-police relations and increase transparency during interventions.

However, opinions from the “field” diverge. Some are in favor of it , in the name of protecting the rights of citizens; others believe, on the contrary, that such a measure would have negative effects on interventions because it would create a climate of voyeurism and excessive surveillance of the action of the police.

In any case, it is appropriate to question the scientific research carried out on this theme internationally, as no results of scientific studies carried out in France are available to date. Remember that in France more than 300 municipalities participated in an experiment carried out from June 2016 to June 2018, which only concerned municipal police officers. This experiment was the subject of a report intended for the Ministry of the Interior. Suspended following the lack of legal framework, the wearing of pedestrian cameras officially resumed for the municipal police as soon as the application decree of March 27, 2019 was published, which supplements the law of August 3, 2018.again authorizing the use of body cameras by the municipal police.

In Europe, the practice of equipping police officers with cameras is already applied in several countries, including Germany , the United Kingdom and Denmark . But for the moment, it is in the United States and Canada that scientific studies have been carried out on this question.

Analysis of the world, from experts

What studies have been done on this?

Let us first recall that it is presumed that body cameras can have a dissuasive impact both on the people subject to interventions and on the police officers themselves: knowing that their behavior is being filmed, the police officers as well as the citizens would act in a way that is more in line with the social expectations associated with this type of situation.

A reference study on this question: the analysis of the results of the experiment conducted in 2013 in Rialto, California .

These revealed that police use of force was half as common among the experimental group (police officers who wore body cameras) and that there was an 87% drop in complaints over the period. test. It is moreover this experiment that provided the Obama administration with the necessary legitimacy to subsidize police services wishing to buy body cameras as a sign of transparency towards the population.

A four-year follow-up study indicated that the decline in police use of force was sustained over time . It should be noted that the city of Rialto has recorded a spectacular drop in complaints against the police . The same effect will be observed in other American cities, including Mesa (Arizona), Phoenix (also in Arizona), Orlando (Florida), Las Vegas (Nevada), Milwaukee (Wisconsin) and Spokane (Washington State) as well as in seven other unspecified towns .

Another study, published in 2014 by Arizona State University, presents the testimonies of 249 people who had interacted with police officers wearing body cameras.

It showed that people who were aware of the existence of the cameras perceived the actions of the police officers as being more "righteous" than those of the officers who were not wearing them.

Since the first literature reviews published in the United States , a second series of reviews have been published in order to update the information . They were followed by dozens of scientific articles and evaluation reports. All of this work leads to several conclusions .

The majority of empirical analyzes have focused on the impact of body cameras or on the behavior of people directly involved in a filmed police intervention; very few have focused on camera recordings, with a few exceptions. In general, these studies also focus on potential biases related to the presence of body cameras.

Almost all evaluations of the impact of body-worn cameras generally measure this impact on three dimensions, referred to as the “Big Three”: citizen resistance, police use of force and complaints against police officers.

Thus, three studies were conducted in Canada, in Edmonton in 2015 , in Toronto in 2016 and in Montreal in 2019 . Positive effects have been observed: a greater ease in assessing the relevance of complaints against the police, a reduction in the aggressiveness and rudeness of citizens (Edmonton) as well as the perception that it was appropriate for the intervention be filmed (Toronto).

It is specified that the impact of body cameras, however, depended on the situation and was not generalized to all police interventions. Despite this, in all three cases, the presence of the cameras was not accompanied by a significant reduction in terms of the use of force by the police.

Contrasting results

In the United States, the dramatic decline in the use of force observed in Rialto and elsewhere has accelerated the deployment of body cameras, which have been used for seven years by 95% of the police in the United States. Police officers wearing body cameras would also be more likely to arrest the aggressor spouse in cases of domestic violence and to make fewer arrests overall. Which, in the context of questioning the legitimacy of the police, can be interpreted as a positive effect .

So we have, on the one hand, neutral studies in Canada, and on the other, positive studies in the United States. But no negative study to date.

“Neutral” studies in Canada: police services in Edmonton (2015), Toronto (2016) and more recently Montreal (2019) did not observe a radical change during their pilot projects.

Positive studies: In the United States, body cameras have been associated with statistically significant decreases in use of force, complaints against police officers, assaults against police officers, behaviors that interfere with police work and protest judicial. It is also noted an improvement in police productivity, citizen satisfaction with the services offered and the level of politeness of citizens and police officers during interventions.

Some tentative conclusions

The cultural aspect of the country is to be considered in the use of the tool: in Canada, the results are to be qualified insofar as the relations between citizens and the police are very good . These could be a determining factor in the successful implementation of body cameras.

Body cameras could only have a significant impact in places where the police act problematically.

The perception of body cameras by the public remains a determining factor for the adoption of the tool.

A recent study explores this question. Wallace, White, Gaub and Todak (2018) recall that body cameras are often presented and understood as a surveillance tool allowing police organizations to demonstrate the transparency of their work, and society to examine the work of police officers (Tanner and Meyer, 2015). Another study (Lollia, 2020) shows that it is above all useful to act on the public's vision of this type of tool in order to transform the perception of a surveillance tool into a protection tool to ensure better acceptance .

In any event, future scientific results drawn from experiments with body cameras on the French police should be able to improve the field approach by highlighting, in an even more explicit way, the opportunities and weaknesses linked to this field technology. .

Law and Order in School and Society: How Discipline and Policing Policies Harm Students of Color, and What We Can Do About It, Janelle T. Scott, Michele S. Moses, Kara Finnigan, Tina Trujillo, Darrell Jackson.( <https://nepc.colorado.edu/sites/default/files/publications/PB%20Law%20and%20Order_0.pdf>)

Full report here:

<https://nepc.colorado.edu/sites/default/files/publications/PB%20Law%20and%20Order_0.pdf>

### *Teaching procedural justice and communication skills during police-community encounters: Results of a randomized control trial with police recruits (Rosenbaum, Dennis P.)*

What We (Don’t) Know About Reducing Police Bias. Wen Bu (<https://thesocietypages.org/minnesota/posts/what-we-dont-know-about-reducing-police-bias/>)

The recent acquittal of Officer Jeronimo Yanez in the shooting death of Philando Castile during a traffic stop near St. Paul brought back into focus for many Minnesotans the frequency with which Black people in the United States are killed by the police. But why is it so common for officers to kill Black suspects? And what can police departments do to prevent or at least reduce these deaths in the future?

Dr. Eugene Borgida, Professor of Psychology and Law at UMN, gave a presentation in March 2017 to the Minnesota Advisory Committee of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights about the current state of psychological science on implicit bias interventions—work that has direct implications for programs designed to reduce racial bias in policing. He has also been invited to participate in a panel on implicit bias for the U.S. Attorney’s Office in the fall.

According to Dr. Borgida, certain psychological approaches show promise for reducing prejudice. These include contact with members of other groups—having friends from another group, having positive interactions with members of another group, having friends who have friends from another group, or sometimes even imagining a positive contact with a member of another group—and cooperative learning—being in an environment that requires cooperation with members of another group to achieve a common learning goal. Other interventions, especially those aimed specifically at reducing implicit bias, have shown short-term effects immediately after the intervention but no effects several hours to several days later.

More importantly for police departments, Dr. Borgida talked about existing police training programs, noting that “we know very little about the effectiveness over time of these training programs to reduce bias in police departments.” While recent research examines bias in shooting simulations and the effect of training programs on officers’ attitudes, no controlled studies have examined the effects of training programs on officers’ racial bias in the field or their involvement in shootings or other uses of force. Dr. Borgida emphasized the need for controlled studies of these programs to test whether and how they reduce bias or if some might instead backfire and increase officers’ bias.

Consistent with President Obama’s task force on 21st century policing, Dr. Borgida recommends collaboration between police and academic researchers to design and test evidence-based prejudice reduction programs that incorporate promising psychological approaches like intergroup contact or cooperative learning. Through collaboration and evidence-based policy making, two approaches Dr. Borgida stresses to his students, we might more systematically address real-world problems like police shootings of Black suspects.