Problem-Oriented Policing
Function of Police: Image

🌟 To fight crime
🌟 To enforce the law
🌟 To protect and serve
Function of Police: Reality

- To prevent and control threats to life and property
- To aid crime victims and protect individuals in danger
- To protect constitutional guarantees
- To facilitate the movement of people and vehicles
- To assist those who cannot care for themselves
- To resolve conflict between individuals, groups, or between citizens and government
- To identify problems
- To create and maintain a feeling of security in the community
Capacity
Capacity

Image

Reality
Policing Strategy

Preventive Patrol

Investigation

Rapid Response

Crackdowns

More Police
Relationship of Police to Criminal Justice System

Police
- Arrest
- No arrest

Prosecutor
- Charge filed
- No file

Court
- Convict
- Acquit

Corrections
- Jail
- Probation
Relationship of Police to Other Systems

- Licensing & Regulation
- Criminal Justice System
- Child Protection
- Dispute Resolution
- Mental Health
- Community Groups
- Drug & Alcohol Treatment
- Schools
- Juvenile Justice
- Code Enforcement
- Nuisance Abatement
- Licensing & Regulation
- Criminal Justice System
- Child Protection
- Dispute Resolution
- Mental Health
- Community Groups
- Drug & Alcohol Treatment
- Schools
- Juvenile Justice
- Code Enforcement
- Nuisance Abatement
Citizens’ Role in Policing
## Identifying & Prioritizing Problems

**Limited**

**Involved**

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7. What do you perceive to be problems in your neighborhood? A rating of 1 represents the  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Sexual Assault</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
<td>h. Burglary / Robbery</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Domestic Violence</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
<td>i. Theft</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Illegal Drug Activity</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
<td>j. Loitering / Curfew</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Gangs</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
<td>k. Vehicle Accidents</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Physical Assaults</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
<td>l. Public Drinking</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Vandalism</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
<td>m. Traffic / Speeding</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. Child Abuse</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
<td>n. Loud Parties / Noise</td>
<td>Select an Answer</td>
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<tr>
<td>o. List other issues:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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![Image of a book titled "Suspicious? Call the Police"

![Image of a group of people in a meeting](image-url)
Taking Action

Protesting

Patrolling

Cleaning

Monitoring

Petitioning
Officer Discretion

Image: None

Reality: Lots

- Where to patrol
- What to emphasize
- Whether to investigate
- How to investigate
- Whether to arrest
- How to arrest
- What alternatives to use
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Elements of Policing</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Reality</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Function</td>
<td>Simple</td>
<td>Complex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Unlimited</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance</td>
<td>Little needed</td>
<td>Lots needed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods and Means</td>
<td>Patrol/arrest</td>
<td>Varied</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Discretion</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Much</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Clear &amp; direct</td>
<td>Ambiguous</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Tight</td>
<td>Loose</td>
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<td>Organization</td>
<td>Rigid</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>Obedient</td>
<td>Adaptive</td>
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</table>
Problem-Oriented Policing

Improving Policing: A Problem-Oriented Approach

Herman Goldstein

The police have been particularly susceptible to the "reactive marvelous" syndrome, placing more emphasis on their improvement efforts on organizational and operational methods than on the substantive nature of their work. This conundrum has been led by the professional concerns within the police field, with its concentration on the staffing, management, and organization of police agencies. More and more police are questioning the underlying assumptions that improvements in the internal management of police departments will enable the police to deal more effectively with the problems they are called upon to handle. If the police are to realize a genuine return on the investment made in improving their operations, and if they are to mature as a profession, they must assume themselves more directly with the end product of their efforts.

Mating this need requires that the police develop a more systematic process for examining and addressing the problems that the public expects them to handle. It requires identifying these problems in more precise terms, searching each problem, discovering the nature of the current police response, assessing its adequacy and the adequacy of existing authority and resources, engaging in a broad exploration of alternatives to present responses, scouting the merits of these alternatives, and choosing from among them.

Improvements in staffing, organization, and management remain important, but they should be subordinated and may, in fact, be more achievable within the context of a more direct concern with the outcome of policing.

Complaints from passengers waiting to use the Rapid to Gainesville have revealed that "the drivers were spending minutes upon of up to 30 people with a smile and a wave of a hand' have been met by a statement pointing out that "it is impossible for the drivers to keep their timetable if they have to stop for passengers'."

All bureaucracies risk becoming so preoccupied with running their organizations and getting on involved in their methods of operating that they lose sight

Herman Goldstein, Political Science, University of Wisconsin at Madison. The author's is indebted to the University of Wisconsin's Departments of Law for making the time available to produce this article as part of a larger effort to rejuvenate the University's role in research and teaching for the police.


What Is Problem-Oriented Policing?

PROBLEM-ORIENTED POLICING (POP) is an approach to policing in which (1) DISCRETE PIECES OF POLICE BUSINESS (each consisting of a cluster of similar incidents, whether crimes or acts of disorder, that the police are expected to handle) are subject to (2) MICROSCOPIC EXAMINATION (drawing on the especially honed skills of crime analysts and the accumulated experience of operating field personnel) in hopes that what is freshly learned about each problem will lead to discovering a (3) NEW AND MORE EFFECTIVE STRATEGY for dealing with it. POP places a high value on new responses that are (4) PREVENTIVE in nature, that are (5) NOT DEPENDENT ON THE USE OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM, and that (6) ENGAGE OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES, THE COMMUNITY AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR when their involvement has the potential for significantly contributing to the reduction of the problem. POP carries a commitment to (7) IMPLEMENTING THE NEW STRATEGY, (8) RIGOROUSLY EVALUATING ITS EFFECTIVENESS, and, subsequently, (9) REPORTING THE RESULTS in ways that will benefit other police agencies and that will ultimately contribute to (10) BUILDING A BODY OF KNOWLEDGE that supports the further professionalization of the police.
Defining Problems

“...discrete pieces of police business...”
Defining Problems by Behavior

- Panhandling
- Robbery
- Assault
- Speeding
- Drug dealing
Defining Problems by Persons

- Gangs
- Mentally ill persons
- Chronic inebriates
- Repeat offenders
- Repeat victims
Defining Problems by Location

- Bar
- Intersection
- Neighborhood
- House
- Apartment complex
Defining Problems by Time

- Bar closing time
- Annual festival
- Rush hour
Scope of Problems

Single location/individual

Neighborhood

District

Citywide
Common Problems from A to Z

• Abandoned buildings
• Abandoned/derelict vehicles
• Assault and battery
  – Aggravated assault (see also Homicide)
  – Gun violence
  – Simple assault
  – Fighting
  – Drug-related assault (see also Drug Trafficking)…
• …Day laborer problems
• Dignitary and celebrity protection
• Disorderly youth in public places
  • Skateboarding or cycling on streets or sidewalks
• Domestic violence (aka Spousal abuse)
  • Domestic disturbances…
Common Problems from A to Z

• …Underage drinking (see also College problems)
• Unlicensed driving (see also Traffic accidents; Drunk Driving)
• Vandalism
  – Criminal damage to property
  – Graffiti
• Vehicle lockouts
• Weapons offenses
  – Trafficking in guns
• Witness intimidation
Scanning for Problems
Analyzing Problems

“...are subject to microscopic examination...”
Purpose of Analyzing Problems

“...discovering a new and more effective strategy...”
Emphasizing Prevention

“...places a high value on responses that are preventive...”
Looking for Alternatives to Arrest

“...not dependent on the criminal justice system...”
Sharing Responsibility

“...that engage other public agencies, the community, and the private sector...”
Fire
Police Methods for Shifting Responsibility

- Engaging and supporting the community
- Making an informal request
- Educating
- Engaging existing services
- Advocating for new services
- Making a confrontational request
- Public shaming
- Withdrawing police service
- Charging fees for police service
- Mandating through legislation
- Bringing a civil action

Degree of resistance
Degree of coercion
Resources required
Evidence required
Taking Action

“...carries a commitment to implementing the new strategy...”

just do it.
Assessing Results

“...rigorously evaluating its effectiveness...”
Defining Success

• Eliminate the problem
• Reduce the volume of incidents
• Reduce the harm from incidents
• Shift ownership to those better able to address it
• More humane, fair, equitable responses
Problem-solving Process

Scanning

Analysis

Assessment

Response

SARA
Problem Analysis Triangle

Handler
Offender
Place
Target/victim
Guardian
Manager

Problem
Reporting Results

“...reporting the results to benefit other police agencies...”
Furthering the Profession

“…building a body of knowledge…”