POLICING PLACES WITH DRUG PROBLEMS: THE MULTI-AGENCY RESPONSE TEAM APPROACH

by

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Abstract: *This study evaluates the impact of the Oakland (CA) Police Department's SMART (Specialized Multi-Agency Response Team) program on drug-related problems and living conditions in the targeted areas. Data were obtained from agency records on arrests, emergency calls and field contacts at SMART sites (N=321). Results indicate that SMART intervention increased the level of citizen reporting of drug problems and decreased the level of narcotics activity at the targeted sites.*

Street-level[1] policing of drug problems typically includes a range of tactics that target individuals selling or buying drugs. Undercover operations (e.g., see Lyman, 1987; Manning, 1980), buy-busts (Uchida et al., 1992), sting- and reverse-buys (e.g., see Dick. 1985; Dickson, 1988) and casual drive-by observations of hand-to-hand drug deals on the street form the basic repertoire of most street narcotic squads in the U.S. In some cities, however, police departments have implemented alternative drug control programs that focus on cleaning up the places where drugs are sold rather than directly targeting the people who use or sell drugs (e.g. see Ferguson and Fitzsimons, 1990; Hope, 1994; Kennedy, 1993; U.S. National Institute of Justice, 1992; Snyder, 1990; Ward, 1987; Weisburd and Green, 1995). These alternative drug control strategies differ from traditional drug control efforts in that the former extends the responsibility for crime control to third parties, such as landlords and business owners (see Buerger and Green, 1994), and uses the city's regulatory rules and civil law codes to control the activities at places with drug problems.

In 1988, the Oakland Police Department in California began a drug control program that relies on police coordination of multi-agency task

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force teams to decrease the level of drug-related problems and improve the habitation conditions of targeted sites. The control tactics of the "SMART" (Specialized Multi-Agency Response Team) approach include: coordinating with a team of city agency representatives to inspect properties identified as drug nuisances; coercing landowners to clean up blighted properties; posting "no-trespass" signs; enforcing civil law codes and regulatory rules;[2] and initiating court proceedings against property owners who fail to comply with civil law citations. While the program emphasizes these alternative intervention tactics, it also directs traditional enforcement efforts at targeted businesses, homes or tenancies. These traditional tactics include arresting drug dealers and organizing increased levels of police patrol presence at drug problem sites.

This paper examines the impact of the SMART program on drug activity and the habitation conditions of targeted properties. The wider effects of the SMART program in "catchment" areas surrounding each targeted location are also reported. The first part of the paper describes the SMART program, and the second section discusses the study sample and evaluation method. The third section reports the evaluation results. The paper concludes with an overview of the main findings and discusses the implications for implementing alternative drug control programs in other cities.

THE SMART PROGRAM

Program Description

The SMART program can be characterized as a drug control program that aims to clean up drug locations by combining the use of traditional narcotics law enforcement tactics, such as arrests, with multi-agency inspections of properties. Since its inception in October 1988, the Oakland Police Department has used the SMART approach at over 2,000 places throughout the City of Oakland, targeting an average of 330 cases every year. Police officers "open" a case after making a preliminary site visit to a place that has received emergency calls, a number of narcotics arrests or special requests for police assistance by community groups. Police begin by visiting nuisance locations and establishing working relationships with citizens, apartment superintendents, landlords and business owners living or working both at the target address and in the immediate surroundings. Police also communicate landlord rights and tenant responsibilities, provide information about crime prevention measures, and support citizens' efforts to clean up a problem location. The program also

offers all owners of Oakland rental property a free course on property management.

The key element of Oakland's SMART program is the multi-agency response team site visit, which involves a series of coordinated trips to problem locations by a select group of city agency representatives. Depending on preliminary assessments made of a place by the police, representatives from agencies such as Alcohol and Beverage Control, Housing, Public Works, Pacific Gas and Electric, and Vector Control inspect a problem location and, where necessary, enforce local housing, fire, and safety codes. About 70% of cases receive at least one code violation from a city agency representative. The police department also draws on its in-house legal expertise and, where necessary, uses a variety of civil laws[3] to elicit compliance from the owners of properties that have drug problems. For example, the provisions of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act make every building where drug use occurs a nuisance, allowing the city to use the civil law to eliminate the problem by fining the owner, and closing or selling the property. Only about 2% of cases result in formal court action against a property owner, suggesting that the SMART program gains a high degree of compliance among property owners without resorting to the court alternative. When one considers that 70% of properties have violations cited against them, this small number of formal court proceedings suggests that the mere threat of court action is sufficient to gain compliance in all but a few cases.

Civil Remedies for Crime Control Purposes

Use of the civil law for crime control purposes is nothing new. Police have drawn on civil laws to control a variety of different crime problems, ranging from white collar crime (Mann, 1992) to more recent applications of the civil law to deter stalkers (see *Boston Globe,* "Fending off a Stalker," pp. 1. 9, March 28, 1995). As such, the application of the civil law to specifically control local-level drug problems should come as no surprise. Many cities across the U.S. are now starting to use provisions within civil law codes to increase the risks for property owners who allow their homes, tenancies or businesses to be used for drug dealing. Unlike many cities that use civil remedies episodically, Oakland's SMART program represents a new trend in drug control efforts by consolidating the use of civil law provisions to gain a crime control effect. Miami's Nuisance Abatement Board (NAB) is another example of a "civil remedy" program. The NAB was established by city ordinance to abate drug-related public nuisances by seizing the real estate if owners did not cooperate by evicting drug-selling tenants and reclaiming the buildings. After publicizing the program

through the successful forfeiture of an apartment building, notorious for free-basing activities, the City of Miami offered low-interest loans to owners of similar buildings to reclaim the buildings from drug dealers (Dickson, 1988).

Police in Seattle have also implemented a civil remedy program as a means of controlling crack houses (U.S. National Institute of Justice, 1992). In 1988, Washington State passed two laws that were designed to assist in drug enforcement (one an abatement law and the other an eviction law). The police department designated two detectives to work with a city attorney to investigate and control crack houses. In its first two years, the program resulted in over 625 actions against crack houses, of which over 90% were resolved through owner action. As a result of this law, owners preferred to evict tenants involved in the drug trade rather than risk their property (Ferguson and Fitzsimons, 1990). One clear consequence of the program "...was a noticeable shift from 'static' rock houses, where drugs were sold from the same location week after week, to very transient rock houses, which only managed to stay in business a few days" (Ferguson and Fitzsimons, 1990:48).

The 1984 Padlock Law Enforcement Program in New York City is another example of a civil remedy program. This program enforced a law that authorized the police to padlock premises that were deemed a public nuisance due to involvement in a variety of illegal activities, including drug sales at houses (Ward, 1987). Similarly, in May 1989 an Abatement Unit was formed in San Diego, CA. The Drug Abatement Response Team (DART) aimed to target properties with numerous narcotics or vice-related violations as abatement cases. Like other *civil* remedy programs, the objective of the DART program was to place responsibility on the property owners to comply with code regulations.

News reports in Chicago (Chester Blair, *"Obvious Weapon in Drug War," Chicago Defender,* Monday January 22, 1990, page 12; Editorial, *"New Ammo in War on Drugs," Chicago Tribune,* January 8, 1990), Boston (Matt Bai, *"Hope in a Blighted Landscape," Boston Globe,* March 19, 1995, City 1; John Ellement, Tenants *Gain Legal Tool in War on Drug Crime."* March 15, 1994), Atlanta (Associated Press, *"Savannah Latest Georgia City to Bring Down the House on Drugs." Atlanta Constitution,* March 26, 1991), and recent court cases (see *Albert G. Lew v. Superior Court oj Alameda County,* No. AOS8265, Calif. Ct. of Appeals, decided Nov. 30, 1993) suggest a rising trend in this type of enforcement strategy. While newspapers report the popularity and success of civil remedies to control drug problems and legal theorists debate the efficacy of civil remedies (see Cheh, 1991), only a handful of studies have sought to quantify the impact that this type of problem-solving activity has on drug activity (see, for example,

Green, 1993, 1996; Hope, 1994; Lurigioetal., 1993). The following section outlines the evaluation method of the SMART program in Oakland.

EVALUATION METHOD

The study sample in this paper draws on the population of places targeted using the SMART approach during the calendar year 1991 (N=321). These places included all homes, tenancies and businesses that were opened as SMART sites during 1991. The 1991 sites were used for several reasons. First, although the SMART program started in 1988, it was not until August 1990 that the program was operational with the current level of staffing. Second, during the period from August 1990 to December 1990, staff records show that new SMART officers were learning program procedures and implementation tactics. During the latter part of 1990, the new SMART officers were also riding with the officers who had been with the program since 1988, getting to know the agency representatives they would be working with and their area of responsibility.[4] The program could not, therefore, be regarded as fully operational until January 1991.

About half of the targeted sites had multiple problems, with drug problems ranking as the most frequently stated problem. Blight (N=134), squatters (N=56), abandoned cars (N=42) and prostitution (N=28) were other frequently cited problems. The majority of targets during 1991 were residential properties (87%), and 13% were commercial properties such as hotels, garages and stores. The median value of the targeted properties was $69,824, and five properties were valued at over $1 million. By contrast, the median value of the City of Oakland properties was $ 185,000. About three quarters of the targeted locations were rented or leased rather than owner occupied, and nearly 90% of the properties were classified as being in substandard condition prior to SMART intervention. Over 80% of the SMART locations were situated on arterial roads. The other SMART sites were located on "feeder" streets to arterial throughways and on cul-de-sacs. The vast majority (84%) of the SMART locations were situated within three blocks of a bar or liquor store. (For a theoretical discussion suggesting why these findings are expected, see Eck, this volume).

To assess the impact of the SMART intervention, this paper examines narcotics arrest, emergency call and field contact data generated by the Oakland Police Department.[5] These data were collected from the department's automated records and processed to allow for case-by-case address-matching against addresses for both the study sample of 1991 SMART project sites and other addresses in the city.[6] The narcotics arrest data included all arrests made for narcotics offenses, ranging from selling

to possession to cultivation. From January 1990 to December 1992, there were 56,181 narcotics arrests matched to addresses in Oakland. Of these arrests, 2351 (4.2%) occurred at the study sample of SMART sites.

Two other official data sources used in the analysis included narcotics emergency calls and field contact information collected from January 1990 until December 1992. The call data included all emergency calls about narcotics problems received by the central police dispatcher. The "field contacts" information is a data collection system where every record represents a person who was cautioned for suspicious behavior in the field by a police officer, but not arrested. Although police most often use the field contact sheets to record names of people suspected of being involved in drug dealing, the contacts are not restricted to this type of behavior. Police officers record the name, age, sex, race and home address of the person contacted in the field (if they are willing to provide such information) , and note the address where the contact occurred. In total, there were 31,672 narcotics emergency calls and 49,315 field contacts throughout Oakland during the three-year period from the beginning of 1990 to the end of 1992. Of these calls and field contacts. 1,091 calls (3.4%) and 979 field contacts (2%) occurred at the SMART study sites.

The present study also sought to assess the impact of the SMART program on the physical appearance of problem sites. To determine the effect of the program on the physical living conditions of targeted sites, the study examined photographs taken before and after the SMART treatment for the 321 sites in the sample. These photographs were taken when a case was first opened and at the time it was closed. Photographs were taken by the SMART officers (generally Police Service Technicians) of the exterior and interior of all SMART sites. Photographs were taken to show specific evidence of a drug problem, blight problem, abandoned cars lying around the site and code violations. Overall, about 20 photographs were viewed for each SMART site in the study sample.

All photographs were viewed by an independent rater who was not a police department employee.[7] The rater was also trained to identify the object of interest for each photograph. For example, Vector Control agents would circle in white chalk a place where they found rodent droppings. This type of photograph would be recognized by the rater as a sign of rodents inside the SMART site. The rater would also examine each photograph for evidence of drug paraphernalia such as empty ziplock bags, used syringes, weighing scales, pipes and torn balloons. Broken windows, graffiti and trash would also be recorded as indicators of decay at the problem site. The rater always completed the "before" photographs

of both the indoors and outdoors of the location before moving on to the "after" photographs.

THE IMPACT OF THE SMART PROGRAM

Impact on Narcotics Activity

To examine the overall impact of the SMART program on levels of narcotics activity, the study used narcotics arrests, emergency calls and field contacts during three time periods: before, during and after SMART treatment at each site. The study used a six-month intervention period for each individual SMART site to reflect the average time that it takes SMART officers to clean up a nuisance location (Green, 1993, 1996). Therefore, for each individual SMART location, the pre-intervention period data comprised all narcotics arrests, calls and field contacts occurring prior to the opening date; the intervention period comprised all data collected from the date that the case was opened to a date six months later; and the post-intervention (or decay) period included all data gathered after the end of the six-month intervention phase through December 1992. A total of 275 SMART sites (86%) were included in this part of the analysis. The remaining 46 sites had no arrest, field contact or call recorded against the study address.

Using narcotics arrest, emergency call and field contact data from January 1990 until December 1992, the number of months in each time period was calculated for each individual site and the number of arrests, calls and field contacts averaged over this number of months. This process resulted in a measure of activity in each time period that represented the number of narcotics arrests, calls, and field contacts made per month at the 275 SMART sites in this part of the study.

The study also examined the monthly averages for all vice arrests, calls and field contacts from January 1990 through December 1992 throughout Oakland as a way to verify whether changes at the SMART sites were merely a reflection of changes citywide, or whether they deviated from city trends. To establish this comparison measure, all police data collected prior to January 1, 1991 were classified as the comparative "before" period, data from January 1, 1991 through June 30, 1991 were classified as the "during" period and all data from July 1, 1991 through the end of 1992 were classified as a comparative post-intervention period.[8]

Table 1 provides the comparisons of narcotics-related activity across data sources by time periods at both the SMART sites and citywide. As this table shows, there are significant differences between the percent

Table 1: Number of Arrests, Field Contacts and Calls Per Month and Percentage Change[9] for SMART Sites and Citywide by Time Period

	Before	During	After	Change
Arrests*				
SMART	38	78	25	-34
Citywide	960	880	778	-19
Field Contacts*				
SMART	34	36	14	- 59
Citywide	1471	1626	1163	- 21
Calls*				
SMART	28	45	27	- 04
Citywide	807	789	898	+10

* Shows significant differences in percent change between SMART sites and citywide ($p < 0.5$).

change in narcotics arrests, calls and field contacts at the SMART sites from the post to the pre-intervention periods compared to the changes across the City of Oakland. Although the number of narcotics arrests per month fell for the city as a whole (19% decrease), for the SMART sites the number of arrests per month decreased by 34%. The latter decrease during the post-intervention period followed a large increase in arrests during the intervention phase (78 arrests per month). The decline in arrests during the post-intervention phase, however, relative to the baseline arrest rate prior to SMART treatment, suggests that a phase of intense intervention can decrease the overall level of narcotics activity at a problem location.

An even greater percent decrease was recorded for the field contact information (minus 59%) at the SMART sites. Citywide, there was a decrease of 21% in the number of field contacts, which was a similar decrease to the citywide narcotics arrest trend (minus 19%). This result suggests that the ratio of arrests to field contacts remained stable across the city. Nonetheless, when the percent change in field contacts was examined for the SMART locations, there was a nearly 60% decrease in activity in the post-intervention period compared to the pre-intervention period. This suggests that the SMART program significantly decreased the level of informal control (as measured by field contacts) brought against SMART locations relative to the trends occurring citywide. The changes in

narcotics arrests and field contacts at SMART sites suggest that, overall, these sites received both less formal and less informal police control during the post-intervention phase compared to pre-intervention levels of control.

Examination of the percent change in emergency calls shows that, for the city as a whole, there was an increase in the number of citizens reporting drug nuisance problems (plus 10%). This increase could be the result of citizens expecting more police attention, or, alternatively, could be symptomatic of an actual increase in narcotics activity throughout the Oakland. Nonetheless, despite an increase in citizen reporting at the SMART sites during the six-month intervention phase (45 calls per month during the intervention phase, up from 28 calls per month in the pre-intervention phase),[10] there was a 4% decrease in the number of calls per month in the post-intervention compared to the pre-intervention phase at the SMART sites.

Overall, these results suggest that the SMART program had a positive and significant effect in decreasing the level of police activity at targeted sites. When these results are compared to the city as a whole, the analyses suggest that the changes were not part of an overall citywide decrease in drug arrests or calls.

Impact on Physical Conditions

The second method used to assess the impact of the SMART program was an analysis of change in the physical appearance of the sample of SMART places. "Before" and "after" photographs of the indoor and outdoor appearances were used to measure the impact that the SMART program had on housing concerns. The photographs depicted the presence of drug paraphernalia, types of housing, utility and other code violations, amount of trash, amount of graffiti and other indicators of housing dilapidation.

Tables 2 and 3 below depict changes in the level of decay, both indoors and outdoors, at all SMART sites treated during the calendar year of 1991 (N=321). Table 2 presents the number of SMART sites that had indoor decay problems identified in the photographs before and after the intervention.

As this table shows, the number of sites that had indoor problems of blight, drug paraphernalia and rodents decreased dramatically after the SMART intervention. When the outdoor photographs were examined before and after the SMART intervention, the results also show that targeted sites improved greatly after the treatment. Table 3 presents the

Table 2: Number of Sites by Type of Indoor Decay—Before and After the Intervention*

	Before	After
Blight	127	2
Drugs	115	5
Rodents	26	1

* Does not total N = 321 because sites could record more than one problem.

number of SMART sites that had outdoor decay problems identified in photographs before and after the intervention.

As Table 3 shows, there were major improvements to the outdoor physical appearances at individual SMART sites after the intervention. For example, 134 locations showed evidence of a blight problem before the intervention, and only 15 sites had this type of problem after the SMART treatment. Similarly, there were far fewer places with broken windows, graffiti, abandoned cars and overgrown bushes after the intervention than was shown in photographs prior to the treatment. The only dilapidation indicator that increased after the intervention was the number of sites that had boards on the windows or doors. This result was a direct function of one treatment component of the SMART program: coordination with city agencies to board up homes and businesses where the owner had not

Table 3: Number of Sites by Type of Outdoor Physical Dilapidation—Before and After the Intervention[1]*

	Before	After
Blight	134	15
Boards	77	85
Broken windows	65	18
Graffiti	54	13
Abandoned Cars	54	3
Overgrown bushes	52	7
Drug paraphernalia	18	1
Sidewalk in disrepair	10	4

* Does not total N=321 because sites could record more than one problem.

corrected housing or health and safety code violations after repeated attempts to elicit support from the owner of the property.

Displacement and Diffusion Effects

While the SMART program seems to have decreased narcotics activity and improved the physical conditions at targeted sites, the question remains whether the program merely shifted the problem to another nearby location. This section examines the impact of the SMART program in "catchment areas" surrounding targeted sites both before and after the SMART intervention.*[1] Table 4 cross-tabulates the number of individual SMART sites and catchment areas that got worse, stayed the same or improved after the SMART intervention, as measured by the number of narcotics arrests and field contacts in the one year prior to the intervention and in the one year after the intervention.[12]

As this table shows, nearly half of the actual addresses that were treated by the SMART program improved (N=147, 45.8%) and only 42 (13%) got worse. By contrast, over three quarters of the catchment areas surrounding SMART locations showed evidence of improvement (N=246, 76.6%). This table also shows the paired outcomes as a result of SMART intervention. The paired outcome that demonstrates a clear beneficial effect of the SMART program is when both the site and the catchment area improved. Table 4 shows that about 40% (N=127) of the places demonstrated improvement at both the site and the catchment area. At a further 95 places (29.6%) that showed no change in narcotics activity, the catchment areas showed improvement. Conversely, for 19 sites that improved as a result of SMART intervention, the catchment area got worse, suggesting a possible displacement effect for about 6% of targeted sites.

Table 4: Number of SMART Sites and Catchment Areas by Type of Change in Narcotics Activity

CATCHMENT AREAS	SMART Sites			
	Got Worse	No Change	Got Better	TOTAL
Got Worse	17	30	19	66
No Change	1	7	1	9
Got Better	24	95	127	246
Total	42	132	147	321

Similarly, 30 sites (9.3%) that showed no change demonstrated a worsening level of narcotics activity in the catchment area. Table 4 tends to suggest, on balance, that the SMART intervention created a diffusion-of-beneflts effect. A more detailed analysis of this suggestion follows.

The present analysis also sought to examine the wider displacement and diffusion impacts of the SMART program by tracking the time sequencing and points of arrest and field contacts for people moving around within the catchment areas. A total of 22,365 people were either arrested or contacted (or both) within the catchment area boundaries from 1990 through 1992, generating a total of 70.783 contacts and representing a mean of 3.2 arrests and/or contacts per person. Table 5 examines the movement patterns of these persons.

This table suggests that the SMART program resulted in a small but overall "net diffusion of benefits" effect when the movement patterns of all 22,365 persons arrested or contacted within the boundaries of the 321 SMART intervention sites were examined. Over half (53.42%) of the people tracked in this study moved in a manner that is consistent with a beneficial effect of the SMART intervention. These people either desisted from being at the SMART site after the intervention (3.96%), or were contacted or arrested prior to the intervention but did not appear within the catchment areas after the intervention (49.46%). By contrast, slightly less than half

Table 5: Percent of Persons Contacted and Arrested by Movement Pattern Classification

Type of Effect (N = 22,365 people)			
Deleterious Effect	**Percent**	**Beneficial Effect**	**Percent**
Persistence		*Desistance*	
SMART -> SMART	.37	SMART -> No Contact	3.96
Address -> SMART	.71		—
Address -> Address	10.58		—
Displacement		*Diffusion*	—
SMART -> Address	1.17	Address -> No Contact	49.46
New Entries			—
No Contact -> SMART	1.35		—
No Contact -> Address	35.15		
Total Percent	49.33		53.42

* N=611 persons were classified into more than one movement category, therefore, total percent does not total 100.

of the people tracked within the catchment area boundaries moved about in a manner that has been classified as a deleterious effect (49.33). These people either "persisted" (11.66% total) or displaced (1.17%) after the SMART intervention. A further 36.5% of the people tracked were classified as "new entries"—individuals not contacted or arrested before the intervention but identified after it.

The absolute difference between the percent of person who moved about in a manner that appears to be consistent with a beneficial effect (53.42%) and the percent of persons who moved in a "deleterious" manner (49.33%) is 4.09%. If this is taken as the "net difference" between the two broad categories of movement patterns, one could argue that the SMART intervention not only decreased the levels of narcotics activity at the target sites but also had a small "net diffusion of benefits" effect in the catchment areas surrounding these sites.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the overall impact of the SMART program intervention in Oakland, CA. The SMART program is described as a drug control program that combines traditionally oriented drug enforcement efforts, typically targeting individual persons, with efforts to clean up the physical characteristics of targeted sites. Most notably, the program engages non-offending third-party persons to take responsibility for places that show evidence of drug and disorder problems, and uses civil laws and regulatory rules to ensure cooperation. The study examined, first, the amount of *change* in the level of arrests, calls and field contacts from the pre-intervention period to the post-intervention period, both at SMART locations and in comparable periods citywide. Second, changes in the indoor and outdoor physical appearances of the targeted places were presented. Finally, the study examined the impact of SMART intervention on the levels of activity and movement patterns of people arrested or contacted within the catchment areas surrounding targeted locations.

The results suggest that SMART intervention increased the level of citizen reporting of drug problems at SMART sites during the intervention phase, and decreased the level of narcotics activity at the targeted sites in the post-intervention period compared to the pre-intervention period. These changes at SMART sites were not a function of citywide trends. In terms of the indoor and outdoor physical appearance of the SMART sites, the research shows that the "before" and "after" photographs revealed a substantial degree of improvement after SMART treatment. Moreover, when activity levels in the SMART catchment areas were examined, the analyses suggest that the intervention program had a small beneficial "net

diffusion" effect rather than a deleterious effect, characterized by persons who persisted, displaced or entered the catchment areas surrounding the targeted sites.

This study suggests that a drug control strategy that combines the use of traditional drug enforcement with efforts to clean up the physical conditions of problem places can decrease the amount of drug activity as measured by police arrests, call and field contact data (see also Hope, 1994). Moreover, while some displacement will most likely occur with this type of crime control program, the overall effect tends to be favorable in the wider spatial area. These results have implications for the development of drug control efforts that aim to target places with street level drug distribution problems. First, unlike other traditional drug enforcement tactics such as arrests, undercover buys, raids and the use of confidential informants, a comprehensive problem-solving approach to the drug problem that uses civil remedies in concert with traditional enforcement and clean-up efforts can impact the level of drug activity at targeted locations. Second, the success of a civil remedy program like SMART clearly demonstrates the value of extending the traditional role of policing (see also Clarke, 1992, 1993, 1994a, 1994b, Goldstein, 1990). For example, the SMART program reaches out to other city agencies such as housing, health, and city works, to establish working relationships. At the same time, the program elicits the support of non-offending third parties, such as landlords and business owners, to bring about a crime control effect. Finally, this study suggests that alternative drug control strategies that focus principally on cleaning up drug nuisance properties should be considered as a policy alternative for fighting drug problems in urban settings. Implementing this type of strategy, however, will depend upon the police developing good working relationships with other city employees and creating incentives for property owners to clean up their homes, tenancies, or businesses. Initiatives such as landlord training and financial support for rehabilitating code violation properties will enhance the chances of long-term success for a place-oriented drug control strategy.

NOTES

1. The definition of "street-level" in this paper refers to the lowest level of drug distribution. Distribution of drugs at the street-level can occur on street corners [Weisburd and Green, 1994; 1995), in residential homes and apartments (Eck, 1994; Green, 1993) and in bars (Roncek and Maier, 1991).

2. Some of the civil ordinances include Drug Nuisance Abatement statutes, municipal codes, housing codes, and health and safety regulations. Some of the local municipal codes that are enforced include obstructions (6-1.09), building constituting a menace to public safety (2-4.09), unnecessary noises (3-1.01), unsecured buildings (2-4.09) and dumping garbage (4-5.12).

3. For example, Section 11570 of the California Health and Safety Code states: "Every building or place used for the purpose of unlawfully selling, serving, storing, keeping, manufacturing, or giving away any controlled substance, precursor or analog specified in this division, and every building or place wherein or upon which those acts take place, is a nuisance which shall be enjoined, abated and prevented, and for which damages may be recovered, whether it is a public or a private nuisance." Additionally, Section 11366.5 (a) stipulates that persons managing or controlling a building who allow the unlawful manufacturing, storing or distributing of any controlled substance can be imprisoned for up to one year.

4. Each SMART officer was assigned approximately eight beats in the City to cover as their area of responsibility. This beat assignment allowed officers to build specialized knowledge of their beats and provided opportunities for officers to get to know the citizens living or working in them.

5. One concern with using official police data in program evaluation analyses is that they are often highly reactive to intervention efforts. It is important, therefore, to understand the type of reaction one would expect. For this study, it should be noted that one of the treatment tactics of the SMART officers is to encourage citizen reporting of suspicious behavior. It was expected, therefore, that the call data would be sensitive to SMART intervention. As part of this intervention tactic, SMART officers also point out simple tips for identifying suspicious behavior and discuss with citizens the importance of providing accurate information. This activity of the SMART program was expected to have an impact on the official data sources in two ways. First, increased reporting of suspicious behavior was expected to increase the base level of emergency calls (irrespective of treatment impact) both during the intervention and in the post-intervention period. Second, the greater number of emergency calls was expected to result in more patrol cars being dispatched to the locations of these citizen complaints. The study expected, therefore, that more calls to SMART locations would increase both the baseline number of field contacts and the number of arrests, if all other factors remained the same.

6. The processing of these data included cleaning the way that the address field was entered both in the 1991 project site database and in the Oakland

Police Department narcotics arrest, call and field contact databases. This was done to ensure that both address entering patterns were consistent with one another. For example, the numeric streets in both databases were cleaned to include the 'th,' 'nd' and 'rd' descriptors. For similarly named streets with different extensions (such as Fifth St. and Fifth Av.), the 'Av,' 'St' or 'Rd' was maintained in the string search. For those unique street names in Oakland, the extension was not included in the string search to allow for mistakes in the extension data entry. A program was then run against the narcotics arrest, call and field contact databases to enter the 1991 project number for each activity that occurred at the project site. Not all arrests, field contacts and calls could be matched to a "valid" Oakland address. These analysis were conducted only on those cases matched to addresses. As such, 9% of vice arrests, 12% of field contacts and 5% of calls were not included in the analysis.

7. If police officers had been used to rate the photographs it was feared that a bias would be built into the data collection. Drawing from their knowledge of SMART sites, it was assumed that police would have been biased toward showing a greater improvement at the site than an independent rater. The decision, therefore, to use an independent rater was made to provide greater objectivity in the assessment of possible change in the physical appearance of SMART sites.

8. The decision to use the first six months of 1991 as the comparative citywide "intervention" period, while somewhat arbitrary, does not unduly bias the comparison in any particular direction. The stability of the arrest and call data throughout 1991 in Oakland (see Green, 1993) suggests that any 6-month period during 1991 would have shown similar results. For field contacts, the month-to-month fluctuations, coupled with an overall drop in monthly field contacts during 1991, suggests that selection of any six-month comparison intervention period during 1991 would have included either an upward or downward trend. Averaging the number of field contacts over six months minimized the impact of the field contact fluctuations.

9. Percent change is calculated by comparing the post-intervention period mean to the pre-intervention period mean.

10. We expect that there was an increase in citizen calls during the intervention phase because SMART officers encouraged citizens to report activity. Since we have no reason to believe that citizens would not call the police if a drug problem continued at the targeted site, we expect that the decline in citizen calls after the intervention reflects a real decline in narcotics activity.

11. "Catchment areas" are defined as all addresses within a two block boundary surrounding the target site.

12. For each site, (Arrests Before + Contacts Before) minus (Arrests After + Contacts After). If the result was a positive number, the site was classified as being improved; if the result was a negative number, the site was classified as getting worse. A similar calculation was used to derive the overall result for each catchment area.

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