

HUDSON VALLEY **PATTERN** *for* **PROGRESS**

Pattern Fellows Class of 2020-2021

Project Team B

Samuel C. Bergsohn
Michael Bonse
Darrah Cloud
Alex Cordova
David Dirks
Randi Picarello
John Hank
Eric Harget
Kate Heidecker
Dabby Hines
Jennifer Holohan-Ferrer
Shelly Humeston
Rob McNeely
Terry Nelson
Michael Santos
Aaron Werner
Richard Williams

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Team B:

Section 1: The History of Police-Community Relations: How did we get here?

From the Revolution to Post-Civil War

Upon examining the history of the local police departments there is a direct correlation between the evolution of police departments throughout the Hudson Valley with the evolution of policing in the United States.

With its roots tracing back to pre-revolutionary war times, to understand the history of policing in the Hudson Valley it is applicable to examine the history of policing in the United States. Following the American Revolution the United States (US) was learning how to develop itself as a nation. Borrowing from its only knowledge the US implemented a policing system similar to England and what had existed prior to the war. As a result, two distinct policing systems emerged - both developed on a similar platform.

In the northern states a watch system emerged. The watch system consisted of volunteers who would warn of impending danger. The southern states too developed a volunteer policing system, however, it was derived from slave patrols originating back to 1704 in the Carolina Colonies. Slave patrols were first created to chase down, apprehend and return to their owners' runaway slaves, provide a form of organized terror to deter slave revolts, and maintain a form of discipline for slave-workers who were subject to justice. These volunteer watch systems remained the predominate method of policing in the United States through the 1830's.

Many of the police departments in the Hudson Valley as we know them today originated in the mid-late 1800's.

Rising Tensions

In the Hudson Valley around the time of the American revolution, the primary driver of tension among its residents was the relationship between landowners and tenants. Drawing on the Revolutionary rhetoric of the time, Africans, and indigenous peoples as well as German, Irish, Scottish, Welsh, and English immigrants waged a set of riots in protest of their conditions of servitude.

After the Civil War, “[t]he Hudson Valley, to a large extent, welcomed freed African Americans...and self-sustaining black communities sprung up in Rockland (Skunk Hollow, near the New Jersey border), Westchester (The Hills in Harrison and another community near Bedford), Dutchess (near Hyde Park, Beekman and Millbrook), Ulster (Eagles Nest, west of Hurley), and all the other river counties. Though legally emancipated, blacks weren’t entirely free yet, and the Valley, like the rest of the state, was in no way free from racism. Laws limited blacks’ rights to vote, to travel with whites on public transportation, to attend school and more.”

In 1899 a race riot broke out in Newburgh after “months of racial tension between non-black and black brickyard workers after brickyard owners began hiring black workers to fill labor shortages.” While the police were involved in resolving the conflict, there were no reports of tensions directly between the police and the non-white workers.

As more black Americans moved to the industrial centers of the Hudson Valley in the early 1900’s, it was not uncommon for white families to leave the communities, colloquially referred to as gentrification (e.g., Runyon Heights in Yonkers). During the mid-20th century, the black population in the Hudson Valley increased further. It was during this time, the Civil Rights Era, where the modern relationship between police and minorities in the Hudson Valley was born.

Realizing change needed to occur, in 1929, President Hoover formed the Wickersham Commission. Its charge was to survey the US criminal justice system under Prohibition and make recommendations for changes to Public Policy. Following the Wickersham Commission,

President Hoover's successor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, declared a war on crime focusing on professionalizing and militarizing the police force.

Continuing this trend in the 1950's, police professionalism was being touted as a better way to improve police effectiveness and reform policing as an institution. In 1951, O.W. Wilson wrote the Progress of Police Administration, which became a manual for professionalizing policing. Wilson himself recruited and promoted people of color during his tenure as Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department however, he supported many methodologies that are attributed to creating rifts between the police and communities served. His programs intensified policing in low-income / high crime neighborhoods with a focus on minor violations. He also strongly advocated for stop and frisk policies. Under his tenure arrests of colored persons in the Chicago area increased substantially. These very tactics developed in the 1950's are still prevalent in current policing and their effectiveness is still debated today.

After the 1950's policing continued to be managed by politics focusing on bureaucratic inefficiencies through the 1960's and 1970's. This resulted in the unionization of police forces, and subsequently in the 1980's the reduction of police force sizes as unions and municipal fiscal management were blamed for many of the financial crisis of the times.

Over the past three decades, the focus of policing has shifted from business management of policing (during the 70's and 80's) to operational management of policing and momentum is increasing. With the dawn of the internet and interconnectivity of the world, police wrongdoings went from isolated and infrequent stories on prime-time media during the 1990's to daily occurrences live streamed to our phones. With that comes a hyper focus on police departments, their interaction with the public, and the necessary reforms that must take place to heal over a century of hurt.

Section 2: Current Events: Where are we today and what are we trying to solve for?

It can be argued that one contributing factor to the current state of police community relations in the Mid-Hudson Valley is America's so-called "war on drugs" and the targeted enforcement of drug laws in economically challenged and racially diverse neighborhoods. This is particularly evident in the small upstate cities of Kingston, Newburgh, and Poughkeepsie.

In an article written by Jesse J. Smith and published by Hudson Valley One, "The undercover operation, which kicked off in the summer of 2011 and culminated with a massive early morning sweep by heavily armed raid teams in March 2012 has, cops say, uprooted deeply entrenched drug-dealing networks and taken dozens of dangerous gang members off the streets. But defense attorneys, including Ulster County Public Defender Andrew Kossover, have criticized the sweep as a heavy-handed crackdown on small-time drug peddlers who found themselves branded gangsters — and given long prison terms — on the flimsiest of evidence." (Smith, 2013)

In 2013 in Kingston, NY, law enforcement authorities were able to arrest – and later indict – more than 80 drug dealers in an effort dubbed Operation Clean Sweep. Three agencies were involved in the operation. The Kingston Police Department's Special Investigations Unit, the countywide Ulster Regional Gang Enforcement Narcotics Team and a state police Community Enforcement Narcotics Team. According to defense attorney Andrew Kossover, those convicted after Operation Clean Sweep were unfairly targeted and evidence of gang affiliation often consisted of little more than a police officer's word, a photograph of a defendant conversing with a known gang member or video showing them wearing the color red. He also noted that, despite making over 100 arrests during the operation, cops recovered just three firearms. (Smith, 2013)

According to Shannon Wong, the current director of the Hudson Valley Chapter of the New York Civil Liberties Union, “The reality is that communities of color have historically been oppressed by police departments.” (Harvey, 2018)

Another contributing factor may be reports of excessive use of force by police. The Bureau of Justice Statistics reported 61% of civilian arrest-related deaths from 2003-2009. (Harvey, 2018)

Between 2006-2012, six men were killed by police in Newburgh, New York. (Harvey, 2018) Policing efforts have polarized relationships between law enforcement and the communities of color they serve. Furthermore, reports in the media of police and community incidents have perpetuated stereotypes of not only people of color, but that of the police. (Harvey, 2018)

In October 2019, New York City passed the [Right to Know Act \(RTKA\)](#). RTKA requires police officers to identify themselves to a civilian and make their business card available. In turn, civilians can use the information to file a complaint, and request body-camera footage of their interaction with the officer. In July 2020, the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council unanimously passed RTKA.

In 2020, the New York State Governor signed a bill that [repealed Section 50-A](#) of the state civil service law, which required the identity of civil service workers, like police officers, to be protected during any job performance review. In June 2020, Senate passed the [Police Statistics and Transparency \(STAT\) Act](#). STAT requires New York State to record and report the demographics of anyone detained and charged with a misdemeanor or violation, inclusive of anyone who dies while in police custody or to establish custody.

Police Reform Efforts

According to *The Washington Post*, there have been nearly 1,000 fatal shootings by on-duty police officers in the United States each year for the past five years. Although half of the people shot and killed are white, Black Americans are shot at a disproportionate rate, as are

Hispanic Americans. White people make up roughly 62 percent of the U.S. population and account for about 49 percent of those who are killed by police officers. Black Americans account for 24 percent of those fatally shot and killed by the police despite being just 13 percent of the U.S. population.

Trust and legitimacy are stronger when police leaders increase transparency in police operations and community interactions. To answer this demand, many police departments have instituted body-worn camera programs. Additionally, police call for service blotters and records are now posted online to allow community members access to the activities of their police departments.

Police reform is not new. For decades, police agencies have been developing innovative best policies, practices, and training on issues such as use-of-force, de-escalation, and crisis intervention strategies. That process must continue and accelerate. If we are to achieve real and sustainable reform in law enforcement, our focus must shift from the police (those individuals sworn to uphold the law) to policing systems (the policies, practices, and culture of police organizations).

Our policing systems must identify the roles and responsibilities of the police, but they must also identify the roles and responsibilities of the community as well. After all, communities are a vital part of the policing system, and we must recognize the necessity of working together if we are to achieve success. To quote Ronald L. Davis, Director of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office of the US Department of Justice, “To separate the community from the policing system is akin to separating patients from the health care system or students from the education system.”

The level of community involvement and personal responsibility each community member shoulders by cooperating and collaborating with police has the potential to significantly impact the outcome. With a stronger policing system, it is more likely that accountability and transparency will be embraced, and it is more likely that recruitment and hiring will produce diverse, qualified candidates that reflect the communities they serve.

Section 3: Re-envisioning Public Safety: Recommendations to get there- Accountability, Safe Neighborhoods, Pride in Community, and Finding Common Ground

This is not an easy mission and there is no “one size fits all” solution for every community and every law enforcement agency. Our communities are demanding a police response to repair the relationship even when they scream profanities at the police. The first aspect to consider is transparency. By definition transparency implies openness, communication and accountability. This is a tall task, but it must be looked into by every police department across the country because they can all make improvements.

The implementation of body worn cameras is one way to be transparent and help create trust. The video footage can show the totality of the circumstances that many officers don’t articulate in a written report. The body worn cameras also help hold officers accountable, which communities are loudly demanding. Officers know the camera is always rolling and this can be difficult for officers to accept initially, but it also has the ability to help on many occasions when an officer is falsely accused with a personnel complaint.

In regard to the question of how to improve police and community relations, it takes change from law enforcement and the community members. According to City of Kingston Mayor Steve Noble "In order to have community, we need to be able to have dialogue...in the end, we have to start to trust each other. And I think building trust is hard." (Harvey, 2018)

It can’t just be, “what are the police going to do to change?” If we are truly a community, and the police are a part of the community whether society agrees with it or not, it is a two-way street and takes “two to tango.” Meaning, the community has to help with this change as well in tangible ways. Body cameras also hold the community accountable. When someone in the community is belligerent, screaming racial slurs, spitting at the police, fighting with police, this is all on camera as well. Often times, people immediately change their aggressive attitude once they see the officer’s camera and the same has happened with officers as well. That is accountability. So, step number one is requiring body worn cameras across the country for all law enforcement. That will come at a financial cost, and perhaps that financial cost should

come from the federal government or state government through grants since this is such a polarizing issue across the country that receives national attention every single day. New Jersey is one state, for example, that is providing grants to help pay the financial cost of body worn cameras for law enforcement agencies. It is a large expense, but this cannot be a barrier with such a desperate need for accountability that our communities are demanding.

Representation Matters

Historically, police departments were comprised of mostly white males. During our discussion with Jeremy Travis, he stated that studies have shown that there is value to having a diverse police force. Travis stated that officers of color tended to use force less often; that police partners that included a woman tended to use less force and used more de-escalation techniques. *(Travis, Jeremy. Pattern Fellows Class 2020-21. April 2021)*

Travis stated that it was important for police departments to be representative of the demographic make-up of the communities they serve. This is not to say, according to Travis, that officers be segregated to serve only the parts of the community that look like the officer (e.g., sending only black officers to black areas of the community). Rather, police departments have to work hard to increase representation and diversity by hiring more people of color, women, age, and educational backgrounds.

“Defund the Police” is Really a Call for Resource Reallocation/Reimagination

Not to say, “defund the police”, rather, reallocate or redirect services that would more appropriately handle a situation that an officer may encounter about which the officer is not equipped to deal (e.g., mental illness, drug overdoses, and other social services issues for which the police are often called to respond.) This must be done carefully and thoughtfully. “Rushing to implement defunding and reinvestment strategies without careful planning is likely to leave

vulnerable members of the community in worse circumstances, not better.” (McCord, 2003; Roman, 2020, as cited in RAND, 2020)

Reimagine the Type of Response

Mental health and substance abuse issues have approached epidemic levels in America in recent years. As a result, police officers are being put in situations that many are not adequately trained to address. An analysis of police shootings reported by the Washington Post in 2015/2016 revealed that a quarter of those killed displayed signs of mental illness. What if we were to chip away at the societal norm that an armed police officer is the automatic response to every emergency call? Sending less threatening, community-oriented civilians to certain non-criminal calls or complaints promotes a neighbors-helping-neighbors mentality and saves police departments money and resources in the process.

This is not an entirely new concept. For example, Eugene, Oregon’s CAHOOTS program was started over 30 years ago in an effort to think outside that traditional box. The program sends teams of unarmed civilians consisting of a mental health crisis expert and an EMT/paramedic to non-criminal emergency calls. The dispatcher decides if the call should be routed directly to the police or to CAHOOTS. The results have been pretty remarkable. In 2019, CAHOOTS responded to 24,000 calls, and only required back-up from police 150 times.

Reimagine Training

In most police shootings, regardless of race, officers don’t shoot out of anger or frustration or hatred, but rather out of fear. A 2014 article from The Atlantic, in the wake of the police-involved killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, highlights the training rookie officers across the country have been accustomed to, which is learning that every encounter, every individual is a potential threat, not all that different from the training provided to soldiers in the military (many former military are also police officers). It is also widely known that many states in this country allow 18-year-olds to be police officers with very little or no firearms training. The end result is both sides are afraid. There have been many documented cases of fatal police

shootings where the subject was unarmed but rather mentally unstable and potentially dangerous for other reasons. This ties in nicely to the idea above about reimagining.

The Way Forward is a Journey, not a Sprint

“The practice of patience and tolerance for how slow things happen...the problems that we face today are four to six hundred years in the making...they don’t transform with the stroke of a pen...it has given me a broader perspective to be more empathetic with others in the world.”

(Matt Birkhold, March 30, 2021)

Re-envisioning public safety must be approached in a manner that is thoughtful, deliberate, and does not rely solely on local police departments. In order for reforms to work, community buy-in is essential. The future of public safety starts in all of the uncomfortable places that we avoid, inadvertently perpetuating institutional racism. We must talk about it with our faith leaders, our schoolteachers, and our peers at work, without fear of being deemed a racist. It is imperative for communities in the Hudson Valley to create an environment where all people are encouraged to effect positive change on the issue of institutional racism, regardless of any underlying fears, history of racism or any other factors that may exist in that community.

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Appendix A: Unabridged Team B Contributions

Section 1: History of police-community relations - how did we get here? (General overview of HV region)

Bergsohn:

While policing as an institution has a history that extends much earlier than that of the United States, it is important to note that one of the earliest forms of policing in this country took the form of slave patrols. “The American South relied almost exclusively on slave labor and white Southerners lived in near constant fear of slave rebellions disrupting this economic status quo. As a result, these patrols were one of the earliest and most prolific forms of early policing in the South. The responsibility of patrols was straightforward—to control the movements and behaviors of enslaved populations.”¹ “It is true that slave patrols were created in slave states and they were an early form of policing. How much that taints the police forces of modern-day Atlanta or Charleston or any other state is clearly up for discussion.”²

Around the time of the American Revolution, the primary driver of tension in the Hudson Valley was the relationship between landowners and tenants. Drawing on the Revolutionary rhetoric of the time, Africans and indigenous peoples as well as German, Irish, Scottish, Welsh, and English immigrants waged a set of riots in protest of their conditions of servitude.³

After the Civil War, “[t]he Hudson Valley, to a large extent, welcomed freed African Americans...and self-sustaining black communities sprung up in Rockland (Skunk Hollow, near the New Jersey border), Westchester (The Hills in Harrison and another community near Bedford), Dutchess (near Hyde Park, Beekman and Millbrook), Ulster (Eagles Nest, west of Hurley), and all the other river counties. Though legally emancipated, blacks weren’t entirely free yet, and the Valley, like the rest of the state, was in no way free from racism. Laws limited blacks’ rights to vote, to travel with whites on public transportation, to attend school and more.”⁴

Many of the police departments in the Hudson Valley as we know them today originated in the mid-late 1800s. In 1899 a race riot broke out in Newburgh after “months of racial tension between non-black and black brickyard workers after brickyard owners began hiring black workers to fill labor shortages.” While the police were involved in resolving the conflict, there were no reports of tensions directly between the police and the non-white workers.

As more black Americans moved to the industrial centers of the Hudson Valley in the early 1900s, it was not uncommon for white families to leave the communities (colloquially referred to as gentrification), for example Runyon Heights in Yonkers. During the mid-20th century, the

¹ <https://lawenforcementmuseum.org/2019/07/10/slave-patrols-an-early-form-of-american-policing/>

² <https://www.aei.org/op-eds/the-problem-with-claiming-that-policing-evolved-from-slave-patrols/>

³ Land and liberty : Hudson Valley riots in the age of revolution, Thomas Humphrey, 2004

⁴ <https://hvmag.com/life-style/history/african-american-past-hudson-valley/>

black population in the Hudson Valley increased further.⁵ It was during this time, the Civil Rights Era, where the modern relationship between police and minorities in the Hudson Valley was born.

Heidecker:

The history of police community relations in the Mid-Hudson Valley is inextricably linked with America's so-called "war on drugs" and the targeted enforcement of drug laws in economically-challenged and racially diverse neighborhoods. This is particularly evident in the small upstate cities of Kingston, Newburgh, and Poughkeepsie.

In 2013 in Kingston, NY, law enforcement authorities were able to arrest – and later indict – more than 80 drug dealers in an effort dubbed Operation Clean Sweep.

In an article written by Jesse J. Smith and published by Hudson Valley One, "The undercover operation, which kicked off in the summer of 2011 and culminated with a massive early morning sweep by heavily-armed raid teams in March 2012 has, cops say, uprooted deeply entrenched drug-dealing networks and taken dozens of dangerous gang members off the streets. But defense attorneys, including Ulster County Public Defender Andrew Kossover, have criticized the sweep as a heavy-handed crackdown on small-time drug peddlers who found themselves branded gangsters — and given long prison terms — on the flimsiest of evidence." (Smith, 2013)

Three agencies were involved in the operation. The Kingston Police Department's Special Investigations Unit, the countywide Ulster Regional Gang Enforcement Narcotics Team and a state police Community Enforcement Narcotics Team.

According to defense attorney Andrew Kossover, those convicted after Operation Clean Sweep were unfairly targeted and evidence of gang affiliation often consisted of little more than a police officer's word, a photograph of a defendant conversing with a known gang member or video showing them wearing the color red. He also noted that, despite making over 100 arrests during the course of the operation, cops recovered just three firearms. (Smith, 2013)

A little over a year later, a similar drug sting operation yielded the arrest of over 40 drug dealers, in an effort termed Operation Mop Up.

In September 2020, an undercover narcotics operation has led to 40 indictments against people in Orange County on drug-sale charges. (Yakin, 2020)

District Attorney David Hoovler said the countywide enforcement detail was meant to clean up neighborhoods. In this operation they targeted drug sales in the cities of Middletown and Newburgh, the towns of Wallkill, Monroe, Woodbury, Warwick, Deerpark, New Windsor and Chester, in the Town and Village of Goshen and in the Village of Florida. In photographs published by the Times Herald Record, it is notable that 31 of the 40 arrested were individuals of color.

⁵ <https://hvmag.com/life-style/history/african-american-past-hudson-valley/>

In a report to the United Nations on Disparities in the United State Criminal Justice system, the authors note how the United States in effect operates two distinct criminal justice systems: one for wealthy people and another for poor people and people of color. The authors write, “The wealthy can access a vigorous adversary system replete with constitutional protections for defendants. Yet the experiences of poor and minority defendants within the criminal justice system often differ substantially from that model due to a number of factors, each of which contributes to the overrepresentation of such individuals in the system.” As former Georgetown Law Professor David Cole states in his book *No Equal Justice*,

These double standards are not, of course, explicit; on the face of it, the criminal law is color-blind and class-blind. But in a sense, this only makes the problem worse. The rhetoric of the criminal justice system sends the message that our society carefully protects everyone’s constitutional rights, but in practice the rules assure that law enforcement prerogatives will generally prevail over the rights of minorities and the poor. By affording criminal suspects substantial constitutional rights in theory, the Supreme Court validates the results of the criminal justice system as fair. That formal fairness obscures the systemic concerns that ought to be raised by the fact that the prison population is overwhelmingly poor and disproportionately black.

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Hines:

The Bureau of Justice Statistics reported 61% of civilian arrest-related deaths from 2003-2009 (Harvey, 2018). Unfortunately, cities in the Hudson Valley have been reflective of the national issues surrounding excessive use of force by law enforcement.

Between 2006-2012 six men were killed by police in Newburg, New York (Harvey, 2018). Policing efforts have polarized relationships between law enforcement and the communities of color they serve. Furthermore, reports in the media of police and community incidents have perpetuated stereotypes of not only people of color, but that of the police (Harvey, 2018).

Law enforcement advocates, have noted the intense stress and negative health effects of responding to community demands (Harvey, 2018). According to a 2010 *New York Times* article, gang members with nationwide attachments outnumber the city police officers three to one (Harvey, 2018). However, according to Shannon Wong, the current director of the Hudson Valley Chapter of the New York Civil Liberties Union, “The reality is that communities of color have historically been oppressed by police departments” (Harvey, 2018).

So, this begs the question...what is at the root of these issues?

Although procedures exist in the hopes of increasing police accountability, the use of discretion by officers navigate the interpretations of policies.

For example, with taser usage, police officers have the discretion to go over set limits to increase compliance. In addition, according to [Campaign ZERO](#), a police reform campaign proposed by activists associated with Black Lives Matter, "Police usually investigate and decide what, if any, consequences their fellow officers should face in cases of police misconduct. Under this system, less than 1 in every 12 complaints of police misconduct nationwide results in some kind of disciplinary action against the officer(s) responsible."

According to City of Kingston Mayor Steve Noble "In order to have community, we need to be able to have dialogue...In the end, we have to start to trust each other. And I think building trust is hard"(Harvey, 2018).

According to Kingston, NY Police Chief Egidio Tinti, "I don't think there's any apprehension on discussing the hard topics," says Chief Tinti. "Whether its body cameras, transparency, accountability, or the use of force that the officers are trained in, the discussion of implicit bias and racism in law enforcement—I think those are all good topics that we need to have hard talks about. At this point, whether or not there's trust across the table, I think there are lines of communication that are open now that weren't open before" (Harvey, 2018).

Perhaps policies that have recently been implemented will allow for transparency that will hold both officers and civilians accountable.

In June, 2020 Senate passed the [Police Statistics and Transparency \(STAT\) Act](#). STAT requires New York State to record and report the demographics of anyone detained and charged with a misdemeanor or violation, inclusive of anyone who dies while in police custody or in an attempt to establish custody.

In October 2019, New York City passed the [Right to Know Act \(RTKA\)](#). RTKA requires police officers to identify themselves to a civilian, and make their business card available. In turn, civilians can use the information to file a complaint, and request body-camera footage of their interaction with the officer. In July, 2020 the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council unanimously passed RTKA.

In 2020, the New York State Governor signed a bill that [repealed Section 50-A](#) of the state civil service law, which required the identity of civil service workers, like police officers, to be protected during any job performance review.

Will these policies help in the use of law enforcement discretion? Will they ultimately have a positive impact on improving police-community relations?

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Williams:

Upon examining the history of the local police departments there is a direct correlation between the evolutions of police departments throughout the Hudson Valley with the evolution of policing in the United States.

With its roots tracing back to pre-revolutionary war times, to understand the history of policing in the Hudson Valley it is applicable to examine the history of policing in the United States. Following the American Revolution the United States (US) was learning how to develop itself as a nation. Borrowing from its only knowledge the US implemented a policing system similar to England and what had existed prior to the war. As a result, two distinct policing systems emerged both developed on a similar platform.

In the northern states a watch system emerged. The watch system consisted of volunteers who would warn of impending danger. The southern states too developed a volunteer policing system, however, it was derived from slave patrols originating back to 1704 in the Carolina Colonies. Slave patrols were first created to chase down, apprehend and return to their owners' runaway slaves, provide a form of organized terror to deter slave revolts, and maintain a form of discipline for slave-workers who were subject to justice. These volunteer watch systems remained the predominate method of policing in the United States through the 1830's.

In 1838, beginning with the City of Boston, the first municipal police force was created. New York City followed suit in 1845, followed by Albany and Chicago in 1851. During the 1830's many of America's cities were expanding and an urbanization was being felt across the country. With large populations in the cities the former watch systems were becoming ineffective in maintaining order. During these periods of urban growth there was increased mob violence, violence against immigrants, and public disorder. At the same time with expanding factories and need for workers, commercial entrepreneurs found it necessary to maintain order to create a stable and orderly work force and prevent unionization to control labor rates. Between 1880 and 1900 New York City had 5,090 strikes involving over 1,000,000 workers. The earliest police forces were tasked with maintaining order by enforcing laws against gambling and drunkenness, surveilling immigrants and freed slaves and harassing labor organizers. In referencing its history, one local police department website notes, "After the Civil War had ended, the social makeup of the Town and Village.... was in turmoil. Transients with no home or work were flooding our streets, bringing with them many problems for our Town Constables. Local newspapers of the day described these constables as ineffective tools of politicians."

Realizing change needed to occur in 1929 President Hoover formed the Wickersham Commission. Its charge was to survey the US criminal justice system under Prohibition and make recommendations for changes to Public Policy. Following the Wickersham Commission, President Hoover's successor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, declared a war on crime focusing on professionalizing and militarizing the police force.

Continuing this trend in the 1950's police professionalism was being touted as a better way to improve police effectiveness and reform policing as an institution. In 1951 O.W. Wilson wrote the Progress of Police Administration, which became a manual for professionalizing policing. Wilson himself recruited and promoted people of color during his tenure as Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department, however, he supported many methodologies that are attributed to creating rifts between the police and communities served. His programs intensified policing in low-income / high crime neighborhoods with a focus on minor violations. He also strongly advocated for stop and frisk policies. Under his tenure arrests of colored persons in the Chicago area increased substantially. These very tactics developed in the 1950's are still prevalent in current policing and their effectiveness are still debated today.

Subsequent to the 1950's policing continued to be managed by politics focusing on bureaucratic inefficiencies through the 1960's and 1970's. This resulted in the unionization of police forces, and subsequently in the 1980's the reduction of police force sizes as unions and municipal fiscal management were blamed for many of the financial crisis of the times.

As the latter part of the latter half 1900's focused on the efficiency and business aspects of the police, many of the militaristic aspects of our police departments and foundational tactics developed in the 1950's have undergone slow reform. Over the past three decades the focus of policing has shifted from business management of policing (during the 70's and 80's) to operational management of policing, and momentum is increasing. With the dawn of the internet and interconnectivity of the world, police wrong doings went from isolated and infrequent stories on prime time media during the 1990's to daily occurrences live streamed to

our phones. With that comes a hyper focus on police departments, their interaction with the public, and the necessary reforms that must take place to heal over a century of hurt.

Section 2: Current events since 2014 - where we are today and what are we trying to solve for?

Bonse:

“The mistrust that exists in certain communities is real. It’s not something that’s made up. It’s not something that’s a media invention...If we break down this distrust, at the end of the day it’s good for people in uniform.”

Former United States Attorney General Eric Holder opened with this statement in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania when he spoke at one of the many community forums he attended in the months immediately following the protests in Ferguson, Missouri (August 2014). The protests and civil unrest came after the grand jury decided not to indict the officer involved in shooting of Michael Brown. Staten Island, New York experienced similar protests in the wake of the death of Eric Gardner. In April 2015, Baltimore, Maryland experienced unrest and violence in the streets after the death of Freddie Gray. More recently, in May 2020, the killing of George Floyd at the hands of the police in Minneapolis, Minnesota has reignited protests around the nation. All of these cases involved controversial uses of force which resulted the death of African-American men, who were being taken into police custody. The aftermath of these events had captured the attention of the nation. While at the same time have torn apart communities, strained police and community relations, and eroded the trust in police.

In a 2009 report, the United States Department of Justice called the building and maintaining of community trust “the hallmark of effective policing.” Trust is the foundation to effective police/community relations. Policing, like any institution, must evolve with the times. The amount of technology that is available to assist police in solving and preventing crimes has evolved rapidly over the past ten years. Today’s officers have available to them; mobile license plate readers, facial recognition software, body-worn cameras, immediate access to state federal databases at the fingertips of the officers on the street, and crime analysis units at their disposal. However, one thing has remained unchanged; the need for the community’s trust in their police department.

As we look forward to the future of policing in America, perhaps one of the most important lessons to remember is to look back at where we have been. Police have been asked to take on not only the role of maintaining order and keeping the peace, but have also been told they are on the front lines of the war on terror, and the war on drugs. Additionally, over the past twenty years, patrol officers have spent countless hours training and reviewing the footage of horrific rampage shootings that have occurred in one our most sacred institutions; our public schools. These events have led to the age of the ‘Warrior Cop.’ However, this mindset may be at the root of the erosion of the community’s trust in their police. In the *Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing* (2015), the authors created a five pillar

approach and offered 64 recommendations for local, state, and federal agencies to address. Pillar one is the building of trust and legitimacy, and their very first recommendation was that “law enforcement culture should embrace a guardian – rather than a warrior – mindset to build trust and legitimacy” (p.1). While improved technologies and altered missions have changed much of the landscape for today’s police officers, police leaders must restore the community’s trust in their police.

Today’s Police Reform Efforts

Many regions across the nation have seen protests devolve into violence, destruction, and even the ‘occupation’ of entire urban neighborhoods. While we have not been immune to the effects, overall, the Hudson River Valley, New York, has responded well. Open and ongoing dialogue by many of our community leaders has very likely prevented tragedies. As a region, we have continued to build upon the forged relationships after the tragic events in Ferguson, Missouri, and other communities in 2014. Enhancing those relationships and fostering new ones will be an integral part of leading our region to meet its potential.

The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) has supported many of our local law enforcement agencies with extensive training on topics such as; procedural justice, implicit bias awareness, de-escalation, duty to intervene, decision-making, reality-based training, and crisis intervention techniques. These classes are being taught to many of the existing police instructors and officers in the field. The curriculum has also been infused into the Basic Course for Police Officers for recruit officers throughout the state.

Trust and legitimacy are stronger when police leaders increase transparency in police operations and community interactions. To answer this demand, many police departments have instituted body-worn camera programs. Additionally, police call for service blotters and records are now posted online to allow community members access to the activities of their police departments.

Solving For a Better Tomorrow

The events of the past six years, more specifically the past year, have brought to the forefront a renewed discussion about race and policing in the United States. Police and community leaders alike must continue their efforts toward improving the relationship between the police and the community. They must collaborate to strengthen relationships and build partnerships with all ethnic groups in the communities they serve. Leaders must foster innovation and promote cultural change, both internally and externally.

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Hank:

Today the country and the Hudson Valley find itself torn between opposite viewpoints. Depending on your views and political affiliations you are either a racist or a snowflake. The popular media and political parties push their agendas with no room for compromise on their current stances. If you support the Republican Party and police, you are labeled racist. If you support the democrat party and any police reforms, you are a snowflake. The middle ground where both sides of the argument can be seen is lost to rhetoric.

Since 2014 policing in US has been going through major changes in policies and practices. Well known in custody deaths and police shootings have driven many of the calls for change. Names like George Floyd, Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Phinaldo Castillo and Walter Scott have become known as rallying cries for reformers. Police supporters seize on the felonious murders of police officers. Over the last four years an average of 50 officers a year have been killed by gunfire. Others are killed by vehicles, assaults and knives.

Orange County has a better police and community relationship than many other places. Still, we are not immune from violence against police officers and police involved shootings. While the many protests in the Hudson Valley in 2020 focused on national issues with policing, there have been multiple police shootings here. Some of the police shootings include Montgomery in May of 2017 where a police chief was shot, and the suspect ultimately shot himself. Montgomery in May of 2017 where a State Trooper shot a suspect attacking troopers. Middletown in August of 2020 a Middletown police officer and a suspect were shot stemming from a domestic dispute. In Newburgh in March of 2020 Newburgh police attempted to arrest an armed suspect who shot an officer and subsequently shot and killed by officers. Warwick in June of 2018 a suspect was shot and killed by police when he rushed at officers while armed with a knife. Port Jervis in March of 2020 a man was shot and killed by police when he attempted to attack officers with a knife. Poughkeepsie in May of 2014 an officer was slashed in the face with a box cutter by a suspect who was then shot by police and died. Goshen in July of 2020 an off-duty detective shot and killed his neighbor who attempted to attack him with a knife.

These are only some of the most recent incidents to strain police and community relations. Open conversations and understanding are needed to improve these issues. Police need to understand why people fear them and how to improve interactions. The public needs to understand the fears that officers experience dealing with unknown dangers and intense scrutiny. An open dialogue needs to start in some way between both sides with empathy and understanding. Until there is some understanding between both sides it will be difficult for relations to improve.

Humeston:

There have been many disturbing incidents since 2014. The killings of Eric Garner, Freddie Gray, Philando Castile and, more recently, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd,

have left our nation anguished and outraged. Racial unrest has created a surge of civil unrest, leading to protests and riots, against systemic racism towards blacks.

According to *The Washington Post*, there have been nearly 1,000 fatal shootings by on-duty police officers in the United States each year for the past five years. Although half of the people shot and killed are white, Black Americans are shot at a disproportionate rate, as are Hispanic Americans. White people make up roughly 62 percent of the U.S. population and account for about 49 percent of those who are killed by police officers. Black Americans account for 24 percent of those fatally shot and killed by the police despite being just 13 percent of the U.S. population. There are critics that argue the reason for this is that a disproportionate amount of murders and other violent crimes are committed by Black Americans.

The instances of police using deadly force are just a small fraction of the millions of interactions that take place between the police and the public every year. The vast majority of police officers perform their jobs admirably despite the enormous challenges they face and the inherent risk to their own personal safety. The fact is, law enforcement isn't called when things are going well. They frequently find themselves in situations where a seemingly normal interaction has the ability to quickly escalate and turn violent. The very nature of the job reinforces the sense of fear and threat the officer's face. Stress gets to them, not only on the job but even off the job; PTSD, alcohol abuse, and marital conflict are common struggles. It often results in a negative circle where the job causes them to be stressed and nervous, which damages their mental health and personal relationships, which raises their overall level of stress and makes the job even more challenging.

Division and conflict have grown out of centuries of oppression and aversion which has led to a heightened level of mistrust. The lack of trust needs to be addressed through police and community engagement in difficult and authentic conversations to create a better understanding of each other's needs - mutual trust and respect must be earned through positive interactions, one encounter at a time. We must foster honest discussions about anger and fear, not unlike the conversations the Pattern Fellows have had over the last six months. If we are to achieve peace and justice for all, we must begin with education, truth, honest reflection, and the ability to confront a difficult history of trauma. An awareness and acceptance of the presence of implicit bias is the first step towards proactively addressing it and reducing it. All individuals must accept accountability and make a commitment to eradicating racism and inequality in an effort to create a more just and peaceful future. The racist rhetoric continues to fuel violence and it will take every one of us, engaging our communities, using our voice, and working together to enact change.

Police reform is not new. For decades, police agencies have been developing innovative best policies, practices, and training on issues such as use-of-force, de-escalation, and crisis intervention strategies. That process must continue and accelerate. If we are to achieve real and sustainable reform in law enforcement, our focus must shift from the police (those individuals sworn to uphold the law) to policing systems (the policies, practices, and culture of

police organizations). Our policing systems must identify the roles and responsibilities of the police but they must also identify the roles and responsibilities of the community as well. After all, communities are a vital part of the policing system and we must recognize the necessity of working together if we are to achieve success. To quote Ronald L. Davis, Director of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office of the US Department of Justice, "To separate the community from the policing system is akin to separating patients from the health care system or students from the education system." The level of community involvement and personal responsibility each community member shoulders by cooperating and collaborating with police has the potential to significantly impact the outcome. With a stronger policing system, it is more likely that accountability and transparency will be embraced and it is more likely that recruitment and hiring will produce diverse, qualified candidates that reflect the communities they serve.

In the words of Sir Robert Peel, the founder of modern law enforcement, "The police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence."

Holohan:

There have been many events over the past decade that have been influential in the down fall of police community relations. In July of 2014 Eric Garner died after being put in a NYPD prohibited choke hold while being approached for selling untaxed cigarettes. The death of Mr. Garner gained national attention and unfortunately did not slow the death of black men at the hands of police. Garner had been identified by police multiple times in his neighborhood for loitering and selling loose cigarettes. The focus of these community officers on petty crimes should have made the neighborhood safer, but in turn only made Mr. Garner defensive of the police. Mr. Garner's choke hold and last words of "I can't breathe" were videotaped and released for the world to see.

In 2015 the Washington Post began to log every fatal shooting by on duty police officers in the U.S. The post had found that the FBI had undercounted fatal police shootings be half due to the voluntary reporting by police stations.(1) While there have been names we all recognized after Eric Garner like Michael Brown, Breonna Taylor, Freddie Gray, and Daniel Prude. Seven years after the start of the Black Lives Matter movement it is uncommon that police are charged and even rarer convicted in the killings of black men. It was reported that in 2017 police shot and killed nearly 1000 people. (2) The case of George Floyd is hopefully a turning point in these statistics.

The 2021 conviction of Derek Chauvin in the George Floyd murder case can only be hopefully seen as a turning point for the nation and the policing of its communities. Policing needs to continue its evolution from a stop and frisk, pull over and search to a connection with the communities it serves. We can continue to better our communities and its policing force by working together for a better understanding of how to live and work cohesively.

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Section 3: Re-envisioning public safety - recommendations/paths to get there - accountability, safe neighborhoods, pride in community, finding common ground.

Cloud:

How can a small town in upstate New York not be subjected to the whims of a policing agency that does not know its people or their history? How can a small town afford to police itself? And how can a small town lucky enough to have its own police department create a culture of openness and generosity, while also keeping an eye on those would might harm others, without prejudice?

We must Think Small. There is nothing that keeps us from meeting and getting to know each other. Nothing. So the first thing to do is to create an atmosphere of congeniality between police agencies which have to work together, and between those agencies and the towns they serve. Boundaries as to how each agency serves each community must be not only clarified but adhered to. Small towns face serious problems often alone if they have no police department of their own due to limited budgets, and cannot afford to contract with their county sheriff's department. In Dutchess County, a small town contracting with the Sheriff can spend upwards of \$200,000 a year on police coverage. (See Sheriff's contract, DC). State Troopers and County Sheriffs are often nowhere near the location of a crime in a rural town upstate, and it can take upwards of an hour sometimes for them to reach a situation. Town police can save lives in cases of domestic abuse in particular, where knowing the people involved helps de-escalate situations. If, indeed, the officers are ethical people.

1) **Hiring** the right people is essential. The test for new officers needs to change to reflect the core values of the communities they serve while also taking into account the skills of listening, patience, and empathy. The nepotism in Sheriff's Departments has long been an issue and has not produced the best officers. Encourage continuity by paying them well while also updating their training constantly to bring in new challenges and ideas.

2) **Training** is utmost. Anti-bias training is paramount. Second would be constant training in how to use weapons. This is because the more comfortable an officer is with how to use a weapon, the more accurately he or she can deploy it when needed. Panic often causes those who use their guns infrequently to draw them and fire indiscriminately out of fear. A policy that goes with the weapon is essential: use of it should be the last resort. Training in mental illness issues is essential for every officer. All these kinds of training should be constant and monthly. The officer-as-guardian not warrior is a huge shift in thinking in terms of policing.

3) Community investment. Guardians know their charges. Police should be a part of the towns they work in. It is optimal if they live there, but not essential. They need to understand the history of where they work, the troubled families, why those families are troubled. Again, there is no law against meeting people in the place where you serve. Small events in which police meet schoolchildren are fine and add to the solution, but adults need to know police too. Hold community gatherings for people to meet officers on a quarterly or semi-annual basis, to familiarize the public with the people who ostensibly protect them. Separate the town into sectors and assign an officer to each, so that he/she can become very familiar with everyone who lives in that area.

4) Use courage, not weapons, to face our problems. So much of policing is about facing up to the flaws in our culture, the systemic problems, the reasons for drug addiction and proliferation, and constant training. I see no reason to employ a social worker in a small police department. But I do see every reason to educate police officers in identifying mental illness, de-escalation, and changing a militaristic culture into one in which the community works with its police.

Harget:

There has never been a year like March 2020- March 2021 in law enforcement and for communities across the country. The relationship between police and the communities they serve has been strained. These are the facts in 2021. Many people around the country have no problem stating these facts on a daily basis through the media, social media, and many other platforms. But, the real question still remains, “how do we improve the relationship and how do we get there?”

This is not an easy question to answer and there is no “one size fits all” conclusion for every community and every law enforcement agency. Our communities are demanding a police response to repair the relationship even when they scream, “f\$@k the police.” The first aspect to consider is transparency. By definition transparency implies openness, communication and accountability. This is a tall task, but it must be looked into by every police department across the country because they can all make improvements. The implementation of body worn cameras is one way to be open. It also can help communicate certain situations better with the public because the video footage can show the totality of the circumstances that many officers don’t articulate in a written report. The body worn cameras also help hold officers accountable, which communities are loudly demanding. Officers know the camera is always rolling and this can be difficult for officers to accept initially, but I have also seen it help on many occasions when an officer is falsely accused with a personnel complaint. In regards to the question of how to improve police and community relations, it takes change from law enforcement and the community members. It can’t just be, “what are the police going to do to change?” If we are truly a community, and the police are a part of the community whether society agrees with it or not, it is a two way street and takes “two to tango.” Meaning, the community has to help with this change as well in tangible ways. Body cameras also hold the community accountable. When someone in the community is belligerent, screaming racial slurs, spitting at the police, fighting with police, this is all on camera as well. I have observed firsthand people immediately change their aggressive attitude once they see the officer’s camera and the same has happened with

officers as well. That is accountability. So, step number one is requiring body worn cameras across the country for all law enforcement. That will come at a financial cost and I believe that financial cost should come from the federal government or state government through grants since this is such a polarizing issue across the country that receives national attention every single day. New Jersey is one state, for example, that is providing grants to help pay the financial cost of body worn cameras for law enforcement agencies. It is a large expense, but this cannot be a barrier with such a desperate need for accountability that our communities are demanding.

Standards for law enforcement is the next issue I believe can be considered and addressed. Many people don't understand this topic and it goes back to the need for police to be more transparent about it. The standards for the newly hired cop in New York are not the same for the newly hired cop somewhere else in the country. What does this mean? Well, a cop in New York needs a high school diploma and 60 credits of college, which is normally equivalent to an Associate's Degree and must be at least 21 years of age. Let's take a look at another state, Florida for example. In Florida a cop only needs to be 19 years old and have a high school diploma. For obvious reasons, I think there should be a national standard set by the Federal government and the standards should be high and attainable. Registered nurses (RN's) are now ultimately required to have a Bachelor's Degree in NYS. That wasn't always the case. Only a few years ago RN's needed a two year Associate's Degree. Could having an age requirement of 22 years old and a four year bachelor's degree requirement help the occupation of law enforcement and the community build more trust? I certainly don't believe more education and another year or two of life experience can hurt. In NYS we also have civil service tests for new hires to take and they are not easy. These tests are normally created by civilians. This is another layer to providing high standards to be able to get the job. This is not the test requirement in every state. Again, this is something that needs to be considered and implemented if possible on a national level.

The last topic I want to consider is a Civilian Police Academy. Some agencies have been doing this for years, which is tremendous. It is a great example of transparency. Through this program members of the community can meet with police one day a week for two or three months, and officers can take the opportunity to show the community what it is that police do. The police need to understand their communities. But, the community also needs to understand the police and the difficult job they have. Remember, I said it is a "two way street." Through this civilian academy there is a real opportunity for both sides to share with each other and learn about each other. I imagine an academy where civilians go through reality based training with a gun and a Taser on their belts and go through shoot or don't shoot scenarios with trained law enforcement instructors. I imagine classes, which teach evidence collection, narcotics identification, use of force encounters, Supervisor investigations, accreditation standards, police commission speakers, crime scene investigations, major case investigations and the list goes on and on. The benefits of this transparency are endless. The classes would be small in size, but we have to start somewhere. Even if a class size is 10 people, by the end of the academy those ten people will tell 10 other people about it and those 10 people will tell 10 more people and so on.

Law enforcement has to take a strong look in the mirror and so do our community members to come up with solutions to repair this broken relationship that I truly believe most people on both sides of the fence want to repair. It will take time and there are hundreds of other topics and examples to consider. These are just a few that can be considered to find common ground between the community and the members that serve and protect them.

Picarello:

As we re envision public safety going forward, I think it is most important to do just that - RE ENVISION it, wholly and completely. I think in order to get results we have never been able to achieve, we must do things we never have done. I know that sounds altruistic, but it has never been more apparent to me than it was after participating in this class.

I think forums and seminars and places of all kinds need to be created as they were for this class, where people can speak freely and without fear. \

I think we will need to argue, and disagree and find ways to compromise and empathize from the bottom up. This is not a solution that will be handed down and implemented from the top.

The EO 203 was a great start. The envisioning has to be conceived by the communities themselves and then reported to the governing agencies. I think doing it in this fashion will foster accountability, pride and the common ground. If the community doesn't have a part in creating the public safety plan, how will they ever support it? No American, no matter their race, creed or color wants to be told what to do. We are a government made by the people, for the people and of the people. I think that finding *the people* is going to be the hard part. It is so much easier to unite people against something out of fear than it is to get people to think outside of their personal experience and work together to be productive towards something new.

I think that the future of public safety starts in all of the uncomfortable places that we avoid, inadvertently perpetuating institutional racism. We must talk about it with our faith leaders, our school teachers and our peers at work, without fear of being deemed racist. We must create an environment where the only people not encouraging communication about institutional racism *are the racists*.

I think most racism breeds in the dark pockets of fear of the unknown. If we shine light on them, we will create the sense of pride and community we need to dictate to the governing bodies just how we think our public safety should be handled.

Police should be required tactical training and mental health evaluations throughout their career. There should be more foot patrol in small neighborhoods. It builds the relationships between the children and the police and encourages an overall sense of safety in the community (and health...)

New officers should not be alone on a call for 2 years. Their partner should be rotating and a veteran officer. There should be gun/weapon drop offs in every town, community drug task

forces, and routine ride along with officers with community members. Police officers should be required to do things like volunteer in the community they work in as little league coaches, mentors, etc.

Santos:

Throughout our time together during this fellowship, we heard from a number of speakers, were introduced to various research findings, and heard from our own fellows a number of best practices that police departments can utilize to re-imagine and/or re-envision what a department could look like in order to better engage with the communities they serve, leading to better police-community relations.

Representation Matters

Historically, police departments were comprised of mostly white males. During our discussion with Jeremy Travis he stated that studies have shown that there is value to having a diverse police force. Travis stated that officers of color tended to use force less often; that police partners that included a woman tended to use less force and used more de-escalation techniques. *(Travis, Jeremy. Pattern Fellows Class 2020-21. April 2021)*

Travis stated that it was important for police departments to be representative of the demographic make-up of the communities they serve. This is not to say, according to Travis, that officers be segregated to serve the parts of the community that look like the officer (e.g. sending only black officers to black areas of the community). Rather, police departments have to work hard to increase representation and diversity by miring more people of color, women, age, and educational backgrounds.

Travis states that to achieve diversity and representation of the force, the department must be willing to invest in effective recruitment strategies.

After recruitment, departments also need to invest in effective standards and training for their officers to focus more on engagement and de-escalation, rather than on use of force.

Departments must also focus on getting rid of officers who “are not doing it right.”

They must be willing to make this type of investment into the future of leadership.

Travis believes there is strong argument to encourage police officers to live in the communities in which they serve because it makes a statement of connection to the community the officer serves. This helps engender a sense of community pride and integration. Common purpose. Empathy for members of the community. Personal stake.

Breaking Barriers/Finding Common Ground

How do we know there is a problem? According to Travis, there are a number of indicators that his research has found:

1. Public opinion surveys – low opinion of police, especially in communities of color

2. Victimization surveys – large percentage of crimes not reported to police and when asked why, it's because they don't trust the police. Indicator of some problem.
3. In work police do to solve crimes, even serious crimes, people distance themselves and don't get involved in the process sometimes out of fear or retaliation, distrust. There is a sense that if we cooperate, someone will get arrested and go to prison which is not a desired outcome (distrust of system). The "customer base" has walked away because of lack of trust, cooperation and trust.

Travis suggests that there is a "Democracy deficit" and explains it as, "lack of engagement between this government service and the people it is supposed to serve." For Travis, this equates to a lack of legitimacy which means there is a lack of trust and confidence in this part of government which is a problem for our democracy. Travis' solution is more democracy – "more engagement, more actual co-production of safety where the community is seen as being a valued partner and an essential partner and in some ways driving that discussion." (*Travis, Jeremy. Pattern Fellows Class 2020-21. April 2021*)

According to another speaker, Matt Birkhold, "Resolving the issues, the dilemmas created by institutional and systemic racism require both that we transform those institutions enormously with policy, and so forth." Birkhold also suggests that we transform ourselves in ways that make us person-oriented rather than thing-oriented. "They require that we, as a country... and they require white people, in particular, to develop a greater commitment to justice than to order." Birkhold recognized that this is not an easy transformation to make, but if we want to create a world where people of color are afforded the chances that all human beings deserve "...it is hard arduous work that we must undertake individually and collectively." (*Birkhold, Matt. Pattern Fellows Class 2020-21. March 2021*).

"The practice a patience and tolerance for how slow things happen...the problems that we face today are four to six hundred years in the making...they don't transform with the stroke of a pen...given me a broader perspective to be more empathetic with others in the world." (Matt Birkhold, March 30, 2021)

Building relationships requires empathy. "Value someone else's humanity."

According to Birkhold, who is a community organizer, he suggests these strategies for communities to build relationships with Police:

1. For Community Members and Community Leaders: Understanding that police officers are human beings just like everybody else. That all human beings are capable of being transformed. If they feel loved and cared for and that can be done in that specific case. By hearing out the dilemmas that PO officers who want to transform policing; who want to have better community relations – by hearing out the struggles that they face on a day to day basis within their department. And then thinking about how support might be given as they struggle with those conditions and try to transform.
2. Find out what kind of support people will need and then create those conditions. Frame issues in a manner where folks who have decision making power have to either make a

decision that supports the will of those who would like to see change or look like they just don't care about human beings.

Need to connect to the community (Matt Birkhold)

Pride in Community

Members of the police force should make the effort to attend community events (e.g. athletic competitions, school functions, fairs, and community functions, volunteer activities) to become entrenched in the community and be seen making positive contributions by working side-by-side with members of the community. Builds familiarity, camaraderie, and trust, as suggested by several law enforcement officers among the fellows in this program. However, it cannot go unsaid that sometimes this is not appreciated by members of the community.

“Defund the Police” is really a Call for Resource Reallocation/Re-imagination

Not to say “defund the police”, rather, reallocate or redirect services that would more appropriately handle a situation that an officer may encounter about which the officer is not equipped to deal. E.g. mental illness, drug overdoses, and other social services issues for which the police are often called to respond. Caution: Must be done carefully and thoughtfully.

“Rushing to implement defunding and reinvestment strategies without careful planning is likely to leave vulnerable members of the community in worse circumstances, not better” (McCord, 2003; Roman, 2020, as cited in RAND, 2020)

“It will be important to understand not just whether such strategies could or should go forward but how to do so responsibly, in an evidence-based way, and with the input and consent of all necessary stakeholders in the community, including police.”

Travis recognizes that the term “defund the police” can be problematic from a messaging point of view, but says that it is nonetheless an effective tool in getting people's attention. As a result of this call to action, “there are people talking now about the proper role for the police, the proper role of the community, how do we think about building up community capacity and not just about police capacity.” He suggests that is it a chance to look at how we think about the role of communities in producing safety, not just the police. It asks questions like: Have we relied too much on the police to produce safety, to provide essential services? Police are always called upon to solve society's problems – mental health, homelessness, safety in school. Over reliance in police as provider of last resort has led to the police to doing things that they shouldn't do; led to police having to do things they are not trained to do. There should be other funded ways to address certain circumstances to which the police would otherwise be called, but not necessarily have the capacity to address. *(Travis, Jeremy. Pattern Fellows Class 2020-21. April 2021)*

Travis acknowledges that for some who are using the phrase, the most extreme articulation is abolition. However, he believes that those who are using this language are really saying, ‘Let's rethink how safety is produced? How should government resources be devoted to production of safety? What should be the police role in those resources? How do police move from warrior to guardian so that they are more rooted in those naturally occurring community

functions? And how do things get restructured to provide that as the way we produce wellbeing and safe communities?” (Travis, Jeremy. *Pattern Fellows Class 2020-21. April 2021*).

McNeely:

Tensions between police and communities around the country are rapidly rising, and many factors are the cause. For one, the true and perceived acts of brutality and the impunity the officers seem to be enjoying has a role in this. But the public’s perception is also skewed by the media, who will often add fuel to the fire to get more attention to the story.

The building of relationships between the police and “the community” is deeply complicated. In truth, there are always multiple communities that police need to build relationships with, especially in urban areas. Cities—and even single policing districts—are often segregated by race, ethnicity, income, and even age. Those communities often have distinctly different perceptions of and relationships with the police.

That does not mean, however, that officers do not have to play their part. As a matter of fact, they should be making the first step, as they are the ones working for the community, not the other way around. Good relationships between law enforcement and communities are essential for many reasons. For one, a public that has a bad perception of the police is much less likely to cooperate and is more likely to retaliate as well. The bond that is forged between the police and community, is one that requires consistent attention.

As society changes, so does the ever-changing way policing need be performed. The advent of lines of communication, such as social media, have expanded incident reporting. Incidents that would have been judged in a court of law, are now judged by public masses within minutes of the occurrence. Police and society are often being forced into conflict, because of these rushed judgments.

In recent years, incidents that society have labeled as police misconduct, have called into question, the way policing is being conducted. Police departments throughout the nation have begun to develop new policing strategies. The theories about enforcing broken laws, have begun to shift towards educating and assisting. Ticket writing programs are being replaced with driver education programs. Many jurisdictions have also adopted a form of prearrest diversion, which help over the handcuffs is the product offered.

Many police agencies have already been holding community-based events, one such as National Night Out. National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances.

Nelson:

Re-envisioning public safety must be approached in a manner that is thoughtful, deliberate, and does not rely solely on local police departments. In order for reforms to work, community buy-in is essential. A community safety plan must be put in place starting with a comprehensive safety needs assessment that addresses differences in the needs and community safety desires of different communities and neighborhoods so that areas of focus for officers patrolling those communities and neighborhoods can be tailored to those needs.

Addressing the needs of individuals is key to improving public safety. The lack of mental health services places our local law enforcement agencies in difficult situations that would be better suited for mental health professional to handle. I think an increase in training in areas such as de-escalation and crisis intervention will better serve our local police departments.

Getting addiction rehabilitation services to those in need will help our communities instead of fracturing them. Some municipalities have programs like Hope Not Handcuffs that addresses these issues. The concept of restorative justice can be used as an alternative to traditional, punitive approaches to the criminal justice system. By bringing those together who commit criminal acts and those affected by them, restorative justice helps repair a community, addresses specific harms done, and strengthens bonds among community members.

Finally, local municipalities should consider having a Human Rights Commission that would advance and foster a community climate of acceptance, affirmation, and equity. The role of the commission is to act as a community voice regarding incidents or transgressions where safety, equity, and quality of life are jeopardized and promote actions that facilitate change. The commission would coordinate with other community organizations including but not limited to civic leadership and government officials, police, religious and volunteer organizations, and our county, state and federal human rights agencies as appropriate.

Cordova:

Organizations that continually improve are data-driven and transparent. Our police departments have to be transparent and be data-driven to maintain and gain the trust of the communities they serve. Public safety and policing is a race without a finish line. Police Officers, city officials, and the public should continually work towards identifying opportunities for improvements.

Data and transparency are needed to identify issues and highlight any improvements in public safety. New York State this past year took steps to ensure transparency in policing by signing into law the Police Statistics and Transparency Act (S.1830-C/A.10609). This legislation requires courts to compile and publish racial and other demographic data of all low-level offenses. The legislation requires also requires New York to collect and report a broad range of data on policing, including:

- The total number of people who die during an interaction with police or in police custody

- The race, ethnicity, age, and sex of anyone who dies during an interaction with police or in police custody

This type of data being readily available will enable communities and police departments to identify any systemic and discriminatory policing practices. Communities need the data to determine if there are any issues with their police departments.

All police departments in the state should offer and require annual training on implicit bias training. Racism, prejudices, and harmful stereotypes exist in our society. We should not ignore these societal issues. Instead, we need to acknowledge them and work towards eliminating them.

The Wall Street Article, New York Police Change Attitudes after Implicit-Bias Training quoted former Philadelphia Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey saying, that police officers operate in an environment informed by stereotypes and biases and sometimes internalize those concepts, even on an unconscious basis. The issue has added importance in the setting of law enforcement because of the power and authority wielded by officers, he said.

"We haven't been successful in eliminating bias from society," Mr. Ramsey said. "Police come from that same society, so it's a problem everywhere."

A central underlying theme in the Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing is ensuring fair and impartial policing. Police departments cannot ensure fair and impartial policing if they do not train their officers on implicit bias.

Often negative interactions with Police officers that go viral on social media highlight an officer's use of discretion. Police officers need to understand how an unconscious bias influences their decision-making and discretion. According to the Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing Procedural justice is based on four principles: (1) treating people with dignity and respect, (2) giving individuals "voice" during encounters, (3) being neutral and transparent in decision making, and (4) conveying trustworthy motives.

Implicit bias training can help officers have more uniform interactions with the public irrespective of race and ensure all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, given a voice and laws are uniformly enforced.

Finally, civilian complaints for each police department should be made public. Members of the public should know how many complaints are filed each year against police officers and the reasons for those complaints. Providing this information to the public increases transparency and may help to increase the public's trust.

Works Cited

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Werner:

1. Reimagine the Type of Response

Mental health and substance abuse issues have approached epidemic levels in America in recent years. As a result, police officers are being put in situations that many are not adequately trained to address. An analysis of police shootings reported by the Washington Post in 2015/2016 revealed that a quarter of those killed displayed signs of mental illness⁶. What if we were to chip away at the societal norm that an armed police officer is the automatic response to every emergency call? This is not an entirely new concept. For example, Eugene, Oregon's CAHOOTS program⁷ was started over 30 years ago in an effort to think outside that traditional box. The program sends teams of unarmed civilians consisting of a mental health crisis expert and an EMT/paramedic to non-criminal emergency calls. The dispatcher decides if the call should be routed directly to the police or to CAHOOTS. The results have been pretty remarkable. In 2019, CAHOOTS responded to 24,000 calls, and only required back-up from police 150 times⁸. Sending less threatening, community-oriented civilians to certain non-criminal calls or complaints promotes a neighbors-helping-neighbors mentality and saves police departments money and resources in the process. By taking the mental health counseling burden off of officers, who are unmistakably at their best when handling encounters with individuals who have either been observed violating the law or in the process of committing a crime, communities like Eugene are admitting that there is not a one size fits all approach to policing in an age of unprecedented mental health and substance abuse challenges. The CAHOOTS example was started by a mental health clinic in the small city of Eugene. Here at home, the Hudson Valley has some of the best mental and behavioral health facilities and hospitals in the northeast, so it certainly makes a lot of sense to experiment with this idea in our communities.

3. Reimagine Training

In most police shootings, regardless of race, officers don't shoot out of anger or frustration or hatred, but rather out of fear. A 2014 article from The Atlantic, in the wake of the police-involved killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, highlights the training rookie officers across the country have been accustomed to, which is learning that every encounter, every individual is a potential threat⁹, not all that different from the training provided to soldiers in the military (many former military are also police officers). It is also widely known that many states in this country allow 18-year-olds to be police officers with very little or no firearms training. The end result is both sides are afraid. There have been many documented cases of fatal police shootings where the subject was unarmed but rather mentally unstable and potentially dangerous for other reasons. This ties in nicely to the idea above about reimagining how certain calls are responded to, and the importance of mental health specialists and non-traditional de-escalation practices in the future of community policing.

⁶ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1536504218776970>

⁷ <https://whitebirdclinic.org/what-is-cahoots/>

⁸ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/07/mental-health-replace-police/>

⁹ <https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2014/12/police-gun-shooting-training-ferguson/383681/>

3. Reimagine Transparency/Accountability

The recent policy changes put in place by New Jersey's attorney general to establish new use-of-force policies for all 38,000 state, county, and local law enforcement officers in the state, is a positive step that can serve as a model in transparency and accountability in policing¹⁰. Under the new policy, a use of force database can be made public by a law enforcement office. The ABC News article in question quotes the attorney general as saying "these changes are about more than just reducing unnecessary use of force by law enforcement. We are also restoring the public's trust in the work we do—which, in the long run, makes law enforcement more effective and everyone safer." This can be an effective community engagement tool in that while being transparent, can at the same time convey the reality that thousands of response calls a day across a particular community end without excessive force or violence.

¹⁰ <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/force-database-established-jersey-attorney-general/story?id=74759101>