

# Defining “Policeability”: Cooperation, Control, and Resistance in South Los Angeles Community-Police Meetings

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*Community policing partnerships are built and maintained by community meetings wherein participants coproduce social order by identifying local problems and devising strategies for their reduction and resolution. Coproduction is a dynamic process of meaning construction that takes place through social interaction. These interactions build toward a mutually satisfactory discourse on local definitions of law, crime, and order. This discourse creates a set of understandings about what citizens interpret as problems, disorder, and crime, as well as police officers' ability to address these issues using a range of enforcement and nonenforcement strategies. Through this interactive process, police and residents define the “policeability” of residents' interpretations. Drawing on literature in symbolic interactionism, we chart a course for unpacking the contest over policeable discourse using ethnographic data gathered over a four-year period in community-police meetings in South Los Angeles. This article explores participants' roles and explicates the process of defining policeability through a set of ideal-type interactions (cooperation, control, and resistance). Power, in this setting, is control over the definition of policeability. Residents are locked into a supplicatory role, while officers are akin to legal brokers, accepting, rejecting, or reframing residents' claims of crime and disorder. Our findings suggest that, in this precinct, while the rhetoric of cooperation abounds, pessimism on the part of policing scholars about the claims toward true partnership are warranted with respect to the power police retain and express in police-citizen interactions. Keywords: community policing; symbolic interactionism; discourse; power; LAPD.*

Twenty years ago, the violence following the Rodney King verdict in Los Angeles produced calls for greater community engagement and oversight, leading to a mandate for community policing (Greene 2000; Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department 1991). Outside of Los Angeles, some adoption of community policing has become ubiquitous in major American and international police forces (Johnson and Roth 2003). Community policing depends on citizen input for success; departments that embrace community policing typically hold periodic meetings in which police officers and precinct commanders meet with residents, business owners, and other stakeholders to discuss local issues of crime and disorder. The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) specifically uses these meetings to keep in touch with community concerns and coproduce policing strategies.

Although these community-police meetings are the bread and butter of community policing, the manner in which residents and officers interact within community police meetings is seldom analyzed. Such interactions determine whether and how specific issues fit within the purview of community policing. Such an opportunity for citizens to shape the basic definition of what is relevant for police to enforce is rare in the criminal legal system, outside of a legislative body or referendum.

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In this article, we highlight the “on-the-ground” processes that shape the coproduction of collective understandings of what can be policed. In analyzing this dynamic, it is helpful to see community-police meetings as public performances in which the continued legitimacy of the forum depends as much on resident expression and input as it does on meeting institutional (LAPD) goals. We take a modified symbolic interactionist approach, drawing from Erving Goffman (1959), Philip Manning (2008), and Robin Smith (2011) to explore community-police meetings, while remaining cognizant of the relationship between individual exchange and the reproduction of discourse (Foucault 1978; Hacking 2004). Coproduction is a process that begins when residents identify an issue they believe appropriate for police intervention. Officers respond, interpreting the relevance of the issue and negotiating strategies to address it or articulating reasons why they will not—this response then may generate further resident response. The entire collection of these exchanges forms a discourse of “policeability” and we suggest that this is a major cornerstone upon which community policing’s claim to coproduction rests. Within the larger set of practices that comprise policework, community policing gathers its legitimacy from the maintenance of this policeable discourse and its successful synthesis of police and resident concerns. How this is produced thus becomes a crucial question.

We identify three basic forms that characterize these exchanges over policeability (cooperation, control, and resistance) and chart the considerable framing, negotiation, and contestation that comprise each. These interactions occur within the confines of a space controlled by police and issues are deflected or taken up within a context of temporal, fiscal, and legal limitations. Police have an institutional interest in community engagement but are also proprietary regarding their workload; as the institutional authority figures, they assume the role of “legal broker” in determining what issues are deemed policeable (Coutin 2003). On the other hand, residents and other stakeholders have a personal interest in social order as well as the leverage of meeting legitimacy and local knowledge to ensure that their concerns are heard. Both sets of actors are interested in producing a continued policeable discourse.

Using ethnographic data gathered over a four-year period, we offer insight into these social processes and interactional dynamics by examining monthly police-community meetings in South Los Angeles. We present coproduction as a dynamic process and chart a course for unpacking that process and the manner in which it connects to a larger understanding of what community policing can address. After sketching this picture, we fill in a specific portion of it, focusing on a set of ideal-type interactions to explore the roles of the participants and explicate our conception of a crucial component of coproduction: policeability. We conclude by discussing the implications of our work for future research on community policing and for understanding the interactive process of coproduction with respect to the power relations between police and residents. Our aim is to broaden discussions of community-government interactions with a fresh analytic approach to the community meeting, a method used widely in both domestic and international partnerships.

## Literature Review

National data suggest that community policing has become the intervention *du jour* for virtually every major municipal police force in the country (Johnson and Roth 2003). Indeed, scholars of political discourse have located this shift within a larger turn to community governance (Herbert 2005; Rose 1996). Community policing is the idea that neighborhood safety requires buy-in from area residents and stakeholders to shape policing strategies (Goldstein 1987; Skolnick and Bayley 1988). Less a specific strategy than an organizational process for producing strategies, community policing devolves some level of control over crime fighting activities to the community (Herbert 2005). In a definitive statement of the concept, Jerome Skolnick and David Bayley (1988) argue that “community policing should be said to exist only when new programs are implemented that raise the level of public participation in the maintenance of

public order" (p. 5), while Jason Scott, David Duffee, and Brian Renauer (2003) suggest that it should form the basis for the "coproduction of social order" (p. 411).

Community policing literature argues over coproduction's contents, efficacy, and whether it increases or decreases social capital (Duffee, Fluellen, and Renauer 1999; Pino 2001; Scott 2002), yet a current of resistance to the idea itself has endured for some time (see anticipations in Bayley 1991; Manning 1997; Weatheritt 1991). More recently, Steve Herbert (2005) refers to the reliance on community coproduction as a "trapdoor": the community is unable to bear the weight of this responsibility, and the trapdoor swings open underneath them. In disadvantaged neighborhoods seen as most in need of community policing, Daniel Flynn (2000) suggests this results in community organizing efforts by the police themselves at best, while at worst, community policing simply does not function (Herbert 2006). Regardless, forms of community-government partnership—and their attendant public meetings—are becoming ubiquitous outside of community policing and deserve more attention (e.g., Brown 2010; Hughes and Edwards 2002).

Renauer and his associates (2003) call for the development of research strategies that will better unpack the processes and mechanisms that comprise community coproduction. Based on evaluations from several nationally sponsored projects, the authors compare "issue-specific" coding strategies (i.e., recording who participated, "actual" community effort, intervention results, how police encouraged action) with "global impression" coding (i.e., summaries regarding meeting contents). They suggest that some evaluations are better than others at generating calculable knowledge about community policing and coproduction, but that the connection between process and outcome remains obscure. The strategies outlined by their research team orient toward the creation of standardized data collection forms and large data sets, to build models that can control for relevant covariates and determine the weight of various aspects of coproduction upon relevant outcomes for across-jurisdiction analysis.

We focus instead on answering these processual questions as well as the ontological arguments raised by Herbert and others through a direct focus on the interactions that comprise the meetings themselves. All the elements suggested by Renauer and associates (2003)—long-term global and issue-specific research with continuous sampling of a specific neighborhood—are available through sustained, in-depth ethnographic research. Moreover, the research question itself is about dynamic process. Similar to Renauer and associates' conclusion, we argue that aggregated evaluation research is constitutionally incapable of answering questions about process because it fails to take seriously coproduction as the result of contest and negotiation between agentive actors with specific interests in a normative space. The question asked by Scott and associates (2003)—how do community and police align their interests coproductively—seems answerable only by seeing the interactions themselves as part of a dynamic process, rather than examining an aggregated summary of their general nature (p. 411). Such an investigation will also lend evidence to the very possibility of coproduction raised by Herbert.

Our purpose here is to improve understanding of community crime control by examining the reality of power inequity and discursive (and literal) conflict between the police and the policed. We share with other scholars of community a desire to draw attention to the social dynamics of coproduction, and see community-police meetings as a powerful site of meaning creation. No research we have found investigates the actual face-to-face interactions that occur within the meetings themselves. As such, we ask the following questions: (1) How can the process of coproducing police action be best conceptualized? (2) In determining appropriate police engagement, what roles do residents and officers assume? (3) What form do these interactions take, and how do they inform the larger process of coproduction?

## Theoretical Framework

Symbolic interactionists study the iterative production of meaning embedded in social interaction. Using the metaphor of [drama as an analytic tool](#), sociologist Erving Goffman (1959)

studied people in various settings as they attempted to create mutually satisfactory interactions in fulfillment of specific personal and organizational goals. These interactions occur in a structured setting where the space, time, and performances are specifically defined. Goffman refers to groups fulfilling organizational goals as “teams,” underlining the idea that organizations are relational constructs; in the case of community-police meetings, it is a process generated in the interactions between agents of government (police) and the public (residents). Organization can be productive, but also oppressive, silencing certain voices and types of speech while recognizing others. In this sense, organizations are relational in that they are premised upon the interplay of relations of power.

From a macro perspective, Michel Foucault reconceptualized power not simply as gross structuralist oppression handed down to the powerless from the powerful, but rather as a set of institutionalizing processes, practices, and definitions that render subjects and situations intelligible through discourse (Foucault 1978, 1995). Foucault situated his analysis at the nexus of power and knowledge (power/knowledge), suggesting power as the ability to define what comprises knowledge. In other words, articulating and defining categories of knowledge that are taken up and made meaningful is the essence of power. Discourse, then, as a collection of these knowledges, renders experience legible; experience is interpreted with respect to dominant discourses. Yet from where do these discourses emerge and how? How can face-to-face interaction both arise from and produce a larger discourse?

Ian Hacking (2004) argues that Goffman’s concern with the mechanics of meaning production, and Foucault’s concern with discourse itself are actually complementary—each is simply working from different ends of the spectrum. From each, we learn that power is a matter of role within social organization constituted through normative discourse. While Foucault suggests that power is capillary, Goffman demonstrates it through the interpersonal interactions that individuals perform, react to, and reproduce. Hacking (2004) finds that the two theorist-methodologists are mutually constitutive: Goffman fills in Foucault’s silences on the actual production of intelligible discourse from individual understanding, and Foucault provides for Goffman the end products that his dramaturgical interactions create (pp. 299–300).

In precisely the sense intended by Hacking, the interactions within community-police meetings work together to produce larger discursive outcomes. Building on Goffman, Peter Manning (1997) points to the utility of organizations as an orienting concept, in part because organizations are a site of social repetition within a normative space. Actors in these environments mutually shape the way others perceive, define, and respond to them, creating, sustaining, and morphing social relations and hierarchies (Manning 2008). These performances are not isolated, rather, they build on one another through what Hacking (2004) calls “looping” effects, or the dialogue between repercussions of past performances and present performances.<sup>1</sup> In this manner, discursive understandings grow from the dialogue between new interactive input and old performances within the confines of an organizational space; the result is dynamic categories of knowledge.

Meaning production is structured through organizational practices such as meetings. When a meeting is called to order and later adjourned, both are acts of power that mark “the boundaries of the occasion” (Johnson 1986). Meetings are conceived to have an official tone and purpose—“within frame” behaviors occur within the official space of the meeting, while nonofficial exchanges are known as “out of frame behaviors.” Precisely because we are interested in the generation of official discourse, we confine our analysis of community-police meetings to within the frame. Consequently, most of the analysis presented here takes place within the portion of the meetings allocated for open dialogue and during agenda time when the precinct captain summarizes crime trends and calls directly for concerns.

In *Asylums*, Goffman (1962) discusses the regulation of behavior through role within institutions, contending that individuals redefine their institutionalized roles in advantageous ways

1. As Hacking (2004) notes, his conception of looping is different from that of Goffman’s (1962), yet the two work together, very much in the spirit of the present analysis. Here, we adapt Hacking’s conception of “dynamic nominalism” to apply to coproduction rather than solely to individuals.

lending them agency and opening space for resistance. In a similar sense, Foucault identifies power as locally performed—agent to agent—and resistance as not only possible but actually constitutive of power, just as transgression is constitutive of law (Golder and Fitzpatrick 2009). Coproduction, from this vantage point, must inevitably be a product of contest, as resident issues must be “deciphered in [their] relation to law” (Foucault 1978:83). Resistance is therefore built into community-police meetings from the ground up. Such dynamic tensions play out in the ways officers control the meeting, residents resist that control, and both groups concede discursive territory to solve problems and enhance legitimacy. Because of this understanding of power, every interaction within community-police meetings contains elements of cooperation, control, and resistance. For analytic purposes, we focus on ideal-typical interactions where expressions of cooperation, control, or resistance are dominant, reproducing power within role as well as undermining it. This approach exposes the ways that Foucauldian power animates the Goffmanian roles that actors inhabit. These ideal-type exchanges triangulate the various ways in which the Community-Police Advisory Board (CPAB) team determines what issues are suitable for police action. Overall, given a controlled situation, a hierarchy of roles, and resident resistance, individual officers and residents produce a discourse that reinforces institutional legitimacy while leaving room for limited challenge.

The role of officers who attend community-police meetings in South LA is broadly analogous to that of “legal broker” (Coutin 2003). Susan Bibler Coutin (2003) explains the case of paralegals working with undocumented immigrants on how best to secure favorable court outcomes, presenting their role as multiple and contradictory within immigrant-serving organizations. Advocates are both sympathetic listeners as well as adjudicators probing for “plot holes” in the accounts of their clients (Coutin 2003:90). Successful advocate-client interactions craft coherent narratives that can withstand legal scrutiny, gaining immigration status for the client and professional success for the advocate.

LAPD officers in community police meetings occupy a similar status, insofar as they possess the institutional power of definition to determine what is appropriate for police action. From the many matters brought to their attention, they work with (and sometimes against) residents to frame problems as appropriate for police action. This role is similarly contradictory however, as we also point to instances where officers break from this role, challenging official rules in ways that enhance meeting legitimacy. In contrast, residents act as complainants, a generally supplicatory role, in which they bring issues to the attention of officers and look for action, acknowledgment, or explanation. Their status as complainants is predicated on their stake in the neighborhood and their local embeddedness, which they use to speak from a position of knowledge about neighborhood problems.

In this article, we advance an understanding of coproduction as a dynamic process in which public meeting exchanges loop into a larger discourse of policeability. This is a sizeable task. Using the modified symbolic interactionist/Foucauldian perspective described above, we focus here specifically on ideal-type interactions of cooperation, control, and resistance to demonstrate elements of contest and negotiation. We also outline the basic roles and power dynamics as we see them unfold in South LA. By viewing meetings as containing a performative process for the maintenance of stable discourse, we investigate community-police “coproduction” as it unfolds.

## Methods

### *Setting*

LAPD breaks LA in four Bureaus—South, Central, West, and the Valley—and again into 21 policing divisions, each with its own centralized station and distinctive style of community policing. South Bureau is the largest geographically and comprises several divisions; one, which we refer to pseudonymously as “South Division,” is our research site. An area long known for its elevated crime rates, South Division has produced many of LA’s most infamous gangs. While

current rates of violence are well below those of the 1980s and 1990s, serious violent crime rates in South Division remain among the highest in the city. In the past two decades, South Division has transitioned from virtually all black to a strong Latino majority. This has created an uneven racialized age structure—youth and young families are overwhelmingly Latino and the older generations are strongly black.

South Division is extremely impoverished. South Division census tracts in 2010 suffered from an official unemployment rate of almost 40 percent and nearly 30 percent lived below the federal poverty line, according to 2010 U.S. Census figures.<sup>2</sup> This impoverishment has dire consequences for private and public services. Private investment is low—the South Division police station, for example, was the only site adjudged worthy of hosting a job fair in 2011, which was attended by over 500 residents on short notice. Several local public high schools are among the lowest ranked in the nation. As is typical in LA, single-family ranchers and two- and three-story apartment complexes line the secondary streets of South Division. Much of the area is physically disordered. Dump sites full of used tires, mattresses, clothing, and trash share space with a growing homeless population. Many homes are well kept, sporting manicured lawns and hedges, but often wrapped in wrought iron, promoting a feeling of general insecurity. Police sirens sound regularly and gunshots are not uncommon.

Community-police meetings in LA are known as Community-Police Advisory Board (CPAB) meetings—two occur in South Division monthly. The “official” meeting is conducted in English and attended mainly by English-speaking CPAB members, neighborhood activists, business owners, and an ever-rotating cast of guests and speakers. Despite the area’s shifting demography, members mostly comprise elderly black residents, although a small contingency of Latinos also attend as well as several local business owners (of various ethnicities). English CPAB elevates several residents into positions such as secretary, sergeant-at-arms, and co-chair, while the LAPD division captain permanently occupies the position of chair. Members undergo background checks, receive ID badges, and the resident co-chair reports annually to the LA Police Commission on CPAB activities. CPAB meetings commonly generate discussions about neighborhood concerns, strategic partnerships, and collaborative events. Agendas are ostensibly generated between the division captain and the resident co-chair. CPAB publicizes meetings through postings on station walls, Twitter, Facebook, e-mail, person-to-person outreach, personalized calls from a phone list, and the occasional referral from front desk officers.

Spanish-speaking residents attend the Spanish-language meeting called “Hispanic Outreach” (HO). This meeting is composed mainly of concerned parents with their children, and a few representatives from local Latino-oriented community organizations—it is often referred to casually as “Spanish CPAB.” HO combines outreach to the Latino immigrant community with education on American civic engagement and fear reduction tactics targeted toward those concerned with deportation and ethnic profiling. Although some of the regular Spanish language attendees have gone through the same process as the English meeting attendees, there is no special status in HO for doing so, and such membership was not designed to be a prerequisite for HO attendance.

In sum, the English CPAB is a quasi-public meeting with structured membership, while HO is more of a public presentation of information between LAPD and resident leaders directed towards attendees. We consider them together in this analysis because both meetings allocate space for residents to directly interact with officers over their concerns, hear about crime trends, and learn about police practices such as arrest procedures, probable cause, and special units. Because each meeting taps into a different resident demographic, both meetings constitute a team that can coproduce policeability.<sup>3</sup>

2. The unemployment numbers are almost certainly higher, given Western’s (2006) insights regarding unmeasured unemployment in segregated, black, impoverished post-industrial communities.

3. While we respect the differences between these meetings, we dedicate those discussions to other pieces in which they can be fully explored. Here, we focus on processual similarities in the determination of policeability across meetings.

LAPD officers who bear the brunt of community policing are known as senior lead officers (SLOs). In South Division, there are twelve SLOs divided evenly between black, Latino, and white; three are women and nine are men. SLOs have a rank commensurate with the most senior patrol officer, but answer only to a community policing sergeant and the division captain. SLOs police a small block group, within which they cultivate ties to residents and business owners, ameliorate quality of life and other patterned crime and disorder concerns, and serve as a point of contact and leadership for stakeholders and other officers. Like any LAPD promotion, SLOs must apply for their positions through a written exam and a stated desire to work with the community—the move is lateral, as one need not become a SLO to progress from senior patrol officer to sergeant or detective. Still, many highly ranked LAPD officials were SLOs at one time. While the bulk of South Division's SLOs are well tenured, having retained their rank and assignment for decades, promotion is also common and SLOs sometimes must switch areas at the behest of LAPD command staff. We know of no South Division SLOs who are actually from or live in South Division, although some are from other parts of LA or the larger county area.

Meetings comprise anywhere from 10 to 30 residents and 2 to 15 officers. Resident members are encouraged to attend or jeopardize their membership, but in practice, attendance is sporadic without consequence. Of a core attendance group of approximately 30 members, about half will be present at a given meeting with a smattering of anonymous residents—as a rough estimate, average annual attendance per core member is probably just over 50 percent. Residents who are not members often attend to ask questions about specific topical issues or in response to neighborhood violence—a homicide proximate to the monthly meeting can often boost attendance significantly, and this sometimes renders visitors into new members. The division captain, or his/her immediate subordinate (also a captain), in conjunction with the resident co-chair run every meeting. SLOs are not required to attend, but are encouraged to do so by the captain. Our conversations with individual SLOs suggest that some view CPAB attendance as a chance to gain face time with residents, while others resent it as a waste of time, compounded because departmental overtime has been abolished.

We originally began attending CPAB meetings as part of a larger project on interracial violence in LAPD's South Bureau. These meetings proved fruitful for those purposes, but we became interested in the stage that community policing provided for residents to voice their personal and group concerns with law enforcement. By building relationships with community stakeholders and officers, we became aware of CPAB's place in LAPD's community policing project. After more than a year of observation at South Division CPAB meetings, the co-chair invited us to join the Board itself as members. Although this was unexpected, we accepted, albeit with a few qualms about becoming more "participant" than "observer." It quickly became clear, however, that the change in status was more of a recognition of our status than a challenge to it; we were familiar with the normative culture and process of the South Division CPAB and the issues at hand, and this translated easily into membership. We received nameplates on yellow paper in plastic holders and were encouraged to sit at the table with the members rather than along the wall where less attached attendees sit. Our role was always primarily that of researcher, insofar as we did not join any committees or shape any agendas. We remained among the Board's most frequent attendees, lending volunteer support when we could to community activities as well as facilitating research and volunteer opportunities between South Division and our educational institution.

We became friendly with many of the residents who attend on a regular basis as well as many of the SLOs and the captains in charge during our tenure. When Captain Patton was promoted and replaced by Captain Saitou, Vera Fischer, the resident co-chair, introduced us publically as "our graduate students," demarcating us as an accepted, if slightly different, part of the group. Although some SLOs were initially skeptical of our motivations, our continued engagement helped them warm to us and we maintained a friendly relationship with them as well.

### *Data and Analysis*

This analysis is based on ethnographic data collected over four years at monthly CPAB meetings beginning in August 2008. Between us, we observed more than 60 community meetings as well as other community-police events, programs, and functions. We relied upon classic participant observation techniques culminating in extensive field notes. All names and places are pseudonyms and details have been changed where necessary to disguise the identity of respondents and identifiable places.<sup>4</sup>

The field notes reproduced below are typed and fleshed out temporally ordered event descriptions of the handwritten jottings generated while in the field (Atkinson 2001). Each of us separately produced five to ten single-spaced pages per observation session. Although both authors attended the vast majority of meetings, one advantage to partnered ethnography is that one author was usually there to apprise the other of meeting events in the event of a schedule conflict. We sometimes collaborated on field notes during particularly complicated or chaotic exchanges (we indicate field note authorship for each excerpt accordingly), but after finishing our notes, we always exchanged them as a way of triangulating our reconstructions of events. When significant disagreements arose, we worked together to integrate where we agreed and demarcate where we disagreed, although these situations were rare. MaxQDA qualitative data analysis software allowed us to organize like sets of interactions together and follow issues through multiple meetings.<sup>5</sup>

This approach has several strengths. Because this is a continuous observational process, we observed and captured interactions as they unfolded, which allowed us to evaluate issues across meetings, foregrounding context and explicating meaning directly through these exchanges. As is accepted in such localized qualitative work, we eschew generalizability for specificity, although other settings with similar power dynamics may find strong congruencies in our analysis. We also make no strong statements about the representativeness of CPAB for either LAPD officers or South LA residents in general. Residents of both meetings are a self-selecting group of neighborhood actors, many of whom are involved in other neighborhood improvement ventures, public services, or are long-time information hubs for their neighborhood. Similarly, officers formally self-select through promotion opportunities. While these groups are not “generalizable” in the sense usually intended in social science, they are relevant precisely to the extent that community policing is premised on the existence and interaction between these selected participants. When LAPD discusses its efforts with “the community,” CPAB is what they mean.

### **Findings**

In investigating coproduction, we found it necessary to explicate the idea of “policeability.” We define policeability (and unpoliceability) as the potential outcomes of a police-resident discussion of a neighborhood problem or engagement opportunity. It also represents the larger discourse emerging from CPAB meetings regarding what is appropriate for community policing intervention. Policeable issues are centered loosely on “quality of life” or “disorder” crimes, as residents attend meetings to become directly involved in the regulation of their property, neighborhood, and community. Policeability need not be coercive or even related to legality—it only

4. Over the course of four years, we have seen several captains and other officers come and go, so although pseudonyms remain consistent, positions do not.

5. Several reviewers suggested that we provide percentages for our ideal types to give the readers an idea of how often these types occur relative to one another. MaxQDA enabled us to report cooperation as occurring 34.8 percent of the time, control as occurring 53.4 percent of the time, and resistance as occurring 11.8 percent of the time.

Although this certainly adds context, we reiterate that we conceive of interactions as processual rather than discrete instances. The contestation over definition is not so easily fixed as this breakdown might suggest, a concern that originally motivated our analytic structure of ideal types. We urge caution in interpreting these numbers; contestation is fluid and seldom final.



must motivate the police to some form of action. This renders the field of police involvement potentially limitless (Goldstein 1987; Wilson and Kelling 1982). For example, complaints can conceivably arise over noise, business regulatory violations, traffic, parking enforcement, and dumping; yet event organization, employment, housing, and fundraising can also be policeable issues. If "regular" policework comprises a set of understandings for action prior to community policing, policeability is that piece that has grown outward and expanded since its adoption and because of its coproduction. The categories of policeable and unpoliceable are the discursive products of these meetings, but the content of those categories and the contours they trace are created through, and in contest with, residents.

For LAPD, CPAB legitimacy is an abstract institutional imperative, yet it still has force. A refusal to act by LAPD, while not uncommon, must be balanced against a potential set of repercussions; after all, perpetually unsatisfied residents may not return to work with police. For residents, CPAB's legitimacy depends upon whether and to what extent they feel heard and respected, and their problems heeded. Residents are aware that they are working directly with LAPD, an institution with a rocky history of racism and brutality in South LA. Policeable discourse is of interest to both parties, but each comes to the issue with separate concerns to be managed.

Coproduction is an interactional process. We identify three types of interactional encounters taking place in South Division's CPAB meetings: what we call moments of cooperation, control, and resistance (see footnote 5 for a rough typological breakdown). Community-police meetings presuppose the possibility and regularity of coproductive cooperation. We discuss items such as event planning that engender cooperation as well as the uncontroversial policeable narratives that are advanced by residents and affirmed by officers. Control takes both subtle and nonsubtle forms. LAPD exerts considerable control over the physical and discursive space where contestation occurs, as well as retaining veto power over the ultimate outcome of policeable issues. Residents (and sometimes officers) can resist these outcomes in various ways, and sometimes reach discursive agreement in ways that continue to see attendees return, although this is not always the case. Residents do not always agree with certain police policies, practices, or viewpoints, and opposing opinions can directly challenge established narratives of what is policeable and what is not. But residents are not always alone in their resistance. Sometimes, in the name of underlining the legitimacy of CPAB, officers also resist official narratives to offer counterstrategies, or subversive ways of manipulating the department's mission and institutional practice to achieve personal and stakeholder aims. These addendums help ensure the legitimacy of the meeting without significantly altering the larger discourse.

The analysis below focuses mainly on complaint encounters to demonstrate these ideas. We use the moments of complaint and response to examine how residents and officers actively discuss local crimes, problems, and resolutions. Some are collective problems and some are individual, but all invite response from LAPD.

### *Cooperation*

Cooperation between officers and residents occurs in small and large ways that reinforce institutional legitimacy.<sup>6</sup> Cooperation, like resistance, inheres in the very structure of the meeting. CPAB is an organization with specific hierarchy that places civilians in prominent roles alongside police officials. The resident co-chair, along with the heads of subcommittees, the secretary, and other members together with officers form an organizational team whose goal is to exchange information about local crime and disorder and to satisfy resident and police needs for addressing it.

6. Although we do not review them here for reasons of space, we also note that many interactions comprise expressions of mutual respect and affection between police and board members. What we conceptualize as "cheerleading" helps reinforce CPAB social bonds and underlines the mutual dependence for legitimacy that CPABs reflect, even when considering issues of control and resistance.

First, we highlight forms of cooperation in those complaint encounters where the result is easily absorbed within the larger discourse of policeability. Definitions shift very little or in ways that LAPD finds comfortable. In the following situation, a prominent CPAB member requests enforcement over the issue of neighborhood car sales from unauthorized dealers. Car sales concern residents because the dealer's cars occupy many of the limited parking spaces on their block:

Bruce Palmer asks what can be done about the illegal auto sales that take place in several areas throughout the division. SLO Chris Cordoba notes that without [Neighborhood Prosecutor] Dakari Hendricks's involvement, officers can go to the locations, run the VIN numbers, and check for proof of insurance. If none is found, they must impound the vehicles. If vehicles are registered, however, officers pass the information along to detectives who will organize a sting with the prosecutor. These detectives, Hendricks adds, are "very successful at filing cases and gaining prosecutions," but they have to catch the actual seller. "That's the tricky part" (Gascón, field notes, March 11, 2010).

It is easy for officers to recognize this complaint as policeable and there is no conflict over enforcement mechanism. Mr. Palmer is in a common role of complainant, identifying local issues of disorder and relaying that information to police. From there, Officer Cordoba affirms that this is a policeable concern and outlines the distinct role of each government official. SLOs can direct patrol officers to begin preliminary investigations with tips from community residents. They then pass that information over to station detectives who will determine tactical procedure, while working with the prosecutor to produce convictions. In partnerships like CPAB, the role of neighborhood prosecutors is to provide linkages between police and the courts to streamline prosecution—their commentary thus often speaks to method.<sup>7</sup> From start to finish, neither officers nor the prosecutor dispute the policeability of the residents' claim, only clarifying what must be done in the law enforcement process to ensure quick resolution. Both parties cooperate, agreeing on the issue as a legitimate local problem with a readily available solution. The issue is absorbed into the policeable discourse—through the unwinding of interactional loops, it may make similar issues more policeable in the future and affect whether and how they are presented.

Similarly, the following excerpt is another example where the issue is absorbed easily into policeable discourse. Officers required only the collection of pertinent information. In this case, the complainant is a newcomer to the meeting:

A resident who is here for her first meeting raises her hand. She tells us that she has two sons, 12 and 16. The older boy came home drunk the other day and she learned from the younger son that the liquor store near their home sells alcohol to minors.

Captain Saitou responds, "I'm going to let you know what our strategy is. Businesses that sell liquor to minors get a \$5,000 fine and can lose their liquor licenses. We have cadets [teenagers from an LAPD junior officers program] who go in undercover and make buys for us and catch them that way. You guys all remember the 'shoulder tap'? You know, the kid waiting outside the liquor store who taps you on the shoulder and has you buy him liquor? Those guys get a huge fine too. The vice unit can perform a sting using decoys and storeowners face a \$5,000 fine if cited. So we will notify vice" (Gascón and Roussel, field notes, April 15, 2010).

Captain Saitou immediately recognizes the policeability of the resident's complaint, articulates an organizational response, and spells out the penalty awaiting stores and individuals selling alcohol to minors. This sort of exchange is ideal for police, since it works smoothly for them as institutional brokers. Policeability is achieved in this case in relation to a solution already within the arsenal of vice responses. Situations like this render easily as policeable and residents seem comfortable in their role of complainant providing specific information.

CPAB members are integral in planning, organizing, and conducting police-sponsored activities throughout South Division. Members plan and coordinate more than a half dozen major

7. Although there are certainly conflicts between police and city attorneys, within the confines of CPAB, their interests align with respect to policeability.

community events each year from carnivals for kids to Officer Appreciation Day. Community events are an opportunity for the department to reach out to the community, expand its CPAB constituency, and become aware of further areas of community concern or interest as they relate to crime. While some, like Officer Appreciation Day, have limited instrumental utility, others, like street carnivals and health/wellness fairs, can directly address needs within South Division by mobilizing resources. These events serve the institutional interests of the police, as they allow noncoercive resident face time for officers and further fulfill the "community engagement" mandate. These events are literally policeable as well, bringing youth and other residents into the regulable space of LAPD. CPAB is legitimated simultaneously through these events as a productive organization. A discussion of such an event illustrates the cooperative potential of CPAB:

Bruce Palmer notes that he will be involved in planning an amateur radio event during the last weekend in June. If youth want to participate, they can camp out for the three-day event, learn about and operate ham radios, and meet amateur operators. Palmer and Captain Saitou decide that this potentially could merge with the upcoming emergency preparedness event. Saitou notes that he'll invite the cadets both for staffing purposes and for training. The LA County Sheriff's Office will be involved, donating radios for use during the event. In addition to the amateur radio training, the youth can also receive search and rescue training, and CERT [Community Emergency Response Team] training. The overall purpose of the event is to show the community the utility of amateur radios during emergency events, especially since we expect the "Big One" [earthquake] in the years to come (Gascón, field notes, January 13, 2011).

Although originally an announcement of Palmer's ham radio event, the discussion quickly becomes a CPAB project through LA's municipal focus on emergency preparedness. The convergence of interests is clear: Palmer can amplify his event through the organizational might of CPAB, and LAPD can further their program of youth engagement and disaster preparedness. Encounters like this illustrate cooperation based on meeting structure, which allows for relevant organizational announcements; it is also based on CPAB's understanding of itself as an organization capable of partnership. The interests of both Mr. Palmer's organization and community policing more generally are served in the planning of the event and the inclusion of other agencies that could potentially offer support and resources.

The issue here is less a problem of crime as it is of neighborhood security in the event of a disaster. LA's general mandate for emergency preparedness (as well as LAPD's own efforts) fits easily into the overarching discourse of policeability, yet Mr. Palmer also inhabits a different role during this exchange. Here, he is not a complainant but a resource partner. In this role, he is not dependent on LAPD for recognition and indeed has leverage over resources of interest to LAPD. This is a significant departure from the complainant/broker dynamic.

### *Control*

The context for interaction is important, and contestations over policeability are set almost exclusively within the walls of South Division's police headquarters. To attend meetings, one must walk past a desk full of police officers and other residents waiting for service, often to see friends and relatives in the jail downstairs. CPAB meetings convene in the "community room," a large, well-lit square room with doors to the outside, where white institutional walls display old station photographs, police officers, former commanders, and police and residents smiling together for the camera. Residents must be prepared to navigate these things, beginning with the idea of meeting with police in police headquarters—no small consideration for some South LA residents. Although some long-term attendees are comfortable in the station and sometimes recognized by officers as CPAB members even on nonmeeting days, the setting is a place symbolically and literally regulated by LAPD. In this section, we discuss the performances of control by institutional authority: officer performance as legal broker and its relationship to the resident role of complainant. Control remains a significant product of police-community partnerships, despite its democratic rhetoric and espousal of cooperative aims.

The meeting itself is constituted through formal and informal processes controlled largely by the captain. Below, Captain Aaron Saitou discusses the availability of several political roles within the CPAB hierarchy, yet simultaneously undermines the authority of those roles by controlling the political process itself:

Captain Saitou proceeds to run through the CPAB bylaws, tossing out the rules that allow expulsion of members for “good cause,” but mentioning that everyone should try to attend as often as possible. He gets to the section on elections and spontaneously throws open the position of resident “co-chair” (he’s the chair, permanently), because Vera Fisher’s term is up this month. Members have the option of electing a new chair or retaining Fisher, who says nothing, but only Bruce Palmer evinces any interest. “Okay, but only for one year,” he says and Saitou admits that Fisher has agreed to stay on if nobody else wants to do it. Saitou warns Palmer that if he takes the position, he’s going to throw a lot of responsibility Palmer’s way. Palmer nods, accepting the challenge, but his offer is passed over somehow without any further discussion and Fisher inexplicably remains co-chair. The position of secretary immediately comes up, and the younger woman sitting catty-corner across the room from us shouts “Bernadette Ayers for secretary!” There seems to be general support for this proposition and it passes with Bernadette Ayers’ caveat that there be a backup secretary as well.

The sergeant-at-arms position is the next opening requiring a volunteer in this impromptu election. Palmer mentions that J. D. Evans used to hold the position officially and still speaks up when residents are talking over one another, (“Hssst! One at a time!”). Without explanation, Saitou nominates John Peters, the quiet, heavysset, lighthearted youngster of the group for the position. When asked if he’s comfortable assuming the responsibility, Peters says, “Well, you elected me, so I guess I have to,” a joking reference to the “legal” nature of the proceedings through the captain’s bylaws. There is no vote, only Saitou’s nomination.

Captain Saitou continues to read the three-page document aloud line-by-line. A few things stand out, particularly those that reserve control over meetings for the captain and the department. Lastly, the captain retains veto power should the Board make any recommendations that contradict the captain’s opinion of appropriate community policing activity (Gascón and Roussell, field notes, January 13, 2011).

The captain’s institutional role as division commander commits him to using and manipulating bylaws and the electoral process as a means of collectivizing residents toward coproduction; yet, maintaining coproductivity in this way privileges the department’s needs and vision, rather than negotiating these through more democratic processes. Manning (1997) argues that interactional performances are goal oriented and reveal institutional “official values”; we extend this logic to policeable discourse. Here we see that although the captain taps into legalistic and democratic ideas such as bylaws and elections, the agenda is manipulable and elections are called—and ignored—at his whim rather than through a scheduled electoral process. The captain literally reads from a script, making known the rules, interests, and power relations of the institution.

Unlike the cooperation depicted above, situations often occur where residents present an issue that fails to resonate and officers rearticulate that issue in ways more in tune with the institutional discourse of policeability. When discussing residents’ complaints, officers in their legal broker role can reveal the contours of policeability through the exertion of control over the framing and interpretation of complaints. Below, co-chair Vera Fisher is determined to discuss the increasing number of homeless (“transients,” in LAPD parlance) generated by the 2007 sub-prime mortgage crisis. She fumes to us before the meeting that officers are harassing “former community members.” While admitting that she sees some that “refuse help,” she outlines discursive space for homeless former residents whose houses have been foreclosed by banks. The division captain, Rick Patton, and the neighborhood prosecutor, Dakari Hendricks, however, reconceptualize the matter and frustrate Fisher:

Vera Fisher, as co-chair, addresses the CPAB about the homeless problem. “What do we want the police to do? Other communities have these problems too, given the economic crisis. Some have opted to allow motor homes, grant permits, park in lots at night, but there are still some in the street. At the neighborhood council meeting, this was a big issue—we had our highest turnout ever because it was on the ballot. These are folks from the neighborhood. They just want to get it together. What should we have them do?”

We've got the second highest homeless problem in the city." This provokes a quick response from Captain Rick Patton.

"There are two kinds of transients. Some want to be on the street, because the help that we provide them requires abstinence from sex and drugs and alcohol. They're frustrating because officers book them and they're back out again the next night. The other type is from the economy."

After some cross-talk, Fisher continues as though Patton had not mentioned the first type of homeless person. "All those places they rented for nothing [SROs and Section 8 housing], now they're getting pushed out, losing their jobs. My question to the city is, this thing with the market-value housing, Section 8, can't take care of those people in the margins."

But there is no assent from Patton or the other officers and it soon becomes clear that the battle over the course of this discussion is over and that Fisher lost. Dakari, Patton, and the officers, the authorities present in the room, push on and begin focusing on how to police the "voluntary homeless"—transients—and basically ignore the issue Fisher raised about the "economic homeless." To hear Fisher talk, there was no significant homeless problem until the economy tanked. Conversely, to hear LAPD tell it, the economy may have increased the absolute numbers of homeless, but they are easily dealt with, weren't a problem to begin with, and to discuss them is to merely postpone the discussion of the real issue—those who like being homeless.

Dakari, heatedly, outlines the steps that he and police have taken to curtail the problem. "I would not agree that officers don't care for the homeless. Cops have not been heavy-handed, we've even been generous, running task forces until our ears turn blue. People who are interested in assistance get it and are not arrested. Most of them simply aren't interested" (Roussell, field notes, September 4, 2009).

In throwing open the policeable definition of homelessness, Mrs. Fisher is arguing that police can help regulate the recently homeless in ways that respect them as former community members rather than interlopers. Captain Patton, and the neighborhood prosecutor, Dakari Hendricks, however, demonstrate the boundaries of policeable discourse. The captain, in his role as broker, articulates two separate issues from the single point that Mrs. Fischer raises, first reiterating the homeless/transient distinction that Fisher elides, and then collapsing homelessness into transience entirely, erasing the "economic" homeless from policeable discourse. Hendricks, in his linkage-providing role, reveals his own difficulties with the homeless, justifying Patton's definition on the grounds of his practical experience.

As co-chair, Mrs. Fisher may have realized the discursive shift she was proposing and interpreted her role in such a way as to permit this. The reaction, however, makes clear that she overestimated the capacity of the co-chair role to broker policeability. This strict role adherence reserves for LAPD the discretion to alter definitions of policeability. Fisher fulfilled her role as resident complainant in introducing the topic, but her redefinition of homelessness was controlled. Coming together to speak against Fisher's definition of the homeless problem, official actors reaffirm that even community interpretations of local disorder are subject to the repressive force of official interpretations.

LAPD also manifests control over the boundaries of policeability by deflecting resident requests entirely. Officers deflect many complaints and questions back to residents because they fail to align with LAPD's bureaucratic processes, although these rules can shift unpredictably. To incentivize attendance, officers and community leaders make explicit and implicit promises that they can help solve problems, even in light of their fiscal and temporal constraints. The promise of such problem solving means that officers receive complaints that they see as outside their definitions of policeability. In controlling these requests, officers make use of strategies that intersect with other LAPD departments or regulatory systems. Sometimes, officers see in these requests a failure of residents in their role as complainant.

One strategy is to deflect the concern back to the resident, informing them that LAPD is incapable of resolving the problem. Officers see this as a helpful insofar as it is both a civics lesson to residents and solves future problems by increasing resident knowledge of bureaucratic functioning. This helps underline what is and is not addressable at these meetings:

Marlene Haywood: Two houses in my neighborhood set up weekend restaurants on my block.  
SLO Melvin Cantrell: That's Health and Safety's deal, we can't help with that.

SLO Liz Fairbanks (breaking in): Wait, we'll drop by, see what we can do.

Fairbanks and Haywood, sitting adjacent to one another, begin to confer on this, but Cantrell interrupts, saying again that the police can't do anything (Roussel, field notes, August 13, 2009).

Below, Ms. Solis specifically references coproduction in her complaint, reproaching the captain for his deflection of the issue. Captain Macias, however, dodges the idea that he is refusing to engage, suggesting that the issue was never eligible for discursive inclusion under "human rights" law:

Abril Solis raises her hand once more and asks Captain Macias what the LAPD will do about the use of weapons by students on the Vernon High School campus, "*como la ley que son* [being the law, as you are]." Macias returns that parents should be more involved in their kids' upbringing. "But isn't this a partnership meeting?" asks Mrs. Solis, speaking as a parent herself. In typical fashion, though, Macias says his hands are tied in situations like this. There can't be too many restrictions, he says, or else organizations like the ACLU will complain about human rights violations (Gascón and Roussel, field notes, January 27, 2011).

Another set of responses throws the onus of responsibility back onto residents, despite their supplicatory role. Below, Hector Mendoza, the leader of the HO meeting, intervenes on behalf of a Spanish-speaking resident, asking Officer Helen Hancock why the police did not intervene when a teenager was caught at school with a large sum of money.

Hancock: We can't just come in and ask questions about where the money came from. We don't know where she got it, and we can't search without cause. We can't help—what do you want me to do?

Mendoza: If this were your kid, wouldn't you want someone to come out?

Hancock: You guys expect miracles! You should take that money [from her] because someone's going to come looking for it.

Mendoza (yielding a bit): Maybe no crime was committed, but you have to admit it's suspicious.

Hancock (dismissive): She [the mother] lost control of her kid at ten.

Mendoza: I got someone to deal with it, but I was disappointed [in the police] (Roussel, field notes, February 27, 2009).

The resident sees this clearly as a policeable affair, but Hancock deflects the complaint. Mr. Mendoza often attempts to make space for the general concerns of immigrants within the discourse of policeability, but in this instance Hancock instead brokers the issue as a failure of the resident in her maternal role. In articulating this as role failure, Hancock intimates that the issue had never been potentially policeable, much like Macias' "human rights" violations.

These deflections sometimes are filtered through LAPD's actuarial model of policing as a "failure to report"—again, a judgment on the complainant role of residents. Former LAPD Chief William Bratton introduced the department to Compstat, a geospatial crime report-monitoring program that helps LAPD organize and deploy its resources. It is not yet clear what effect this may have had on community policing overall, but in CPAB meetings, statistics (outside of a general recitation of crime trends) are used to remind residents of their primary role (Dabney 2010). By suggesting that residents must improve reporting before coproduction becomes possible, officers position themselves as upholding their roles, and the residents as failing in theirs.

In the example below, a man brings an issue he has been negotiating with a "sober living community" in his neighborhood:

Resident (late middle aged black man with white streaks in his hair sitting behind me): First, I want to express my gratitude for the job that you do. I live right in the vicinity of three sober living houses and not a week—sometimes even a day—goes by without those residents driving my nieces out from playing in the front yard because of their profanity and their craziness. I've made a lot of complaints and I've gotten a lot of lip service, but they continue to use drugs right on my street, sell drugs right on my street, and smoke their drugs right on my street. I confront them about it and they say "I know where you live." I know the [sober living] owner is in violation, and I know your hands might be tied, but . . .

Captain Saitou: Dwayne Glover is your SLO over there. Everything we do is tracked by statistics, so I know you aren't the first to complain about the sober living residents. Keep complaining, because for

the neighborhood prosecutor to take action, there needs to be a demonstrated history of complaints and calls for service at that house, SLO action, and other testimonials. So keep calling and complaining.

SLO Phil Hackett: When you call 911, make sure that you call in their address, not yours, and then tell them to contact you.

Saitou: Or call 311 [nonemergency complaints], but make sure it's that address and that house and in the notes, make sure that you say, please contact me only by phone (Roussell, field notes, April 15, 2011).

Collectively, LAPD officers inform the resident that he and his neighbors: (1) must generate more of the same responses that drove him to CPAB in the first place; and (2) are failing to report the problems correctly. The concern can be safely deflected, in other words, because the problem would have been solved had residents reported correctly and/or more often. Although this issue seems like particularly fertile ground over which to negotiate the details of its policeability, officers deflect the whole issue as role failure and we have not seen the resident at a meeting again.

As might be expected, the constant theme of better reporting often leads to discussions of the bureaucratically appropriate channels to use for particular issues. The underlying message—"report crime whenever you see it"—conflicts with the reality of an ever-shifting set of rules for doing so. Officers demarcate the options that will render appropriate institutional response, but residents are aware that the lines between them are technical and contradictory. These discussions recur regularly, even among longtime members. Activity can be reported by phone in different ways (e.g., 311 [nonemergency], 911, the SLO office, South Division front desk), but different activity dictates this (e.g., criminal, nonemergency, noncriminal but worthy of report, quality-of-life), and a variety of forms of witnessing complicate this (e.g., resident-as-witness, resident-as-victim, resident-as-recipient-of-information). This wide latitude in reporting possibilities means that residents are easily defined as failing in their role of complainant, despite the conflicting explanations:

The conversation shifts to how one ought to call the police. We learn that 911 is not appropriate for everything, especially quality of life crimes. The nonemergency number is 311 and the officers exhort the audience to use it—both are official lines, they say. This naturally leads to a hair-splitting discussion of exactly what is considered a "nonemergency." Witnessing drug crimes is a particular bone of contention. In response, the officer treats the attendees to a long pedantic ramble about reasonable suspicion and probable cause. He explains that drug tip offs are particularly troublesome because even if he knows something is going on, he often cannot do anything about it. In our conversations after the meeting, Danny and I agree that he wasn't particularly coherent and more than likely the attendees were just as confused afterward as before the conversation. Yet the officer ends his talk by firmly reminding them that they should call in every time they see something suspicious (Roussell, field notes, January 23, 2009).

The results from such conversations can be seen as an exercise in getting "the run-around," as Mr. Mendoza suggests below, defending his complainant role:

Mendoza: Okay, case in point, I see a drug house in operation, I call 311 at night, they say call the daytime detectives, I get the runaround.

Patton: No, that's a crime in progress. Call 911 to get dispatched if you see people selling drugs. Whenever there's a crime in progress, call 911 (Roussell, field notes, August 28, 2009).

### *Resistance*

With respect to the determination of policeability, both residents and officers can and do resist. Residents resist decisions about policeability that they disagree with, while officers can resist institutional pressures with regard to policeable discourse. In most cases, resistance from residents is exercised informally, interpersonally, and at some risk, while officers, particularly division captains, have some leeway in legal and procedural interpretation and little to fear in the way of

official sanction.<sup>8</sup> Residents sometimes refuse to accept policeable discourse about crime and policing practices, highlighting the coproductive aspect of their role and positionality as local resident complainants, and jeopardizing meeting legitimacy by exposing unfulfilled expectations. As with the “sober living house” complaint above, however, absence—i.e., declining to continue to participate in CPAB—is the outer limit of that resistance within the meeting frame.

“Cruising” or “lowriding” refers to large gatherings of mainly black car owners who have modified their vehicles in ways that are often not strictly legal (e.g., extra lights, hydraulics). Lowriders sometimes “bounce for pinks,” where the winner gains the loser’s vehicle title. Lowriding groups on the move can slow down traffic considerably and sometimes engage in extra-legal traffic maneuvers, which draw the attention of LAPD. The sheer size of lowrider gatherings can also generate problems for trash and waste management. These events were culturally established decades ago and many lowriders are older and otherwise respectable. Indeed, several are members of South Division’s CPAB. Several CPAB lowriders raise the issue of harassment below:

Dr. Stacy raises her hand. She tells Captain Richard Lucas that she recently received a message from the lowrider group wondering if the division’s officers are “aggressively pursuing” them. The lowrider group has been growing and they’re taking more and more of the [home improvement retailer] parking lot area. They typically begin their caravan on Jeffery and Alton, ride to the parking lot, then to the bank on Main, and then down into Orange County.

Tanika Mahoney adds that the growth of the group is due to the “girl clubs getting involved,” and that “We’re really tired of being harassed.”

The group as a whole has experienced a rash of unpleasant encounters with police. While arrests are infrequent, they do occur, and Mahoney, Stacy, and a few other residents claim that the officers’ comportment during these contacts has been unprofessional and offensive. “We’re still being harassed by the same officers,” Tanika continues. One is particularly “nasty.”

When Captain Richard Lucas and police service representative Jan Greeley ask who the officer is, neither Tanika nor Dr. Stacey can give them a name. Lucas looks disbelieving. “Well, let’s find out,” he says, with his chin in his hand.

“He’s a sergeant.”

“A sergeant?” Lucas does not conceal his emotions well and surveys the room skeptically. The discussion begins to crescendo with many people speaking at once and he quickly quiets the room, extending his arms outward and speaking loudly.

“He’s got short sleeves and tattoos,” Mahoney says, indicating that they extend from wrist to his upper forearm on both arms. “They’re flames.”

“If he’s got tattoos, he should be wearing long sleeves, number one,” the captain says.

“Is he Caucasian?” Ms. Plowman asks.

“No. He’s black and something,” Tanika Mahoney returns.

“Well, get me a name so I can go in and lay down the law,” Lucas continues, “I don’t have a problem with him enforcing the law, but I do care about how you talk to folks. But here’s the other piece: I’ve been stopped by good and bad officers and I listen and simply ask for a name,” Lucas says, placing the blame back onto the residents for not doing their diligence. “That’s what you should be doing.” His overall demeanor still indicates that the residents did something wrong in not getting the information he requires (Gascón and Roussell, field notes, December 10, 2008).

The exchange above depicts a group of residents actively resisting the definition of their own activities as policeable. Dr. Stacey condemns LAPD practices against the group as “aggressive” and Mahoney refers to it as “harassment.” Captain Lucas, however, attempts to rearticulate the issue as a simple matter of “how you talk to folks,” an easily deflected issue of internal discipline—the “bad apple” defense. Lucas tries to fit the sergeant’s behavior under Lucas’ role as institutional administrator, narrowing the issue from a challenge to policeable discourse to one of personal

8. While power infuses the role of legal broker, resistance is “[a]t the very heart of the power relationship” (Foucault 1982:790, as cited in Golder and Fitzpatrick 2009 [p. 78]). If resistance is built into power—as transgression is built into law—it is everywhere in small and large forms; here we bracket both the “bow” (obsequiousness) and the “fart” (silent resistance) (Mumby 2005:21) in favor of considering public discussion and its contribution to the discourse of policeability.



misconduct. He asks residents to identify the sergeant, yet rejects their descriptions because they contradict his understanding of the sergeant role—a respectable authority figure without exposed forearm tattoos who would not harass. While already rejecting the larger complaint as unpoliceable ("I don't have a problem with him enforcing the law"), Lucas ends the exchange on the verge of dismissing even the misconduct complaint because it impugns the symbolic figure of the sergeant. The description may have induced him to disbelieve the claim altogether. In this specific moment, lowriders have little recourse to these redefinitions, but they continue their resistance across meetings.

While residents and police both construct outgroups to be policed as a matter of course, alienating actual CPAB members can have potentially serious repercussions for CPAB's legitimacy. These are not marginalized individuals, but rather people involved in community-police coproduction. In addition, Tanika Mahoney works at a domestic violence organization tied closely to LAPD and Dr. Stacey is a former college professor. Sometime later we spoke to Mahoney about the incident and the follow-up:

Tanika says she's still involved with the lowriding group, but meetings have been moved. Now, she says, people find out about rides like kids do for raves, via text message. Locations are kept secret. Nothing was cleared up through CPAB and the police apparently still harass them just as they did before. It made her angry enough that she considered quitting CPAB, which she only attends now because her boss does, anyway. She is quick to defend the lowriders, saying members aren't the hoodlums they're assumed to be. On the contrary, she says, they're "professionals who go to church and get involved in charitable activities," as well as donate money to domestic violence organizations and events (Gascón and Roussel, field notes, March 10, 2011).

Mahoney positions her group as respectable professionals and therefore an injured party. The LAPD response makes Mahoney question CPAB's legitimacy to the extent that she "considered quitting" CPAB, which she does, eventually. This demonstrates the difficulty of maintaining open resident resistance and attempting coproduction simultaneously. Mahoney is forced to choose between the role of CPAB member (as complainant) and outgroup member to be policed.

The exchange below occurs a few months later: a new captain and a sergeant again access the definition of lowrider as policeability, echoing Lucas, over the issue of protection—not from LAPD this time, but from violent crime. In this instance, Dr. Stacey is alone in her advocacy and the issue is successfully deflected despite her tenacity:

Dr. Stacey, sitting serenely at the table on the far side of the semicircular configuration: "Captain, can you tell us anything about people shooting at cars on Alton?"

This is one of Captain Carlos Macias's first meetings and his is a bit nervous. He appears not to pick up on the reversal of cars and shootings that she emphasized. "Yes, we've had some shootings over there, it's been giving us some problems . . ."

"No, shootings from the sidewalks into cars."

Macias is puzzled now, but tries to satisfy her by answering a different question. "No, but we have found abandoned vehicles with shots fired into them. There are no victims and the cars are abandoned."

"No, I mean people are coming out of stores and other places, getting into their cars, and being shot at."

Foster Gill, as is his wont, speaks up loudly and aggressively, implying that they should know better. "Out of bars?" Dr. Stacey, a veteran of Mr. Gill's personal style, is unperturbed, but wants to be clear that this is not just drunks being shot at.

"Yes, bars, hair salons . . ."

Macias, demonstrating his inexperience, mumbles a few random things while paging through the sheaf of crime stats in front of him. There is clearly nothing in there of relevance, but he keeps looking. It appears that he doesn't know what's going on and doesn't yet have enough control over the situation to head it off. SLO Sergeant Joe Rubio, however, understands Stacy's question as well as the motivation.

"Are these cruisers that are being shot at?"

Stacey, warily, "Yes, they asked me to look into it."

"Did they file a report?"

Exasperated at this response, and a little defensive, Stacy replies, "Well, I told them to."

"Well if they didn't . . ." Rubio shrugs.

Stacey attempts to recenter the focus of the discussion. "They asked me to try to find out if you guys know who is shooting into their cars."

Macias finishes looking through his crime log, finding nothing, and the conversation is brushed past quickly in a flurry of activity. Sergeant Rubio's point stands as the last word, and Stacey is left without recourse as the meeting moves on (Roussell and Gascón, field notes, May 13, 2011).

This exchange reveals Captain Macias as not yet fully integrated into his role as legal broker. Running one of his first meetings as a captain in South Division, he is caught flatfooted and Stacey is able to frame a starkly policeable complaint: people are being shot at, maybe targeted. Perhaps detecting Macias's inexperience, she does this largely unchallenged, although Mr. Gill, a white resident, aggressively implies that those leaving South Division bars are asking for trouble. Sergeant Rubio, more comfortable in his role, adroitly renders her serious claim—which might ordinarily be termed "attempted homicide"—unpoliceable by using the failure-to-report control strategy. It is tempting to read this as simple deflection by Sergeant Rubio over reporting issues, but the history of lowriders within CPAB—underlined by Mr. Gill's interjection and Rubio's pointed question about the identity of the victims—suggests that LAPD has again refused to recognize the standing of lowriders to bring complaints of policeability. When we discuss this afterward with Dr. Stacey, she is angry, but there is little she can do.

Rather resisting their own policeability, in this case lowriders attempted to leverage Dr. Stacey's CPAB role to incorporate the attempted murder of lowriders into policeable discourse. The important constant between these moments of complaint is that lowriders cannot take the role of complainant—they have standing neither to contest their own mistreatment nor to have their victimization taken seriously. We have not seen Dr. Stacey nor Ms. Mahoney at a meeting since that time. Although we have been unable to ascertain if this is the reason for their absence, the role conflict remains stark: CPAB residents cannot coexist with such forms of resistance and retain the role of complainant.

Though less obvious than residents' resistance to LAPD interpretations, officers also sometimes resist official narratives, albeit with fewer consequences. Their role here as legal brokers, clear in their deflection of issues, can also assume a positive gatekeeping status. As bureaucratic agents, police are meant to adhere to legal directive, but can also subvert bureaucracy by endorsing nonlegal solutions to crime problems or manipulating bureaucratic practice. Although this can sometimes make their role in police-community partnerships contradictory, it can also serve to further the legitimacy of the partnership. In the exchange below, Captain Macias exhorts residents to use his bureaucratic knowledge to get the legal remedy they desire, which he casts as "the law of the streets":

One female resident asks the captain what to do when she calls 911 and officers don't respond. She's called, she says, telling the operator that her or a neighbor's home was being robbed as she was making the phone call, and officers arrived either the next day or not at all. Macias responds by explaining the triage of call priority, saying that if there's a shooting, for example, on one end of the division, that crime response would have a high priority. There are only 13 cars patrolling the division at one time—and that's during peak hours—so officers simply can't always respond in the ways residents would like. To ensure that officers show up in a timely fashion, Macias advises residents to embellish the circumstances of a crime when making 911 calls to ensure higher priority.

"*Eso es la ley de la calle* [That's the law of the streets]," he says (Gascón and Roussell, field notes, January 27, 2011).

Captain Macias, despite his undercutting of the bureaucracy, is neither contemptuous of the law nor redefining policeability. Rather he alerts residents to the limitations of police practice, which prioritize calls by certain language and may cause dispatchers to downgrade their concerns. This elevates the CPAB members' definition of the situation over the priority of bureaucratic process, as well as over the definition of nonattendees. While officers are aware of these bureaucratic manipulations within their own fraternity, this instance is a deliberate attempt to widen that circle to include CPAB members. Like Coutin's (2003) legal advocates, the captain outlines a strategy whereby residents can circumvent the established bureaucracy. Residents are aware that this elevates their role as complainants, although it does so by underlining it, rather than expanding it. This sort of resistance by officers can help bind residents and officers more closely together. Crucially, however, the specific discourse over the policeability of neighborhood issues remains largely untouched, as these calls will bypass the community meeting entirely and go directly to dispatch.

## Discussion

Community meetings have become ubiquitous to the overall project of community crime control embedded within a larger shift toward the community as a political unit (Brown 2010; Hughes and Edwards 2002; Rose 1996). Community policing has formed part of the vanguard of that shift. Coproduction is a cornerstone of community policing, allowing the public to help shape the actions of police (Scott et al. 2003; Skolnick and Bayley 1988). In this article, we have described a major element of community-police coproduction as the process of producing "policeability," or police action on questions of "disorder" and "quality of life" (Goldstein 1987) derived from residents. The development of policeability is an interactive, symbolic process (Goffman 1959) on this vague and expansive terrain, which, through Ian Hacking's (2004) looping effects, can feed back on itself, creating and renewing a dynamic discourse over policeability. Within this process, officers serve in the role of legal broker (Coutin 2003), while residents serve in the role of complainant, bringing concerns forward for consideration. In analyzing the symbolic interactions that comprise the coproductive aspects of community policing, we explored the power of definition invested in role and situation. We did so by examining three archetypical forms of interaction: cooperation, control, and resistance.

The dynamic of cooperation reveals the importance of interest convergence. Unsurprisingly, issues that have a solution already in LAPD's arsenal can be heard and events that have mutual benefit can be organized unproblematically; it is possible that these interactions provide social lubricant to weather more fraught encounters. Incorporating such issues into policeable discourse requires only explaining the efforts already underway or reanimating past efforts toward similar purposes. In this way, each and every issue deemed policeable loops into the larger narrative, in however small a fashion, shifting it slightly, building a growing history and understanding surrounding what is policeable. As an important note, the lowriders' experience demonstrates that cooperation is not possible over issues of unpoliceability because of the nature of the roles of broker and complainant.

Our category of control reveals how tightly LAPD brokers policeability. Police exert control over the terms of the engagement both situationally and discursively, making evident LAPD's power of definition. Despite entertaining concerns surrounding quality of life and disorder, those issues outside what officers define as the contours of policeability are deflected or rearticulated in LAPD-friendly ways that may not resemble the original complaint. Moreover, residents have few other roles available to them and little recourse within the role of complainant—even Vera Fisher, CPAB co-chair, was incapable of reanimating her concern after it had been reshaped.

Indeed, her occupation of the role itself is contingent on LAPD approval as we saw with the election vignette.

Residents' aggressive resistance to policeable definition is not undertaken lightly, while police have more latitude to resist official narrative. Had Mrs. Fisher further pursued her quest for justice for homeless neighbors, it would have constituted outright resistance rather than control. However, in such a controlled setting, this sort of resistance is difficult to maintain. Fisher's role as co-chair has extra responsibility and prestige attached to it, but in this setting at least, no more leverage over policeable discourse than any other resident. She may even have less—the main figures in the lowrider example have resisted through their absence, while Fisher's continued responsibilities preclude that response, and would add additional turmoil to any resistance-through-absence. On the other hand, in small ways, officers challenge official designations without serious consequence. Not only do they face no reprisals in the meeting setting, but the official discourse remains unchanged as well, meaning that their short-term goals are accomplished while policeable discourse remains unaffected. This suggests that the role of complainant—and with it, local expertise—can be assumed by LAPD in certain situations, while the reverse is not true of residents.

Coproduction implies a partnership, a word that occurs often in LAPD's own characterization of community policing (e.g., Parks 1999) as well as the academic literature (e.g., Skolnick and Bayley 1988). Much as it designs the setting and controls the electoral process, LAPD also designs a role—CPAB member—that institutionalizes residents as local experts and provides a platform for complaint, but fails to make it exclusive. LAPD officers can take up these roles as well as their brokerage role, meaning, to a point, that residents can simply become redundant with little recourse beyond disengagement. Residents need LAPD for CPAB action, but LAPD does not require residents for expertise. One notable exception to this is Bruce Palmer in his role as resource partner where he evokes cooperation over disaster management. Community crime control varies according to place, but the extent to which shifting context can inscribe a different dynamic, one where residents can directly influence discourse brokerage, is a question dependent on constitution of role and the power over definition. Mr. Palmer is a good example of this, but in an impoverished area like South Division, resources cannot back every complaint. To the extent that resources dictate coproduction and roles are constructed with residents in permanently supplicatory positions, community policing pessimists (Herbert 2005; Manning 1997) may be right, not necessarily because responsabilization is too much for the community, but because residents are locked out of definitional power.

This article has taken a step forward in addressing the problematic identified by Scott, Renauer, and Duffee (Renauer et al. 2003; Scott et al. 2003). In connecting Goffman to Foucault through Hacking, we have sketched a framework for understanding coproduction as a dynamic process in which on-the-ground interactions feed into a larger discourse of policeability. In this initial look, we have focused specifically on ideal-type meeting exchanges to flesh out the individual instances of contest and describe the roles inhabited by residents and officers. Several pieces of this schema remain to be explored by future research.

First are the contours of the policeable discourse itself. Although clearly a moving target, some sense of its stability for a specific community policing program should be determined as a reference point for evaluating the extent to which residents have definitional power to shift that discourse. Another key area for development is the looping process itself, by which policeability grows and changes. The divergent examples relating to 911 calls are a good example of this—the looping mechanisms connecting Captain Macias's "law of the streets" to the confusing earlier explanations is beyond the scope of this analysis and deserves its own explanation. Future research should compile the perceptions of individual officers and residents regarding changes in policeability during their tenure and the ways they mobilize emerging understandings of policeable issues to preserve and advance the discourse. What is more, future research should also evaluate whether and the degrees to which residents' complaints become translated into police action by "following" complaints outside the meetings and into the community. This can be done

by conducting observations at the problem locations and/or by conducting ridealongs with precinct officers. Above all, future research on community policing must consider relative power in investigations of coproduction, and challenge, rather than assume, the existence of cooperation in police-community partnerships.

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