

The Police: To “Serve and Respect”

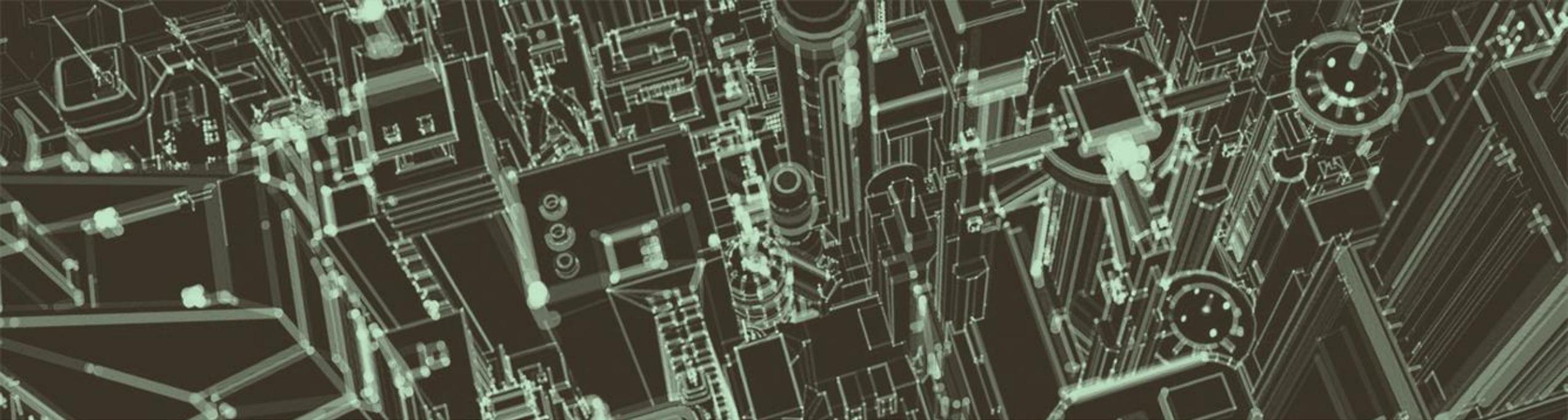
The need for intercultural communication in police problem solving
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Goals for problem oriented policing practitioners

- Value preventative responses to social problems
- Rely less on the criminal justice system for solutions
- Enjoy community engagement in the process
- Honor the principles of a democratic and free society to enhance the lives of those we serve (Scott & Kirby, 2012)

In order to achieve these, we must better understand our power, impact, and seek culturally appropriate and ethical crime suppression techniques.



The How and Who in Champaign/Urbana

Demographics and Police Staffing

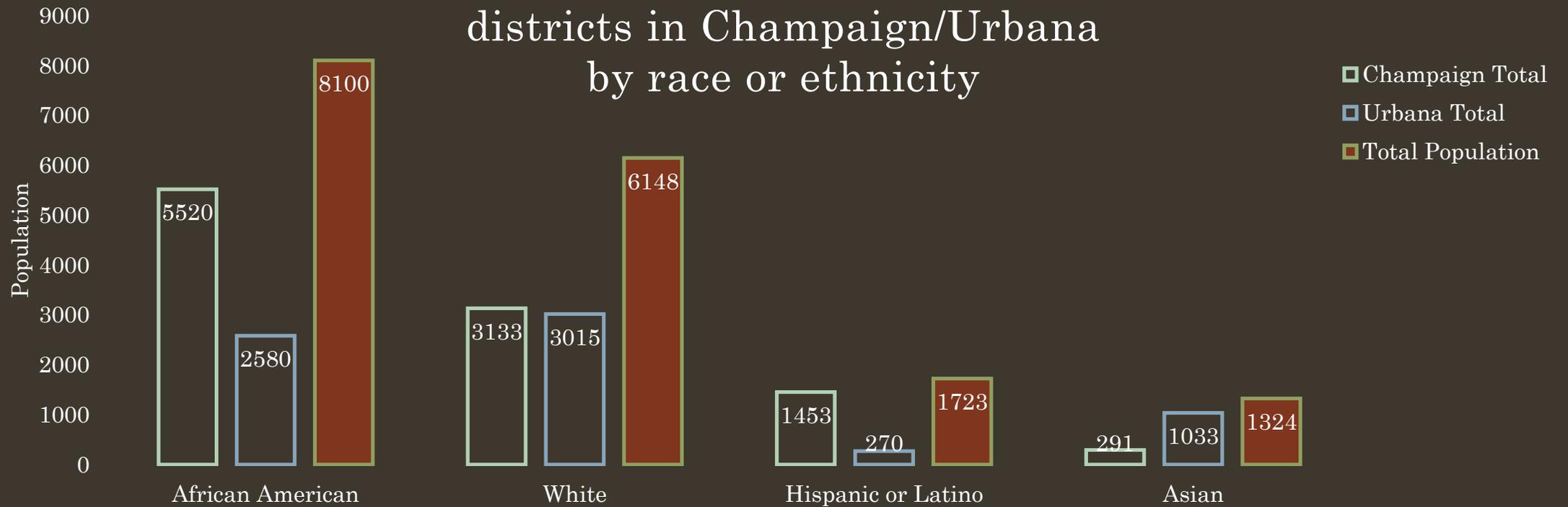


The How - Staffing and Communities

- **Districts are carved out by geographic landmarks such as railroad tracks, major streets**
- **Ethnic, racial and economic population boundaries tend to follow these geographic landmarks**
- **Based on social disorder issues and crime reports, certain communities may be subject to more policing than others**
- **Police staffing decisions in a district are traditionally based on number of incidents**
 - A higher crime rates lead to more police patrols and stronger crime suppression techniques
 - Greater staffing leads to greater police ability to discover unlawful activity
 - Being more aware of unlawful activity equals higher crime rates
 - Higher police staffing is then required to suppress crime
 - *Increasing police power in these areas becomes a self-perpetuating cycle (Websdale, 2001)*

The Who in Champaign/Urbana

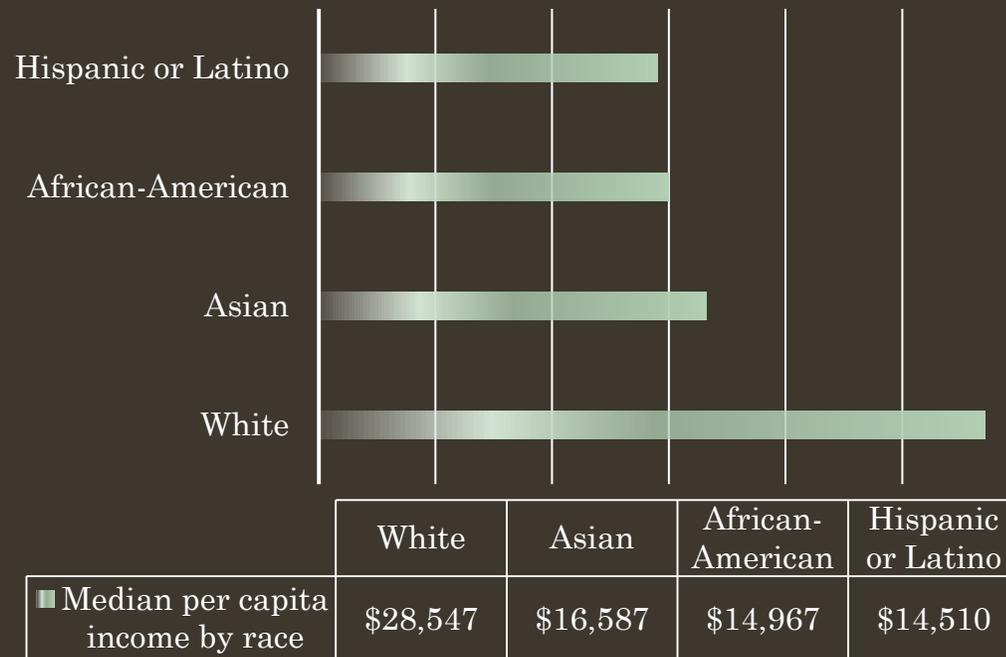
Total population in the most heavily policed districts in Champaign/Urbana by race or ethnicity



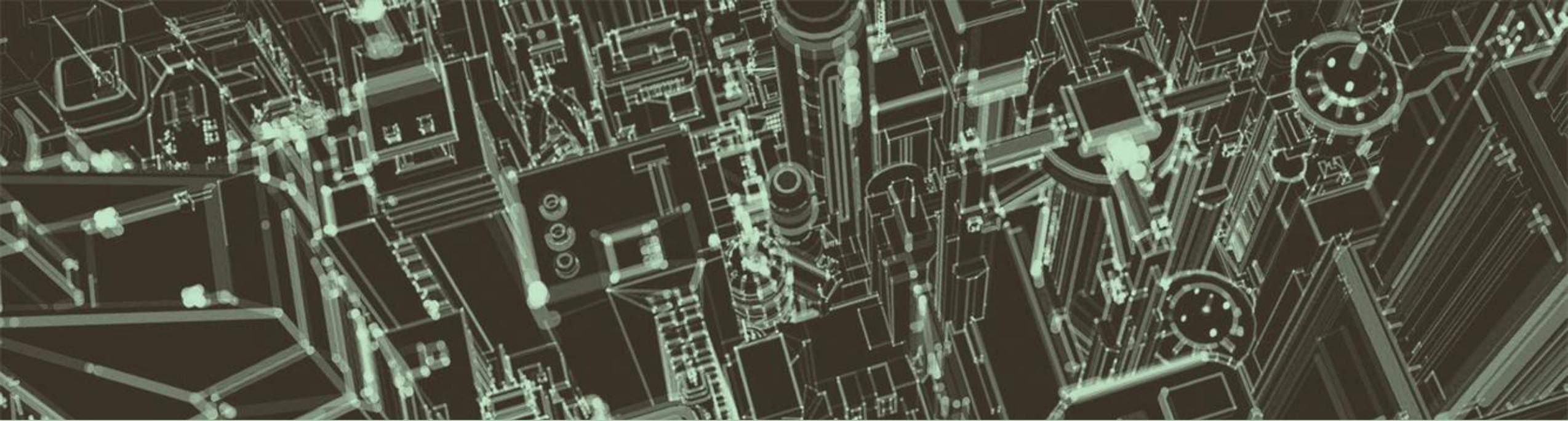
(US Census Bureau, 2010)

The Who in Champaign/Urbana

**MEDIAN PER CAPITA
INCOME BY RACE
(US CENSUS BUREAU, 2012)**



- **One police district, Champaign's Beat 11, tends to be the busiest, most heavily policed districts in Champaign-Urbana**
 - Population is 88% African-American (US Census, 2010)
 - Public housing tracts in this district
- **Those policed the most in our area are most likely to possess the least**



Traditional Methods of Crime Suppression

Controlling crime or tearing at the community?





Crackdowns

Practice and Expected Impacts

Practices:

- New laws to battle certain criminal behaviors
- Heavy and coordinated enforcement on specific violations
- Enhanced penalties for offenders

Expected positive impacts:

- Reduction in violent behavior or safety violations in the case of traffic enforcement
- Increased publicity and heightened police presence (Scott, 2003)

Possible Results to the Community

- Community members may feel unfairly targeted, especially if stop-and-frisk or aggressive stop policies are in place (Eterno & Silverman, 2006)
- Arrests and prison time negatively impact individuals' ability in the future to gain or maintain employment. (Visher, Debus & Yahner, 2008)
- Need for publicity and positive results may lead to unconstitutional practices by the police to achieve success (Eterno & Silverman, 2006)

Arresting communities – Prison boom

- **Strong anti-crime legal remedies lead to a need for more prisons**
 - Three Strikes Law
 - Heavy penalties for repeated drug offenses
- **The additional prison effects on the family unit**
 - 25-28% of African-American children born in 1990 had a parent imprisoned by the time the child reached the age of 14. (Wildeman, 2009)
 - Incarceration of a parent may traumatize a child, reduce financial resources, and lead to future anti-social behavior. (Wildeman, 2010)

Are we using the right tools to control and stop the cycles of crime in our communities?

OR

Are we using our law enforcement powers to contribute to the decay of our community?



Quality of Life and Security Enhancements

Practice and Expected Impacts

Practices:

- New laws to abate nuisance and anti-social disorder issues
- Physical security enhancements such as cameras, fences, and enhanced locking systems (Atlas, 2008)

Expected positive impacts:

- Reduction in anti-social or nuisance behavior that are believed to contribute to more violent criminal behavior (Johnson, Golub & McCabe, 2010)
- Physical security can target harden areas that are dangerous (Atlas, 2008)

Possible Results to the Community

- Laws about nuisance tend to be based on a middle class standard of “quality” and their writing does not generally involve the voices of those who will be impacted (Johnson, Golub & McCabe, 2010)
- Physical security enhancements in areas that are able to afford them may displace crime to areas that are less wealthy (Atlas, 2008)
- Cheaper, but poorly designed physical security enhancements may actually isolate community members from one another, ignoring factors of cohesion, connectivity or community culture (Atlas, 2008)

Security design – fences

The playground encased in razor wire fencing



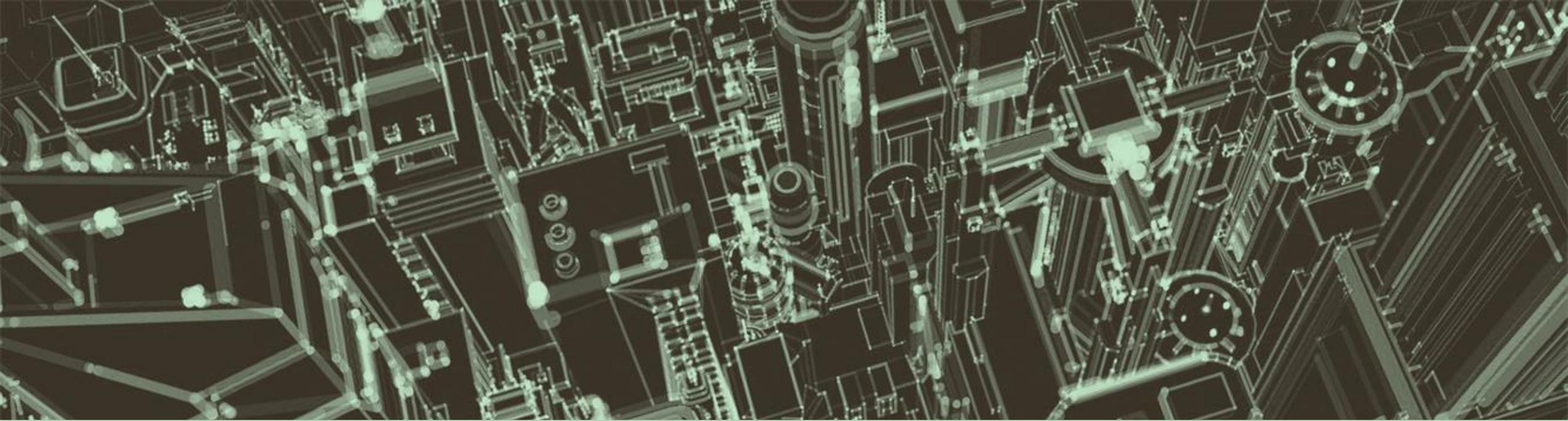
- Do you believe that this space is physically secure?
- Is this playground inviting?
- Would you want your children to play in this playground?
- What does it say about the neighborhood?
- How would this space promote a cohesive community?

Security design

Homeless spikes

- Do you believe that this space will be secure from the homeless sleeping under the bridge?
- What does this space say about the values of this community?
- Is this appropriate nuisance abatement from a human service standpoint?
- Would you consider it ethical?





To “Serve and Respect”

The value of our community members to the solutions



To “Serve and Respect”



- Respect that we serve all people in our community
- Respect that we wield a great deal of power in our communities
- Respect that our actions are very impactful to individuals and whole communities in both negative and positive ways

Two approaches to police power in crime suppression

Hegemony

- Police often accept large shares of responsibility for handling social and crime problems
- Could lead to inappropriate tools to solve problems without the input of the community (Scott & Kirby, 2012)
- “I am right because I am the police! You are wrong...because you’re not!”
- Hegemonic power may lead to resistance from the community (Allen, 2011, p. 31)

Collaboration

- Police become brokers for responsibility in public safety – share the problem solving responsibility with community members
- Network within neighborhoods to seek just solutions with the community
- Focus on the impact to the people we serve versus numeric results (Scott & Kirby, 2012)

Distributed power in problem solving and security

- Embrace and support community members' self-directed problem solving
- Help build activities around the culture and traditions of the community versus our traditional security measures
- Help build welcoming community spaces
- Utilize positive community-based resolutions such as restorative justice and rehabilitation services that focus on repair rather than incarceration

(Atlas, 2008)

Examples of power distribution in problem solving



Community gardens are cropping up in abandoned lots that would have otherwise been deemed as “nuisances” rife for illegal activity such as drug dealing. Community members take responsibility for the security in these lots through wanted activities. Crime reduction means less need for police activity.

Communities are embracing restorative court processes such as drug court and teen restorative justice courts. These court processes do not burden families with incarceration, but seek to rehabilitate. Police can make referrals to these courts. Trained community members and judges preside. (Godwin, 2001)



There is another way...

bell hooks (2000) and service

“It is always possible to share resources in ways that **enhance** rather than devalue the **humanity** of the poor” (p. 47)

“As a nation we should uphold the belief that **everyone has the right to a life of well-being**” (p. 79)

“**do not dehumanize** the poor and make it impossible for them to change their lot when **opportunities** arise” (p. 128)

“embrace anew the concept of **interdependency** and **accountability** for the **collectiveness of all citizens** that is the foundation of any truly democratic and just society” (p. 129)

What can you change in your individual role to:

- **Enhance humanity?**
- **Ensure that everyone has the right to a life of well-being?**
- **Avoid dehumanizing those we serve based on their social status, race, or culture?**
- **Work on the local crime problem in an interdependent way versus promoting our own power?**

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