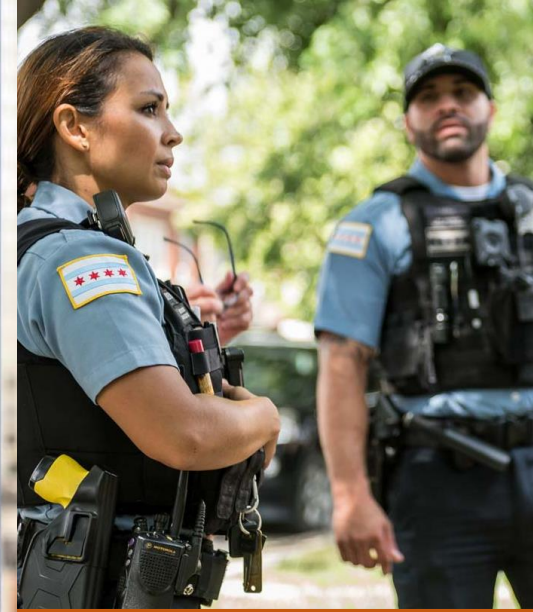




Fixing Ineffective Social Policy with Research

Starting from the Ground Up with Community Policing

Kyle S. H. Dobson

University of Virginia
Incoming Fall 2023

Why do bad things happen under “good” policies?

Officer: Can I talk to you for a second?

Civilian: Yes. ← One-word responses

Officer: I'm [Officer] with the [police department]. What's your name?

Civilian: [Civilian]. ←

Officer: [Civilian]? Um, are you a student?

Civilian: Yes. ←

Officer: Yeah, is it okay if I sit down and talk to you?

Civilian: Yeah. ←

Officer: Cool.

Civilian: Did something happen?

Officer: No, no. I just wanted to talk to you.

Civilian: Oh... ←

Officer: Just wanted to say hey.

Civilian: Something happen?

Officer: No something, nothing happened. No. Just wanting to talk to you, say, hey.

Civilian: Hi. ←

Describe the last time you interacted with a police officer.

N = 104 Chicagoans I recruited off the street who interacted with the police within the last year, said...



My Process

for fixing ineffective social policy



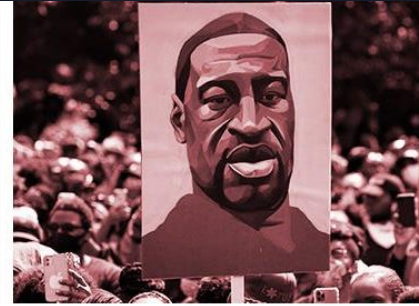
My Process

for fixing ineffective social policy

Look for
Opportunities
for positive change



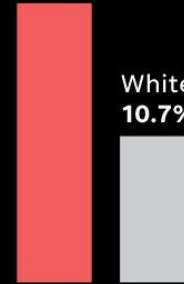
90%
of police depts claim
having policies for
social inequity
e.g., *community
policing*



Black poverty rate

21.2%

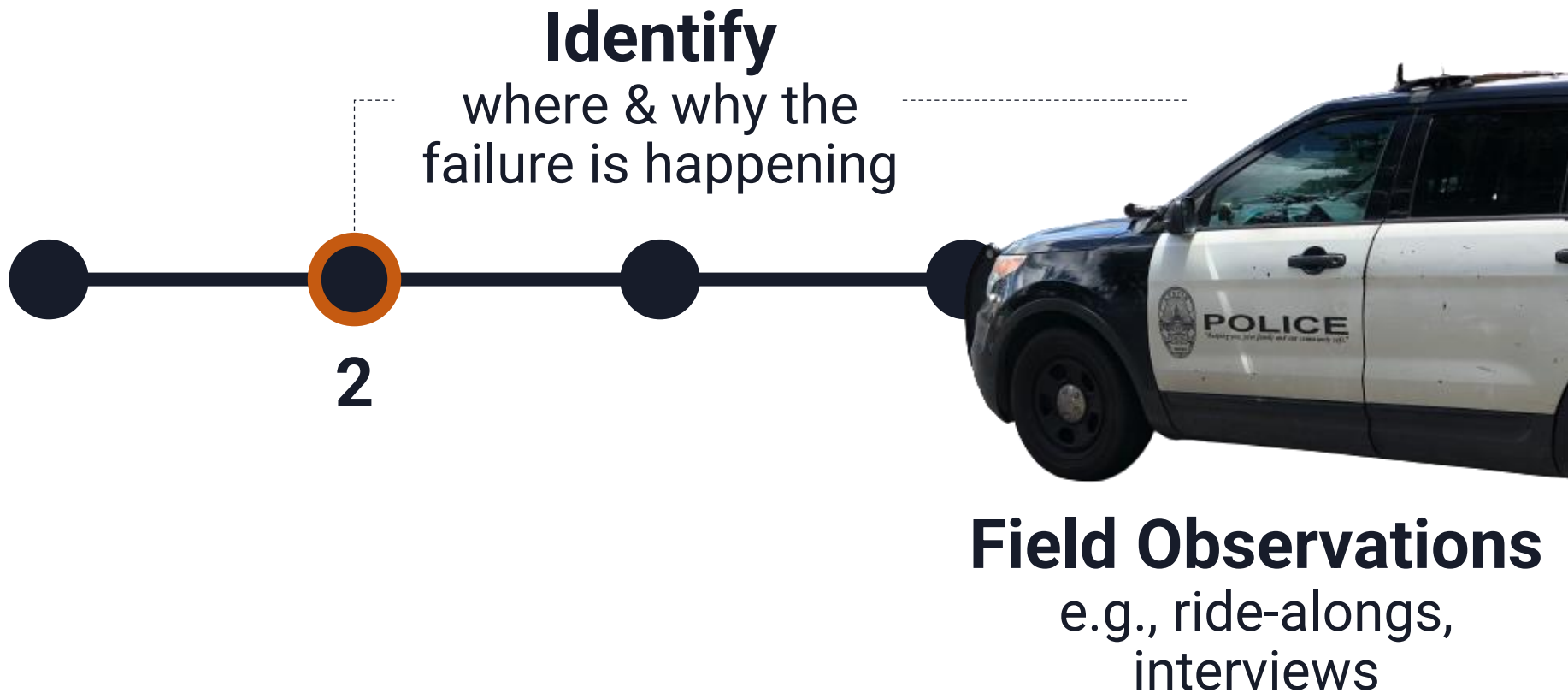
White
10.7%





My Process

for fixing ineffective social policy



Phase 2: Identifying reasons for failure

How are you
doing?

What are you
up to?

Reason: An illusion of rapport

There is no way for a friendly and polite demeanor to put people at ease if their predominant experience is a more aggressive policing style.

My Process

for fixing ineffective social policy

Identify “uncut gems”

potential for success,
happening in the field
where & why the
failure is happening



Home > Crain's forum on gun violence

August 28, 2019 05:24 PM

Chicago gives 'community policing' another try

A New Model Of Policing In Chicago

With trust in police at a historic low, the Chicago Police Department's latest community policing initiative puts relationship building at its center.

A PHILOSOPHY, NOT A PROGRAM:
CHICAGO AND NEW YORK POLICE
MEET TO DISCUSS NEIGHBORHOOD
POLICING

Phase 3: Identify “uncut gems”

Hi, we're
just here to
drop off a
gift.



Phase 3: Identify “uncut gems”

Hi, we’re
just here to
drop off a
gift.



“This is perfect! We’ve been telling people for years to just go out and be friendly [laughs]. This is something I can tell my rank-and-file guys—it can be short, and easy to remember.”

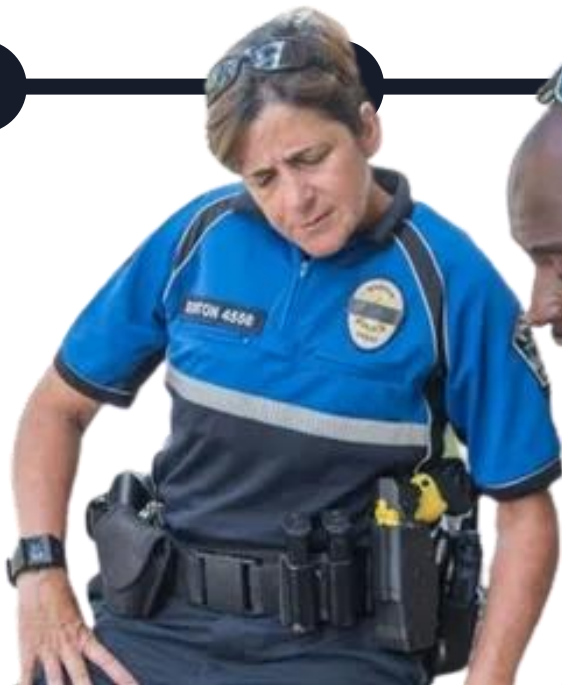
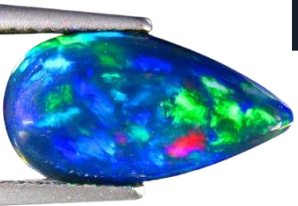
-- Police Chief
with 45 years of experience

My Process

for fixing ineffective social policy

Refine gems in the field

e.g., using experiments to
model the field



Phase 4: Refine gems with experiments



Modeling Real Life

- Involved community members and rank-and-file officers to scout locations where police interactions were frequent
- Five experimental areas in community, occluded from each other

Transparency condition:

"Hi, I'm Officer [Name], how's it going? I'm walking around trying to get to know the community. Can I talk to you for a minute?"



N = 232
interactions

Control condition:

"Hi, I'm Officer [Name], how's it going? Can I talk to you for a minute?"

"Hello, I'm just out and about walking around, talking to people in the community."

"...I'm just taking a walk, trying to get to know my community better."

"...I'm just walking around getting to know like everybody that's hanging out in the area."

QUOTES



For detail, go to:
tinyurl.com/TrustResearch



Baseline

Interaction & Recovery

Survey

~2-5 min

~2-3 min

~1-2 min



Continuous skin conductance monitoring

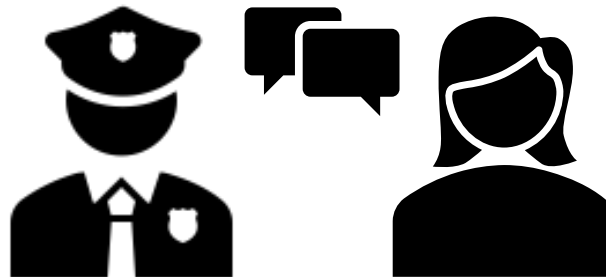
Phase 4: Refine gems with experiments

Control condition: "Hi, I'm Officer [Name], how's it going? Can I talk to you for a minute?"

Transparency condition: "Hi, I'm Officer [Name], how's it going? I'm walking around trying to get to know the community. Can I talk to you for a minute?"

Surveys

Threat, Trust, & Emotions



*For detail, go to:
tinyurl.com/TrustResearch*

Physiological Stress

Skin Conductance (Sweat)



Conversations

Linguistic Affiliation



Phase 4: Refine gems with experiments

Control condition: "Hi, I'm Officer [Name], how's it going? Can I talk to you for a minute?"

Transparency condition: "Hi, I'm Officer [Name], how's it going? I'm walking around trying to get to know the community. Can I talk to you for a minute?"

Surveys

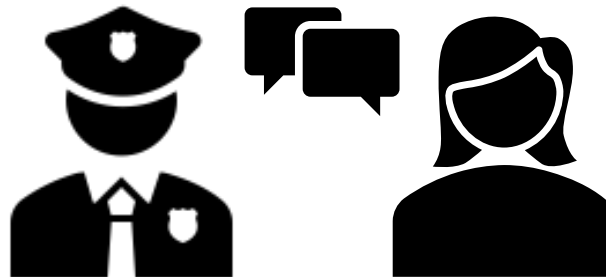
Threat, Trust, & Emotions



Threat ↓

↑ Trust

↑ Pos. Emotion 😊



Physiological Stress

Skin Conductance (Sweat)



↑ Engaged at the start

Calmed down quickly ↓

Conversations

Linguistic Affiliation



Disclosed more



For detail, go to:
tinyurl.com/TrustResearch

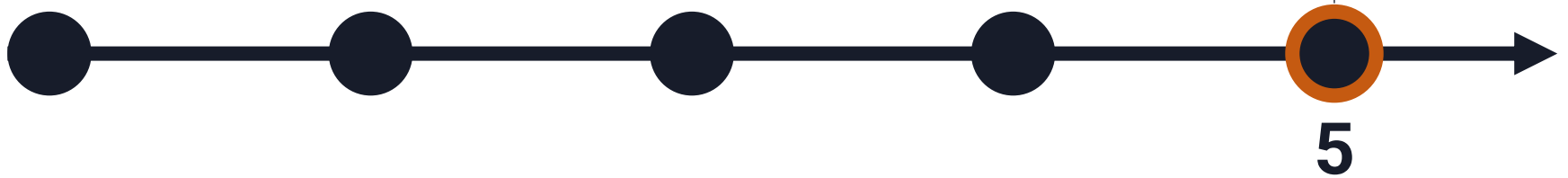
My Process

for fixing ineffective social policy

Translate into policy

i.e., new, specific plans for government action

Community Policing



Traffic stops



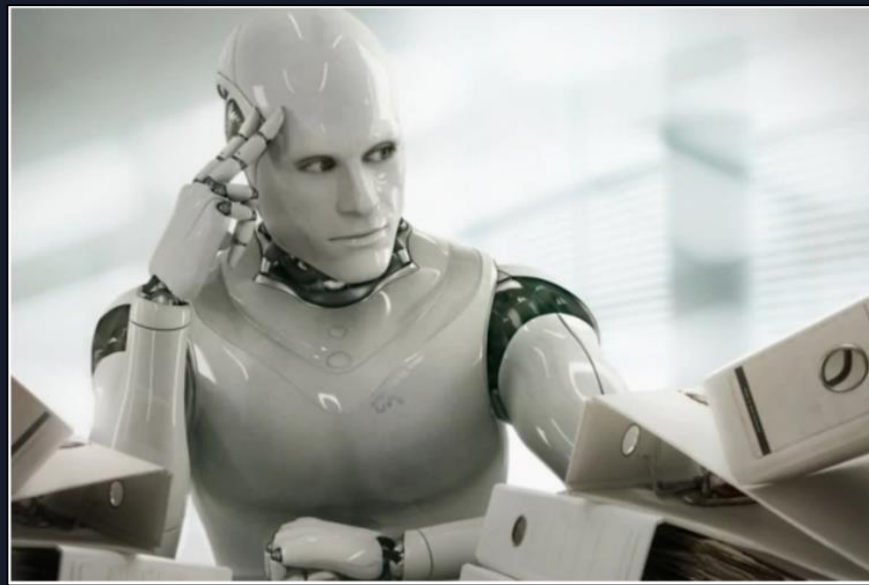
Gun control & violence



Why do bad things happen under “good” policies?

Often, we haven't looked closely enough to heterogeneity at the ground-level...

- thoughts
- feelings
- words
- other behaviors



Andrea Dittmann

David Yeager



Thank you!

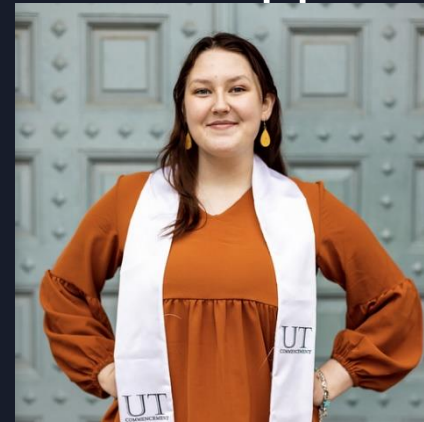
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Mac Clapper



Police Dept Partners & Community Members:
Chicago, Evanston, Northwestern Univ., Austin,
Univ. of Texas, and several others...