

# The Channels for Public Input Toward Police

Tony Cheng

Assistant Professor

Criminology, Law and Society & Sociology (courtesy)

UC Irvine

## Goodhart's Law

"When a measure becomes a target,  
it ceases to be a good measure"

# Channels for Public Input

1. Department Channels
2. Partner Channels
3. Independent Channels

# 1. Department Channels

New York's Finest

 **NYPD**

简体中文 ▶ Translate ▼ Text-Size

Home About **Bureaus** Services Stats Media Careers Policies Search

**Patrol** Transit, Housing & Transportation Investigative Administrative

Find Your Precinct

Precincts

Find Your Build the Block Meeting

[Neighborhood Policing](#)

Special Operations

 Share

 Print

## Neighborhood Policing



### A New Patrol Paradigm

The cornerstone of today's NYPD is Neighborhood Policing, a comprehensive crime-fighting strategy built on improved communication and collaboration between local police officers and community residents. Neighborhood Policing greatly increases connectivity and engagement with the community without diminishing, and, in fact, improving the NYPD's crime-fighting capabilities.



Cheng, Tony. 2022. "The Cumulative Discretion of Police over Community Complaints." *American Journal of Sociology*.

## Sector 55A, September 2018

“I called the cops...it took them one hour to come there...gangs move and come into the building now every night, between 9, 10, 11, smoking... if there's a gunshot, the whole place floods. But when you tell them what's going on, an hour? That's ridiculous”

## Sector 55A, September 2018

“I called the cops...it took them one hour to come there...gangs move and come into the building now every night, between 9, 10, 11, smoking... if there's a gunshot, the whole place floods. But when you tell them what's going on, an hour? That's ridiculous”

TRESPASSING | NARCOTICS  
LATE NIGHTS

“Trespassing/Narcotics  
Late Nights”



## Neighborhood Policing Meeting Reviewed

Meeting ID: [REDACTED]



**Crime Type :** Trespass

**Location :** [REDACTED]

**Date/Time :** [REDACTED]

**Detail :**

Complaints from community regarding individuals who do not live in the building hanging out in the lobby and hallways and blocking main entrance to the building every day during evening hours.

**Plan to address Crime/Condition :**

Complete 75C / 75I at location and issue summonses and make arrests if necessary.

**Crime Type :** Marijuana Use/Sale

**Location :** [REDACTED]

**Date/Time :** [REDACTED]

**Detail :**

Complaints about individuals smoking marijuana inside/outside of the building at every day during evening hours.

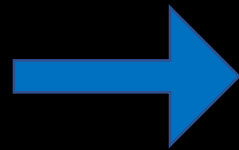
**Plan to address Crime/Condition :**

Complete 75C / 75I at location and issue summonses and make arrests if necessary.



## Sector 55A, September 2018

"I called the cops...it took them an hour to come to the place and if you tell them what's going on, an hour? That's ridiculous"





### Neighborhood Policing Meeting Reviewed

Meeting ID: [REDACTED]

**Crime Type :** Trespass

**Location :** [REDACTED]

**Date/Time :** [REDACTED]

**Detail :** [REDACTED] residents who do not live in the building hanging out in the lobby blocking main entrance to the building every day during evening hours.

**Plan to address Crime/Condition :**  
Complete 75C / 75I at location and issue summonses and make arrests if necessary.

Trespass



### Neighborhood Policing Meeting Reviewed

Meeting ID: [REDACTED]

**Crime Type :** Marijuana Use/Sale

**Location :** [REDACTED]

**Date/Time :** [REDACTED]

**Detail :** [REDACTED] side of the building at every day during evening

**Plan to address Crime/Condition :**  
Complete 75C / 75I at location and issue summonses and make arrests if necessary.

Marijuana Use/Sale





# NYPD

## Neighborhood Policing Portal

### Crime Condition:

Type: \*

Location: \*

Date/Time: \*

Detail:

Plan to Address

Please select a value...

Abandoned/Derelict/Unregistered Vehicles

Bar/Nightlife

Bicycle (On the sidewalk, Roving Bands, etc.)

BBQs

Burglaries

Car Break-ins

Commercial Parking

Controlled Substance Use/Sale (Crack, Cocaine, Heroin, etc.)

Dirt Bikes

E-Bikes

Gambling

Graffiti

Homeless Issues (Encampments/Shelters/Panhandling)

Larcenies

Lighting/Scaffolding Conditions

Loitering/Disorderly Groups

Mailbox Fishing

Marijuana Use/Sale

Noise

Other Crime

Other Parking (Blocked Driveways, Double Parking, etc.)

Other Quality of Life (Vendors, Untaxed Cigarettes, Dog Off Leash, etc.)

Prostitution

Requests for Services/Info (CCTV, Neighborhood Watch, etc.)

Sanitation Issues (K9 Waste/Public Urination/Illegal Dumping)

School Issues (Dismissals/Fights)

Traffic Violations (Speeding, Red Lights, etc.)

Trespass

+ Add Additional Crime/Condition

## 2. Partner Channels



Credit: *Chicago Sun Times*

## 2. Partner Channels



Credit: *Chicago Sun Times*

2009-2021:

- 385 unique speakers spoke 948 times
- Modal Response: Thank You
- CPD response rate: 23%
- Police Board's rate: 22%

# Input vs. influence

- Who runs the meetings?
- Are officers present and if so, what role and rank?
- Meeting rules and norms of civility
  - How long can speakers speak for?
  - Can audience members hold signs?
  - How are disruptions managed?
- What recourse is available for dissatisfied attendees?



### 3. Independent Channels



### 3. Independent Channels



Cheng, Tony. Forthcoming. "The Policing Machine: Enforcement, Endorsements, & the Illusion of Public Input. University of Chicago Press.

# Takeaways

1. Measuring community sentiments must account for voices across channels
2. Police and partners are not neutral actors in shaping the voices that emerge in each



## Goodhart's Law

"When a measure becomes a target,  
it ceases to be a good measure"

# Thank you

tony.cheng@uci.edu  
tonykcheng.com