

6-26-2015

The Roles of Disorder, Attitudes Toward the Legal System, and Neighborhood Satisfaction in the Intervention During Neighborhood Problems

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**THE ROLES OF DISORDER, ATTITUDES TOWARD THE
LEGAL SYSTEM, AND NEIGHBORHOOD SATISFACTION
IN THE INTERVENTION DURING NEIGHBORHOOD
PROBLEMS**

by

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THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

**Master of Arts
Sociology**

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

May, 2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge Dr. María Vélez for her mentorship and guidance, which allowed me to complete my Master's thesis. I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Christopher Lyons and Dr. Brian Soller for their comments and guidance on previous drafts. Thank you to all who helped me accomplish my goal.

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ABSTRACT

A key idea in the communities and crime literature is that residents need to take ownership and intervene as a strategy to solve community problems including crime. This process is part of a larger concept called community social organization, which refers to the ability of a neighborhood to achieve collective goals like public safety. It is important to understand what predicts intervention at the micro-level as individuals will likely not react the same to similar neighborhood characteristics. How do individual perceptions of neighborhood characteristics influence a resident to intervene during a neighborhood problem? Furthermore, do perceptions of these characteristics motivate individuals to intervene informally or formally to neighborhood problems? I use a survey of Oakland, CA residents and employ logistic regression to test how perceptions of disorder, attitudes toward the legal system, and neighborhood satisfaction influence individuals' willingness to intervene during neighborhood problems. I find that these perceptions influence the likelihood that individuals will intervene during a neighborhood problem and that they work differently for informal and formal intervention.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A key idea in the communities and crime literature is that residents need to take ownership and intervene as a strategy to solve community problems including crime. This process is part of a larger concept called community social organization, which refers to the ability of a neighborhood to achieve collective goals like public safety (Bursik 1988). To investigate how intervention matters for community problem solving, most scholars conceptualize it as a neighborhood-level process. That is, neighborhoods are thought to vary in their ability to intervene to solve problems. One way this has been examined is via the work on collective efficacy. Sampson, Raudenbusch, and Earls (1997) conceptualize collective efficacy as neighborhood-level social cohesion, mutual trust among neighbors, and residents' willingness to intervene. They find that the presence of collective efficacy decreases violent crime in neighborhoods (Sampson et al. 1997).

The current study is primarily concerned with the intervention aspect of community social organization, or the "willingness to intervene", as this is pinnacle to crime control in neighborhoods. Unfortunately, the macro-level focus common in social organization research neglects variation *within* the neighborhood regarding the decision to intervene. That is, individuals within neighborhoods vary in their likelihood that they will take ownership and intervene during neighborhood problems. First, neighborhood residents need to perceive a situation as a problem. Second, they need to decide whether and how they will intervene (Hirsh and Lyons 2010). Because individuals have to perceive situations as problems, not everyone will interpret the same situation negatively

or even give it the same level of importance (Browning, Soller, Gardner, and Brooks-Gun 2013). The exclusion of micro-level research on the willingness to intervene is problematic given that the decision to intervene is likely made at the individual level.

Perhaps just as important as the ecological factors that determine intervention are the perceptions people hold toward their neighborhoods. This study is concerned with how individual perceptions of their neighborhoods influence whether they intervene after identifying a problem. How one feels about their neighborhood and the processes within it may shed light on variation within individuals mobilizing against neighborhood problems. Sharkey (2006) points to the inherent difficulty that scholars face when trying to understand how neighborhood context influences individual behavior and urges us to account for individual agency within social contexts such as neighborhoods to account for variation in individual behavior. I thus take seriously the notion that subjective appraisals of neighborhood dynamics will influence the odds of an individual intervening during a neighborhood problem.

To address this gap in the literature, I examine a sample of residents in Oakland, CA during the early 1980s to determine what drives individual-level intervention during neighborhood problems. Drawing on the literature on urban communities, I pay particular attention to three factors that may predict the odds of intervention. First, I focus on perceptions of disorder, which could be trash on the streets, open drug-use, or abandoned buildings in the neighborhood. Some research finds that disorder in neighborhoods impacts perceptions of safety among residents and decreases collective intervention in neighborhoods (Skogan 1992). Second, research suggests that attitudes toward the legal system influence whether residents mobilize sanctioned social

control to combat problems and crime in neighborhoods (Kirk and Matsuda 2011; Kirk and Papachrsitos 2011; Sampson and Bartuch 1998). And lastly, Silver and Miller (2004) find that increases in quality of life predict higher levels of informal intervention in neighborhoods by using neighborhood satisfaction as a potential determinant of intervention.

Not only do I conceptualize intervention as a function of perceptions of neighborhood characteristics, I also investigate whether these perceptions influence the use of informal methods to intervene (e.g., talk with neighbors, attend neighborhood meetings) or more formal methods (e.g., call the police, call the city). It may be that certain perceptions, such as negative attitudes toward the police, will decrease the likelihood that an individual will call upon formal methods of intervention and increase the likelihood of informal methods of intervention. The point here is that certain appraisals of neighborhood dynamics may work differently in their ability to influence the strategies residents use to combat neighborhood problems.

This study is unique in several ways. First, the questions regarding resident responses to identified neighborhood problems are non-hypothetical. By asking the respondent what they *actually* did after they identified an issue, this study is better able to determine how perceptions shape individual mobilization, and provides a truer picture of how residents react to problems. Second, many surveys that lend themselves to measurements of collective efficacy (Sampson et al. 1997) ask respondents how they think their *neighbor* would intervene. Although this approach is perhaps better able to measure social cohesion and mutual trust, it does not capture the potential mechanisms that motivate an *individual* to intervene and not their neighbor. This is an important

distinction because perceptions do not always mirror reality. One may perceive or assume that a neighbor would or would not intervene, but that may be inaccurate. Having direct measures of individual intervention allows me to better understand the potential mechanisms that influence people to get involved. I estimate a series of logistic regressions to assess the possible influences individual perceptions have on the decision to mobilize around identified neighborhood problems.

CHAPTER 2

INTERVENING IN NEIGHBORHOOD PROBLEMS

One of the most robust findings in the communities and crime literature is that the willingness to intervene during neighborhood problems decreases crime in neighborhoods (Sampson et al 1997). It is therefore important to understand what motivates individuals to get involved and take ownership over neighborhood dynamics as this helps increase social organization in communities. Neighborhood characteristics predict levels of social organization in neighborhoods but these conditions cannot be measured at the individual level. Therefore I rely on how residents subjectively appraise their neighborhoods to better understand how perceptions of neighborhood characteristics influence individuals to intervene. Furthermore, I differentiate between informal and formal strategies of intervention to better understand how perceptions of different neighborhood dynamics may influence individuals to use different methods of intervention.

I pay attention to two types of strategies individuals use to intervene: informal and formal. Informal intervention (or informal social control) refers to a neighborhood's ability to curb crime by regulating the behavior of residents and socializing residents to be law-abiding (Bursick and Grasmick 1993; Sampson and Groves 1989; Vélez 2014). Formal social control focuses on how the police are called to address problems in the neighborhood (Holmes et al. 2008) and on people's willingness to call the police in response to a problem or victimization (Doyle and Lukenbill 1991; Goudriaan, Wittebrood, and Nieuwebeerta 2005; Greenberg and Beach 2004; Slocum et al. 2010). Other bodies of research in this area focus on mobilizing the law, which could involve

calling the police or even a lawyer to settle a dispute (Baumer 2002; Black 1973 1976 1983; Gottfredson and Hindelang 1979).¹

Below I review the relevant literature regarding how disorder, attitudes toward the legal system, and neighborhoods satisfaction may influence the willingness to intervene, and how each may differentially impact the strategies individuals use when they do intervene.

Disorder

Skogan (1992) identifies two types of neighborhood disorder: physical and social. Social disorder refers peoples' behavior in a neighborhood such as open drug-use, hostility, and other anti-social behaviors. Physical disorder refers to things like abandoned buildings in the neighborhood and trash on the streets. Disorder may increase resident's fear of crime thereby impacting whether residents intervene during a problem by possibly affecting their perception of safety to do so, or their perception that intervening will accomplish their goal (Skogan 1992). This means that disorder likely affects whether or not someone intervenes, and it also may affect the strategies individuals utilize if they do decide to intervene.

Disorder sets in motion processes that likely impinge upon informal intervention. This is evident from the finding that high levels of disorder within in a neighborhood increase fear of crime (Lee 1981; Markowitz et al. 2001; Perkins and Taylor 1996; Skogan 1992), which in turn breaks down a neighborhood's ability to

¹ Public social control is a neighborhood's ability to solicit resources from the mayor's office, public resources such as funds for various cleanup efforts (Medoff and Sklar 1994), and to relate with city officials who tend to the needs of a community (Vélez 2001). Although formal and public control are similar, nuances emphasize that agents of formal social control such as police are state-operated, whereas public social control focuses more on the resources provided by banks giving loans, and communities having relationships with the mayor's office or other public offices (Vélez 2001). For the purpose of this paper, the term 'formal' social control will embody both public and formal.

exercise informal social control in their neighborhood by negatively impacting cohesion (Markowitz et al. 2001). Skogan (1992) finds that the consequences of disorder, both physical and social, are detrimental for neighborhoods. Specifically, he identifies disorder as causing withdrawal and lack of cooperation between residents, and it also undermines the housing market, which encourages resident mobility and decreases ties within the community thought to foster collective efficacy.

Disorder likely impacts the use of formal and public interventions (or formal social control). Formal interventions are an important strategy for communities to curb crime and disorder in the neighborhood, and has received some attention in the criminology literature (Bursik and Grasmick 1993; Sampson, Morenoff, and Gannon-Rowley 2002; Vélez 2001). For a community to employ formal social control it must have relationships with public officials and the police department that are outside the community (Bursick and Grasmick 1993; Vélez 2001). In disadvantaged neighborhoods in particular, relationships with public officials provide important resources to combat neighborhood disorder because these neighborhoods often lack the internal resources to do so (Vélez 2001). Even the most affluent neighborhoods must rely on public officials for disorder grievances; however, the levels of disorder in these neighborhoods never reach those in disadvantaged neighborhoods (Peterson and Krivo 2010; Skogan 1992).

There is evidence that formal social control and resources provided by the city can help eliminate disorder; however, there is relatively little research on how disorder impacts the use of formal social control. Some neighborhoods experience lack of formal social control. In addition, the presence of formal controls may not provide residents with the resources needed to curb crime and disorder (Black, 1983; Carr et al., 2007). Without

resources, neighborhoods may lack the ability to address building dilapidation, removal of abandoned cars, and unsightly disorder such as graffiti and trash on the streets. Securing help from city-led institutions contributes to a neighborhood's ability to keep their community free from these types of problems (Medoff and Sklar 1994; Skogan 1992). Having high-levels of disorder may be the product of a lack of relationships with formal controls and resources.

I have several hypotheses for social and physical disorder. One predicted outcome is a curvilinear relationship between perceived levels of disorder and individuals taking action. Skogan (1992:69) identifies this relationship to be as follows: as disorder increases so will residents' willingness to combat it; however, at a certain level of disorder residents may become too debilitated and their willingness and ability to do something about it decreases. Those who perceive high levels of disorder may be demoralized and suffer from distrust. In sum, the curvilinear relationship between intervention and perceptions of disorder predicts that at low levels of perceived disorder individuals would have no reason to engage in solving the problem as they may not perceive low levels of disorder as something to mobilize around. At very high levels of disorder individuals are less likely to engage in solving the problem; it is in the middle where perceptions of disorder motivate individuals to intervene on behalf of their neighborhood (Skogan 1992).

Furthermore, levels of neighborhood disorder may elicit differential modes of social control. Perhaps residents that identify high levels of disorder are less likely to use informal social control as Skogan (1992) predicts. If disorder causes community withdrawal and residential mobility, then the ability for a community to come together to

control neighborhood affairs may be weakened. Consistent with some of the legal cynicism literature, residents who live in neighborhoods suffering from high levels of disorder may be more inclined to utilize formal control mechanisms over informal ones (Avakame et al. 2006; Carr et al. 2007; Putnam 1993). For instance, Avakame et al. (2006) found that residents within disadvantaged neighborhoods called the police more often than middle-class residents living in less-disadvantaged neighborhoods in response to problems. Furthermore, in Putnam's (1993) study of democracy in Italy, he found that because residents in southern Italy lacked the neighborhood ties and cohesion needed to exert informal social control they relied on formal social control to address issues in the community. Although the aforementioned research does not use levels of disorder to predict outcomes, they do find that disadvantaged neighborhoods, often characterized as having higher levels of disorder, is a key predictor for decreased intervention. These outcomes may indicate that individuals residing in neighborhoods experiencing high levels of disorder have not been able to maintain ties and trust with their neighbors, which are needed to effectively control their neighborhood, and therefore would have to rely on more formal mechanisms of social control.

Contrary to the above mentioned research I expect to find a curvilinear relationship for all types of intervention. Previous research has neglected to test for this relationship and I believe that testing for the curvilinear effect will provide a more complete picture of how disorder impacts intervention. I expect to find the curvilinear relationship for both types of disorder and for all types of intervention.

Attitudes Toward the Legal System

I draw from the literature on legal cynicism to conceptualize why these attitudes will impact intervention. Recent research on legal cynicism refers to the perception that the legal system, often experienced via the police, is illegitimate, unresponsive, and unable to deter crime in neighborhoods (Kirk and Matsuda 2011; Kirk and Papachristos 2011). Kirk and Matsuda (2011) found that high levels of legal cynicism decreased collective efficacy thereby decreasing the ability to exert informal social control in the neighborhood. In another illustration of how perceptions of the legal system impact informal social control, Silver and Miller (2004) found that satisfaction with the police is a source of increased informal social control within neighborhoods. Specifically, they found that when residents viewed the police as a viable local resource, they were more willing to intervene informally. They hypothesized that this may be due to residents perceiving their neighborhoods as places worth defending and felt a responsibility to maintain order when they thought neighborhood resources were available and responsive (Silver and Miller 2004).

The influence of attitudes toward the legal system on employing formal social control is complicated. On the one hand, many scholars demonstrate how individuals (Avakame et al. 1999; Black 1983) are less willing to report crime when formal social controls are considered illegitimate and unresponsive. On the other hand, communities that suffer from social disorganization call upon formal social controls to curb crime and disorder due to a lack of informal social controls (Carr et al. 2007; Putnam 1994). When neighborhoods lack the mechanisms to informally control their neighborhoods, formal social controls can be another option for relief.

Illustrating the complex relationship between attitudes toward the legal system and formal social control, Carr et al. (2007) find in their qualitative study of three neighborhoods in Philadelphia that although youth in the neighborhood reported negative attitudes toward the police, their recommendations for decreasing crime was to have a larger and tougher police presence in the neighborhood. This study shows that individuals can hold negative attitudes toward the legal system and yet hold contrary positive attitudes toward its utility (i.e., performance of the legal system). This distinction may have implications for how scholars measure attitudes toward the legal system and I therefore separate perceived levels of the fairness of the legal system from the perceptions that the legal system is performing well. Research has shown there is a difference between perceptions of performance and perceptions of fairness with regard to legal institutions (Tyler 2004). In other words, a person can believe in the fairness of the legal system without necessarily perceiving the legal system as performing well, and vice versa.

I hypothesize that an increase in favorable attitudes toward the *fairness* of formal social control will positively influence whether residents react by calling the police or city in response to problems and disorder. Favorable attitudes toward the *performance* of the legal system may decrease residents' willingness to call upon formal methods of social control owing to their sense that the system works properly and therefore requires no prompting.

Neighborhood Satisfaction

Neighborhood satisfaction depends on evaluations of the physical and social characteristics of the neighborhood and also on the ease of use of services in the

neighborhood (Ringel and Finkelstein 1991).² Following Silver and Miller's (2004) finding that when residents consider their neighborhoods to be decent places to live they engage in more informal social control, I use a measure of neighborhood satisfaction to predict the likelihood of individual intervention. Silver and Miller (2004) urged future research to identify specific 'use values'³ such as proximity to local services and satisfaction with institutions such as schools, to develop a better understanding of how satisfaction with these resources may increase attachment to neighborhoods thereby increasing informal social control.

The current study focuses on perceptions of neighborhood and therefore, the perceptions of physical and social characteristics and ease of use of services that individuals have toward their neighborhood are used as predictors of intervention. Motivation to include neighborhood satisfaction derives from an idea that being satisfied with one's neighborhood and the institutions within it may indicate a sense of reciprocity causing residents to feel more of an obligation to enforce social rules/norms/codes. If residents report high levels of satisfaction in their neighborhood it may signify higher levels of social organization within the community, whereby they will be better able to collectively control problems using informal social control mechanisms.

² There is debate in the literature regarding the difference between neighborhood attachment and neighborhood satisfaction and the utility, if there is one, in separating them. Scholars have concluded that although neighborhood attachment and neighborhood satisfaction are highly correlated, they do indeed embody different things (Ringel and Finkelstein 1991). Neighborhood attachment refers to "a complex system of friendship and kinship networks and formal and informal associational ties rooted in family life and ongoing socialization processes." (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974: 329; see also Taylor 1996). That said, neighborhood attachment is often measured by the presence of family or friends in the neighborhood or the time spent living in the neighborhood, but this study is more concerned with perceptions and not the presence of an actual relationship.

³ Logan and Molotch (1987) first identified 'use value' as a property of a place. Individuals use that place to access other resources. For instance a place or residence will have a higher 'use value' if it provides access to better schools.

Although there is a plethora of research on neighborhood satisfaction, scant research considers how it relates to the use of informal social control at the macro- or micro-level. That said, Silver and Miller (2004) concluded that perceptions of good quality of life increase informal social control at the neighborhood level. Scholars who examine neighborhood satisfaction have long concerned themselves with the determinants of satisfaction, but research neglects the outcomes of varying levels of satisfaction. How one feels about their neighborhood, and their perceptions of satisfaction with it are important; those who report higher satisfaction may feel more ownership over neighborhood dynamics. It may be that they are satisfied because they are involved, or it may be that their satisfaction relates to outside resources in the neighborhood that help keep the community safe and disorder-free.

How neighborhood satisfaction shapes formal intervention is unclear in the literature. However, Lee and Guest's (1983) study is instructive. They find that higher socioeconomic statuses and less dense neighborhoods yield higher levels of neighborhood satisfaction. These advantages are structural in nature and point to the existence of formal relationships to access the resources needed to realize community goals. Although intervention is not a commonly discussed variable in the neighborhood satisfaction literature, surely a community goal is to have a crime-free environment and residents' willingness to intervene during problems is pinnacle to realizing that goal.

I hypothesize that higher levels of neighborhood satisfaction will predict residents acting to rectify perceived neighborhood problems informally due to a sense of responsibility to maintain order. I do not expect a relationship between neighborhood satisfaction and formal social control.

CHAPTER 3

DATA & METHODS

Data

Data for this project come from the Study of Race, Crime, and Social Policy in Oakland, CA. (Street, 1976-1982).⁴ This study collected information from eight ethnic neighborhoods in Oakland to better understand racial and ethnic disparities in crime. The combined sample of residents is derived from a citywide sample (in which residents are not connected to any particular neighborhood) and a sample of residents living in eight different neighborhoods. The sample in this study is 1,930; however, the final sample size for the current study is 1,799 after recoding.⁵ The survey does not ask what the respondent thinks their neighbor would do or even what respondent would do. It asks them what they did providing a better picture of intervention than asking why they think their neighbor would do during a problem. Respondents were able to be more specific when reporting their actions allowing for differentiation between formal and informal intervention. Furthermore, the survey has adequate measures for individual perceptions

⁴ Although the data are over 20 years old, their effectiveness in measuring non-hypothetic reactions to disorder, and their ability to measure individual attitudes and perceptions of both the legal system and neighborhood characteristics are unrivaled in available data for testing how perceptions influence the odds individuals will intervene, and also for separating informal and formal strategies of intervention.

⁵ Cases were dropped from the analysis if they were missing for the dependent variables. Additional cases were dropped if they were missing on their race/ethnicity or their gender because those variables were used to impute other missing data. More information on missing data is provided in the following sections.

about their neighborhoods, levels of both social and physical disorder, the functioning of the legal system, and neighborhood satisfaction.

Dependent Variables

I measure intervention with three dichotomous variables. The first dependent variable asks respondents to rate the levels of disorder in their neighborhood; after identifying the problems they perceived, they were asked whether they “did anything” about the problem. Respondents could answer yes=1 or no=0 to this question. This variable is referred to as “general intervention” as it does not specify what the respondent did exactly about the problem, just that they did “something”.

Respondents were then asked “what” they did to intervene. Respondents who intervened informally answered that they intervened by talking with neighbors about the problem, got involved themselves with the problems, or went to neighborhood meetings to address the problems. Respondents answered yes=1 or no=0. Respondents who reacted formally reported intervening by calling the police, or calling the city about the problem. Respondents answered yes=1 or no=0. Answers to these questions are not mutually exclusive.

Independent Variables

Below are descriptions of each key independent variable. All independent variables are scales that are standardized to assess how each respondent’s score deviates from the mean.

Social and Physical Disorder: Respondents were asked to rate the level of disorder in their neighborhood. Social and physical disorders are separated as the literature suggests that different types of disorder may yield different reactions from

residents (Skogan 1992). Respondents were read a list of types of disorder that happen in some neighborhoods and the interviewer asked the respondent to rate (on a scale from 0 to 100) how big a problem they perceived each item on the list to be in their neighborhood. For social disorder, respondents were asked to rate: noisy neighbors; troublemakers on street; reckless drivers in area; problems of drug use; and racial conflict. A standardized scale was created from the responses to these problems ($\alpha=.76$).

Physical disorder is measured by respondents rating how big a problem the following neighborhood attributes are in their neighborhood: poor care of homes and yards; abandoned houses and buildings; streets in bad repair; abandoned cars; and poor street lighting. A scale was created from residents' responses ($\alpha=.75$). Physical and social disorder are highly correlated ($r=.73$) and will therefore be tested in separate models to account for multicollinearity. A quadratic is introduced in order to examine whether residents become too debilitated by high levels of both social and physical disorder at a certain level of disorder.

Perceptions of the Legal System: Two domains were used to measure perceptions of the legal system. First, respondents answered questions about their perceptions of the fairness of the legal system. Second, respondents were asked how well they perceived the legal system to perform their duties. Respondents were asked to rate the fairness the average: police officer, district attorney, judge, public defender, and private lawyer show toward people like yourself. Respondents' answers could range from 0 to 100 with a zero representing absolute unfairness and one hundred representing absolute fairness. In addition, respondents were asked, "how fair a trial can members of the following groups get in Alameda County?" Using the 0 to 100 scale, respondents

rated the fairness of a trial for: working class people like bus drivers; Asians; unemployed poor like welfare people; Hispanic people; Black people; and for American Indians.

These answers were then combined to create a standardized scale ($\alpha=.91$). Respondents answered similar questions regarding the performance of the average police officer, district attorney, judge, public defender, and private lawyer. Answers to these questions were combined into a standardized scale ($\alpha=.72$).

Perceptions of Neighborhood Satisfaction: For neighborhood satisfaction, respondents were asked how satisfied they were with various elements in their neighborhoods, with 0 representing no satisfaction and 100 representing complete satisfaction. Respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they were with the quality of schools; convenience of shopping; convenience of transportation; safety of the neighborhood; housing for the money; racial composition; having friends in the neighborhood; and living in Oakland. There are 8 items in the satisfaction standardized scale ($\alpha=0.71$).

Controls

I begin with demographic controls that may be associated with the odds of intervention. Sex is measured as a dummy variable (female=1; male=0). Age is captured by the year the respondent reported as their birth subtracted from the year the survey was administered and ranges from 16 to 90. Income is measured with 9 categories, ranging from 1 for no income and 9 as the largest income category.⁶ All race categories are measured as mutually exclusive dummy variables representing white, black, Hispanic and Asian. Respondents who chose 'other' as a racial category were dropped from the

⁶ Income categories as follows (1=No income; 2=Up to \$5,000; 3=Up to \$8,000; 4=Up to \$12,000; 5=Up to \$18,000; 6=Up to \$25,000; 7=Up to \$35,000; 8=Up to \$45,000; 9=Up to \$45,000; 10=Over \$45,000)

analysis due to their small sample size (N=27). Education is measured with a categorical variable ranging from 1 to 10.⁷

In addition to demographic controls research points to residential mobility, years residing in the neighborhood, and having friends and family within the neighborhood as affecting residents' willingness to intervene in a neighborhood problem (Shaw and McKay 1942; Sampson et al 1997). Fear of crime is another variable thought to influence a person's willingness to use social control mechanisms (Markowitz et al. 2001) and is in the model to assess its influence over individual decision-making.

Residential mobility is measured by the respondent answering how likely they were to move from the neighborhood. A Likert-type scale was used where definitely move=1 and definitely not move=5. Years in the neighborhood was operationalized by subtracting the year the respondent moved into the neighborhood from the year of the survey. Respondents who reported having friends and/or family in the neighborhood were coded yes=1 and no=0 for having ties in the neighborhood. Fear of crime is a scale comprised of a Likert scale asking the respondent about how likely they felt to be a victim of a certain crime in their neighborhood and how much crime they perceived in their neighborhood ($\alpha=.91$).⁸

Analytic Strategy

Due to the dichotomous nature of the dependent variables. I use logistic regression for this analysis. I adjust for where respondents live by coding if they are a

⁷ Education categories as follows: (1=None; 2=Some grade school; 3=8th grade or junior high; 4=Some high school; 5=High school diploma or equivalent; 6=Some college; 7=Bachelor's degree; 8=Master's degree; 9= Ph. D.; 10= Law or Medicine degree.

⁸ The scale consists of the following questions: Level of crime in the neighborhood; chances of being burglarized; chances of being robbed; chances of having car stolen; chances having car vandalized; chances of being de-frauded; chances of assaulted; chances of raped; chances of money stolen at work; chances of a hit & run accident; chances of injured by drunk driver; chances of theft from R's car.

part of the citywide sample=0 or neighborhood sample=1. Furthermore, I use robust standard errors due to residents being clustered in neighborhoods.

Missing Data

Many of the scales that make up the independent variables had missing data. In order to keep as many cases as possible, I used the *mi impute regress* command in STATA to predict the values of the missing variables. Using this command, STATA is able to create several imputations and then average across the imputations to replace the missing values with predicted values (this study includes fifteen imputations per variable with the rseed set at 1234). To predict missing values for certain individuals, the *mi impute regress* command uses demographic information of respondents. The sex, neighborhood and race/ethnicity were used to predict the value that the individual may have answered given their demographic information. Further motivation to impute the missing values is that all the questions were asked regardless of respondents' answers to previous questions. This technique is well used in micro level data and is thought to be an adequate modeling system to deal with missing data. Data must be missing less than 50% of the time for this to be an adequate modeling system (Schafer and Olsen 1998).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Descriptives

Table 1 reports the basic descriptive patterns with my data.⁹ The first dependent variable captures residents' general intervention in neighborhood problems. A total of about 39.00% of residents reported intervening. Respondents then had the option of reporting how they intervened (informally or formally); 22.07% of respondents reported informal interventions, and 18.62% reported formal interventions when problems arose.

Given that my measures of social disorder, physical disorder, performance of the legal system, fairness of the legal system, and neighborhood satisfaction are indices their means will be at zero. I will therefore give examples of their non-standardized sub-components. Residents did not report very high levels of social disorder in their neighborhoods. For example, the average resident had a score of 27.19 (S.D. = 26.52) for "noisy neighbors". The highest average for the sub-components was for "reckless drivers" (32.90; S.D. = 30.58). The lowest average for the sub-components of social disorder was for "racial conflict in neighborhood" (12.67; S.D. = 20.44). The lowest average for the sub-components of physical disorder was for "abandoned houses and

⁹ I report the unstandardized descriptives for the sub-components of the scales to allow for a more intuitive interpretation of the mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum.

buildings” (11.24; S.D. = 20.68). The highest average reported for the subcomponents of physical disorder was for “poor care of homes and yards” (29.37; S.D. = 28.34).

For the most part, residents reported favorable attitudes toward the fairness and performance of the legal system.¹⁰ The lowest average for the sub-components of the scale for the performance of the legal system was for the performance of “judges in sentencing criminals” (48.02; S.D. = 23.74). The highest average was for the performance of “private attorneys” (62.88; S.D. = 21.73). Regarding the subcomponents for the scale of the fairness of the legal system, the highest average was for the fairness of the “police” (70.75; S.D. = 23.27) and the lowest average was for the fairness of a “trial for unemployed” (48.89; S.D. = 25.96).

For the neighborhood satisfaction scale, the highest average for the sub-components was for “convenience of transportation” (82.43; S.D. = 23.33) and the lowest average for the subcomponents was for the “quality of schools” (59.50; S.D. = 26.05) in the neighborhood.

Turning to controls, a little over half of respondents were female (.54) and the average age of respondents was 44.15. The majority of respondents identified as white (41%), followed by black (30%), Asian (17%) and Hispanic (13%).¹¹ The average number of years respondents reported living in their respective neighborhoods was 11.3, and 85% of respondents reported having family and/or friends residing in their

¹⁰ I included ideas such as, “How fair do you find the District Attorney?” and “How fair do you consider the judge to be?” Most people do not interact with D.A.s and judges, or even private attorneys very regularly. Incorporating these professions may be too abstract for people who have not dealt with the D.A. or a private attorney. Although people may have vicarious experiences with these professions, and that vicarious experiences *do* impact how people feel about the legal system, perhaps only measuring perceptions of the police, would allow individuals to better assess the performance and fairness of the legal system. In future research, I plan to untangle assessments of only the police versus all agents of the legal system have on perceptions of fairness and performance.

¹¹ At the time of the survey, Hispanic was considered an exclusive race category. Categories were mutually exclusive and respondents did not have the option of choosing Hispanic along with another race category.

neighborhood (social ties/neighborhood attachment). The average for the probability of respondents moving from their neighborhood is nearly 4. This indicates that the average resident will “probably not move”. The average of 5.53 for education indicates the average resident has a high school diploma. The average resident has an income of a little over \$18,000 a year. Finally, the average resident had a score of 41.01 for the fear of crime scale (SD=23.39), which means residents reported moderate levels of fear of being victimized.

Table 1: Descriptives

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D</u>	<u>Min</u>	<u>Max</u>
Dependent Variables				
Do something	.39	-	0	1
Informal	.22	-	0	1
Formal	.19	-	0	1
Controls				
Sex (female=1)	.54	-	0	1
Age	44.15	16.93	16	90
Income	5.30	1.90	1	9
Black (=1)	.30	-	0	1
Hispanic (=1)	.13	-	0	1
White (=1)	.41	-	0	1
Asian (=1)	.17	-	0	1
Education	5.53	1.82	1	10
Probability of R moving*	3.99	1.22	0	5
<i>*(1=definitely move) (5=definitely not move)</i>				
Years in the Neighborhood	11.30	15.05	0	82
Fear of Crime	41.01	23.39	0	100
Friends/family in neighborhood	.85	-	0	1
Independent Variables				
Neighborhood Satisfaction	.00	.61	-2.6	1.09
<i>Quality of schools</i>	59.50	26.05	0	100
<i>Convenience of shopping</i>	76.14	26.26	0	100
<i>Convenience of transportation</i>	82.43	23.33	0	100
<i>Good housing for the money</i>	69.52	25.42	0	100
<i>Friends in the neighborhood</i>	65.95	29.76	0	100
<i>Racial Composition of neighborhood</i>	74.39	24.69	0	100
<i>Living in Oakland</i>	71.67	28.36	0	100
<i>Safety of neighborhood</i>	61.25	27.59	0	100

Table 1: Descriptives continued

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D</u>	<u>Min</u>	<u>Max</u>
Social Disorder	.00	.73	-.91	2.44
<i>Noisy Neighbors</i>	27.19	30.05	0	100
<i>Trouble makers on street</i>	26.52	29.57	0	100
<i>Problem of drugs</i>	29.73	31.29	0	100
<i>Reckless drivers</i>	32.90	30.58	0	100
<i>Racial conflict in neighborhood</i>	12.67	20.44	0	100
Physical Disorder	.00	.71	-.79	3.18
<i>Poor care of homes and yards</i>	29.37	28.34	0	100
<i>Abandoned houses and buildings</i>	11.24	20.68	0	100
<i>Streets in bad repair</i>	23.57	26.88	0	100
<i>Abandoned cars</i>	17.62	24.03	0	100
<i>Poor street lighting</i>	20.87	27.87	0	100
Performance of Legal System	0.00	0.68	-2.51	1.93
<i>Oakland police department</i>	62.05	23.27	0	100
<i>The district attorney</i>	53.91	22.06	0	100
<i>Judges in sentencing criminals</i>	48.02	23.74	0	100
<i>Public defender</i>	55.58	21.70	0	100
<i>Private attorneys</i>	62.88	21.73	0	100
Fairness of Legal System	.00	.71	-2.76	1.7
<i>Of police</i>	70.75	23.27	0	100
<i>Of district attorneys</i>	65.52	21.50	0	100
<i>Of judge</i>	64.95	22.14	0	100
<i>Of public defender</i>	63.82	21.86	0	100
<i>Of private attorneys</i>	70.61	22.40	0	100
<i>Fair trial for working class</i>	68.51	19.72	0	100
<i>Fair trial for unemployed</i>	48.89	25.96	0	100
<i>Fair trial for Hispanics</i>	53.26	23.40	0	100
<i>Fair trial for black people</i>	54.71	24.09	0	100
<i>Fair trial for American Indians</i>	51.47	24.86	0	100
<i>Fair trial for Asians</i>	64.38	20.69	0	100

N=1,799

General Intervention

Table 2 presents the results for the baseline logistic regression predicting the likelihood of individuals intervening in response to a neighborhood problem. Baseline results in model 1 show controls largely working in the expected direction, although resident mobility is non-significant. Years residing in the neighborhood increases the likelihood of individuals intervening in neighborhood problems ($p < .01$); having friends

and/or family residing in the neighborhood also increases the likelihood of intervention ($p < .05$). Those with a higher education are more likely to intervene ($p < .001$). When fear of crime increases, so does the likelihood of intervening ($p < .001$). This finding is contrary to prior work; however, as evidenced by the next few models, fear of crime becomes non-significant when disorder is entered into the model, suggesting that fear of crime is confounded by the levels of disorder in a neighborhood. The strongest predictor of non-intervention is identifying as Asian. Those identifying themselves as Asian (with white as the reference group) are about 53% less likely to intervene ($p < .001$).

Model 2 introduces levels of social disorder into the model. Of note, the relationship between fear of crime and the willingness to intervene disappears.¹² Model 2 indicates the predicted curvilinear relationship between social disorder and the willingness to intervene. As social disorder increases, so does the likelihood of intervention; however, once social disorder reaches a certain level, the ability of the residents to intervene is dampened. Figure 1 illustrates the curvilinear effect social disorder has on general intervention. The figure, based on the final model for general intervention, with all other variables held at their means, indicates that at very high levels of social disorder (roughly 2 standard deviations above the mean) the likelihood of intervention starts to decrease.¹³ The relationship between social disorder and intervention is essentially linear until perceptions of disorder reach extreme levels. At roughly one standard deviation above the mean the slope for intervention becomes relatively flat, also supporting the idea that social disorder is largely mobilizing. There is

¹² Fear of crime and social disorder were correlated at .37 and fear of crime remains significant when both social and physical disorder are left out of the model.

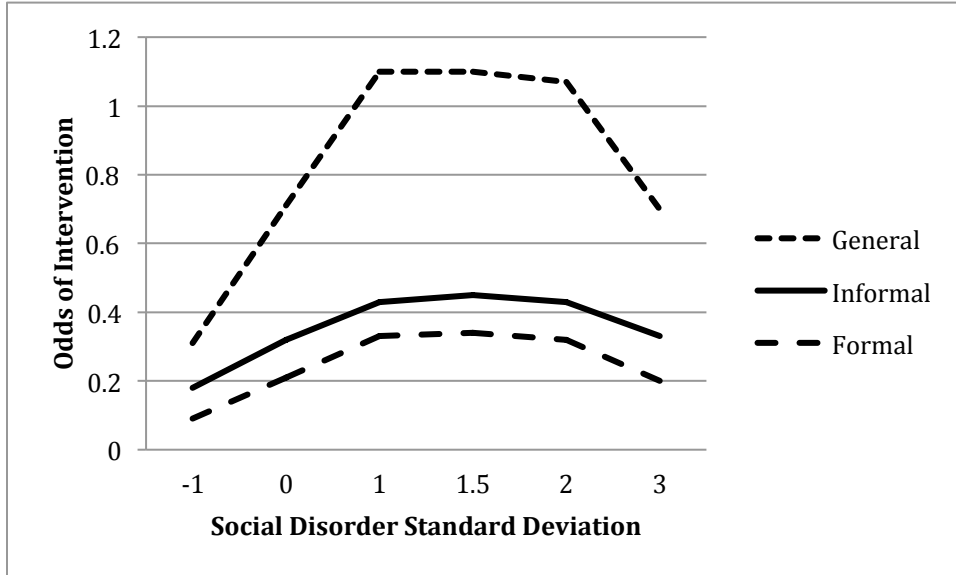
¹³ This estimate is derived from the bivariate relationship between social disorder and general willingness to intervene, and is based on z-scores of the disorder scale.

substantively a small difference between those at one standard deviation above the mean and those at two standard deviations above the mean. Unfortunately these data do not allow for actual neighborhood characteristics so it is difficult to ascertain the impact of these characteristics on individual perceptions of social disorder. What I can derive from my data are some basic demographics for those who perceive levels of social disorder that become debilitating. Interestingly those respondents who perceive levels of social disorder to be very high (4.5 percent of respondents) are distributed throughout all income and education categories, indicating that income and education may not be a factor for perceived levels of disorder. For education, however, the highest percentages of those perceiving very high levels of social disorder fall in the middle of the education distribution and have either a high school diploma or equivalent (24.7%) and some college (28.4%). Furthermore, the gender of those reporting such high levels disorder are almost split down the middle (male=45%; female=55%), which is representative of the sample distribution of gender. The above mentioned findings indicate that perceptions of disorder are not uniform across demographics.

In regards to those who fall beyond the tipping point, nearly 45% reported black as their race, compared to 32% of whites; 18% of Hispanics; and 5% of Asians. In fact, one of the strongest predictors of individuals perceiving high levels of social disorder is reporting black as their race/ethnicity.¹⁴ Blacks are disproportionately represented in the perceived levels of disorder that go beyond the levels that motivate individuals to intervene. Interestingly, the only race/ethnicity category that had an effect on the *likelihood of intervention* was individuals identifying as Asian; Asians are less likely compared to whites to intervene in every model presented.

¹⁴ This finding is based on a regression on social disorder not shown.

Figure 1: Social Disorder and The Likelihood of Intervention

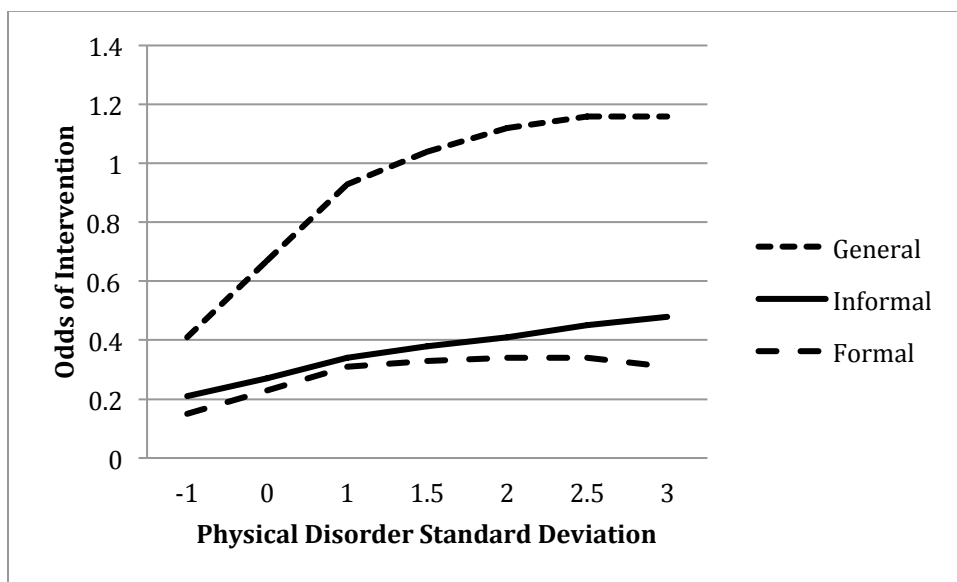


Model 3 introduces physical disorder in place of social disorder to assess the extent to which social and physical disorder work differently. Because physical and social disorder are highly correlated, they cannot be in the model together ($r=0.73$). The same curvilinear relationship exists with physical disorder as it does with social disorder. Increases in physical disorder increase the likelihood of resident intervention, but only to a point. When physical disorder reaches very high levels (roughly 3.5 standard deviations above the mean), residents' likelihood of intervention decreases. The tipping point for physical disorder is much higher than for social disorder suggesting that physical disorder has more of a mobilizing effect for intervention than social disorder. Even at the observed highest levels of physical disorder, the likelihood of intervention is still greater than at very low levels of physical disorder (1 standard deviation below the mean). Only 2.2% of individuals perceived physical disorder at levels higher than 3.5 standard deviations above the mean. Figure 2 illustrates the influence of physical disorder on general intervention. Noting that residents report higher levels of physical disorder than social

disorder (maximum social disorder has a Z-score of 2.44 versus physical disorder having a maximum Z-score of 3.18), the curvilinear relationship remains indicating that both physical and social disorder have the greatest mobilizing effect at moderate/high levels of disorder and tail off toward very high levels of disorder. The mobilizing effect of disorder on general intervention is consistent with both social and physical disorder; at low levels of each, disorder does not increase the likelihood of intervention and as disorder starts to increase, it increases the likelihood of intervention.

Here again we see the same demographic distribution of those on the high ends of physical disorder. Blacks are disproportionately represented as perceiving debilitating levels of physical disorder (53%), while only 20% reported white, 18% reported Hispanic, and 9% reported Asian. Such a distribution may be a result of blacks living in more disadvantaged neighborhoods characterized as having high levels of disorder. Similar patterns hold for gender, income, and education.

Figure 2: Physical Disorder and the Likelihood of Intervention



Model 4 introduces the variables measuring attitudes toward the legal system.¹⁵ Contrary to the expected relationship, perceptions of fairness have a null relationship with likelihood of general intervention. The perceptions of the legal system as performing its duties well however, decreases the likelihood of resident intervention by about 20% ($p < .05$) supporting the hypothesis that as perceptions of the legal system performing well increases, likelihood of intervention decreases.

Model 5 tests the association between neighborhood satisfaction and intervention. The relationship is non-significant. All other controls remain in their expected relationships when accounting for neighborhood satisfaction. Model 6 incorporates all the independent variables along with the controls.¹⁶ Expected relationships maintain their significance and direction. Social disorder upholds a curvilinear relationship with intervention. Fear of crime once again becomes non-significant once accounting for levels of social disorder. Performance of the legal system remains significant and decreases the likelihood of intervention by 16%.

¹⁵ Fairness of the legal system and the performance of the legal system are correlated .52.

¹⁶ Physical disorder is left out of final models as it does not change associations and works in the same manner as social disorder.

Table 2: Regression on Willingness to Intervene

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Social Disorder			.81 ***	.11		
Social DisorderSq			-.40 ***	.09		
Physical Disorder					.62 ***	.10
Physical Disorder Sq					-.19 **	.08
Performance of Legal System						
Fairness of Legal System						
Neighborhood Satisfaction						
In Neighborhood=1 (Citywide=0)	.07	.11	.07	.12	.06	.12
Sex (female=1)	-.04	.10	.03	.10	.00	.10
Age	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Income	.04	.03	.07 *	.03	.05	.03
Black (=1)	-.07	.12	-.08	.12	-.14	.12
Hispanic (=1)	-.18	.19	-.25	.20	-.25	.20
Asian (=1)	-.75 ***	.18	-.78 ***	.18	-.75 ***	.18
Education	.16 ***	.04	.16 ***	.04	.16 ***	.04
Probability of R moving	-.01	.04	.01	.04	-.02	.04
Years in the Neighborhood	.01 **	.00	.01 **	.00	.01 **	.00
Fear of Crime	.01 ***	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Neighborhood attachment	.23 *	.12	.21	.12	.22	.12
Intercept	-1.92 ***	.40	-1.89 ***	0.42	-1.73 ***	.41
Log pseudolikelihood	-1144.56		-1114.51		-1125.25	

N=1,799

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

SE=Robust Standard Errors

Table 2: Regression on Willingness to Intervene (continued)

	Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Social Disorder					.87 ***	.11
Social DisorderSq					-.40 ***	.10
Physical Disorder						
Physical Disorder Sq						
Performance of Legal System	-.23 *	.09			-.23 **	.09
Fairness of Legal System	.09	.09			.15	.09
Neighborhood Satisfaction			-.13	.09	.14	.09
In Neighborhood=1 (Citywide=0)	.08	.11	.07	.11	.07	.12
Sex (female=1)	-.06	.10	-.04	.10	.02	.10
Age	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Income	.04	.03	.04	.03	.08 *	.03
Black (=1)	-.06	.13	-.06	.12	-.05	.13
Hispanic (=1)	-.17	.19	-.17	.19	-.25	.20
Asian (=1)	-.74 ***	.18	-.75 ***	.18	-.77 ***	.18
Education	.16 ***	.04	.16 ***	.04	.15 ***	.04
Probability of R moving	-.01	.04	.00	.04	.00	.04
Years in the Neighborhood	.01 **	.00	.01 **	.00	.01 **	.00
Fear of Crime	.01 ***	.00	.01 **	.00	.00	.00
Neighborhood attachment	.24 *	.12	.24 *	.12	.21	.12
Intercept	-1.92 ***	.40	-1.97 ***	.41	-1.86 ***	.41
Log pseudolikelihood	-1141.23		-1143.45		-1110.45	

N=1,799

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

SE=Robust Standard Errors

Informal Intervention

I now turn my attention to the types of strategies individuals use to address problems in their neighborhoods. Table 3, model 1 tests the association between the controls and the use of informal social control. The relationships between education and respondents identifying as Asian remain significant and in the same direction. Resident mobility is also still associated with the use of informal social control. The relationship between fear of crime and the use of informal social control is not supported in this model.

Model 2 introduces social disorder. The curvilinear relationship remains between social disorder and the use of informal social control. In model 2, social disorder

is positive and significant ($p < .01$) meaning that as social disorder increases, so does the use of informal social control and once levels of disorder reach a tipping point of roughly 1.5 standard deviations above the mean residents again become less likely to intervene informally. Again there is little difference between those at one standard deviation above the mean and those at two standard deviations above the mean suggesting that social disorder levels out at high levels and only decreases when perceived levels of social disorder are extreme. Model 3 tests the same relationship with physical disorder in the place of social disorder. All relationships remain; however, the curvilinear relationship between physical disorder and informal intervention is not supported.¹⁷

Model 4 introduces variables capturing perceptions of the legal system. Neither fairness nor performance of the legal system affects the use of informal social control. Model 5 introduces neighborhood satisfaction into the model. As hypothesized, neighborhood satisfaction increases the likelihood of informal intervention (odds ratio=1.29; $p < .01$). Model 6 incorporates all independent variables along with controls in the model. Interestingly, the coefficient for neighborhood satisfaction increases from .26 to .45 indicating a possible suppression effect in previous models.

¹⁷ Although the quadratic for physical disorder is not significant, calculating the tipping point from the bivariate coefficients of physical disorder regressed on informal intervention suggests that if it were significant, the tipping point would be 3.37, which is a score not observed in these data.

Table 3: Regression on Informal Intervention

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Social Disorder			.42 ***	.12		
Social Disorder Sq			-.25 *	.11		
Physical Disorder					.31 **	.12
Physical Disorder Sq					-.03	.09
Performance of Legal System						
Fairness of Legal System						
Neighborhood Satisfaction						
In Neighborhood=1 (Citywide=0)	.05	.13	.05	.14	.03	.14
Sex (female=1)	-.10	.12	-.07	.12	-.07	.12
Age	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Income	.08 **	.03	.10 **	.03	.09 **	.03
Black (=1)	.03	.14	.04	.14	-.02	.14
Hispanic (=1)	-.05	.23	-.08	.23	-.10	.23
Asian (=1)	-.71 **	.22	-.72 ***	.22	-.70 ***	.22
Education	.14 **	.04	.13 **	.04	.14 **	.04
Probability of R moving	.05	.05	.06	.05	.05	.05
Years in the Neighborhood	.01 *	.00	.01 *	.00	.01 *	.00
Fear of Crime	.00	.00	.00	.00	-0.00	.00
Neighborhood Attachment	.18	.14	.16	.14	.16	.14
Intercept	-2.79 **	0.48	-2.74 ***	.48	-2.67 ***	.49
Log pseudolikelihood	-916.77		-910.52		-911.89	

N=1,799

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

SE=Robust Standard Errors

Table 3: Regression on Informal Intervention

	Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Social Disorder					.60 ***	.13
Social Disorder Sq					-.27 *	.12
Physical Disorder						
Physical Disorder Sq						
Performance of Legal System	-.03	.11			-.07	.11
Fairness of Legal System	.03	.10			.03	.10
Neighborhood Satisfaction			.26 ***	.10	.45 ***	.12
In Neighborhood=1 (Citywide=0)	.05	.13	.05	.13	.04	.14
Sex (female=1)	-.10	.12	-.12	.12	-.08	.12
Age	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Income	.08 *	.03	.08 *	.03	.10 **	.03
Black (=1)	.04	.14	.04	.03	.04	.14
Hispanic (=1)	-.04	.23	-.06	.23	-.12	.23
Asian (=1)	-.70 ***	.22	-.70 ***	.22	-.71 ***	.22
Education	.14 **	.04	.13 **	.04	.12 **	.04
Probability of R moving	.05	.05	.03	.05	.03	.05
Years in the Neighborhood	.01 **	.00	.01 *	.00	.01	.00
Fear of Crime	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Neighborhood Attachment	.18	.14	.16	.14	.12	.14
Intercept	-2.79 ***	.48	-2.70 ***	.48	-2.60 ***	.48
Log pseudolikelihood	-916.71		-913.52		-902.44	

N=1,799

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

SE=Robust Standard Errors

Formal Intervention

I now turn attention to the formal strategies residents use to combat neighborhood problems (Table 4). Model 1 tests the association between the use of formal social control and the controls. Education, fear of crime, and resident mobility all increase the likelihood of residents using formal social control in response to a neighborhood problem.

Models 2 and 3 introduce the disorder variables. The relationship between education and the use of formal social control becomes non-significant, as does fear of crime. The curvilinear relationships remain between social and physical disorder and the

use of formal social control as in previous models for intervention. The tipping point for social disorder must reach 1.5 standard deviations above the mean before decreasing the likelihood of formal intervention. Perceived physical disorder must reach very high levels (roughly 3 standard deviations above the mean) before its mobilizing influence starts to decrease. Model 3, shows that Asians are no different than whites after physical disorder is taken into account.

Model 4 tests the association between attitudes toward the legal system and formal intervention. Interestingly, the performance of the legal system has no significant effect. This contradicts previous hypotheses that attitudes toward the legal system would matter more for formal intervention compared to informal or just general intervention.

Model 5 tests the association between the controls and neighborhood satisfaction. Neighborhood satisfaction has no effect on the use of formal social control, which supports the hypothesis that neighborhood satisfaction may be more important for the use of informal versus formal social control.

Model 6 incorporates all independent variables. In Model 4, attitudes toward the legal system had no affect on formal intervention. Once all variables are entered into the model, increases in attitudes favorable to the fairness of the legal system increase the likelihood of formal intervention. Residents who find the legal system to be fair are 1.25 ($p < .05$) times more likely to intervene by calling the police or city about the perceived neighborhood problem. Again, there is likely a suppression effect when all variables are not included in the model.

Table 4: Regression on Formal Intervention

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Social Disorder			.86 ***	.13		
Social DisorderSq			-.45 ***	.12		
Physical Disorder					.60 ***	.13
Physical Disorder Sq					-.22 *	.10
Performance of Legal System						
Fairness of Legal System						
Neighborhood Satisfaction						
In Neighborhood=1 (Citywide=0)	.16	.14	.16	.15	.15	.14
Sex (female=1)	-.02	.13	.06	.13	.03	.13
Age	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Income	.02	.04	.01	.04	-.01	.04
Black (=1)	.00	.15	-.02	.15	-.07	.15
Hispanic (=1)	-.11	.24	-.18	.24	-.17	.24
Asian (=1)	-.44 **	0.22	-.45 *	.22	-.42	.22
Education	.09 *	0.04	.08	.05	.09	.05
Probability of R moving	-.01	.05	.02	.05	-.01	.05
Years in the Neighborhood	.01 **	0.00	.01 **	.00	.01 ***	.00
Fear of Crime	.01 *	0.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Neighborhood attachment	.11	.14	.07	.14	.09	.14
Intercept	-2.40 ***	.50	-2.35 ***	.50	-2.22 **	.50
Log pseudolikelihood	-848.38		-826.92		-836.67	

N=1,799

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

SE=Robust Standard Errors

Table 4: Regression on Formal Intervention (continued)

	Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Social Disorder					.88 ***	.14
Social DisorderSq					-.42 ***	.12
Physical Disorder						
Physical Disorder Sq						
Performance of Legal System	-.18	.11			-.16	.11
Fairness of Legal System	.17	.10			.24 *	.11
Neighborhood Satisfaction			-.19	.10	.01	.12
In Neighborhood=1 (Citywide=0)	.16	.14	.16	.14	.16	.15
Sex (female=1)	-.02	.13	.00	.13	.06	.13
Age	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Income	-.02	.04	-.01	.04	.01	.04
Black (=1)	.04	.15	-.01	.15	.05	.15
Hispanic (=1)	-.08	.24	-.09	.24	-.14	.24
Asian (=1)	-.42	.22	-.44 *	.22	-.42	.22
Education	.09	.04	.10 *	.05	.08	.05
Probability of R moving	.00	.05	.01	.05	.02	.05
Years in the Neighborhood	.01 **	.00	.01 **	.00	.01 **	.00
Fear of Crime	.01 **	.00	.01 *	.00	.00	.00
Neighborhood attachment	.12	.14	.12	.14	.09	.14
Intercept	-2.42 ***	.50	-2.49 ***	.51	-2.39 ***	.51
Log pseudolikelihood	-846.53		-846.62		-824.24	

N=1,799

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

SE=Robust Standard Errors

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

To better understand variation in the decision to mobilize during a neighborhood problem I assessed the extent to which resident perceptions of neighborhood characteristics influenced the likelihood they would intervene. Furthermore, I used these perceptions to predict the use of informal and formal methods of intervention. The first sets of analyses explore how perceptions of disorder, perceptions of the legal system, and neighborhood satisfaction influence an individual's response to perceived neighborhood issues. As mentioned in the methods section, the data employed in this study are unique in that they asked residents to identify whether they actually did something in response to their identified neighborhood problems instead of what they or their neighbors would do hypothetically.

Before delving into my findings, I will quickly summarize the results of the regarding the similarities and differences across intervention outcomes. The variables of social and physical disorder predicted all types of intervention. Social disorder consistently had a curvilinear effect for general intervention, informal intervention, and formal intervention. Physical disorder had a curvilinear effect on general intervention and formal intervention, but not for informal intervention. Attitudes toward the legal system and neighborhood satisfaction did not have consistent effects across the different types of intervention. Increases in perceptions that the legal system performed well decreased the likelihood of general intervention and had no effect on informal or formal intervention. Perceptions that the legal system is fair only increased the likelihood of formal intervention and had no effect on general or informal intervention. Residents who were

satisfied with their neighborhoods were more likely to use informal intervention only and had no effect on general or formal intervention. Below I discuss the implications of these findings.

The consistent curvilinear effect of disorder on intervention means that as disorder increases, so does the willingness of individuals to exercise social control in response to it, but only to a point. When disorder reaches a high level, residents' ability may be decreased due to lack of resources to intervene or to a perception that disorder has reached limits too far to be dealt with by an individual.

Social disorder and physical disorder are separated to determine whether they elicit different forms of intervention. Interestingly, my data do not observe the tipping point for physical disorder and the likelihood of informal intervention; however the curvilinear effect is observed for general willingness to intervene and formal intervention. This may indicate that physical disorder is mainly a motivating factor for informal strategies to decrease physical disorder in individuals' neighborhoods. This finding has several implications for the study of disorder. First, it may suggest that social and physical disorder should be separated when studying the impact of disorder on communities and individuals and that disaggregating disorder may have implications for choices regarding the type of intervention adopted. Second, it may indicate that when it comes to physical disorder, residents may have more faith in their neighbors and themselves to deal with the problems than they do with social disorder. One finding in the literature states that disorder causes fear of crime (Lee 1981; Skogan 1992). Perhaps social disorder causes more fear in individuals than does physical disorder. Fear of crime has been linked to lessening community satisfaction (Hartnagel 1979) thereby eroding

ties and cohesion in a neighborhood which in turn decreases the ability and maybe the perception that anything can be done about the problem. This may be truer for social disorder than for physical disorder at least when it comes to dealing with problems informally, which would explain the lack of a curvilinear effect for physical disorder on informal intervention. Another interesting implication for the lack of a curvilinear effect for physical disorder on informal intervention is that high levels of physical disorder might be a proxy for neighborhood disadvantage. As previously hypothesized by Skogan (1992), exercising informal social control could be compromised in highly disadvantaged neighborhoods due to erosions of ties within the community needed to effectively use informal social control. Again, the fact that social and physical disorder work differently points to the importance of separating types of disorder when looking at their effects as they seem to elicit different reactions from individuals.

The current study separated perceptions of the fairness from perceptions of the performance of the legal system to assess whether these constructs of legal cynicism work differently in mobilizing residents to intervene. Separating the performance from the fairness of the legal system proved wise in this analysis based on the opposite effects they elicit on the use of social control. Further studies regarding legal cynicism should take the results of this analysis into account when measuring legal cynicism.

For general intervention, those who perceived the legal system to be performing well were 21% less likely to call the police or call the city about neighborhood problems. If individuals perceive the legal system to be performing adequately, they may be less likely to intervene themselves as they assume formal social controls will address the

problem. However, this relationship only remained for general intervention and was absent in models for informal or formal intervention.

Perceptions of the fairness of the legal system had an effect on formal intervention but only when all variables are in the model. As perceptions of fairness increased, individuals were 1.25 times more likely to call the police or the city to intervene (formal intervention). This makes sense, as individuals would be less likely to call upon formal social control if they thought those agencies were acting unfair in their dealings with citizens.

As hypothesized, neighborhood satisfaction increased the likelihood that individuals would use informal social control in response to neighborhood problems. Although neighborhood satisfaction never reached significance in other analyses, it did predict the specific use of informal social control in response to disorder. It may not be enough to simply measure neighborhood attachment as years lived in the neighborhood and whether residents have family and friends living in the neighborhood, but also how satisfied they are with their neighborhood. Neighborhood satisfaction may foster a sense of reciprocity between neighbors that allows for more informal social control. It takes collective action to maintain a neighborhood and neighborhood satisfaction may be the result of prior relationships in the neighborhood that give rise to more informal social control in the neighborhood.

The inability to establish causality is one of the limitations of the current study. Although this analysis sheds light on the predictors of individual intervention, cross-sectional data are limited in their ability to contribute to knowledge on causal relationships. As an example, it may be that having experiences with successful

intervention yields neighborhood satisfaction. Moreover, there is likely to be considerable endogeneity among my independent variables, impacting the way they work in shaping intervention. For instance, favorable attitudes towards the legal system likely are shaped by how satisfied one is with their neighborhood. In a regression analysis not shown, I find support for this in that increases in favorable attitudes regarding the fairness and performance of the legal system predicted higher levels of neighborhood satisfaction. I encourage future work to disentangle the causal sequence related to informal social control.

This study seeks to advance our understanding of how neighborhoods are experienced at the individual-level. In order for a community to experience social cohesion and social organization, individuals need to decide to intervene on behalf of the common good. To this end, scant research has been devoted to linking micro-level action to macro-level outcomes such as collective efficacy. The current study bridges this gap by providing evidence that individuals are more or less likely to get involved in neighborhood problems depending on their perceptions of structural neighborhood conditions and their perceptions of the effectiveness of social controls. It also further demonstrates the importance of perceptions predicting intervention net of other variables that are thought to contribute to levels of social control in communities. My results points to the importance of subjective appraisals of neighborhood characteristics as determinants of the likelihood of individuals getting involved to combat neighborhood problems. Such appraisals also differentially impact the strategies individuals use when they do decide to intervene in behalf of the common good. When residents positively appraise

neighborhood characteristics they will mobilize against neighborhood problems.

Otherwise, residents and their neighborhoods will spiral into disorder and decline.

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