

LINKING RESEARCH ON DISPUTE-RELATED VIOLENCE WITH VIOLENCE

REDUCTION STRATEGIES

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Introduction

This paper is concerned with urban dispute-related violence. This paper has three objectives. First, to highlight the literature and research that should aid in the development violence-reduction strategies. Second, to address some of the challenges associated with drawing concrete policy implications from the extant research on dispute-related violence. Third, to identify the law enforcement strategies that can be utilized to reduce dispute-related violence.

Review of Literature on Dispute-Related Violence

Disputes as Criminal Events

This research is concerned with urban dispute-related violence. The criminal event perspective will be used to guide understanding of the questions addressed in this research. Utilizing the criminal event perspective, disputes will be viewed as events and violent assaults as criminal acts that occur within disputes. This subtle distinction is important; as criminal acts are instances of behavior, while events concern the social environment and the context of behavior (Meier, Kennedy, & Sacco, 2001). The event perspective seeks to identify those factors that are immediate, relatively close, and more removed—but still relevant—to the occurrence of a crime (Meier et al., 2001). As criminal events, disputes operate at the micro-social level (Short, 1997). The micro-social level is interested in the ongoing interactions within events. Thus, the event perspective seeks to ask the following questions: how did this event occur, what was the history between the two parties, what was nature of the interaction between the two parties when the assault occurred, what set of rules defined their behavior, how did the individuals involved interpret different aspects of the event, and what role did third parties play in influencing the outcome of the event (Meier et al., 2001; Short, 1997)?

The criminal event perspective seeks to understand the dynamic nature of violence. As such, this approach examines how characteristics of the offender, the victim, and the context converge to shape criminal behavior (Miethe & Meier, 1994). There are three primary ways that individual characteristics shape criminal events. First, individuals with certain predispositions (i.e. impulsivity or low self-control) may be more likely to respond violently to perceived provocations (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1993; Wilkinson, 2009). Second, individuals may internalize street code values that suggest one must “act crazy” or be willing to use violence to maintain respect (Anderson, 1999; Wilkinson, 2001). Third, individuals may engage in behaviors that increase their risk of victimization (Meier & Meithe, 1993). Importantly, the event perspective accounts for the fluid nature of interactions in violent disputes. Thus, an aggressor in one stage of the dispute can become a victim in another stage.

Miethe and Meier (1994) note that three micro-level contexts are important for shaping criminal violence: (1) the physical location, (2) the interpersonal relationship between the actors, and (3) the behavioral setting. Physical location is important because research has demonstrated that crime is not evenly distributed across space, but instead concentrated in certain micro-places (Braga, Papachristos, & Hureau, 2010; Sherman, Gartner, & Buerger, 1989; Weisburd, Groff, & Yang, 2012). The interpersonal relationship between the actors is important because it shapes the underlying motivations and physical ecology of violent crime. The behavioral setting establishes the predisposing and precipitating factors—such as escape routes, access to weapons, and presence of third parties—as well as facilitates the nature of the interaction between the offender, victim, and the immediate environment.

Neighborhood characteristics determine the background factors that shape criminal events. Routine activities, opportunity structures, access to social capital and proximity to

poverty are all shaped by neighborhood characteristics (Short, 1997). Additionally, neighborhood characteristics influence the likelihood that an individual adopts an oppositional subculture that subverts conventional values (Anderson, 1999). Our understanding of criminal events is further enhanced by research that outlines the stages of violent disputes.

Understanding the Stages of Disputes

Luckenbill's Situated Transactions

Luckenbill (1977) proposed that violent events are "situated transactions." A situated transaction refers to a chain of interaction between two or more individuals that lasts the time they find themselves in one another's immediate presence (Goffman, 1963, p. 167). According to Luckenbill (1977), actors in situated transactions take on different roles. Luckenbill (1977) identifies six important steps in violent transactions. First, the victim performs an action that is viewed offensively by the offender. An example might include an insult, or an offensive physical or non-verbal gesture. Second, the offender—usually at the behest of third parties—interprets the victim's behavior as personally offensive. Third, in an attempt to save face and demonstrate strong character, the offender chooses to attack the victim. At this stage of the transaction, the offender has determined that the best way to handle the dispute is through the use of violence.

During the fourth stage the victim continues to engage in actions that are perceived as disrespectful by the offender, refuses to comply with the offender's verbal cues to stop the said behavior, or refuses to flee. At this stage, the nature of the transaction becomes more volatile. Regardless of the intentions of the victim, the offender may interpret the failure to comply with a particular order as an affront. Additionally, during this stage of the transaction the roles of the actors may change, with victims responding to offender threats with physical retaliation or lethal

violence. Luckenbill (1977) also notes that bystanders play an important role at this stage of the transaction. Bystanders can serve as protagonists for one of the actors, encouraging aggression or even providing weapons; other bystanders can serve to deescalate the situation; while the silence of neutral witnesses may be interpreted as tacit approval by the actors.

In the fifth stage, the authors engage in battle. The presence of weapons is believed to facilitate the willingness of actors to engage. In the sixth and final stage the transaction is terminated. Termination occurs after the victim is subdued or killed. During this stage the offender either flees the scene, remains, or is captured. Which of these occurs is influenced by whether bystanders seek to aid or prevent the offender's escape, and whether law enforcement is nearby to apprehend the suspect.

Wilkinson's Situational and Transactional Theory of Urban Youth Violence

The most recent, and perhaps most comprehensive, attempt to understand violent street disputes is the work of Wilkinson and associates (Fagan & Wilkinson, 1998; Wilkinson, 2009; Wilkinson & Carr, 2008; Wilkinson & Fagan, 2001). Fagan and Wilkinson (1998) argue that attempts to understand urban violence must account for six things: (1) the factors that channel arousal into aggression and violence; (2) the decision-making framework that informs gun use; (3) the functions served by violence (i.e. social control, identity, material acquisition); (4) the processual dynamics of violent events; (5) the violent scripts that inform youth about the appropriate use of violence in certain circumstances; and (6) the social contexts under which violent scripts, decision making, and social definitions of conflict emerge.

In an attempt to address these issues, Wilkinson (2009; Wilkinson & Carr, 2008) proposed a situational and transactional theory of urban youth violence. According to Wilkinson

(2009), the actors in violent events include the antagonist, the protagonist, the cooffending antagonists and protagonists, the audience, and agents of social control. Inner-city youth are said to utilize violent scripts to organize their understanding of situations, and determine the behavioral expectations and potential outcomes of violence altercations. Wilkinson suggests that the settings of inner-city youth violence can be divided into two dimensions: (1) private vs. public spaces and (2) controlled and uncontrolled places. Differences in setting are important for understanding disputes because they influence the facilitation of illegal activities that contribute to violence (underage drinking, drug use), and the extent that the environment is regulated or monitored by agents of social control.

Violence between these actors is said to unfold in a six stage process.¹ First, the protagonist makes his opening move; which often consists of the threats, accusations, and insults. Second, the protagonist responds with a counter move or threat. Third, violence is escalated or intensified. It is during this stage that an actor is most likely to use a weapon to harm or kill another. The fourth stage involves closing moves. This stage is characterized by the resolution of the conflict or its disruption, the use of stalling tactics by one of the actors, one of the actors fleeing the scene, making additional threats, injuring the other actor, or being arrested. The fifth stage is the assessment stage. During this stage actors assess the damage incurred as a result of the act. The sixth and final stage is the aftermath. During this stage, some actors will utilize avoidance behaviors or enhance self-protection out of fear of retaliation; other actors will engage in gossip and other actions that enhance their reputation; other actors will plan revenge attacks; while others use drugs or alcohol for celebratory or self-medication purposes. The aftermath is

¹ Importantly, Wilkinson (2009) says that all events don't necessarily unfold in this manner; nor are all steps necessary for violence to occur.

followed by a retaliatory planning stage and an anticipatory stage. During the aftermath actors on both sides of the dispute plan for further violence and anticipate the actions of other actors.

Street Justice and Retaliation

Research by Jacobs and Wright (2006) sheds light on the nature and types of retaliation that occur in dispute-related violence. Jacobs and Wright (2006) argue that retaliatory urges are a universal aspect of the human experience. This drive for retaliation has both direct and vicarious dimensions. Virtually all of us have experienced the spontaneous urge to strike back reflexively against a perceived injustice. Further, it is not uncommon for third party actors to experience feelings of righteousness from witnessing wrongdoers get their just deserts.

Although retaliation is thought to be a universal impulse, retaliatory disputes are likely to thrive in the street criminal underworld because it exists outside of the reach of the formal social control apparatus, and because members of the street underworld view honor as inviolable and something that must be protected at all costs.

Jacobs and Wright (2006) point to four reasons that street offenders who fall victim to crime fail to seek the assistance of law enforcement. First, doing so could alert police to the victim's illegal activities. Second, offenders are aware of the fact that police cannot enforce illegal contracts. Third, adherence to the street code necessitates that criminal offenders must handle conflicts themselves rather than seek the aid of police. Fourth, the relationship between police and street criminals is inherently conflictual.

The inability of street offenders to turn to formal authorities for resolution of disputes—when combined with the fact that street offenders are themselves vulnerable to violent victimization—increases the likelihood that disputes will be handled informally and regulated by

the code of the street. As such, street offenders are likely to mete out their own brand of street justice in response to perceived slights and to deter future transgressions. This leads to a cycle of retaliatory violence that fuels inner-city crime rates, triggers a contagion of violence, and spawns spirals of conflict, retaliation, and counter-retaliation.

Jacobs and Wright (2006 see also Jacobs, 2004) developed a typology of violent retaliation. According to Jacobs and Wright (2006), two axial factors shape the manner that retaliation can be understood. First, whether a strike occurs immediately after the affront. Second, whether the retaliatory strike involves face-to-face contact with the person responsible for the affront. Based on these axial factors, Jacobs and Wright (2006) identify 6 types of violent retaliation: reflexive, reflexively displaced, calculated, deferred, sneaky, and imperfect. Reflexive retaliation is face-to-face retribution that occurs immediately after an affront. It is a knee-jerk response that affords the attacker instant gratification in response to the affront and protects them from the perceived weakness associated with failing to respond immediately. Calculated retaliation is face-to-face retribution that is delayed because the retaliating party wishes to gain a competitive advantage over the violator. Deferred retaliation involves face-to-face retaliation that is delayed, but the delay is not desired by the retaliatory party. This occurs when the retaliatory party determines that reflexive retaliation is inappropriate at the particular time or setting, is unaware of the violator, unable to locate the violator, or deterred by the presence of formal or informal social control. Sneaky retaliation involves retaliation that lacks face-to-face contact and is purposefully delayed by the retaliatory party. This occurs when the retaliatory party would like to keep their identity concealed or they wish to retaliate against the violator in a particular way. Imperfect retaliation lacks face-to-face contact where delay is not desired. Imperfect retaliation involves reprisal against someone who did not commit the

violation. This occurs when the grievant is unable to identify or locate the violator. As a last resort, the retaliating party may punish someone affiliated the violator to send a message to him or her. If the grievant is unable to punish someone affiliated with the offender they may strike an unrelated bystander. This is usually done to relieve anger or recover items lost as a result of the previous affront.

Jacobs and Wright (2006) note that imperfect retaliation has the most potential to spread the contagion of violence because such attacks provoke additional disputes with unrelated third-parties. Jacobs and Wright identify three types of imperfect justice. Wholly imperfect retaliation targets individuals who have nothing to do with the instigating violation against the retaliatory party. Such strikes usually are not the preferred option of the grievant, but occur as a result of proximity, opportunity, or convenience. Wholly imperfect retaliation provides the grievant with the opportunity to vent frustration or retrieve lost assets; but does not deter against future aggression because neither the victim nor the bystanders will draw a connection between the instigating event and the retaliatory act. Relationally imperfect strikes involve victims who did not engage in the instigating violation, but who are blood relatives to the violator. These attacks are made to send a message to the violator or to pressure the violator to resurface. Marginally imperfect strikes involve attacks against individuals who the grievant perceives to be an accomplice in the instigating violation, but whose culpability is not definitive. This form of imperfect retaliation usually targets associates of the violator. The primary factor that distinguishes wholly imperfect strikes from marginally imperfect strikes is the perceived culpability of the target.

Jacobs and Wright (2010) note that the nature of retaliation is influenced by bounded rationality. Bound rationality assumes that offenders engage in a decision-making process

whereby they contemplate certain aspects of a limit number of alternatives and ignore the rest. Jacobs and Wright (2010) trace the origins of the concept to bounded rationality to the work of Simon (1957), who argued that because it is impossible for actors to engage contemplate all of the choices and outcomes of a particular act they engage in satisficing behavior that allows them to make adequate responses based on the information available to them. Jacobs and Wright (2010) argue that there are three prominent bounds on rationality that mediate retaliatory decision making: anger, uncertainty, and time. These three factors lead to imperfection in the enactment of reprisals by causing asymmetries in strike intensity and target choice. Asymmetry in strike intensity occurs when the grievant responds excessively relative to the predisposing affront. Asymmetry in target choice occurs when retaliation is redirected and leads to imperfect justice. While anger is believed to lead to asymmetries in both strike intensity and target choice, uncertainty and time are said to lead to asymmetries in target choice only. Understanding bounded rationality is important because it leads to imperfect justice, which likely spawns more dispute-related violence in urban neighborhoods.

Cultural Processes that Influence Retaliatory Disputes

Anderson (1999) and the Code of the Street

Importantly, all of the perspectives discussed above recognize that disputes occur in a larger socio-cultural context. The disputes examined in this proposal primarily involve urban males living in socially-disadvantaged neighborhoods. Anderson's (1999) work on the code of the street informs understanding of the cultural dynamics that inform violent disputes.

Anderson (1999) contends that socially-disadvantaged urban neighborhoods are regulated by a code of the street which establishes an informal set of rules that governs interpersonal behavior, particularly violence. At the heart of the code of the street is the issue of respect. According to the code of the street, respect is a valuable commodity that is difficult to attain, but easily lost. In the inner-city respect can be viewed as a type of social capital, and establishing respect on the streets is important because it decreases the likelihood that individuals will face life-threatening altercations; thereby reducing the chances that they will be disgraced in public. Because respect is so valuable, it must be constantly guarded, and the use of aggression and violence is often necessary to do so. Individuals who fail to use retaliatory violence when attacked or disrespected face the prospects of being viewed as weak or vulnerable. The code of the street is so pervasive in urban neighborhoods that even those who oppose the values of the code are proscribed by its dictates and understand the consequences for violating the code. Anderson contends that the roots of the code of the street are structural, and that the code of the street is as an adaptation to the harsh conditions of inner-city life, namely: “the lack of jobs that pay a living wage, limited basic public services...the stigma of race, the fallout from rampant drug use and drug trafficking, and the resulting alienation and absence of hope for the future.” (p. 32)

Kubrin and Wietzer (2003) identify two factors that account for the occurrence of dispute-related retaliatory violence in disadvantaged neighborhoods. First, residents in inner-city neighborhoods have few conventional avenues for gaining prestige and status. This creates conditions conducive to the development of alternative normative codes that legitimate the use of violence to preserve status. Second, alienation from law enforcement increases the likelihood that disputes will be handled informally.

As a cultural process operating in urban neighborhoods, the code of the street shapes the nature of violent disputes in several ways. First, the code establishes those acts that should be responded to with violence. Second, the code establishes those places and settings (i.e. staging areas) where the use of violence is most appropriate to establish respect and honor. Third, the code defines how inter- and intra-group dynamics influence retaliatory violence.

Assessing the State of Knowledge on Retaliatory Disputes

Taken together, the research discussed above has greatly enhanced our understanding of violent disputes. The event perspective provides us with a framework to understand the role that the offender, victim and context play in shaping retaliatory violence. The work of Luckenbill (1977) and Wilkinson (2009) helps us better understand the different stages in violent altercations, and the factors that influence which stages occur. Further, the work of Anderson (1999) establishes the cultural context in which violent disputes emerge. Despite the progress made in research on violent disputes, important challenges remain. First, there is still much about the nature of disputes that is not understood. Second, more work is needed that links understanding of disputes to concrete intervention strategies that reduce dispute-related violence. Both of these challenges make it difficult to directly translate knowledge on dispute-related violence to effective violence reduction strategies.

Four important questions about the nature of dispute related violence that have direct implications for the development of effective dispute-related violence intervention strategies are discussed below. Linking extant research with intervention strategies is discussed in the next section.

1. Are there different types of violent dispute?

Criminologists have a long history of developing typologies to enhance understanding of violence. Violent crime typically has been categorized as either expressive or instrumental. Expressive crimes represent acts of violence that occur as a result of anger or frustration generated in response to an event or series of events. Instrumental crimes are those committed for explicit material gain (Miethe & Regoeczi, 2004 see Block and Block, 1993; Felson, 1993; and Polk, 1994 for approaches that have questioned the utility of this taxonomy). Meithe and Regoeczi (2004) found support for the notion that expressive and instrumental crimes are fundamentally and qualitatively distinct; but also found that in the last two decades there has been an emerging context of drug- and gambling-related violence among inner-city youth that does not clearly fit either category.

These findings are important for understanding variation of violence in Rochester, NY. Klofas (2001) found that homicides committed in Rochester in the year 2000 largely consisted of two types: drug rip-offs or dispute-related violence. Interestingly, many of these homicides didn't fit neatly into the expressive-instrumental taxonomy. For instance, 6 of the 17 dispute-related homicides that occurred in Rochester in 2000 were the result of long-running disputes. 2 of the 17 dispute-related homicides were the result of a past rip-off or a past debt. Disputes such as these likely are motivated by both instrumental and expressive factors. 13 of the 18 rip-off homicides were the result of drug house robberies/assassinations. Although these homicides may seem instrumental on the surface, research has shown that both instrumental and expressive motives influence retaliatory drug violence (Jacques & Wright, 2011). It is possible that the concentration of homicide in certain areas of Rochester is the result of disputes that don't clearly fit into the instrumental/expressive dichotomy.

Understanding differences across disputes will bring us a step closer to finding solutions to prevent them. Different types of disputes may require different types of interventions from authorities. Further, participants in certain types of disputes (i.e long-term gang disputes) may be more difficult to deter than participants in other types of disputes.

2. What factors determine if retaliatory violence occurs within disputes?

Contemporary criminologists recognize retaliation as a key motive for violent crime (Anderson, 1999; Bruce. A. Jacobs, Topalli, & Wright, 2000; Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003). Until recently, however, the manner that offenders express retaliatory impulses has remained unspecified (Bruce. A. Jacobs, 2004). Kubrin and Weitzer (2003) note that neighborhood disadvantage increases the likelihood of retaliatory homicide. This may be due to the fact that social control is weak in such areas, and disputants are of low status or engaged in activities that are not legally enforceable (Black, 1983). Wilkinson's (2009) research has documented retaliation planning as an important stage of disputes (Wilkinson, 2009), but Jacobs (2004) notes that situational factors influence when and how retaliatory events unfold. Jacobs and Wright (2006) note that there are different types of retaliation, and that the rationality of the grievant is often bounded by anger, uncertainty, and time pressures (Jacobs & Wright, 2010).

Progress has been made on understanding retaliation, but we still don't understand why retaliation occurs in some disputes but not others. Researchers have noted importance of background factors and situational factors (Kubrin and Weitzer, 2003; Jacobs and Wright, 2006, 2010), but the role of individual factors, group dynamics, and other factors have not been specified. Specification of the factors that distinguish retaliatory disputes from non-retaliatory disputes will enhance the development of effective violence reduction strategies.

3. How long do violent disputes last and what causes them to end?

The research discussed above has identified the stages that violent acts progress through, but says little about how long disputes last and when they end. Luckenbill (1977) notes that death or serious injury can end a dispute, but it should also be noted that the death or serious injury of a dispute participant may also exacerbate tensions and lead to further violence (Jacobs, 2004). Additionally, Wilkinson (2009) notes that after a violent act is committed, disputants will often retreat and plan for retaliation and, as noted above, situational factors influence how and when retaliatory violence is carried out (Jacobs, 2004). What is not yet known is why some disputes terminate after the initial conflict while others do not. Further, criminological research has not explicated why some disputes remain dormant over long periods of time while others lead to continuous reflexive retaliation. In essence, we know very little about the life course of disputes. Understanding these issues is important for developing appropriate violence reduction strategies that seek to reduce disrupt dispute-related violence.

4. What distinguishes disputes that become lethal?

Much of the interest in retaliatory violence stems from the fact that a disproportionate amount of lethal violence occurs in socially disadvantaged urban areas. Yet, we know relatively little about the factors that distinguish lethal and non-lethal disputes. Criminologists disagree on the importance of criminal intent in determining the lethality of violent assaults. Some contend that criminal intent is an important factor to consider (R. B. Felson & Messner, 1996; Kleck, 1997), while others contend that death occurs as a result of weapon lethality (Zimring, 1972), situational factors (Weaver et al., 2004), or unintended circumstances (R. Block, 1977). Identifying the factors that influence the likelihood that a

dispute becomes deadly can help prioritize which disputes should be prioritized during intervention.

Linking Criminological Knowledge to Violence Reduction Strategies

One major challenge faced by participants in collaborative violence reduction initiatives is deriving concrete violence-reduction strategies from the extant criminological literature. This problem manifests in two ways: First, criminologists often utilize self-report and victimization data to identify correlates of crime that cannot be easily identified using police data. This makes translating research findings to straight-forward policy recommendations difficult. As such, much of the existing research has little practical value for law enforcement. It is necessary to identify ways that official data—which is easily accessible to law enforcement—can be utilized to enhance the development of actionable violence-reduction strategies. Second, policy recommendations from criminological research often focus on background factors—such as poverty and family makeup—that require long-term solutions that cannot be addressed by law enforcement. While consideration of poverty and other factors is important, it is imperative to derive policy implications from criminological research that can provide near-term solutions to crime and that can be implemented by law enforcement.

Researchers have noted the utility of examining police reports to understand the stages of violent events (Luckenbill, 1977; Meithe and Meier, 1994). Research assessing crime reports and FBI Supplemental Homicide Reports has proven useful, but examination of crime reports *in isolation* may provide an incomplete picture of disputes. Fortunately, modern police departments collect a plethora of crime data that can enhance our understanding of violent disputes. The Rochester Police Department collects data generated from field information forms,

investigative action reports, crime bulletins, calls for service, shot spotter, and street intelligence. This data is collected and analyzed at the Monroe Crime Analysis Center. By combining this data into one database and examining this data over time, we can enhance understanding of urban dispute-related violence.

One question that might emerge is what are the important characteristics of dispute-related violence that have been identified in the criminological research and that can be measured using police data? Several characteristics are identified here. First, dispute-related violence occurs in stages. Thus, it is possible to intervene in disputes to prevent escalation or retaliation. Police data can be used to track the most serious violent incidents in retaliatory disputes and necessary steps can be taken to head off retaliation. Second, individual risk factors increase the likelihood that actors will engage in violent disputes. Therefore any risk assessment tool must take individual violence propensity into consideration. Important individual risk factors for consideration include, but are not limited to, previous violent history, previous weapon history, gang membership, reputation for street violence or being “wild or crazy.” Third, place characteristics influence the emergence and outcomes of violent disputes. Violent street crime disproportionately occurs in hotspots with low levels of public control. These hotspots become staging areas where dispute-related violence is carried out. Fourth, certain situations—such as gambling, underage drinking, and drug sales—that occur in uncontrolled environments are likely to foster the emergence, re-ignition, or escalation of a dispute. Targeting locations where these activities occur can potentially prevent the emergence of new disputes and reduce the likelihood that retaliatory violence occurs. In consideration of these facts, several law enforcement practices can be utilized to reduce dispute-related violence. These practices are briefly discussed below. Extensive detail about the strategies discussed below can be found at crimesolutions.gov.

Offender Notification Meetings

Offender notification meetings can be utilized to target high-risk offenders believed to be engaged in a violent dispute. Offender notification meetings involve identification of potential disputants based on their criminal records and other police intelligence. The intervention involves relaying deterrence based-messages to the disputants and offering the provision of social services. This approach was developed as a significant component of the crime reduction effort in Boston and has been implemented by David Kennedy in a variety of cities. (McDevitt, Decker, Kroovand Hipple, & McGarrell, 2006). Although this approach has often involved targeting probationers and parolees in general, it can be modified for the purposes of this project to target particular suspects of a violent dispute.

Chronic Offender Lists

If law enforcement is unable to identify suspects in a particular case, but have reason to believe that a violent dispute is occurring (i.e. through intelligence or a rapid increase in violence in a particular area); chronic offender lists may help identify potential suspects. This chronic violent offender strategy emphasizes the identification of individuals who are engaged in gun violence without specific reference to an individual case. The aim is to identify those individuals who have demonstrated continued involvement in gun crimes and thus represent a considerable danger to the community. This approach may be useful for identifying potential disputants because research has established that a small proportion of violent actors are responsible for a

disproportionate number of violent crimes. Thus, data analysis can be used to identify individuals who share these characteristics. Law enforcement intelligence concerning these individuals can then be used to refine the list and determine enforcement strategies and priorities (Bynum & Decker, 2006).

Street Outreach

Street outreach is an appropriate alternative when the disputants have been identified but are uncooperative with law enforcement. In such instances, law enforcement can notify street outreach workers of the dispute, and the outreach workers can target the disputants for counseling, conflict mediation, and provision of social services. Street outreach workers also serve as “violence interrupters,” counseling friends and relatives of recent shooting victims in hopes of breaking the cycle of violence. Evaluation of this approach in Chicago has indicated that it shows promise and may be replicable in other jurisdictions (Skogan, Hartnett, Bump, & Dubois, 2009).

Crime Incident Reviews

Crime incident reviews provide a way of sharing detailed information about specific types of crime, most often homicide, in the local criminal justice system and using that information to develop strategic approaches to reduce crime. During incident reviews, representatives from across the criminal justice system assemble to discuss the details of a particular incident. Front line staff with street-level knowledge provide pertinent details about the case and researchers analyze the information and identify patterns and other issues that may assist in the development of strategic responses to the problem (Klofas & Kroovand Hipple,

2006). When applied to dispute related violence, crime incident reviews can be used to track known disputes and assess the success or failure of particular violence reduction strategies.

Operation Night Light

Programs such as Operation Night Light may prove useful when law enforcement intelligence indicates that a particular suspect is involved in a violent retaliatory dispute and poses an immediate risk to public safety. Operation Night Light pairs probation officers with police officers to make surprise visits to the homes, schools, and worksites of high-risk youth probationers during the non-traditional hours of 7 p.m. to midnight in order to enforce the terms of probation. The teams also stop at various parks and street corners where youth congregate to see if any probationers are present. It becomes evident to youth that the probation and police officers are working together and are interested in probationer's activities and whereabouts. The program focuses on high-risk offenders, the relatively small percentage of probationers who pose a threat to public safety. This partnership provides benefits for both agencies, including enhanced search and supervision powers. The probation officers are permitted secure home visits which enhance credibility of probation and its enforcement. Benefits for the police include an additional tool to address serious crime problems and an additional means of affecting hot spots for serious crime, including gang violence. This program began in Boston and has been widely adopted elsewhere. Importantly, the program can be expanded to include high-risk adult probationers, as well as parolees.

Gun Prosecution Case Screening

The goals of the gun prosecution case screening process are to incapacitate violent gun crime offenders and to communicate a deterrent message to potential offenders through increased certainty and severity of punishment for gun crimes. Gun prosecution case screening is a vehicle for finding the best venue for prosecution (i.e., federal or local court) in order to increase the certainty of sanctions for gun crimes and to remove the most serious gun crime offenders from the community (Decker and McDevitt, 2006).

Deployment Based Interventions-Hot Spot Policing

Hot spot policing involves temporary deployment of police for preventive patrol based on crime analysis identifying geographical and temporal locations of crime. Hot spot policing has been widely used across the country and generally begins with identifying those areas where crime clusters. After hot spots are identified, law enforcement can employ several different approaches, including increasing presence in problem areas, focusing on suspicious behavior, employing aggressive traffic enforcement, and utilizing stop-and-search approaches. This approach will be useful for reducing dispute-related violence in instances where data analysis indicates an uptick in violence at a particular location, and law enforcement intelligence suggests a dispute. Hotspots associated with the dispute can be targeted to intercept potential retaliatory violence and send a message of deterrence.

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