

COMMUNICATING REFORM: APOLOGIES AND POLICY
IMPLEMENTATION FOR POLICING'S HISTORY

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ABSTRACT

Governments sometimes apologize for their mistakes but apologizing for mistakes does not always impart legitimacy on governments. Policing's history in the United States creates the context through which policing is understood today. Because people are socialized into understanding government throughout their lives, individuals come to an understanding of what police are like, how police act, and biases that police have. Policing's history is full of enforcing racial inequity which creates a context today that imparts illegitimacy, especially among African Americans, and legitimacy is crucial for government's effective operations. After conducting a literature review and exploratory qualitative research, this dissertation designed two experiments to test apology's effects on police legitimacy among African American respondents. The initial experiment showed little legitimizing effects on the police from a supplementary apology. The second experiment showed some legitimizing effect from a police chief apologizing for policing's history, especially compared to not responding to policing's history at all, but sustained policy reform implementation seems to be a stronger and more durable approach. While administrators like police have the ability to address the past through reconciliation, they also have the power to change the future through policy implementation.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Governments sometimes apologize for their mistakes, but apologies do not always make governments more legitimate. This dissertation's findings suggest that apologies for policing's history could improve policing's legitimacy among African Americans today, but that policy reform implementation provides stronger legitimizing effects. Apologizing need not worsen policing's legitimacy, but this research suggests that implementation is key to improving it. While government can address the past through apologies, policy implementation creates its future.

I came to these conclusions after analyzing myriad qualitative and quantitative data. After literature review, interviews, and a case study, I designed two experiments that presented African American participants with randomly assigned vignettes with or without apologies and policy implementation for policing's history. I used these vignettes to situate the experiments within municipal policing, the sort of policing that people mostly experience in their daily lives and thus at a level of policing that is most relevant, common, and familiar to participants.

Qualitative evidence from the first experiment suggested that the clearest indicator of a department's desire to reform police interactions with African American communities is ongoing and sustained reform implementation. Participants indicated that the most legitimizing approach would not be apologia but would rather be policy implementation over time. Based on this feedback, I designed a second experiment to test the independent effects of apologizing, community policing implementation, and a combination of the two. I found that when faced with a policing racial controversy, a department could gain

more legitimacy from apologizing for policing's history than from not responding at all. However, even in the second experiment, community policing implementation provided more legitimacy.

Many police departments in the United States are grappling with their relationships with African Americans in the communities that they serve. This research could help inform departments about apologies' and implementations' potential to improve their relationships with their African American clients. Apologies have been given for historical atrocities in several contexts, with some examples of apologies for individual historical acts of police racism, but a broader apology for policing's history has neither been given nor evaluated. This research focuses on apologies as a resource to improve policing's legitimacy; however, there are good reasons to be concerned about policing's legitimacy in the United States irrespective of apology's effect on that legitimacy.

The Importance of Improving Policing's Legitimacy

Protests against police racism and police killings of African Americans demonstrate the legitimacy deficit that policing faces today. When discussing the importance of legitimacy, Max Weber (1978) wrote:

“Authority is the probability a command will be obeyed...it may be determined by...interest...by custom...or by mere affect...A structure of power, however, if it were to rest on such foundations alone, would be relatively unstable. Both rulers and rules uphold the internalized power structure as ‘legitimate’ by right, and usually the shattering of this belief in legitimacy has far reaching implications.”

Under Weber, government's authority is a function of its justification, with stable authority relying on justified systems of laws, positions, and relationships that the governed believe to be appropriate. Important for this research is Weber's caveat that

legitimacy is a “belief,” a perception ultimately left to the governed. Governments seeking legitimacy can structure institutions to achieve it, but legitimacy itself is determined by those subject to the institutions through interactions with them (Kettl, 2017). Legitimacy is then defined as the view among governed people that those who govern should be allowed to do so in the way that they do so.

It would be inaccurate to broadly describe African Americans’ views of the police as legitimate, and these views have negative implications for government (Gibson & Nelson, 2018). African Americans consistently have worse attitudes towards the police than other races (Wheelock et al., 2019). African Americans are substantially more likely than whites to believe they have been treated unfairly by the police, are substantially less likely to have a positive view towards police officers’ uses of force, and are substantially more likely to believe that fatal encounters between non-whites and police officers are indicative of greater problems in policing (DeSilver et al. 2020). By any measurement, African Americans do not see police as legitimately as others. This has operational implications for government, as legitimacy is important for government’s effective operations.

People who see the police as more legitimate are less likely to break the law (Tyler 1990; Tyler, 2007; Tyler and Jackson, 2013; Haam et al., 2017; Walters and Bolger, 2018; Kaiser and Reisig, 2019). While police enforce laws, they usually require citizens to voluntarily comply with them. Police cannot be everywhere at once and citizens will always outnumber officers, so law enforcement rests on the assumption that most people will not be breaking important laws at most times. “Effective leadership requires compliance with the leaders’ decisions from ‘the bulk of the members [of society]...most

of the time” (Tyler, 1990, p. 19, quoting Easton, 1965, p. 185). Large scale law breaking could not be effectively policed by local police departments because they are relatively under resourced compared to the population that they police. To maintain order in a community, police departments depend on citizens voluntarily obeying the most important laws most of the time and then deal with the worst of left-over lawbreaking.

Tyler (1990) argues that in obtaining legitimacy, police departments can improve their voluntary compliance and consequently their effectiveness. Views of police legitimacy are not the only reason that people voluntarily obey laws – in as much as laws reflect cultural morality, laws like murder prohibitions might be followed and enforced against in most situations with or without government intervention – but legitimacy can aid law enforcement in securing the voluntary compliance with laws when the correspondence between law and cultural morality become less clear (Tyler, 1990).

When people obey laws, they do not do so only to avoid punishment from law enforcement. People often follow laws because they believe legal systems to be fair and laws to be fairly enforced. Those who view the government as legitimate are less likely to engage in riotous or protest behavior. Beyond that, policing that depends on securing legitimacy from citizens has the advantage of greater sophistication than other models of policing, in that it harnesses intrinsic motivation to avoid lawbreaking and avoids suppressive surveillance. Harnessing intrinsic motivation can allow for resources to be more efficiently targeted to problems that cannot be solved with intrinsic motivation e.g., lawbreaking. The more voluntary compliance that exists in a community, the less involuntary compliance is required from police (Tyler, 2007).

Citizens are more likely to cooperate with police during criminal investigations if they view policing as legitimate (Murphy, 2005; Murphy et al., 2008). A community that views the police as legitimate can be a powerful tool, as police departments and community members can work together to create and maintain a peaceful law-abiding populace (Tyler & Jackson, 2013; Kaiser & Reisig, 2019). Legitimacy can denote the fairness of government's enforcement activities – when government is seen as legitimately enforcing fair rules, even those that the law is investigating are more likely to cooperate (Mendoza et al., 2016; Haam et al., 2017; Walters & Bolger, 2018).

Apologies in Public Administration

This is all to say that effective governance is aided by views among the governed that government is legitimate, which motivates a need to investigate reconciliation and apology as a legitimacy strategy in policing. Some readers may be familiar with the concept of apologetic reconciliation from government, perhaps most familiar with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. In that process, following the dissolving of a government that had historically and continued to create policy to support institutionalized racial segregation (Apartheid), victims and perpetrators of racialized human rights violations were invited to speak to their experiences surrounding segregated government (Espinosa et al., 2017). While the South African case may be the most familiar case of reconciliation from government, it is hardly the only case. Similar processes have taken place in Canada (James, 2012), Peru (Rendon, 2019), and Sierra Leone (Menzel, 2020). Many reconciliatory processes contain apologies (Blatz et al., 2009).

However, no such process has been broadly attempted for policing in the United States (O'Brein & Tyler, 2020). An apologetic reconciliatory approach may hold promise for improving police legitimacy today. Policing has a history of racism, from early police chasing enslaved persons to modern protests against police racism, that makes it a prime candidate. Policing's transgressions are long, historical, and racially patterned in a way that reduced policing's legitimacy today. Governments in pursuit of legitimacy when faced with the consequences of historical atrocities sometimes turn to apologies. This research investigates reconciliatory police apologies for policing's racist history, through which police departments could be able to improve their legitimacy for the sake of more effective police operations and more legitimate government generally.

Summary of Chapters

This introductory chapter discusses the main focus of this dissertation, if reconciliatory apologia, the study and practice of giving apologies for historical atrocities, works to improve policing's legitimacy among African Americans. It also considered the importance of policy implementation as one of public administration's greatest legitimizing tools. It is important to improve policing's legitimacy to improve policing's operations. Policing itself depends on citizens largely following laws and obeying police commands of their own accord, and without legitimacy aiding citizens in doing so the consequences can be disastrous for government, policing, and society. Apologizing is one approach taken by governments pursuing legitimacy, but its effectiveness in addressing the delegitimizing effects of policing's history in the United States is unclear.

Chapter Two further investigates and explains policing's history and its contemporary delegitimizing effects. Policing has a history of contributing to racial inequity in the

United States and that fact contributes to policing's legitimacy problems today. Using interview and participant observational methods, I argue that the history of policing could be salient to police legitimacy among African Americans today. I interviewed 20 African American participants in a community I give the pseudonym of "Wellsville" to understand views of racial representation in policing. Some participants expressed the theme that police history was important to their understandings of policing. This was buttressed by participant observation of a case of an activist group in Wellsville, where community activists took a historically informed approach to understand local policing.

Chapter Three explores literature to better understand and explain the concepts of interest for experimental testing in this research, apologia for policing's history and community policing. Evidence from Chapter Two suggested that history is important to how African Americans understand police legitimacy, and apologia is one way to deal with legitimacy problems arising from patterned historical discrimination. Apology's ability to deal with historical atrocities makes it a prime candidate for testing as a police legitimacy tool. I examine reconciliatory apologia research, a subgenre of the apologia discipline, to best construct a reconciliatory apology for policing's history to use in the experiment. There are good reasons to believe apologies might legitimize, but also good reasons to believe it might not and that implementation would be superior.

Chapter Four describes the design of the experiment used to test a hypothesis from Chapter three. I use a between-subjects experimental design to compare the legitimizing effects of a promise of community policing to a promise of community policing supplemented with an apology for policing's history. I surveyed African Americans in Amazon's Mechanical Turk participant pool, a pool that has been common in political

research and experimentation but that requires special consideration to use effectively (Berinsky et al. 2012; Huff & Tingley 2015; Coppock, 2018). In Chapter Four, I explain how an experiment was designed and how I ensured that data were of the highest quality possible for hypothesis testing.

Chapter Five shows experimental results of the experiment in Chapter Four. Because my experiment was successfully randomized, I can analyze results using simple statistical techniques. Because experiments measure so specifically, causality for differences in dependent variables between groups is most plausibly attributed to the experimental treatment. I use bivariate and multivariate ordinary least squares regression to analyze differences between experimental groups that did and did not receive the supplemental apology. Bivariate results show at best only small improvements in legitimacy from the supplemental apology. Multivariate analysis shows no statistically significant effect from the apology on legitimacy. Even in bivariate models, the apology's effect was small. Regardless of model choice, apologia shows at best a small and inconsistent effect or at least no effect and does not appear to be a substantial legitimacy tool for policing as applied in this experiment.

Chapter Six analyzes textual comment data from the first experiment for themes to better understand why it was that the apology seemed to have such little effect. Treated participants revealed that they perceived police department actions speaking louder than words and that they doubted the ability of the police chief to control street-level officers. Comparison group participants revealed a preference for implemented policy over a promise of policy. As will be discussed, these findings comport with recent research

(O'Brien et al., 2020) that found legitimacy improving effects from reconciliatory gestures in policing but only when citizen participation in policing was implemented.

Based on the findings from Chapters Five and Six, I design a second experiment that tests the independent effects of apologizing for policing's history, community policing implementation, and a combination of the two. The first experiment only promises community policing, while the second reports the results of a successful community policing program. I include a control group that receives no response to charges of racism in policing's history from the vignette's police department. In this scenario, apologies provided additional legitimacy compared to no response. This finding indicates that apologizing for policing's history has potential to improve policing's legitimacy somewhat, at least when compared to no other response. However, consistent with the first experiment's findings, community policing implementation provided superior legitimizing effects.

I conclude in Chapter Eight by reemphasizing the need for improved legitimacy in policing. Apologies for policing's history may provide some value, but policy implementation will likely be key. This research would not support the hypothesis that apologia worsens policing's legitimacy – the experiment simply does not show anything in the way of the sorts of monumental effects that would be needed to deal with the legitimacy problems that policing has today. Apologies could be one tool for improving policing's legitimacy, but to legitimize policing sustained reform implementation will likely be necessary.

Conclusion

Illegitimacy between African Americans and the police need not be inevitable, but the influence of history weighs heavily on policing's legitimacy today. Police departments need to deal with their legitimacy problem for the sake of effective operations.

Departments must be willing to take new steps to become more legitimate in African Americans' eyes, and apologizing could be one step to reach that goal. However, an apology is first in need of evaluation. It may be that apologies are not always effective, or that other solutions are more legitimizing. Apologies to improve police legitimacy should not be given lightly because we cannot assume that any apology will necessarily effectively legitimize. Instead, they should be considered, developed, and evaluated for their potential effectiveness.

CHAPTER TWO: POLICE HISTORY AND ITS INFLUENCE TODAY

Today's police departments inherited policing's past, but that past can still influence today's police legitimacy. This chapter explains how police history feeds into African Americans' contemporary understandings of police legitimacy. After examining literature on policy feedback theory and policing's history, I describe the results of an observational extended case method analysis of police reform in a medium sized midwestern community given the pseudonym of "Wellsville". In that case, history was salient to activists' understandings of policing today.

This dissertation will refer to Wellsville throughout its text. In this chapter "Wellsville" serves as a pseudonym (a fictional name that writers give to something real so that readers will not know specifically what the real thing is) for a real community in which participant observation occurred. The research in this chapter occurred in the real-world Wellsville. Although the events discussed in the community were public, most participants did not anticipate being studied in this way and are thus worthy of the anonymity protections afforded by false names. In a future chapter, Wellsville will serve as a stand-in name for a hypothetical community in an experiment. The two uses of the community name of Wellsville should not be confused.

Following the presentation of the extended case method study, I show the results of several interviews that occurred in the real community I gave the pseudonym of Wellsville. These interviews provide further evidence that the history of policing could be salient for police legitimacy among African Americans today. These interviews were initially about the topic of racial representation in policing, but the topic of policing's

history arose on several occasions. Overall, this chapter provides support for the proposition that policing's history is important for police legitimacy today, motivating future chapters that examine how policing's history might be addressed with an apology or policy implementation.

Theoretical Framework

This section lays out the theoretical framework supporting this chapter. Centuries of recurring negative interactions between police and African set the context for today's policing. As today's police inequity becomes understood as in line with centuries of racially inequitable policing, police legitimacy suffers.

Policy Feedback: Why History Matters

This section considers how policing's history feeds into African American's police legitimacy attitudes today. Much research into government considers the direct effects that policy has or evaluates the effects of an implemented policy on a clearly defined goal. Policy scholars taking these evaluation-focused approaches examine policy to see if it had its expected effects. Such research might examine the efficacy of a new educational program for graduation rates or check if a jobs training program increased employment. On the other hand, policy feedback theory focuses in on policy's unintended or unexpected consequences over longer timespans than evaluation focused research usually considers.

Today's policy can feed into African Americans' future attitudes towards government and police. In one study (Bruch & Soss, 2018), African Americans were more likely than others to have relationships with school authority figures that fed into future negative

perceptions of government. In another study, Maltby (2017) found that contemporary racially inequitable policing was associated with more negative attitudes towards the police for highly educated Blacks than other groups. Kochel (2019) found that African Americans in Ferguson Missouri had more negative perceptions of their police department's legitimacy after Michael Brown was shot by officer Darren Wilson, whereas whites in Ferguson had no significant perceptual changes over the same period. But policy feedback effects do not occur strictly within one's lifetime and often occur over much longer intergenerational timespans.

Political science establishes the importance of intergenerational politics. For example, partisan self-identification can be seen largely as a consequence of parental socialization (Jennings & Niemi, 1968; Niemi & Jennings, 1991). Similarly, policy feedback effects can be intergenerational. That was the case in Johnson and Dawes (2016), who found that a father's participation in the Vietnam War as a drafted soldier was negatively associated with their child's political participation. Intergenerational policy feedback can also work in the opposite direction: The birth of a child can change a parent's policy opinions as they realize that their child becomes subject to public policy (Sharro et al., 2018).

Historical policy can affect today's attitudes as parents pass their policy attitudes, perhaps influenced by their own parents (e.g. their childrens' grandparents), onto their own children. As an unsatisfied parent's attitudes become negative due to their childrens' negative experiences with the police, they often go on to socialize their children to dislike the police (Cavanagh & Cauffman, 2015; Cavanagh & Cauffman, 2019). African Americans have disproportionate contact with the police (Piquero, 2008), and a high number of contacts provides additional opportunities for feedback effects.

Parents' attitudes towards the police can influence their childrens' attitudes, and a child's experience with the police can worsen parents' attitudes. Through a combination of inequitable policing and intergenerational socialization, African Americans can come to form negative attitudes towards the police. The inequitable history of policing seems to feed into African Americans' current attitudes towards the police partially through familial socialization. As Teague describes (2018, p. 763, citing *Behind the Veil*, 1994, p. 59), among African Americans, attitudes to the police are "one thing parents passed on to their children. Fear and hate of the police."

Historically, police both perpetrated violence against African Americans and allowed white citizen's violence against African Americans to occur unabated (Wright, 1996).

Soss and Weaver (2017, p. 577-583) argue that:

"Police worked to protect the economic interests that white elites and state officials shared in a ready supply of exploitable Black labor, and terrorized Blacks who crossed de facto racial boundaries above and below the Mason-Dixon Line. Time and again in American history, police and the local criminal justice apparatus operated to enforce racial norms of docility and deference, preserve the ballot from Black voice, defend white public spaces and white residential neighborhoods, protect vigilante mobs, repress Black labor agitation, suppress dissent, and undermine racial and social justice movement leaders...Stories of police brutality or unfairness are passed through family and friendship networks, the routines of Black comedians, rap lyrics, and Black media, and are passed down through generations like heirlooms."

The racist history of policing remains unreconciled in a way that influences today's views of government (Campbell, 2009). There are those alive today who still remember past abuses, especially from the Civil Rights movement. The AARP has a web page dedicated to testimonials from people who participated, whose parents participated, or were alive during the American Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. At the time of this writing one

storyteller alleges that her grandfather was murdered in a conspiracy involving a state mental hospital and Bull Connor during the Civil Rights Movement (AARP, 2020).

As African American youths learn about the role of race in the history of the United States from educational systems, they perceive contemporary discrimination to be in line with that history (Hope & Jagers, 2014). Education about historical atrocities provides opportunities to understand today's government (Bowen & Kisida, 2020). The racist history of policing is woven into America's culture, and appears to operate through the transition of information through educational systems, family socialization, and popular culture.

Knowledge of organized police violence against African Americans imparted the belief that present and future police-citizen interactions will resemble interactions of the past. Historical police violence begat expectations of future violence, and present police violence begets future expectations (Hamilton & Foote, 2018). Today, African Americans provide worse evaluations of the police than whites in part because of a history of differential treatment (Howell et al., 2004). African Americans can believe that historical momentum structures today's police interactions to resemble the interactions of the past. Hadden and colleagues (2016, p. 11) describe this as "a collective gnawing 'knowing' that the next incident is right around the corner."

Policing's History

This section describes the historical policing policy that this dissertation argues has a delegitimizing feedback effect today. By understanding patterned racial inequity over time between policing and society, it becomes easier to conceptualize how today's policing could be seen during contemporary interactions. United States' law and public

policy have historically been deeply intertwined with racial inequity, or creating and applying policy differently based on race (Monroe, 2020). Racial inequity through government has occurred at all levels of government through the history of the United States. One of the most striking examples of how government has contributed to racial inequity exists in local policing.

Policing has played an important role in enabling public policy to treat African Americans differently from others. Some of the earliest police departments in the United States formed in the American South to police slaves (Turner et al., 2006). These early policing units, called slave patrols, closely monitored slaves' activities, enforced laws surrounding slavery, checked freed Blacks for documentation to make sure that they were not in fact runaway slaves, searched slave housing for contraband, and mediated slave owners' disputes with one another. Slave patrols prevented slaves from gathering in public for fear of organized revolt and returned runaway slaves to their owners (Durr, 2015). Governments authorized slave patrols to physically brutalize slaves and interrogate every aspect of Black life. In a time when local government was small and mostly unfunded, slave patrols received pay for their work. Slave patrols were instrumental to maintaining the hierarchical racist government policies and administrative arrangements that allowed for chattel slavery (Spruill, 2016; Lee & Robinson, 2019) especially in majority-slave areas (Bass, 2001).

Police departments maintained their role of local racial control in United States cities after the Civil War during the reconstruction era. As African Americans urbanized from Southern to Northern cities, in the 1800s and 1900s, corrupt police administrations continued to terrorize their neighborhoods and communities (Wade 1996; Steffens,

2018). From the late 19th to early 20th centuries, Americans faced a wave of fear over the disorders that they believed urbanization would create. Centralized police departments were formed to maintain the status quo in cities (Potter, 2013). Officers enforced segregation that barred African Americans from transportation, schools, restaurants, and hotels, among other institutions. Even as American government made legal progress in reducing racial inequity, the lived reality of African Americans continued to entail it. Police departments in this period often tolerated crimes that society understood were committed to maintain racial hierarchies (English, 2009). Police officers sometimes participated in lynchings and other violence against African Americans themselves, and when not actively participating, police departments often did nothing to prevent racial violence in society (King, 2011; Fischer-Stewart, 2017; Teague, 2019).

Police departments enforced sundown laws in towns across America. These sundown laws barred African Americans from being present in towns at night. Sundown laws regulated Black movement and migration patterns by regulating their freedom to travel. Sundown laws were laws in American towns from 1890 to 1968 (O’Connell, 2018). In addition to immediate mobility restrictions, sundown laws also contributed to long-term residential racial segregation by presenting a clear signal of where African Americans were not welcomed to locate. The legacy of sundown laws continues to influence population distributions today by having structured the migration patterns of African Americans throughout the United States for decades (Loewen, 2005; Loewen, 2009; Crowe & Ceresola, 2014).

In a second wave of Black migration from South to North, in the middle of the 20th century, cities responded with an increased police presence. For example, during this

period in Milwaukee, Blacks were jailed at four times the rates of whites and many complained that arrests were disproportionately for petty violations (Balto, 2013). In 1958, police officers shot Daniel Bell in Milwaukee which incited protests. Twenty years later it was revealed that the officer planted a knife on Bell. At the time, a local judge commented during a trial that he could scarcely believe abuse from the Milwaukee police department – when African Americans in attendance scoffed at his statement, he brought them to the front of the court room and cited them with contempt of court (Dougherty, 2004).

Police departments worked to oppose civil rights protesters. During America's Civil Rights movement, as African American activists and their allies argued for civic equality, police departments sprayed them with fire hoses. Officers released dogs on peaceful protesters and passers-by alike. Police jailed children and abused civil rights icons like Martin Luther King Jr. (Andrews & Gaby, 2015). National media shared images of these iconic protests and abuses, and they spread across the country. Police disparaged and attacked peaceful African American protesters who were in pursuit of civil rights. Southern police departments became emblematic of racial conflict in the United States (Spratt, 2008; Rafail et al., 2012; Corrigan, 2017). In the same period, Malcolm X consistently argued against police brutality against dark skinned people worldwide (Corrigan, 2017).

In 2014, police officers in New York City choked Eric Garner to death. The officers approached Garner and accosted him over an accusation of selling loose cigarettes. Garner countered that he had not been doing anything illegal and that this was not the first time that he had been harassed by the officers. Officers tried to handcuff Garner –

when he resisted arrest, one officer began to choke him. Officers proceeded to wrestle Garner to the ground as he groaned that he could not breathe. Seeing that Garner had become unresponsive, the officers called him an ambulance. Officials pronounced Garner dead an hour later (Newman, 2014).

That same year, police officer Darren Wilson shot Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. The shooting happened after Wilson received a report of a theft where the suspect seemingly matched Brown's description. As their interaction turned into a struggle, Wilson shot the unarmed Brown. He claimed a fear for his life and was later found to be acting within department policy that governed his actions. Brown's body laid in the street for four hours before an ambulance arrived to take it away. These events, among others, acted as a spark that lit contemporary protests of police violence against African Americans around the United States (Bosman & Goldstein, 2014). Brown's death, the events surrounding it, and the minutiae of the city's prosecution against Darren Wilson himself, were broadcast internationally.

In 2020, a police officer knelt on George Floyd's neck in Minneapolis, Minnesota until he was killed while three other officers observed. George Floyd's death was caught on camera and sparked protests, demonstrations, and riots across the United States (The New York Times, 2020). Like protests of police racism before it, this moment saw calls for the radical restructuring of policing in the United States. Some activists went so far as to call for the abolition of policing itself, arguing that racial inequity was so fundamental to policing in the United States that any reform could not go far enough. From some perspectives there is seemingly little new about today's interactions between police and African Americans. There is an uninterrupted line of policing contributing to and

maintaining racial stratification in the United States. Today's police brutality resembles racialized brutality of the past and it can appear that today's policing is not much different than policing two hundred years ago, at least in terms of race relations. Marlese Durr (2015) argues as much, writing:

“Some historians assert that the transition from slave patrols to publicly funded police departments was smooth in the South and North, while others regard slave patrols as the first formally recognized undertaking of policing in America...Policing became salient as large numbers of immigrants and African Americans migrated to Northern industrial cities from the South during the Great Migration...Within American cities, African Americans continued to face organized violence at the hands of the police...Today, a more delicately obscure adaptation of the slave patrols, instituted by municipal governments has introduced aggressive measures such as Stop and Frisk, Racial Profiling, or Driving While Black, but most important is the ‘Speak When I Tell You Law’...the time when you realize your social position and location in society comes down to your skin color.”

Lipsky (1980) argues that public administration should focus in on the day-to-day activities of bureaucrats and how their clients understand them to be, and his implications are clear: Sometimes, the policy that citizens understand in their day-to-day interactions with government officials is the only policy that really matters for what government is. The most important characteristics of government are not so much how policy is written or how policy was supposed to be implemented. Instead, government is best understood as what people experience during their interactions with people who implement policy. As people interact – or do not interact – with government, they come to form an impression of government. For African Americans, interactions over the history of the United States may form a strong impression and influence expectations for current and future interactions.

Data and Methods

Scholarly literature indicates that policing's history may be important for how people understand police today. That history can seem to create an uninterrupted line of racial stratification from policing in a way that creates illegitimacy. This chapter includes two sets of empirical observations, an extended case method analysis and narrative interviews, to further demonstrate support for the proposition that policing's history matters for African Americans today in a way that contributes to police illegitimacy. This section describes the methods used to gather those observations.

Extended Case Method

I take an extended case method approach to analyze police reform in the observed community I give the pseudonym Wellsville, appropriate for the way that data was gathered. I observed reform processes from a distance on a regular basis, and extended case methods are appropriate for data generated through such a process. To observe police reform in Wellsville I attended recorded community and city council meetings or watched their archived videos, talked with activists, went on a police ride along, read news, read freedom of information releases that included internal department communications and training materials, contracted with the Wellsville police department for statistical analyses, and generally engaged with ongoing policing issues in the Wellsville police department in an ongoing way beginning near the end of 2017. Many of these sources cannot be directly cited as to do so would reveal identifying information about the community in which the research occurred and defeat the purpose of assigning a pseudonym.

Extended case methods apply participant observation in a case to connect it to a more general theory (Burawoy, 1998) – by examining individual instances in an overall larger case, we can see how those instances are “constitutive of the processes studied” (Tavory & Timmermans, 2009, p. 246), in this case policing reform around race. The extended case method is reflexive and subjective in that it looks back on a researcher’s overall experiences with the case. Tavory and Timmermans (2009) characterize the extended case method as an ethnographical methodology in contrast to grounded theory methods: Whereas grounded theory methods aim to construct theory through an intentional and constant gathering of data, theory creation, and hypothesis testing, extended case methods rely directly on researcher’s overall experiences to create theories.

No method is objective, but if placed on a scale from constructed directly from data and constructed directly from experience, grounded theory methods and extended case methods would fall on polar opposite ends. Extended case methods allow for a deep and complex understanding of observed reform in the Wellsville police department to be articulated as it was observed rather than limiting the researcher’s observations to a contrived data and theory organization process. One downside to the extended case method is that it may not be as efficient for building theory as grounded theory methods (Charmaz, 2014), but in the case of this research inefficiency does not seem to have served as a limitation.

I used triangulation from multiple sources as well as long-term engagement to lessen inaccuracies resulting from such subjective methods. Drawing on multiple sources in this way, called triangulation, helps increase the quality and validity of the project. I present my findings in the form of narrative as a means of conveying information (Tavory &

Timmermans, 2003; Riessman, 2003), describing several events that created the overall process of police reform in Wellsville.

Interview Methods

In addition to literature and the policing reform case, I present several sections from interviews. I gathered interview data in the course of an exploratory project on policing. Sampling strategies consisted of interviewing those who filled geographic variation in either Wellsville or another city in the same state. I also knew some participants prior to their interviews. This sort of convenience sampling might bias the results of interviews but is sufficient to demonstrate that policing's history can enter individual's interpretations today. Some participants recommended other participants and the researcher relied on some participants known prior to research – this kind of snowball sampling might also bias responses, but nevertheless does not preclude support for the chapter's proposition that history is important for police legitimacy. Table 1 shows descriptive characteristics for those interviewed. All participants identified as African American for a total of 20 participants.

Table 1 Qualitative Sample Descriptive Characteristics

Pseudonym	Age	Sex	Race
Alice	30	Female	African American
Angela	40	Female	African American
Clara	26	Female	African American
Corey	24	Male	African American
Caleb	28	Male	African American
Daniel	37	Male	African American
David	29	Male	African American
Delila	37	Female	African American
Hawthorne	24	Non-Binary	African American
Jasmine	34	Female	African American
Kyle	62	Male	African American
Kassie	27	Female	African American
Lucy	52	Female	African American
Max	64	Male	African American
Michael	27	Male	African American
Malik	47	Male	African American
Paula	33	Female	African American
Theodore	47	Male	African American
Tonya	56	Female	African American
Yvette	49	Female	African American

The interviews were conducted in 2019 and were of an average length of about half an hour. Interviews were semi-structural and approached with constructivist sentiments (Patton, 1990; Roulston, 2010), in that interviews started with a list of questions but were open to probing for additional information. Interviews were transcribed verbatim but are modified during presentation for readability while still preserving participants' voices. When interview segments would be prohibitively long to display, ellipsis (...) indicate omitted content as is the case for the entire research text. Line numbers are presented in the order that they appear in this paper. Dashes from one speaker to another (-) indicate crosstalk. I assign pseudonyms to protect participant's privacy. These are standard data presentation and analysis procedures in qualitative research (Atkinson & Heritage, 1999)

Findings

Empirical Observations of Police Reform

I observed an empirical case of police reform in a medium sized midwestern community from 2017 to 2020. This included conversations with a local activist leader, city officials, and police officers. I attended several city council meetings and watched some archived meetings. Local activists had made freedom of information requests from the city in the past, resulting in hundreds of pages of police department internal documents, internal communications, training materials, and policy materials for public viewing. Those activists also made their own internal organizational documents available to the public.

There is a race-focused activist group working in Wellsville that advocates against racial inequity in government. They are influential in Wellsville's local government – a conversation with the group's leader indicates that she directly communicates with city elected and appointed officials over text message, telephone calls, and emails on a regular basis. They have worked in policy areas of education and policing to advocate for an end to racial inequity and white supremacy in government. The group frequently starts conversations about inequity in policing in Wellsville.

In 2015 the city created a community policing unit in targeted neighborhoods after a successful pilot. Activists supported the new initiative. Examinations of internal evaluations of the impact of the community policing unit showed decreased crime and improved satisfaction with the police in targeted neighborhoods. The same measures saw no improvements in neighborhoods in which there was no community policing unit. This evaluation proved sufficient for some to deem the new unit a success. Activists, the mayor, and the city council expressed satisfaction with the community policing unit, but

patrol officers and the police chief expressed some dissatisfaction with the loss of resources from other areas of the department. Officers also expressed that they were not always confident in the wisdom of the community policing unit's priorities.

After the community policing unit was deemed effective and popular, "Wellsville's" mayor and council tasked the police department with moving away from a community policing unit and enacting a community policing work model for the entire "Wellsville" police department. However, the lieutenant in charge of writing the plan for a full transition did not seem to support the new policy. His lack of support was reflected in the final plan. The plan that the lieutenant ultimately produced seemed to address very few concerns about police racial inequity in the United States, which activists in the community often cited. Instead, the report was largely concerned with officers' themselves and argued that community policing could not be implemented without improving officers' qualities of life and work. The city council, mayor, and local activists found the report to be underwhelming.

The local activist group responded to the community policing report by releasing their own policy brief. In that report they laid forth their vision for community policing, including historically informed principles of trust, legitimacy, community priorities, community governance, officer well-being, and a commitment to inclusion. The report argued that policing in the United States has never fulfilled community policing values because of a focus on suppression against the powerless, in particular African Americans. The report stated:

"The path to community-oriented policing in the United States has been littered with obstacles. While community policing in the United Kingdom became synonymous with their unarmed officers, policing in the U.S.

followed a path of militaristic force for several reasons: Repression of slaves, repression of slave revolts, fear of social change and disorder, repression of the urban poor and immigrants, and enforcing racial conflict.”

This case suggests the importance of history for policing’s legitimacy. The activist group in Wellsville framed its understanding of policing and community policing around history. They examined how community policing failed to develop in the United States in the way that it did in other nations because of particular historical issues of slavery and racism. They argue that the unique context of the United States, in particular the presence of slavery and racism, structured policing away from a more communal role and towards a more suppressive role.

One case does not justify a theory itself, even when it comports with scholarly thinking, but this case does provide some evidence that policing’s history exists as a delegitimizing force among some of its constituents. To further demonstrate the phenomenon, in the following section I show several interviews highlighting the importance of policing’s history among African Americans today.

Interview Results

Of the 20 people interviewed, 25% mentioned policing’s history. One participant, Delila, offered this description of the racial history of policing. She connected today’s policing directly to a historical pattern:

1. Interviewer: What do you think (pause) why do you think Black communities
2. are overpoliced today?
3. Delila: Um because of the history of why the police were formed in the first
4. place. The institution of the police was to protect white people from slaves.
5. After you know um the period, the time of slavery, there was a moral panic
6. amongst whites that these slaves wanted revenge. There was really just a kind
7. of fear that, they are going to do to us what we’ve been doing to them. They
8. were kidnapped, and brought over to this country, and forced to perform
9. manual labor, and all the other atrocities that happened during that period of
10. time so amongst white people after slavery was this (pause) fear-

11. Interviewer: -mm-hmm-
12. Delila: -and as a result of that fear, policing was instituted in order to protect
13. white people from slaves, period. So the very institution and foundation of
14. policing started from the idea of keeping white people safe from Blacks,
15. period. So as a result of that, there are still um towns in this country um,
16. called, um-
17. Interviewer: -sundown towns-
18. Delila: -sundown towns, exactly. So there's a reason for that right?

Delila's view of policing is informed by its racist history. She pointed to white's fear of African Americans, especially in post-Civil War America, as the driving force for the creation of police departments. Policing's history has inequitable foundations, inequity continued over time as officers enforced segregation and other laws, and Delila saw today's policing as in line with that past.

Another interview participant, Michael, shared how the racist history of policing colors his perceptions of the police:

19. Interviewer: So I'm just starting with a real basic question um what do you
20. think about the police overall?
21. Michael: What do I think about the police overall? That is a (pause) very very
22. very very very, sorry, very complex question...but overall I honestly have a
23. strong distaste for the police-
24. Interviewer: -mm-hmm-
25. Michael: -and for policing. The reason being is because of the deeply rooted
26. racist history of police.
27. Interviewer: Yeah.
28. Michael: Police. People don't understand that like the, the foundational roots
29. of that were you know catching slaves and, you know (laughter), it was rooted
30. in slavery and racism-
31. Interviewer: -yeah-
32. Michael: and then moving from that it was still discriminatory.

Michael's perspective matches with this research's theoretical framework: that the racist history of policing influences African American's current attitudes towards the police and must be dealt with in some way to policing's legitimacy. Michael is versed in the racist history of policing, beginning in slavery in colonial America and moving into modern

times. Michael recognizes the racist history of policing, sees a long uninterrupted line of inequity in policing, and understands today's policing to be in line with the past.

At the end of her interview, Lucy offered an explanation of her understanding of how today's policing fits in line with the racial history of policing, saying:

33. Interviewer: Are there any questions you think I should have asked you about
34. Black and white cops?
35. Lucy: Hmm. (pause) I guess maybe how they see their role in communities
36. and if that has changed over time. Or, is it harkening back to kind of the early
37. days of policing? Which you know I've started to do more research on like the
38. whole policing structure -
39. Interviewer: -mm-hmm-
40. Lucy: -and you know looking at it, back to slavery-
41. Interviewer: -mm-hmm-
42. Lucy: and these, um what are they called, slave militias. And you know
43. protecting white people. And someone's gonna go after Nat Turner for
44. rebelling against slavery, saying we're going to make sure no one else gets
45. killed. And you know that there has always been this kind of fear of Black and
46. brown people, and how yet and still we pay taxes in order to be protected.

Through her research and her education, Lucy began to come to an understanding of the role of race in policing's history. She saw slave patrols in policing's history, that police protected whites against their fears of revolting slaves (demonstrated through Nat Turner, who rebelled with other slaves against Virginian slaveowners), and that police departments overpoliced and continue to over police African Americans. As Lucy became more educated, she became more in tune with the racist history of policing and saw it continuing in today's policing.

One way that African Americans may come to negative attitudes through the racial history of policing is through parental socialization. Not all police feedback effects need to include multiple generations of families. Corey explained as much, stating:

47. Interviewer: I hear the 70s and 80s even like the late 60s, we think stuff is bad
48. now-
49. Corey: -without a doubt-
50. Interviewer: -it was worse because there wasn't even any real control over

51. officers at all.
52. Corey: Yeah and my so my parents grew up they both went to the University
53. of Kansas-
54. Interviewer: -mm-hmm-
55. Corey: - and uh it was ah very, there was a lot of activism going on in
56. Lawrence-
57. Interviewer: -yeah, yeah-
58. Corey: -they were always having sit ins, interacting with police I think that
59. kind of socialized them to, I don't want to say a negative, but a cautious
60. experience around the police officers.

Corey tried to take an even approach to police interactions but could not deny that he noticed police officers policing Blacks more heavily than whites. Corey's attitudes seemed to be influenced by his own socialization into policing in the United States, which itself was informed by his parents' experiences. As African Americans become socialized into today's inequitable policing through family, they may make connections between current policing and the past's policing. There are few positive connections to make.

Responding to a question about why an African American would become a police officer, Kassie referenced history's role:

61. Kassie: I don't know if it's why they would become police, I think it's more
62. of a why they should become police. You have a lot of people, a lot of Black
63. people especially in Black communities, we want to feel protected. Based on
64. America's history, and based on what's happened especially in the news, I
65. think Black people should because we're in a situation where we need to see
66. people like us who understand what we've gone through. It's uncomfortable
67. to have a white person policing, especially with the history of America
68. policing Black communities...but due to the history of this country I
69. understand why African Americans are a little bit more afraid and wouldn't
70. call the police.

Kassie pointed out that many African Americans would feel unsafe in the presence of police officers because of a history of police racial discrimination. While her outlook for representation in policing was not optimistic, Kassie believed that shared racial identity could provide increased feelings of safety during interactions with officers because of a

shared understanding of patterned police inequity. Kassie also understood why African Americans may not cooperate with the police or legal justice system: because they are skeptical that their participation could end badly or could support inequity.

Conclusion

Generally, this chapter supports the proposition that policing's racist history is important for policing's legitimacy today. Policing's history seems long and uninterrupted and influences how African Americans see the police. Chapter One highlighted the importance of police legitimacy for effective operations. When police are seen as legitimate, they have an easier time securing voluntary compliance and a more lawful population. If policing's history is standing in between policing and legitimacy among African Americans, it would be in policing's best interest to remove that barrier. Chapter Four will explain an experiment designed to test one intervention to improve policing's legitimacy, apologizing for policing's history.

As the following chapter will discuss, numerous governments have apologized for historical atrocities, but apologia has not been broadly attempted as a strategy to reduce police illegitimacy arising from history. It will be especially important to consider apologia as a strategy for police legitimacy. Apologia is a solution designed for historical atrocity, and by considering it as a strategy for police legitimacy this research places policing's history within the realm of historical atrocity.

CHAPTER THREE: APOLOGIA

This chapter investigates apologia and reconciliatory apologia, as well as community policing. Apologia is the scholarly study and practice of giving apologies. Reconciliatory apologia seeks to apologize to heal relationships, and it is this second sort of apology this research is most interested in. A reconciliatory apology directly addresses policing's history in a way that no other approach does by understanding policing's history as atrocity. Apologizing for policing's history has potential to improve policing's legitimacy today but as this chapter will discuss, such a strategy also could have drawbacks. Apologia is one form that reconciliation from government can take. The experiment in this research tests reconciliatory apologia as a supplement for community policing to improve policing's legitimacy among African Americans.

Potential Benefits of Apologia for Policing's History

Police organizations may wish to improve their legitimacy by apologizing for policing's history, especially given today's protests and activism against police (Blessett, 2017; Moore, 2018). This approach may be able to improve long-conflictual relationships between police and African Americans. While financial reparation has been one suggested avenue for racial reconciliation in the United States, it may be insufficient: "Financial reparation, even though it at least acknowledges that evil happened, may fall too short for many...because evil is relational, relational expiation seems clearly preferable" (Balfour et al., 2020, p. 167-168). Balfour and colleagues stop short of explicitly suggesting apologia, but such an approach is clearly within the purview of their relational expiation.

A case study by Androff (2012) shows that apologizing for historical police racial discrimination can bring validation and catharsis to victims. In Greensboro North

Carolina, victims of historical police racism sought to reconcile with government and other perpetrators. In 1979 Greensboro a protest against the Klu Klux Klan turned violent and several protesters were shot by Klu Klux Klan members in attendance. Despite having knowledge of the protest and a suspicion that the protest might turn violent, police declined to monitor the events. Police were found to be jointly liable with the Klu Klux Klan for the shootings because of negligence, in 1985. While a guilty verdict helped assuage resident's negative feelings towards the department, it did not totally relieve them. Greensboro residents independently formed the Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2004. Without apologies in addition to the legal consequences, the Commission believed that justice could not be entirely reached. They released their final report of their perspective on the shooting and subsequent trials in 2006. Among their recommendations was that:

“The City should formally recognize that the events of Nov. 3, 1979, provided a tragic, but important occasion in our city's history... Individuals who were responsible for any part of the tragedy of Nov. 3, 1979, should reflect on their role and apologize – publicly and/or privately – to those harmed” (Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2006).

Androff (2010; 2012) notes that local government chose not to participate in the Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a crucial shortcoming of the case for a theory seeking reconciliation for policing's history.

In 2019 North Carolina, Wake County Sheriff Gerald Baker apologized to victim Lynn Council for a 1952 attempted lynching by the department. Two county police officers attempted to lynch him after he would not confess to a robbery that he did not commit, or as Council puts it, “for no reason.” Sheriff Baker apologized on behalf of the department, gave Council the key to the sheriff's department, and took down a picture of

the sheriff in charge of the department during the event from a memorial. Both Council and his family expressed gratitude (Owens, 2019). In a similar event in LeGrange, Georgia, a police chief apologized for allowing a 16-year-old in their custody to be lynched by an angry mob eight decades after the event occurred (Harris, 2017). These apologies in police departments appear to be individualized, with departments responding to individuals rather than classes or specific groups. The effects of a broader apology are unclear from these cases.

The United States Department of Justice released a report in 2012 titled “Racial Reconciliation, Truth Telling, and Police Legitimacy” (Mentel, 2012). Originating from within the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) division of the Department of Justice, the report highlights that there are deep feelings of animosity in African American communities towards the police. The report argued that existing strategies for racial reconciliation were “insufficient in overcoming the problems that are a legacy of the 300 years of racial history in this country” (Mentel, 2012, p. vi). The report goes on to describe two narratives surrounding policing. In one, African Americans believe that police are entirely corrupt and racially motivated. In the other, police officers believe that Black communities are completely responsible for a descent into lawlessness. Because police departments and African Americans believe their narratives so strongly, only reasoned and thoughtful interventions will be able to break relational gridlock. Apologizing may be one such intervention.

O’Brien and colleagues (2020) found that reconciliatory gestures, a designator under which an apology could fall, provided legitimacy improvements in New York City when implemented with community policing reform. That research examined citizens’ police

legitimacy perceptions after community policing initiatives and after officers began to reach out to individual citizens to improve trust. Their study suffers a lack of geographic diversity, in that it took place in New York City which is unique and likely cannot reliably generalize to other contexts. It also differs from this research in that, while apologizing can reasonably be described as a reconciliatory gesture, the measurement used in their study was a vague measure of awareness of officers “reaching out.”

There are certainly myriad examples of apologies for grave historical wrongdoings outside of policing. Bill Clinton apologized for the internment of Japanese people and property during World War II. Clinton also apologized for unethical research practices used on African Americans in Tuskegee, and The United States Congress apologized for overthrowing the native government of Hawaii for colonization. Outside of the United States, the United Kingdom has apologized for its role in the Atlantic slave trade, the Australian government apologized for the kidnapping and re-education of native aboriginal children, and the Japanese government apologized for the murder of civilians as well as forcing captured prisoners into prostitution during World War II (Blatz et al., 2009).

While addressing and apologizing for the racist history of policing may not be enough to improve police legitimacy broadly, there is good reason to believe that such an apology is a first step to broader social and political reconciliation (Nytagodienn & Neal, 2004). At the same time, there are reasons why an apologetic strategy may not be effective.

Disadvantages of Apologia for Policing’s History

This section discusses some of the disadvantages of apologia. While apologia for policing's history shows promise, it does not come without costs. In 2000, 79% of African Americans supported apologies for slavery while only 30% of whites supported the same, denoting a disparity in the willingness to apologize for racist history (Dawson, 2004). Whites have largely not supported apologia for racist history in the United States in a way that at times has created political conflict and not all African Americans have been supportive of racial apologies – an approach that does nothing for the aggrieved while aggravating others seems to be an irrational approach to legitimacy in government.

States have attempted to apologize for racist history in the United States. In 2007 the state of Virginia apologized for its role in slavery, writing in policy that:

“Whereas, despite the ‘self-evident’ character of fundamental principles, the moral standards of liberty and equality have been transgressed during much of Virginia's and America's history... slavery, having been sanctioned and perpetuated through the laws of Virginia and the United States, ranks as the most horrendous of all depredations of human rights and violations of our founding ideals ... resolved by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, that the General Assembly hereby acknowledge with profound regret the involuntary servitude of Africans” (V.J.R 728).

Whites in the United States have long been reticent to apologize for slavery, and the fallout from the Virginia apology reflected this fact (Glaser & Ryan, 2013). Virginia's apology made national news as the first state apology for slavery. Following the passage of the law, several other states put forth similar laws. Of note, several of the passed state laws contained disclaimers that apologies were not to be interpreted to support compensatory measures (Blatz & Ross, 2009; Davis, 2014). Some Virginia politicians vocally opposed the apology as unnecessary (Davis, 2014). Others criticized the law by arguing that it provided only an illusion of reconciliation given that it disallowed

financial reparations and expressed an interest in reconciliation without setting forth the steps to reach it (Davis, 2012).

The Virginia apology generated pushback from those who were more generally in favor of racial reconciliation and from those who were against it. A similar event took place in the United States national legislature. In 2008 the United States House of Representatives took up a bill (U.S H.R. 194) considering apologizing for slavery, among other racial and ethnic historical atrocities. The bill was popular in the House and was passed to the Senate. The United States Senate, however, modified the bill as the result of political conflict and because of the possibility that apologizing could be interpreted as accepting responsibility and lead to legal liability in international courts (Davis, 2014). The resulting bill displeased former advocates who saw the bill as compromised and opponents who saw the bill as capitulating to others' interests. Apologies for historical racism can generate pushback and contemporary racial conflict, and not only from those who oppose racial equity.

Apologies may be ineffective because of the link between managerial police chief apologizers and street-level officers. In 2016 Terrence Cunningham, the president of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), encouraged other chiefs of police to apologize for policing's historical mistreatment of African Americans (Kaleem, 2016). In a speech at a national policing conference, Chief Cunningham argued that police officers had become a tool of racial repression in the United States through their law enforcement role. He said that white officers may not identify with this sentiment, but that they must come to understand it. Cunningham called departments to action, saying that "for our part, the first step in this process is for law enforcement...to acknowledge and apologize

for the actions of the past and the role that our profession has played in society's historical mistreatment of communities of color" (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2016). However, Cunningham's apology was not taken up by chiefs more broadly. If Cunningham's apology were the beginning of a process, it does not appear that the process moved very far forward (Pegues, 2017). ICAP also cannot claim to espouse individual members' views and certainly cannot claim to speak for the patrol officers with whom citizens have most of their police interactions (Robinson & Ramsay, 2017).

Trying to mitigate apologies' cost might minimize their effect. For example, in 2009, Barack Obama apologized for the systematic violence that the American government perpetrated against Native Americans. He buried the apology so deeply in a defense appropriation request that Native American leaders felt as if no apology had been made at all (Stone, 2012). A covert apology may be as good as or worse than no apology at all. While apologies for the racist history of policing may be effective to improve African Americans' attitudes towards the police, they certainly need not be and may in fact worsen attitudes beyond their existing level. Racial inequity runs deep in policing and has for a long time – for an apology to be effective it would have to be very powerful (Benson, 2016).

Examining legislative apologies for slavery, Angelique Davis (2012, p. 42) argues that:

"Apologies...appear to promote racial healing and reconciliation [but] they actually promulgate white supremacy by covertly thwarting reparations claims or other racial justice efforts for Blacks while simultaneously providing the illusion of substantive racial progress."

It may be that apologia for the racist history of policing would not provide noticeable attitudinal improvements for reasons Davis (2012) suggests. Ultimately, an apology is only words. It need not signal any intention for future action, it does not undue the damage done over the course of history, and it need not set a path forward for equity.

Reconciliatory Apologia

This research will test the effects of a reconciliatory apology for the racist history of policing compared to community policing. The study of reconciliatory apologies and their effectiveness falls under the research umbrella of apologia: the study of communicating responses to charges of wrongdoing. Apologia has a history in communication research (Ware & Linkugel, 1973), and I turn to that discipline to better understand the concept. Apologia research today is not only the study of apologizing – it also includes the more general study of responding to charges of wrongdoing. This research is interested in understanding apologia but will quickly turn to the subdiscipline of apologia most concerned with relational reconciliation, reconciliatory apologia.

Some of the oldest apologia appears in theological and philosophical texts as responses to criticism, used to determine the innocence or guilt of an accused wrongdoer (Downey, 1993). More modern apologia research tends to focus on apology as a face-saving or image-maintenance strategy. In that vein of apologia research, apologies themselves are not strictly necessary – instead, those responding to criticism might instead outright deny wrongdoing (Gold, 1978), levy charges of conspiracy against accusers (Downey, 1993), deflect blame to another party (Hood, 2010), downplay any harm that happened (Prasch, 2015), prioritize their good intent over bad outcomes

(Hatch, 2015), or use rhetorical tricks to preserve their image. The reconciliatory branch of apologia focuses in on how apologies can be used to achieve relational healing.

Reconciliation apologia typically considers communications where wrongdoing cannot be denied and face cannot be saved with rhetoric – cases where evidence of wrongdoing is so great or where audiences have grown so cynical that any communication beyond accepting responsibility will be met with cynicism (Koesten & Rowland, 2004). Reconciliation apologia seems appropriate for the racist history of policing as that history has been known and extremely consequential, which is to say it is a case where face may not be savable. In that situation, a reconciliatory apology may be the only sort of apologia that can be met with a positive response.

Reconciliation approaches to apologia may hold the key to an effective police apology. The reconciliation subgenre of apologia is small but there are researchers who take a reconciliatory approach seriously and have identified effective reconciliatory apologia components. Some scholars question apologia's ability to lead to racial reconciliation. Such was the case for Holling et al. (2014), who studied 24 public apologies over racial insensitivity. They found that in apologizing for public racist utterances, many who apologized tended to re-enforce their racist views during their apologies. Their paper does not present much hope for racial reconciliation, but they do recommend that reconciliatory apologies will admit that wrongdoing occurred, will admit that the actions were important, will avoid denial, will avoid minimizing the harm that was caused, and will frame the apology to be about what the apologizer did rather than the victim's response to it. Holling et al. (2014) provides opportunities to avoid typical racial apologia mistakes.

In a 2006 article, Hatch (2006) points to an apology for the international slave trade conference in Benin, West Africa as a model of effective apologia. Here, a United States congressman became so moved by the willingness of people to apologize for their nations' roles in the international slave trade that he introduced a bill in the U.S. House to apologize for slavery upon his return home. The bill created substantial political conflict in the United States, and Hatch (2006) argues that it was because of the context of the apologies. Whereas the Benin apologies were heartfelt and given to an audience largely in support of reconciliation, the analogous apology in the United States Congress became a conflictual process with a partially hostile audience. In particular, as a result of congressional processes of legislative amendment, the final apology legislation emphasized a present commitment to racial equality over past wrongdoing, denied legal liability, and largely avoided direct responsibility for history. Hatch (2006) concludes by offering that an effective reconciliatory apology will not work if it tries to save face through denial or emphasizing a speaker's positive qualities but will instead be more likely to work if it aims to lead to relational healing and emotional catharsis. He also points out that effective reconciliatory apologies are tragicomic – a portmanteau of tragic and comic – in that they both juxtapose good and evil and demonstrate the connectedness of all humans.

Apologia research has its roots in philosophical but especially theological thought. With that in mind, Koesten and Rowland (2004) take a theological approach to reconciliatory apologia. They argued that, based in Jewish traditions of atonement surrounding the holiday Yom Kippur, that an effective reconciliatory apology would seek forgiveness, demonstrate strong feelings of guilt, demonstrate knowledge of the

wrongness of the action in need of apology, and express a desire for a better future. These steps must be taken publicly, and largely correspond to Jewish atonement steps during the Yom Kippur holiday. Overall this research highlights that effective reconciliatory apologies should avoid denial and admit wrongdoing occurred while juxtaposing good with the actions that occurred, demonstrating guilt, and hoping for a better future.

Community Policing and Apologia as Supplement

Beyond apologies, community policing also shows promise for improving police legitimacy but does not directly address policing's history. Because community policing does not address history it is a prime candidate for supplementing with apologia.

Community policing has been one suggested policy that could improve relationships between police and African Americans: It could fulfill many individual African Americans' and their communities' concerns about policing, without explicitly addressing race. Community policing is a more complex way of governing than traditional policing, in that it prioritizes police action towards citizen concerns and does so through ties with community residents. It requires more thoughtful interactions and more careful considerations of what citizens want but it has been found to associate with improved attitudes towards police generally and towards specific police programs (Schaefer, et al., 2003).

Under community policing, police officers, citizens, and community groups work together to co-produce lawfulness in the community and prioritize police resources to locally identified concerns (Reisig & Giacomazzi, 1998; Piquero et al., 2001). By working with citizens, officers create conditions in which the community is comfortable sharing information about crime. Community police officers can solicit citizen

participation in policing and prioritize problems that community members care about in order to demonstrate effectiveness. Citizens can become more satisfied with policing through the process of building relationships to handle community concerns and complaints (Schaible et al., 2012). Community policing may also be able to provide policing services to citizens in a way that is faster, more responsive, and more personalized to local concerns than other policing models (Boettke et al., 2016). Some research that suggests community policing works to reduce residents' fears of crime, though none focus on African Americans (Weisburd & Eck, 2004; Reisig & Parks, 2004).

Government leaders may be especially interested in improving police legitimacy in disorganized neighborhoods, where community policing may be most effective (Choi & Choi, 2012). Community policing in part represents a police department's ability to interact effectively with its environment. Departments that engage their environment with community policing are able to improve arrest rates and mitigate external constraints on departments' actions (Nicholson-Crotty & O'Toole Jr., 2004).

Hypothesis

Policy feedback research can consider the intergenerational effect that policy administration can have on attitudes towards the government (Niemi & Jennings, 1991; Johnson and Dawes, 2016; Sharrow et al., 2018; Bruch & Soss, 2018) with some research indicating that African Americans' contemporary attitudes towards the police are informed by centuries of inequitable policing (Howell et al., 2004; Campbell, 2009; Schuler, 2012; Hadden et al., 2016; Maltby, 2017; Teague 2018; Hamilton & Foote, 2018; Cavanagh & Cauffman, 2019).

Other research (Nytagodienn & Neal, 2004; Blatz et al., 2009; Androff, 2012; Hope & Jagers, 2014; Blessett, 2017; Moore, 2018; Adams & Balfour, 2020; Bowen & Kisida, 2020) indicates that apologizing for inequitable history may be able to create some attitudinal changes that improve police legitimacy, but that approach also comes with potential drawbacks and roadblocks (Dawson, 2004; Stone, 2012; Davis, 2014; Robinson & Ramsay, 2017).

Community policing is a popular policy that might be able to improve police legitimacy (Reisig & Giacomazzi, 1998; Weisburd & Eck, 2004; Reisig & Parks, 2004; Schaible et al., 2012; Boettke et al., 2016), crucial for police operations, but does not address policing's history specifically. I will test apologia for policing's history as a supplement for community policing to address the second approach's shortcoming, leading to the following hypothesis.

H1: African Americans faced with a police department apologizing for the racist history of policing while implementing community policing will see the department as more legitimate than those who are faced with community policing alone.

Conclusion

This chapter investigated apologia and its potential for addressing policing's history.

While apologia has been broadly attempted, it has found only limited practice in policing.

There are reasons to believe apologia could work to improve policing's legitimacy by addressing policing's history directly, focusing on relational components of policing, and providing victims with validation and catharsis. At the same time, apologies for racist history in the United States have generated broad political pushback in a way that may disincentivize apologies from elected officials. Apologies also need not lead to reconciliation, as they may not be sufficient to address the entire history of policing.

It is difficult to ignore apologia's potential because of its ability to uniquely address history, but it is also difficult to ignore its potential drawbacks. While apology alone may not be sufficient to improve policing's legitimacy, it might also serve as one crucial component of securing legitimacy. Reconciliatory apologia especially shows promise for addressing policing's history and the legitimacy deficit that flows from it. To understand how apologizing might work as a supplement to community policing, I performed an experiment. The next chapter describes the design and process of that experiment.

CHAPTER FOUR: EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN AND METHODS

This chapter details the experimental design used to better understand how police departments might respond to the racist history of policing with a supplemental apology. This research relies on a between-subjects experiment with random assignment to compare community policing policy by itself to community policing supplemented with an apology for the racist history of policing.

Chapter One provided background on the importance of improving African Americans' attitudes towards the police. Chapter Two detailed policy feedback theory to understand how past policy influences current attitudes and provided evidence of police policy feedback among African Americans. Chapter Three explored apologies in detail, examining apologia, reconciliatory apologia, and apologia as a supplement to community policing, while also presenting hypotheses for an experiment. Chapter Five will show experimental results from the survey experiment on Amazon's Mechanical Turk service. But for now and in this chapter, I discuss experimental rationale, experimental design, sample justification, and subgroup analyses.

Experimental Design

The experimental design was first informed by observing community policing reform and conducting interviews in "Wellsville," as discussed in Chapter Two. In that chapter, Wellsville referred to a real community in which data were gathered. In the experiment, Wellsville will be used as the name of a hypothetical community in a story. Observations and interviews in the real-world Wellsville informed that the racist history of policing is important to police legitimacy among African Americans and that reform that did not

address that history may be ineffective to improve policing's legitimacy. Scholarly literature supports these observations.

Apologizing for the racist history of policing might improve policing's legitimacy. Because community policing also has potential to address policing's legitimacy but might benefit from a supplement that directly addresses policing's history, I use community policing reform as a base condition to which I compare community policing reform with an apologetic supplement. Table 2 shows the design summary for the experiment. That table also shows the sample sizes obtained for the final experiment. The design is inspired by Benjamin (2017), who took a similar approach to presenting and analyzing experimental variation.

Table 2 Experimental Design Summary

Treatment Group	Introduction to Department	Racial History Prompt	Community Policing Reform	Apologize for Racial History	Hypothesis	Sample Size
1	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Comparison	699
2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	+	693
Total						1,392

The survey experiment takes the form of respondents reading one of two randomly assigned vignettes. The choice for one comparison and one treatment group arose from a process of balancing theoretical expectations, a desire for high statistical power, funding limitations, and expediency. The comparison choice creates limitations. This research can compare two groups for the effect of apology as a supplement for community policing, but in doing so precludes other theoretically and empirically interesting comparisons. Of note, all treatment groups received at least a promise of community policing reform, meaning this comparison cannot measure the independent effect of a promise of

community policing reform compared to no response or the independent effect of an apology without a promise of community policing.

Experimental methods require a consideration of sample size to understand if potential effects are statistically detectable. Without a sufficiently sized sample, small but real differences might not be statistically identifiable. I did a power analysis using an American National Election Study police feeling thermometer as reference data. When considering the 2016 ANES police feeling thermometer among African Americans (mean feeling thermometer baseline = 57.73, standard deviation = 28.12), with a statistical power of .8 and a type 1 error rate of .05, a sample of 400 respondents per treatment category could detect a mean feeling thermometer change of 4 points. The same considerations assuming a statistical power of .9 could detect a change of 4.5 points. With a statistical power of .9 and a type 1 error rate of .01, the experiment could detect a mean change of 5.5 points. I deemed this level of power sufficient, then overshot it to ensure power even in the case of smaller treatment effects. The power analysis provides some indication that any results (or lack thereof) cannot be attributed to sample size.

Each treatment group received an introduction to the Wellsville police department, based on the characteristics of the city in which reform was observed. Each treatment group also read a hypothetical communication from an activist at a city council meeting highlighting the racial history of policing and the distrust it creates among African Americans towards police today. The first treatment group then received a community policing response, which did not apologize for the racist history of policing. The second treatment group received the community policing treatment, but also read an apology for the racist history of policing.

I constructed the apologia treatment keeping in mind literature on effective reconciliatory apologia. From Holling and colleagues (2014), I ensure that the apology admits wrongdoing and avoids denial. From Hatch (2004) I ensure the apology is aimed at relational healing and juxtaposes goodness with the actions that occurred. From Koesten and Rowland (2004) I ensure the apology seeks forgiveness and hopes for a better future. The experimental vignettes are below:

(Introduction)

The Wellsville police department is in a Midwestern city with about 100,000 residents. The residents are about 82% white, 11% Black, and 7% something else. The Wellsville police department is a fairly typical police department: Police officers usually have either a high school or college education, officers make about \$45,000-\$75,000, and there are about 2.4 police officers per 1,000 people in the city.

(Racist History)

An activist made a statement at a Wellsville city council meeting after a police officer made a racially insensitive comment on video. She pointed out that police departments have a long history of poor relationships with African Americans. She said that in the United States, the earliest police departments were created to return runaway slaves and they later enforced Jim Crow segregation laws. More recently, police abused civil rights protesters including those with Martin Luther King Jr. These problems still linger between African American communities and police departments today.

(Community Policing Policy)

The Wellsville police chief responded with a prepared statement saying that he would like to start community policing. He would like officers to establish ongoing relationships with residents and community groups as well as create a community policing philosophy among all of his employees. He says that he will hire 35% more officers over the next five years, provide counselling services to officers, have officers visit children in schools, and increase community policing patrols in targeted neighborhoods. Additionally, he will include a community policing philosophy in the department's training, employee evaluation, and promotion processes. He plans to visit another police department in a nearby state with other officers to observe their community policing. The police chief believes the department can do this while maintaining high standards.

(Acknowledge and Apologize)

The Wellsville police chief also delivered a prepared statement apologizing for the racist history of policing in the United States. He said that police departments have been abusive to African Americans throughout America's history and that it has had serious consequences. He noted that this was often true even when the victims of abuse were good citizens. The chief did not deny that police were responsible for their problems with African American communities. He does not believe that his department will ever gain the trust of African Americans in Wellsville unless he acknowledges the racist history of policing and apologizes for it. He hopes that with enough time and healing that African Americans in Wellsville can forgive the police department and hopes that the police and African Americans can work together more.

The two groups were exposed to different vignette lengths, in that treatment group two reads an extra paragraph. This may bias causal identification in favor of an effect by making it impossible to disentangle the causal effects of the additional text and the content of that text (Alexander & Becker, 1978; Galesic & Bosnjack, 2009; Guo et al., 2016). However, within the overall context of vignette experiment research, the two vignettes are short (Stolte, 1994; Galesic & Bosnjack, 2009). Basnak and colleagues (2018) find that the length of surveys and treatments only influences data quality when surveys become very long and “researchers can assign dozens of tasks without substantial declines in response quality” (p. 112). That research provides a good indicator that different paragraph lengths will not bias accurate causal identification. Because the two vignettes are short, it seems unlikely that adding an extra paragraph of text to the treatment condition will substantially bias experimental findings.

Sample

I administered the survey on Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (MTurk), a convenience sample (Berinsky et al. 2012; Huff & Tingley 2015). Researchers can expect MTurk samples to skew younger and more educated than other samples, although they replicate well-known and credible experiments and respondents are as attentive to survey content as other

survey pools (Coppock, 2018). While convenience samples often suffice for true experiments such as this one (Stritch et al., 2017), it is worthwhile to explore best practice in research that uses MTurk to ensure that data is of the highest possible quality.

Amazon's MTurk staff claims over 200,000 active participants in the United States (Robinson et al., 2019). Of those, estimates for the proportion of African American respondents vary between 5.8% and 8.1% (Walter et al., 2019 Siegel & Navarro, 2019; Jeong et al., 2019). MTurk has been found to be more reliable than other online panels, especially when workers are experienced, there are checks to ensure participants are paying attention, and participants are not allowed to re-take surveys (Christenson & Glick, 2013; Paolacci & Chandler, 2014; Hauser & Schwarz, 2016; Kees et al., 2017a; Paas et al., 2018). MTurk has been used to effectively research subjects like political ideology (Clifford et al., 2015), organizational characteristics (Walter et al., 2019), game theory (Horton et al., 2011), and employment and demographic characteristics (Huff & Tingley, 2015).

There are downsides to MTurk. MTurk workers are younger, more educated, and less well-off than the general population of the United States (Christenson & Glick, 2013). If respondents on MTurk are aware of experimental qualifications, they might misrepresent themselves to appear to qualify for a survey that they do not actually qualify for to receive a survey reward (Wessling et al., 2017). MTurk participants might work through surveys hastily in a way that results in a weaker treatment someone who worked more slowly or take surveys multiple times using different accounts (Smith et al., 2016). These sorts of participants are referred to, respectively, as speeders and cheaters (Ford, 2017). Participants might also seek outside information in a way that would be prohibited in an

in-person laboratory experiment (Clifford & Jerit, 2016). These downsides are typical of many experimental panels and are not unique to MTurk – the service is as high of a quality as most credible convenience samples (Kees et al., 2017b).

Despite its pitfalls, this research uses MTurk because it is a sufficient sample for experimental research. It is still worthwhile to keep best practices for MTurk survey administration in mind, and to use them. The survey was only administered to African American respondents, as the focus of the study was their perceptions towards the police. MTurk does not allow for direct demographic specifications for respondents. Ensuring that only those qualified for the sample entered the experiment required ensuring that MTurk respondents did not have sufficient information to cheat demographic qualifications. Prior to assignment into a treatment group, respondents were taken to a Qualtrics survey page asking for various demographic information. If respondents did not indicate they were African American, they were removed from the survey without being assigned to a treatment group or entering other information. Respondents were not informed of demographic qualifications at any point during the survey process.

Responses were also limited to those who had completed more than 100 tasks on MTurk who have also had at least 85% of those tasks approved. Workers could not retake the survey and were checked to see if they were paying attention by implementing a common instructional manipulation check from Oppenheimer and colleagues instructing respondents not to respond to a question (2009; Peer et al., 2014; Hauser & Schwarz, 2016). Respondents failed if they responded to the manipulation check. I put the instructional manipulation check at the beginning of the survey after demographic questions but prior to treatment – if respondents did not pass it they were informed and

asked to complete it until they pass it. I do not drop respondents failing the instructional manipulation check until they have failed it three times because doing so prior to that might bias data in a way that may not contribute to significant data quality gains.

Independent Variables and Subgroup Analyses

In addition to randomly assigning participants into treatment conditions, the design also gathers several other independent variables. These variables allow for a check of balance between groups to ensure that randomization was successful, ensure that only those qualified to enter the survey will take it, and will allow for analyzing if the treatment had different effects on different kinds of people. Independent variables are education, gender, partisanship, political ideology, age, income, and linked fate. Coding is in the dissertation's appendix.

Comparing those at one value of an independent variable to those at a different value of that variable allows checking for what scholars sometimes call subgroup effects. Expected differences in treatment outcomes for different types of people warrant discussion and include variation among three variables: Linked fate, education, and gender. I expect that treatment effects could be different for those who have different measurements for those characteristics.

Linked fate is a measurement in race and ethnic politics research, based on the work of Michael Dawson (1994). In his book Dawson (1994) discusses African Americans' nearly consistent political behavior. Because race stratifies American politics, Dawson writes that many African Americans behave politically with race in mind. Many African Americans may have a conservative ideology and not identify with the Democratic party, but still tend to vote for the Democratic party. The ideological and partisan, and

behavioral, mismatch arises because by voting for the Democratic candidate African Americans have a greater chance of having their political voices considered. Because conservative African Americans' policy preferences will not be met until they have greater political voice than they currently have, African Americans tend to band together politically by voting for parties that are more likely to provide them with more opportunities to influence policy. Linked fate is usually measured either using a four-point frequency scale or a five-point Likert scale (Simien, 2005; Stout et al., 2015). I use the four-point frequency scale as it is the more common contemporary approach.

African Americans have various levels of linked fate, with some feeling more politically connected to their race and some feeling a weaker connection. I expect that respondents with lower levels will be less attitudinally moved by apologies for the racial history of policing than those with high levels, given the lesser role that racial stratification plays in those respondents' political behavior.

There may be differences in experimental results based on other demographic characteristics. Those with more education may be able to better interpret the implications of the survey vignette. Moreover, as African Americans are socialized through education, they may become more sensitized to the racial history of policing and subsequently better identify the implications of apologies for that history than those at lower levels of education. Because African American men are more often subject to inequitable policing (United States Sentencing Commission, 2017), and although all genders are also subject to inequitable policing and its fallout, it may be that African American men are less moved by apologies for racialized policing than others because they have directly experienced inequitable policing more frequently than other groups.

Potential differences of treatment for those at different levels of independent variables drive three subgroup hypotheses that this experiment will test:

SGH1: Participants at lower levels of linked fate will have smaller experimental effects compared to the control group than those at higher levels of linked fate.

SGH2: Participants at higher levels of education will have larger experimental effects compared to the control group than those at lower levels of education.

SGH3: Participants who identify as men will have smaller experimental effects compared to the control group than those who identify as women.

The rationale behind the first subgroup hypothesis is that a legitimacy strategy focusing on policing's racist history will be more salient for those who view race as important for their political identities than those who do not view it as important. For the second subgroup hypothesis and in line with Hope & Jager (2014, which found that education created connections between past and present racial inequity), I expect that those with more education will have more knowledge of policing's history, will be better able to connect that history to contemporary police inequity, and will be more likely to understand that an apology accounts for that history. For the third subgroup hypotheses, I expect that apologia will be more effective for those who identify as men given that Black men experience a disproportionate share of police racial inequity (United States Sentencing Commission, 2017).

Dependent Variables

Research conceptualizes police legitimacy by examining its different components, and I focus on three important aspects of police legitimacy for dependent variables. First, I consider general warmth of feelings towards a police department as a police legitimacy component. This measure is often used in police legitimacy research (Bierie et al. 2010; Kahn et al. 2017; Drakulich et al. 2020) as a general conceptualization of police

legitimacy. The rationale of a more generic component of police legitimacy acknowledges that general feelings towards public organizations reflect individuals' legitimacy judgements.

In a landmark study, Tyler (1990) conceptualized police support as the sort of disposition that views the police as legitimate. This disposition includes respect for local police, belief in the honesty of local police, pride in local police, and support for local police. One who views the police as respectful and honest, and who takes pride in and supports local police, can be said to view that department as legitimate (Tyler 2002; Sunshine & Tyler 2003; Bolger & Walters 2019; Moule et al. 2019). Tyler (1990) validated his support measurement with self-reported legally compliant behavior over time, finding that respondents with higher police support were more likely to avoid lawbreaking.

I also consider trust in police, the belief that a police department will act correctly. Trust is an important component of legitimacy (Skogan 2006; O' Brien et al. 2020), with distrust having the potential to undermine authority (Kettl 2017). Examining trust in police and drawing from a wide variety of literature including Tyler (2004), Tyler and Fagan (2008), and Resig and Lloyd (2008), LaVinge and colleagues (2017) design a survey to understand police legitimacy. They measure trust in the police, as they argue that for the public to view police as legitimate that they must be able to trust that police will be good representatives of the law. We draw on their conceptualization of police legitimacy as including components of trust in a police department's own legal behavior, their sincerity, their helpfulness, that they will do the right thing, and overall confidence in the department. The police support and trust in police variables are additive scales of

their components. In the experiments, both have Cronbach's alpha values above .9, inter-item covariances between .85 and .94, and no unique results if scale components are examined as dependent variables independently from their scales.

One potential weakness of these dependent variables is that they only measure perceptions of the police. It could be argued that perceptions of the police based on inequity are not as important as inequitable policing outcomes. While inequitable policing outcomes are important, they are only one piece of the puzzle when it comes to understanding police-African American relationships. Moreover, for examining police legitimacy, it is important to understand how government is seen, as those subject to governments are those who ultimately make the most important judgements about government's legitimacy. This research will not deign to assert that it has every answer for police-African American legitimacy problems; however, perceptions of the police are certainly one important component of that problem. It is important for public administration to understand how it is perceived (Boer, 2020) given that citizen's experiences of government make up the reality of what government actually is.

Conclusion

This chapter explains the experimental design that was used to gather data and test hypotheses. This design will allow for causal inference in the effect of a supplemental apology added to a promise of community policing implementation. I will use the experiment to test hypotheses from Chapter three. The results for these hypotheses and analysis of experimental data occurs in Chapter Five. Following these hypotheses tests, I will move on to examine respondents' motivations for their post-treatment responses to understand why they responded the way they did. This research will examine both the

experimental quantitative effects on legitimacy from apologia and the sort of qualitative thematic responses that apologia elicits.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS

This chapter presents a research design to test the hypothesis that an apology is an effective supplement to community policing for improving policing's legitimacy among African Americans. Apologizing is novel and untested but theoretically interesting in that it directly addresses policing's history, creating the need to test its effects more precisely.

To restate this experiment's main hypothesis:

H1: African Americans faced with a police department apologizing for the racist history of policing while implementing community policing will see the department as more legitimate than those who are faced with community policing alone.

I also expect that men will have larger positive treatment effects than women, and that the same will be true for those with high linked fate compared to low linked fate and high education compared to low education. With survey data gathered from the experiment described in the previous chapter, I compare African Americans who read only the community policing vignette to those who read the community policing vignette and the supplemental apology. I examine the three dependent variables – the police feeling thermometer, the police support scale, and the police trust scale – to understand the causal effect of the apologia supplement on them.

For the final survey, the mean completion time was about seven and a third minutes, with a median completion time of about four and a third minutes. Treatment group mean completion time was about eight minutes with a median of four and a half minutes, and the comparison group that read one less paragraph had a mean completion time of about six and a third minutes with a median time of three and three quarters minutes, suggesting treated respondents spent extra time reading additional content. This suggests that

treatment was successfully delivered, as treated respondents on average required additional time to complete the survey. The final survey was administered from July 13th, 2020 to July 17th, 2020. Participants were paid \$0.70 for completing the survey. The total number of respondents was 8,393, with 1,392 (16%) African American respondents successfully completing demographic screening and receiving payment.

Results

Descriptive Results

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics

<i>Feeling Thermometer</i>
Min: 0; Max: 100; Mean: 69.5; Median: 75; Standard Deviation: 22.3
<i>Trust in Police</i>
Min: 5; Max: 25; Mean: 17.5; Median: 19; Standard Deviation: 5.0
<i>Support for Police</i>
Min: 4; Max: 20; Mean: 14.1; Median: 15; Standard Deviation: 3.9

Table 3 shows descriptive results for the sample, in aggregate, for dependent variables.

Each row first shows the variable being described in italics, then summary statistics.

Overall, the dependent variables are left-skewed. There is moderate variation, with a single standard deviation falling within real values of the variables. It seems likely that the scales captured the real possible values of the components of police legitimacy attitudes that I measure given that responses deviate from the mean mostly within measured values of the scale.

Table 4 Balance of Characteristics Between Treatment and Control Groups

Variable	Comparison	Treatment	P-score for Differences
More than Bachelor's	23%	24%	.47
Male	58%	63%	.06
Mean Partisanship (1-7; Dem. – Repub.)	4.1	4.3	.08
Mean Ideology (1-7; Lib.-Consv.)	3.9	4.0	.43
More than 50k yearly income	44%	42%	.31
Mean age	35	35	.62
Mean linked fate (0-3, low to high)	3.2	3.2	.64

Randomization is crucial for causal identification, and without randomization the treatment effects cannot be said to be valid. Table 4 shows the statistical balance of observable characteristics between the treatment and comparison groups. The second column shows the characteristics of respondents assigned to read the community policing policy and the third column shows characteristics of those assigned to read both the community policing policy and the apologetic communication. There is good balance between the two, indicating that randomization was successful. Two-tailed t-tests do not report significant differences in observable characteristics between treatment and control at $p < .05$, an indicator that unobservable characteristics were randomly assigned. It does not appear that assignment into treatment predicted observable measurements, indicating that unobservable characteristics were also randomly assigned between treatment and comparison groups. This kind of randomization is crucial to isolate the causal effect of the treatment because it ensures that the only difference between the two groups is receiving or not receiving treatment. The two groups are not perfectly balanced, but are almost perfectly balanced, on observed characteristics. Imbalance need not always indicate a lack of randomization as it is expected that groups will be unbalanced at random (Mutz et al., 2018).

Beyond observable selection, it would generally be difficult for respondents to select into treatment or control with Qualtrics' interface. Participants did not observe their own randomization and the mechanisms behind it, and it would be difficult for them to cheat into a preferred experimental group. There seems to be little incentive for them to do so beyond reading the additional treatment paragraph. Respondents were paid the same amount regardless of their assignment into treatment or comparison group.

Figure 1 Feeling Thermometer Histogram Comparison

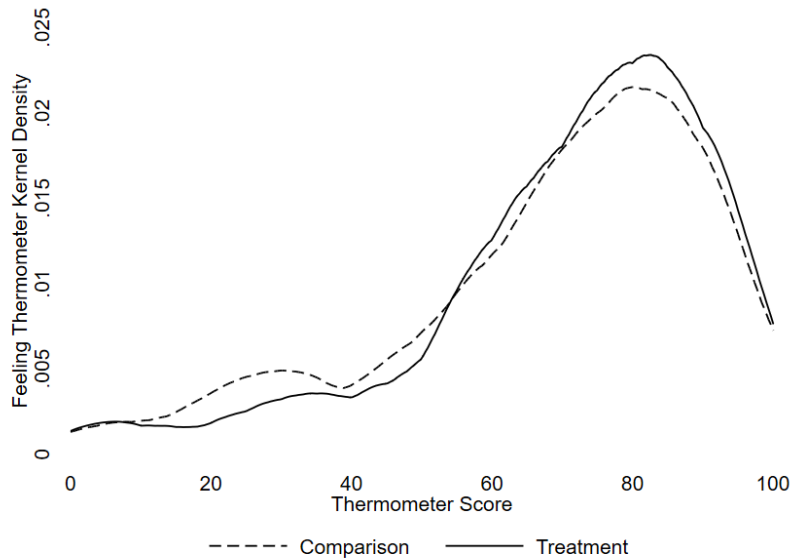


Figure 1 shows smoothed distributions of treatment and comparison group feeling thermometer scores. The distribution of the two groups appears to be quite similar, perhaps with some lower comparison group scores (20-40) being perhaps counterfactually represented in the treatment group with higher scores (70-90). The overall feeling thermometer distribution of the treatment and comparison group appear to be similar, with the treatment group perhaps having higher scores overall. This distributional similarity is repeated in figures 2 and 3. Those figures show the distributions of the police support and police trust scales between comparison and

treatment groups. While the treatment group may have slightly higher scores than the comparison group, the similarities between the two groups' distributions are striking.

Figure 2 Distribution of Trust in Police Scale

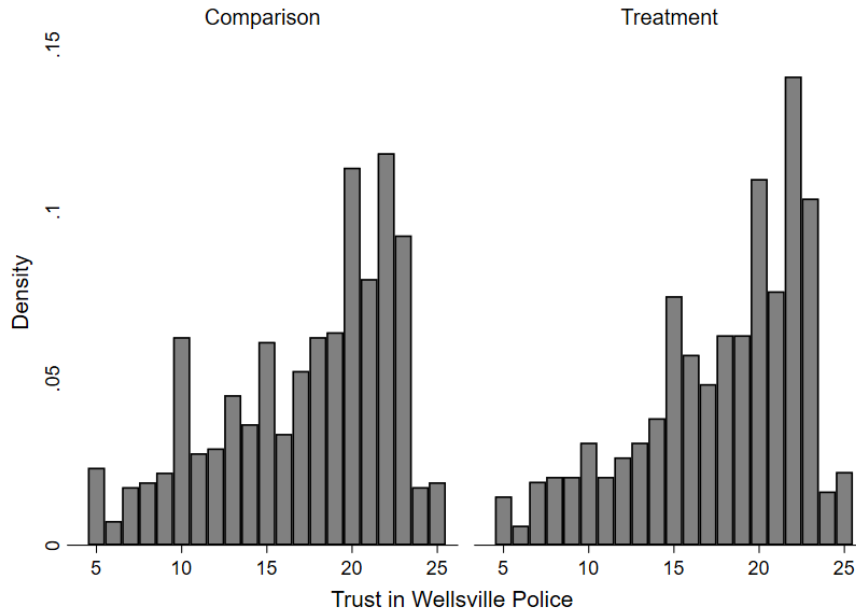
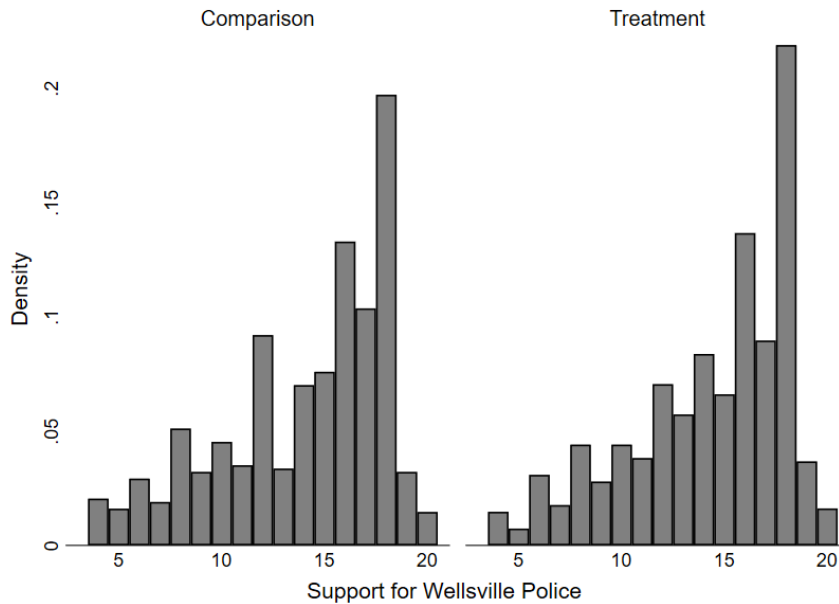


Figure 2 Distribution of Police Support Scale



Statistical Modeling Results

Table 5: Experimental Differences

	Feeling Thermometer		Support for Police		Trust in Police	
	Bivariate Regression	Controlled Regression	Bivariate Regression	Controlled Regression	Bivariate Regression	Controlled Regression
Treatment	2.6*	1.8	0.28	0.15	0.55*	0.41
Effect Size	0.06*	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.06*	0.04
n	1,383	1,381	1,366	1,365	1,374	1,373

Note: *** = $p < 0.001$; ** = $p < 0.01$; * = $p < 0.05$. Standardized coefficients in units of DV standard deviation = coefficient/dependent variable standard deviation. The comparisons were performed using ordinary least squares regression for each dependent variable, treatment as the independent variable, and controlling for education, gender, ideology, income, and linked fate.

Table 5 shows the results of the experiment for each dependent variable using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. I omit control variables from tables but describe them in the note, showing only the supplemental apology treatments' coefficients and effect sizes. In all regressions, very few respondents are case wise excluded (<20) with controls because they did not fully respond to control variable questions. For each dependent variable, the first row shows the results from a bivariate OLS regression, with the second row showing the results for a multivariate OLS regression with controls. Bivariate results are sufficient to show treatment effects in the case of successful randomization, but I also show multivariate comparisons to show more precise estimates and to compare the relative explanatory power of the models (Krause & Howard, 2003).

The bivariate regression for the feeling thermometer shows statistical significance but adding in controls erases that statistical significance. Figure 4 visualizes the controlled coefficients from Table 5 for the feeling thermometer, standardizing the feeling thermometer (mean = 0, standard deviation = 1) to ease comparing coefficient sizes. The treatment coefficient is positive, but with confidence intervals and multivariate controls statistical significance disappears. It becomes difficult to say with certainty if the apologetic treatment improved attitudes towards the Wellsville police department as measured by the feeling thermometer without a statistically significant coefficient.

Figure 4 Coefficient Plot for Police Department Feeling Thermometer

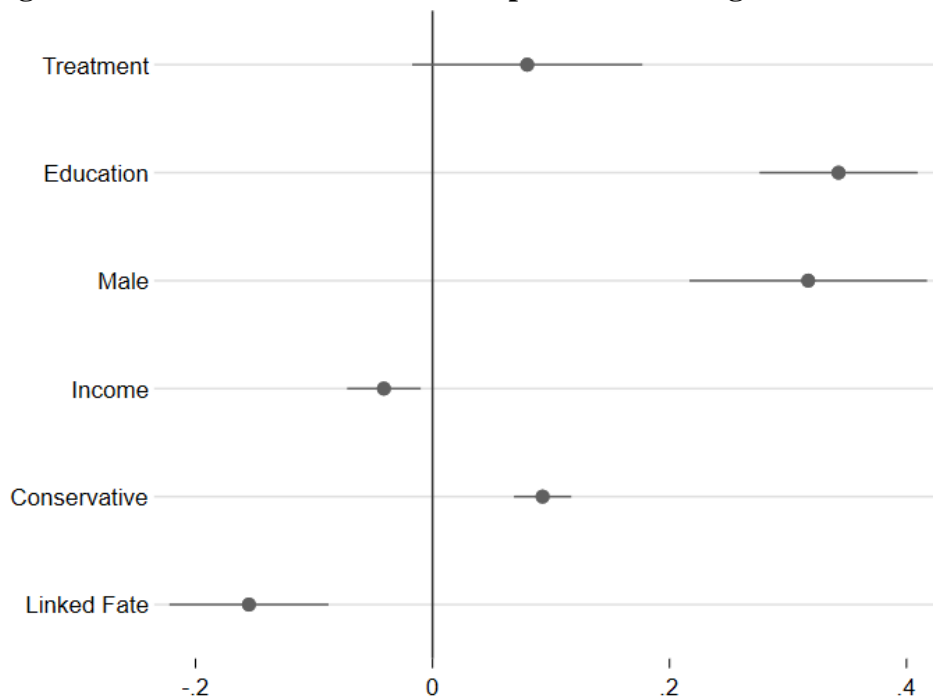


Table 5 also shows results for the police support dependent variable. The bivariate regression shows small statistically insignificant effects, as does the controlled model. Unlike the police feeling thermometer regression, the police support regression does not show statistically significant results in either bivariate or multivariate models. Figure 5 visualizes the controlled regression, showing the lack of statistical significance. Treatment appears to have unambiguously had no effect on the police support variable.

Figure 5 Coefficient Plot for Wellsville Police Support

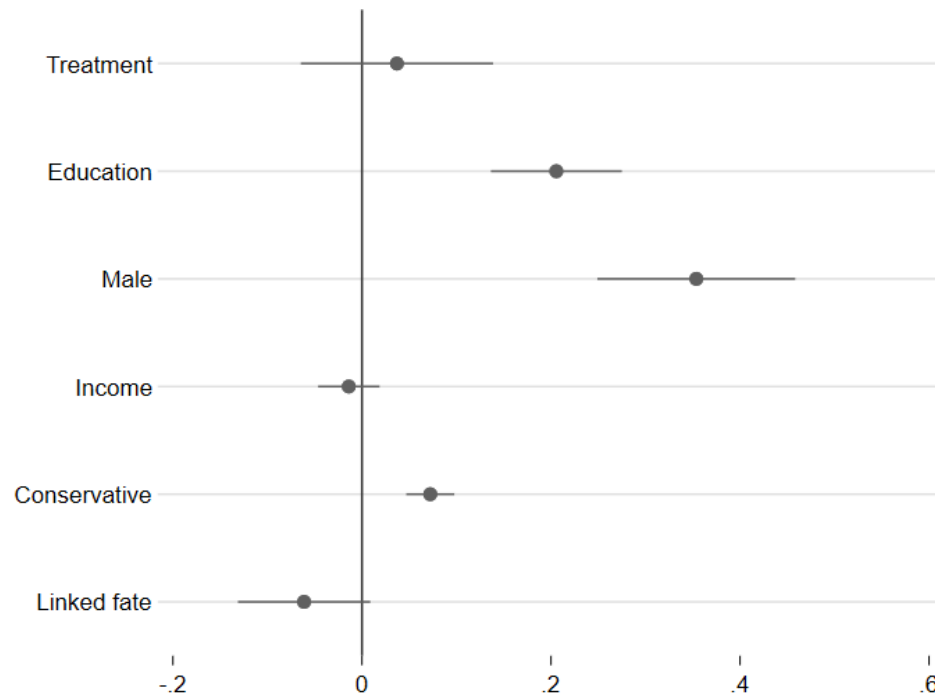
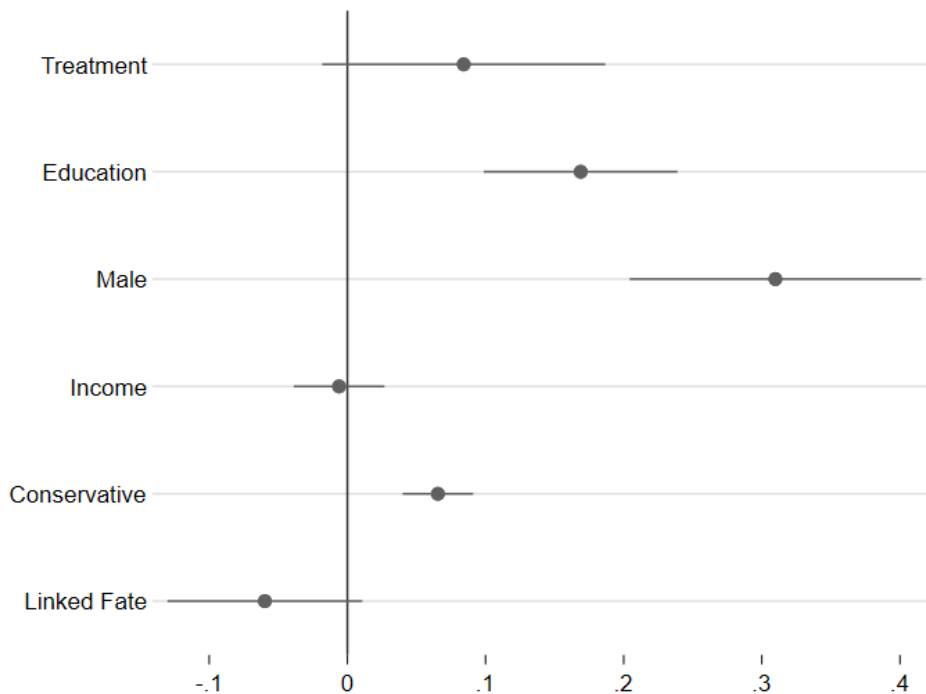


Table 5 also shows the experimental effects for the trust in police variable. The effects are similarly ambiguous to those for the police feeling thermometer regression. A bivariate regression shows a small effect with statistical significance that is erased with controls. Figure 6 visualizes this controlled model ambiguity. While effects were statistically significant in bivariate model, those effects were small and easily erased with additional variation.

Figure 6 Coefficient Plot for Trust in Police



The effects of apologia police legitimacy appear to be small and ambiguous at best, in the case of the trust in police and feeling thermometer variables, and statistically indistinguishable from zero at worst, in the case of the police support variable. When models are statistically significant, accounting for any other variation in the dependent variable using multivariate models erased that significance. Even in significant cases, standardized effect sizes are extremely small, with no statistically significant effect size exceeding 0.06. Such an effect size is so small as to be insubstantial. These results are suggestive that apologia might have some small effect, but that it will not be sufficient to substantially improve policing's legitimacy as presented in this experiment.

Subgroup Analyses

I examined if treatment had any unique effects on those who identified as men compared to those that did not, respondents who feel strongly linked to their race compared to those who do not, and respondents with high levels of education compared to those at lower

levels of education. Aggregate effects were at times ambiguous, but treatment may have had a special effect on some sub-groups. I identify male respondents through self-identification to compare with self-identified non-male respondents, those with high linked fate as responding that they think what happens to other African Americans in the United States has “some” or “a lot” to do with their life compared to those who believe it has “a little” or “not very much” to do with their life, and those with high levels of education as having a bachelor’s degree or higher.

I omit regression tables and graphics for the subgroup analysis because no subgroup had unique effects from treatment at a statistically significant level of $p < .05$. Apologia seems to have at best a small insubstantial effect on policing’s legitimacy among African Americans in comparison to a more typical community policing approach, and that is true in aggregate as well as when examining subgroups. I must fail to reject the mediation null hypotheses.

Discussion

Overall, experimental results are at best merely suggestive that apologizing for the racist history of policing might have some effect. Bivariate findings showed some small effect with statistical significance that was erased through covariates. At the same time, apologizing as presented cannot necessarily be recommended as an effective supplement for community policing reform, especially given that its effects seem so easily called into question. Apology’s effects are insubstantial – the standardized coefficients for the bivariate regressions on feeling, trust, and support were .06, .03, and .05 respectively. Additionally, apologizing is financially low cost but may carry political costs this experiment did not consider. This research examines experimental effects outside of

political systems without assessing costs – apologies for racial history in the United States has carried noticeable political costs in the past (Dawson, 2004; Hatch, 2006). It also seems likely that future police department actions incongruent with apologia could reverse any small effect – an apology communication shortly followed by racially stratified police brutality will likely negate any small effect that apologia had.

The police support legitimacy indicator from Tyler (1990) is the most precisely unaffected dependent variable. Neither bivariate nor multivariate results show statistically significant effects. When treatment is controlled, its coefficient centers nearly over zero. Tyler's variables influence legal behavior – support for legal systems indicate a belief in those systems' legitimacy and a willingness to comply with their rules. Tyler validated his scale to correspond to legally compliant behavior. With that in mind, it seems unlikely that apologizing for the racist history of policing will improve police legitimacy in a way that improves legal compliance and cooperation.

Limitations and Future Research

This research faced limitations, which suggest directions for future research. First, the experiment did not measure the independent effect of community policing policy or apologizing on police legitimacy because it instead focused on apologizing as a supplement. Future research might consider the independent effect of apologizing and community policing policy with experimental groups as follows: 1) neither community policing nor apology, 2) implemented community policing without apology, 3) apology without any community policing, and 4) implemented community policing followed by a supplemental apology. This approach would allow examinations of the independent effects of apology and community policing policy as well as their interactive effects

rather than merely their interactive compared to non-interactive effects. By including community policing implementation, rather than a promise of community policing, future research would acknowledge the procedural nature of legitimacy building in government. Each group could be assessed independently, compared to one another, and compared to the control condition.

It may also be that differently written supplemental apology might have a greater or lesser effect than the one presented in the experiment. For example, the community policing policy that all respondents read sometimes switched between reforms the police chief said they would like to do and will do. Similarly, in the supplemental apology treatment, perspective changed between presentations of what the Chief reported and his corresponding beliefs, switching from a third person to third person omniscient perspective. Future research might test variations on apology designs, and in-particular a treatment given in the third person might have the highest external validity.

An additional possible explanation for this experiment's findings may have to do with its time of administration. The final survey was administered from July 13th, 2020 to July 17th, 2020. George Floyd was killed on May 25th, sparking off weeks of protests throughout the month of June. Experimental administration was initially planned in June but was paused to account for ongoing protest and racial conflict surrounding policing. While time was sought between protests and the experiment's administration, it may be that racial conflict around policing had not diminished in American culture in a way that interacted with the treatment condition. If the treatment was influenced by events surrounding George Floyd's death and the social response to it, that would change the

interpretation of this research – rather than applying this research more generally, this research would be best applied during times of particularly high racial conflict.

At the same time, I believe it to be unlikely that George Floyd's death is the only explanation for this research's findings. Scholars (Blatz & Ross, 2009; Davis, 2012; Glaser & Ryan, 2013; Davis, 2014; Robinson & Ramsay, 2017) were skeptical of apologia's effects prior to his death. If George Floyd's death and the subsequent protests influenced the results of this experiment, apologia was not a sure thing prior to those events.

Conclusion

There are good reasons to believe that the racist history of policing influences African Americans' attitudes towards the police today with negative implications for police legitimacy. Policing has historical and contemporary negative relationships with African Americans, theory and scholarly research supports that this history matters, and several respondents in this survey will indicate with their comments that history was important. The experiment in this research, however, does not provide strong support for the hypothesis that a supplemental apology for police history will improve attitudes beyond a more typical community policing approach.

The apology as presented seems to have had at best a small effect, but why was that the case? In the next chapter, I examine qualitative comments from the survey experiment for differences in themes between treated and comparison participants. Examining qualitative comments will suggest that apologies are insufficient to address the racist history of policing, considering that many African Americans have experienced promises of changed police relationships that have not materialized. Instead, it may be that the

implementation of policy reform is crucial for legitimization. The next chapter further considers participant comments to understand why apologies did not seem to substantially improve legitimacy attitudes beyond the community policing approach.

CHAPTER SIX: PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Apologizing did not seem to create very substantial changes in police legitimacy as a supplement to a promise of community policing, but why was that the case? The survey experiment solicited qualitative comments from respondents immediately prior to completion, and these comments might provide some insight into these results. It may be possible to gain additional insight on the quantitative findings by examining comments from those who were part of the experiment. In this chapter, I compare treatment and comparison group comments to understand their expressed motivations for their responses. Examining these comments allows for a comparison of themes between them.

Fifty-one treated respondents who read about a promise of community policing and an apology for policing's history chose to leave a substantive (e.g. included any opinion about policing and excluding comments on the quality of the survey)¹ comment. Thirty-two members of the comparison group who read only a promise of community policing opted to leave a substantive comment. The key differences between these groups are if they were or were not exposed to apologia for policing's history, an important factor to keep in mind for comparing their comments.

Each comment was first read to identify if it was at all substantive. Following that, I read each substantive comment to gain an understanding of the overall themes of the data. From that reading, I identified three themes: an assertion that actions speak louder than words, that managers have a difficult time controlling street-level officers, and that there is a desire for policy to be implemented over time. I then read each substantive

¹ Examples of non-substantive comments include: "No/no comment/nothing," n=142; "Good," n = 141; "Good survey," n = 48; "Nice," n = 22"; "I liked this survey," n = 9;

comment again to determine if it could be accurately described as expressing those themes. Having categorized comments that expressed specific themes, I examined the comments within each theme. Below, I discuss and show the most demonstrative comments of the themes.

These two groups of respondents may be the most engaged of the sample given their participation in commenting – most participants did not choose to leave substantive comments. Those who did leave substantive comments tended to have higher linked fate (a mean of 3.5 compared to 3.2), lower education (with the modal substantive comment coming from those who had completed high school) and identified more strongly with the Democratic party (a mean of 3.3 republican self-identification on a scale of 1-7 among substantive comments vs. a mean of 4.2 among others). Comparing themes generated from the experiment in such a high-engagement group would most suitably externalize to African Americans with a similar high engagement in policing reform.

Treated Comments

Twenty-three percent of (55) substantive treated comments left some variant of the comment that ‘actions speak louder than words.’ Apologia had a small effect for some of those clients, albeit a small and uncertain one. One participant wrote “I would like to believe that this police department is sincere. I would say that only time can tell, but it sounds very positive. It is a start and if we don't start an action, we will never see the results.” This comment seemed appreciative of reform and apologia, but also seemed to hope for even greater change. Describing apologia as “a start” seems accurate – an apology would mean little if it were not followed by actions that demonstrate regret. An

apology followed by the very actions that one apologized for may only serve to create further illegitimacy.

Another comment communicated similar themes, saying “I think coming out with an apology and a plan is great. However, I think Black people are tired of that. We want real change.” The difference between this response and responses from the comparison group is reading the apology from the police chief, and this respondent focused their comment on the importance of policy change over the apology. Apologizing may have some small legitimizing effect, but people have expectations beyond apologies for policy reform. Apologizing for policing’s history might be a start for improving policing’s legitimacy, but it is not the totality of needed legitimacy reforms that reformers call for.

Some respondents appreciated the apology but expected more. Others simply expected more without expressing appreciation. For them, apologies may have had no effect or may have even worsened their police legitimacy. One respondent wrote that “these things keep happening too much in real life. Police are only sincere for the cameras, so they don’t look bad. The same thing will happen months down the line and another fake apology will be issued.” This respondent matched with theories that expect apologia to be interpreted as mere words, and they themselves interpreted the apology as “fake.” Others expressed skepticism of apology’s sufficiency to address policing’s history, with one respondent saying, “knowing the origins of the police in this country and what they have stood for, for so long, it is almost impossible for me to trust words. Actions speak much louder.” This response indicates that the history of policing is important for attitudes towards the police, but that an apology does not sufficiently address that history. Before legitimacy improvements can flow from reform, they must be

implemented and not merely discussed. This final comment also be one example of how George Floyd's death could have contributed to the experiment's findings, in that Floyd's death could be seen as one in a line of recent deaths that could be further traced to policing's history.

Another respondent wrote that "The Wellsville Police Chief's comments towards the Black community were similar to what I have heard other police chiefs say in the past. I would not completely trust the police department if I were a Wellsville resident." This response might also help explain small treatment effects – for some respondents, apologia would not mean much because experience informed that no action would be taken. People have heard apologies before and have seen actions incompatible with apology's intent. Instead of trusting words, people may need to observe policy reform implementation in action before police can be legitimized.

Another respondent combines prior experience with the inability of apologies to sufficiently address policing's history, saying "whenever a case of civil rights abuse occurs the police tend to have the same speech, the same apologies, and the same comments. Unfortunately, nothing is done to eradicate those mistreatments and violations." This comment also marks the gravity of police racial inequity. It also expects that apologetic speech need not indicate future equitable action and that the best future for policing is one without mistreatments or violations.

Some respondents expressed skepticism that any police chief could control all officers, or that a chief could speak on the behalf of all members of their organization. These participants spoke to themes of discretion in policing and the managerial difficulties it can create. Many police officers use a substantial amount of discretion in

their work, and some respondents worried that that discretion would be inequitably applied against African Americans. One respondent made their position especially clear, arguing that “talk is cheap, and bullshit runs a marathon. The police chief may be sincere, but that does not tell me that the officers are equally sincere and open minded.” Another respondent stated that they would trust and believe the police chief but that it would be impossible for him to apply sufficient control over officers, saying “I believe that the police Chief is committed to doing exactly what he said. The issue is playing babysitter to the ones that don’t want to go along with it.” Even very effective police chiefs will not necessarily be able to hire officers who all share similar ideals. Officers, as a part of the job, are authorized to use substantial force even to the point of killing clients. The consequences of an officer using their discretion to inequitably apply deadly force could be catastrophic to their clients and community.

Comparison Comments

Treated comments revealed themes of actions speaking louder than words and the difficulties of centralized control over street-level officers. Comparison group respondents, who only read about a promise of community policing without an apology, indicated policy preferences with a wide variety of preferences.

Of 33 substantive comments from the comparison group, about one-third indicated that they preferred policy as a response to policing’s history. One respondent reported that “I believe that if police participate in community policing...a lot would change.” That comment supports community policing policy, which on average did not create substantial police legitimacy changes beyond an apology. For that respondent, the policy seems sufficient. Another respondent generally supported community policing, saying “I

think a lot of the problem comes from the police not knowing their communities. If they built relationships with us maybe they would treat us like people worthy of respect and care.” Without asking for community policing, this respondent seems focused on its core values of relationship building and respect built over time.

Other comparison comments called for a variety of policy changes in policing. Some respondents supported more stringent hiring standards for police officers, with one saying that “I think the police need to do an entire reevaluation on who they hired or are going to hire. Do a psychological test on racism before hiring them as well.” There are numerous scales to measure racism, including the symbolic racism scale (Henry & Sears, 2002) and the implicit association test (Lehr & Banaji, 2010). This is one sort of policing reform policy that departments could be able to implement.

Another respondent argues for a different policy, that “if a person cannot be trained the first time, why keep trying to train them? To do the right thing comes naturally or maybe through rules enforced with high standards.” This respondent suggests policing’s historical problem may be solved through enforceable rules, or otherwise by hiring the right people as officers.

Discussion

In reckoning with the racial history of policing, treated comments ultimately landed on themes of operational concerns about management and police departments’ actions speaking louder than apologia. Comparison comments suggested numerous other actions that departments could take to improve legitimacy without a real core policy preference. The commonalities between the two are the importance of implementation sustained over time. For treated comments, an apology did not necessarily indicate future department

actions and that may have stopped the apology from having stronger effects on police legitimacy. Future improvements in legitimacy are not out of the question for respondents arguing that actions speak louder than words. Those respondents merely required more time to see if the apology would result in the sort of reform that it suggests.

Comparison comments also called for policy, with numerous preferences and a general desire to see policy implemented thoroughly. In both cases, policy needed to be sustained over time for respondents to improve their views towards the police in a way that imparts legitimacy. Both kinds of comments called for reform implementation, within or without the context of an apology. For police legitimacy to be improved, police departments will likely have to prove that they are sincere about reform. That sincerity is best demonstrated through actions consistent with a desire for reform rather than statements expressing a desire for reform.

Research published during this dissertation's writing (O'Brien et al., 2020) highlighted one potential reason for the findings of the experiment. In that article, Drs. O'Brien, Tyler, and Meares found that improved police legitimacy and voluntary cooperation with the police could be obtained through both reconciliatory gestures and community policing implementation. The experiment in this research presented participants with two reform options, either community policing or community policing with apologia, and found little difference between the two regarding changes in police legitimacy. Markedly different from this experiment, their experiment evaluated a reconciliatory gesture and participation program in New York City, a meaning that their participants were familiar with a real community policing program that had actually been implemented and reconciliatory gestures which had actually been made.

This research comports with theirs, in that this research found little results for apologetic gestures that did not have the opportunity to demonstrate their sincerity over time through implementation. It may be that an experiment situated in a Wellsville that had successfully implemented community policing then offered an additional reconciliatory gesture may have stronger legitimacy improvements than this research found. That research would comport more closely with O'Brien and colleagues (2020) in that it would evaluate an apology in the context of an implemented community policing program.

Conclusion

Among those who read a promise of community policing and an apology for policing's history, some respondents indicated that apologizing was not sufficient for the racist history of policing. Some indicated that apologizing was a good start, but that more robust reform would be necessary to address policing's racist history. Others indicated that apologizing was probably not sincere and that actual policy implementation, rather than the promise of future implementation, would be necessary for legitimacy improvements. That last category of response best represents the idea that 'actions speak louder than words,' or a preference for policy implementation. Others indicated that even if a police chief were sincere in his words that the difficulties of managing street-level officers would make an apology difficult to believe. Police chiefs may seek reform, but if they cannot bring officers to enact that reform an apology will mean little.

Among those who only read about a promise of future policy implementation, most indicated a policy preference of some sort – some indicated a preference for community policing, others for stricter hiring standards, and still others for a stricter enforcement of

departmental rules. Evaluating these approaches is out of the scope of this research; however, future research might examine the legitimacy effects of such reform. What is clear from both groups of comments is that there does appear to be some real desire for reforms that are implemented and sustained over time. Community policing as a reform draws on the power of the community for lawfulness. Community participation is the heart of community policing, as without participation departments cannot know their clients' problems and priorities. Current research (O'Brien et al., 2020) suggests that an actually implemented community participation and reconciliatory gesture policing strategy showed effectiveness in New York City for legitimacy, highlighting that a lack of implementation might be one explanation for initial experimental findings.

CHAPTER SEVEN: EXTENSION

The results of the initial experiment suggested that a supplemental apology may provide little to no improvement for police legitimacy attitudes among African Americans, especially absent policy implementation. Initial experimentation faced limitations which suggested directions for future research. First, the experiment did not measure the independent effect of community policing policy or apologies on police legitimacy because it instead focused on apology as a supplement to a promise of community policing. Thus, the initial experiment could test the independent effects of neither. A redesigned experiment will include additional treatment groups that allow for additional comparisons in dependent variables.

Second, qualitative comments indicated that supplemental apologies may not be interpreted as an indicator of future equitable police behavior, especially without reform implementation. Kettl (2017) argues that trust in government is both cause and effect; that is, government's current actions are judged with its past actions in mind. If one has grown cynical of government based on past assessments, its current efforts will also be met with cynicism regardless of their intent. Comments indicate a similar orientation when it comes to apologies and legitimacy in policing: Participants indicated that they had heard promises and apologies before that were not filled, and that current promises may not be trustworthy. Successfully delivering community policing policy could re-orient respondents' attitudes towards what apologizing means from a cynical face-saving maneuver to a genuine expression of regret and hope. It may be that respondents viewed the initial apology as mere apologia as opposed to reconciliatory apologia because of existing illegitimate assessments of policing that had not been proved incorrect through

something tangible like successful policy implementation. Policy reform implementation may be key to improving police legitimacy among African Americans and allowing apologies to have a legitimizing effect. However, the initial experiment only promised community policing reform without discussing its implementation or showing its success.

The extended research will consider the effects of apologies and community policing policy with experimental treatment groups as follows: 1) neither community policing nor apology (control), 2) implemented community policing without apology (as opposed to a promise of future implementation), 3) apology without any community policing, and 4) implemented community policing followed by a supplemental apology. This approach would allow examinations of the independent effects of apologies and implemented community policing policy as well as their interactive effects rather than testing apologizing as a supplement to community policing. This approach acknowledges the procedural nature of legitimization from apologies, as the fourth group's apology would occur only after implemented community policing reform. A summary of these four experimental groups is below.

Table 6 Extended Treatment Groups

Treatment Group	Introduction	Racial History Prompt	Implemented Community Policing	Apology	Sample Size
1	Yes	Yes	No	No	365
2	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	366
3	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	365
4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	365
Total					1,461

Treatments

The modified treatment groups consider feedback from the initial experiment by including implementation and using tenses more consistently. Group 1 serves as a control group reading neither about implemented community policing nor an apology. Group 2

only reads about implemented community policing and group 3 reads only an apology. Group 4 reads about implemented community policing and reads and apology. The updated text for the survey vignettes for the four treatment groups in the extension is below.

(Introduction)

The Wellsville police department is in a Midwestern city with about 120,000 residents. The residents are about 82% white, 11% Black, and 7% something else. The Wellsville police department is a fairly typical police department: Police officers usually have either a high school or college education, officers make about \$45,000-\$75,000 yearly, and there are about 2.4 police officers per 1,000 people in the city.

(Racial History Prompt)

An activist made a statement at a Wellsville city council meeting after a local controversy where a white police officer shot an African American person. She pointed out that police departments have a long history of poor relationships with African Americans. She said that in the United States, the earliest police departments were created to return runaway slaves and that they later enforced Jim Crow segregation laws. She stated that more recently, police abused civil rights protesters including those with Martin Luther King Jr. She said that problems still linger between African American communities and police departments today.

(Implemented Community Policing)

After hearing the activist's statement, the Wellsville police chief decided to start a community policing program. The chief started training officers to establish relationships with community members. He told officers that they should take community concerns seriously. The chief also created a new performance review for officers that included community policing participation. Officers visited children in schools, patrolled under-served neighborhoods, listened to citizens' concerns, and got to know city residents. One year after the chief implemented community policing, he reported on its success in a public meeting. He said, "Since we started community policing, citizen satisfaction with policing has improved in Wellsville. Not only are people happier with the Wellsville police department, but people are also committing fewer crimes. Because of our improved relationships with African Americans in the community, when

crime does happen, we are much more likely to be able to use information from the community to solve the crime than before."

(Apology)

The Wellsville police chief then made a statement apologizing for policing's racist history. He said, "I am sorry that police departments have been abusive to African Americans throughout America's history. That abuse has had serious consequences. Police abuse of African Americans often happened even when victims were good citizens and members of the community." The chief said that "I do not deny that police have been responsible for problems with African American communities." The chief further stated that, "I do not believe that this department will ever gain the trust of African Americans in Wellsville unless we acknowledge the racist history of policing and apologize for it. I hope that with enough time and healing that African Americans in Wellsville can forgive the police department. In the future, I hope we can work together more."

Hypotheses

The extended research considers six hypotheses. Apology's legitimizing effects may come from their ability to uniquely address the delegitimizing effects of police history, leading to the first hypothesis:

H1: African Americans who read an apology for the racist history of policing from a hypothetical police department will see that department as more legitimate than those who read no response.

Testing this hypothesis will test the independent effects of an apology for policing's history on policing's legitimacy among African Americans without other intervention.

While the apology was supplemental in the initial experiment, in this experiment it can be a single response compared to no response.

Comments in initial research led to the conclusion that apologies for racist history could be seen as mere words when policy implementation processes were necessary for legitimization. That consideration led to the second hypothesis:

H2: African Americans who read about successfully implemented community policing in a hypothetical police department will see that department as more legitimate than those who read no response.

The second condition tests the independent effects of a communication of successfully implemented community policing policy, communicated as reduced criminality, higher success rates in clearing crimes through citizen information, and higher citizen satisfaction. Considering that initial respondents seemed to prefer policy implementation over apologies led to:

H3: African Americans who read about successfully implemented community policing in a hypothetical police department will see it as more legitimate than those who read only an apology for the racist history of policing.

Hypothesis four aligns with a procedural approach to legitimacy in public organizations as well as comments calling for implementation. It may be that the supplemental apology in the initial research was initially ineffective because it was not a reflection of broader processes of legitimization – the apology took place before policy implementation rather than after. Hypothesis four considers the interactive effects of hypotheses one and two by considering the effects of successfully implemented community policing and an apology for police history:

H4: African Americans who read about successfully implemented community policing followed by an apology for the racist history of policing will see the department as more legitimate than those who do not read a response.

In this way, the apology will be an extension of community policing rather than a supplement, and respondents can read that the community policing associated with the apology was implemented. This frames community policing as a process that was implemented over time and the apology as a culmination of that process.

Hypothesis one suggests that apologies could perhaps, at some level, improve police legitimacy relative to no response in a way that was not considered in initial research. Participants also suggested that they would prefer to see implemented policy implementation. If an apology and implemented policy could have independent effects and apology's effect would be greater after implemented policy, it follows that the interactive effects of apologies and implemented community policing would be greater than the effects of their interactive components. That consideration leads to the final hypotheses:

H5: African Americans who read about successfully implemented community policing followed by an apology for the racist history of policing will see the department as more legitimate than those who read about successfully implemented community policing alone; and,

H6: African Americans who read about successfully implemented community policing followed by an apology for the racist history of policing will see the department as more legitimate than those who read only an apology.

The table below shows expectations for these findings, showing how different treatment combinations are expected to legitimize policing among African Americans relative to one another.

Table 7 Extended Treatment Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Expected Legitimizing Effect
H1:	Apology > No Response (Control)
H2:	Implementation > No Response (Control)
H3:	Implementation > Apology
H4:	Interaction > No Response (Control)
H5:	Interaction > Apology
H6:	Interaction > Implementation
Findings	

Table 8 Extended Experimental Differences

	Apology v. Control	Implementation v. Control	Implementation v. Apology	Interaction v. Control	Interaction v. Apology	Interaction v. Implementation
Warmth	7.2***	13.5***	6.2***	13.9***	5.7***	-.23
Trust	1.6***	2.3***	0.75*	2.4***	0.8*	0.07
Support	1.2**	2.1***	0.91*	1.9***	0.61	-0.25
Protest	-0.13	-0.12	0.02	-0.15	0.04	0.02
n=	695	670	677	679	686	687

Note: *** = $p < 0.001$; ** = $p < 0.01$; * = $p < 0.05$. All models controlling for education, gender, ideology, income, and linked fate. All models OLS except for likelihood to protest which is logit predicting yes/no (1/0). Interaction refers to the treatment group that read about policy implementation and an apology instead of one or the other.

Table 8 shows the results for the extended experiment. All models include the control variables used in chapter 5 and show unstandardized coefficients.

These results show more consistency and are more easily interpreted than the original experiment. For hypotheses 1 and 2, either apologizing or implementing community policing increased all measures of legitimacy (warmth, trust, and support) relative to no response. This indicates that legitimacy could be improved through either approach, although coefficients in table 8 indicate that implementation alone will likely be more legitimizing than apologizing alone. When comparing policy implementation to apology for hypothesis three, table 8 shows that implementation provides additional warmth (6.2), trust (0.75), and support (0.91) compared to the apology. This supports hypothesis three. Together, hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 results indicate that while apologizing or policy implementation will increase police legitimacy among African Americans relative to no response, implementation would impart more legitimacy than apologizing if only one could be chosen.

Regressions show support for hypothesis 4, that a combination of implementation and apology provides legitimacy relative to no response. Hypothesis 5, that both apologizing and implementation will improve legitimacy relative only to an apology, finds only

partial support. While those who read both an apology and policy implementation had improved warmth and trust relative to those who read only the apology, they did not have more support. Adding implementation to an apology provides additional legitimizing effects relative to only an apology, but only partial effects. Finally, hypothesis 6 found no support. In the presence of implementation, apologizing provided no additional legitimacy.

Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 suggest an independent legitimizing effect from both apologizing and policy implementation with a stronger effect from implementation. Hypothesis 4 supports the two in conjunction as legitimizing relative to no response. The results for hypothesis 5 suggest that when apologizing and policy implementation are in combination and compared to an apology that the additional implementation provides partial benefits. Adding implementation to an apology provides legitimacy, but in a less consistent way than other comparisons by providing no improved support. Finally the results for hypothesis 6, comparing implementation and apology to only implementation, suggest that implementation and apology is not more legitimizing than implementation without apology. Overall, while both apologizing and implementation have effects, implementation is the more consistently legitimizing approach.

Table 9 below shows results for the extended hypotheses, summarizing these findings. It is worth noting that when responding to the question “Would you attend a protest in the community of Wellsville organized by the activist in the scenario?” no treatment was effective in reducing self-reported likelihood to protest. About 75% of respondents indicated that they would attend that protest, without significant variation between treatment groups. This may create expectations for future behavior around police

controversies involving race. While responses to public charges of police racism may be effective to improve police legitimacy, it may be those responses will be insufficient to prevent protests after controversy.

Table 9 Extended Treatment Hypotheses Results

Hypothesis	Expected Legitimizing Effects	Support
H1:	Only Apology > No Response (Control)	Supported
H2:	Only Implementation > No Response (Control)	Supported
H3:	Only Implementation > Only Apology	Supported
H4:	Interaction > No Response (Control)	Supported
H5:	Interaction > Only Apology	Partial
H6:	Interaction > Only Implementation	Not Supported

Conclusion

Taken together, these findings suggest that both apologizing and policy implementation could provide some legitimacy for policing. Apologizing directly considers the racist history of policing, and in doing so may be able to increase policing's legitimacy among African Americans. Limited to one choice, only policy implementation provides superior legitimizing effects compared to only apologizing. Consistent with the initial experiment, implementation seems to be key to building legitimacy lost to the racist history of policing. Apologies provide an independent effect, but implementation is superior. Moreover, as indicated by the failure to support hypothesis 6, in the presence of successful policy implementation an additional apology simply provides no additional effects.

Overall, these results indicate a limited role for apologizing in public management but also emphasize the importance of policy implementation over time. Hypotheses one and two provide support for either apology or policy implementation in the face of racial controversy, as either will likely improve legitimacy relative to no response. Hypothesis three suggests that, between the two options, successful policy implementation provides

more legitimacy. Successful policy implementation is challenging but provides legitimizing rewards when accomplished. Hypothesis five suggests that if an apology is given, further legitimacy can be gained from successful implementation. This is not true for the results of the unsupported hypothesis six, which suggested that in the presence of successful implementation that an apology provides no further legitimacy.

The relationship between apologizing, implementation, and legitimacy is thus complex. Compared to no response, apologizing legitimizes. However, compared to successful implementation, an additional apology is not necessary to further legitimize. Moreover, it is exactly in the context of a police department that cannot provide future policy reform implementation that an apology alone would not legitimize, because it could be interpreted cynically by the people it serves. A department with which people have grown so cynical that a lack of reform implementation is expected will likely be seen cynically enough that an apology will not be trusted. While apologizing has a role in public administration these findings highlight the importance of implementation for public administration, which has the power to demonstrate what government is like through its actions over time rather than its words in the moment.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

Recent protests demonstrate the need for police reform. It has dangerously low legitimacy among African Americans who have been subject to generations of inequitable policing. That the history of the United States, and especially policing, feeds into African Americans' current views of the police does not seem to be in doubt. When clients see police departments as legitimate, they are more likely to follow police commands and less likely to engage in unlawfulness – that policing's history creates legitimacy problems today is a serious concern for police operations.

Policing may gain some legitimacy improvements among African Americans from apologizing for its history, but this research suggests that durable legitimacy improvements will likely require more concrete reform implementation that is sustained over time. Community policing – an approach to policing where officers, managers, community groups, and citizens work together to identify community problems and solve crimes – appears to be tenable. This research indicated that apologizing with community policing reform might not be an optimally effective legitimacy strategy without actually implemented reform. Policy implementation sustained over time then becomes substantially important to improve government's legitimacy. While government cannot change its past, it has the ability to create its future. By demonstrating an understanding of what is important to citizens through its actions over time, policing can gain legitimacy in a way that is untrue for apologizing. Policing's history cannot be changed, but how people see police going forward can be changed.

Policing's History, Community Policing, and Apologia

From its inception, policing has enforced racial inequity in the United States. The earliest police in the United States worked to police slaves, police continued to enforce racial

stratification, and issues between African American communities and police continue to this day. The racist history of policing creates legitimacy problems today as African Americans learn from family, education, and popular culture that today's policing is in line with policing's past.

Scholarly literature and theorizing informed that policing's history would be important to policing today, and examination of a case and interviews showed that such a phenomenon exists among at least some African American police clients. Activists frequently cited policing's history as a serious force in structuring policing today. Several interview participants expressed similar themes, that policing's history was important to how they understand police today. The history of policing' informs African Americans views of the police, leading to negative expectations for police interactions and lowered legitimacy.

Apologia

Apologia is a novel approach to government reconciliation that directly addresses the historical portion of police legitimacy. By considering policing's history during reform, apologies could address one aspect of policing legitimacy that no other theory addresses. Because apologia addresses relationships between police officers while accounting for specific historical atrocities, apologia operates in a way no other reform does. While community policing has shown promise and addresses many concerns that African Americans might have about the police, it does not address policing's history. By including apologia as a supplement, I hoped to strengthen community policing as a legitimacy strategy.

There were reasons to believe an apology might not be effective. First and most saliently, apologia is only words that try to account for a materially important history. Apologia cannot un-whip enslaved people, did not secure African American suffrage, and will not bring George Floyd back to life. When facing the enormous weight of historical police inequity, it was always possible that apologia would cower in comparison. It may have always been that actions speak louder than words. Beyond that, racial apologia in the United States has received significant pushback in the past, indicating that it may carry costs. Because apologia is novel, largely untested, and potentially effective, I considered it worthwhile to research its potential.

Experimental Testing

Community policing does not address policing's history but could improve policing's legitimacy, creating additional context in which to understand apology's potential legitimizing effect. This drove the hypothesis in chapter three and the experiment designed to test it. The experimental design allowed for causal identification of apologia's effects as a supplement to community policing. The hypothesis was based on observations of reform and supported by literature and other evidence.

The experimental randomization appeared to be successful. Two groups of African Americans were presented with community policing reform with and without an apologetic supplement. Results were suggestive but so small as to be inconsequential. Apologizing provided only tiny legitimacy improvements among African Americans. While apologizing may have had some small effect and did not worsen legitimacy, it seems that going on to implement reform is critical for maintaining police legitimacy. The core of participant comments indicated that policy implemented over time was key to

improving police legitimacy. The second experiment found that apologizing might provide additional legitimacy relative to no response, but again found that policy implementation will likely be key to improved police legitimacy. Comparatively, policy implementation provides greater legitimacy than apologizing. Additionally, including policy implementation with an apology provides legitimacy in a way that is not true for including an apology with policy implementation.

Conclusion

Thus, an apologetic supplement seems insufficient to address the racial history of policing. It could be a good start and preferable to no response, but it is not a panacea for policing to improve its legitimacy among African Americans today. Instead, police departments should begin testing other strategies and evaluating their effectiveness. Community policing policy is one policy that could improve policing's legitimacy, but as noted there are myriad ideas for reform. Policing's history may hang over its head forever, but it may not be too late to alleviate some of its contemporary effects. History cannot be changed but the legitimacy problems it creates might very well be solved. Policy implementation will be key as departments will have to prove the sincerity of their desire for reconciliation and reform. Community policing reform or other policy properly implemented may be the first step.

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Appendix: Dependent variable and linked fate wording and scaling

Initial Experiment

Wellsville police feeling thermometer (0-100)

Police support (4-20; strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- I would have a great deal of respect for the Wellsville police (1-5)
- On the whole I would think that Wellsville police officers are honest (1-5)
- I would be proud of the Wellsville police (1-5)
- I would feel that I should support the Wellsville police (1-5)

Trust in police (5-25 strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- I would believe that the Wellsville police department would do what's legal (1-5)
- I believe the police chief's communication was sincere (1-5)
- I would believe that the Wellsville police department would try to help people like me (1-5)
- I would trust the Wellsville police to do the right thing (1-5)
- I would have confidence in the Wellsville police (1-5)

Linked Fate (0-3)

- How much do you think that what happens to Black people in this country will have something to do with what happens in your life?

Extended Experiment

Wellsville police feeling thermometer (0-100)

Police support (10-40; strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- Overall, Wellsville officers are legitimate authorities and people should obey the decisions they make (1-4)
- I should do what the Wellsville police in my neighborhood tell me to do even if I disagree with their decisions (1-4)
- I trust the Wellsville police to make decisions that are good for everyone in the neighborhood (1-4)
- I have confidence that the Wellsville police can do their job well (1-4)
- The Wellsville police in my neighborhood are often dishonest (1-4; reverse coded)
- My feelings about right and wrong usually agree with the laws that the Wellsville police enforce (1-4)
- The Wellsville police have the same sense of right and wrong as I do (1-4)
- The Wellsville police stand up for values that are important to me (1-4)
- The Wellsville police usually act in ways consistent with my own ideas about what is right and wrong (1-4)

- The Wellsville police and I want the same things for my community (1-4)

Trust in police (5-25 strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- I would believe that the Wellsville police department would do what's legal (1-5)
- I believe the police chief's communication was sincere (1-5)
- I would believe that the Wellsville police department would try to help people like me (1-5)
- I would trust the Wellsville police to do the right thing (1-5)
- I would have confidence in the Wellsville police (1-5)

Protest (Yes/no)

- If you lived in Wellsville and the activist from the story organized a protest against the police department after these events, would you attend?

Linked Fate (0-3)

- How much do you think that what happens to Black people in this country will have something to do with what happens in your life?

VITA

Mark Benton was born in Freeburg Illinois. After completing his BA in Sociology at Saint Louis University, he worked a year with Americorps VISTA as a program evaluator at Gene Slays' Girls and Boys Club. After finishing his term, he continued his education at Saint Louis University where he received his Master's in Public Administration and ultimately his PhD at the Truman School of Public Affairs in The University of Missouri – Columbia. Mark has researched racial inequity and its solutions in government, including how the city planning discipline contributed to racial segregation and the demonization of Black populations. His current research examines racial inequity in the criminal justice system, particularly in policing. In addition to his research, Mark regularly consults with state and local governments on various research and evaluation projects.