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Policing for the Community

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Jeffrey Munoz
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Abstract

As a society, we are currently in a period of time where the community reflects their dissatisfaction with law enforcement by staging protests, organizing groups who demand change and unfortunately at times displaying a degree of violence towards authority. These issues are products of controversial police shootings like those of the killings of Tamir rice, Freddie Gray and Eric Garner in which all demonstrated a reasonable degree of uncertainty. The fact of the matter lies within the officers' actions as they manifest an inherent racial bias seen one to many times by populations that have been oppressed throughout history. The retaliation by community members in combination with police departments' responsibility to act, has generated a deep disconnect between communities and law enforcement making it very difficult for law enforcement to effectively carry out their duties. As a result, many police departments around the country have tackled the pending issue by adopting a policing strategy known as community policing. The main goal of community policing is to simply maintain and achieve a strong relationship with members of the community in efforts to prevent crime, increase community satisfaction, build trust and solve quality of life issues. This is done by implementing a problem-solving approach to community issues and using community members as resources to better serve their needs. To learn more about this method, I partnered with the University of Rhode Island Police Department so I can experience first-hand, the effectiveness of this strategy. The purpose of this project is to learn effective strategies and assess the true success of the community policing model so that it can be implemented at a nationwide level.

Additionally, I will examine specifically, the established practices at the University of Rhode Island and determine their effectiveness at following the community policing model.