The New Parochialism: The Implications of the Beltway Case for Arguments Concerning Informal Social Control

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This article presents a five-year ethnographic study of informal social control in the Chicago neighborhood “Beltway,” where controls at the private and what has traditionally been known as the parochial level are weaker and less important than heretofore assumed. In addition, the parochial and the public arenas are inseparable from each other, not independent as others have argued. Instead, informal social control in Beltway is characterized by what the author calls the “new parochialism,” where diminished private and traditionally parochial forms of social control are replaced by a combination of parochial and public controls. The new parochialism is occasioned by wider societal and local changes, and the concept is shown to have theoretical and empirical implications.

INTRODUCTION

What do people do to control crime and disorder? The question of what ordinary citizens do to keep where they live free from crime and disorder—that is, how people practice informal social control—is one that has attracted the interest of scholars for decades (see, e.g., Jacobs 1962; Sampson

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1997; Shaw and McKay 1942). Moreover, recent discussions of the notion of collective efficacy (Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls 1997) and the reworking of social capital (Sampson, Morenoff, and Earls 1999) have touted the beneficent properties of informal social control. Despite the popularity of the concept, however, there have been few microlevel studies of how informal social control works over time. In this article, I attempt to follow in the tradition of the Chicago school (see, e.g., Anderson 1923; Cressey 1932; Frazier 1932; Hiller 1928; Reckless 1933; Wirth 1928; Zorbaugh 1929) by using an extended ethnographic case study (Burawoy 1991; Van Velsen 1967) of the Beltway neighborhood in Chicago to discuss the process of informal social control (Abbott 1997). In so doing I hope to add to what we have learned from previous studies (Merry 1981; Sampson and Groves 1989; Sullivan 1989; Suttles 1968; Warner and Rountree 1997) and theoretical arguments (Black 1989; Bursik and Grasmick 1993; Gibbs 1994; Granovetter 1973; Sampson 1997) that have examined informal social control, and I wish to suggest some future directions for theory and research.

In their statement of social disorganization theory, Shaw and McKay (1942) first postulated that regulatory activities carried on by neighborhood residents can impede criminal and delinquent behavior, and indeed recent reformulation of the notion of social disorganization (see Bursik 1988; Bursik and Grasmick 1993, 1995; Hunter 1985; Sampson 1988, 1997; Sampson and Groves 1989) has emphasized the “systemic” nature of these internal controls (Janowitz 1975; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974). The systemic model holds that the structure of relational networks, or density of social ties, determines the extent to which a neighborhood can engage in self-regulation (Janowitz 1975). I argue that the evidence from Beltway would seem to question the centrality of dense social ties in the implementation of informal social control. Informal social control in Beltway works without dense network ties because the strategies that are employed there do not owe their existence or their efficacy to social ties. The Beltway case studies illustrate how informal social control can work in a neighborhood that is not characterized by dense social ties but rather where community organizations and their links with public agencies outside the neighborhood facilitate action by citizens to control crime and disorder. The Beltway data should be viewed in the "context of discovery" (Fagan

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1 There are of course notable exceptions. Suttles's (1968) hugely influential study does discuss informal social control, as does Merry (1981), Anderson (1990), Pattillo-McCoy (1999), and Sullivan (1989). However, informal social control does not form the central focus of these studies and in this respect the present work differs.

2 Beltway is a white, working-class and lower-middle-class neighborhood located on the edge of Chicago. The name Beltway is a pseudonym. All of the names of people and places in this article have been changed to preserve anonymity.

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1996) that has implications for how we think not only about informal social control but also with respect to broader issues of civic engagement (Putnam 2000) and citizen involvement in community policing and order maintenance strategies (Kelling and Coles 1996; Skogan and Hartnett 1997).

Much of the research that has utilized the systemic theory has focused on three basic types of networks derived from Hunter’s (1985) typology of private, parochial, and public spheres of social control (see, e.g., Bursik and Grasmick 1993, 1995; Warner and Rountree 1997; Rountree and Warner 1999). Private networks center on family, kinship, and intimate friendship groups; parochial networks are less intimate, secondary relationships, such as community organizations; and public networks are the links to institutions and groups outside the neighborhood (Bursik 1999). Effective informal social control occurs where private, parochial, and public controls act together and such control is facilitated by the strength of the social networks that underpin each sphere.

In this article I will draw on five years of qualitative ethnographic research in the Beltway neighborhood to examine informal social control at the private, parochial, and public levels. I begin with a discussion of the literature that examines how neighborhood conditions lead to crime via the lack of social control, situating my own work within this tradition. Second, I outline the methodology of the project and provide a description of the neighborhood. Next, I discuss the social organizational structure of Beltway and describe the general features of informal social control in terms of Hunter’s typology. Finally, I present a number of case studies that further depict informal social control in Beltway and I discuss the significance of these findings.

Specifically, I present two major findings that have implications for how we think about informal social control. First, I illustrate that controls at the private and what we traditionally have known as the parochial level can be weaker and less important than we have heretofore assumed. Many two-parent families in Beltway are dual-earner families where both the mother and the father work outside the home (Carr and Pashup 2002) and this weakens familial control because parents that work are home less. With respect to what we have come to know as parochial control (namely collective supervision of youth and intervention when trouble occurs), the supervision of young people in Beltway is age graded and, significantly, most Beltway residents do not collectively supervise teenagers. Similarly, Beltway residents are reticent to directly intervene in teen disputes and would prefer to call 911 (an indirect intervention) to report misbehaving teens rather than directly deal with the incidents.4 Second,

4 In the in-depth interviews that I conducted, I asked residents what they would do
I demonstrate that the parochial and the public arenas are inseparable from each other, not independent as other scholars have argued (see Bursik and Grasmick 1993). I explain these two findings by arguing that informal social control in Beltway is characterized by what I call the “new parochialism,” where diminished private and traditionally parochial forms of social control are replaced by a set of behaviors that are a combination of parochial and public controls. Instead of supervision and direct physical intervention in disputes, Beltway residents engage in behaviors that are more secure and facilitated by actors from the public sphere of control. I describe the case studies of the Beltway Night Patrol, the neighborhood problem-solving group, and the Court Advocacy Program as illustrations of the new parochialism and how it works.

The new parochialism encompasses the informal social control behaviors engaged in by citizens at the parochial or neighborhood level of control but facilitated by agents from the public sphere. For example, the actions of the neighborhood problem-solving group who utilize the local politicians and city bureaucracy to close down a tavern that is notorious for creating crime and disorder illustrates the new parochialism. Residents who engage in these actions want to control crime and disorder, but they also fear repercussions from their personal involvement. Beltway residents want to engage in secure activism and, while Beltway does not have a high crime rate relative to other neighborhoods in Chicago, many residents are afraid to involve themselves directly in informal social control (see Skogan [1990] for a discussion of how residents adapt to a fearful environment). In the Beltway case some residents get involved in organizations that work to keep the neighborhood free from crime. The new parochialism and the behaviors associated with it are neither wholly parochial nor public controls; instead there is a partnership between parochial and public spheres. The new parochialism is that set of practices that creates solutions at the parochial level but owes its existence and its efficacy to the intervention of institutions and groups from outside the neighborhood. Further, the activities of residents in Beltway seem to suggest that dense social network ties are not wholly necessary for effective control. Beltway residents are not closely tied with each other, and this may be one of the reasons that private forms of control, such as collective supervision of neighborhood children and intervention in disputes, are rare. However, I would suggest that while people who are not closely tied

if they witnessed a group of teens misbehaving. Thirty-six out of 40 (90%) said that they would call 911 rather than deal with the incident themselves. Of the remainder, two said they would deal with the incident themselves, and two said that it would depend on the situation.

5 The period 1994 to 1995, e.g., Beltway ranked in the lowest quintile of community areas in Chicago in terms of overall violent crime rate.
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may not supervise or intervene, they may engage in other behaviors designed to help them live in an area free from crime (a finding echoed by Bursik [1999]). The lack of close ties may indeed be partly responsible for some residents’ fear of reprisals if they get personally involved in informal social control. Involvement in a neighborhood organization offers a solution for those residents that want to be civically engaged but would prefer to do so as part of a group, not as individuals.

The new parochialism then would seem to undermine some of the central assumptions of the systemic model. In the first place, strong social ties do not appear to be crucial to informal social control. Beltway is not characterized by dense interpersonal networks; yet, as the case studies detailed later will illustrate, residents engage in successful campaigns aimed at controlling crime and disorder in the neighborhood. Second, the spheres of control, specifically the parochial and the public, are not independent of each other, but rather there is a mutual interplay between them. Ultimately, the partnership between the parochial and public spheres appears to be crucial for effective informal social control. Before discussing the methods used in the study and describing Beltway, I will explain how this work contributes to the literature on crime in general and to social disorganization research in particular.

NEIGHBORHOODS AND CRIME: THE SALIENCE OF INFORMAL SOCIAL CONTROL

The salience of informal social control for self-regulation generally, and for the control of crime specifically, is evident on the theoretical level. It is almost common sense to say that if the members of the community regulate behaviors and sanction deviants then there will be less deviation from established norms. Since Shaw and McKay’s (1942) first statement of the theory of social disorganization and Jane Jacobs’ (1962) propositions regarding surveillance and intervention, the concept of informal social control has been central to the study of neighborhoods and crime (Bursik 1999; Girling, Loader, and Sparks 2000; Greenberg, Rohe, and Williams 1985; Reiss 1986; Sampson and Groves 1989; Skogan 1988; Stark 1987; Taub, Taylor, and Dunham 1984), communities and crime prevention (Bennett and Lavrakas 1989; Bennett 1987, 1989, 1990; Crel et al. 1977; Crawford 1995; DuBow and Podolefsky 1982; Garofalo and McLeod 1989;

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6 This finding echoes similar recent work by Bellair (1997) and Warner and Rountree (1997) and the observation by Granovetter (1973) about the strength of weak ties. In addition, Fischer’s (1982) diversity of communities perspective indicates that even in dense urban settlements community may not be lost (Wellman 1979), and even weak ties can facilitate supportive networks.
Hope and Shaw 1988; Lavrakas 1985; Lavrakas and Herz 1982; Rosenbaum 1988), and community-policing initiatives (Fielding 1995; Kelling 1987; Skogan 1990; Skogan and Hartnett 1997; Wilson and Kelling 1982). Moreover, recent work by Sampson (1997) has argued for a recasting of social (dis)organization theory that will focus on informal social control as the key neighborhood process. However, there have been few in-depth examinations of how informal social control as a process works over time (notable exceptions are Merry 1981; Pattillo 1998; Pattillo-McCoy 1999; Suttles 1968; Sullivan 1989). Much of what we do know about informal social control has been inferred from large-scale surveys, such as the British Crime Survey or, more recently, the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods. These “big science” projects (Short 1998) have certainly illustrated what has been evident in previous ethnographic accounts of neighborhoods (Anderson 1990; Gans 1962, 1967; Kefalas 2003; Merry 1981; Stack 1974; Whyte 1981)—namely, that community processes are important for understanding a range of action within the community, among them the informal control of crime and deviance. In addition to the big science projects, other studies have examined the impact of informal social control on crime, territoriality, and social ties (e.g., Greenberg et al. 1985; Sampson and Groves 1989; Sullivan 1989; Warner and Rountree 1997), and there have been recent theoretical statements about the phenomenon (Stark 1987; Black 1989; Gibbs 1994). Furthermore, a multiplicity of theories of the relationship between neighborhoods and crime have posited the beneficent properties of informal

7 A good recent example of such work is that by Morenoff, Raudenbush, and Sampson (2001), which examines the spatial dynamics of urban violence, utilizing data from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods.

8 Each of these theoretical statements has a different take on the role of informal social control. Stark (1987), for example, argues for a return to the ecological framework that explains deviance not in terms of kinds of people, but rather as a kinds of places argument. Stark outlines 30 propositions of his theory of deviant places, and he argues that essential aggregate characteristics such as poverty, density, and transience have impacts on the moral order of neighborhoods. One of the possible responses to poverty, transience, density or dilapidation is diminished social control, which can then further amplify the “volume of deviance” (Stark 1987, p. 895). Informal social control for Stark, then, is the result of supranighborhood characteristics, and in turn diminished social control can contribute to further deviance and crime. Black (1989) outlines a theory of social control that argues for the central role of the socialization process. He also discusses specific processes such as gossip and avoidance that function as effective informal controls on behavior. Gibbs (1994) advances a general theory of control, which, he argues, is the central sociological notion. His expansive work includes discussion of a wide variety of social controls. For example, he distinguishes seven basic types of control over human behavior, which enhances the scope of the concept of control. The seven types are proximate control, sequential control, referential social control, allegiative social control, vicarious social control, modulative social control, and preclusive social control (Gibbs 1994, pp. 46–57).
social control (Bursik and Grasmick 1993; Granovetter 1973; Hunter 1985; Jacobs 1962; Kornhauser 1978; Sampson 1997; Sampson and Wilson 1995; Skogan 1990; Shaw and McKay 1942; Wilson and Kelling 1982). However, social disorganization theorists first posited that neighborhood conditions lead to crime in the absence of social control, and this project is embedded in this perspective.

Shaw and McKay's (1942) statement of social disorganization theory held that certain neighborhoods have a diminished capacity to regulate the behavior of juveniles. In particular, they argued that the residents of high poverty neighborhoods have difficulty regulating the behavior of juveniles because such neighborhoods are also characterized by high levels of residential mobility and a high degree of ethnic and radical heterogeneity (Bursik 1999; Kornhauser 1978; Shaw and McKay 1942). In this view, neighborhoods that have limited capacity to regulate the behavior of juveniles are socially disorganized. The regulation of behavior, or informal social control, then is key to preventing crime and delinquency. The social disorganization perspective has persisted in spite of a number of critical challenges (see, e.g., Jonassen 1949; Kobrin 1971). While Bursik (1988) acknowledges some of the problems with the original formulation of social disorganization theory (see also Kornhauser 1978), he argues that the essential thrust of Shaw and McKay's thesis concerning the importance of internal neighborhood controls remains pertinent. Similarly, Sampson's (1997) proposal for a reconceptualization of social (dis)organization argues for the centrality of informal social control. Thus, while social disorganization theory has received its fair share of criticism (e.g., Reiss 1986), many studies have sought to specify the nature of neighborhood processes and their relationship to crime and delinquency. In particular, the social disorganization framework has been recast in terms of the systemic theory of control.

The systemic theory is based on the work of Kasarda and Janowitz (1974) where they state that "local community is . . . a complex system of friendship and kinship networks and formal and informal associational ties rooted in family life and ongoing socialization processes" (p. 329). The complex of network social ties mediates between neighborhood structural variables, length of residence for example, and outcomes for the community, among them the informal control of crime. Janowitz (1975) specifically ties the concept of informal social control to systemic theory when he argues for a return to what he considers the classical usage of social control; namely, the capacity for a group to engage in self-regulation. Self-regulation is achieved through the density of neighborhood social ties that mediate between the structural variables of poverty, residential mobility and ethnic and racial heterogeneity, and crime rates (Bursik and Grasmick 1993). Neighborhoods that have a high rate of residential instability, or
population turnover, have difficulty establishing stable relational networks that serve as the foundation for informal social control. Conversely, residentially stable neighborhoods with dense and widespread friendship and associational ties have the greater potential for informal social control. The systemic theory redefines social disorganization "as the regulatory capacity of a neighborhood that is imbedded in the structure of that community's affiliational, interactional and communication ties among its residents" (Bursik 1999, p. 86).

The systemic theory of neighborhood organization has enabled scholars to test the theory of social disorganization. The evidence in support of the disorganization framework has been mixed. For example, Sampson and Groves (1989) find in their analysis of the British Crime Survey that communities with extensive friendship networks, high organizational participation, and effective control of teen peer groups have lower than average rates of burglary. They also find that the presence of unsupervised teen groups in a neighborhood has direct positive effects on rates of both violence and damage to property. However, Warner and Rountree (1997), in their analysis of Seattle neighborhoods, find that social ties do not have strong effects on crime rates. In the case of burglary, strong social ties seem to have positive effects on burglary rates. Bellair (1997) examines the effects of social interaction on crime and finds that frequent and even infrequent interaction among neighbors is important for establishing community controls. The finding that weak ties can be effective in crime control (also provided by Granovetter 1973) is interesting because it may speak to processes beyond interaction and the oft-cited systemic control practices of supervision, surveillance, and intervention. While Bellair (1997, p. 697) notes that people who interact infrequently may supervise and intervene, I would suggest that people who are not closely tied may not supervise and intervene but may engage in other behaviors that contribute to community controls. In other words, it may be possible to have effective informal social control without dense interpersonal networks. The latter point has been recently underscored by Morenoff et al. (2001), who posit that there are "reasons to problematize the process by which

9 Recently, Veysey and Messner (2000) have argued that Sampson and Groves may have overstated the support for social disorganization theory in their analysis of the British Crime Survey data. After a reanalysis of the data, Veysey and Messner (2000) argue that the mediating effect of social disorganization variables is not as strong as Sampson and Groves originally argued, and, rather than a single construct, social disorganization may represent several mechanisms. In particular, Veysey and Messner state that the strong effect of unsupervised teens on crime may not in fact be supportive of social disorganization, and they posit the salience of learning theory for explaining the effect of unsupervised peer groups. While Veysey and Messner (2000) do not advocate abandoning social disorganization theory, they underscore the need for further theoretical and empirical specification.
strong social ties translate into low crime rates" (p. 519). Specifically, Morenoff and his colleagues draw on Wilson’s (1996) insight that in many impoverished neighborhoods high degrees of social integration and low levels of informal control coincide, mainly owing to the social isolation of residents and the consequent inability to tap into extra-community resources. Sampson and his colleagues (Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls 1997; Sampson, Morenoff, and Earls 1999) argue that we should direct our attention to mechanisms that can facilitate social control in the absence of strong ties; to wit, they posit the notion of collective efficacy, which is the linkage of trust and cohesion with shared expectations for control (Morenoff et al. 2001). These authors’ emphasis on the action residents are capable of rather than on the potential for action that inheres in social ties prefigures the present extended case-study analysis, which seeks to provide additional clarification as to the workings of neighborhood informal social control.

Bursik and Grasmick (1993) use the systemic model as their baseline for discussing effective neighborhood control (Hunter 1985), adding that the systemic model relies on the assumption that people who live in a neighborhood share a common goal of living in an area relatively free of crime (Bursik and Grasmick 1993, p. 15; Sampson 1997). Hunter’s (1985) typology of private, parochial, and public spheres, each with an attendant form of social control, focuses our attention on the maintenance of effective social control at the neighborhood level. It is the articulation of private, parochial, and public controls that results in effective neighborhood social control. Bursik and Grasmick (1993) utilize the Hunter framework in their discussion of the dimensions of effective control and summarize it thus:

[Hunter’s] most basic order of control is at the “private” level, which is grounded in the intimate informal primary groups that exist in the area. . . . The second level of control . . . is called the “parochial” order and represents the effects of the broader local interpersonal networks and the interlocking of local institutions, such as stores, schools, churches and voluntary organizations. That is, whereas the private order refers to relationships among friends, the parochial order refers to relationships among neighbors who do not have the same sentimental attachment. . . . [Finally, there is] the “public” level of social control, which focuses on the ability of the community to secure public goods and services that are allocated by agencies located outside the neighborhood. The external resources can take two basic forms . . . municipal service bureaucracies . . . [and] the police department. (Bursik and Grasmick 1993, pp. 16–17)

The Hunter typology offers a useful heuristic to examine effective informal social control. If social control is to be effective, then all three levels—private, parochial, and public—must function together. Do private, parochial, and public forms of control act together in the Chicago
neighborhood of Beltway? In what follows I will present a number of case studies that demonstrate effective informal social control in the neighborhood, and I will document the contribution of the various levels of control to these efforts.

THE STUDY

I collected the data for this study over a five-year period from 1993 to 1998. For the first two and a half years the research was part of the Comparative Neighborhood Study (CNS) at the University of Chicago. The CNS focused on four working-class lower-middle-class neighborhoods in Chicago: Archer Park, a predominantly Mexican community; Beltway, a white neighborhood; Dover, a neighborhood in transition from white to Mexican; and Groveland, an African-American neighborhood. The CNS set out to study the social organization of each neighborhood, with an emphasis on the roles of race, racial discourse, and culture. In addition to the two and a half years of the CNS, I spent an additional two and a half years in Beltway, studying informal social control specifically.

The data were collected using a variety of methods. The principal source of the CNS data was intensive participant observation in the local schools, parks, restaurants, bars, and homes of each neighborhood (Burgess 1995; Spradley 1979; Stewart 1998). Field-workers attended meetings of local organizations, community-policing groups, and business associations, and they engaged in activities that ranged from volunteering in the park district to helping out on election campaigns. Much of the participant observation involved weekly and biweekly interactions with the same informants. Researchers were able to gain the confidence of local residents, and this familiarity and trust facilitated frank conversations about family, crime, politics, aspirations, and ethnic/race relations. In addition to the participant observation in Beltway, the CNS research team conducted 31 interviews with local residents and a further 8 with important institutional actors in the neighborhood who did not reside there.10 There were a number of specific interview guides utilized that were designed to elicit information on a broad range of topics. The CNS fieldwork was continually reflexive; each situation would bring new questions to investigate, and the analysis of field notes was carried on simultaneously with the fieldwork. We coded our field notes by subject category, which aided in

10 The research team in Beltway consisted of two field-workers, one male and one female. The CNS principal investigators felt that having male and female field-workers could aid in gaining access to gendered spaces in the field. When the CNS research was completed, both field-workers continued their research in Beltway.
the identification of patterns in the data. We also conducted an exhaustive search of three daily Chicago papers—the Chicago Tribune, the Chicago Sun-Times, and the Daily Southtown—as well as of the local weekly papers for articles that pertained to Beltway itself or to issues relevant to the neighborhood. We minimized the problem of selectivity by the range of interactions and data sources utilized in each field site.

The informal social control study that I carried out in Beltway entailed a more directed reflexive approach. At the conclusion of the CNS fieldwork, I stayed in Beltway specifically to study informal social control. I paid special attention to the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) initiative in Beltway,¹¹ and I attended beat meetings, spoke with police officers, and became involved with the Beltway problem-solving group and the Beltway Night Patrol (BNP) neighborhood watch group, both of which were started under the auspices of CAPS. I volunteered with the problem-solving group, and I went out on patrol every month for 18 months with the BNP. Being a participant not only afforded me the opportunity to observe these processes over time; it also permitted me to gain the confidence of the people in the problem-solving and neighborhood

¹¹ The CAPS program began in five prototype police districts in April 1993 and was expanded to the remaining 20 districts in the city 18 months later. There are four basic elements to CAPS that set it apart from traditional policing methods: proactive problem-solving as opposed to reactive policing; partnership with the community rather than police officers’ working alone; support of other city agencies, a multiagency rather than monoagency approach to problems, and, finally, departmentwide change in the police department to allow it to become more decentralized, flexible, and supportive of the CAPS program (Research and Development Division 1995). CAPS, then, has a number of facets that distinguish it from other community-policing programs (Skogan and Hartnett 1997). For a start, the whole police department was involved in the program; it was not just a specialized unit. Second, each of the 25 districts was divided into beat areas, 279 in all, with each area having approximately 10,000 inhabitants and 4,100 households. Beat officers were assigned to work certain beats and were given a mandate to get to know their beat area and its problems. They are expected to stay in their beat area for the majority of their shift, responding to calls and working on local problems. The beat officers are augmented in their task by rapid response teams, which serve a whole district and respond to the bulk of the 911 calls, and by tactical officers. These operational procedures help maintain beat integrity by allowing beat officers to spend most of their time working on their beat area. The third area that differentiates CAPS from other community-policing programs is the serious commitment to training that was done in order to underscore the professionalism of community policing. The fourth, and for my purposes most important, characteristic of CAPS was the central role envisioned for the community in the CAPS program. The assumption is that the police cannot solve problems on their own and thus they require the assistance of the public in their problem-solving efforts. The community component of CAPS was realized initially in two fora: The regular monthly or bimonthly beat meetings, where the beat officers meet with community members to discuss crime and disorder problems in the area, and the meetings of a district advisory committee, where community leaders meet with district commanders and staff to develop joint police-citizen plans to tackle problems.
watch groups. I conducted in-depth interviews with 28 of the approximately 33 active members of the BNP. The interviews were designed to focus on informal social control processes and on crime in Beltway, and my interview guide used open-ended questions primarily in which I asked people to elaborate on issues rather than restrict them to a set of predetermined answers (Spradley 1979). In addition, I used the same guide to interview a further 12 neighborhood activists, identified as people who are actively involved in a neighborhood organization but who are not members of the BNP.

The methods employed in the study allowed me to get at the process of informal social control. Indeed, it was fortuitous that the fieldwork in Beltway did not initially concentrate on informal social control. Instead, in the manner of all good emergent themes (Glaser and Strauss 1967), the topic of informal social control sprang forth from the fieldwork. By the time I narrowed my focus in the field, I had already fostered relationships with several residents who were active in the neighborhood, and, consequently, I was well known in Beltway. My key informants helped me enormously in setting up the fieldwork, and the five-year time frame also allowed me the luxury of observing events, institutions, and people over an extended period of time, which is crucial to capturing process. Informal social control can be better understood if we see how it actually plays out over the course of several years. Quantitative methods alone would not have permitted me to glean such detailed, rich data about the process, and, ultimately, I think that we can better quantify a phenomenon such as informal social control when we know more about how it works over time.

There are well-documented difficulties with qualitative research (see, e.g., Reiss 1986). It is true that one case cannot tell the whole story about any phenomenon, but I think that the Beltway case can tell us a great deal about informal social control. By offering a detailed picture of how the residents in one neighborhood engage in informal social control, the present work can shed light on what makes for effective social control generally at the neighborhood level. Specifically, I think that this ethnography can add to our theoretical knowledge of informal social control and suggest avenues for further empirical investigation. In this regard, the extended case method employed here addresses the issue of generalization by using what Burawoy (1991, p. 280) calls a “genetic” explanation of particular outcomes. Burawoy argues that the extended case method can derive generalizations by reconstructing existing theory, which it does by investigating what implications the case study has for society, thereby uncovering how the micro situation is affected by wider societal processes. Crucially, the extended case method (see also Sullivan 1998; Van Velsen
1967) tests and refines theory by working "outward and upward to identify the contexts relevant to understanding that case" (Sullivan 1998, p. 389).

The events in Beltway that I describe are embedded in the contexts of the local history and city and nationwide trends, and any understanding of the Beltway case must uncover how these macro processes impact and give shape to the micro events. Working in the opposite direction, the case study here can help refine and reconstruct current theory on informal social control.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Beltway is located on the edge of Chicago. The neighborhood is made up mostly of single-family Chicago bungalows that stand on postage-stamp lots: precise, neat, and clean. In Chicago terms, it is a relatively young neighborhood,12 since most of the houses were built in the postwar building boom of the 1950s and 1960s. One of the first things to strike the outsider about the neighborhood is the manner in which it is bounded by dramatic ecological barriers. Beltway is bordered to the north by an airport and by railroad tracks, to the south by a line of factories, and to the west by railroad tracks and the city limits. The eastern border is a six-lane thoroughfare that links the north and south sides of Chicago. Interspersed with the predominant bungalows are older ranch-style houses (which date from the early 20th century when most of the area was prairie) and newer blocks of condominiums. The Beltway business district runs through the center of the neighborhood, and, while there are still a number of stores open for business, much of the area is deteriorating, since people do most of their shopping in the nearby malls. Beltway has three parks, four elementary schools, two Roman Catholic churches, a United Methodist church, a Lutheran church, and a new multipurpose field house at one of the parks.

The 2000 national census offers the most recent demographic data on Beltway. Up to 1980, Beltway had been 99% white. However, in the 1980s a Latino population began to settle there, especially in the eastern part of the neighborhood. The 1990 census indicated that almost one-tenth of the Beltway population of about 25,000 was Latino, the vast majority of this group being Mexican in origin. The trend of an increasing number of Latinos moving into the neighborhood continued in the 1990s. Census

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12 While much of present-day Beltway was built after World War II, the neighborhood has been part of Chicago since 1915, when the village of Beltway was annexed to the city of Chicago. More land was added in 1917 and 1923 when the current boundaries of the neighborhood were established.
2000 statistics for race and ethnic origin indicate that the population of Beltway is now approximately one-fifth Latino.

Of the more than 9,000 housing units in Beltway in 2000, over three-quarters were owner occupied and less than one-quarter renter occupied. With respect to residential stability, almost two-thirds of Beltway residents in 2000 reported that they had lived in the same house five or more years, which is higher than the average for the city as a whole. The local workforce historically depended on the nearby factories for work. Now the vast majority of Beltway’s working population is employed in low- and mid-level white or pink collar work. In 2000, 33% of the workforce had “sales and office” occupations, 19% had “service occupations,” 21% were managers and professionals, 17% were employed in “production, transportation and material moving,” and 9% had jobs in “construction, extraction and maintenance” operations. The decline in the number of blue-collar workers is demonstrated by the fact that only around one-quarter of the workforce is in traditional blue-collar employment. The employment data includes a fifth who were employed by the City of Chicago. The large number of city workers in Beltway is because Chicago has an ordinance that prohibits them (i.e., city hall, streets and sanitation, police, firefighters, and park district employees) from living outside the city limits. Thus, Beltway is home to many city employees, mostly police officers and firefighters. Median family income in 1999 was about $53,000 (higher than the city average of $42,724), and the poverty level is low in Beltway, with only about 1 in 20 residents at or below the poverty level.

Beltway is a low crime neighborhood. Compared to other Chicago neighborhoods, the area does not have a great deal of crime. For example, the index crime rate in Beltway in 1997 and 1998 was approximately 2,300 and 2,500 per 100,000 of the population, which compares to citywide figures of 9,360 and 6,921 per 100,000 over the same period. The three largest crimes in the neighborhood are theft, burglary, and auto theft. During the period of the fieldwork there was a total of only five homicides in Beltway, an average of one per year.

Overall then, Beltway is a homogeneous, residentially stable neighborhood with an above-average level of income and a below-average level of crime. Beltwayites work in mostly low- and mid-level, white or pink collar occupations, and they tend to be homeowners. All in all, Beltway seems to be a typical white working-to-lower-middle-class neighborhood in a large city. In what follows, I will briefly describe the social organization of Beltway and then detail the case studies of the problem-solving group, the Beltway Night Patrol, and, the Court Advocacy Program.
THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF BELTWAY

Sampson (1997) has argued that, instead of asking how socially organized a neighborhood is, we should ask the question: organized for what? To that end, my discussion of the social organization structure of Beltway centers around what this organizational structure supplies in terms of informal social control. I will focus on the community-level structural variables, the institutional structure of the neighborhood, and the density and availability of public resources in Beltway. This discussion is cast in terms of the history of activism in Beltway to help distinguish the new parochialism from previous organizational forms.

In terms of the Shaw and McKay (1942) indicators of disorganization, Beltway appears to be a textbook example of a socially organized neighborhood. Poverty levels are low, the neighborhood is racially and ethnically homogeneous, and there is a high degree of residential stability. However, social organization is more dynamic than a set of static indicators (Sampson 1997; Venkatesh 1997). Beltway also has a large number of local institutions. For example, the Beltway Civic League is a local organization that has existed since 1960, and the area is also served by the Beltway Business Association, the PTA, two park advisory councils, church boards, the Beltway branch of the Chicago Public Library, and four local school councils, all of which are active within the neighborhood. However, the large number of groups tells only part of the story of social organization in Beltway. These community groups benefit from the activities of two local aldermen who are connected to powerful ward machines and to Mayor Richard M. Daley, and local groups can also call upon area residents who are city workers in the Chicago Police Department, Chicago Streets and Sanitation, the Chicago Fire Department, and the Chicago Park District. In addition, a U.S. congressman lives in a nearby neighborhood and serves as one of the ward’s Democratic committeemen. The Democratic committeeman for the neighborhood’s Second Ward is a long-time state representative. Community activists often call on the assistance of the aldermen, a friend in the police department, or the congressman for assistance on a project. For example, the former commander of the local police district, Henry Rusnak, talked about how well the local political machine worked, and how he utilized the aldermen in his area in order to get things done.

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14 The committeeman is one of the most important positions in the ward organization. The committeeman is responsible for picking and choosing who will serve as the Democratic Committee’s nominee for alderman and who will serve as precinct captain. Unlike the alderman, the committeeman is not elected by the people. The ward committee selects the committeeman. Thus, Democratic committeemen in Chicago are very powerful, since they directly influence the makeup of the ward organization.
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Now over in Beltway you have two aldermen, young men, both smart. Now if I have a problem that I need their help getting done, like it would take me forever to do it through the channels downtown, I just call 'em. Once I have to get some new lights put in at Fairfield Park, there's a lot of gang activity there and they figured that if there were more lights there. If it was lit up more at night, then the problem would go away. Now if I call up the electric company department and say that one of my officers has a bright idea [sic], they'll just sit on it and do it whenever. Now I call up [the alderman] and say can you get this done for me, he says "sure in about three or four days." And it's done, [with] no fuss. That's the way it should be.

Rusnak's comments demonstrate how formal networks in Beltway can tap into the political structure of Chicago. Beltway residents who are skilled in utilizing these formal networks of social organization are more likely to secure goods and services for the neighborhood. It is important to note that there is a good deal of access to public resources available to Beltway residents and that it is activated in order to get things done for the neighborhood. For example, the Beltway Civic League has a rich tradition of promoting local issues. Specifically, the league has used its connections to the ward system to fight a number of zoning issues, and it helped secure a new library for the neighborhood and agitated for the demolition of a vacant "white elephant" adjacent to Beltway. Similarly, individual community members can call on their precinct captain to get an alderman's assistance with permits for a home conversion or with sponsorship for an annual block party.

The activities that I later describe as the new parochialism have their roots, then, in the type of activism that has been practiced in Beltway for several generations. The new parochialism is different from previous forms of social organization in Beltway because in large part it exists independently of the ward system,14 and its primary point of contact with the public sphere is the police department. The fact that the new parochialism is not subsumed under the ward system marks it as a new hybrid form of organization that is focused on internal neighborhood problems but that exists independently of the local political structures.

In summary, Beltway is socially organized in terms of community-level structural characteristics, institutional density, and the ease with which residents can secure goods from the public sphere. It is the availability of and the willingness to access these resources that provides the key to

14 The Beltway examples of the new parochialism differ from the case study detailed by Guterbock (1980) in that the alderman is not an active participant in the voluntary organizations of the Beltway problem-solving group and Beltway Night Patrol. The alderman and the ward to serve as conduits for city services, but remain largely outside the organization.
answer the question: organized for what? In the case of Beltway, social organization must preclude effective informal social control. The successful articulation of private, parochial, and public spheres of control necessitates, at the very least, a number of local institutions and a mechanism to procure goods and services from outside the neighborhood. The case studies of the problem-solving group, the BNP, and the Court Advocacy Program illustrate the informal social control process in the neighborhood. Before going on to detail the case studies, I will describe the general picture of informal social control in Beltway.

INFORMAL SOCIAL CONTROL IN BELTWAY: THE DIMINISHING ROLE OF PRIVATE AND TRADITIONALLY PAROCHIAL FORMS OF CONTROL.

Generally, informal social control in Beltway is a complex process. Residents engage in a variety of behaviors designed to control disorder, deviance, and crime. In terms of the systemic model, supervision and intervention do take place in Beltway but only in specific situations. The main point to note is that supervision is age graded: children up to the teenage years receive the vast majority of supervision, while teenagers are left to their own devices in many cases. For example, at the numerous block parties that punctuate the summer in Beltway, young children are collectively supervised as they bounce on jumping jacks, play Frisbee in the street, or swim in a neighbor's pool. The supervision is expected and unconscious. The nearest parent or adult usually takes care of a group of children. The same collective supervision is also evident at the many school-sponsored activities: concerts, sports events, or picnics are staffed by parents and teachers who keep a watchful eye on the children. The school activities tend to be more structured than block parties, with each adult given specific responsibilities. However, in less-structured activities the amount of collective supervision is more sporadic and irregular. Importantly, the day-to-day supervision of teens is rarely a collective enterprise. People tend not to stand on street corners, and many front stoops

15 James Coleman's work (see, e.g., 1971) has illustrated that teenagers in the United States have always enjoyed at least a modicum of freedom, and so the fact that Beltway teens are relatively unsupervised is unremarkable. What is important to note is that this dearth of supervision takes place at a time when changes in U.S. society that impact the lives of many teens make this a more portentous development. The most notable changes include rising juvenile crime rates, especially violent crime (see, e.g., Cook and Laub 1998), a proliferation of handguns (Fagan and Wilkinson 1998), and violence in urban schools (Heaviside et al. 1998), all of which takes place against a backdrop of fundamental changes in the transition from adolescence to adulthood (Furstenberg 2000).
and porches remain uninhabited during the summer months. In the 40 in-depth interviews that I conducted with members of the local watch group and other neighborhood activists, I asked the respondents, “If you witnessed a group of teens misbehaving, what would you do?” Thirty-six of the 40 respondents (90%) said that they would call the police rather than take care of it themselves. The sample is not representative of the neighborhood as a whole, but it would seem that Beltwayites are more likely to call 911 than to intervene personally. When asked if people in Beltway engage in collective supervision, Lydia Donovan, a longtime resident and local activist, replies:

Yes and no. They usually have a group of kids that they know through friendship ties of their own children, and then if they are the kind of house where the kids come over, then they would supervise in that situation. Sometimes if people are out on the street they may choose to comment depending on the situation. Nobody wants to deal with teens, that’s where everybody drops out. They don’t want to deal with teens at all. I think part of it is an age perception, a single old adult does not want to go up against a crowd of youth.

For most Beltway residents, then, informal social control consists of age-graded collective supervision in familial and personal networks. Teens are largely unsupervised either by family or by the community at large, except where they are involved with organized activities sponsored by the school or the park. Generally, there is a diminished role for private and traditionally parochial forms of control in Beltway,16 and, specifically with respect to the collective supervision of teenagers, many residents “don’t want to deal with teens” because they fear them.

The diminution of private and traditionally parochial forms of informal control in Beltway has important consequences for the neighborhood. In particular, the lack of supervision of teens has coincided with a rise in the amount of gang activity in Beltway. Over the course of the fieldwork the number of gangs with active members in the neighborhood grew from one in 1993 to five in 1998.17 While a good deal of gang activity in Beltway

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16 As Taylor (2002, p. 784) notes, “At the core of the parochial level of systemic control is residents’ perceived and actual willingness to intervene.” Beltway residents are mostly unwilling to supervise area youth or directly intervene when there is trouble, which are the bulwarks of traditional parochial control.

17 The information on local gangs was obtained from the local police department’s gang officers, from the local beat officers, and from young people in the neighborhood. There are, of course, different types of gang and indeed different levels of involvement. For the present purposes, all gangs referred to have at least five active members in the neighborhood who engage in illegal gang activities, such as violence or drug dealing. Gangs also have identifiable names and colors associated with them, and have engaged in some form of gang tagging: in Beltway. Tagging is the spray painting of graffiti.
is of a "wannabe" (Monti 1994) variety, there have been some incidents of serious violence. Specifically, the double homicide of two local teenage girls by area gang members alerted residents to the problems of unsupervised youths.

THE POWELL-HARVEY MURDERS: A WAKE-UP CALL

In 1995, two 13-year-old girls from Beltway were shot and killed by five members of a local gang called the Knights. The girls, Melissa Harvey and Teresa Powell, were shot because they had been sitting in a van with three members of another gang, the Vikings, who had been vying for Beltway turf with the Knights. The double homicide had a profound effect on Beltway. First and foremost, it brought home the fact that Beltway was not immune to the dangers of youth gangs. Residents were faced with the evidence that these gangs were not nonwhite, poor youths from outside the neighborhood but youths homegrown on the perfectly manicured lawns and ordered blocks of bungalows.

While the danger signs of an increasing youth gang problem had been evident in the form of gang graffiti and a number of drive-by incidents, many residents ignored the problem until the Powell-Harvey killings. In the weeks following the murders, there were a number of well-attended meetings. Local activists and police officers urged residents to get involved with local community policing efforts and help eradicate the youth gang problem. For example, at a community policing beat meeting soon after the murders, Sergeant Henderson, a neighborhood relations officer, addressed residents on the issue.

I can see that this incident has polarized people. There's two ways people can react in a situation like this, one of them is fear, and that's no good. I think that something like this can make us all afraid, and what we have to do is get involved and do something. I'm involved with the neighborhood watches in the area. I live in this beat so I'm concerned about all of this. But there's ways that we can fight back. Neighborhood watch is one of those ways, and it's part of the problem-solving training. A number of local neighborhood watches have been very successful. You all know Victory

There are two main types of tagging: general tagging, where the tagger or graffiti artist "throws up" his or her specific tag or moniker, and gang tagging, where members of a gang paint slogans to mark their territory or to communicate messages to other gang members (see Phillips [1999] for a more detailed explanation of the meaning and significance of tagging). Typically, gang tagging will have specific letters and symbols that represent the particular gang throwing up the graffiti.

There were three drive-by shootings in the eastern part of Beltway from March 1994 through June 1995. Although only one person was actually hit in these drive-bys, all three were attributed to gang activity in the area.
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Park? It’s near here. Well they had problems that are much worse than here with the gangs. The folks over there got together and formed a neighborhood watch, and the crime has gone down over there.

The calls for action encountered resistance from some Beltway residents, who felt that ultimately the parents of gang members, the police, or the school should be made accountable for the gang problem. To many Beltwayites, gangs were not a community problem. Interestingly, it was formal agents of social control that were instrumental in stimulating the informal social control apparatus in Beltway. The Joint Community Police Training (JCPT) program, jointly run by the Chicago Police Department and the Chicago Alliance for Neighborhood Safety, trained local residents in problem-solving techniques in Beltway in the early months of 1996, and a neighborhood watch group was formed in September of that year from the core members of the problem-solving group. The link between the watershed event of the Powell-Harvey murders and the formation of the problem-solving group and neighborhood watch is not lost on Jane Pratt, a longtime resident and founding member of both groups: “The problem solving [trainers]. I liked what they brought in and it seemed like exactly what we need in our area, to me like they were like a wake-up call. And that’s what most people seem to need before they get involved, a wake-up call and the timing about everything was right, it was after the shooting of those girls.”

PROBLEM SOLVING AND THE BELTWAY NIGHT PATROL: THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF THE PAROCHIAL AND PUBLIC LEVELS OF CONTROL

After the Powell-Harvey shootings, the Chicago Police Department decided to introduce problem-solving training into the neighborhood a full four months ahead of schedule. As Officer Sabatini, a local resident and problem-solving trainer, explained, “After those girls were killed, I pushed to bring in the JCPT early to the neighborhood. We felt that we had to get started solving the problems right away. It was a matter of urgency for us.” The JCPT trainers held a number of training sessions at the Beltway Public Library and trained a local group of activists in the use of problem-solving techniques. The problem-solving group then assessed a number of local problems and settled on one that they would try to solve; namely, the disorder created by a local tavern. The tavern had become notorious for attracting drug users, alcoholics, and panhandlers, and locals frequently complained about the crime and disorder associated with the bar. The owner of the tavern was invited to a problem-solving meeting and, after a particularly heated exchange, he stormed out of the
meeting, yelling, "Prohibition didn't work." The owner was also at a number of subsequent meetings, but each time the Beltway problem-solving group tried to resolve the situation informally, he rejected the proposals and responded that he was being railroaded and singled out. It was at this stage that the group decided, after consulting with the JCPT trainers, to refer the matter to the liquor commissioner for the City of Chicago. The liquor commissioner had a series of meetings with representatives of the problem-solving group and the owner of the tavern, and the commissioner tried to broker a solution that would address the concerns of the Beltway residents. The owner failed to cooperate with the directives, and the commissioner told him that he should take the problems of the community seriously and admonished him: "Holding a liquor license is a big responsibility and you need to start taking this more seriously than you are. We appreciate that you are starting to recognize [the problems] and trying to work with the community, but you . . . need to do more, be more compliant."

When the owner of the tavern did not comply with the directives from the liquor commissioner, the Beltway group, in concert with one of the local aldermen and with the blessing of the commissioner, generated a petition for a referendum on the tavern's liquor license. The result of the ballot in November 1996 was overwhelmingly in favor of rescinding the license of the tavern, and, in late 1996, the bar was closed down, just seven months after the issue had first surfaced. The example of the problem-solving group at once illustrates the tenor of community action and the operation of the new parochialism in Beltway. The work of the problem-solving group is informal social control in that it is action undertaken by residents for self-regulation, but this action follows a more formal route than what we would normally think of as informal social control. The work of the members of the Beltway problem-solving group was facilitated in part by the JCPT trainers and local police officers who worked closely with them in the initial stages of their campaign. In addition, when informal mediation between the problem-solving group and the tavern owner breaks down, the group utilizes ties with the public sphere of control in the form of the city bureaucracy (the liquor commissioner and the local alderman) to expedite getting a referendum vote to take away the tavern's license. Kitty Kelly, a longtime resident and founding member of the problem-solving and neighborhood watch groups, details how the Beltway group solved the problem of the tavern:

We took the [tavern] problem that seemed to [create] the most concern among the people. So one girl was assigned to go the Liquor License Commission to find out if he had a license, [or] who had it. Someone else was supposed to write a letter to request that the owner of the bar come [to a
meeting] so we could talk to him. Then we researched how exactly we could shut him down and we researched any offenses he had against his liquor license in the past. So there was a lot of research done in the beginning. We were told [by the JCPT trainers] to kind of watch the situation [and] if we went by the location and there were a lot of drunks there we were to write that down. So [group members] went around and got a petition together and were able to close him down. We finally closed him down. The people of the precinct voted against him.

The problem-solving group thus utilizes formal channels to solve the problem of the tavern. Even the informal mediation takes place in bounded settings such as community meetings.

While the Beltway problem-solving group had been attempting to solve the problem of the tavern, the subject of having a neighborhood watch had been raised at a number of meetings, and, during August 1996, the Beltway group took their first steps toward forming a watch group. The Beltway Night Patrol had its inaugural meeting on October 2, having their stated purpose as

1. To promote neighborhood safety by patrolling the community and contacting police and proper authorities when action is required.
2. To assess community problems through the use of problem-solving techniques (Beltway Night Patrol Bylaws).

The night patrol began patrolling in mid-October 1996. The BNP has an elaborate set of bylaws, which govern the conduct of group members. For example, there is a probationary period for new members and while on patrol members of the BNP are forbidden to leave their car to get involved in challenging miscreants. The routine of the BNP is to have one or two cars patrolling the area and to call in problems by radio to a designated home base. These problems range from suspicious persons or, most often, curfew violators to city service requests for items such as malfunctioning streetlights or crooked stop signs. The home base person then relays calls either to the police or to the city services’ 24-hour hotline. The rest of the time the two-person patrol (no one is allowed to patrol alone) trawls through the streets and alleys logging incidences of graffiti and watching for crimes in progress. Patrol volunteers use a logbook to note the graffiti that they encounter. After each weekend the BNP president reports all graffiti to the relevant source in order to have it removed. The local ward office will send out the graffiti-blower truck to remove graffiti on residences and businesses, and, for graffiti on dumpsters in alleyways, the BNP president calls the sanitation companies that own the dumpsters.

In its first year, the BNP targeted graffiti in the neighborhood as one of their main priorities. As a neighborhood watch volunteer, I found that a large part of each patrol was taken up with logging graffiti, after which
there was a careful follow-up by the BNP president to make sure that the graffiti was removed. At each BNP monthly meeting there was a report on new graffiti in the area, and a number of BNP members became skilled at "reading" graffiti and could tell what gang messages, if any, were being communicated. Graffiti removal in Beltway during this period was swift and efficient. Most graffiti was removed in less than a week. A BNP member had also taken it upon herself to remove smaller graffiti from garage doors, stop signs, and dumpsters. She estimates that in her personal crusade she has removed over 200 pieces of graffiti. In addition, within the organization's first year, from October 1996 through October 1997, the BNP called in 698 separate incidences of graffiti. Along with logging graffiti and requesting city services, the BNP also coordinates local representatives for the Court Advocacy Program, which is a part of CAPS. In this program, volunteers attend court cases of offenders who have committed crimes of particular interest to neighborhood residents.

LETTING THE JUDGE KNOW THAT THE COMMUNITY CARES: COURT ACTIVISM AND THE COURT ADVOCACY PROGRAM

The tactic of getting a group of people to go to court to "let the judge know that the community cares" is one that historically has been used to great effect in Beltway and actually predates the Court Advocacy Program. In 1994, a case involving a local boy, Orlando Santos, who was apprehended while scrawling graffiti on a local school, was concluded successfully after three hearings that were attended by an average of a dozen local residents. Concerned that the juvenile courts might be too lenient on Santos because he was a first-time offender, school principal Jean Sidwell called on parents and the school's neighbors to attend all the court dates in order "to put pressure on the judge" and demonstrate that the community viewed Santos's actions as a serious assault against the neighborhood and the school.

Another case in which residents lobbied the courts concerned a drive-by shooting that injured a local gang member near Leahy Park in the eastern part of Beltway. The perpetrator was caught and charged with simple battery. Maria Causio, a local resident, organized a petition that she presented to the judge in the case. She explained, "The slap on the wrist is an invitation for more firearm use in our area. We need stiffer penalties to protect our community and the innocent bystanders. The shooting was just a few blocks from the school where our kids go!"

This member of the BNP was so zealous in her removal of graffiti that the local beat officers had to issue her a warning because she was removing graffiti from mailboxes. It is a federal crime to tamper with mailboxes.

19 This member of the BNP was so zealous in her removal of graffiti that the local beat officers had to issue her a warning because she was removing graffiti from mailboxes. It is a federal crime to tamper with mailboxes.
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ganizing the petition about the simple battery charge, which is a mis-
demeanor, resulted in the charge being upgraded to aggravated battery, a felony. Causio remarked that the change in the charge had been made “after a lot of us went down there to the court and showed the judge that we were paying attention.” The charge was actually upgraded by the prosecutor in the case, who was persuaded by the petition and show of support by Beltway residents.

CAPS initiated the Court Advocacy Program in 1996 to coordinate community action in the courts. This description of the program comes from a police department brochure:

Each of the 25 police districts has a Court Advocacy Subcommittee. With input gathered at beat meetings or from other members of the community, the Court Advocacy Subcommittees, working with the Police Department, identify and track cases of interest to the community. Cases can range from violent crimes, such as murder or rape, to “quality of life” cases, such as drug dealing and public drinking, abandoned buildings and negligent landlords, and problem liquor establishments. Volunteers then attend court dates associated with those cases. Court Advocacy Subcommittees play an important role in advancing the goals of making our neighborhoods safer. First, volunteers provide support for victims and witnesses who may be hesitant to testify in court. The presence of Court Advocacy volunteers from their community can make the difference in whether a victim or witness decides to appear in court. Second, the presence of Court Advocacy volunteers sends a strong message to the defendant, the judge and all other interested parties in the criminal justice system: the community cares about the outcome of these cases and is willing to devote its time and energies to monitoring the workings of the judicial system. (Emphasis added.)

The Court Advocacy Program organized a delegation from Beltway when the cases of the gang members accused of killing Teresa Powell and Melissa Harvey came to trial in July and August 1997. The BNP team leader, Kitty Kelly, coordinated with the district-court advocacy subcommittee and distributed buttons with “Court Advocate” printed on them. The buttons are worn in court to identify “concerned members of the community.”

For the most part the Court Advocacy Program volunteers tend to be retirees, who, in the words of BNP member Marcia Moran, “just have more time to go to court, day in and day out. I would love to go to all of the cases about local issues but I cannot take all that many days off work.” In certain cases, Beltway residents will take off work to go to court. In the aforementioned Orlando Santos case, four of the Beltway delegation took days off or swapped shifts with coworkers to attend the hearings. Court advocates, in a similar fashion to the Beltway problem-
solving group, engage in informal social control in a bounded and secure setting.

There are other strategies that Beltway residents utilize to informally control their neighborhood. These strategies include using phone trees for calling 911, painting house numbers on garages in alleys to help identify residences, and utilizing the local zoning board to fight unwanted buildings or licensed premises. These strategies, along with those employed in the case studies of the problem-solving group, the BNP, and the Court Advocacy Program, are deployed at the parochial level of control and are coproduced by Beltway residents and actors from the public sphere of control.

The data from the case studies illustrates the interdependence of the parochial and public levels of control in Beltway. The examples are neither wholly parochial nor public forms of control. The neighborhood groups such as the BNP and the problem-solving group are parochial groups but, in order for informal social control strategies to be effective, they engage public agents of control, the liquor commissioner, judges, or aldermen, and they procure goods and services from the public arena. Indeed, public agents of control help establish and enable some of the neighborhood groups in the first place—for example, the JCPT trainers who equip residents with strategies for problem solving. Taken together, these strategies form what I call the new parochialism, a new parochial order of control that demonstrates the diminishing significance of private and traditionally parochial forms of control and the increasing interdependence of parochial and public forms of control. In the remaining sections I will situate the new parochialism, explain why it is “new,” and assess the theoretical and empirical implications of the Beltway case.

DISCUSSION: THE NEW PAROCHIALISM

The data from Beltway tell us a great deal about the process of informal social control, and there are two main findings. First, the roles of private and what we have traditionally known as parochial forms of informal social control are much smaller than has been assumed (Bursik and Grasmick 1993). Supervision and intervention in disputes is age graded and confined for the most part to familial and personal networks, and there is a dearth of collective supervision and intervention in disputes. Collective supervision of neighborhood youth, and of teens in particular, is sporadic. The second major finding is that there is a strong interplay between the parochial and public levels of control. Far from being independent, the two levels seem dependent on each other in Beltway and the interplay between them gives shape to the strategies of informal social
control practiced in Beltway. It is the partnership between parochial and public levels of social control that gives rise to the new parochialism. This new parochialism owes its existence in part to the diminished role of private and traditionally parochial forms of social control. For example, in Beltway after the double homicide the strategies of informal social control that took shape were prompted by JCPT trainers and local police officers, and the action undertaken for self-regulation is a hybrid of parochial and public forms of control.

The practices of informal social control in Beltway are now based mainly around problem solving, neighborhood watch, court advocacy, and phone trees. Certainly, these strategies are informal social control in that the residents of Beltway enact them to engage in self-regulation, but they are coproductions of Beltway residents and actors from formal agencies, such as police officers, problem-solving trainers, aldermen, and city bureaucrats. The new type of parochial control is certainly more formal than the hand-to-hand immediacy of collective supervision and intervention. Beltway residents now have a buffer between themselves and teens. They can call 911 to report miscreant teens, they can monitor local wrongdoers through court advocacy, and they can avail themselves of the liquor commissioner when they have a problem with a local tavern. The new parochialism thus allows for a more formalized and, for some residents, a more secure type of activism.

Why in essence is this a new parochialism? It is certainly accurate to say that residents in neighborhoods that resemble Beltway, especially white ethnic groups in Chicago, have always used ties to the public sphere to solve their problems. However, the partnerships in Beltway between parochial and public agents of control that were described in the case studies are formed specifically to enable Beltwayites to engage in self-regulation, a process that by its very nature has always been internal to the neighborhood. It is not as if Beltway residents have outsourced the control of crime and disorder; rather, a new hybrid organization for self-regulation has arisen in response to local, citywide, and national changes.

The argument that the Beltway case study presents a new hybrid form of informal social control necessitates examining the assumption that there was a great deal of traditional informal social control in the past both in Beltway and, more generally, in places similar to Beltway. Suttles’s (1968) depiction of the segmented social order illustrated the strength of localized control while identifying the limitations faced by neighborhoods lacking strong political ties. More important for the current argument is the testimony of Beltway residents, both those that have lived in the neighborhood for several decades and those who, while they are more recent arrivals, previously lived in neighborhoods similar to Beltway. In the in-depth interviews, more than 90% of the residents and activists stated that
there had been a significant change in terms of what people do to control crime and disorder in the neighborhood. Residents expressed this change in terms of a discourse that emphasized that in the past people were available and willing to intervene if someone, especially a local youth, was misbehaving. The type of intervention that many residents say was commonplace no longer takes place. For longtime residents such as Brendan Sheridan, part of the reason is that parents are defensive about the misdeeds of their children and this leads to a reticence to intervene, because there is no agreement on how social control should be exercised:

In days gone by, if you got in trouble in school and then when you got home you get in trouble for getting in trouble in school. It would be double trouble. The same way with the neighborhood. If Mrs. Jones down the block or Mr. Jones down the block caught you doing something he’d kick your butt and send you home. Then he’d tell your dad and your dad would kick your butt. Now, both in the neighborhood and in the schools, if the teacher complains about you or the neighbor complains about you and tells your dad, your dad goes and complains to the teacher and tells the neighbor to mind his own business, that “my little Johnny isn’t like that.”

Other residents such as Jane Schubert, a lifelong Beltway resident, contextualize the change in terms of general lack of supervision of children: “A lot of these kids today are left home alone or they’re left with sitters that don’t care or that are actually doing things that they shouldn’t be doing with them. So, how can you control that when people are trying to work two jobs, both parents are trying to work and the kids are not getting the guidance that they need? How do you change that, how does society change it and go back to having people at home with their kids that really care about them?” Whatever the predominant reason given by the residents, defensive or absent parents, there is a sense that there is much less supervision and intervention in Beltway now than there was when adult residents themselves were growing up. The frequency with which the discourse of diminished supervision and intervention was expressed would seem to go beyond simply viewing the past through rose-tinted spectacles. In fact, it is worth examining the changes that seem to give rise to new parochial forms of control.

Historical Context of the New Parochialism

The historical context in which the new parochialism has been forged is crucial to understanding its existence. In particular, a number of trends set the stage for the new parochialism. First, the trend of increasing numbers of women joining the labor force, either because they wish to supplement or maintain family income, in the case of many working-
middle-class women, or because they are coming off welfare rolls, in the case of many poor women, is one that impacts every neighborhood. The recent Report on the American Workforce (U.S. Department of Labor 1999) illustrates how the labor-force participation of "women has risen sharply from 41.6% in 1968 to 59.8% in 1998" (p. 41). Married women are working or looking for work in greater numbers, and the proportion of women with children under three in the labor force rose from 23% in 1969 to 63% in 1998 (p. 96). In tandem with the trend of an increasing proportion of women entering the workforce is the fact that the percentage of married women working full-time doubled between 1969 and 1998. While the average weekly hours worked by women has since 1969 remained steady over time, the average for married couples as a unit increased by about 14 hours per week from 1969 to 1998 (p. 100). This latter increase occurred for married couples with and without children, and couples with children under six years old experienced the largest increase. Put simply, in terms of what Cohen and Felson (1979) call routine activities, for many parents there has been a change in routine activities that has taken them away from the household to the workplace,\(^20\) which, in turn, leaves less time for home-based activities. The implication of these trends is that parents have less time to devote to basic parental responsibilities, let alone volunteer activities. This dramatic change in routine activities impacts many important neighborhood processes, including informal social control. More two-parent families now have both parents working and putting in longer hours on the job, and for many there is simply not enough time to collectively supervise and socialize neighborhood youth.\(^21\)

In Beltway it is not simply that women are working; labor force participation for Beltway women has steadily increased from a little over 40% in 1960 to close to 60% in 1990, but additionally mothers of children under 18 years of age in the neighborhood have increasingly joined the labor force. For example, labor force participation for married women with children under six doubled from one-fifth to two-fifths between 1970 and 1980, and by 1990 over half of children under six living with both

\(^{20}\) It should be noted that during this time an increasing number of people work from home or telecommute. However, the proportion is sufficiently small that it does not detract from the overall argument that more time spent working means less time available for parenting, volunteering, and informal social control.

\(^{21}\) Perhaps the major reason that there are more dual-earner couples in Beltway and that people are working longer hours is that in real terms income has declined for most Beltway residents. When we adjust median household income to 1996 dollars, we can see that median household income declined from almost $50,000 in 1970 to just over $40,000 in 1990. Put simply, Beltway residents have had to work more and for longer to maintain their income levels. See Purcell and Menaghan (1994) for a more complete discussion of the effects that parents’ jobs have on children.
parents had both parents in the labor force. The labor force participation for married women with husband present also increased between 1970 and 1980, and in 1990 over two-thirds of children in Beltway between 6 and 17 years old who lived with both parents had both parents in the labor force. The large proportion of dual-earner families with children under 18 where both parents work has considerable implications for informal social control. For example, Ruth Breslau, a lifelong resident, explains how she views the impact of dual-earner families on youth gang formation. “The reason why the gang activity has kind of exploded [is] that both parents are not home. Mom is working now, which has taken [an] adult [away]. It used to be when I was a young girl there was moms home on the block. God forbid you did something wrong, you were gonna hear it not only from that mom who caught you doing it, but she would tell your mother.” The economic imperatives that compel increased labor force participation are not the province alone of two-parent households; one can speculate that the need to go out to work is even greater for single parents. However, the net effect in terms of supervision of youth is, to use Cohen and Felson’s (1979) phrase, “the absence of capable guardians.”

A second national trend that impacted Beltway and made the new parochialism possible was the rising rate of juvenile crime, especially violent crime, that occurred in the latter half of the 1980s and continued into the early 1990s, peaking in 1993 (see Cook and Laub 1998, 2002; Fox 1996). Much of the violence was associated with youth gangs and the illicit drug trade. By the mid-1990s Chicago was reputed to have about 130 youth gangs with an estimated 36,000 members (Block et al. 1996; Block and Block 1993; Skogan et al. 1999). More important, Skogan and his colleagues (1999) report that the Chicagoans they surveyed in 1996 said that crime was by far the city’s most important problem. While in Beltway the gang problem was not as severe as in other parts of the city, the perception among Beltwayites in the mid-1990s was that if the problem was left unchecked, gang crime could get significantly worse. One of the specific elements of this discourse in Beltway was an avowed fear of youth with guns. The concerns and fears of residents in response to the rising rates of youth crime and the possibility that teens were carrying guns also affect the tenor of internal community controls.

The increasing participation of women (especially mothers of children under 18) in the workforce and trends in youth crime can also be discerned at the national and metropolitan level. In Chicago, a larger proportion of women, especially those with children, were in the labor force in the
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1990s than at any time since World War II, and youth violence and gang violence in particular peaked nationally and locally in the early to mid 1990s (Cook and Laub 1998, 2002). Changes internal to the city were also reshaping Chicago.

The 1990s saw the Latino population in Chicago increase from 19% to 26% of the total population; in real terms over three-quarters of a million Chicago residents are Latinos. As the Latino population, which is predominantly Mexican in origin, increased in many neighborhoods, especially on Chicago’s south and southwest sides, Latinos began to displace not only whites but also African-Americans. Latinos, too, were increasingly populating Beltway; they went from being one-tenth of the population in 1990 to one-fifth in 2000. The arrival of Latinos in large numbers was a cause of concern for some Beltway residents. However, the Latinos that settled in Beltway were primarily middle-class second- and third-generation Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans for whom Beltway has been a step-up neighborhood; they own their own homes and share many of the values and practices of their white neighbors. Latinos in Beltway in the 1990s participated in civic groups, and many volunteered their time for the neighborhood watch and problem-solving groups. However, the ethnic turnover and increasing heterogeneity of Beltway does have implications for the strength of local social ties. Residential mobility alone can weaken social ties, because if people are moving in and out it is hard to get to know your neighbors, but when this process is combined with heterogeneity the potential for what we have traditionally thought of as informal social control is diminished.

The advent of the CAPS program in Chicago is perhaps the development that most directly impacts the new parochialism. CAPS and its problem-solving component were instituted in the 1990s as a response to the rising crime rates, and as an attempt to allay citizens’ fears and enable them to become involved in controlling crime and disorder in their neighborhoods. The fact that the CAPS program focused on changing the whole policing model in Chicago over time, and was not an experiment carried out in one or two districts, underscores its potential as a transforming agent. The CAPS focus on stimulating local problem-solving efforts and

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21 In 1996, 55.6% of adult women in Chicago were in the civilian labor force (Bureau of Labor Statistics 1998).

23 For example, a common discourse centering on Latinos in Beltway was that “they were bringing the gangs with them from the old neighborhood.” This was used to explain the increase in gang activity that occurred in the neighborhood in the early 1990s. While there were some Latino gang members, the vast majority of local gang members were white.

24 The vast majority of the Latinos in Beltway are Catholic, and many take an active role in both neighborhood parishes.

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on encouraging citizen participation provides a needed focus and a formal procedure for communities concerned with regulating crime and disorder.

The confluence of increasing labor force participation of women, rising rates of youth crime and fear of youth gangs, changing neighborhoods, and a new brand of policing provide the backdrop against which the new parochialism emerges. Certainly in Beltway the Powell-Harvey murders are the local stimulus for action, but the particular brand of action is inflected by the wider social and historical context. The new parochialism is occasioned by developments that render what we have traditionally known as parochial control difficult to enact. If people are not around to supervise or are afraid to intervene because they fear teens or don’t really know their neighbors, then the new parochialism is a viable and attractive option in terms of informal social control.

Implications of the New Parochialism

In terms of informal social control theory, I would argue that the systemic model, which has been very influential, comes into question given the ethnographic data from Beltway. It would seem that Warner and Rountree (1997) are correct to say that strong social ties, the staple of the systemic model, are not the keys to the process of informal social control. Rather, being closely tied is not a prerequisite for successful informal social control. In concrete terms, the practices of informal social control in Beltway exist in spite of the diminished role of private and traditionally parochial forms of control, both of which are dependent on close ties. Beltway residents who are involved with problem solving or neighborhood watch bemoan the fact that not everybody gets involved or knows each other in the neighborhood. Moreover, they attest to the fact that many parents simply do not have the time to supervise children. For example, Carla Wisneski, a longtime resident and member of the BNP notes,

I think everybody used to watch out for everybody else’s kid and nowadays you can’t do that. People get very defensive if you yell at a kid who’s running in the store. And they get so defensive cause they know they’re not doing their job and if I happen to say something to some kid in the store it has nothing to do with how I feel about their parents or their parents aren’t watching over them. I know you can’t do it every second. But you shouldn’t get upset when someone else tries to watch out for the child. You need to have an authority figure around the corner. [When I was young] you couldn’t do anything, somebody would be there to break up a fight. Now the kids are on their own and I think they have too much freedom, too much time on their hands and they make too many decisions on their

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25 In extended interviews the themes of lack of involvement in neighborhood groups and lack of parental supervision were addressed by 77% and 87% of those interviewed.
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own. That’s another problem. How do you have one parent stay home when you have two car payments and a mortgage?

Similarly, Bernadette Bonick remarks,

I think parents today, [families with] two parents, both parents have to work today just to exist in a halfway decent life. I think children have too much time on their own, too much time to fantasize and dream up things to do. They don’t have that guidance of a mother at home with the cookies, the warm bread, and that was me, I was guilty. I was a stay-at-home mom. [H] was always there. Nothing took place in my house because mom didn’t go anywhere. But I think the fact that both parents have to work, and when they come home, they’re tired, and it’s just like “go on out will you, I need to rest, I’m exhausted.” Parents don’t do enough activities with their children.

Dual-earner families and the unwillingness of residents, in particular seniors, to “deal with teens” has created a situation where the usual patterns of informal social control, supervision and intervention, have been supplanted and replaced by a set of more structured and formalized practices. For example, older residents in Beltway may be unwilling to supervise young people or confront them when they witness wrongdoing, but they will get involved with the Court Advocacy Program. Lydia Donovan explains why she thinks seniors do not pick up the slack with regard to informal social control, “They don’t want to be bothered in the sense that either (a) they think they’ve done their community efforts and they’re tired of that, or (b) they could be physically afraid of the situation that they see overwhelming them. And, I mean, whether it’s a gang situation or theft or drugs or any of that, if they feel physically intimidated about it, they are not going to get involved. Actually, it’s the mental intimidation even more than a physical intimidation.”

Thus, on a theoretical level we may need to rethink the systemic model and examine how neighborhoods where people are not closely tied engage in informal social control. Loose ties can be efficacious, but effective control may depend on the strength of local institutions or the ease with which partnerships can be formed between parochial and public levels of control. Some of the recent studies of collective efficacy (Moreno, Raudenbush, and Sampson 2001; Sampson et al. 1997) and social capital (Sampson et al. 1999) offer insights as to how we may go beyond the systemic model. Neighborhoods that are not characterized by dense social ties may be capable of exercising effective control over crime and disorder because of the ease with which they can avail themselves of political and institutional resources outside the neighborhood. For example, neighborhoods that can use ties with politicians, police, judiciary, and city bureaucracy to help keep their area free from crime and disorder should
have an easier time exercising effective social control. The new parochialism in Beltway suggests the central importance of partnerships between parochial and public actors for effective social control. Areas that can use resources such as the JCPT, and engage in problem-solving efforts to control crime and disorder, should be able to exercise effective informal social control regardless of the density of social ties within the neighborhood. In terms of the Hunter (1985) typology, then, effective control can occur where there is not a perfect articulation between the private, parochial, and public level of control. An effective partnership between parochial and public spheres, for example, can offset deficiencies at the private level.

The Beltway case also speaks to more general issues of civic engagement. It has not been my intent to weigh in on the debate about civic engagement and whether it is declining (see, e.g., Lappe and Du Bois 1997; Norris 1996; Putnam 1993, 1995). However, the Beltway data does showcase civic engagement in action and as such it does tell us a little about the phenomenon in the latter part of the 1990s. The restrictions on time for volunteering that Putnam (2000) talks about in his most recent work, and the diminishing capacity of middle-class women (long the stalwart volunteers) to allocate time to civic engagement because of their increased involvement in the labor force, may go some way toward explaining the new parochialism in Beltway. For example, about three-quarters of the local residents involved in the problem-solving group and the BNP are women, and almost all of these women either work in full-time or part-time employment. Their time is precious, and, consequently, their activism must be focused and have identifiable outcomes. The strategies of the new parochialism then may take root because they are co-produced by local residents and actors from the public sphere and, as such, local activists are not wholly responsible for their initiation and implementation. Moreover, time is used efficiently when tasks are laid out in advance and there is a definite division of labor. Thus, even those residents who are pressed for time can volunteer when there is a framework that facilitates efficient involvement.

26 For a more detailed discussion of how different types of neighborhood engage problem solving under CAPS, see Skogan et al. (1999).

27 Much of the debate focused specifically on social capital, defined by Putnam (1995, p. 67) as features of social organization, such as networks, norms, and social trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. For example, Norris (1996) takes issue with Putnam’s assertion that television is one of the causes of declining civic engagement and political participation. Lappe and Du Bois (1997) argue that Putnam’s focus on voluntary activity alone ignores arenas of participation in the workplace and in schools, and that increasingly there are many possible sources for activism.
Of course, the people that volunteer are still in the minority and among those that do give up their time, a core group undertakes a disproportionate amount of the work. However, the new parochialism is attractive in part because it can fit into the hectic schedule of women such as Lydia Donovan, Carla Wisneski, and Kitty Kelly, who all remarked that even though they work full-time, allocating five or six hours a month to volunteer with the BNP is not a hardship. The bounded nature of the new parochialism, compared to the traditional parochial activity of ongoing supervision for example, makes it an attractive option for many residents. One of the central theses of Putnam’s (2000) work is that while traditional forms of civic engagement may indeed be declining, alternative avenues of volunteerism and civic participation may be opening up. Certainly the new parochialism in Beltway would seem to mirror that particular finding.

The new parochialism also has implications for community-policing initiatives. The main strategies of the new parochialism in Beltway were created at the behest of the CAPS program in Chicago. On a purely practical basis, the strategies and campaigns of the problem-solving group and the BNP have yielded some positive results—the closing of the disorderly tavern and the reduction of graffiti in the neighborhood. Some of the other initiatives have less tangible outcomes. For example, it is not altogether clear what effect, if any, the Court Advocacy Program or the painting of house numbers on garage doors has on crime and disorder.28 However, the finding that actors from the public sphere of control facilitate the initiatives that Beltway residents undertake provides evidence for the possible success of new parochialism partnerships within a community-policing model.29 The new parochialism is not about applying the same strategy to solve the same problems in every neighborhood. If anything, the approach of equipping interested citizens with the wherewithal to solve problems for themselves is adaptable across neighborhood context precisely because the problem-solving skills can be molded to suit the exigencies of each particular situation. Given the dexterity of the approach, it is important to note that neighborhoods that have less access

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28 Of course, not every action has the result of reducing crime. It may well be important for people to feel involved, as in the Court Advocacy Program, or to feel more secure, as when they paint house numbers on their garage doors. Such intangible benefits are vitally important for individual and civic well-being.

29 The concept of community policing used here is meant to mean all policing approaches that seek to involve the citizenry in some way in the overall goal of maintaining order (see Fielding 1995 for a more thorough discussion). The variants of community policing are as plentiful as the departments that employ it, either wholly or in part, but in general, it stands opposed to the professional model of policing. The professional model holds that police are the only people who should deal with crime and disorder. Even as variants of community policing differ, so, too, does the willingness on the part of officers to put the ideals into practice (see Skogan and Hartnett 1997).
to public-sphere goods and services, or whose citizens lack experience in procuring such amenities, may have a harder time achieving success. However, even for residents in impoverished and high-crime neighborhoods the new parochialism with its brand of specific, secure, and bounded activism may be a model with which to deploy meaningful community-police partnerships. While it would be naive not to recognize the historically privileged position of whites, especially the middle class, with respect to being able to secure public goods for themselves and their communities, I would contend that the current sociopolitical landscape in Chicago dilutes this position of privilege somewhat, especially with respect to the new parochialism. There is no longer a white hegemony in the City Council, and Mayor Richard M. Daley's power base is maintained by coalitions he has formed with African-American and Latino politicians and ward organizations. And, perhaps more important, the CAPS program and the problem-solving initiatives therein are extant in all city neighborhoods.

Building on the latter point, a final implication of the new parochialism is with respect to policy on community control of crime. The new parochialism demonstrates how successful partnerships to combat crime and disorder are forged between parochial and public agents of control. The semiformal organization of initiatives such as the problem-solving group and the BNP suggest a possible blueprint for future community-policing and crime-prevention initiatives. At the very least, the Beltway case study illustrates what works in terms of the CAPS program for their neighborhood (see Skogan et al. [1999] for a more detailed discussion of police and community problem solving in other Chicago neighborhoods). Perhaps similar strategies can be employed in other cities to good effect. Further, the existence of the new parochialism provides firsthand evidence of civic engagement in action and, at the micro level, bears out Robert Putnam's (2000) argument that civic engagement may not simply be on the wane. For many Americans the nature of engagement itself may be changing, and future policies aimed at stimulating civic engagement should take into account the fact that many people have limited time to

30 Skogan and Hartnett (1997) report that beat meetings were well-attended in African-American beats, even ones that were high crime, although attendance in Latino beats was not as high. While Venkatesh (2000) does not talk about beat meetings or the CAPS program, it is apparent that many residents of the Robert Taylor homes wanted to have more control over the youth gangs in the area, but feared for their personal safety. I would suggest that the new parochialism might be especially attractive in such circumstances. However, the crucial caveat is that any stimulation of local action and any partnerships between parochial and formal control agents must be able to take account of and overcome what Sampson and Bartusch (1998) call legal cynicism and the subcultural tolerance of deviance on the part of many residents in disadvantaged and minority neighborhoods.
devote to volunteerism and may opt for engagement that is structured and organized, and, in the case of informal social control, for activity that is secure.

CONCLUSION

The Beltway case study illustrates a diminution of the role of private and traditionally parochial forms of control and a strong interplay between the parochial and public levels of control. The interplay between the parochial and public levels of control gives rise to strategies that I call the new parochialism, a set of semiformal practices coproduced by neighborhood residents and formal control agents. The new parochialism is grounded in the context of Beltway but speaks to wider trends and developments. Residents say that they and their neighbors have changed what they do with respect to controlling local youths and many articulate that what has changed specifically is that parents are too busy to properly supervise their children and neighbors are afraid or unwilling to fill the void. The new parochialism is new in the sense of its being a new form of organization that is there specifically to deal with informal social control because the traditional forms of parochial control are no longer widely practiced in Beltway. It would be a mistake to assume that the new parochialism does not have a degree of continuity with other forms of community organization. Certainly the tradition of the ward system in Chicago (Guterbock 1980) and the practices associated with it give residents a repertoire for getting things done. However, the ward organization and its ties to agencies outside the neighborhood has rarely been used for self-regulation, except in extreme circumstances and then only as a conduit to ask for stronger formal control. More important is the fact that the new parochialism is a set of strategies of ongoing informal social control, enabled by community policing initiatives, that arise in response to the confluence of trends in labor force participation, youth crime, and neighborhood change that render traditional forms of parochial control more difficult to undertake.

The Beltway case study then compels us to reconstruct existing theory about informal social control because the developments underpinning the new parochialism are not limited to neighborhoods that share Beltway’s profile. Specifically, the central tenet of the systemic model of control, that strong social ties are crucial to engaging in effective neighborhood control, is called into question. Beltway residents engage in effective informal

31 For example, using the precinct captain to get the alderman to fix street signs or help out with the annual block party.

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social control, as evidenced by the successful campaigns to close down the tavern and reduce graffiti in the neighborhood, but the neighborhood is not characterized by dense social ties. Indeed it is the dearth of dense social ties that contributes in part to the diminished role of private and traditionally parochial forms of control. The central insight of the social disorganization approach, namely that neighborhoods have different capacities for controlling crime and disorder, remains pertinent, but it seems that the mechanisms that contribute to effective control are changing. Instead of private, parochial, and public forms of control acting in concert to maintain effective neighborhood controls, in the Beltway case we see how effective control can be exercised when private and traditionally parochial forms of control are weak and when there is a strong interplay between the parochial and public levels of control.

Whether the new parochialism operates in neighborhoods with different levels of crime and different class and racial profiles is an empirical question. However, I think that neighborhoods that have crime and disorder problems may find that the new parochialism is an appealing and oftentimes effective way to control crime. Indeed, with fear of teens and crime at high levels, the new parochialism may be increasingly the most prevalent form of informal social control in many urban neighborhoods. In particular, the new parochialism may be particularly relevant for suburban neighborhoods. Some suburban neighborhoods have seen crime rates increase recently, even as crime rates drop in many urban areas, and perhaps in many suburban areas that are newly established, where dual-earner families are common, or where there are residentially transient populations, there is also a penury of private and traditionally parochial forms of control. In such a situation the interplay between parochial and public forms of control may increasingly be adopted. With respect to urban

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32 For example, Pattillo (1998; Pattillo-McCoy 1999) notes that the overlapping of licit and illicit networks in the African-American neighborhood of Groveland can work against partnerships between residents and formal agents of control. Such a situation is certainly one that could compromise a new parochial order, and it would make for an interesting empirical test.

33 In the first half of 2002 the FBI reported a 3.6% increase in serious crime in suburban counties generally across the United States. This increase was addressed by the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee on December 16, 2002. Senator Patrick Leahy (Vermont) spoke about “the new trend showing an unprecedented rise in suburban crime. Nearly every type of crime is up in suburban counties, with murders rising a staggering 11.5 percent and forcible rapes up 3 percent.”

34 For example, the Frontline documentary “The Lost Children of Rockdale County” details the troubled lives of affluent teens in the middle-class suburb of Conyers, Georgia. One of the recurring themes in the documentary is the absence of working parents and, consequently, the lack of supervision and how this can lead to self-destructive, deviant, and, in some cases, criminal behavior.
initiatives to fight crime and disorder, some community-policing and neighborhood-organizing programs have emphasized the notion of partnerships between parochial and public groups to achieve desirable outcomes (Berrien and Winship 1999; Braga et al. 2001). There is institutional support for the new parochialism, and in Beltway it seems to resonate with neighborhood activists.

Finally, there are significant policy implications of the new parochialism. In the first place, the data from Beltway suggest that the CAPS initiative has produced some beneficial results for the neighborhood. The problem-solving and neighborhood watch groups are cosponsored by CAPS, and the Court Advocacy Program is also part of the CAPS initiative. The Beltway problem-solving group and the BNP owe part of their success to CAPS, and it will be interesting to see whether similar initiatives in other neighborhoods and cities have similar outcomes. Second, if Beltway is efficacious because of its strong political ties, then efforts should be made to provide neighborhoods that are not well-connected with the means for achieving effective social control. If everybody wants to live in an area free of crime, then it is imperative that they be provided with the means to achieve this goal, and in such a way that empowers those hitherto cynical or alienated from the legal system, or those who have been denied access to the requisite political and social resources increasingly needed for successful self-regulation.

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