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Community Perceptions of Fear of Crime and Police Legitimacy in Seattle's Autonomous Zone: Implications for Community-Police Engagement

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I, Brandon Bledsoe, hereby submit this work as part of the requirements for the degree of:

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Abstract

Amid social justice protests in 2020 following the murder of George Floyd, Seattle was at the center of national attention due to the development of a police-free autonomous zone in the city's East precinct. The autonomous zone was short-lived as it quickly experienced high rates of violent crime with police unable to respond. Considering the extraordinarily low perceptions of police that led to the creation of this zone followed by high crime rates in the area, it is vital to examine how police legitimacy and fear of crime were impacted in the East precinct compared to the rest of the city over time to inform next steps in improving community-police relations. This study employs a panel regression utilizing six years of data from the annual Seattle Public Safety Survey. Implications for community-police engagement are explored.

Keywords: police legitimacy, fear of crime, public perceptions, police-community relations

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Community Perceptions of Fear of Crime and Police Legitimacy in Seattle's Autonomous Zone: Implications for Community-Police Engagement

Police are the most visible representatives of the criminal justice system and are afforded a great amount of authority in society. Consequently, they are held to the highest standard of conduct and morals. As agents of a democracy their success is reliant on community support. Following the murder of George Floyd in 2020, protests led by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement erupted as the American public demanded reform in the criminal justice system to address the racist and classist practices that have plagued the system since its inception (Westerman et al., 2020). The consequential criticism that bombarded police agencies influenced the public's perceptions of police legitimacy as people reevaluated the role they should serve in society. Police legitimacy is defined as the extent in which individuals recognize the police as legitimate authority figures who have the right to rule and dictate appropriate behavior and influences compliance with the law and enforcers of the law (Skogan & Frydl, 2004; Tankebe, 2013).

During this time, Seattle garnered national attention due to daily protests, some of which became violent as protestors and police clashed regularly. The Seattle Police Department (SPD) was frequently criticized for aggressive crowd control tactics during the protests as many officers needed to engage in use of force and the department utilized flashbangs, pepper spray, and tear gas to disperse the crowds, eventually resulting in a 30-day ban of tear gas by then-Mayor Jenny Durkan and SPD Chief Carmen Best (Baumann, 2020). These crowd control tactics also had influences on residents who lived in the densely populated areas who were not involved in the protests as gas invaded their homes, causing many to evacuate (Graham, 2020). Further exacerbating tensions, protesters could be seen throwing bricks, water bottles, and other

projectiles at the officers. As tensions proliferated and protestors frequently gathered around Seattle's East police precinct, it ultimately led to the building being evacuated in an attempt to de-escalate the demonstrations.

Shortly after the precinct was evacuated, fires were set outside the precinct and protestors began to occupy the surrounding six-block area (U.S. Attorney's Office, 2020). With the support of city personnel, protestors were able to block off street traffic to create a police-free autonomous zone in the Capitol Hill neighborhood, formerly known as the Capitol Hill Autonomous Zone (CHAZ) and later renamed the Capitol Hill Occupied Protest (CHOP) (Burns, 2020). The purpose of CHAZ/CHOP was to demonstrate the ability for a police-free area to operate by emphasizing community support systems. There was free food, snacks, and drinks for residents in need to take and was home to a clothing station (Savransky, 2020). To date, this is one of the first and only demonstrations of police abolition at the neighborhood level (Piza & Connealy, 2022). However, CHAZ/CHOP was short-lived as it quickly became known for high rates of violent crime with police unable to respond and the incapability of a designated security force to maintain order (Piza & Connealy, 2022; Rufo, 2020).

Over its 24-day existence, there were four shootings, two deaths, arsons, and several alleged sexual assaults (Burns, 2020). In an evaluation of crime rates in CHAZ/CHOP, Piza and Connealy (2022) found that at its height, crime within this area was 132.9% higher than the control area during the occupation period. Drastic rises in crime combined with the inability for officers to respond led to Mayor Jenny Durkan making an order for the police to take back the occupied zone. Armed in riot gear, police swept the area and made numerous arrests of occupants who refused to disperse (Golden, 2020). SPD has been under the watchful eye of the public since they came under a federal consent decree in 2012 (SPD, n.d.). The events that took

place in 2020 further fractured the relationship the department had with the community as their tactics were widely perceived as unnecessary and dangerous.

CHAZ/CHOP is a unique case as it was born from extraordinarily poor perceptions of police legitimacy, but also became known for being a lawless area in the city. There is very little research on the impacts of CHAZ/CHOP. Piza and Connealy's (2022) evaluation of crime rates in the autonomous zone is valuable for understanding concrete public safety implications of police abolishment at the neighborhood level, but there are no studies evaluating how the events of 2020 impacted public perceptions of police legitimacy and fear of crime. To address this gap in the literature, the following study evaluates how perceptions of fear of crime and police legitimacy in 2020 East precinct and Capitol Hill compare to perceptions prior to and following the protests at the Citywide precinct level and the East precinct micro-community level to inform next steps on public safety and community-police relations. The following research questions arise: *How do perceptions of police legitimacy and fear of crime compare in East precinct 2020 to the rest of the city over time? How do perceptions of police legitimacy and fear of crime compare in Capitol Hill 2020 to other micro-communities in East precinct over time? Are there correlations between changes in police legitimacy and fear of crime? How do demographics such as age and race influence perceptions of police legitimacy and fear of crime?* While this final question is not a central research question, given the racial contexts of the protests and younger age composition of the protestors (Statista Research Department, 2020), it is valuable to explore how demographics influence perceptions of police legitimacy and fear of crime.

Background and Importance of Subject

Police legitimacy and fear of crime have significant influences on quality of life and psychological well-being of the public (Burke et al., 2009; Helfgott et al., 2020; O'Campo et al.,

2009). Individuals who view police negatively may experience fear from police engagement, contributing to strain in their lives (Bowleg et al., 2020; Madon et al., 2017). Additionally, those who have negative perceptions of the police will be less likely to approve of their decisions and comply with orders (Jackson et al., 2020; Murphy & Tyler, 2008). This can become a safety issue for both community members and police as tension in community-police interactions can increase risk for physical coercive tactics. Conversely, if someone holds more positive views toward the police and views them as valuable actors in society, they will be more likely to comply with orders and laws because they perceive compliance as an acceptable, positive response (Jackson et al., 2020; Skogan & Frydl, 2004).

Further, high levels of fear of crime can induce recurrent feelings of vulnerability in everyday life, leading to engagement with self-protective techniques that may not be otherwise necessary such as carrying a weapon, installing alarms, placing bars on windows, avoiding worrisome areas, or acquiring a guard dog (Antoci et al., 2017; Hauser & Kleck, 2017; San-Juan et al., 2012). Self-protective behaviors have also been associated with low perceptions of police legitimacy because lower trust in the police to effectively protect the public increases feelings of personal responsibility for one's own safety (Gau & Brunson, 2015; Sierra-Arévalo, 2016; Watkins et al., 2008).

There are numerous factors that influence perceptions of police legitimacy and fear of crime, particularly social identity (Gau & Brunson, 2010; Gill et al., 2014; Madon et al., 2017; Power et al., 2016). Social identity is made up of a variety of factors including age, race/ethnicity, gender, marital status, household income and level of education. These factors are valuable to consider in perceptions of safety and police legitimacy because influences of broader social contexts relating to one's identity can be accounted for. Social groups have unique

experiences that cannot always be generalized to other groups. Therefore, communities who have been disproportionately targeted by police are likely to perceive law enforcement as less legitimate than populations who have experienced fairer tactics (Alexander, 2012; Madon et al., 2017). In relation to fear of crime, neighborhoods that experience higher rates of crime and exhibit symptoms of social disorganization are expected to produce higher fear of crime. Due to systemic marginalization of minority groups, many of these neighborhoods are comprised of minority and low-income populations. Additionally, groups who are subject to hate crimes and/or lack the ability to physically defend themselves have been found to report higher fear of crime (Pain, 2001). This may include racial/ethnic minorities, women, members of the LGBTQ community, and older populations (Pain, 2001). Since everyone has a vested interest public safety, it crucial to investigate public perceptions of crime and local law enforcement to improve quality of life for all community members. Surveys have become a valuable way for law enforcement agencies to collect data on real crime rates as well as perceptions of public safety nationally and locally.

National Crime Surveys

The oldest source for U.S. crime data is the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR), developed in 1930. The FBI compiled data from 17,000 law enforcement agencies each year and reports were published in the annual report *Crime in the United States* through 2019 which includes national, state, and regional violent crime rates (Grawert & Kim, 2022). The FBI initially used the Summary Reporting System which tracked monthly totals of crimes that were known by law enforcement and ranked the seriousness of offenses. However, the system only focused on a small number of crime types and failed to capture valuable details including the number of people who were involved in the crime and restricted the ability to report multiple crimes in one

incident (Grawert & Kim, 2022). To improve these issues, the FBI shifted to National Incident Based Reporting System in 2021 which allows for data to be collected in greater detail as it covers a wide range of crimes and has abandoned the crime hierarchy allowing for reports to be made about multiple crimes in a single incident (Grawert & Kim, 2022).

Additionally, the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) was developed in 1972 and has been a valuable source of information on criminal victimization in the United States with an annual sample of approximately 240,000 persons in approximately 150,000 households (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2021). Respondents are interviewed about the frequency, characteristics, and consequences of criminal victimization (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2021). NCVS collects data on nonfatal personal crimes and household property crimes, both reported and unreported to the police (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2021). However, the NCVS is a self-report survey which has numerous limitations including respondents not being aware of all types of victimization and faulty recollection of timelines of criminal events. The sample of the NCVS is also selected from households which excludes experiences of the homeless population, a group who is prone to high rates of victimization. Despite their limitations, national surveys like the UCR and NCVS are valuable for understanding overarching crime rates in the United States, but it remains crucial for public safety data to be collected at the local level as well to understand how individual communities are impacted by crime in their neighborhoods to inform appropriate police responses.

The Seattle Police Department's Micro-Community Policing Plans

In an effort to collect data on public safety perceptions at a local neighborhood level in Seattle, SPD developed and implemented the Micro-Community Policing Plans (MCPP) in 2014. MCPP is a collaboration between Seattle University and SPD that utilizes a mixed-method

approach to improve public safety in Seattle (Helfgott & Parkin, 2018). MCPP works to improve community-police collaboration so that there can be a concerted response to improve public safety in the city. There are 58 identified micro-communities within all five SPD precincts and MCPP acknowledges that no two micro-communities are alike which requires specialized responses from law enforcement to effectively meet the needs of each neighborhood. The community's participation in this effort is vital so residents can provide input on their unique needs. SPD utilizes public perceptions data collected by MCPP in conjunction with official crime statistics to achieve a holistic understanding of public safety in Seattle and implement best practices (Helfgott & Parkin, 2018; Helfgott & Bledsoe, 2022).

MCPP is comprised of the annual administration of the Seattle Public Safety Survey (SPS) and community-police dialogues conducted in between survey administrations that provide opportunity for community members and police to engage in discussion of the survey results and to share real-time crime and public safety concerns.[1] Additional key components of the MCPP include Seattle University Research Analysts (RAs) who are employed in civilian research roles working as part of a Seattle University researcher team and in police-community engagement assigned to Seattle police precincts.[2]

[1] In addition to the survey providing insight to SPD about public safety concerns at the micro-community level, the survey results are used to inform virtual community-police dialogues - 15 total dialogues annually – 5 per precinct. Community-police dialogues are held in between survey administrations (For example, see Helfgott et al., 2022b). The MCPP community-police dialogues provide an opportunity for community members and police personnel to discuss the annual survey findings, real-time public safety concerns, and concrete ways that public safety can be improved in Seattle. At the start of each dialogue, the results of the previous year's survey at the citywide and neighborhood level are shared so that participants understand what their community reported as the top safety concerns. RAs take detailed notes during each dialogue allowing for qualitative data to be collected to supplement the SPS, further informing our understandings of public safety in Seattle.

[2] I have served as an SPD MCPP RA assigned to the South and Southwest Precinct since 2021 engaged with Seattle communities and police. This experience has inspired a profound passion for community-police relations and public safety research. As I have immersed myself in this position, I have listened to community members voice their concerns about public safety and police accountability, as well as heard SPD's concerns about their capacity to respond to crime throughout the city. As an MCPP RA, I am in a unique position to utilize the SPS data to answer research questions that complement the analyses conducted as part of the annual SPS reporting.

The SPS has been distributed and analyzed since 2015. The survey was intentionally designed as a non-probability survey to ensure that any and all community members who live and/or work in Seattle have the opportunity to participate in the survey. The survey is distributed from October 15 through November 30 in 11 different languages with electronic and physical surveys available to make it as accessible as possible to all populations. To ensure that as many public safety concerns are reported as possible, an open-ended response to the question, "Do you have any additional thoughts on public safety and security issues in Seattle, generally, or your neighborhood, specifically, that you would like to share?" is included where respondents can leave comments about their concerns that the close-ended questions did not explore. MCPP RAs read through every comment made in the survey and code the comments based on themes.

Results of the survey are compiled into an annual report[3] and submitted to the SPD data-driven team that highlights the primary concerns and narrative themes at the citywide, precinct, and micro-community level. Concerns are made up of five to 13 items each and are reported through nine public safety concern indices (drugs and alcohol, homelessness, police capacity, public safety and community capacity, property crime, public order crime, quality of life, traffic safety, violent crime). Additionally, there are multiple scales utilized to measure community perceptions of public safety with five focuses: police legitimacy, collective efficacy – informal social control, collective efficacy – social cohesion, social disorganization, and fear of crime. For the purposes of this study, data drawn from fear of crime and police legitimacy questions will be utilized.

[3] All reports are available for public viewing through the Micro-Community Policing Plans front-facing website at www.seattle.gov/police/information-and-data/data/mcpp-about

Literature Review

Community surveys that measure local perceptions of fear of crime and police legitimacy are valuable to better understand the relationship between fear of crime and police legitimacy and how these perceptions may differ across neighborhoods. Surveys also help identify how perceptions may change over time in response to cultural events and discourse such as the events that occurred in 2020 including the COVID-19 pandemic, the murder of George Floyd, and the subsequent BLM protests.

Community Public Safety Surveys

Community public safety surveys have been a common tool for researchers and law enforcement agencies to collect data about levels of community support for police and prominent safety concerns (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999). Local surveys became particularly valuable to police agencies in the 1980s as the community policing model began to take shape. Prior to this time, policing was primarily focused on crime control and criminal apprehension through crime response rather than prevention which led to police having few positive connections with the communities they were serving (Community Policing, n.d.). Police were often only seen in times of conflict, especially during protests for civil rights and the Vietnam War, contributing to a culture of opposition between law enforcement and community members. As tensions heightened, policing required a change which led to the development of the community policing model. There are numerous definitions of community policing, but the primary goal is to reduce crime, fear, and disorder, by building connections with the community (Community Policing, n.d.). This shift required a reassessment of the role that the community has in public safety and necessitates community-police collaborations.

In the 1980s, police agencies began conducting their own surveys with greater frequency to evaluate public perceptions of their work utilizing mailed or telephone surveys. Most surveys evaluating perceptions of police involved procedural justice elements as data was often collected from community members who had filed a complaint, received a traffic citation, or had other formal contact with police (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999). An example of a police legitimacy survey is the Community Oriented Policing Services' *Community Survey on Public Safety and Law Enforcement.* The anonymous survey examines five key components: community involvement, safety, procedural justice, performance, and contact and satisfaction with law enforcement (Community Oriented Policing Services, 2010). Numerous police agencies across the United States utilize this survey to obtain feedback about their services from their communities.

However, some surveys distributed by police agencies have become subject to criticism due to the potential biases of survey administrators to utilize results as self-serving devices to create a positive image of the police, especially during times of scrutiny (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999). There have also been concerns about accessibility of surveys to underrepresented populations creating sampling biases. To overcome these issues, many agencies have partnered with local universities and researchers to distribute public safety surveys (Community Oriented Policing Services, 2010; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999).

Fear of crime measures are often included in public safety surveys (e.g., Hauser & Kleck, 2017; Mitchell, 2004; Vigne et al., 2017; Weinrath et al., 2007). In an effort to improve insight about public safety concerns, the 1990s saw an increase in surveys that included items evaluating specific concerns in neighborhoods. Most surveys at this time were somewhat informal and consisted of door-to-door distribution evaluating the extent and nature of fear of crime by

including items about criminal victimization, views of crime, and residents' willingness to report crime (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999). Data that was collected inspired various fear reduction programs in cities including Houston, Newark, and Baltimore. Many surveys evaluating fear of crime contain questions examining how often people worry about various crimes as well as precautions taken for personal protection such as installing alarms, getting a guard dog, carrying a weapon, or taking personal defense classes (Hauser & Kleck, 2017; Weinrath et al., 2007). Although collecting data on public perceptions is crucial to properly inform law enforcement responses to crime and engagement with the communities they serve, a deeper understanding of how perceptions are shaped is required to understand how various social groups vary in perceptions and quality of life.

Perceptions of Fear of Crime

There are numerous physical and social contexts that must be considered when evaluating fear of crime. Problematically, researchers have failed to develop an absolute definition of fear of crime resulting in variation across the literature (Pain, 2001). A significant reason for this issue is that "fear" is often used interchangeably with other terms like anger or anxiety (Rachman, 1990; Weinrath et al., 2007). Scholars have also made the distinction between three primary dimensions of fear of crime: affective, cognitive, and behavioral (Fattah & Sacco, 1989). Affective fear of crime is rooted in the emotions that are derived from fear of crime such as anger, anxiety, and worry. Cognitive aspects of fear of crime are related to rational thought processes where perceptions of risk are developed. Finally, behavioral fear of crime are physical responses people have in these circumstances. This may include avoiding specific areas, protecting certain items, or taking other precautions to protect oneself (Fattah & Sacco, 1989).

Liska and colleagues (1988) contend that to understand fear of crime, factors related to victimization must be evaluated. Routine activities theory asserts that crime occurs when there is a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Lai and colleagues (2017) found support for the connection between fear of crime and routine activities theory with proximity to motivated offenders being the most significant predictor of fear of crime, followed by target vulnerability and capable guardianship. Interestingly, there were distinctions made between residential fear of crime and neighborhood fear of crime, with residence-based fear varying significantly across racial/ethnic groups. These findings illude to the social and situational complexity of fear of crime.

Early investigations of the connection between demographics and fear of crime identified people over the age of 60 and women as the most worried about crime despite being at a lower risk for victimization (Pain, 2001). Fear of crime for ethnic/racial minorities was often found to be higher than whites as well. This led to a wide belief that much fear of crime was irrational, particularly for these groups (Pain, 2001). However, this assumption became challenged in the late 1980s as fear of crime began to be situated within the broader contexts of society such as social, economic, and political statuses. Researchers also began highlighting how discriminatory hate crimes against ethnic/racial minority groups could contribute to increased fear of crime for these populations. As the evaluation of fear of crime became more complex, it was acknowledged that social identity has a profound influence on fear of crime, and the generalizations that were prominent in earlier research became disputed (Pain, 2001).

As researchers have shifted to focus on broader social contexts, gender and race have remained among the most consistent predictors of fear of crime as females and racial/ethnic minorities have continuously been found to have a higher fear of crime than their counterparts

(Acierno et al., 2004; Adjekum-Boateng & Boateng, 2017; Cops & Pleysier, 2011; Hutchison et al., 2007; Parker, 1988; Sutton & Farrall, 2005). Jackson (2009) found that fear of crime was higher in their sample of females because they were less able to physically defend themselves, had lower perceived self-efficacy, had higher perceived negative impact, and viewed the likelihood of victimization as higher for themselves and their social groups. Some explanations for lower fear of crime in men have been attributed to masculinity which makes fear a less acceptable response for men (Pain, 2001). However, there are methodological concerns in evaluating fear of crime in men because males tend be more reluctant to provide answers that challenge their personal view of their invulnerability (Pain, 2001). However, qualitative examinations have suggested that for some men, their fear of crime is just as high as it is for women (Gilchrist et al., 1998; Stanko & Hobdell, 1993).

Concerning the interaction between race and fear of crime, Adjekum-Boateng and Boateng (2017) found that non-white college students had a significantly higher fear of crime than their white counterparts in both bivariate and multivariate levels. These results are consistent with prior research about the interaction between fear of crime and race including Parker (1988) who evaluated a sample of Mississippi residents and found that non-white respondents were more fearful of crime compared to whites. This disparity between white and non-white respondents has been attributed to racial/ethnic minorities living in more socially disorganized neighborhoods resulting in higher exposure to crime (Adjekum-Boateng & Boateng, 2017; Parker, 1988).

The influence of age has produced relatively mixed results as research on this interaction has developed. Many early studies found that despite young people being more likely to be victims of crime than older individuals, they are less likely to worry about personal victimization

(Acierno et al., 2004; Pain, 2001). However, there has been some evidence that suggests that age is negatively associated with concern about crime (Cops & Pleysier, 2011; Jackson, 2009). Cops and Pleysier (2011) found fluctuations in age in a group of 14 to 30-year-old respondents, but a general decline of fear of crime as participants grew older was present.

Finally, socioeconomic status has been identified as a significant indicator of fear of crime. Individuals who have low-income are more likely to live in neighborhoods with higher crime rates often resulting in higher potential for victimization, and they are less likely to possess resources to properly protect themselves from crime (Franklin et al., 2008). There has also been extensive support found for people with lower levels of education reporting higher levels of fear of crime than their counterparts who are well educated (Baumer, 1978; Franklin et al., 2008; Pantazis, 2000; Will & McGrath, 1995). However, this could also be due to higher levels of education being a contributing factor to higher income.

Geographic location and social disorganization are also important to consider in relation to fear of crime. Social disorganization theory contends that environment plays a significant role in crime and delinquency. Social disorganization is proposed to manifest when there is a lack of agreement on values within a community which breaks down valuable social control and community structures creating disruption and leading to higher rates of crime and delinquency. Contributing factors often include socioeconomic disadvantage, high residential turnover, and population heterogeneity (Shaw & McKay, 1942). Further, broken windows theory asserts that signs of disorder in neighborhoods such as broken windows or graffiti encourages crime in the area (Wilson & Kelling, 1982). As law-abiding residents witness disorder in the community, they retreat from the areas leaving people who have a higher inclination for criminal behavior (Wilson & Kelling, 1982).

Although there has been limited empirical support for physical displays of disorder increasing actual crime rates, Lewis and Salem (1986) argue that as residents are exposed to disorder in their neighborhoods, it serves as an environmental warning signal which increases perceptions of victimization risk. Research has consistently found that social issues (e.g., gangs, drug dealing) and physical issues, are positively associated with fear of crime (Bolger & Bolger, 2019; Franklin et al., 2008; Scarborough et al., 2010). This can also lead to certain locations becoming labeled as 'no-go' areas leading to withdrawal from the community in those locations, significantly impacting businesses and allowing for continuance of criminality (Dupéré & Perkins, 2007). Perceptions of disorder indirectly contribute to fear partially because it displays low levels of informal social control mechanisms (Gau et al., 2014). Additionally, in a study evaluating perceptions of crime in conjunction with real crime statistics, Hipp (2013) found that violent crime rates have the most significant impact on perceptions of crime.

On a broader societal level, fear of crime can lead to certain groups being ostracized and blamed for rising crime rates exacerbating racism and xenophobia, as well as promoting division and hostility among the public (Amerio & Roccato, 2005). If there is hostility against particular groups such as minorities, immigrants, or others, people also tend to blame the police for failing to protect them, negatively influencing police legitimacy (Bradford et al., 2014). Further, opposition to these groups can have implications for how community members view treatment from police. Jackson and colleagues (2022) found that residents in high-crime areas in Brazil were more tolerant of police violence toward out-group community members who had been blamed for rising crime rates. However, this can be a conflicting stance as residents may still fear being personally mistreated by police but were willing to look away when police were engaging with someone who was a non-member (Jackson et al., 2022).

Researchers have also considered time of day as a variable in fear of crime. Fear of crime at night has consistently been found to produce higher levels of fear when compared to the daytime (Nasar & Jones, 1997; Warr, 1990). It has been argued that the nighttime produces higher fear of crime in part due to low visibility which provides cover for offenders and the reduction of guardianship (Felson, 2002). As previously discussed, routine activities theory contends that crime is more likely to occur when there is a presence of a motivated offender, the absence of guardianship, and a suitable target (Cohen & Felson, 1979). With less people on the street to intervene in a crime and more blind spots in the darkness, the nighttime serves as a prime opportunity for crime to occur. Although the notorious *bystander effect* should be considered which asserts that bystanders will be less likely to step in due to an expectation that someone else will, often resulting in nobody intervening, most people still tend to rely on the *good Samaritan* principle and rely on the intervention of others (Warr, 1990). Therefore, the presence of others can provide a psychological safeguard for the potential victim, but also may be a deterrent for a determined offender contributing to lower fear of crime during the day when compared to the night. Conversely, it should be noted that the presence of individuals who are perceived as potential offenders may also raise fear of potential victimization, so the mere presence of others does not always reduce feelings of vulnerability.

Perceptions of Police Legitimacy

Like fear of crime, there are numerous contextual factors that must be considered when evaluating perceptions of police legitimacy. The criminal justice system has been used as a tool for social elites to gain and maintain power over groups based on class, race, and gender biases (Kraska, 2004). Police have been instrumental in this effort by policing minority communities aggressively and disproportionately, substantially contributing to mass incarceration (Alexander,

2012). Policy changes, notably the War on Drugs, enabled police to utilize prejudiced tactics to round up minority communities and force them into criminal justice system. This initiative garnered wide public support, but the policies disproportionately impacted minorities, especially the African American community. Due to disparate sentencing ratios and biased policing, this policy resulted in the removal of primarily African American men from their communities for long periods of time for miniscule possession of drugs, significantly contributing to social disorganization in their communities (Alexander, 2012). Children grew up in single parent homes reducing levels of daily supervision allowing for criminals to prey on the younger generations.

Further, actuarial tools are contemporary statistical methods used to identify areas that are the most susceptible to crime so police can focus their efforts on specific geographic locations to control crime (Harcourt, 2007). Harcourt (2007) criticizes the use of actuarial tools as being a statistical smokescreen for criminal justice agencies to maintain the systemic biases that have plagued the system for decades. Due to high levels of social disorganization among many minority and low-income communities, these areas often have high rates of crime. Therefore, these neighborhoods are policed heavier contributing to a culture of opposition among the community (Harcourt, 2007; Jackson et al., 2020; Weisburd et al., 2011). Procedural justice theory contends that personal experiences that people have with the police will shape their perceptions of the police (Skogan & Frydl, 2004). As racial and ethnic minority communities have been disproportionately targeted by law enforcement for generations, it has been found that these communities often have lower perceptions of police legitimacy compared to the white population (Brown & Benedict, 2002; Madon et al., 2017).

Researchers have also investigated age as an indicator of police legitimacy as age has been found to be positively associated with police legitimacy (Correia et al., 1996; Hauser & Kleck, 2017). Empirical evidence suggests that perceptions of police legitimacy are formed at a young age as adolescents endure legal socialization (McLean et al., 2018; Nivette et al., 2019; Piquero et al., 2005). Legitimacy attitudes are not absolutely fixed although the extant literature fails to identify specific factors that contribute to fluctuations in attitudes relating to age and police legitimacy (McLean et al., 2018). Due to the tendency for younger populations to have lower ratings of the police, much of the research on police legitimacy and age has focused on younger demographics.

The influence of gender on police legitimacy has produced mixed results. Some studies have concluded that females hold a more positive view of police than men (Cao et al., 1996; Taylor et al., 2001) while other studies produced conflicting results (Correia et al., 1996; Hurst & Frank, 2000). There is also some evidence that gender is not a significant predictor of police legitimacy (Cao & Hou, 2001; Wu & Sun, 2009, 2010). However, Davis and colleagues (2018) found that men are more likely than women to experience threat or use of physical force by the police. As procedural justice theory proposes, personal experiences with the police influence perceptions of police legitimacy which leads to the hypothesis that men would be more likely to have more negative perceptions of police than women. Further, members LGBTQ community tend to have lower perceptions of the police compared to their non-LGBTQ counterparts (Dario et al., 2020; Miles-Johnson, 2013; Nadal et al., 2015; Owen et al., 2017). Like other minority groups, police have contributed to the discrimination and marginalization of this population leading to distrust of the police in this population.

Further, individuals who have a higher socioeconomic status have been shown to generally have higher levels of police legitimacy and willingness to cooperate which could be attributed to them living in more affluent neighborhoods with less crime and less police presence (Gau et al., 2012; Lundman & Kaufman, 2003; Tankebe, 2013). There is also evidence that having an annual income under $20,000 significantly increases risk for police use of force during street stops which can have a negative impact on perceptions of procedural justice for those living in poverty (Motley & Joe, 2018). Interestingly, Hinds and Murphy (2007) found that higher levels of education were associated with lower perceptions of police legitimacy. This may be due to people with higher levels of education being more likely to be exposed to policing's role in the oppression of various communities.

It is also crucial to evaluate collective responses whether it is within a particular demographic group or a geographic area. When there are large populations that have consistently experienced poor interactions with police, collective responses and perceptions can be developed. Even if an individual has had limited contacts with police, stories being shared throughout neighborhoods can contribute to collective memory shaping perceptions of police legitimacy in the group (Jackson et al., 2020; Novich & Hunt, 2017). Jackson and colleagues (2020) found support for this idea as willingness to cooperate with police was strongly clustered by area. Communities who identified strongly with the police were significantly more willing to cooperate with them than areas who did not strongly identify with the police (Jackson et al., 2020). Further, neighborhoods that have diminished perceptions of the police have been found to be less likely to rely on police protection when they perceive threats to their personal safety at home (Sampson & Bartusch, 1998). Therefore, it is valuable to consider the culture of the

neighborhood and the population makeup to understand what broader contextual factors contribute to an area's perception of police legitimacy.

The Relationship Between Fear of Crime and Police Legitimacy

As minority and low-income communities have endured biased policing while often experiencing higher crime rates in their neighborhoods, the relationship between fear of crime and police legitimacy comes into question which has inspired a significant body of literature. Since the onset of the community-oriented policing era, law enforcement agencies have frequently utilized the public's fear of crime as one of their primary measures of police effectiveness (Zhao et al., 2002). Policing literature has shown that high fear of crime is often associated with low perceptions of police protection (Lytle & Randa, 2015; Reisig & Parks, 2004). Criminal incidents and neighborhood disorders also impact their perceptions of overall effectiveness of local police (Gau & Pratt, 2008; Weitzer & Tuch, 2002; Weitzer et al., 2008).

Analogous to perceptions of crime being as important as actual crime rates, perceived effectiveness of police is crucial to consider (Taylor et al., 2015). Empirical evidence suggests that the less confident community members are in the police to fight crime effectively, the less favorably they will perceive the police and the more they will worry about safety (Reisig & Parks, 2000; Taylor et al., 2010). Skogan (2009) identifies the accountability and reassurance models as the two primary models in the relationship between police effectiveness and fear of crime. The accountability model suggests that residents hold the police accountable for the condition of their neighborhoods. For example, community members who believe their neighborhood is afflicted with gangs and drug dealing are more likely than areas without these concerns to be critical of the police (Skogan, 2009). The reassurance model contends that increased confidence in the police provides assurance to feelings of safety, thus reducing fear of

crime because formal social control is perceived to be strong (Skogan, 2009). Utilizing panel data and structural modeling to identify causal ordering of concerns about crime and confidence in the police, Skogan (2009) found strong support for the reassurance model while the accountability model was not statistically significant.

Further, Oh and colleagues (2019) investigated whether neighborhood disorder is associated with negative perceptions of police legitimacy and how police effectiveness influences fear of crime. The results indicated that there was a mediating effect of police effectiveness in the relationship between perceived social disorder and fear of crime, except for the most disadvantaged neighborhoods. The absence of mediating effects in the most disadvantaged neighborhoods was attributed to the legal cynicism hypothesis which argues that dissatisfaction with the law and enforcers of the law are common in disadvantaged neighborhoods (Oh et al., 2019). Similarly, Kubrin and Weitzer (2003) found that residents in disadvantaged neighborhoods were less likely to rely on police protection when resolving disputes or perceive threats to their safety.

However, there have also been other studies that have found limited to no support for any association between fear of crime and police satisfaction (Hauser & Kleck, 2017; Helfgott et al., 2020; Krahn & Kennedy, 1985). Hauser and Kleck (2017) investigated the effect of police strength and arrest rates on community members' fear of crime, perceived risk of victimization, and confidence in the police. They found that there was a modest but statistically significant negative association between confidence in the police and fear of crime while police force size and arrest productivity did not have a statistically significant influence on fear of crime or overall confidence in the police.

Helfgott and colleagues (2020) also found that fear of crime and police legitimacy was unrelated in their evaluation of fear of crime and misdemeanor crime rates in Seattle neighborhoods. Interestingly, high levels of informal social control were associated with higher levels of fear of crime. The study by Helfgott and colleagues (2020) is particularly important to consider in relation to the present study as it also drew data from the Seattle Public Safety Survey to evaluate fear of crime and police legitimacy although this was not the central research question of the analysis. Due to the conflicting body of research on the relationship between fear of crime and police legitimacy, it can be anticipated that police play some role in fear of crime among the public but there are other aspects of social life that must be considered as well including an individual's media consumption, collective efficacy, and social standing.

The Present Study

Considering the significant impact that perceptions of police legitimacy and fear of crime have on quality of life and the nearly non-existent body of literature on the effect of 2020 protests and CHAZ/CHOP on the Seattle community, this study intends to contribute to the extant literature by evaluating how public perceptions in 2020 East precinct and Capitol Hill compare to perceptions at the Citywide precinct level and East neighborhood level respectively over time by utilizing data from the annual SPS from 2017-2022. The SPS is a valuable survey to utilize in this investigation because of its unique focus on public perceptions of public safety at the micro-community level. By evaluating changes in fear of crime and police legitimacy longitudinally and at the neighborhood level, this study seeks to provide a nuanced perspective of the relationship between fear of crime and police legitimacy across time, space, and social contexts to inform next steps in community-police engagement.

Method

Despite the SPS being distributed and evaluated annually since 2015, some elements in the collection of the fear of crime and police legitimacy items were altered in 2017[4]. For the sake of consistency in the dataset, data from 2015 and 2016 will be excluded in this analysis. Utilizing SPS data from 2017 – 2022, a panel regression is employed to answer the following questions: (1) how do perceptions of police legitimacy and fear of crime compare in East precinct 2020 to the rest of the city over time? (2) How do perceptions of police legitimacy and fear of crime compare in Capitol Hill 2020 to other micro-communities in East precinct over time? (3) Are there correlations between changes in police legitimacy and fear of crime? (4) How do demographics influence perceptions of police legitimacy and fear of crime?

Based on the exceptionally low perceptions of police legitimacy that led to the events of 2020 paired with significant rises in crime following the exodus of police in CHAZ/CHOP, the following hypotheses were developed: (1) East precinct in 2020 will have the lowest ratings of police legitimacy and highest fear of crime compared to all other precincts and survey years; (2) Capitol Hill in 2020 will have the lowest perceptions of police legitimacy and highest fear of crime of all micro-communities within East precinct across all survey years; (3) there will be a negative correlation between changes in fear of crime and police legitimacy. Given the relationship between demographic factors, especially age and race, and the ratings of police legitimacy and fear of crime expressed in the 2020 protests, the relationship between these variables were explored and included in the present analysis.

[4] The changes that were made in 2017 included the addition of questions on fear of crime during the day and during the night in addition to fear of crime generally and the addition of a question on how respondents view the Seattle police specifically and police in the United States generally.

Data Collection

The SPS is primarily an online survey built through Qualtrics, but physical copies of the survey are available for those who do not have access to the internet. Responses from physical surveys are manually entered by MCPP RAs to ensure the data is accounted for. The survey is translated into Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, English, Korean, Oromo, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Tigrinya, and Vietnamese. The SPS has been administered annually since 2015 from October 15 through November 30. The survey was intentionally designed as a non-probability survey to ensure that everyone who lives and/or works in Seattle has an opportunity to take it and to provide insights through qualitative analysis of narrative comments in response to an open-ended question. Therefore, community outreach is crucial to data collection. Extensive email lists have been compiled and built on every year that the survey has been distributed. The lists are comprised of community members, schools, universities, community organizations, religious organizations, residential buildings, retirement communities, non-profit organizations, neighborhood councils, city advisory boards, and a wide range of private businesses across the city. In addition to email lists, MCPP has a social media presence and frequently post on Twitter, Facebook, Reddit, and Nextdoor[5] to promote the survey. The research team has also written multiple op-eds that have appeared in local newspapers including The Seattle Times and South Seattle Emerald and made appearances on local news and radio shows. Additionally, RAs plaster Seattle with flyers by posting them on light poles, in parks, neighborhoods, community centers, approving businesses, and other public spaces and centers that grant permission.

Populations who are particularly difficult to reach such as the homeless or groups who have disengaged from the police are identified and targeted in outreach efforts. This is

[5] Nextdoor is a social media app for neighborhoods.

accomplished by RAs going to shelters or community centers that these groups are present in to encourage their participation in the survey. The team is constantly searching for innovative ways to conduct outreach to maximize participation and ensure diversity of opinions and demographics. Despite the exhaustive effort of the team, some populations remain underrepresented in the survey[6].

Participants

Participants in this study were respondents who completed in the survey from 2017 through 2022. Due to the non-probability nature of the survey and encouragement for any and all community members to participate each year, there are likely many repeat participants, although it is unclear how many are repeat participants. Table 1 displays the demographics of survey respondents. Demographics collected include age, race/ethnicity, gender, marital status, education, and household income of respondents. To properly run regressions, the following nominal variables were transformed into binary variables: employment (employed/unemployed), marital status (married/unmarried), race (white/nonwhite), and gender (male/non-male).

Table 1. Demographics of Respondents

Variable	Responses	Valid Percent
Age	18-29	11.8
	30-39	24.5
	40-49	21.0
	50-59	18.3
	60-69	15.2
	70-79	7.9
	80-89	1.2
	≥90	.1
Race	White	79.7
	Non-White	20.3

[6]Annual reports for the SPS are statistically weighted to reflect the Seattle City Census so that underrepresented populations can be properly accounted for. To avoid further overpowering the sample in this study, the data was not statistically weighted.

Gender	Male	39.0
	Non-Male	61.0
Marital Status	Married/Domestic Partnership	61.1
	Single/Separated	38.9
Education	No High School Diploma	0.5
	High School Diploma	2.9
	Some College	12.4
	Associate Degree	6.4
	Bachelor's Degree	42.6
	Graduate Degree	35.2
Annual Household Income	< $20,000	4.0
	$20,000 – $39,999	6.2
	$40,000 – $59,999	9.4
	$60,000 – $79,999	10.3
	$80,000 - $99,999	9.7
	$100,000 - $119,999	10.4
	$120,000 - $139,999	8.1
	$140,000 - $159,999	7.4
	$160,000 - $179,999	5.6
	$180,000 - $199,999	5.4
	$200,000 - $299,999	13.1
	$300,000 - $399,999	5.1
	$400,000 - $499,999	2.4
	$500,000+	3.0
Employment	Employed	78.4
	Unemployed	21.6

*To maintain succinct tables, 9 age categories were created to report percentages but the actual ages of respondents were utilized in regressions.

Instrument and Survey Items

The SPS is a comprehensive survey designed to collect community perception data on crime and public safety concerns at the neighborhood level as well as public safety-related quality of life elements including police legitimacy, social disorganization, informal social control, social cohesion, and fear of crime of Seattle community members. The survey takes approximately 20 minutes to complete and is available to anyone who lives and/or works in Seattle over the age of 18 (Helfgott & Parkin, 2018).

For the purposes of this study, items relating to respondent demographics, police legitimacy, and fear of crime will be included in the analysis from 2017 through 2022. Participants also indicate their neighborhood of work or residence so their responses can be assigned to one of the existing 58 Seattle micro-communities. Dummy variables were created for all neighborhoods and recoded into Seattle's five precincts: East, North, South, Southwest, and West. Responses that failed to indicate their neighborhood were excluded from the final analysis. Notably, the Chinatown/International District was split into East and West precinct prior to 2020. Since it is now identified as solely being in West precinct, responses prior to 2020 that were from the East precinct neighborhood were recoded into the West precinct Chinatown/International District.

The police legitimacy scale in the SPS is informed by prior literature and builds on scales developed by Sunshine and Tyler (2003) and other research (i.e., Gau, 2014; Reisig et al., 2007; Tankebe, 2013; Tyler, 2006). Participants are asked to what extent they agree with various statements when thinking about law enforcement and how they are treated by law enforcement. Other questions are related to trust and perceived obligation to obey the police. The scale is made up of 18 questions as participants were asked to rate from 0-100 (0 - strongly disagree, 100 - strongly agree) the extent in which they agree with the following statements:

- Seattle police officers protect people's basic rights in the neighborhood.
- Seattle police officers are honest.
- Seattle police officers do their jobs well.
- Seattle police officers can be trusted to do the right thing for my neighborhood.
- I am proud of Seattle police officers.
- I have confidence in Seattle police officers.

- When a Seattle police officer issues an order, you should do what they say even if you disagree with it.
- You should accept Seattle police officers' decisions even if you think they are wrong.
- People should do what Seattle police officers say even when they do not like the way the police treat them.
- Seattle police officers treat people with respect and dignity.
- Seattle police officers treat people fairly.
- Seattle police officers take time to listen to people.
- Seattle police officers respect citizen's rights.
- Seattle police officers treat everyone equally.
- Seattle police officers make decisions based on facts and law, not personal opinions.
- Seattle police officers explain their decisions to people.
- Seattle police officers make decisions to handle problems fairly.
- Seattle police officers listen to all citizens involved before deciding what to do.

Scale responses to these statements were combined into an index and averaged to determine respondents' perceptions of police legitimacy.

Fear of crime items were drawn from a scale developed by Gray and colleagues (2008) which built on the work from Farrall and Gadd (2004). Respondents are asked to rate on a scale from 0 to 100 how often they worry about the following crimes in the daytime and the nighttime separately:

- Somebody breaking into your home/work and stealing or damaging things.
- Somebody stealing your vehicle, things from or off it, or damaging it.
- Somebody stealing from you in a public space.

- You or somebody you know being sexually assaulted.
- You or somebody you know being physically attacked.

Ratings during the daytime and nighttime were combined and averaged into their own separate indexes while a general fear of crime index was created by combining and averaging daytime and nighttime ratings.

Survey participants are also asked whether they have engaged in the following self-protective behaviors (yes, in the last year; yes, but not in the last year; no):

- Attended a neighborhood watch meeting.
- Installed a security system or camera.
- Installed an alarm or other security device in your car.
- Had police complete a home/business security check.
- Have a guard dog.
- Engraved identification numbers on your property.
- Removed visible items from your vehicle to keep them safe from car prowlers.
- Installed extra locks on windows or doors.
- Have a weapon inside the home for protection (e.g., knife, pepper spray, firearm).
- Carry a weapon on your person for protection (e.g., knife, pepper spray, firearm).
- Added outside/automatic lighting.
- Went out of your way to park in a secure location.
- Walked/biked out of your way to avoid unsafe areas in your neighborhood.
- Drove out of your way to avoid unsafe areas in your neighborhood.

Responses to these behaviors were transformed into yes/no responses by combining *yes, in the last year* and *yes, but not in the last year*. Responses were then merged into a self-protection

behavior index and utilized as an independent variable in fear of crime and police legitimacy regressions. As previously discussed, prior research has found that individuals who engage in self-protective behaviors tend to have higher fear of crime than those who do not (Antoci et al., 2017; Hauser & Kleck, 2017; San-Juan et al., 2012). This was also included as an independent variable in police legitimacy because individuals who engage in these behaviors have been previously found to report lower perceptions of police legitimacy (Gau & Brunson, 2015; Sierra-Arévalo, 2016).

Analysis

The present study employs a panel regression to evaluate the research questions previously posed. Panel datasets are a combination between cross-sectional and time series datasets (Kahane, 2008). Cross-sectional data is limited to one point in time where time is held fixed and variations across space are considered. Time series data allows for space to be fixed permitting time to be assessed (Kahane, 2008). Panel datasets enable a combination of these analyses as each year's sample can be "stacked" on top of each other to display variations across both time and space to identify the effects of numerous variables (Kahane, 2008). Therefore, in addition to demographics and self-protective behaviors, year (time) and precinct/micro-community (space) are employed as independent variables with police legitimacy and nighttime, daytime, and general fear of crime being utilized as dependent variables.

Building a panel dataset involves pooling all cross sections of data to create a larger sample, producing more precise estimates of population parameters and allows for variations in fear of crime and police legitimacy to be observed across micro-communities and years (Kahane, 2008). Data from 2017-2022 was pooled together resulting in a sample of $N = 59{,}804$. To allow multiple groups to be represented within the regression, dummy variables were included for

survey year, precinct, and micro-communities. In the precinct level analysis, survey year 2020 and East precinct were utilized as the comparison variables which resulted in dummy variables being included in the regression for years 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, and 2022. Additionally, precinct dummy variables were included for North, South, Southwest, and West.

The East precinct micro-community analysis utilizes Capitol Hill in 2020 as the comparison variables which allowed for the same survey year dummy variables to be used as the precinct level analysis. The following dummy variables for the other micro-communities in East precinct were created: Central Area/Squire Park, Eastlake, First Hill, Judkins Park, Madison Park, Madrona/Leschi, Miller Park, and Montlake. At the precinct and micro-community levels, means and regressions for police legitimacy and nighttime, daytime, and general fear of crime were run in the statistical data software tool, SPSS. To further contextualize changes in perceptions, correlations between general fear of crime and police legitimacy are evaluated by utilizing Pearson's correlation coefficient. Scatterplots and line graphs are included as visuals to supplement correlations.

Results

The following sections report means and regressions of perceptions of police legitimacy and nighttime, daytime, and general fear of crime at the Citywide precinct level, followed by an analysis at the East precinct micro-community level. Correlations between ratings of fear of crime and police legitimacy are also explored with visuals to supplement results.

Police Legitimacy by Precinct

Mean police legitimacy ratings in each precinct and survey year are outlined in Table 2. All precincts other than East had a moderate increase in police legitimacy from 2017 to 2018 prior to experiencing declines from 2019 through 2022. Perceptions in East precinct decreased every year as residents reported the second lowest police legitimacy means from 2017 to 2018, and the lowest from 2019 through 2022. South precinct reported the lowest means in 2017 and 2018 and maintained the second lowest in the city from 2019 through 2022. West was the only precinct to experience a rise (2.4 units) in police legitimacy in 2020 resulting in the highest rating for that year, but then plunged 13 units in 2021. However, it remained the second highest score in the city with Southwest reporting the highest in 2021 and 2022. Citywide police legitimacy means declined only 2 units in 2020 but had the most drastic decline of 9.9 units in 2021 and continued its descent the following year. Notably, standard deviations are generally highest in 2020 which could be a result of this year being particularly politically driven, leading to respondents displaying overwhelming support or opposition for the police.

Table 2. Citywide Police Legitimacy Means (N = 39,959)

Precinct	Year	Mean	S.D.
East	2017	61.1	23.2
(n = 7,095)	2018	60.9	23.2
	2019	57.7	25.6
	2020	50.0	33.1
	2021	41.5	28.9

	2022	38.9	28.4
	Total	48.8	29.8
North	2017	62.8	20.5
(*n* = 15,574)	2018	63.7	21.2
	2019	61.0	23.4
	2020	59.0	28.9
	2021	49.3	26.5
	2022	46.1	27.1
	Total	56.6	26.1
South	2017	58.3	23.2
(*n* = 4,218)	2018	60.3	22.8
	2019	58.8	24.0
	2020	57.4	31.3
	2021	47.7	26.6
	2022	42.2	26.9
	Total	52.7	27.3
Southwest	2017	64.8	21.7
(*n* = 4,793)	2018	67.7	21.0
	2019	64.4	23.2
	2020	62.6	28.7
	2021	57.0	25.5
	2022	51.5	26.8
	Total	60.3	25.8
West	2017	64.2	22.0
(*n* = 8,279)	2018	66.6	21.5
	2019	62.7	23.9
	2020	65.1	27.5
	2021	52.1	27.1
	2022	50.6	28.0
	Total	59.5	26.9
Citywide	2017	62.6	21.7
(*N* = 39,959)	2018	63.8	21.8
	2019	61.1	23.9
	2020	59.1	30.0
	2021	49.2	27.3
	2022	45.8	27.9
	Total	55.8	27.3

Table 3 reports Citywide police legitimacy means by demographics. There is a general positive association between police legitimacy means and age of respondents which is consistent with prior literature that older individuals tend to have higher perceptions of police legitimacy (Correia et al., 1996; Hauser & Kleck, 2017). There is a decrease in means for respondents 90+ but this is likely due to the small sample size of this age category. A positive trend can also be observed between police legitimacy and annual household income until $120,000+ where the means become less consistent. Surprisingly, non-white respondents reported a higher mean in police legitimacy by 1 unit compared to their white counterparts while non-male respondents reported 2.9 units lower in mean scores than males. Employment and marital status produced the most drastic differences in means with married/domestic partnership respondents reporting 7 units higher than those who were single/separated, and unemployed individuals reporting 8.1 units higher than their employed counterparts. Finally, level of education appears to be relatively consistent with all means falling between scores of 55 and 58, lacking a general trend.

Table 3. Citywide Police Legitimacy Means by Demographics (*N* = 39,959)

Variable	Responses	Mean	S.D.
Age	18-29	42.1	29.8
	30-39	46.8	28.5
	40-49	55.5	26.9
	50-59	62.6	24.1
	60-69	65.0	22.3
	70-79	67.3	20.4
	80-89	73.3	17.4
	≥90	70.4	18.2
Race	White	55.9	27.1
	Non-White	56.9	28.2
Gender	Male	57.7	27.8
	Non-Male	54.8	26.8
Marital Status	Married/Domestic Partnership	58.7	26.2

	Single/Separated	51.7	28.4
Education	No High School Diploma	57.3	31.0
	High School Diploma	57.7	30.2
	Some College	56.7	29.5
	Associate Degree	57.2	28.0
	Bachelor's Degree	55.2	27.3
	Graduate Degree	56.5	25.9
Annual Household Income	< $20,000	49.2	30.5
	$20,000 – $39,999	50.1	29.2
	$40,000 – $59,999	52.3	28.8
	$60,000 – $79,999	53.5	27.8
	$80,000 - $99,999	56.0	27.4
	$100,000 - $119,999	58.1	26.7
	$120,000 - $139,999	57.0	26.9
	$140,000 - $159,999	55.9	27.1
	$160,000 - $179,999	55.8	26.3
	$180,000 - $199,999	58.2	25.6
	$200,000 - $299,999	57.1	26.2
	$300,000 - $399,999	57.6	25.9
	$400,000 - $499,999	59.2	25.3
	$500,000+	63.1	25.2
Employment	Employed	54.3	27.7
	Unemployed	62.4	24.8

*To maintain succinct tables, 9 age categories were created to report means but the actual ages of respondents were utilized in regressions.

Regression results for police legitimacy across demographics, survey years, and precincts compared to 2020 East responses are reported in Table 4. The independent variables accounted for just 25.6% (adjusted $R^2 = 0.256$) of variance in the model. All demographic categories are statistically significant at $p < .001$ except for marital status. Due to the large sample size, it is unsurprising that majority of the variables are statistically significant. Therefore, the magnitude of the coefficients become crucial to consider. Differences in means between non-white and white respondents is statistically significant with non-whites reporting nearly 1.8 units higher in perceptions of police legitimacy. This is contrary to previous findings that ethnic/racial

minorities tend to have lower police legitimacy ratings compared to their white counterparts (Brown & Benedict, 2002; Madon et al., 2017). Additionally, non-male respondents scored 4 units lower than male respondents. This could be due to transgender and gender-fluid individuals being recoded into the non-male category. Members of the LGBTQ community tend to score lower on perceptions of the police due to law enforcement's contributions to the marginalization of their community (Dario et al., 2020; Miles-Johnson, 2013; Owen et al., 2017).

Table 4. Linear Regression Predicting Police Legitimacy (*N* = 39,959)

	B	**S.E.**	**Sig.**
Non-white	1.797	.424	<.001
Non-male	-4.021	.301	<.001
Married	.515	.341	.130
Age	.481	.011	.000
Employed	-1.362	.413	<.001
Education	-.490	.140	<.001
Income	.578	.050	<.001
Self-Protection	2.130	.047	.000
Survey Year (2020)			
2017	13.393	1.209	<.001
2018	13.968	1.211	<.001
2019	11.249	1.225	<.001
2021	1.180	1.199	.325
2022	-.038	1.193	.975
Precinct (East)			
North	2.241	.423	<.001
South	-1.127	.565	.046
Southwest	5.599	.546	<.001
West	6.098	.485	<.001

Further, a one unit increase in level of education was associated with a decrease of .49 units in police legitimacy while an increase in annual income resulted in an increase in police legitimacy by .578 units. These results are consistent with the extant literature that more educated individuals tend to have lower perceptions of police legitimacy while those with higher income often have higher perceptions of police legitimacy (Hinds & Murphy, 2007; Tankebe,

2013). Employment was also found to be statistically significant with employed respondents scoring 1.3 units lower in police legitimacy compared to non-employed respondents. The most significant variables in this model at $p = .000$ are age and self-protective behaviors. As age increases by one year, perceptions of the police increase by 0.481 units. Additionally, engaging in more self-protective behaviors resulted in an increase in police legitimacy scores by 2.1 units. This finding contradicts to the hypothesis that those who engage in self-protective behaviors have lower perceptions of police legitimacy due to feelings of a lack of protection from law enforcement.

When compared to East 2020 respondents, survey years 2017-2019 all had a significance of $p < .001$ with respondents rating police between 11 and nearly 14 units higher. 2021 and 2022 are not statistically significant which signals continued dissatisfaction with the police at the Citywide level as it is now comparable to a time and location of particularly tense community-police relations. Further, each of the precincts compared to East 2020 were statistically significant at $p < .001$ with the exception of South precinct being moderately significant at $p = .046$. South was the only precinct to rate police legitimacy lower (1.1 units) than East when accounting for all other variables in the regression model. This is expected as South precinct had the lowest mean police legitimacy ratings from 2017 to 2018, and the second lowest police legitimacy ratings between 2019 and 2022 as East took over as the lowest in the city. Respondents in West rated the police approximately 5.6 units higher than 2020 East respondents while Southwest respondents rated police 6 units higher. Community members from North also rated police higher than 2020 East respondents by 2.2 units.

Fear of Crime by Precinct

Table 5 presents the means from each year and precinct for all three fear of crime models. Overall, mean fear of crime scores across all models remained relatively steady with only minor changes from year-to-year. The most drastic Citywide change in general fear of crime was a 4-unit increase from 2017 to 2018, but subsequent years trended down with the only other Citywide general fear of crime increase (0.2) happening from 2021 to 2022. Surprisingly, East precinct had the lowest fear of crime across all three models and despite having no change in nighttime fear of crime from 2019 to 2020, experienced a reduction of 3.8 units in 2021. Daytime fear of crime in East precinct also had a steady decline following 2018 with the most drastic decrease being 3.2 units in 2021. Considering the increase in violent crime in CHAZ/CHOP, this contradicts the hypothesis that East precinct in 2020 would have the highest levels of fear of crime. This will be further explored at the micro-community level in following sections. West precinct includes the downtown core/commercial district and was consistently among the highest in fear of crime means across all three models. This is notable especially because West also tended to have the highest means in police legitimacy in the city while East precinct had the lowest fear of crime and police legitimacy.

Table 5. Citywide Fear of Crime Means

		Day (*N* = 39,370)		**Night** (*N* = 40,703)		**Gen.** (*N* = 38,597)	
Precinct	Year	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
East	2017	36.0	23.2	45.2	23.2	41.0	22.1
	2018	39.1	24.9	48.3	24.8	43.9	23.8
	2019	37.4	26.8	46.2	26.6	42.0	26.1
	2020	36.8	29.7	46.2	29.3	41.9	28.8
	2021	33.6	28.0	42.0	28.1	38.1	27.5
	2022	33.4	27.2	42.5	27.1	38.1	26.1
	Total	35.5	27.3	44.6	27.2	40.3	26.5
North	2017	42.4	24.8	49.6	24.2	46.4	23.7
	2018	47.2	26.2	55.0	24.9	51.4	24.7

	2019	47.1	27.7	54.6	26.3	51.2	26.3
	2020	42.0	28.5	50.3	27.3	46.7	27.3
	2021	37.8	27.5	46.8	26.9	42.5	26.6
	2022	37.6	27.3	46.9	26.6	42.4	25.7
	Total	42.0	27.3	50.3	26.3	46.4	26.0
South	2017	45.5	26.1	53.3	25.3	49.6	24.8
	2018	45.9	26.9	52.5	26.0	49.7	25.5
	2019	40.2	27.2	47.6	27.2	44.1	26.5
	2020	42.0	30.2	49.5	28.9	46.3	28.8
	2021	37.6	26.8	45.2	26.3	41.6	25.9
	2022	36.9	27.9	44.8	27.0	40.9	26.2
	Total	40.7	27.9	48.3	27.1	44.7	26.6
Southwest	2017	40.3	24.3	48.6	24.4	44.6	23.4
	2018	42.7	25.3	50.4	24.3	46.7	23.9
	2019	40.7	26.0	47.8	25.2	44.7	24.7
	2020	39.7	27.6	48.2	26.5	44.5	26.4
	2021	39.3	26.4	48.3	25.3	44.0	25.1
	2022	37.7	26.4	48.9	25.4	43.5	24.4
	Total	39.8	26.2	48.7	25.3	44.5	24.8
West	2017	41.0	24.5	50.3	23.8	45.9	23.3
	2018	45.0	27.0	54.5	25.5	50.1	25.3
	2019	45.9	29.2	53.4	28.3	49.9	28.0
	2020	45.4	29.5	54.1	28.1	50.4	27.9
	2021	43.0	28.0	51.2	27.2	47.4	26.9
	2022	45.1	29.0	52.5	27.7	49.0	27.0
	Total	44.5	28.4	52.8	27.2	49.0	27.0
Citywide	2017	41.2	24.7	49.2	24.2	45.5	23.6
	2018	45.1	26.3	53.2	25.2	49.5	24.8
	2019	43.9	27.8	51.5	26.9	48.0	26.6
	2020	41.7	29.2	50.2	28.1	46.5	27.9
	2021	38.2	27.6	46.7	27.1	42.7	26.7
	2022	38.3	27.9	47.2	27.0	42.9	26.2
	Total	41.0	27.6	49.4	26.7	45.5	26.3

Citywide fear of crime means by demographics are reported in Table 6. Interestingly, there is a positive trend in fear of crime and age until 60 years+ where it declines across all three models. It was anticipated that older respondents would have higher fear of crime due to reduced ability for self-protection, but this decline could potentially be from some older community

members living in assisted facility or retirement homes where there is higher levels of social cohesion and assistance readily available. As hypothesized, non-whites and non-males score higher than their respective counterparts in mean fear of crime in each of the models with non-whites having a drastic difference of 7.3 units in general fear of crime. Additionally, those who were single tended to report lower means in fear of crime across all models compared to married respondents. Means in education and employment appear to be more arbitrary than other demographics listed.

Table 6. Citywide Fear of Crime Means by Demographics

		Day (*N* = 39,370)		**Night** (*N* = 40,703)		**Gen.** (*N* = 38,597)	
Variable	Responses	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Age	18-29	35.1	28.4	44.8	28.8	40.3	27.8
	30-39	37.7	28.2	46.8	27.7	42.5	27.2
	40-49	43.6	27.6	51.9	26.5	48.0	26.2
	50-59	45.7	27.0	53.7	25.5	50.0	25.3
	60-69	43.2	26.7	51.0	25.3	47.4	25.1
	70-79	37.1	25.1	44.3	24.3	41.1	23.8
	80-89	32.4	24.5	39.6	25.5	36.9	24.1
	≥90	23.8	19.1	32.8	23.2	29.5	19.2
Race	White	39.7	27.0	48.4	26.3	44.4	25.8
	Non-White	47.8	30.0	54.9	28.4	51.7	28.3
Gender	Male	39.7	27.8	47.9	26.8	44.0	26.5
	Non-Male	42.1	27.5	50.5	26.7	46.6	26.2
Marital Status	Married/Domestic Partnership	42.1	27.5	50.4	26.3	46.5	26.0
	Single/Separated	39.1	27.8	47.8	27.4	43.7	26.7
Education	No High School Diploma	47.5	33.9	54.4	32.1	51.6	32.2
	High School Diploma	48.8	30.6	55.8	29.4	52.7	29.1
	Some College	44.6	29.2	52.5	28.1	49.0	27.8
	Associate Degree	46.6	29.4	54.2	27.8	50.7	27.7
	Bachelor’s Degree	40.8	27.5	49.5	26.6	45.5	26.2
	Graduate Degree	38.3	26.2	46.9	25.7	42.9	25.1

Annual Household Income	< $20,000	39.4	28.8	47.2	28.6	43.5	27.7
	$20,000 – $39,999	38.8	28.4	46.8	27.6	43.1	27.3
	$40,000 – $59,999	39.7	28.1	48.0	27.6	44.3	27.0
	$60,000 – $79,999	40.8	28.1	49.3	27.3	45.4	26.8
	$80,000 - $99,999	41.6	27.9	49.8	26.8	46.0	26.4
	$100,000 - $119,999	41.6	27.8	49.6	27.0	45.9	26.6
	$120,000 - $139,999	41.2	27.8	50.1	26.7	45.9	26.4
	$140,000 - $159,999	40.7	27.3	49.2	26.5	45.1	26.1
	$160,000 - $179,999	40.8	27.2	49.7	26.3	45.5	25.9
	$180,000 - $199,999	42.1	26.7	51.0	25.7	46.9	25.4
	$200,000 - $299,999	40.7	27.0	49.3	26.2	45.2	25.7
	$300,000 - $399,999	39.8	26.6	48.2	25.7	44.2	25.4
	$400,000 - $499,999	40.7	27.2	49.7	25.5	45.6	25.5
	$500,000+	43.0	28.2	51.4	26.6	47.5	26.6
Employment	Employed	41.5	27.9	50.1	26.9	46.1	26.5
	Unemployed	38.8	26.7	46.6	26.0	43.2	25.6

*For the sake of space, 9 age categories were created to report means, but the actual ages of respondents were utilized in the regressions.

Table 7 outlines the results from all three fear of crime regression models. The independent variables explained 30.9% of the variance in the daytime model (adjusted R^2 = 0.309), 32.2% (adjusted R^2 = 0.322) of the variance in the nighttime model, and 33.7% (adjusted R^2 = 0.337) of the variance in the general fear of crime model. All demographics are statistically significant at $p < .001$ in the general and nighttime fear of crime model except for age and marital status. However, marital status was significant at $p = .038$ and age was significant at $p = .001$ in the daytime fear of crime model. Consistent with prior literature, non-whites and non-males reported higher fear of crime than their counterparts across all three models. Non-whites reported 5.5 units higher than whites while non-males reported 2 units higher than males in general fear of crime.

Table 7. Linear Regression Predicting Fear of Crime

	Day (*N* = 39,370)			**Night** (*N* = 40,703)			**Gen.** (*N* = 38,597)		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
Non-white	6.281	.415	<.001	4.683	.395	<.001	5.511	.393	<.001
Non-male	1.614	.296	<.001	2.322	.281	<.001	2.006	.280	<.001

Married	.695	.335	.038	.370	.319	.245	.522	.316	.099
Age	.035	.011	.001	-.016	.011	.130	.012	.011	.249
Employed	2.963	.408	<.001	2.993	.388	<.001	2.913	.386	<.001
Education	-1.862	.138	<.001	-1.641	.131	<.001	-1.782	.131	<.001
Income	-.312	.049	<.001	-.296	.046	<.001	-.304	.046	<.001
Self-Protection	4.399	.046	.000	4.431	.043	.000	4.421	.043	.000
Year (2020)									
2017	6.124	1.216	<.001	9.307	1.169	<.001	7.853	1.171	<.001
2018	8.106	1.217	<.001	11.520	1.170	<.001	9.955	1.172	<.001
2019	7.861	1.229	<.001	10.677	1.182	<.001	9.465	1.184	<.001
2021	5.863	1.205	<.001	9.376	1.160	<.001	7.782	1.161	<.001
2022	7.321	1.199	<.001	11.018	1.154	<.001	9.387	1.156	<.001
Precinct (East)									
North	2.972	.417	<.001	2.425	.396	<.001	2.686	.394	<.001
South	.486	.552	.484	-.683	.525	.194	-.229	.522	.661
Southwest	-.789	.542	.145	-.693	.515	.178	-.776	.512	.130
West	5.745	.481	<.001	5.246	.457	<.001	5.549	.455	<.001

Further, increases in education and annual income resulted in lower fear of crime in all three models which could be a result of these individuals living in more affluent neighborhoods that have lower crime rates. However, the differences in income were marginal as increases in income produced a decrease of 0.315 or less in each fear of crime model while education had a more of a substantial impact as it resulted in a decrease in fear of crime between 1.6 and 1.9 units across all three models. Further, employed respondents had higher general fear of crime compared to non-employed respondents by 2.9 units. This is surprising since respondents with higher incomes reported lower fear of crime, but this could be due to those who are employed being more likely to commute daily where they may be more subject to witnessing criminal behavior. Self-protective behaviors were also significant at $p = .000$. Engagement with more self-protective behaviors was associated with a substantial increase in general fear of crime by approximately 4.4 units. This finding is consistent with the extant literature as those who engage

in self-protective behaviors are likely to have been previously victimized or have observed a need for personal protection (Antoci et al., 2017; Hauser & Kleck, 2017; San-Juan et al., 2012).

Each survey year compared to 2020 East responses is statistically significant at $p < .001$ with each year reporting higher general fear of crime with the most substantial difference of 9.9 units being in 2018 and the smallest difference of 7.7 units in 2021. Notably, 2019 nighttime fear of crime was 10.6 units higher while 2021 was 9.3 units higher than East 2020, displaying the particularly low fear of crime in this area in 2020. Additionally, North, and West precincts were the only precincts that are statistically significant compared to East 2020 with North precinct reporting 2.7 units higher in general fear of crime, and West precinct reporting 5.5 units higher. After evaluating fear of crime means, it is expected that South and Southwest are not statistically significant as their overall general fear of crime means are within 2.8 units of East 2020.

Citywide Police Legitimacy and Fear of Crime Correlations

As previously reviewed, East precinct tended to score among the lowest in police legitimacy and fear of crime while West precinct was among the highest in police legitimacy and fear of crime suggesting there may be a correlation between these variables. Correlations between higher general fear of crime and higher police legitimacy were moderately significant ($p = .017$) with a relatively weak positive relationship ($r = .313$). Figures 1-4 visually display how general, daytime, and nighttime fear of crime and police legitimacy have changed across time. Police legitimacy has a sharp decline across time whereas fear of crime generally, night, and day, remain consistent from 2017-2022.

Figure 1.

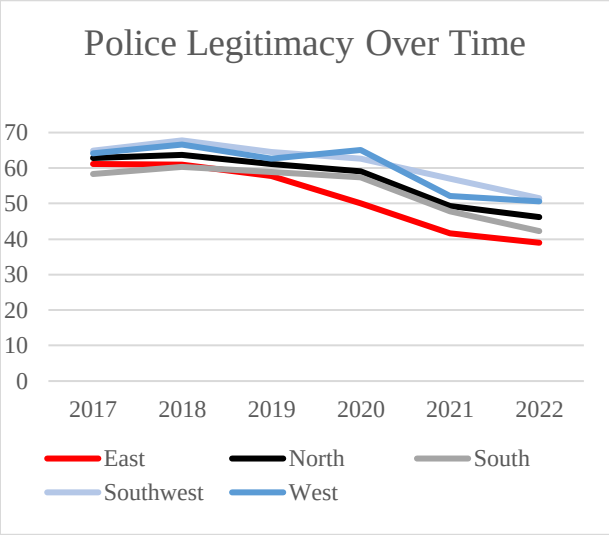


Figure 2.

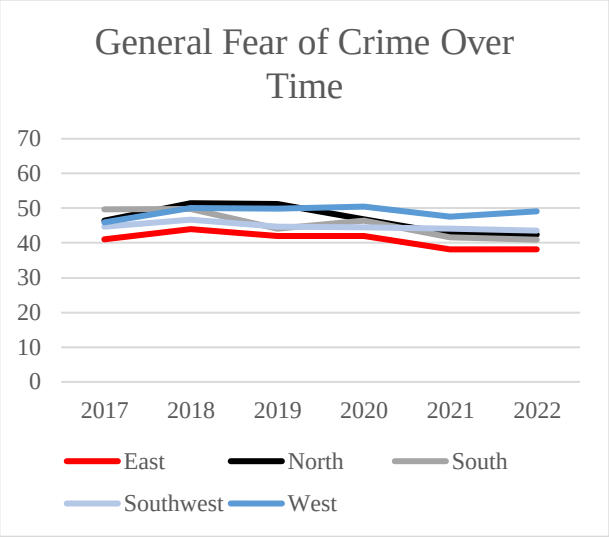


Figure 3.

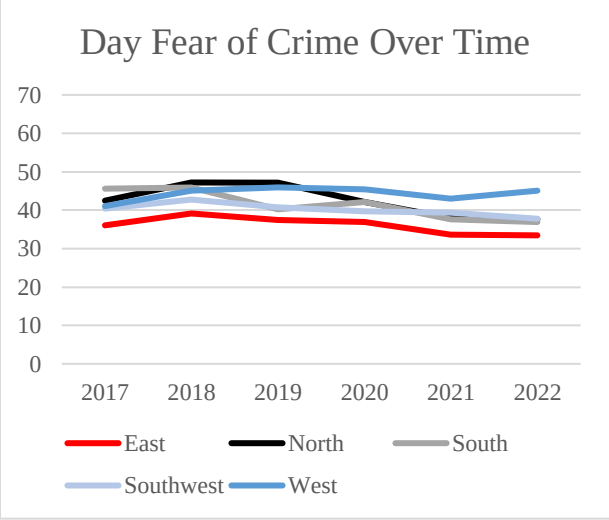
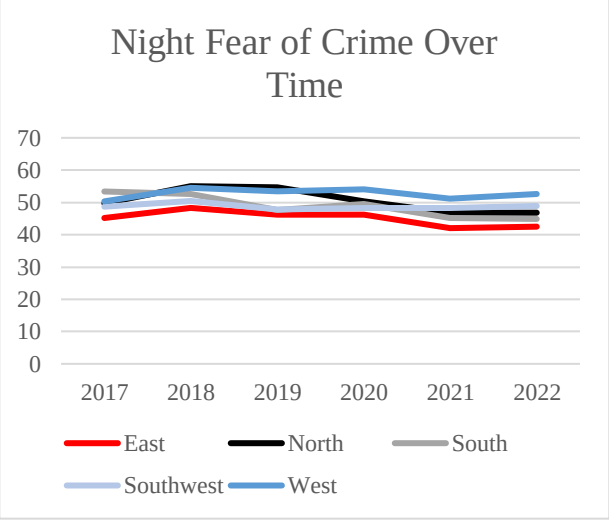


Figure. 4.

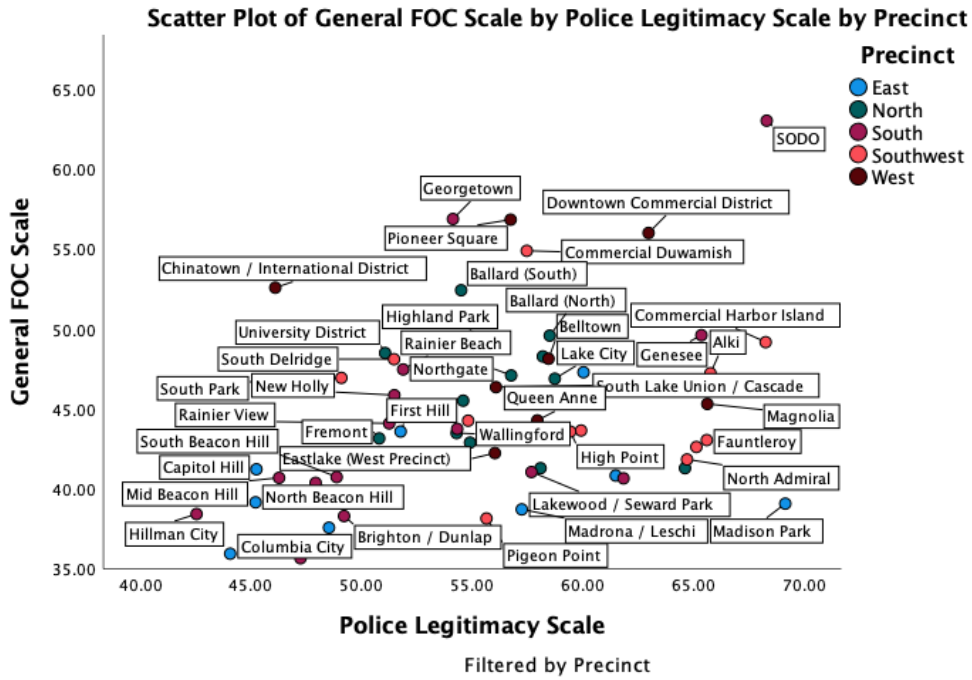


Regression models were also run for general fear of crime and police legitimacy alone to supplement these findings. As reported in Tables 2 and 5, the Citywide police legitimacy mean was 55.8 and the mean general fear of crime was 45.5. Both models produced adjusted R^2 = .135 and were significant at p = .000. The magnitude of the coefficients was slightly different as a one unit increase in general fear of crime was associated with a .349 unit increase in police

legitimacy while a one unit increase in police legitimacy was associated with a .386 unit increase in fear of crime.

Figure 5 displays a scatter plot of general fear of crime and police legitimacy of micro-communities, colored by precinct. Considering the trivial correlation between police legitimacy and fear of crime, it is expected that the points would be well disbursed throughout the chart. A few outliers to consider are SODO and Madison Park. Madison Park is a micro-community in East precinct that has substantially higher perceptions of police legitimacy across the city with very low fear of crime. As expected, many of the East micro-communities are clustered around low police legitimacy and low fear of crime apart from Madison Park deviating from this pattern. A deeper evaluation of East precinct micro-communities will be discussed in the following section. Additionally, SODO deviates from what would be expected from South precinct in police legitimacy as it rates police nearly as high as Madison Park despite reporting the highest fear of crime in the city, similar to the West precinct findings. However, SODO borders West precinct so this could be explained by its proximity to West. Commercial Harbor Island is another outlier in police legitimacy ratings which is likely due to the low response rate from this neighborhood (n = 25).

Figure 5.



It is beyond the focus of this study to analyze how each of the 58 micro-communities in Seattle have differed in police legitimacy and fear of crime. However, considering that CHAZ/CHOP was a neighborhood level protest, it is valuable to consider how Capitol Hill relates to the other neighborhoods within East precinct over time. Although this section provides some context on how individual neighborhoods within East precinct were impacted by the events of 2020, it would be valuable for future research to expand on this study and evaluate how police legitimacy and fear of crime have changed across all 58 micro-communities in Seattle.

Police Legitimacy by East Precinct Micro-Communities

Table 8 presents the mean responses for police legitimacy across all nine micro-communities in the East precinct. There is a general negative trend in police legitimacy across these micro-communities other than an increase taking place in 2018 in six neighborhoods, most of which would drop again the following year. Madison Park was the only neighborhood that had an increase in police legitimacy (6.6 units) in 2020, then plunged 11.2 units in 2021. As

previously discussed, Madison Park consistently reported the highest perceptions of police legitimacy in the East precinct, never falling below a score of 60. Further, mean scores for Capitol Hill show that perceptions of police have been declining each year since 2017, but a noticeable 8.2-unit reduction in 2020 was followed by another 8.5-unit decrease in 2021. Capitol Hill is also tied for the second lowest overall police legitimacy mean (45.2) in East precinct with Central Area/Squire Park having the lowest (44).

Table 8. Police Legitimacy Means by East Micro-Communities (*n* = 7,095)

Micro-Community	**Year**	**Mean**	**S.D.**
Capitol Hill	2017	62.4	24.2
(*n* = 3,561)	2018	58.9	23.8
	2019	54.7	26.5
	2020	46.5	33.7
	2021	38.0	29.5
	2022	35.8	28.2
	Total	45.2	30.8
Central Area / Squire	2017	54.3	23.4
Park	2018	57.4	23.2
(*n* = 1,055)	2019	54.2	25.2
	2020	45.0	32.3
	2021	34.8	25.2
	2022	32.1	25.3
	Total	44.0	27.9
Eastlake	2017	59.3	26.5
(*n* = 164)	2018	68.9	24.8
	2019	63.6	28.7
	2020	60.9	28.9
	2021	59.6	29.6
	2022	52.3	29.0
	Total	60.0	28.1
First Hill	2017	59.9	24.8
(*n* = 733)	2018	63.1	23.5
	2019	58.7	24.8
	2020	53.4	31.1
	2021	50.4	26.9
	2022	42.4	25.6
	Total	51.7	27.7

Judkins Park / North Beacon Hill (*n* = 338)	2017	58.7	24.1
	2018	53.8	26.3
	2019	53.9	24.0
	2020	45.9	34.0
	2021	38.7	25.9
	2022	32.7	25.4
	Total	45.2	28.5
Madison Park (*n* = 347)	2017	76.6	15.6
	2018	73.7	19.3
	2019	67.5	22.2
	2020	74.1	23.6
	2021	62.9	27.4
	2022	61.2	29.1
	Total	69.1	24.8
Madrona/Leschi (*n* = 486)	2017	61.0	18.7
	2018	63.7	19.2
	2019	63.2	23.1
	2020	59.6	29.4
	2021	50.3	26.1
	2022	49.1	27.6
	Total	57.2	25.3
Miller Park (*n* = 73)	2017	55.0	26.0
	2018	68.3	17.9
	2019	85.0	4.2
	2020	47.1	32.0
	2021	50.4	20.6
	2022	31.5	25.9
	Total	48.5	27.7
Montlake / Portage Bay (*n* = 338)	2017	66.4	16.4
	2018	67.4	19.6
	2019	69.4	22.8
	2020	63.8	26.8
	2021	47.1	26.3
	2022	54.4	30.3
	Total	61.4	25.0

The neighborhoods that surround Capitol Hill include Eastlake, Miller Park, Central Area/Squire Park, and First Hill which all had a negative trend in police legitimacy following

2019. Miller Park had the most significant decline in police legitimacy mean (37.9 units) in 2020 but was also the only micro-community to experience an increase in 2021. However, this can be attributed to the small sample size of $n = 73$ across all six years. Interestingly, Eastlake and First Hill's most substantial declines of 7.3 units and 8 units respectively took place in 2022 while there was a decline of just 4 and 3 units from 2019 through 2021. Central Area/Squire Park had a much more substantial decrease of 8.2 units in 2020 followed by another 8.5-unit decline in 2021.

Mean police legitimacy ratings in East micro-communities by demographics are identified in Table 9. Micro-community police legitimacy means have similar trends to Citywide results with positive trends being associated with age and annual household income. Notably, income seems to have a more substantial positive trend in East precinct with there being a 20.3-unit difference in means between respondents under $20,000 and respondents who make $500,000+ whereas there was only a 13.9-unit difference in means Citywide between these groups. Further, non-white respondents rated police higher than whites by 4.2 units which is a 3.2-unit increase compared to Citywide means. Marital status and employment had the most drastic differences among binary variables with single and unemployed respondents rating police approximately 10 units lower than their respective counterparts. Education and fear of crime at this neighborhood level appears to have a relatively weak association.

Table 9. East Precinct Police Legitimacy Means by Demographics ($n = 7,095$)

Variable	Responses	Mean	S.D.
Age	18-29	36.2	30.0
	30-39	40.5	29.1
	40-49	48.7	29.5
	50-59	59.9	27.0
	60-69	62.0	24.1
	70-79	65.0	21.9
	80-89	68.6	15.4

	≥90	62.1	25.3
Race	White	48.1	29.7
	Non-White	52.3	29.9
Gender	Male	50.8	30.2
	Non-Male	47.1	29.3
Marital Status	Married/Domestic Partnership	53.9	28.7
	Single/Separated	43.2	29.9
Education	No High School Diploma	54.2	33.6
	High School Diploma	47.2	31.6
	Some College	47.1	31.9
	Associate Degree	48.2	31.9
	Bachelor's Degree	46.8	29.6
	Graduate Degree	52.0	28.5
Annual Household Income	< $20,000	42.0	32.2
	$20,000 – $39,999	39.4	29.7
	$40,000 – $59,999	44.3	30.3
	$60,000 – $79,999	43.2	30.1
	$80,000 - $99,999	47.4	28.5
	$100,000 - $119,999	49.5	29.9
	$120,000 - $139,999	51.8	29.4
	$140,000 - $159,999	48.2	29.5
	$160,000 - $179,999	47.9	28.6
	$180,000 - $199,999	52.9	28.0
	$200,000 - $299,999	52.7	28.7
	$300,000 - $399,999	52.3	28.4
	$400,000 - $499,999	57.4	28.8
	$500,000+	62.3	26.3
Employment	Employed	46.9	27.7
	Unemployed	56.8	27.9

*For the sake of space, 9 age categories were created to report means, but the actual ages of respondents were utilized in the regressions.

Regression results for police legitimacy in East precinct compared to 2020 Capitol Hill responses are presented in Table 10. Similar to the precinct-level analysis, the independent variables explained just 25.1% of the variance in the model (adjusted $R^2 = .251$). All demographics are statistically significant except for marital status. Results in relation to

demographics are very comparable to the precinct level with non-males, employed respondents, and those with higher levels of education reporting lower perceptions of police legitimacy. Those who were non-white, older, had higher income, and engaged in more self-protective behaviors all scored higher in police legitimacy in East precinct neighborhoods. The magnitude of the coefficients is also highly consistent with the precinct-level model.

Additionally, years prior to 2020 are the only years that are statistically significant at $p <$ .001 with 2017 and 2018 respondents rating police higher than 2020 Capitol Hill respondents by over 13 units, followed by a difference of 11.5 units in 2019. The only micro-communities that are statistically significant are Central Area/Squire Park, Judkins Park, and Madison Park. Interestingly, the only statistically significant micro-community that neighbors Capitol Hill, Central Area/Squire Park, scored 6 units lower in police legitimacy. The lower scores in police legitimacy could be explained by residents from the neighboring micro-communities likely experiencing the same responses from police during the protests in Capitol Hill due to their geographic proximity. The other neighboring micro-communities not having statistically significant differences from Capitol Hill in 2020 also signals high levels of dissatisfaction with the police, which is expected considering that East precinct consistently rated the police the lowest in the city.

Table 10. Linear Regression Predicting Police Legitimacy in East Precinct (n = 7,095).

	B	**S.E.**	**Sig.**
Non-white	1.733	.424	<.001
Non-male	-4.032	.302	<.001
Married	.483	.341	.157
Age	.485	.011	.000
Employed	-1.166	.414	.005
Education	-.613	.140	<.001
Income	.593	.050	<.001
Self-Protection	2.137	.047	.000
Year (2020)			

2017	13.572	1.212	<.001
2018	13.982	1.214	<.001
2019	11.531	1.228	<.001
2021	1.265	1.202	.293
2022	.150	1.196	.900
Micro-Community (Capitol Hill)			
Central Area / Squire Park	-6.109	.875	<.001
Eastlake	2.519	2.353	.284
First Hill	.402	1.091	.712
Judkins Park	-7.068	1.524	<.001
Madison Park	8.280	1.622	<.001
Madrona/Leschi	-.738	1.265	.560
Miller Park	.960	3.414	.779
Montlake	.169	1.581	.915

Fear of Crime by East Precinct Micro-Communities

Table 11 displays the mean scores of all three models of fear of crime by East precinct micro-communities. Despite police legitimacy means in Capitol Hill being among the lowest in East precinct, they are the third highest in general fear of crime. There was an increase in all three fear of crime models in 2020 which was then followed by a decrease in 2021. This could be due to the lawlessness of CHAZ/CHOP in 2020 contributing to increases in fear of crime within Capitol Hill. Central Area/Squire Park had the lowest total fear of crime means in all three models and were also among the lowest in police legitimacy which follows the Citywide pattern. Central Area/Squire Park and First Hill were also the only neighboring micro-communities that reported a reduction in fear of crime in 2020. Eastlake reported the highest fear of crime in East precinct as it is the only micro-community to score above 40 in daytime and above 50 in nighttime fear of crime, and also reported the third highest police legitimacy mean in East precinct.

Table 11. Fear of Crime Means by East Micro-Communities

		Day (*n* = 6,871)		**Night** (*n* = 7,131)		**Gen.** (*n* = 6,737)	
	Year	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Capitol Hill	2017	36.1	24.2	47.6	23.6	42.2	22.8
	2018	40.8	25.4	49.3	25.0	45.3	24.1
	2019	35.2	28.0	45.4	27.8	40.5	27.2
	2020	38.4	30.4	47.7	30.0	43.3	29.6
	2021	34.2	28.7	42.2	28.8	38.5	28.3
	2022	34.9	27.9	43.7	27.8	39.4	26.8
	Total	36.4	28.4	45.5	28.2	41.2	27.5
Central Area / Squire Park	2017	34.6	24.1	41.4	23.0	38.5	23.1
	2018	37.3	23.9	48.0	24.1	42.3	22.9
	2019	34.6	26.5	44.1	28.0	38.9	26.8
	2020	30.7	29.0	39.9	28.7	35.4	27.8
	2021	28.0	27.0	34.6	27.4	31.8	27.0
	2022	28.0	24.0	36.9	25.2	32.7	23.6
	Total	31.5	26.0	40.0	26.3	35.9	25.4
Eastlake	2017	36.3	25.3	41.0	24.8	39.5	24.2
	2018	35.3	23.7	46.8	24.7	41.4	23.5
	2019	46.1	24.9	54.4	21.1	50.2	21.8
	2020	45.1	29.3	56.6	28.4	51.8	28.3
	2021	38.1	30.3	46.6	28.9	43.1	28.8
	2022	48.1	33.3	56.7	30.9	52.6	30.8
	Total	42.1	28.9	51.3	27.9	47.2	27.4
First Hill	2017	38.7	24.6	49.9	24.3	44.6	23.4
	2018	46.8	27.4	55.8	27.2	52.5	25.2
	2019	42.8	24.5	50.1	23.3	46.8	23.4
	2020	39.5	30.0	49.4	29.5	45.1	29.2
	2021	35.4	28.1	44.9	29.0	40.2	27.8
	2022	35.6	28.5	46.3	27.2	41.0	26.5
	Total	38.2	28.0	48.1	27.6	43.5	26.9
Judkins Park / North Beacon Hill	2017	40.6	23.7	52.2	25.2	46.8	22.3
	2018	39.0	29.7	46.3	28.8	42.2	28.9
	2019	36.7	26.5	41.8	24.4	39.3	25.2
	2020	31.5	27.3	40.7	27.9	36.9	26.6
	2021	30.0	26.5	42.7	25.2	37.0	24.3
	2022	30.7	26.6	38.5	26.3	34.8	25.6
	Total	34.1	26.9	43.4	26.7	39.1	25.7
Madison Park	2017	36.1	19.7	43.7	20.8	39.8	19.1
	2018	42.6	22.6	51.3	23.0	47.9	21.4

	2019	32.0	22.0	37.9	21.5	35.5	21.3
	2020	35.0	26.9	45.0	25.4	40.2	25.3
	2021	35.5	29.4	44.0	28.0	39.7	28.3
	2022	28.3	22.3	37.5	22.1	33.2	21.7
	Total	34.4	24.6	49.4	26.8	39.0	23.6
Madrona / Leschi	2017	33.2	19.9	39.9	19.0	36.6	18.7
	2018	32.8	20.6	42.7	21.9	38.3	20.7
	2019	35.6	23.0	45.8	24.7	40.9	22.7
	2020	31.7	27.5	39.7	27.2	36.5	26.7
	2021	38.4	25.0	48.2	25.1	44.6	24.2
	2022	32.6	26.7	43.1	27.3	38.0	26.0
	Total	33.6	24.2	42.7	24.5	38.7	23.5
Miller Park	2017	40.1	19.5	52.2	21.0	46.2	19.4
	2018	44.2	9.2	55.7	17.7	50.0	12.5
	2019	53.4	28.2	61.5	42.2	57.4	35,2
	2020	25.4	20.7	36.0	24.4	30.7	21.9
	2021	31.8	17.2	39.8	18.5	35.8	17.5
	2022	29.8	24.1	36.0	25.3	33.1	24.3
	Total	32.9	20.6	42.0	23.1	37.5	21.3
Montlake / Portage Bay	2017	34.8	20.5	42.0	22.6	39.1	20.2
	2018	34.6	24.0	43.5	23.0	39.8	22.7
	2019	51.4	27.2	56.8	25.4	55.1	25.5
	2020	34.7	25.2	43.8	23.7	40.1	23.2
	2021	34.5	24.9	44.4	24.1	39.4	23.7
	2022	29.9	23.2	39.6	22.0	36.0	21.6
	Total	35.8	24.4	44.2	23.6	40.8	23.0

Mean fear of crime responses in East precinct by demographics are reported in Table 12. Consistent with Citywide means, fear of crime tends to rise with age until it decreases for respondents aged 60+. Further, there is a substantial difference in means between non-white respondents and white respondents as non-whites scored 10.4 units higher in general fear of crime. There is a minor difference in gender fear of crime means as non-males reported only 1.5 units higher than male respondents. Level of education and fear of crime produced a noticeable inverse correlation with a range of 18.9 units between individuals with a high school diploma

and respondents with a graduate degree. Annual household income remains relatively steady as no income category falls below 37.5, while respondents who make $500,000+ are the only category to score over 42 in general fear of crime.

Table 12. Fear of Crime Means by Demographics in East Precinct

		Day (*n* = 6,871)		**Night** (*n* = 7,131)		**Gen.** (*n* = 6,737)	
Variable	Responses	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Age	18-29	30.9	27.0	40.8	27.9	36.2	26.8
	30-39	33.0	27.5	42.1	27.5	37.7	26.8
	40-49	38.6	28.4	47.0	27.7	42.9	27.2
	50-59	41.3	27.5	50.4	26.7	46.2	26.1
	60-69	39.2	26.2	49.0	25.7	44.4	25.0
	70-79	31.9	21.7	39.8	22.6	36.3	20.8
	80-89	30.1	22.5	35.7	22.2	33.7	22.2
	≥90	17.4	15.7	23.5	15.5	19.3	13.8
Race	White	33.9	27.0	43.2	26.5	38.8	25.7
	Non-White	44.0	26.4	51.9	29.4	48.4	28.9
Gender	Male	34.8	27.2	43.7	26.9	39.5	26.2
	Non-Male	36.1	27.5	45.3	27.4	41.0	26.6
Marital Status	Married/Domestic Partnership	37.3	27.5	46.4	27.1	42.1	26.4
	Single/Separated	33.6	27.0	42.5	27.2	38.3	26.4
Education	No High School Diploma	52.5	35.7	64.4	32.8	57.8	33.0
	High School Diploma	42.7	31.2	50.4	30.6	47.3	30.3
	Some College	37.1	28.5	45.5	29.1	41.8	28.0
	Associate Degree	41.6	29.6	49.7	28.8	45.9	28.2
	Bachelor's Degree	35.2	27.4	44.2	27.3	39.9	26.6
	Graduate Degree	34.0	25.9	43.5	25.8	38.9	24.9
Annual Household Income	< $20,000	36.5	28.4	45.9	28.8	41.0	27.6
	$20,000 – $39,999	33.1	27.8	41.4	27.9	37.5	27.3
	$40,000 – $59,999	35.0	27.5	43.6	27.9	39.6	26.8
	$60,000 – $79,999	34.5	27.6	44.0	27.7	39.6	26.9
	$80,000 - $99,999	35.1	27.5	43.8	27.3	39.8	26.6
	$100,000 - $119,999	34.0	27.2	42.8	26.6	39.0	26.2
	$120,000 - $139,999	37.1	28.1	46.6	27.1	42.0	26.9

	$140,000 - $159,999	35.1	28.1	43.5	28.2	39.7	27.3
	$160,000 - $179,999	34.4	27.0	45.7	28.3	40.1	26.8
	$180,000 - $199,999	36.7	26.6	44.9	26.4	40.8	25.6
	$200,000 - $299,999	36.0	26.4	45.4	26.0	40.8	25.3
	$300,000 - $399,999	34.5	24.7	42.9	24.9	39.0	23.9
	$400,000 - $499,999	35.5	27.0	44.7	25.8	40.3	25.8
	$500,000+	40.1	26.7	49.0	25.9	45.1	25.4
Employment	Employed	35.9	27.6	45.2	27.4	40.8	26.7
	Unemployed	34.0	26.0	42.3	26.3	38.6	25.4

*For the sake of space, 9 age categories were created to report means, but the actual ages of respondents were utilized in the regressions.

Table 13 provides regression results for all three fear of crime models by East precinct micro-communities. The independent variables accounted for 30.4% of the variance (adjusted R^2 = .304) in the daytime model, 31.8% (adjusted R^2 = .318) in the nighttime model, and 33.2% (adjusted R^2 = .332) for the general fear of crime model[7]. The significance and magnitude of coefficients in East precinct micro-communities' fear of crime models is again similar to the precinct-level analysis with non-white, non-male, and employed respondents reporting higher levels of fear of crime in each of the models compared to their respective counterparts. Further, higher levels of education and annual income resulted in lower fear of crime. Increases in level of education produced a reduction in general fear of crime by 1.7 units while a one unit increase in income is associated with a moderate .238-unit decrease. Marital status was not statistically significant in any of the models while age was only statistically significant for daytime fear of crime with a one unit increase in age being associated with a .037 increase in daytime fear of crime. Self-protective behaviors also had a significance of p = .000 with increases in self-protective behaviors resulting in a 4.4-unit increase in general fear of crime.

[7] Although regression models were separately run for nighttime and daytime fear of crime, all variables retained their direction and significance in these separate analyses so only general fear of crime is discussed narratively in this section.

Table 13. Linear Regressions Predicting Fear of Crime by East Micro-Communities

	Day (*n* = 6,871)			**Night** (*n* = 7,131)			**Gen.** (*n* = 6,737)		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
Non-white	6.270	.415	<.001	4.678	.395	<.001	5.494	.393	<.001
Non-male	1.674	.296	<.001	2.357	.282	<.001	2.053	.280	<.001
Married	.518	.335	.122	.195	.319	.541	.334	.316	.292
Age	.037	.011	.001	-.015	.011	.162	.013	.011	.226
Employed	2.973	.409	<.001	3.008	.389	<.001	2.926	.387	<.001
Education	-1.834	.138	<.001	-1.625	.131	<.001	-1.759	.131	<.001
Income	-.245	.049	<.001	-.230	.047	<.001	-.238	.046	<.001
Self-Protection	4.384	.046	.000	4.415	.043	.000	4.406	.043	.000
Year (2020)									
2017	6.180	1.218	<.001	9.411	1.171	<.001	7.940	1.174	<.001
2018	8.138	1.218	<.001	11.502	1.172	<.001	9.979	1.174	<.001
2019	7.779	1.231	<.001	10.560	1.184	<.001	9.390	1.186	<.001
2021	5.641	1.207	<.001	9.141	1.162	<.001	7.580	1.163	<.001
2022	7.221	1.201	<.001	10.913	1.156	<.001	9.296	1.158	<.001
Micro-Community (Capitol Hill)									
Central Area / Squire Park	-5.330	-5.330	<.001	-5.376	.827	<.001	-5.457	.823	<.001
Eastlake	-.918	-.918	.701	-.819	2.225	.713	-.614	2.244	.784
First Hill	.817	.817	.452	2.501	1.032	.015	1.546	1.027	.132
Judkins Park	-3.083	-3.083	.034	-2.547	1.395	.068	-2.810	1.384	.042
Madison Park	-5.825	-5.825	<.001	-5.809	1.535	<.001	-5.714	1.529	<.001
Madrona / Leschi	-6.577	-6.577	<.001	-5.208	1.198	<.001	-5.781	1.205	<.001
Miller Park	-1.719	-1.719	.593	-2.267	3.099	.464	-2.177	3.015	.470
Montlake	-4.537	-4.537	.003	-4.760	1.479	.001	-4.133	1.477	.005

Each year compared to 2020, Capitol Hill responses are statistically significant at $p <$ .001. General fear of crime ranged from 7 to nearly 10 units higher in each year compared to 2020. This finding opposes the hypothesis that fear of crime in 2020 Capitol Hill would be highest in East precinct across all survey years. Central Area/Squire Park, Judkins Park, Madison Park, Madrona/Leschi, and Montlake are all statistically significant in relation to Capitol Hill in 2020. Each of these neighborhoods had lower fear of crime across all models, signifying an abnormally high fear of crime in Capitol Hill. The only micro-community with a higher fear of crime was First Hill, but it is not statistically significant. Although East precinct compared to the

rest of the city tended to have lower fear of crime overall, it appears that CHAZ/CHOP may have had a more substantial impact at the micro-community level. This could explain why Capitol Hill was one of the only micro-communities to have low perceptions of police legitimacy and high fear of crime.

Figures 6 through 9 display changes in police legitimacy and fear of crime means over time by East micro-communities. Correlations between general fear of crime and police legitimacy by East precinct micro-communities are not statistically significant (p = .408) and had a relatively weak correlation (r = .316).

Figure 6.

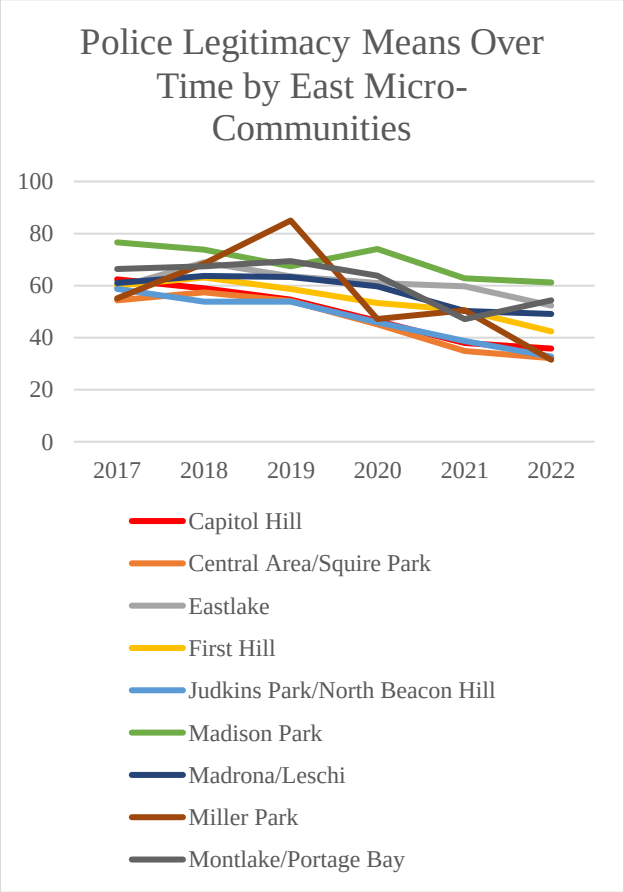


Figure 7.

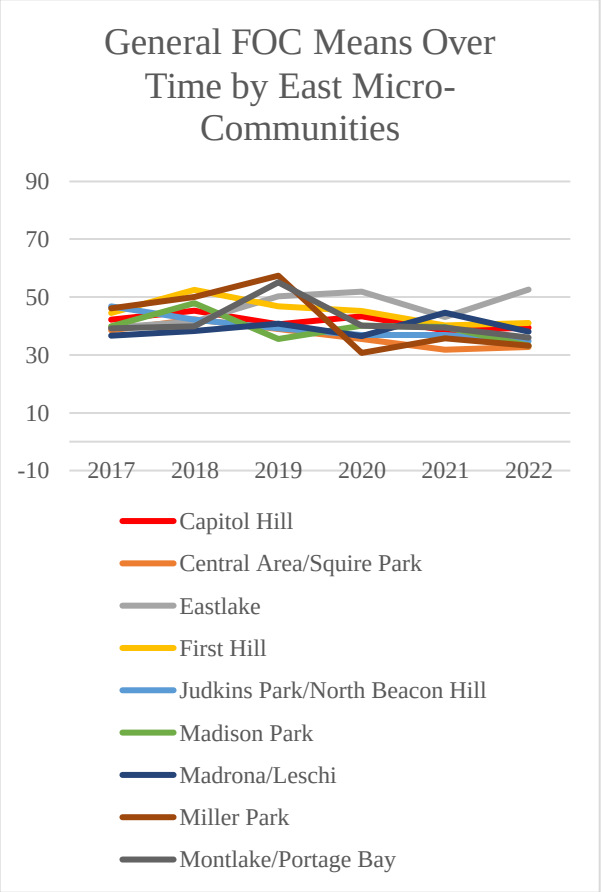


Figure 8.

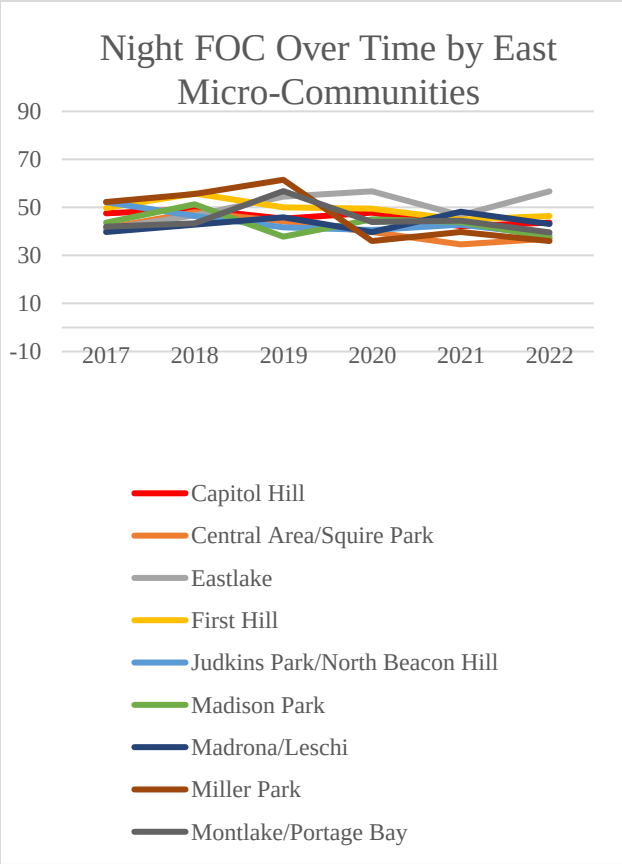


Figure 9.

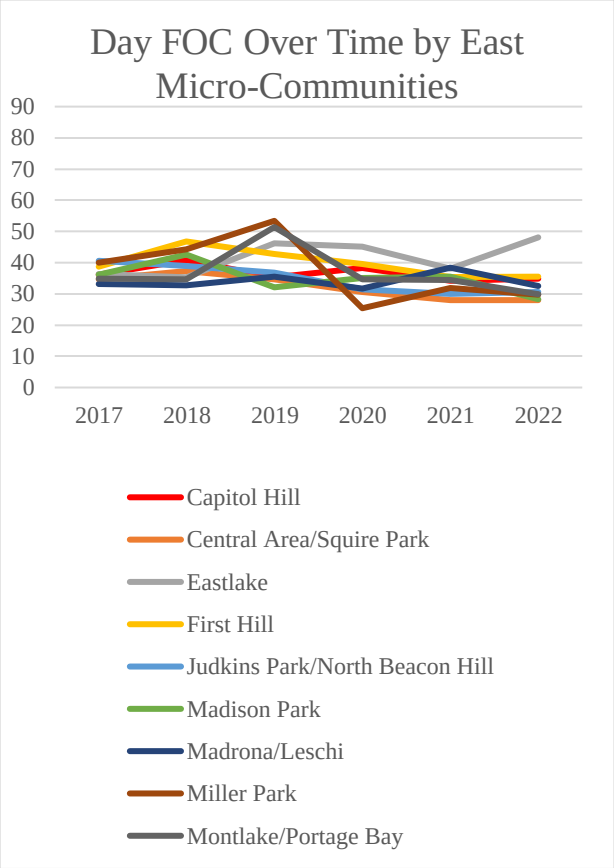
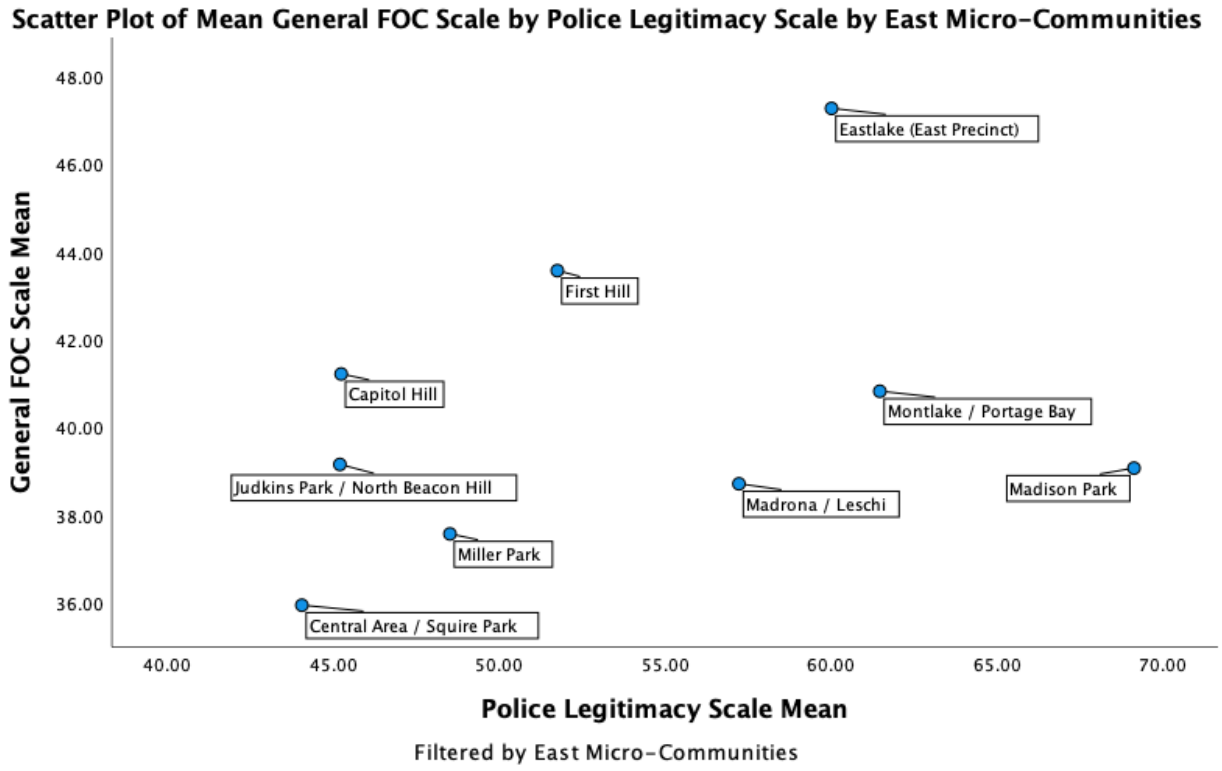


Figure 10 displays a scatterplot of mean general fear of crime and police legitimacy ratings in all East precinct micro-communities. It is expected that Eastlake and Madison Park are outliers as Eastlake was the only micro-community to have high levels of police legitimacy and fear of crime, while Madison Park had high perceptions of police legitimacy and low fear of crime.

Figure 10.


Scatter Plot of Mean General FOC Scale by Police Legitimacy Scale by East Micro-Communities
General FOC Scale Mean
48.00
46.00
44.00
42.00
40.00
38.00
36.00
Eastlake (East Precinct)
First Hill
Capitol Hill
Montlake / Portage Bay
Judkins Park / North Beacon Hill
Madrona / Leschi
Madison Park
Miller Park
Central Area / Squire Park
40.00
45.00
50.00
55.00
60.00
65.00
70.00
Police Legitimacy Scale Mean
Filtered by East Micro-Communities

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate how perceptions of fear of crime and police legitimacy compared in 2020 East precinct to the rest of the city from 2017 through 2022. The results display the significant damaging impression that 2020 had on the city's perceptions of police legitimacy, particularly in East precinct, while fear of crime was marginally influenced. The first hypothesis was that East precinct in 2020 would have the lowest ratings of police legitimacy and highest fear of crime compared to the other four precincts in all survey years. The results partially supported this hypothesis as East precinct did have the lowest ratings of police legitimacy in the city, but there has been a continued decline in subsequent survey years with means in 2022 having the lowest ratings of all six years. Prior to 2020, East precinct already tended to have low perceptions of police legitimacy, but the drastic decline in 2020 and beyond should be noted especially since it was accompanied by a Citywide regression.

There are several explanations for the deterioration in perceptions of police legitimacy, notably, the ongoing staffing crisis which has made it more difficult for police to respond efficiently to calls for service, potentially damaging the public's perceptions of law enforcement's ability to protect them. As SPD's budget was slashed in 2020 and strained community-police relations left officers feeling a lack of support as they moved to other departments or took the opportunity to retire, it led to an unprecedented staffing crisis (Kakade & Ramirez, 2022). As prior research has found, communities tend to rate police lower when they feel like they are not effective (Reisig & Parks, 2000; Taylor et al., 2010). Additionally, the continued dissatisfaction may signal inadequacy in the department reconnecting with the community following the events of 2020. Paired with high turnover in the department during a time where most were in social isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many community

members became disconnected from the department making community outreach particularly important. However, this has been a challenge for SPD due to the staffing shortage as officers have little time to spare in between calls. Despite the community's dissatisfaction with SPD, fear of crime across the city remained constant in all six years.

Research has found that social cohesion and informal social control can produce a mediating effect on fear of crime (Hawdon et al., 2014; Helfgott, et al., 2020; Oh & Kim, 2009). Levels of social cohesion Citywide has remained consistent during this time, but there was a considerable reduction in informal social control in most precincts reaching its lowest point in 2020 until it began to rise again (Helfgott et al., 2022). Although there were not any drastic rises in informal social control or social cohesion, it would be valuable for future research to include these factors as explanatory variables to investigate the impact they had on fear of crime and police legitimacy. Unexpectedly, East precinct had the lowest ratings of fear of crime in the city despite the lawlessness in 2020. In an evaluation of misdemeanor crime rates and fear of crime, Helfgott and colleagues (2020) found that urban neighborhoods with more young, single transient populations tend to have lower fear of crime despite higher rates of misdemeanor crime. East precinct is generally a lively, densely populated area with an attractive nightlife. It is also home to numerous colleges and universities, making for a younger heterogenous population which could be a significant factor in these findings. Although there was marginal impact on fear of crime in the precinct analysis signaling that CHAZ/CHOP may have not had a drastic impact at the larger precinct level, the micro-community evaluation indicates that there was a more significant impact at the neighborhood level.

It was hypothesized that Capitol Hill would have the lowest perceptions of police legitimacy and highest fear of crime in East precinct which was again partially supported.

Capitol Hill reported the third highest general fear of crime means and was tied for the second lowest perceptions of police legitimacy. Although Capitol Hill did not have the highest fear of crime or lowest ratings of police legitimacy, they were among the highest and lowest respectively. This relationship at the micro-community level deviates from the positive correlation between fear of crime and police legitimacy that was identified at the precinct level. Helfgott and colleagues (2020) found that community members who had been victimized were more likely to have higher fear of crime. Considering the high rates of violent crime in CHAZ/CHOP it is likely that many people in the neighborhood were either personally or vicariously impacted by the spike in crime, leading to heightened fear of crime in this neighborhood. Further, the autonomous zone was born from the idea the community can survive independently without police protection which creates the expectation that they will have particularly low perceptions of police legitimacy.

The third hypothesis was that there would be a strong negative correlation between changes in fear of crime and police legitimacy based on the extensive body of policing literature that has shown that high fear of crime is often associated with low perceptions of police legitimacy (Gau & Pratt, 2008; Lytle & Randa, 2015; Reisig & Parks, 2004). However, this relationship was not supported in this study. At the precinct level there was a moderate significance ($p = .017$) between these variables and had a relatively weak strength ($r = .313$), while it was not statistically significant at the micro-community level. Although there is a relatively weak positive correlation at the precinct level between fear of crime and police legitimacy, this interaction is still worth consideration.

The political climate of Seattle could serve as a potential explanation for this relationship. Individuals who are politically left leaning tend to have lower perceptions of police legitimacy

and are more lenient in their attitudes about punitiveness and crime as it is often perceived to be a result of systemic failures, providing a societal justification for crime to occur (Gromet & Darley, 2011; Roché & Guillaume, 2017). Additionally, those who are politically conservative tend to hold favorable opinions of police and subscribe to a more individualistic ethic, resulting in expectations of personal responsibility for harm done (Gerber & Jackson, 2017; Johnson, 2009). Therefore, in a predominantly democratic city it is anticipated that most of the population would be particularly critical of the police while excusing crime as something that is somewhat out of the control of the individuals committing them, potentially mediating or lessening fear of crime. Conversely, those who subscribe to more conservative ideologies and hold more favorable views of the police may have heightened fear of crime due to criminal behavior being perceived as more rational and at the fault of the individuals committing them. This population is also more likely to be in contact with local law enforcement than groups who have disengaged from the police, so they may be privier to the SPD staffing crisis and the laws that keep officers from intervening in certain types of crime which may reduce the fault they attribute to law enforcement for the lawlessness they are witnessing. Further investigation is required for this because the SPS does not collect data on political ideologies.

This study also evaluated the influence of demographics on police legitimacy and fear of crime. Results at the precinct level and micro-community level were highly consistent. Age was only statistically significant for the daytime fear of crime model, and unemployed respondents had lower fear of crime than employed respondents. Unemployed respondents having lower fear of crime than their employed counterparts could be attributed to those on disability being merged into this category who may have caretakers that frequently accompany them.

Consistent with the extant literature, racial/ethnic minorities, non-males, and those with lower income and education reported higher fear of crime. It was expected that racial/ethnic minorities would have higher fear of crime because they are more likely to experience hate crimes, discrimination, and live in socially disorganized neighborhoods (Adjekum-Boateng & Boateng, 2017; Pain, 2001; Parker, 1988). Furthermore, higher fear of crime for lower income and education levels can be explained by these respondents also being more likely to live in neighborhoods with higher crime rates and poverty, exposing them to more criminal behavior. Regarding the influence of gender on fear of crime, females are often physically smaller than men making them less likely to be able to physically defend themselves from crime which can contribute to higher fear of crime (Jackson, 2009). Members of the LGBTQ community who were merged into the non-male gender category are also at increased risk for experiencing hate crimes which likely increased fear of crime in this demographic category (Crowley, 2014; Jackson, 2009, 2017).

Surprisingly, racial/ethnic minorities rated the police higher than white respondents which opposes previous findings. This could be due only 20.3% of survey respondents being racial/ethnic minorities so the sample may not be fully representative of their populations. The SPS is also associated with SPD which could attract individuals who are more comfortable with the police, regardless of their racial or ethnic group likely inflating perceptions of police legitimacy among the sample. However, it should also be noted that there is a possibility that the presence of the *white savior complex* within the Seattle community has had a true influence on these ratings. In a highly white and democratic city that is constantly advocating for social progress, one might question the extent in which white community members speak on behalf of minority communities. As white activists work to create reform for communities they do not

belong to, the needs of those communities may become clouded and sacrificed[8]. Criminal justice reform is absolutely necessary to create a more equitable society for all populations, but those who have the most privilege in society must also be cognizant of their own active role in colonization, even when they believe they are "allies" advocating for just and equitable movements. It is incredibly important to allow for members of minority communities to speak for themselves about their wants and needs rather than further contributing the silence of these communities by being the loudest voices in the demonstrations.

Moreover, non-males had lower perceptions of police legitimacy than male respondents. Again, this could be due to the non-male category containing respondents who are members of the LGBTQ community who are gender-fluid and do not identify as male. Due to law enforcement's role in the marginalization of the LGBTQ community, they tend to have lower perceptions of police legitimacy which likely reduced police legitimacy scores for this gender category (Dario et al., 2020; Miles-Johnson, 2013; Owen et al., 2017). The results also indicated that age of respondents was a significant predictor in perceptions of police legitimacy as ratings tended to rise with age which supports the extant literature on this relationship (Correia et al., 1996; Hauser & Kleck, 2017). Higher levels of education and lower annual income was also associated with lower perceptions of police legitimacy. This was anticipated as higher levels of education increase the likelihood that people are more exposed to systemic issues and the role of the criminal justice system in the marginalization of minority communities. Additionally, many low-income neighborhoods experience high rates of crime which can signal an inability for law enforcement to effectively protect residents, reducing police legitimacy scores.

[8] As a co-facilitator of MCPP community-police dialogues, this topic has been discussed in multiple dialogues as African American community members have voiced their frustration with white activists speaking on behalf of their community which has resulted in a continued strenuous relationship with the police department despite their community wanting more engagement and involvement from the police in their neighborhoods and schools.

Another element that this study investigated was the impact that self-protective behaviors have on fear of crime and police legitimacy. Self-protective behaviors were statistically significant predictors of fear of crime and police legitimacy with more engagement with these behaviors being positively associated with these variables. The interaction in relation to fear of crime supports the extant literature as people who have witnessed crime or have been personally victimized tend to feel a higher need to protect themselves (Antoci et al., 2017; San-Juan et al., 2012). Relatedly, lower confidence in law enforcement to protect the public effectively would create the expectation that an individual would engage in more self-protective behaviors (Gau & Brunson, 2015). However, the positive association between self-protective behaviors and police legitimacy could again potentially be explained by political ideologies. Considering that support of the police and exercising the Second Amendment is often associated with more conservative-leaning political ideologies, this population may be more willing to carry weapons and engage in other self-protective behaviors for personal protection while simultaneously supporting law enforcement.

Implications for Community-Police Engagement and Public Safety

The findings in this study are crucial to consider because perceptions of police legitimacy have influences on compliance with the law and enforcers of the law (Skogan & Frydl, 2004; Tankebe, 2013). If there are exceptionally low perceptions of police legitimacy, it may increase the potential for physical coercive tactics during police stops and protests which can lead to violent interactions as experienced in 2020. Additionally, maintaining public safety requires communication and collaboration between the community and law enforcement to be as effective as possible. The findings regarding perceptions of police legitimacy indicate that there is a dire need for open dialogue between the Seattle community and SPD to rebuild the relationships that

have been severely fractured. As Piza and Connealy (2022) argue, CHAZ/CHOP is a demonstration that complete police abolition is impractical and unsafe signaling the need for police to remain as a cornerstone of public safety. Therefore, the purpose of restoring this relationship is not to forget the events of 2020 or the historical role that policing has played in the oppression of minority communities, rather, to move forward together as a community and work collaboratively to reform policing in an equitable and safe fashion for everyone.

These changes require investment from SPD and community members to get involved and have open and honest dialogue about how to move forward as a community. This includes identifying common values, building personal relationships, and working to humanize each other to break down the "us vs. them" mentality. This can also be an opportunity for community members to learn more about the changes that the department has made to their crowd control tactics or other efforts they have made to reform the department while concurrently providing the opportunity for law enforcement to learn the wants and needs of the various communities they are serving. This is particularly important following the significant amount of turnover within the department as new officers work to build lasting relationships with the community and learn how they can improve the police institution.

Following the events of 2020, SPD became subject to a Sentinel Event Review investigation to determine what went wrong during the protests and create recommendations for reform. There were four waves of investigations that included 17 notable events and responses from SPD that a committee of criminal justice professionals determined were important for consideration, review, and action. Waves were broken up based on four time periods between May and October 2020. The first wave included incidents from May 29 to June 1, wave 2 was for June 2 – 7, wave 3 was June 8 to July 1, and the fourth and final wave was for July 2 through

October 7. Events included but were not limited to dispersion of OC spray on a child, police vehicles set on fire, stolen SPD rifles, SPD use of force at a barricade, a man driving a car into a crowd of protestors, evacuation of the East police precinct, and the CHAZ/CHOP experience (Office of Inspector General, 2023).

To collaboratively investigate the events, restorative justice-based focus groups took place that included community members, SPD stakeholders, and facilitators/outside experts who dedicated over 80 hours to talking through the events and coming to a mutual understanding. A planning group worked to collect data on potentially reviewable incidents, analyze patterns of use of force, and identify events that were notable of public attention. The group then evaluated these events based on outcomes that should not occur when the public is engaging in their First Amendment rights. The incidents were sent to panelists for root cause analyses and the panel utilized their collective expertise to determine prioritization of the events. These events were then brought to the table for discussion and facilitation of a peacemaking process, as well as create recommendations for SPD to consider as they work to improve their departmental policies (Office of Inspector General, 2023).

Recommendations for reform included a variety of concrete actions for improving community legitimacy, situational awareness, SPD communication with media, protestors, and legal observers, crowd management tactics, officer wellness, and the utilization of less lethal weapons (Office of Inspector General, 2023)[9]. This investigation was integral for creating recommendations for reforming SPD's policies that are still in the process of being evaluated and authorized by the department. However, the data displayed in the current study exhibits the need for more community-police engagement to heal as a community. The panelists that served on the

[9] The full list of recommendations can be found in the Sentinel Review Reports at www.seattle.gov/oig/sentinel-event-review

Sentinel Review Board only included six community members, five SPD personnel and one Inspector General Judge (Office of Inspector General, 2023). Although a small group allowed for progress to be made, the healing process was limited to those who had been selected to participate. Therefore, there is an imminent need for broader community engagement so that anyone who lives or works in Seattle can contribute to open and honest conversations about their experiences and develop solutions on how to move forward as a community and improve public safety.

Prior to 2021, MCPP hosted community public safety focus groups that provided space for community members to express their public safety concerns. Following numerous requests from participants to include law enforcement officers in the discussions, MCPP has since developed and held weekly virtual restorative justice-based community-police dialogues in between survey distributions, replacing the original focus groups. Results from the SPS are presented to inform participants on what were identified as the most prominent public safety concerns to facilitate discussion on what concrete actions can be taken to improve safety at the neighborhood and precinct level, but the dialogues also serve as an opportunity for SPD personnel from all levels of command staff and community members to bridge the gap and foster relationship building (Helfgott & Bledsoe, 2022). This has also led to the development of a 1-credit restorative justice circle practicum at Seattle University co-facilitated by MCPP RAs and SPD community outreach officers.

Restorative justice practices have garnered a significant amount of empirical support as a valuable asset for enabling healing processes between victims and offenders (Angel et al., 2014; Hadar & Gal, 2023; Nascimento et al., 2022; Sherman et al., 2015). These practices can be traced back to native tribes in the United States and Canada (Coates et al., 2003). The basis of the

restorative justice strategy is to settle disputes within the community by bringing offenders and victims together to admit to wrongdoing, assess the harm done, and discuss how to move forward and resolve conflict (Coates et al., 2003; Umbriet et al., 2007). Police agencies have traditionally utilized restorative justice-based practices at the community level particularly for youth in prison diversion efforts (Coates et al., 2003). The basis of restorative justice is accountability, so it is not used to excuse past harms, rather, confront and admit to them to move forward as a community. Although the MCPP dialogues also provide space for community members to express their ongoing public safety concerns, there have been plenty discussions about SPD's harmful responses to the 2020 protests, CHAZ/CHOP, and how the department has changed their policies to improve. These dialogues have provided the opportunity for SPD to admit to their wrongdoing while community members were able to express the impact the events had on them as individuals which will hopefully be considered as SPD reevaluates their policies and procedures.

Additionally, MCPP launched a separate set of dialogues in 2022 focused on *Before the Badge* police recruits. Before the Badge is an initiative championed by Seattle Police Chief Adrian Diaz focused on engaging police recruits with the communities they will be serving and informing them about the historical harms of policing on marginalized communities prior to the recruits entering the police academy (City of Seattle, 2023). MCPP dialogues have been employed as one element of the recruits' Before the Badge experience as they provide the opportunity for them to meet with community members, learn about various neighborhoods and cultures, and build lasting relationships that they will be able to further cultivate when they become sworn officers (Helfgott & Bledsoe, 2022). These dialogues provide a unique

opportunity for community members to be a part of the training process and speak with incoming officers about how they envision the future of policing in Seattle.

Although the MCPP dialogues have provided space for discussion to occur between community members and SPD, it has been difficult to achieve representation from a wide variety of demographics and opinions. Many community participants have been involved in block watch or have worked with the police department in some capacity in the past creating a tendency for some of the discussions to be favorable of the police which is not representative of the larger Seattle community. To improve the MCPP dialogues, it is crucial to get community members involved who belong to groups who have disengaged from the police so that the discussions can be a true reflection of the Seattle community, and the department can understand what kind of change various populations are looking for so they can employ more equitable practices. A benefit of hosting virtual dialogues is that community members do not need to be in the same room as the officers which is meant to minimize fear in police interactions. Additionally, no personal information about participants is collected to ensure anonymity. MCPP RAs continue to improve their outreach efforts every year but also need investment from the community and the city to create a meaningful impact.

Currently, the only incentive for community members to participate in the dialogues is their own interest in being involved in public safety and meeting officers. To generate more incentives for community participation, it would be valuable for a portion of the dialogues to be hosted in person, with food and drinks available to participants. For those who may not have an initial interest in the discussion but are enticed by refreshments, the hope is that they will at least be exposed to the dialogue and spark an interest. This would eliminate the anonymity and comfort that the virtual dialogues allow for, but it could improve engagement and be more

accessible to individuals who do not have the means to attend a virtual meeting. Therefore, it would be important to utilize a hybrid modality to ensure that there are enough options and opportunities for everyone to participate comfortably. Investments should also be made into hiring interpreters for non-native English speakers since there is a substantial population of immigrants in the Seattle community. These changes require additional funds for SPD and MCPP which necessitates financial investment and prioritization from the city. MCPP has worked to create these opportunities by proposing larger annual budgets to pay for these incentives but are yet to gain approval.

There are also some barriers in terms of space to host dialogues. When focus groups were hosted prior to the dialogues, there was an ongoing struggle to find locations across the city to host the focus groups. This can be an expensive venture so it would be crucial for community centers and organizations to invest their time and space into these dialogues to provide the space required to hold in-person meetings at a neutral location. Additionally, considering the SPD staffing crisis, it can be difficult to find officers available to attend these meetings. To allow for improved community-police engagement, it will require more officers on the force. Mayor Bruce Harrell and Seattle Police Chief Adrian Diaz have formed a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan to improve the number of officers in the city (Housen, 2022), but it will take many years to restore the department back to where it once was. The city must continue to prioritize the department's capacity which will create positive influences for response times as well as community-police engagement.

SPD has also been under a significant amount of strain due to the high volume of mental health and social crisis calls that they are not equipped to properly respond to. Therefore, it is also critical for the city to invest in community resources and mental health professionals. Police

should be involved in calls that threaten the safety of an individual or the public, but the mental health and drug crises in the city must be addressed by established community resources who have the proper resources to get them the help they need. Investment in expanding co-response teams and unarmed community service officers to respond to social service needs would significantly improve the capacity of the police department as well as provide adequate services to those in social crises.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

There are numerous limitations to this study that should be considered. First, the SPS is non-probability-based which restricts the survey's generalizability. It has remained a non-probability survey to allow for the opportunity for everyone and anyone who lives and/or works in Seattle to voice their concerns, but the number of responses and diversity of respondents is highly variable from year to year. This has also resulted in some commercial micro-communities having particularly low yearly responses which creates large variations in perceptions over time that are likely not representative of the community. Additionally, majority of the survey participants in this study were white (79.7%) which is approximately 10% higher than the percentage of whites that make up the Seattle population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). 77.8% of respondents held at least a bachelor's degree which is approximately 12% higher than the Seattle population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). Demographics for annual SPS reports are statistically weighted to reflect the Seattle City Census but were not weighted in this study to avoid further overpowering the sample size. The accompaniment of a probability survey has been proposed to SPD to address this limitation, but the substantial cost of this venture has been a barrier for implementation.

The SPS is also distributed from October 15th through November 30th each year. The series of social justice protests and creation of CHAZ/CHOP was during the summer months, so responses were a few months removed from these events which could have provided time for fear to be mediated making it difficult to definitively determine the extent in which CHAZ/CHOP impacted public perceptions at the time of the protests. However, the primary purpose of this study is to inform next steps in community-police relations, so this limitation does not have a drastic impact on recommendations at this point.

Further, to properly run regressions, nominal variables had to be transformed into binary variables, notably race and gender, which prevents a nuanced understanding of how various social groups perceive police legitimacy and crime. Especially considering that non-white respondents rated the police higher than white participants, a deeper investigation into race and police legitimacy using this dataset would contextualize these findings. It is also unclear how much of an impact members of the LGBTQ community had on perceptions of police legitimacy for the non-male demographic category. Seattle, and particularly East precinct, has a high population of the LGBTQ community so it would be useful for future research to expand on this and continue to investigate how individual demographic categories influence public perceptions to properly inform community outreach tactics.

As previously discussed, it would also be valuable to analyze differences in perceptions across all 58 micro-communities in the city, beyond just East precinct. All micro-communities were accounted for in the precinct-level analysis, but an investigation at the neighborhood level would be essential for understanding the unique needs of each community. The SPS collects narrative comments that can provide additional insight on how people define, express, and experience fear of crime and police legitimacy. There are thousands of narrative comments left

each year which are coded by MCPP RAs based on themes that arise. Analysis of this data was beyond the capacity of this study but would be valuable to be considered in future studies to provide additional insight on how respondents view these issues and how it impacts them personally.

Finally, this study primarily investigated correlations between police legitimacy rather than causations. Future research should expand on this study by delving deeper into other factors that influence police legitimacy and fear of crime in the city including police capacity and the consideration of real crime statistics to achieve a holistic understanding of public safety and quality of life in Seattle to attain a true causal understanding of changes in public perceptions.

Conclusion

The unique social circumstances in 2020 that led to the development of CHAZ/CHOP that have had lasting ramifications for public safety in Seattle have been severely understudied. This study sought to contribute to a clearer understanding of how community members' perceptions of fear of crime and police legitimacy were impacted by the events of 2020 to inform next steps in community-police relations. The primary outcome of this study is that police legitimacy and fear of crime are marginally related at the citywide level but unrelated at the neighborhood level. Drawing data from the SPS, Helfgott and colleagues (2020) also found that police legitimacy and fear of crime were unrelated at the neighborhood level. In addition to the results between micro-communities, the current study extends the findings of Helfgott and colleagues (2020) by evaluating perceptions at the macrolevel as there was a statistically significant yet relatively weak positive correlation in the citywide analysis between changes in police legitimacy and fear of crime.

Findings at the citywide level of the present study shows that even if there is a very limited influence of police legitimacy on fear of crime within individual neighborhoods, there is an impact that it can have when evaluating perceptions at the citywide level making it important for SPD to make efforts to improve police legitimacy and be one of many needed contributing factors to reduce fear of crime and subsequently improve quality of life for the broader Seattle community. Even if improving police legitimacy makes a marginal impact on fear of crime, it still matters for those who were impacted and is worth the investment. Helfgott and colleagues (2020) contend that their findings are still useful for law enforcement so they can work to educate the public about the reality of crime in their neighborhoods. In addition to the implications made by Helfgott and colleagues (2020), the results of this study also show that there should be a concerted effort by the police to engage with community members and work to improve police legitimacy across the city.

To my knowledge, CHAZ/CHOP is the first and only attempt at police abolishment at the micro-community level. This study along with Piza and Connealy's (2022) evaluation on crime rates within the autonomous zone can be evaluated in conjunction to serve as valuable insight about the impact of complete police abolition, but there is plenty of other research needed to understand the true impact of CHAZ/CHOP and how it might influence future attempts at police reform. As the Seattle community looks to move forward following undoubtable strain in community-police relations, it is imperative that efforts are made by community members, city leaders, and SPD to foster relationship building by engaging with each other and healing as a community through the employment of restorative justice-based practices. Improving public safety requires a community effort, and everyone has a stake in keeping their communities safe. As Piza and Connealy (2022) contest, the outcome of CHAZ/CHOP displays the inability for

complete police abolition to safely exist, at least in the way that CHAZ/CHOP was implemented. This is crucial to consider as police remain integral elements of public safety, but also must be held to the highest standards of morality and conduct to ensure the safety of populations who have been historically marginalized by law enforcement. This will require the cooperation of community members and police to find creative solutions and be open to dialogue to share expectations and discover mutual understandings.

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