



**BODY-WORN
CAMERA**

TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Role of Police Body-Worn Cameras in Recent Public Protests: Benefits, Challenges, and Solutions

July 23, 2020

Dr. Michael White, Co-Director BWC TTA
Assistant Chief Jeffery W. Carroll, Metropolitan Police Department
Dr. Edward Maguire, Arizona State University



Introduction

Tom Woodmansee, Senior Advisor
of BWC TTA, CNA



Webinar Introduction

- ▶ **Introductions** – Tom Woodmansee, BWC TTA Senior Advisor, CNA
- ▶ **Results of TTA Site Survey**- Dr. Michael White, ASU
- ▶ **Jurisdiction Experience**– Assistant Chief Jeffery W. Carroll, Metropolitan Police Department
- ▶ **Improving Protest Policing** - Dr. Edward Maguire, ASU
- ▶ **Questions**- Dr. Michael White, Co-Director BWC TTA & ASU
- ▶ **Closing Remarks**- Dr. Michael White, Co-Director BWC TTA & ASU



Webinar Overview and Logistics

- ▶ Webinar is recorded
- ▶ Questions
- ▶ Webinar evaluation
- ▶ Resources



Results of TTA Site Survey



Dr. Michael White, Co-Director of
BWC TTA and Professor, Arizona
State University



The ASU “BWC and Protests” Survey

- ▶ Survey link emailed to 426 current and former TTA sites
 - ▶ Sent out June 11, 2020
 - ▶ Reminders - June 18, June 25
- ▶ 53 returned email addresses (373)
- ▶ 100 completed surveys returned
 - ▶ Response rate = 23.5% (100/426) or 26.8 % (100/373)
- ▶ 18 from agencies with 500+ sworn



The ASU Survey - Topics

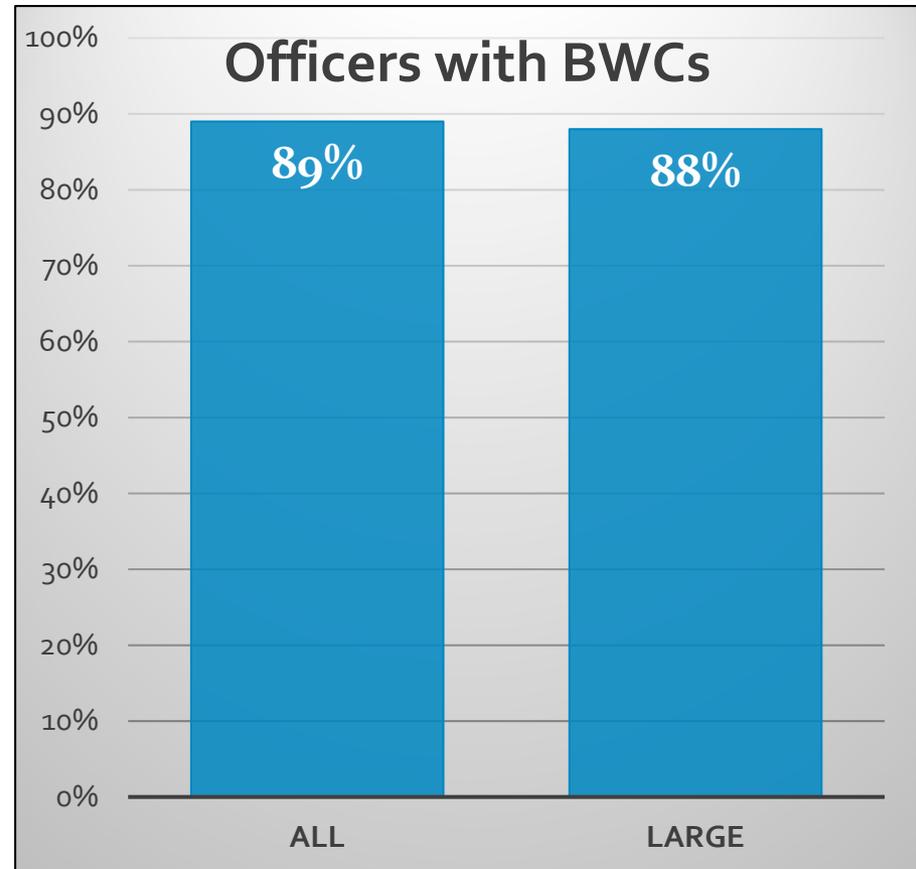
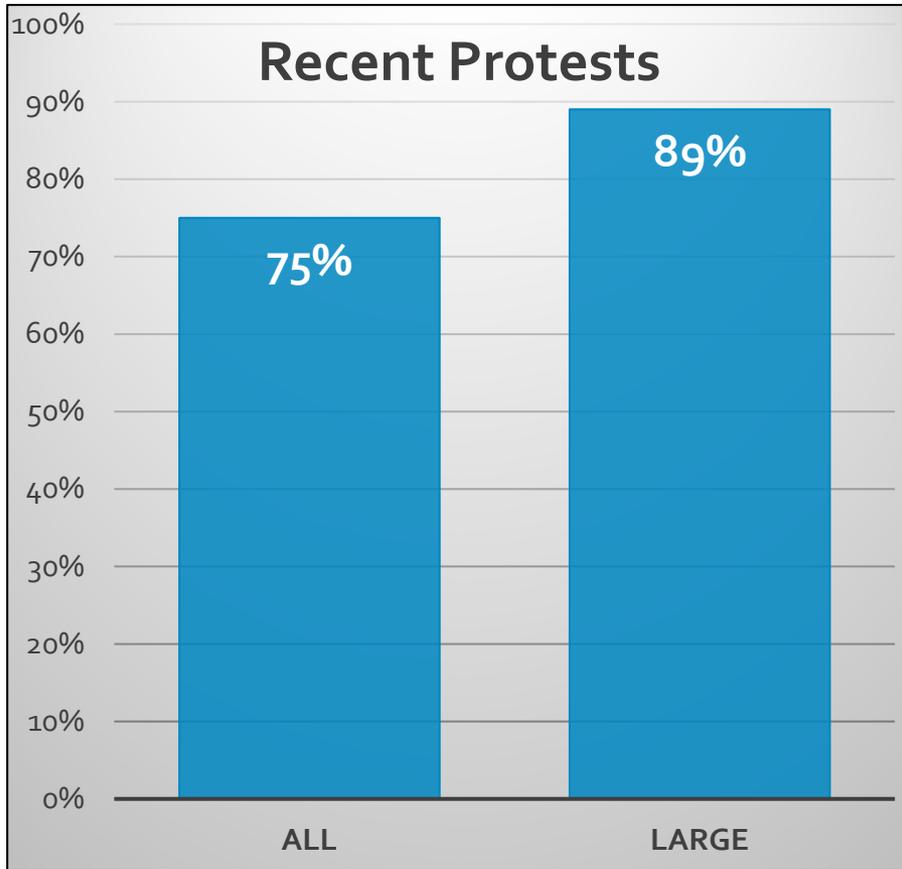
- ▶ Prevalence of protests (since May 25, 2020)
- ▶ Civility of protests
- ▶ BWC presence
- ▶ Activation/live-streaming
- ▶ Problems/issues with BWCs (battery life/recording capacity)
- ▶ Usefulness of BWCs
- ▶ Complaints against officers (BWCs present)



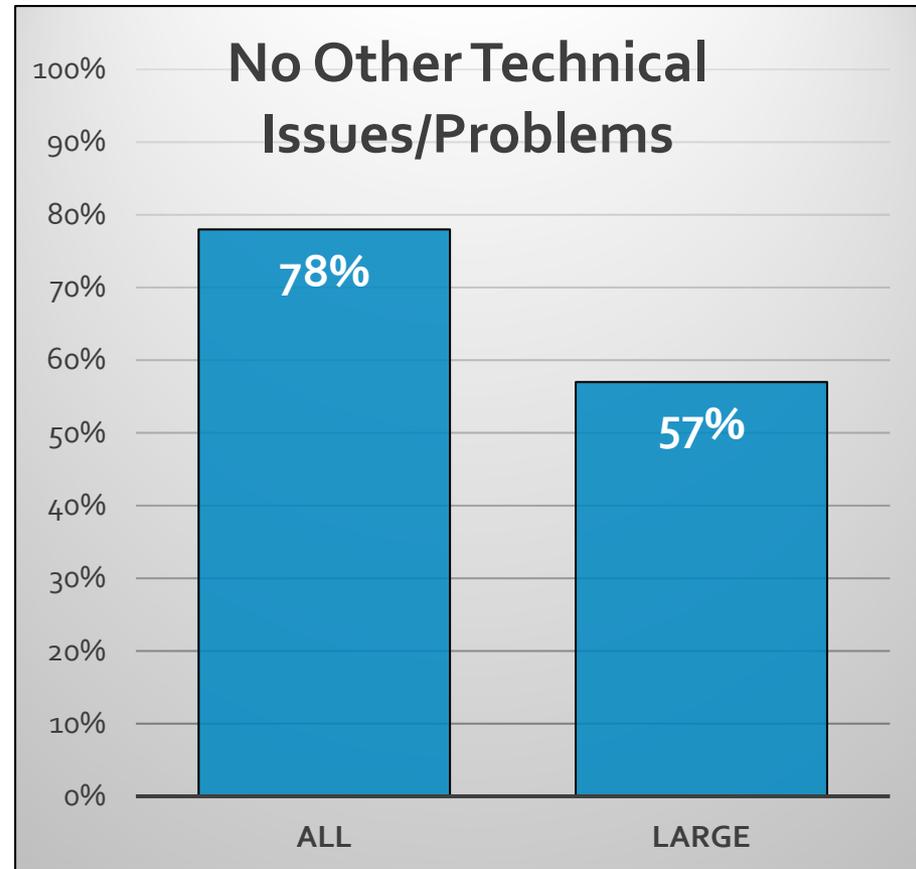
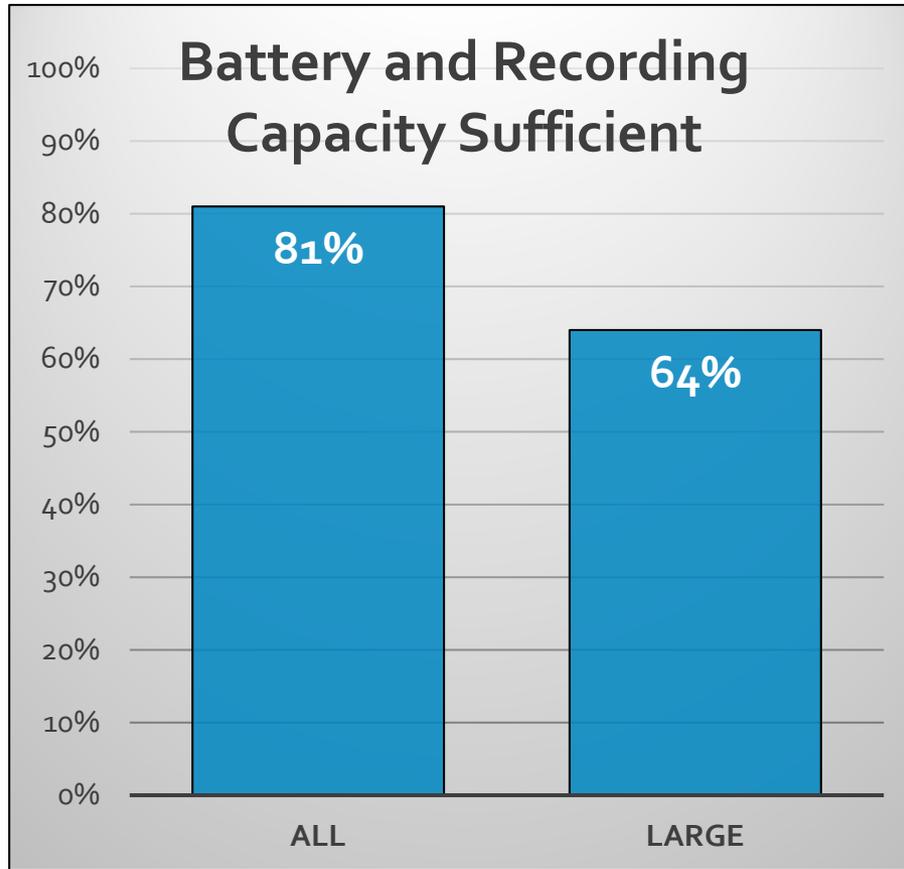
Results



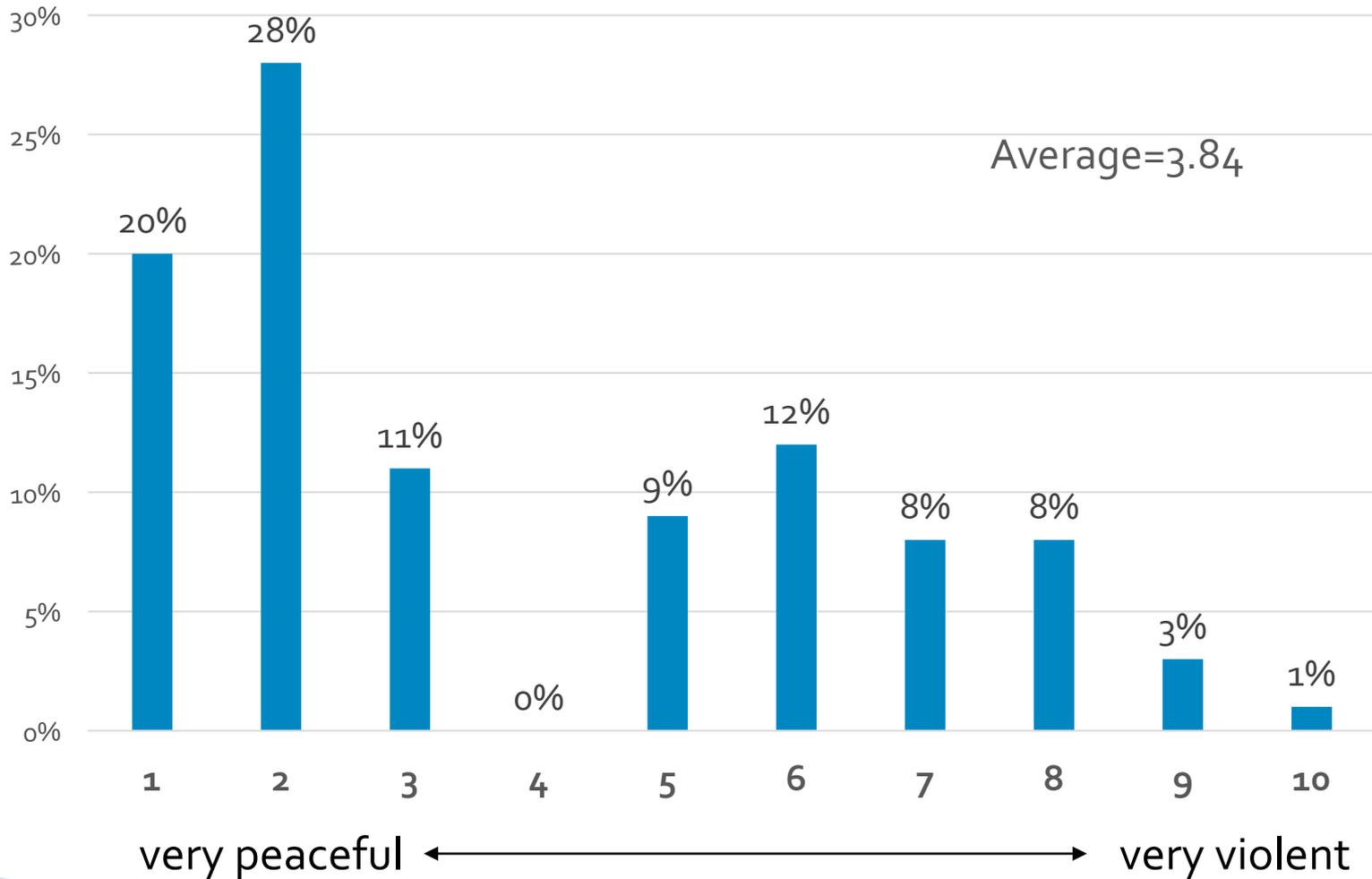
Prevalence of Protests (and BWCs)



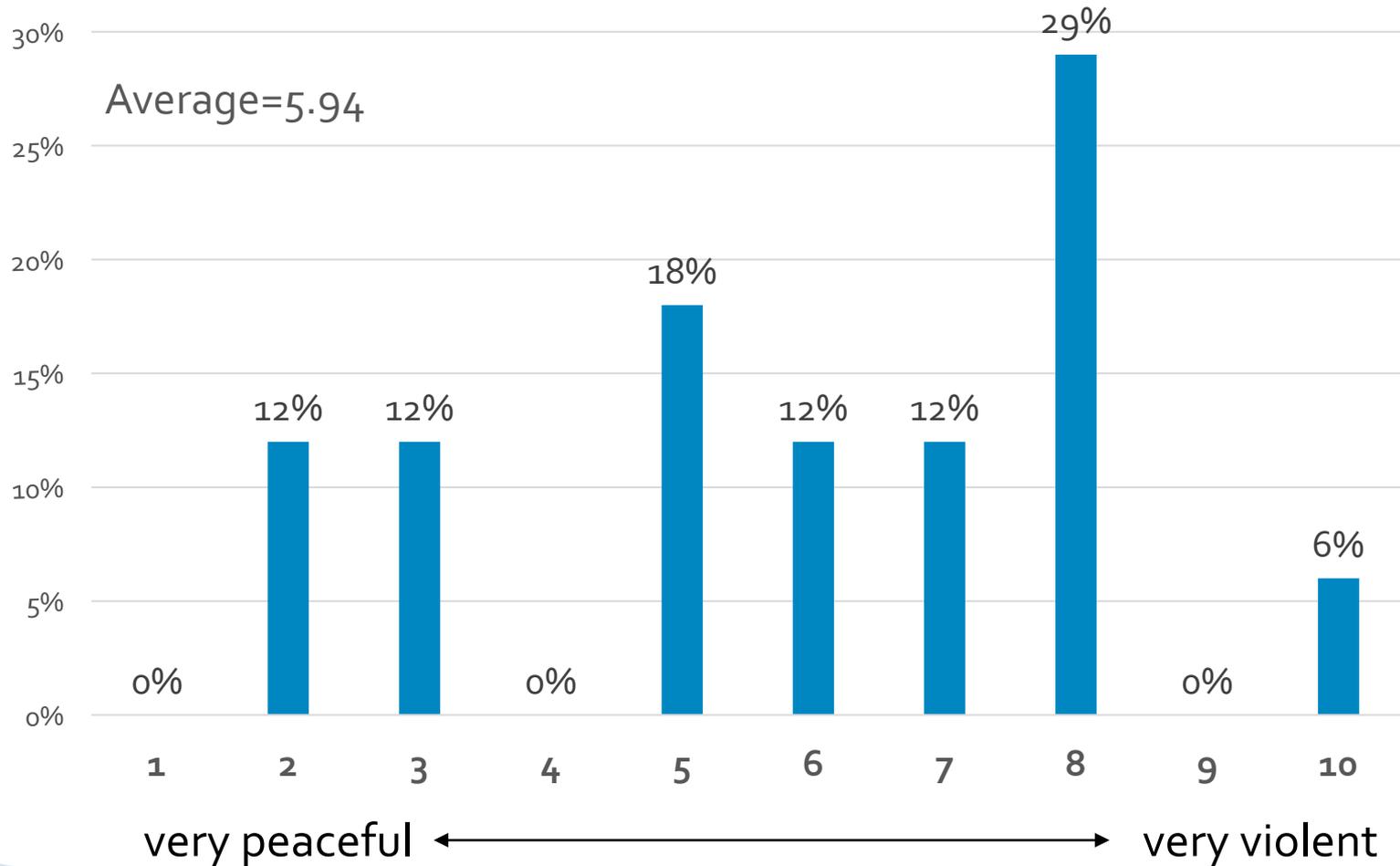
BWC Problems at Protests



The Civility of Protests: All



The Civility of Protests: Large



Are BWCs useful at protests?

- ▶ 81% say “yes”
 - ▶ 85% of large agencies say “yes”
- ▶ Most commonly identified benefits
 - ▶ Evidentiary/documentation (60%)
 - ▶ 77% of large agencies
 - ▶ Just as useful as for everyday activities (15%)
 - ▶ 8% of large agencies
 - ▶ Promote positive behavior (4%)



Other Findings of Interest

- ▶ 50% sent officers to protests in other jurisdictions
 - ▶ 39% for large agencies
- ▶ 81% require activation of BWC at protests
 - ▶ 71% for large agencies
 - ▶ 31% restrict activation (criminal activity, direct contact)
- ▶ Live-streaming was rare (3%)
- ▶ 18% reported having complaints filed against officers
 - ▶ 67% for large agencies



Summary

- ▶ Most have had recent protests (75%)
 - ▶ Protests more common (89%) and more violent in large agency jurisdictions.
 - ▶ Complaints against officer also much more common (67%).
- ▶ Most had BWCs present at those protests (89%)
- ▶ Most require activation of BWCs at protests (81%)
 - ▶ 71% for large agencies
- ▶ Most reported no problems with their BWCs (80%)
 - ▶ Problems more common for large agencies
- ▶ Most reported BWCs are useful at protests (81%)
 - ▶ 85% for large agencies



Jurisdiction Experience



Assistant Chief Jeffery W. Carroll,
Metropolitan Police Department



Improving Protest Policing

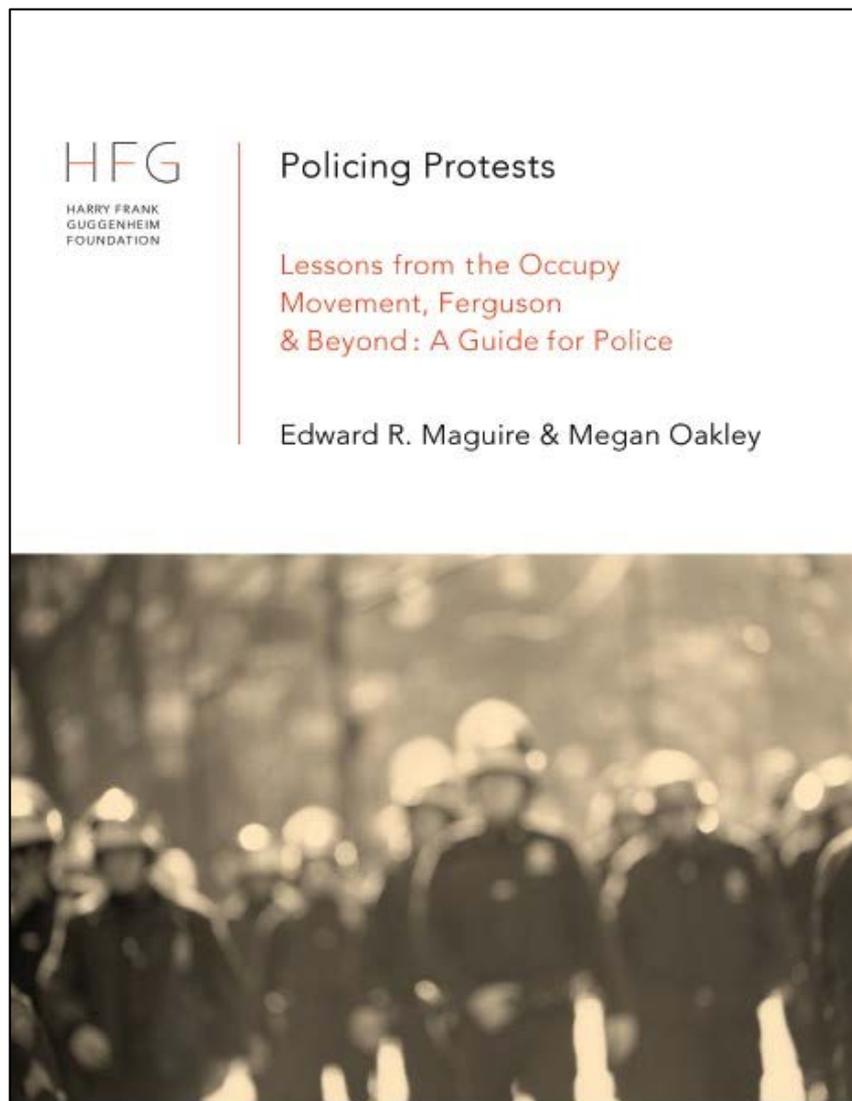


Dr. Edward Maguire, ASU



Policing Protests

- ▶ Lessons from the Occupy Movement, Ferguson & Beyond
- ▶ <https://www.hfg.org/policingprotests.htm>



* Research funded by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) of the U.S. Department of Justice

Basic Concepts & Principles

- **Constitutional Law**
- Procedural Justice & Legitimacy
- Crowd Psychology



Constitutional Law

Most Constitutional law challenges in protest policing arise from three amendments:

- ▶ 1st Amendment
- ▶ 4th Amendment
- ▶ 14th Amendment

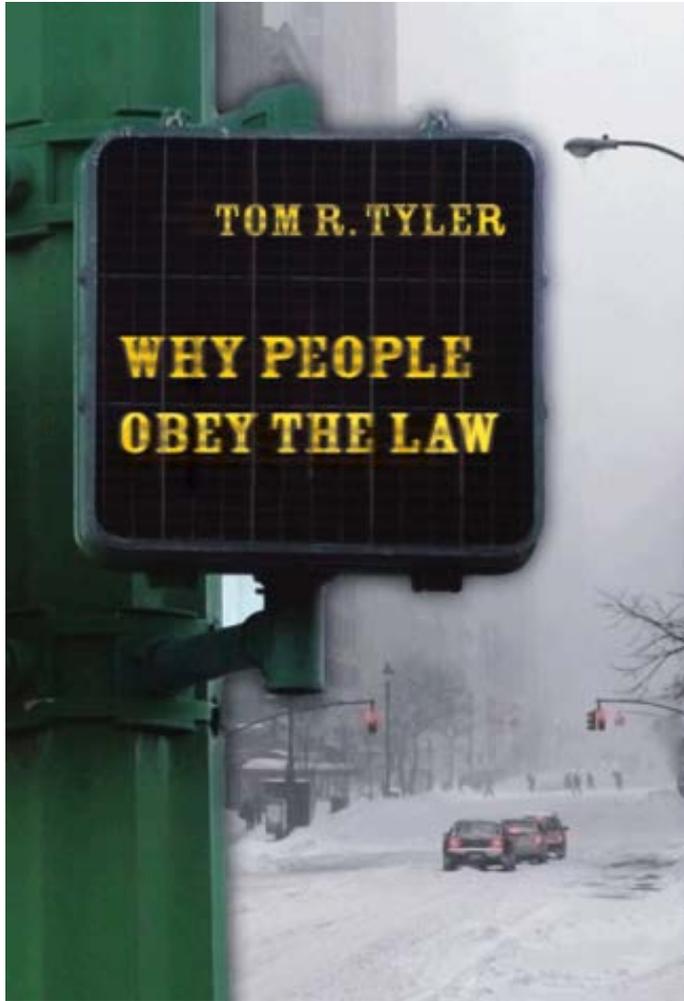


Basic Concepts & Principles

- Constitutional Law
- **Procedural Justice & Legitimacy**
- Crowd Psychology



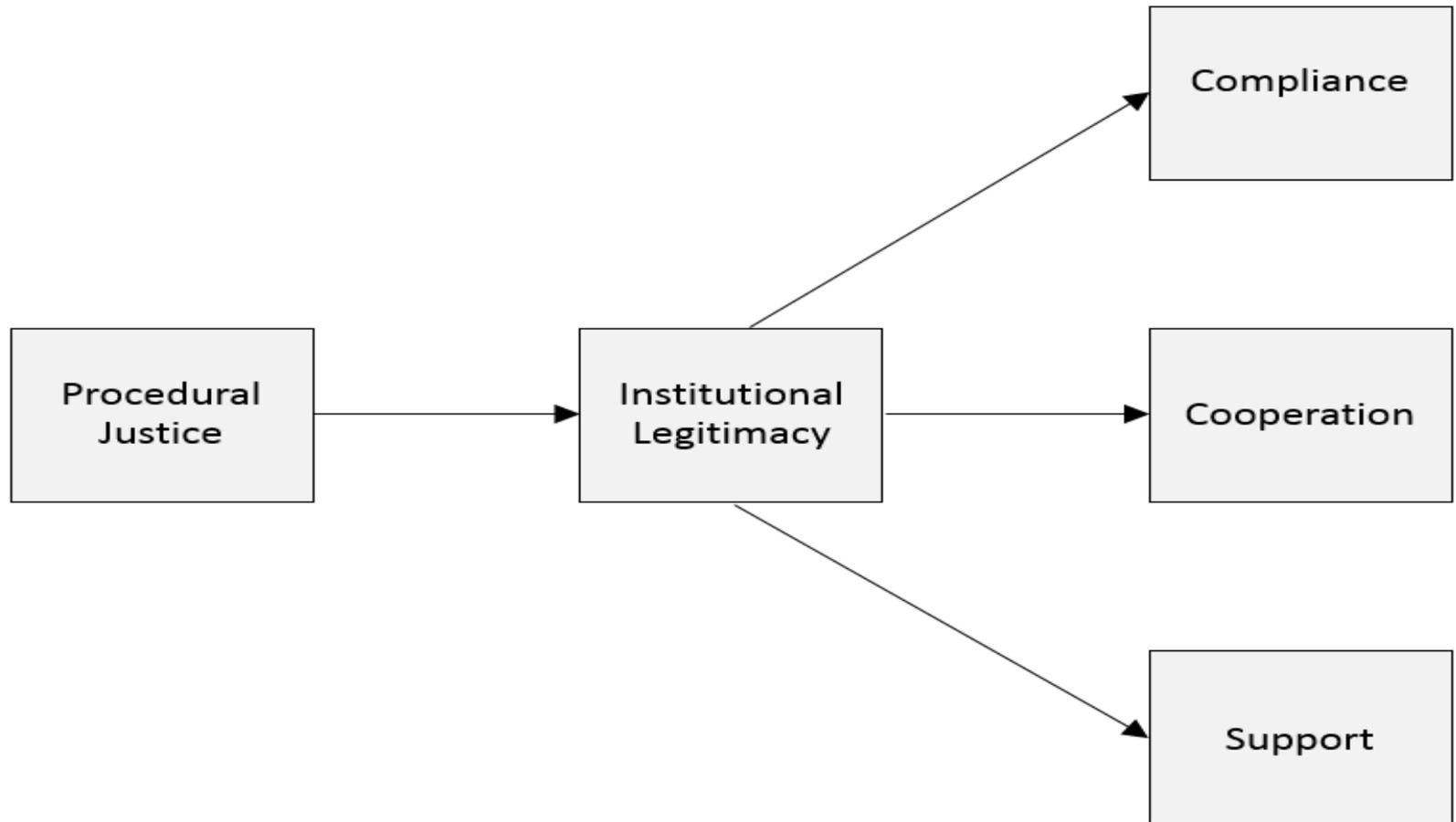
Procedural Justice



Social psychologist Tom Tyler argues that a concept known as procedural justice has a powerful influence on why people comply with or defy law and legal authorities.



Logic Model: Procedural Justice & Legitimacy



Recent Research Findings

Protesters who believe police have treated them or their peers *unjustly* are *more likely* to endorse the *use of violence* against police officers as a legitimate protest tactic.



Fair and effective protest policing strategies aim to secure voluntary compliance without instigating a sense of defiance or rebellion among protesters.

Basic Concepts & Principles

- Constitutional Law
- Procedural Justice & Legitimacy
- **Crowd Psychology**



Crowd Psychology

- ▶ Crowds are heterogeneous and contain multiple subgroups, each with different norms and values.
- ▶ Most crowds contain a majority of “moderates” who are peaceful and lawful. Many crowds also have a minority of “radicals” who are destructive and/or violent.



Crowd Psychology...

- ▶ When police treat people in a crowd unfairly, even moderates can begin to embrace an anti-police sentiment.
- ▶ Implication: Departments should attempt to avoid taking enforcement actions against an entire crowd based on the actions of a subset. Treat the crowd as heterogeneous and target those who are violent for arrest.



Crowd Psychology...

Winning the hearts and minds of the peaceful members of a crowd stimulates self-policing within the crowd. The moderates seek to keep the radicals in line.



Improving Protest Policing



A Four-Part Framework

- ▶ The approach builds on a framework developed by crowd psychology experts.
- ▶ The framework has four components: education, facilitation, communication, and differentiation.



1. Education

- ▶ Police must *educate* themselves about the social identities of the various subgroups in a crowd, including their values, goals, and intentions.
- ▶ Understanding the composition of a crowd enables police to develop more nuanced policing strategies.



2. Facilitation

- ▶ When operating from the vantage point of how *to facilitate peaceful* protests rather than how to control or regulate them, police can improve relationships with protesters and minimize the likelihood of conflict and violence.
- ▶ This is especially important when protests focus on the police, because efforts to block these protests will inevitably strengthen the perception that police are unjust or illegitimate.



3. Communication

- ▶ **Communication** enables police to discover the aims of event organizers and how best to facilitate these aims. It also enables police to learn about potential public order / public safety issues and try to prevent these issues together with event organizers.
- ▶ Even for more spontaneous events like flash protests or sports celebrations, police can usually identify informal organizers or influential participants with whom they can communicate.



4. Differentiation

- ▶ In a *differentiated* approach to protests, police continue to facilitate peaceful expression even while taking enforcement action against those who are engaging in violence, property damage, or looting. This preserves police legitimacy and reduces defiance and rebellion.



Other Considerations

- ▶ Departments should have a policy dictating when the use of riot gear is appropriate, and should consider a “**graded response**” plan.
- ▶ As part of the plan, consider staging officers in riot gear out of sight in a nearby location where they can be deployed quickly.



Closing Remarks



Dr. Michael White, Co-Director of
BWC TTA and Professor, Arizona
State University



Questions & Answers

Please let us know your thoughts.



Resources

- ▶ BJA Body-Worn Camera Toolkit (<https://www.bja.gov/bwc>)
- ▶ BWC TTA website (www.bwctta.com)
- ▶ Getting started guide (<https://www.bja.gov/bwc/topics-gettingstarted.html>)
- ▶ BWC subject matter experts (<https://bwctta.com/Ask%20a%20BWC%20Expert>)
- ▶ TTA email address (BWCTTA@cna.org)



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Thank you!

