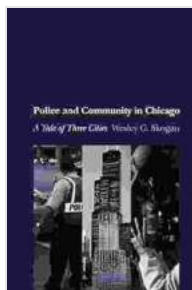


The Complex Relationship Between the Police and Community in Chicago

The relationship between the police and community in Chicago has been fraught with tension for decades. This tension has been exacerbated in recent years by a number of high-profile police shootings of unarmed Black men, including Laquan McDonald, Rekia Boyd, and Ronald Johnson. These shootings have led to widespread protests and calls for police reform.

In this article, we will explore the history of police-community relations in Chicago, the current state of affairs, and the challenges that both the police and the community face in building a better relationship.



Police and Community in Chicago: A Tale of Three Cities (Studies in Crime and Public Policy)

by Wesley G. Skogan

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History of Police-Community Relations in Chicago

The history of police-community relations in Chicago can be traced back to the city's founding in 1833. The first police department was created in 1835, and it was quickly tasked with enforcing the city's segregationist laws. These laws required Black people to live in designated areas of the city and prohibited them from entering white neighborhoods.

The police department's enforcement of these laws led to widespread resentment and distrust among Black Chicagoans. This distrust was further exacerbated by the police department's use of brutal tactics to suppress Black protests and demonstrations.

In the 1960s, the civil rights movement led to a number of changes in the way that the police department operated. The department began to hire more Black officers, and it adopted a policy of community policing, which emphasized building relationships between officers and residents.

However, despite these changes, tensions between the police and the community continued to simmer. In 1968, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led to riots in Chicago and other cities across the country. These riots further damaged the relationship between the police and the community.

In the decades since the 1960s, there have been a number of attempts to improve police-community relations in Chicago. However, these efforts have been hampered by a number of factors, including the city's high crime rate, the lack of trust between the police and the community, and the politicalization of the issue.

Current State of Affairs

The current state of affairs between the police and the community in Chicago is complex. There have been some improvements in recent years, but tensions remain high.

One of the biggest challenges facing the police department is the city's high crime rate. In 2020, Chicago had the highest homicide rate of any major city in the United States. This high crime rate makes it difficult for the police to build relationships with residents, as they are often focused on fighting crime.

Another challenge facing the police department is the lack of trust between the police and the community. This lack of trust is due to a number of factors, including the history of police brutality and misconduct in Chicago.

The politicalization of the issue of police reform has also made it difficult to address the underlying causes of tension between the police and the community. In recent years, the issue of police reform has become a major political issue, with both Democrats and Republicans using it to attack their opponents. This has made it difficult to find common ground and work together to address the issue.

Challenges

There are a number of challenges that both the police and the community face in building a better relationship. One of the biggest challenges is the city's high crime rate. This high crime rate makes it difficult for the police to build relationships with residents, as they are often focused on fighting crime.

Another challenge is the lack of trust between the police and the community. This lack of trust is due to a number of factors, including the history of police brutality and misconduct in Chicago.

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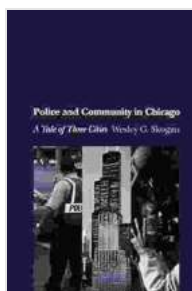
Solutions

There are a number of things that can be done to improve the relationship between the police and the community in Chicago. One important step is to address the city's high crime rate. This can be done by investing in crime prevention programs, such as job training and after-school programs.

Another important step is to rebuild trust between the police and the community. This can be done by increasing transparency and accountability in the police department. The police department should also work to diversify its ranks and to improve its training on de-escalation techniques and cultural sensitivity.

Finally, it is important to address the politicalization of the issue of police reform. This can be done by bringing together stakeholders from both sides of the issue to find common ground and work together to address the underlying causes of tension between the police and the community.

The relationship between the police and the community in Chicago is complex and challenging. There have been some improvements in recent years, but tensions remain high. There are a number of things that can be done to improve the relationship, including addressing the city's high crime rate, rebuilding trust between the police and the community, and addressing the politicalization of the issue of police reform. By working together, the police and the community can build a better relationship and make Chicago a safer and more just city.



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