LEGAL CYNICISM, COLLECTIVE EFFICACY, AND THE ECOLOGY OF ARREST*

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Ethnographic evidence reveals that many crimes in poor minority neighborhoods evade criminal justice sanctioning, thus leading to a negative association between the proportion of minority residents in a neighborhood and the arrest rate. To explain this finding, we extend recent theoretical explications of the concept of legal cynicism. Legal cynicism refers to a cultural orientation in which the law and the agents of its enforcement are viewed as illegitimate, unresponsive, and ill equipped to ensure public safety. Crime might flourish in neighborhoods characterized by legal cynicism because individuals who view the law as illegitimate are less likely to comply with it; yet because of legal cynicism, these crimes might go unreported and therefore unsanctioned. This study draws on data from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods to test the importance of legal cynicism for understanding geographic variation in the probability of arrest. We find that, in neighborhoods characterized by high levels of legal cynicism, crimes are much less likely to lead to an arrest than in neighborhoods where citizens view the police more favorably. Findings also reveal that residents of highly cynical neighborhoods are less likely to engage in

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> *collective efficacy and that collective efficacy mediates the association*
> *between legal cynicism and the probability of arrest.*

Racial and ethnic minorities, particularly African Americans, are drastically overrepresented in the U.S. criminal justice system. Although African Americans constitute roughly 13 percent of the total population in the United States, they accounted for 28 percent of arrests in 2008 (U.S. Department of Justice, 2009). Against this backdrop, ethnographic evidence reveals that, although many crimes lead to arrest in poor, African American neighborhoods, countless others go undetected and unsanctioned. For instance, Venkatesh (2008; see also Venkatesh, 1997) depicted in vivid detail how residents of the Robert Taylor Homes, a recently demolished housing project located on the south side of Chicago, endured the constant presence of drug distribution by gang members in the lobbies of the high-rise buildings yet did not generally bring these crimes to the attention of the Chicago police. This lack of reporting occurred for a variety of reasons, including the fact that the notorious street gang the Black Kings funneled money and favors back to the community in return for silence. Yet the puzzle still remains; why is the American criminal justice system characterized by such vast racial and ethnic disproportionality when many crimes go unsanctioned in the poorest neighborhoods of the country?

We assert that the same factor—legal cynicism—can explain these seemingly disparate patterns. Legal cynicism is a cultural frame in which the law and the agents of its enforcement are viewed as *illegitimate*, *unresponsive*, and *ill equipped* to ensure public safety (Kirk and Papachristos, 2011). We argue that the controlling influence of the law carries little weight when people view the law and its agents negatively. Thus, more crime will occur in neighborhoods characterized by legal cynicism. Yet when residents perceive that the police are unresponsive and that calling the police will do little or nothing to resolve the crime problem endemic to their neighborhood, proportionally more crimes will go unreported and unsanctioned than in neighborhoods where the law and the police are viewed more favorably. Drawing on a unique assemblage of individual-, family-, and neighborhood-level data from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods, this study aims to test these arguments by disentangling whether and why the frequency of arrest and the probability that a crime leads to arrest vary across neighborhood context. We focus attention on the ways that perceptions of the law and the police influence crime and criminal justice sanctioning.

This study proceeds as follows. We begin by describing our conception of legal cynicism and the way cynicism of the law influences criminal behavior and the capacity of the justice system to sanction that behavior. After that, we test our theoretical arguments in a multilevel framework

that controls for individual- and family-level determinants of arrest as well as for alternative neighborhood-level explanations. With this design, we attempt to isolate the effect of legal cynicism on arrest from the multitude of confounding factors related to crime and criminal justice sanctioning.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To explain geographic variation in the use of or capacity for formal social control, scholars often have employed either the minority threat or the benign neglect theses; yet it is debatable whether these macrolevel perspectives fully consider the complex nature of police–community relations in the modern metropolis. The minority threat thesis asserts that increases in the proportion of non-Whites in a population will lead to increases in formal social control to neutralize the threat of the expanding population. According to Liska (1992: 165), "the greater the number of acts and people threatening to the interests of the powerful, the greater the level of crime control." A visible minority population generates perceptions of "threat" to the political and economic superiority as well as to the personal safety of the dominant group (Blalock, 1967; Liska and Chamlin, 1984). Members of the majority then use their access to formal institutions such as the criminal justice system to mitigate the perceived threat through the suppression of minority populations. Empirically, the minority threat thesis predicts that increases in the relative size of the minority population in a given geographic area will lead to increases in police force size and crime-control expenditures as well as to higher arrest rates (Liska, 1992; Stults and Baumer, 2007).

In seeming contrast to the minority threat argument, the benign neglect thesis specifies an inverse relationship between the share of the non-White population in an area and the extent of formal social control (Liska and Chamlin, 1984). In this case, the proportion of non-Whites in a population influences the likelihood of arrest through its effect on the racial composition of victimization. As the minority population grows, the ratio of intraracial to interracial crimes will likely increase. Then, as the relative share of victimizations involving a non-White victim increases, the criminal justice system is less likely to deploy social control in response. The basis for the argument is that non-White citizens are devalued relative to Whites, particularly when it comes to the legal system and the police (Wilson, 1971: 141).[1]

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1. Use of the phrase "benign neglect" in discussions of race relations generally is attributed to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the late Harvard sociologist and U.S. Senator, who used the phrase in a memorandum to President Richard M. Nixon in 1970 to suggest that race relations had become so contentious in the United

Empirical support for the minority threat and the benign neglect theses has been inconsistent, with inferences dependent on the measure of formal social control used as well as on the measures of threat. Generally, studies of the *capacity* for formal social control (e.g., police force size) provide evidence in support of the minority threat thesis (e.g., Jackson and Carroll, 1981; Kent and Jacobs, 2005; Liska, Lawrence, and Benson, 1981; Stults and Baumer, 2007), whereas investigations of the *use* of formal social control (e.g., arrest) provide greater support for the benign neglect thesis (Liska and Chamlin, 1984; Parker, Stults, and Rice, 2005; Stolzenberg, D'Alessio, and Eitle, 2004).

Even though the benign neglect thesis garners some support for explaining arrest, additional dissection is necessary of the specific mechanisms that explain why the use of formal social control is inversely related to the proportion of a minority population in a geographic area. The reason for this negative correlation may be something other than, or in addition to, the overt devaluation of minority victims relative to White victims. In fact, Moskos (2008) noted that a prime way for the police to demonstrate organizational productivity and effectiveness is by amassing arrests. Because police performance is judged through arrests, the police have substantial motivation to make arrests in minority neighborhoods; yet it is still the case that the probability of getting arrested after the commission of a crime is lower in minority neighborhoods. One reason might be that the perception that the police are unresponsive to the needs of minority victims and residents, whether true or not, undermines both formal and informal social control of crime in a neighborhood. Anderson (1999) observed that many residents of disadvantaged areas in Philadelphia are afraid to report crimes for fear that the police, even if they respond to a call for service, might harass them or reveal their identities to the perpetrators of the crime. Venkatesh (2008) reported that the Chicago Police Department deemed the Robert Taylor Homes too dangerous to patrol because residents would throw bottles or fire weapons whenever the police showed up. Because residents of the Robert Taylor Homes perceived that the police—or ambulances, for that matter—would not respond to a call for service, they generally did not report victimizations or call the police when they needed assistance. Instead, many residents relied on a street gang, the Black Kings,

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States that a period of "benign neglect" would be constructive in which racial progress continued but racial rhetoric subsided (Clymer, 2003). However, Moynihan's phrasing often was interpreted, or misinterpreted, to suggest that the federal government should abandon efforts to advance the welfare of Black families and Black neighborhoods. Use of the phrase in criminology seems to follow such an interpretation (i.e., a policy or practice of abandoning the welfare, in this case the public safety, of the Black population).

to keep the peace or used vigilante militias to exact retribution for crimes. If residents *perceive* that the police are neglectful, unresponsive, or abusive, then they are less likely to report crimes to the police regardless of whether the police are actually neglectful. A lack of reporting necessarily means that a crime will go unpunished, at least officially.

Because policing is largely a reactive process, although community policing can be an exception, the capacity of the police to make an arrest depends on their ability to detect the criminal behavior and locate a suspect. If a criminal offense in a minority neighborhood does not ultimately lead to an arrest, it could be because the crime remained unknown to the police. If a crime is known, then identifying a suspect might prove impossible without citizen cooperation. Cynical views of the police and the criminal justice system might lead individuals to conclude that reporting a crime to the police or cooperating with the police to help locate a suspect is of little use. And without detection of a crime or a known suspect, no sanctioning for that crime can occur (i.e., arrest).

CAUSES OF LEGAL CYNICISM

Sampson and Bartusch (1998: 782) conceived of legal cynicism as a component of anomie, "a state of normlessness in which the rules of the dominant society (and hence the legal system) are no longer binding in a community." They empirically measured legal cynicism using survey measures of the following form:

- "Laws are made to be broken."
- "It's okay to do anything you want as long as you don't hurt anyone."
- "To make money, there are no right or wrong ways anymore, only easy ways and hard ways."
- "Fighting between friends or within family is nobody else's business."
- "Nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today and let tomorrow take care of itself."

In contrast to Sampson and Bartusch's (1998; also Sampson, Morenoff, and Raudenbush, 2005) broad conceptualization of cynicism, Kirk and Papachristos (2011) conceived of legal cynicism more narrowly by focusing specifically on the causes and consequences of the "legal" aspects of cynicism. They defined legal cynicism as a cultural frame in which people perceive the law, and the police in particular, as illegitimate, unresponsive, and ill equipped to ensure public safety. Kirk and Papachristos argued that legal cynicism is an emergent property of neighborhoods in contrast to a property solely of individuals. They contended that legal cynicism is cultural because individual perceptions of the law not only are based on personal

experience but also are augmented and solidified through communication and social interaction among neighborhood residents. In this way, residents of a given neighborhood arrive at a shared, although not necessarily identical, understanding of the law and its usefulness to them. In this study, we similarly focus on the legal aspects of cynicism and consider legal cynicism as an emergent property of neighborhoods.

Although our focus in this study is on the consequences of legal cynicism for the spatial variation in arrest, it is pertinent to establish the root causes of such cynicism before addressing the consequences. Legal cynicism is the product of neighborhood structural conditions as well as of neighborhood variation in police practices and resident interaction with the police (Kirk and Papachristos, 2011). To the extent that neighborhood disadvantage inhibits the upward mobility of residents because of social isolation or restricted opportunities, such disadvantage breeds cynicism toward societal institutions. As Sampson and Bartusch (1998: 801) argued, "we should not be surprised that those most exposed to the numbing reality of pervasive segregation and economic subjugation become cynical about human nature and legal systems of justice—even as they personally condemn acts of deviance and violence." As a particularly illuminating example of the causes and consequences of cynical views of the law, take Anderson's (1999) ethnographic account of street life in modern America:

> [T]he inclination to violence springs from the circumstances of life among the ghetto poor—the lack of jobs that pay a living wage, limited basic public services (police response in emergencies, building maintenance, trash pickup, lighting, and other services that middle-class neighborhoods take for granted), the stigma of race, the fallout from rampant drug use and drug trafficking, and the resulting alienation and absence of hope for the future. . . . The hard reality of the world of the street can be traced to the profound sense of alienation from mainstream society and its institutions felt by many poor inner-city black people, particularly the young. The code of the street is actually a cultural adaptation to a profound lack of faith in the police and the judicial system—and in others who would champion one's personal security. (pp. 32, 34)

According to Anderson, the structural context leads to alienation from societal institutions, including the legal system and the police. The consequence of this alienation and cynicism is the development and reproduction of the "code of the street."

A second and related source of legal cynicism is the actions of the criminal justice system, particularly policing. The way justice is administered influences legal cynicism, and differences in police practices across

neighborhoods explain geographic variation in legal cynicism. For instance, Smith (1986) found that police are less likely to file incident reports after a crime in high-crime neighborhoods than in low-crime neighborhoods (see also Klinger, 1997). Such neglect by the police certainly plays a role in the production of legal cynicism. In this sense, cynicism of the law might serve to mediate the effect of benign neglect.

Additional determinants of cynicism include police misconduct and harassment. Smith (1986) found that police are more likely to use coercive force in non-White and racially mixed neighborhoods than in predominantly White neighborhoods. Similarly, Terrill and Reisig (2003) found that the police are more likely to use force in disadvantaged neighborhoods, and Kane (2005) found that police misconduct is dramatically more prevalent in disadvantaged areas. Empirical research confirms that legal cynicism is a by-product of these types of experiences with the justice system. For instance, Carr, Napolitano, and Keating (2007) observed that youths subject to repeated victimization and police harassment often develop a negative disposition toward the police. Brunson (2007) similarly found that youths' negative perceptions of the police are generated by direct and vicarious experiences with police harassment, misconduct, and brutality. In his semi-autobiographical account of his time as a Baltimore police officer, Moskos (2008: 20) recounted an instance as a police trainee when a Black citizen called out his trainee group as "murderers" as they jogged in military-style formation through Baltimore's Inner Harbor area. Moskos told the story of another resident of the Eastern District of Baltimore, who complained that the police must be on-the-take because nothing else could explain how such a vast scale of drug distribution could operate in Eastern Baltimore except through police corruption. In sum, the sources and reasons for cynicism take several forms.

CONSEQUENCES OF LEGAL CYNICISM

Scholars have given the consequences of legal cynicism for criminal offending some empirical consideration, although the field has devoted less attention to the consequences of cynicism for arrest. In terms of criminal offending, Kirk and Papachristos (2011) argued that legal cynicism increases the likelihood of violence by constraining individuals' options for resolving disputes. When an individual perceives the police to be unresponsive or ill-equipped to ensure safety, he must look to other options to remedy the situation. In the face of such a *constraint*, the use of violence as a form of "self-help" might become a situational response to legal cynicism (Black, 1983). Kirk and Papachristos (2011) found that legal cynicism explains why violence persisted in some Chicago neighborhoods during the 1990s despite socioeconomic advances and a citywide decline in violence.

An alternative view is that legal cynicism serves to loosen the moral bind of the law, thus *expanding* the possibilities for action to include the option of illegal tactics. This argument is not unlike Matza's (1964) notion of "drift." Matza presented a view of delinquency whereby individuals episodically drift between conventional and delinquent behavior. In Matza's model, external factors enable some actions, like delinquency, by loosening the moral bind of the law. One such factor could be cynicism of the law and its agents.

Empirical research on legitimacy and authority convincingly has shown that people are more likely to obey the law when they view lawmakers and the agents of law enforcement as legitimate (Tyler, 2006). Legitimacy of the law fosters obedience to it, and perceptions of illegitimacy make violations of the law more likely. For instance, in a study of Chicago residents, Tyler (2006) found that individuals who view the legal system as legitimate and who trust legal authorities are more likely to comply with the law. In fact, Tyler's findings suggest that legitimacy is more powerful than deterrence as a predictor of obedience to the law. In sum, whether through the constraint or the expansion of behavioral choices, we suggest that cynicism of the law increases the likelihood of criminal offending. Cynicism constrains an individual's choices for resolving a grievance or dispute because he might not see the police as a viable source of protection or resolution. In addition, cynicism of the law expands an individual's choices for action by loosening the control aspect of the law. When the law is perceived to be illegitimate, it loses its binding capacity.

In this study, we extend the application of legal cynicism to understand the production of not only crime but also *arrest*. Again, our core argument is that when the law is perceived to be just, legitimate, and responsive, individuals not only are more likely to comply with the law but also to cooperate with the police to combat neighborhood crime. Along these same lines, Sunshine and Tyler (2003) examined whether residents' perceptions of the legitimacy of the police ultimately influence their likelihood of co-operating with the police, where cooperation refers to whether residents report crimes to the police, help the police locate the suspects of a crime, and provide the police with information useful for solving crimes. They found that the perceived legitimacy of the police has a substantial positive influence on an individual's likelihood of cooperating with the police, and this association is consistent across race–ethnic groups (Black, White, and Latino). Out of ten predictors, which included demographic characteristics of the respondent as well as a collection of variables related to the extent of the crime problem and police performance, Sunshine and Tyler found that legitimacy is the primary factor explaining resident cooperation with the police. In the interest of verifying the causal directionality in the legitimacy–cooperation association, Tyler and Fagan (2008) employed a longitudinal

Figure 1. A Conceptual Model of the Ecology of Arrest
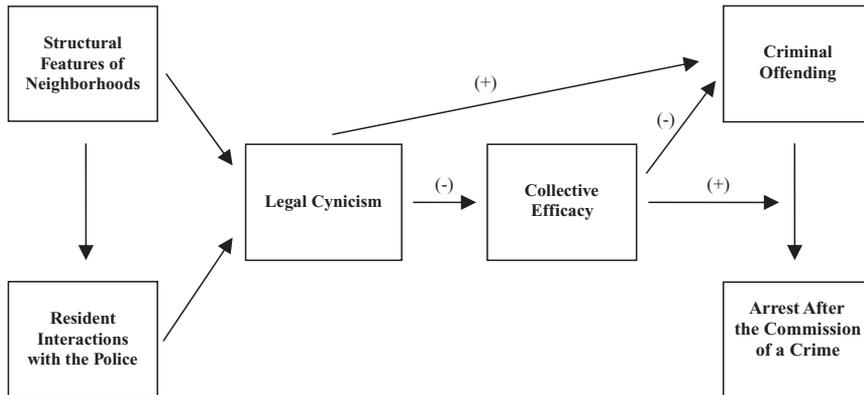
NOTE: This conceptual model does not represent every relationship between concepts (e.g., neighborhood structural features are predictive of collective efficacy). Our focus is on the path from legal cynicism to arrest.

research design to explore the association between resident attitudes toward the police and cooperation with the police. Like Sunshine and Tyler, they found that resident perceptions of police legitimacy have a positive influence on resident cooperation with the police. Slocum and colleagues (2010) investigated whether perceptions of the police—measured by views of police honesty, respectfulness, and effort—are related to the likelihood that a teenager will report a crime. They found that negative perceptions of the police undermine intentions to report crime to the police and that perceptions of the police mediate the negative association between neighborhood poverty and the reporting of crime.

Figure 1 translates the foregoing arguments into a conceptual model. We expect that, in highly cynical neighborhoods, the rate of crime is significantly greater than in neighborhoods where people view the law and the police more favorably. Yet an important countervailing influence exists. We contend that crimes are much less likely to lead to an arrest in highly cynical neighborhoods. Highly cynical individuals are less likely to report crimes or assist with a police investigation because they assume that cooperating with the police will provide them with little personal benefit and might even put them in danger. If there are widespread, cynical views toward the law in a neighborhood, then residents might be unwilling to intervene collectively to thwart local crime because of the absence of police support (Silver and Miller, 2004). If legal cynicism varies with the proportion of minority population in a neighborhood, as we expect, then legal cynicism might

help to account for the disproportionate frequency of criminal behavior in minority neighborhoods as well as for a lower likelihood that crimes lead to arrests. Per our arguments and the conceptual model outlined in figure 1, we hypothesize the following:

> *Legal cynicism is negatively related to the likelihood that any given crime results in an arrest, and this association between legal cynicism and arrest is mediated by collective efficacy (i.e., the collective actions of neighborhood residents to control crime, including the reporting of crimes and cooperating with police).*

THE CURRENT STUDY

We contribute to this body of literature by testing the influence of legal cynicism and collective efficacy on the probability of arrest while controlling for the differential sorting of individual and family characteristics across neighborhoods, particularly self-reported criminal offending. Although many studies of the capacity and use of formal social control have used city, county, or state units of analysis, we instead use a within-city, between-neighborhood research design in part because neighborhood variations in policing practices are averaged out when aggregating data to a higher order unit such as the city level (Hipp, 2007; Weisburd, Bernasco, and Bruinsma, 2008). Because neighborhood context is a key determinant of police behavior (e.g., Smith, 1986), testing the effect of legal cynicism on arrest requires a research design that allows for a consideration of neighborhood effects. In other words, we might gain theoretical purchase on the import of legal cynicism by exploring why neighborhoods within the same police jurisdiction demonstrate wildly different probabilities of arrest after a crime.

DATA AND RESEARCH DESIGN

The study sample is drawn from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods Longitudinal Cohort Study (PHDCN-LCS), a multiwave study of the factors influencing human development and antisocial behavior of Chicago youths and young adults. The PHDCN-LCS collected longitudinal data on seven cohorts of subjects, defined by age at baseline (0, 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, and 18 years), with subjects and their primary caregivers interviewed up to three times between 1995 and 2002. This article focuses on the 15- and 18-year-old age cohorts; members of these cohorts

were approximately 21 and 24 years old by the end of the data collection.[2] For the data collection, the PHDCN-LCS selected a random sample of 80 neighborhood clusters, stratified by racial–ethnic composition and socioeconomic status, from 343 neighborhood clusters in Chicago (Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls, 1997). Within these 80 neighborhoods, a simple random sample of households yielded a total sample of 1,329 individuals in the 15- and 18-year-old cohorts. These individuals are representative of adolescents and young adults residing in a representative sample of Chicago neighborhoods. The present analysis uses a subset of the total sample ($N =$ 1,071) who consented to have their official criminal records searched. This subsample showed no significant difference in the average number of *self-reported* arrests per wave compared with those subjects who did not consent to a criminal records search ($F = 1.824$; degrees of freedom [d.f.] $= 1$, 1,328).

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The Chicago Police Department (CPD) provided official arrest data on sampled individuals from 1995 to 2001.[3] The dependent variable we derived from these data is the number of times a respondent was arrested during this period. We also disaggregate analyses by crime type (violent, property, public-order, and drug). We coded crime types based on statute description. For arrests with multiple charges, we coded the crime type based on the most serious offense of arrest.[4]

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

The statistical models include several neighborhood-, individual-, and family-level predictors. At the neighborhood level, we use measures of the share of non-Latino Black population (*proportion Black*) and the share of Latino population (*proportion Latino*) in a given neighborhood in 1995 to examine to what extent the probability of arrest varies as a function of neighborhood race–ethnic composition. We use a linear interpolation of the population share from the 1990 and 2000 censuses to produce measures

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2. For ease of presentation, we refer to members of these cohorts as "adolescents," but technically, the cohorts include both adolescents and young adults.
3. Both official crime data and self-report data have known limitations; thus, inferences about the relation between crime and neighborhood context might depend on the data source. However, previous research using the PHDCN-LCS sample reveals that the neighborhood-level and family-level predictors of arrest are largely invariant across official and self-report measures of arrest (Kirk, 2006).
4. Felonies (i.e., murder and Class 1–4 felonies) were ranked most severe followed by misdemeanors (Class A, B, and C), petty offenses, and violation of local ordinances.

of the proportions of Black population and Latino population for the year 1995.

We also examine whether the probability of arrest varies with *concentrated poverty*, which is a scale of economic disadvantage in a given neighborhood cluster created via principal components analysis. We used the following indicators from the 1990 U.S. Census to construct the measure: the percentage of families below the poverty line, of families receiving public assistance, of unemployed individuals in the civilian labor force, of female-headed families with children, and of neighborhood population under the age of 18.

Our two primary predictors of interest are *legal cynicism* and *collective efficacy*. To measure legal cynicism, we combined three items from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods Community Survey (PHDCN-CS). Respondents of the survey were asked the extent to which they agree to the following: 1) the police are not doing a good job in preventing crime in this neighborhood, 2) the police are not able to maintain order on the streets and sidewalks in the neighborhood, and 3) laws are made to be broken.[5] Five ordered response categories for these items range from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

Our measure of collective efficacy, which we construct from data from the PHDCN-CS, is identical to the scale developed by Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls (1997). *Collective efficacy* represents a combined measure of neighborhood social control, social cohesion, and trust. Neighborhood social control refers to the willingness of residents to intervene in the following situations: 1) children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner, 2) children were spray-painting graffiti on a local building, 3) children were showing disrespect to an adult, 4) a fight broke out, and 5) the fire station closest to the respondent's home was threatened with budget cuts. Five ordered response categories range from "very unlikely" to "very likely." The measure of social cohesion and trust is based on the level of respondent agreement ("strongly disagree" to "strongly agree") to the following survey statements: 1) people around here are willing to help their neighbors, 2) people in this neighborhood can be trusted, 3) people in this neighborhood generally get along with each other, 4) this is a close-knit neighborhood, and 5) people in this neighborhood share the same values. We constructed both the legal cynicism and the collective efficacy scales via multilevel item response models, with responses to each survey question nested within a respondent and respondents nested within neighborhoods. From the respective item response models, we output

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5. We include views of the law in addition to the police in our cynicism measure under the assumption that perceptions of the broader legal system influence resident cooperation with the police.

neighborhood-specific empirical Bayes (EB) residuals to use as our scales. These scales represent the average level of legal cynicism and collective efficacy across residents of each given neighborhood.

We also draw on 911 emergency calls for service data in the interest of accounting for alternative explanations for the negative association between arrest and the proportion of minority population besides legal cynicism. We obtained data on calls for service through the Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC).[6] These data are available by police beat. Because the boundaries of the 284 police beats in Chicago do not align with the boundaries of the Chicago neighborhood clusters, we apportioned the calls for service data to the neighborhood clusters through tools available in ArcGIS based on the amount of a beat's geographic area that overlaps with a given neighborhood cluster. Our variable, *calls for service*, represents the natural log of the count of calls originating from a given neighborhood cluster in 1999 and is designed to measure police workload.[7] We use this variable to determine whether differences in the probability of arrest across neighborhoods are explained by the fact that police workload varies across neighborhoods. Higher crime police districts tend to have greater call-to-officer ratios and therefore fewer resources to devote to any particular incident than in low-crime districts. Consequently, a smaller proportion of criminal incidents will be investigated—and arrests made—in a high-crime neighborhood than in a low-crime neighborhood (Klinger, 1997; Smith, 1986).

The analyses employ the following dummy indicators of race and ethnicity taken from the PHDCN-LCS: *Black*, *Mexican*, *other Latino*, *other race*, and *White*. Black, White, and other race groups are all non-Latino. In analyses to follow, we use the Black dummy variable as the reference

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6.   As a sensitivity analysis, we also tested our models with an alternative measure of *calls for service* that represents the natural log of the count of 911 *and* 311 calls in a given neighborhood. This broader measure captures the overall demand for police services in a neighborhood, which includes calls for both emergency (911) and nonemergency city services (311). Nevertheless, our findings with respect to legal cynicism and collective efficacy presented in tables 2–4 are robust to which measure of calls for service we use in our analyses.

7.   A potential temporal ordering issue exists with using calls for service data from 1999 but arrest data that begin in 1995, but OEMC records are unavailable in retrievable electronic form before 1999. That said, considerable temporal stability exists in the geographic distribution of calls for service in Chicago. The correlation at the police beat level between the count of calls for service in 1999 and 2000 equals .952, and the correlation between 1999 and 2001 calls equals .924. Thus, even though we use calls for service data from 1999, we believe it is a reasonable assumption that the same geographic distribution characterized calls for service in the mid-1990s.

category. Other key individual demographic factors include *cohort* and *gender.*

The study includes the following measures of family characteristics as predictors of arrest, taken from wave I of the PHDCN-LCS: *socioeconomic status*, *family structure*, and *family control*. Socioeconomic status is a composite measure of the primary caregiver's education, occupation, and income. A binary variable reflecting the marital status of a respondent's biological parents describes family structure. Family control, derived from caregiver responses to the Family Environment Scales survey instrument (Moos and Moos, 1986), measures the extent to which strict rules for behavior and a hierarchy for decision making characterize the family.

Finally, given that variation in arrest across individuals as well as neighborhoods in part is a result of differential involvement in offending (see, e.g., Hindelang, 1978; Kirk, 2008), a key individual-level explanatory variable to examine is the role of *self-reported criminal offending*. These crimes were reported in a confidential survey, and we assume that many offenses remained unknown to the Chicago police. Analyses include a measure of offending created from 17 survey items from the wave I self-report survey (PHDCN-LCS). These items are indicators of the frequency of violent, property, and drug offending over the 12-month period preceding the survey date and include offenses such as assault, aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, theft, destruction of property, and drug distribution. We combined all items into a scale using an ordinal item-response model with the STATA generalized linear latent and mixed models program (StataCorp, College Station, TX; Rabe-Hesketh, Skrondal, and Pickles, 2004).

ANALYTIC STRATEGY AND STATISTICAL MODELS

We use a multilevel research design, with respondents nested within their neighborhood of residence, to investigate the factors that contribute to criminal arrest. Because our goal is to identify how neighborhood context affects arrest, our focus is primarily on the between-neighborhood (i.e., level 2) inferences derived from our statistical models. To determine whether characteristics of the neighborhood environment (e.g., legal cynicism) have a contextual effect on arrest, it is necessary to control for neighborhood compositional differences in the characteristics of respondents and their families. As we noted earlier, neighborhood variation in arrest is certainly a function of variation in the number of offenses and offenders across neighborhoods. Thus, controlling for criminal offending is essential to assess between-neighborhood variation in the use of formal social control.

To estimate the likelihood of arrest, we specify a series of population-averaged multilevel models designed to account for the clustering of residents within neighborhoods. The baseline model includes individual- and family-level factors. We expand the baseline model iteratively with the predictors of neighborhood racial–ethnic composition, legal cynicism, concentrated poverty, calls for service, and collective efficacy.

Each model in the analysis assumes that Y_{jk}, the observed number of official police arrests for person j in neighborhood k, follows a Poisson distribution. With the Poisson distribution, it is assumed that the conditional mean and variance are equal, although this might not be true with arrest data. Thus, we add a dispersion parameter to all models to allow for conditional variance that is larger or smaller than expected.

Equation 1 specifies the first, individual level of the model, where X_{jk} is a vector of individual and family characteristics and p refers to the number of independent variables (in addition to self-reported criminal offending) in the individual-level model. Equation 1 is expressed as follows:

$$\log E(Y_{jk}) = \beta_{0k} + \beta_{1k}(\text{self-reported criminal offending})_{jk} + X_{jk}\beta_{pk} \quad (1)$$

Equation 2 shows that the expected count of arrests (β_0) and the association between offending and arrest (β_1) are modeled as a function of neighborhood covariates, $W_k\gamma$. By modeling the association between offending and arrest, which we refer to as the "probability of arrest," our goal is to determine the extent to which legal cynicism and collective efficacy influence the likelihood that an individual will be arrested in a given neighborhood after committing a crime. Equation 2 is expressed as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
\beta_{0k} &= \mu + W_k\gamma \\
\beta_{1k} &= \mu + W_k\gamma \\
\beta_{pk} &= \mu
\end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

All covariates are centered around their grand means, so we can interpret model coefficients as the average effect or association across neighborhoods. Furthermore, by centering the demographic dummy variables (i.e., race, ethnicity, gender, and cohort) around their grand means, we interpret the intercept as the expected number of arrests by the *average* individual, not the expected count for the dummy reference categories.

RESULTS

Table 1 displays a descriptive summary of the zero-order correlations between the neighborhood-level predictors we use in the study. Results reveal a substantial, positive association between legal cynicism and both the

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Correlations of Neighborhood-Level Variables, Chicago Neighborhood Clusters

Variables	Mean	(SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Legal cynicism	.00	(.64)	—					
2. Proportion Black	.42	(.43)	.529***	—				
3. Proportion Latino	.22	(.27)	.177***	−.603**	—			
4. Concentrated poverty	.00	(.96)	.649*	.724**	−.232**	—		
5. Calls for service (log)	8.96	(.58)	.129***	.323**	−.249**	.243**	—	
6. Collective efficacy	3.89	(.26)	−.685***	−.369**	−.145**	−.135*	−.621**	—

NOTE: N = 342 (excludes O'Hare Airport).
ABBREVIATION: SD = standard deviation.
$^*p < .05; ^{**}p < .01; ^{***}p < .001.$

proportion of Black population in a neighborhood (.529) and concentrated poverty (.649). We also find a strong, negative association between legal cynicism and collective efficacy (−.685). This finding suggests that cynicism toward the law deters neighborhood residents from engaging in collective efficacy, at least when the collective goal is related to the control of crime. It is possible that residents are organized around other issues yet still have little collective capacity to control crime because of cynical views of the law. Our discussion section offers additional insights on this relation between legal cynicism and collective efficacy.

MULTILEVEL MODELS OF ARREST

Table 2 displays results from the multilevel regression of the total arrest count on individual, family, and neighborhood characteristics in which model 1 is the baseline model. Results from model 1 reveal that substantial differences exist in the expected number of arrests between Blacks and other race–ethnic groups even after controlling for individual and family characteristics. The expected count of arrests from 1995 to 2001 for the average Black male in late adolescence or young adulthood is 1.88; for White males, it is .59; for Mexican males, it is .89; and for other Latino males, it is .65 (holding other covariates at their grand means). Model 1 also reveals a sizable gender difference in arrest.

In model 2, we begin to explore the association between neighborhood racial–ethnic composition and arrest. We find a substantial negative association between the proportion of Black population in a neighborhood and the frequency of arrest. To explore the mechanism underlying the

Table 2. Multilevel Model of Arrest with Individual, Family, and Neighborhood Characteristics

Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Coefficient	(SE)	Coefficient	(SE)	Coefficient	(SE)
Intercept (frequency of arrest)	−.977***	(.096)	−.994***	(.089)	−1.004***	(.090)
Neighborhood-level ($N = 78$)						
Proportion Black			−.861*	(.407)	−.682†	(.395)
Proportion Latino			−.057	(.515)	.030	(.507)
Individual-level ($N = 1,071$)						
White	−1.166***	(.297)	−1.573***	(.374)	−1.625***	(.390)
Mexican	−.756**	(.263)	−1.102***	(.322)	−1.129***	(.320)
Other Latino	−1.066***	(.260)	−1.406***	(.300)	−1.419***	(.305)
Other race	−1.027***	(.294)	−1.400***	(.381)	−1.471***	(.404)
Male	1.957***	(.169)	1.970***	(.172)	1.964***	(.171)
Cohort 15	−.212	(.144)	−.188	(.148)	−.177	(.145)
Family socioeconomic status	−.061	(.073)	−.065	(.077)	−.060	(.077)
Married parents	−.591***	(.178)	−.584**	(.187)	−.581**	(.185)
Family control	.011	(.008)	.009	(.008)	.009	(.008)
Self-reported criminal offending	.542***	(.093)	.538***	(.089)	.545***	(.089)
SRO × proportion Black					−.489†	(.283)
SRO × proportion Latino					−.164	(.367)

ABBREVIATIONS: SE = standard error; SRO = self-reported criminal offending.
†$p < .10$; *$p ≤ .05$; **$p ≤ .01$; ***$p ≤ .001$.

effect of neighborhood race–ethnic composition on arrest, in model 3, we add cross-level interactions between self-reported offending and the race–ethnic composition of the neighborhood. By adding these interactions, we seek to determine whether the likelihood of arrest *after a crime* is lower in predominantly Black neighborhoods. Results in model 3 indicate that the probability of arrest after a crime is inversely related to the proportion of Black residents in the neighborhood.[8]

In model 4 in table 3, we examine whether differences in legal cynicism across neighborhoods account for the association between neighborhood racial composition and the probability of arrest (i.e., the cross-level interaction between proportion Black and self-reported criminal offending). Per our hypothesis, we find that legal cynicism is negatively related to the probability of arrest. We suggest that, in highly cynical neighborhoods, residents are less likely to report victimizations or crimes to the police or to cooperate with the police in an investigation because they perceive little benefit in doing so. We also find that legal cynicism mediates the association between the proportion of Black residents in a neighborhood and the probability of arrest. In other words, the likelihood that a crime will result in an arrest is lower in predominantly Black than in other neighborhoods because Black neighborhoods have higher levels of cynical views of the law.

In addition to these findings related to the probability of arrest, we also find a positive association between cynicism and the frequency of arrest. Cynicism lessens the likelihood that a crime ultimately will lead to arrest; yet it also increases the frequency of arrest. Thus, legal cynicism influences arrest through two opposing mechanisms. On the one hand, neighborhoods with large proportions of cynical individuals have more crime and therefore more arrests than neighborhoods with few cynical individuals. This pattern occurs because legally cynical individuals are less inclined to abide by the law if they view it as illegitimate and unjust (Tyler, 2006). On the other hand, in neighborhoods characterized by widespread cynicism, residents might not call the police when a crime has occurred or assist police in an investigation.

Figure 2 graphically depicts the association between arrest and criminal offending by legal cynicism. The *x*-axis represents a range from 2 standard deviations below to 2 standard deviations above the mean level of offending

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8. Here and throughout, we refer to the association between *self-reported criminal offending* and arrest as the "probability of arrest." Inferences about the effect of neighborhood context on the probability of arrest are based on the cross-level interactions presented in the bottom rows of tables 2–4. Inferences about the effect of neighborhood context on the frequency of arrests are based on the coefficients immediately under the "Neighborhood-level" heading in tables 2–4.

Table 3. The Effect of Legal Cynicism and Collective Efficacy on Arrest

Variables	Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	Coefficient	(SE)	Coefficient	(SE)	Coefficient	(SE)
Intercept (frequency of arrest)	−1.036***	(.088)	−1.033***	(.087)	−1.050***	(.092)
Neighborhood-level (N = 78)						
Proportion Black	−1.667**	(.582)	−1.660**	(.571)	−1.690**	(.593)
Proportion Latino	−1.259†	(.738)	−1.133	(.734)	−1.056	(.732)
Legal cynicism	.650**	(.227)	.548*	(.272)	.636*	(.284)
Concentrated poverty			.111	(.144)	.126	(.155)
Calls for service (log)			.029	(.124)	.016	(.121)
Collective efficacy					.364	(.410)
White	−1.538***	(.383)	−1.530***	(.375)	−1.528***	(.389)
Mexican	−1.048***	(.305)	−1.048***	(.302)	−1.137***	(.290)
Other Latino	−1.360***	(.290)	−1.364***	(.284)	−1.393***	(.289)
Other race	−1.388***	(.391)	−1.389***	(.394)	−1.464***	(.436)
Male	1.967***	(.174)	1.965***	(.172)	1.934***	(.179)
Cohort 15	−.165	(.143)	−.171	(.147)	−.149	(.146)
Family socioeconomic status	−.043	(.078)	−.040	(.080)	−.059	(.077)
Married parents	−.573**	(.187)	−.560**	(.190)	−.556**	(.194)
Family control	.008	(.009)	.008	(.009)	.007	(.009)
Self-reported criminal offending	.586***	(.083)	.591***	(.082)	.514***	(.083)
SRO × proportion Black	.331	(.476)	.254	(.498)	−.277	(.492)
SRO × proportion Latino	.859	(.643)	.800	(.717)	.531	(.670)
SRO × legal cynicism	−.526**	(.188)	−.584*	(.247)	−.026	(.279)
SRO × concentrated poverty			.108	(.157)	.216	(.147)
SRO × calls for service (log)			.021	(.154)	−.042	(.157)
SRO × collective efficacy					1.544***	(.421)

ABBREVIATIONS: SE = standard error; SRO = self-reported criminal offending.
†$p \leq .10$; *$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$; ***$p \leq .001$.

**Figure 2. Association Between Criminal Offending and
             Arrest by Legal Cynicism**
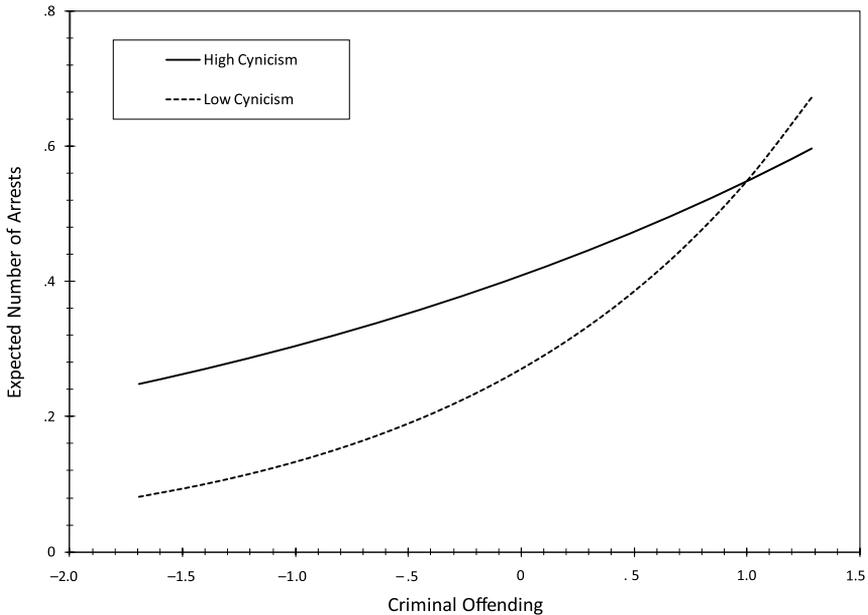
in the data. Low cynicism represents the 25th percentile among neighbor-
hoods ranked according to legal cynicism, and high cynicism represents the
75th percentile. The positive main effect of legal cynicism on arrest from
model 4 implies that arrest is more frequent in neighborhoods with greater
levels of cynicism because crime is more frequent. This fact is reflected in
the gap between the two curves. Yet, because of the negative cross-level
interaction with criminal offending, the two curves converge and even cross
toward the right tail of the distribution. The relationship between offending
and arrest is much flatter in highly cynical neighborhoods than in less
cynical neighborhoods, which means that, in highly cynical neighborhoods,
crimes are much *less likely* to lead to an arrest than in neighborhoods
where the police and the law are viewed more favorably. We suggest that
this is because legally cynical individuals are less likely to report crimes
or assist the police because they assume the police are unresponsive, and
cooperating with the police might even put themselves at risk of retaliation
by perpetrators or their associates.

   In model 5, we control for alternative explanations by adding indicators
of calls for service and concentrated poverty. These factors are potential
confounders that are predictive of both legal cynicism and arrest, thereby

rendering the association between legal cynicism and arrest spurious. Results reveal no significant associations between arrest (frequency or probability of arrest after offending) and these additional factors. Moreover, the addition of these variables does little to alter the associations between legal cynicism and either the frequency or the probability of arrest.

In model 6, we examine whether collective efficacy mediates the observed association between the probability of arrest and legal cynicism. We argue that collective efficacy is the mechanism that explains the legal cynicism–arrest association because cynicism toward the law deters individuals from engaging in collective actions designed to control crime. For instance, neighborhood residents might find little reason to risk their lives to thwart the crimes of gang members and drug dealers if they perceive that they will receive little help and support from the police. Potential risks to intervening to prevent crime exist, and neighborhood residents are more likely to take those risks if they perceive that they have the support of a responsive police force. In support of our core hypothesis, we observe that the cross-level interaction between legal cynicism and criminal offending weakens to nonsignificance after adding collective efficacy. The coefficient declines all the way from $-.584$ to $-.026$. The probability that a crime leads to arrest is significantly lower in neighborhoods void of collective efficacy. In neighborhoods with a surplus of efficacy, the collective crime-control apparatus among residents makes it likely that any crimes that do occur will not be ignored. Hence, if a crime occurs, then it is more likely to result in an arrest than in neighborhoods lacking in collective efficacy.

CRIME-TYPE ANALYSES

We return now to the motivating paradox of our study; on the one hand, the American criminal justice system is characterized by vast racial and ethnic disproportionality, whereas on the other hand, the likelihood that a crime will lead to arrest is lower in predominantly minority neighborhoods. The fact that more arrests occur in predominantly Black neighborhoods, whereas the probability of arrest is lower than in mixed neighborhoods, might have little to do with legal cynicism. This paradox simply could be the product of variation in the crime-type mix across neighborhoods. Crimes that are abundant yet have relatively low clearance rates (e.g., drug distribution) might characterize predominantly Black neighborhoods. The key question then is whether the relationships among legal cynicism, collective efficacy, and arrest in table 3 hold when we disaggregate our arrest measure by crime type. The results shown in table 4 attempt to make some headway on this question.

With the exception of property arrests, the results in table 4 largely replicate our aggregate results in table 3. In particular, we find in the first

Table 4. Between-Neighborhood Differences in the Probability of Arrest, by Crime Type

Variables	Violence Model 1 Coefficient	Violence Model 2 Coefficient	Property Model 1 Coefficient	Property Model 2 Coefficient	Public-Order Model 1 Coefficient	Public-Order Model 2 Coefficient	Drug Model 1 Coefficient	Drug Model 2 Coefficient
Intercept (frequency of arrest)	-2.777***	-2.800***	-2.251***	-2.261***	-2.774***	-2.833***	-2.453***	-2.474***
Neighborhood-level (N = 78)								
Proportion Black	-2.172**	-2.208**	-1.152	-.985	-1.195*	-1.201*	-1.735*	-1.917*
Proportion Latino	-1.960*	-1.897*	-1.641†	-1.467†	-.369	-.254	-1.012	-1.042
Legal cynicism	.896*	.947*	.285	.155	.623†	.758*	.362	.615*
Concentrated poverty	.212	.223	.175	.146	.000	.035	.123	.155
Calls for service (log)	.057	.041	-.201	-.182	.015	-.002	.101	.073
Collective efficacy		.243		-.326		.578		.750
Individual-level (N = 1,071)								
White	-1.952***	-1.980***	-.715	-.711	-1.592***	-1.512**	-1.949***	-1.944***
Mexican	-1.125**	-1.177***	-.167	-.231	-1.518***	-1.650***	-.928*	-.972*
Other Latino	-1.363***	-1.397***	.123	.125	-2.001***	-1.986***	-1.740***	-1.744***
Other race	-1.077**	-1.169*	-1.816**	-1.743*	-1.169*	-1.327**	-1.781***	-1.870***
Male	1.911***	1.874***	.977***	.962***	2.815***	2.823***	2.348***	2.341***
Cohort 15	-.097	-.097	-.172	-.146	-.353†	-.355†	-.071	-.063
Family socioeconomic status	-.005	-.026	-.067	-.073	-.058	-.076	-.015	-.014
Married parents	-.345	-.332	-.477†	-.482†	-.607**	-.612*	-.706**	-.703**
Family control	.017	.016	.008	.006	.011	.009	.010	.010
Self-reported criminal offending	.733***	.667***	.616***	.592***	.542***	.428***	.587***	.516***
SRO × proportion Black	.345	-.153	-.739*	-1.090*	.907†	.116	.600	.436
SRO × proportion Latino	1.588*	1.452†	-.734	-.829	1.741***	1.293*	.981	.979
SRO × legal cynicism	-.667*	-.137	.306	.702*	-1.191***	-.392	-.800**	-.465
SRO × concentrated poverty	.007	.144	-.295	-.195	.419*	.570**	.077	.097
SRO × calls for service (log)	-.019	-.075	.157	.079	.187	.097	-.073	-.100
SRO × collective efficacy		1.692*		1.262*		2.085***		.927

ABBREVIATION: SRO = self-reported criminal offending.

†*p* < .10; **p* ≤ .05; ***p* ≤ .01; ****p* ≤ .001.

model for violent, public-order, and drug arrests that legal cynicism again conditions the association between criminal offending and arrest (i.e., the significant cross-level interaction between legal cynicism and self-reported criminal offending). Crimes are substantially less likely to lead to an arrest in neighborhoods characterized by legal cynicism. In the second models for these three crime types, we find that collective efficacy mediates the effect of legal cynicism on the probability of arrest.

For property arrests, we find in model 2 that the probability of arrest is greater in neighborhoods characterized by legal cynicism—the opposite of our inferences for other crimes. What accounts for this divergence with property arrests? Our results reveal that the frequency of property arrests does not vary across neighborhoods nor does the likelihood that a crime will lead to arrest.[9] In contrast, for violent, public-order, and drug arrests, we find significant variation across neighborhoods in the frequency and probability of arrest. Simply put, there is neighborhood variation to explain for these three arrest types but not for property. By incorporating six different neighborhood factors to explain what little between-neighborhood variation exists for both the frequency and the probability of property arrest, we are providing a worse fit to the data than if we simply estimated the model without neighborhood predictors. So the puzzle for property arrests is not why legal cynicism seems to be positively related to the probability of arrest but why property arrests do not vary across neighborhoods. Still, with the exception of property offenses, the basic theoretical model we outlined in figure 1 is robust to different formulations of our dependent variable.

DISCUSSION

The objective of this study has been to examine how neighborhood context shapes the likelihood that the commission of a crime ultimately leads to arrest. We find evidence that an individual is less likely to be arrested after the commission of a crime in predominantly Black neighborhoods. A key reason for this inverse relationship between Black neighborhood composition and the probability of arrest is legal cynicism. As figure 2 illustrates, offenders are far less likely to be arrested after a crime in legally cynical neighborhoods than in neighborhoods that view the police more favorably, and collective efficacy mediates this association. We interpret

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9.   We make this observation when running crime-type models that contain a fully specified individual- and family-level model but no neighborhood-level predictors. Such a model provides information on the extent of between-neighborhood variation in the frequency of arrests and the likelihood of arrest after the commission of a crime.

the mediating influence of collective efficacy to mean that cynicism of the police and legal system undermines residents' willingness to engage in the collective actions necessary to control crime.

Collective efficacy refers to the process of activating or converting social ties among neighborhood residents to achieve collective goals, such as public order or the control of crime (Sampson, 2006; Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls, 1997). The theory of collective efficacy helps to explain the following observation that occurs in an assortment of ethnographic studies: the simultaneous presence of strong, dense neighborhood networks yet high levels of crime. Social ties among neighbors do not always lead to the social control of crime and might even foster criminal behavior (see, e.g., Pattillo, 1998; Venkatesh, 1997; Warner and Rountree, 1997; Whyte, 1993 [1943]). Social ties among neighborhood residents represent "resource potential," but this resource must be activated toward achieving a specific collective goal (Morenoff, Sampson, and Raudenbush, 2001). Thus, collective efficacy is task-specific in the sense that social ties among neighbors are activated through the process of collective efficacy to achieve a specific collective goal, such as the control of crime. Whyte's (1993 [1943]) Cornerville and Venkatesh's (2008) Robert Taylor Homes are just two examples of socially organized neighborhood communities with dense ties that did not activate those ties toward controlling crime. Our results suggest that one vital reason for this absence of social control is legal cynicism. Cynicism of the law helps explain why collective efficacy does not occur in some neighborhood environments despite dense social ties and a surplus of social capital available for use.

There are several reasons why legal cynicism hinders collective efficacy. First, because of legal cynicism, residents might assume that collective efforts to rid their neighborhood of criminals will be fruitless if a revolving door of justice puts offenders back on the street in little or no time. Second, and relatedly, if residents fear retribution for trying to thwart offending in their neighborhood, then those residents who doubt the capacity of the police to protect them might be unwilling to risk their safety to engage in the collective control of crime. Third, residents might turn to the individuals in their neighborhood who engage in criminal conduct to obtain protection as well as basic necessities. Venkatesh (1997, 2008) recounted numerous examples of ways the Black Kings obtained the allegiance and cooperation of residents in the Robert Taylor Homes in Chicago despite resident desire for less violence, gang warfare, and drug dealing. In sum, a neighborhood might be socially organized—and that is certainly a picture we get from Venkatesh's work (1997, 2008)—yet that organization might be useless for the "task" of controlling crime because of legal cynicism.

Because legal cynicism is so consequential for both the frequency of crime and the collective efforts among neighborhood residents to control

crime, it is vital to consider how to minimize or reverse cynical views of the criminal justice system. Although perceptions of the police as well as police–community relations might seem to be unbending, they are not in fact static. In 1993, the Chicago Police Department implemented community policing in five police districts and expanded the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) to all 25 districts in 1994 and 1995. As Skogan (2006: 59) noted, "the traditional work of district police officers in Chicago consists primarily of driving around, looking out the window while waiting for a call." In contrast to this largely reactive model of policing, community policing in Chicago was designed as a proactive measure to prevent crime by addressing a wide range of community problems, by involving the community and partner agencies in problem-solving efforts, and by decentralizing police administration (Skogan, 2006; Skogan and Hartnett, 1997). As initially implemented, however, CAPS was essentially "dead in the water" by 1999, as organizational and cultural resistance hindered any kind of meaningful organizational change (Skogan, 2006: 87). One key problem of the initial CAPS implementation was a lack of leadership accountability to carry out or even design procedures for identifying and solving community problems. Changes in the program after 1999 addressed this fundamental flaw, particularly the creation of the CAPS lieutenant post and the creation of the Office of Management Accountability.

A core basis for engaging the community in the policing process is to restore police legitimacy in the eyes of the public and to involve residents in the practice of community safety. Community policing is designed to encourage residents to report crimes promptly and to cooperate with the police as witnesses (Skogan, 2006). During the mid- and late 1990s, confidence in the CPD, as measured by perceptions of police demeanor, responsiveness, and performance, all increased for Blacks, Latinos, and Whites (Skogan, 2006). This increased confidence in the police coincided not only with the implementation of CAPS but also with dramatic declines in crime and disorder as well as with the general improvement of neighborhood conditions. To the extent that CAPS affected crime, disorder, and neighborhood conditions, at least an indirect link exists between community policing and the lessening of legal cynicism.

Although our results provide valuable information about the contextual sources of neighborhood variation in formal social control, limitations of the study provide opportunities for future research. For one, direct data on the reporting of crime or resident cooperation with the police would provide enhanced tests of our core theoretical model and therefore help explain why the probability of arrest is lower in predominantly Black neighborhoods. Second, selection bias often plagues observational studies of neighborhood effects. Although individuals are frequently constrained

in their decisions of where to live, they do have at least a minor influence on those decisions. Selection bias might occur when an unobserved characteristic of individuals or families influences both where they live and the outcome under study and, therefore, might account for any relation between neighborhood characteristics and outcomes. In this study, we have attempted to minimize the potential for selection bias by accounting for a theoretically relevant set of confounders. In essence, we have attempted to create a comparison whereby people are equivalent on family- and individual-level factors, particularly their extent of criminal offending, but differ with respect to their place of residence. We then sought to determine whether neighborhood context accounts for arrest differences between otherwise similar individuals. The strength of our research design and data collection allowed us to control for confounders at multiple levels of analysis (i.e., individual, family, and neighborhood), but we cannot altogether rule out the possibility of selection bias (for a discussion of selection bias, see Kirk and Laub, 2010).

As these limitations demonstrate, numerous challenges exist to the study of the ecology of arrest. We have attempted to mount as rigorous an analytic effort as possible by exploiting a data repository that offers a rich measurement protocol for assessing the predictors of arrest at multiple levels of analysis. Our findings reveal that the likelihood of arrest after the commission of a crime is explained, in part, by legal cynicism. Legal cynicism has a countervailing influence on arrest. On the one hand, it increases the likelihood of arrest by increasing the likelihood of criminal offending. When people view the law with cynicism, they are more likely to violate it. On the other hand, when residents are cynical of the law, they are less likely to engage in collective efforts to thwart crime, including cooperating with the police. Therefore, crimes are less likely to go punished in highly cynical neighborhoods. The ecology of arrest cannot be understood fully without considering the interplay between legal cynicism and collective efficacy.

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