Algorithmic Patrol: The Futures of Predictive Policing

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What is predictive policing?

• ‘the application of analytical techniques—particularly quantitative techniques—to identify likely targets for police intervention and prevent crime or solve past crimes by making statistical predictions’

• How ‘new’ is predictive policing?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime Type</th>
<th>Week to Date 2012</th>
<th>Week to Date 2011</th>
<th>28 Day</th>
<th>Year to Date</th>
<th>Year to Date</th>
<th>2 Year</th>
<th>11 Year</th>
<th>19 Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-30.0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>-15.5</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>40.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fel. Assalt</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>-13.8</td>
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<td>Burglary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-33.3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<td>Gr. Larceny</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>-28.6</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>114</td>
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<tr>
<td>G.L.A.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>-25.0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-44.6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>-46.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>26</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>-61.7</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>-62.0</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**62nd Precinct**

**CompStat** Report Covering the Week 4/2/2012 Through 4/8/2012
BIG DATA?

VOLUME
Large amounts of data.

VELOCITY
Needs to be analyzed quickly.

VARIETY
Different types of structured and unstructured data.

Worldwide IP traffic will quadruple by 2015.

By 2015, nearly 3 billion people will be online, pushing the data created and shared to nearly 8 zettabytes.
Causality to Correlation

• ‘society will need to overturn some of its obsession with causality in exchange for simple correlations: not knowing *why* but only *what*’ (Mayer-Schönberger and Cukier 2013: 14).

• Dataism
Transparent Technologies

• Black-boxing
• ‘technical capacity is hidden from the user and the science is already built in’
• ‘Intuitive Usability’ with actionable predictions at ‘one click of a mouse’
• Seamless and invisible prediction
• Data thirst
Marketing the Future

POWERFUL SOFTWARE. FIGHTING SERIOUS CRIME.
PredPol provides targeted, real-time crime prediction designed for and successfully tested by officers in the field.
MINORITY REPORT, IN REAL LIFE?

BIG DATA IS WATCHING YOU

Police turn to computers to help predict potential crimes.

WELCOME TO THE FUTURE
‘Dear Sir/Madam: Please let my chief and I know where we can buy the software that will tell us where to go pick up criminals as they are committing crimes. We have read articles and seen ads on this...’

(Composite of multiple letters sent to the International Association of Crime Analysts) (cited Perry et al 2013)
Policing for Austerity
Evaluation

- Industry sponsored evaluation
- Rand Corporation Shreveport Evaluation
- ‘no statistical evidence that special operations to target property crime informed by predictive maps resulted in greater crime reductions than special operations informed by conventional crime maps’ (Hunt et al 2014: xvi)
- Impact upon community
• “IT and its supporting features did not change any significant practice” (Manning 2008: 251)
• Information Overload
• Over-collection of police data
• Resistance to and subversion of technology in the field
Antinomies of Prediction

• Notion of technology as ‘force multiplier’
• Deskilling/Burbank Police
• Benevolent Prediction
• Predictive policing to ‘provide a greater level of precision and also provide information on officer activity when not on a predictive policing mission’ (Mohler et al 2015: 1410)
• Community Policing
Post-Political Crime Control?
Tracking and Targeting in the Smart City
Some concluding thoughts

• Policing for Austerity – the erasure of politics and normalization

• Rationalization of crime control

• The scientification of police work and the narrowing of mission

• Escalating spirals of hot spots, prediction and the ‘usual suspects’