Assessing Risk Assessment in San Francisco

(and other projects)

Megan Price
Human Rights Data
Analysis Group

Kristian Lum
University
Pennsylvania

Chesa Boudin
San Francisco
District Attorney

Outline

- How we started working together

- What is risk assessment?

- What next?

Our responses to the Covid-19 crisis

We show that statistics have human consequences

Data science and police accountability
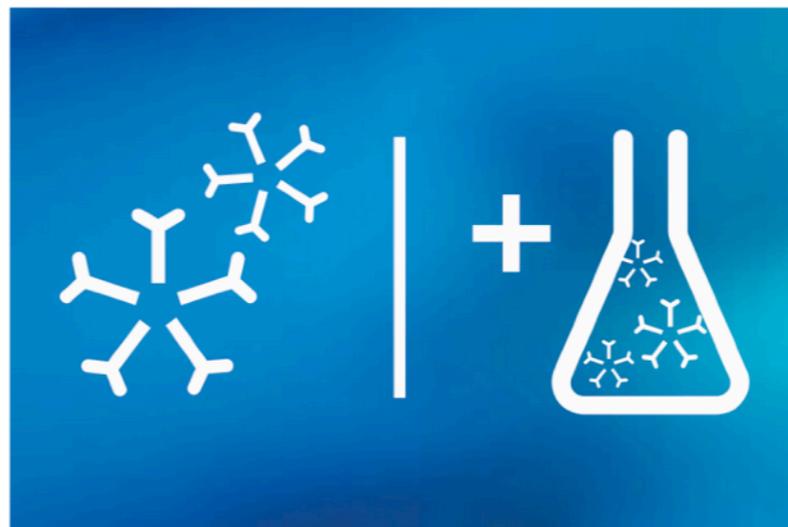
Statistics and Covid-19

Most of the available data on the

Finding Mexico's hidden graves

For more than ten years, Mexican authorities

Partners

Pre-Trial Risk Assessment

- Attempts to categorize individuals *post* arrest and *pre* trial into "risk categories"

- Different outcomes to model "risk":

  - Failure to appear for court date (FTA)

  - Potential re-arrest for new criminal activity (NCA)

  - Potential re-arrest for new *violent* criminal activity (NVCA)

Pre-trial risk assessment - concerns

- "Fairness" of predictive performance

- "Fairness" of inputs

Fairness

- https://shiraamitchell.github.io/fairness/

- https://facctconference.org/

"Because of the partial and selective nature of the police data, comparisons based on them of variations in 'actual crime' over time, between places, and among components of the population, are all held to be grossly invalid."

"The Interpretation of Criminal Statistics," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* 60 (**1897**)

Risk Assessment in San Francisco

- Arnold Ventures Public Safety Assessment (PSA)

- Pilot run 2016-2017

- SB 10: Pretrial Release and Detention

PSA - covariates

- Age at current arrest

- Pending charges at time of current offense

- Prior misdemeanor convictions

- Prior felony convictions

- Number of prior violent convictions

- Prior FTA

- Incarcerated as result of past conviction

- Whether current booked offense is violent

PSA - process

1. Calculate FTA, NCA, NVCA

2. Determine "charge-based exclusion" automatically categorizing as "release not recommended"

3. Determine recommendation from "decision-making framework"

4. Determine if any charges result in "bump up" to more restrictive recommendation

	NCA 1	NCA 2	NCA 3	NCA 4	NCA 5	NCA 6
FTA 1	OR - NAS	OR - NAS				
FTA 2	OR - NAS	OR - NAS	OR - NAS	OR - Minimum	SFPDP - ACM	
FTA 3		OR - NAS	OR - Minimum	SFPDP - ACM	SFPDP - ACM	Release Not Recommended
FTA 4		OR - Minimum	SFPDP - ACM	SFPDP - ACM	Release Not Recommended	Release Not Recommended
FTA 5		SFPDP - ACM	SFPDP - ACM	SFPDP - ACM* Release Not Recommended	Release Not Recommended	Release Not Recommended
FTA 6				Release Not Recommended	Release Not Recommended	Release Not Recommended

* Release Not Recommended if any booked offense is a felony or violent misdemeanor per PSA Violent Offenses List; SFPDP – ACM if booked offense(s) are non-violent misdemeanors.

Overbooking

- Owens et al (2017) find that "[p]eople of color receive more serious charges at the initial booking stage, reflecting decisions made by officers of the San Francisco Police Department."

Data

- PSA records for Public Defender clients (scanned images)

- Court data with unique identification number, name, date of birth, list of booking charges, list of charges led by the district attorney, and the disposition code for each individual charge

Analysis

- Link PSA and court data

- Confirm calculation of PSA recommendation

- Re-calculate recommendation using *convicted* charge (not *booked*)

Results

Percent of cases for which each component of PSA was higher under booking charges compared to convicted charges

Exclusions	21%
Bump-ups	17%
NVCA	11%
Recommendation	27%

Next Steps

- Ongoing PSA working group meetings with PDO and other groups

- New collaborations with District Attorney's Office

An introduction to the
Citizens Police Data Project

02:48
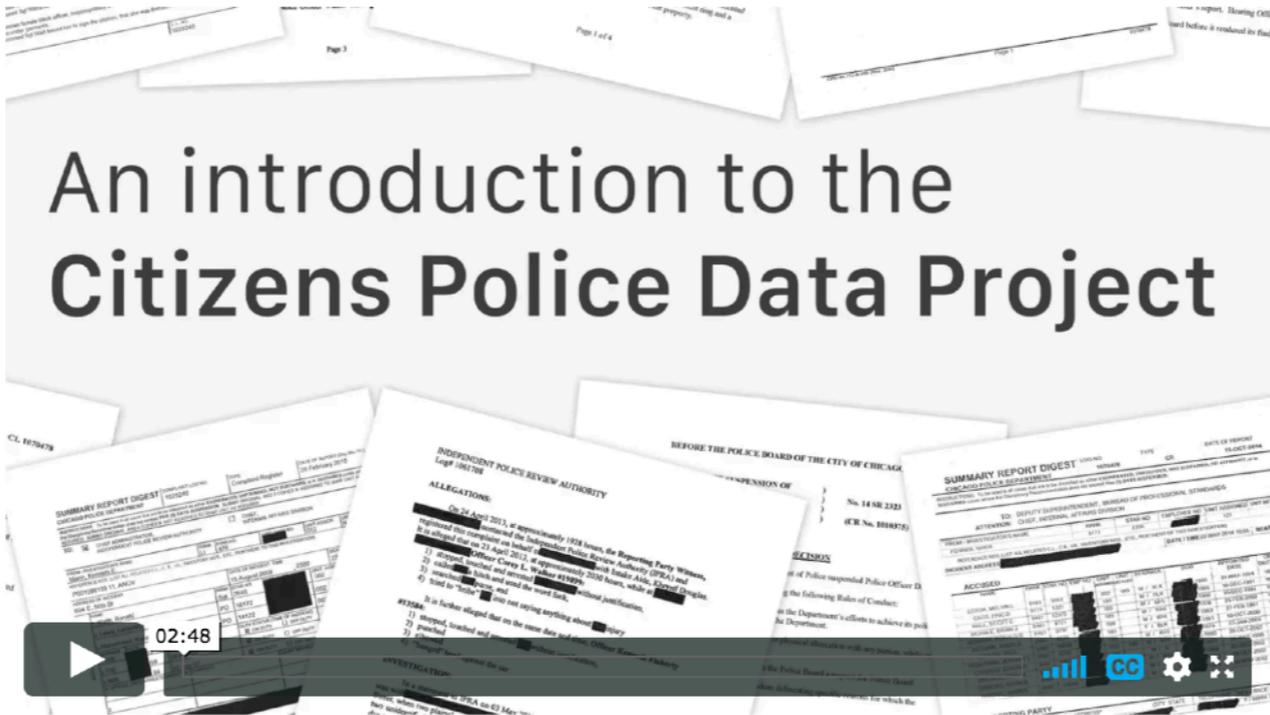
The Citizens Police Data Project (CPDP.co) is a tool for holding police accountable to the public they serve.

CPDP takes records of police interactions with the public – records that would otherwise be buried in internal databases – and opens them up to make the data useful to the public, creating a permanent record for every CPD police officer.

EXPLORE DATA

Thank you

meganp@hrdag.org

@StatMegan

@hrdag

Stay informed about our work:

hrdag.org/subscribe

HRDAG
Statisticians
for Human Rights