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# CRIME AND VIOLENCE IN CHICAGO

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a Geography of Segregation and Structural Disadvantage

An aerial photograph of Chicago, showing a dense urban landscape with a mix of brick buildings and modern skyscrapers in the distance. The sky is clear blue with a small crescent moon visible. The foreground shows a street lined with multi-story brick buildings, some with flat roofs and air conditioning units. The overall scene is bathed in the warm light of late afternoon or early morning.

**Tim van den Bergh - Master Thesis Human Geography  
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# Crime and Violence in Chicago: a Geography of Segregation and Structural Disadvantage

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## ABSTRACT

**Tim van den Bergh:** *Crime and Violence in Chicago: a Geography of Segregation and Structural Disadvantage*

Engaged with the socio-historical making of space, this thesis frames the contentious debate on violence in Chicago by illustrating how a set of urban processes have interacted to maintain a geography of racialized structural disadvantage. Within this geography, both favorable and unfavorable social conditions are unequally dispersed throughout the city, thereby impacting neighborhoods and communities differently. The theoretical underpinning of space as a social construct provides agency to particular institutions that are responsible for the 'making' of urban space in Chicago. With the use of a qualitative research approach, this thesis emphasizes the voices of people who can speak about the etiology of crime and violence from personal experience. Furthermore, this thesis provides a critique of social disorganization and broken windows theory, proposing that these popular criminologies have advanced a problematic normative production of space and impeded effective crime policy and community-police relations.

Key words: *space, disadvantage, race, crime & violence, Chicago*

(Under the direction of dr. Olivier Kramsch)

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1 - Introduction</b> .....	1
§ 1.1 Studying crime and violence in Chicago.....	1
§ 1.2 Research objective.....	2
§ 1.3 Research questions.....	3
§ 1.4 Relevance .....	3
§ 1.4.1 <i>Scientific relevance</i> .....	3
§ 1.4.2 <i>Societal relevance</i> .....	5
§ 1.5 Structure .....	6
<b>Chapter 2 - Theoretical Framework</b> .....	8
§ 2.1 Introduction .....	8
§ 2.2 The spatial turn: conceptions of space and place.....	9
§ 2.3 The ghetto as a heterotopia of deviation.....	10
§ 2.5 Critiquing criminologies: social disorganization and broken windows .....	13
§ 2.5.1 <i>Social disorganization</i> .....	14
§ 2.5.2 <i>Broken windows</i> .....	15
§ 2.6 Conclusion .....	16
<b>Chapter 3 - Methods</b> .....	17
§ 3.1 Introduction .....	18
§ 3.2 Critical discourse analysis .....	18
§ 3.3 Interviews & participatory observation .....	20
§ 3.4 Location / locale / sense of place.....	22
§ 3.5 Data analysis & coding .....	23
§ 3.5 Conclusion.....	24
<b>Chapter 4 – Historical Context: Early Processes of Ghettoization</b> .....	25
§ 4.1 Introduction.....	26
§ 4.2 United States ghetto formations .....	26

§ 4.2.1 Emergent ghettos: 1880-1910.....	27
§ 4.2.2 The Great Migration.....	28
§ 4.3 Chicago’s ghetto origins.....	30
§ 4.3.1 Chicago’s first ghetto.....	30
§ 4.3.2 Chicago’s second ghetto.....	32
§ 4.4 Housing policy.....	33
§ 4.4.1 National housing policy.....	33
§ 4.4.2 Chicago housing policy.....	35
§ 4.5 Conclusion.....	37
<b>Chapter 5 - The Political Economy of Disadvantage.....</b>	<b>38</b>
§ 5.1 Introduction.....	38
§ 5.2 Urban deserts of disinvestment: sketching a visual.....	39
§ 5.3 Ramifications of segregation.....	42
§ 5.3.1 Segregation & concentrated poverty.....	42
§ 5.3.2 Segregation & crime/violence.....	44
§ 5.4 Toward a geography of opportunity.....	47
§ 5.4.1 Access to education.....	48
§ 5.5 Conclusion.....	50
<b>Chapter 6 – Community Aspects: Housing, Families and Gangs.....</b>	<b>52</b>
§ 6.1 Introduction.....	52
§ 6.2 Housing & displacement.....	53
§ 6.2.1 Residential mobility, white flight & gentrification.....	53
§ 6.2.2 Public housing demolition.....	54
§ 6.3 Family Structure: a geography of broken families.....	56
§ 6.3.1 Families & mass incarceration.....	57
§ 6.3.2 Teenage pregnancy.....	59
§ 6.3.3 Family dynamics & processes of socialization.....	60
§ 6.4 Changing gang culture.....	61
§ 6.4.1 Gang formation.....	62
§ 6.4.2 Gangs as community extensions.....	63

§ 6.4.3 <i>Gang fragmentation</i> .....	64
§ 6.5 Conclusion.....	65
<b>Chapter 7 - Social Disorganization and Broken Windows Theory: a Context for Community-Police Relations</b> .....	67
§ 7.1 Introduction .....	67
§ 7.2 Community – police relations .....	67
§ 7.2.1 <i>Laquan McDonald &amp; the Police Accountability Task Force</i> .....	68
§ 7.2.2 <i>Representations in the media: a myth of black criminality</i> .....	70
§ 7.3 Critiquing criminologies continued.....	73
§ 7.3.1 <i>a Normative production of space</i> .....	73
§ 7.3.2 <i>Crime policy &amp; policing Strategies</i> .....	74
§ 7.4 Conclusion.....	76
<b>Chapter 8 – Conclusion</b> .....	78
§ 8.1 Limitations & delimitations .....	78
§ 8.2 Recommendations.....	78
§ 8.3 Concluding remarks.....	80
<b>References</b> .....	82
Appendix 1: Interview questionnaire template .....	91
Appendix 2: Coded table.....	94

**Figures and Tables**

Figure 1 .....15  
Figure 2 .....23  
Figure 3 .....23  
Figure 4 .....40  
Figure 5 .....41  
Figure 6 .....44  
Figure 7 .....45  
Figure 8 .....49  
Figure 9 .....71  
  
Table 1 .....21

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

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### § 1.1 Studying crime and violence in Chicago

Within the curriculum of the human geography master's specialization; Conflicts, Territories and Identities, a focus is placed on the study of conflict, and the territorial boundaries and borders in the minds of people involved. Logically, one might assume that conflict studies remains an endeavor in which only the foreign and exotic regions of the world are studied and scrutinized by Western standards. I find, however, that the Western World itself is not at all absent of such conflict either. Even in the United States, the self-proclaimed pinnacle of Western Christian civilization, for example, conflict readily can be identified.

The succession of Obama by Trump, for one, has confirmed the tumultuous state of American society, where a perpetual social, economic and political division of the American people contextualizes contemporary social issues. One of such issues is the enduring and quintessential problematic of the urban. At exponentially growing rates, the world is becoming more and more urbanized (Hagedorn & Rauch:2007, p.440), and this trend is uneasily accompanied by novel problems regarding urban space. In the United States, the city has always been an arena for social unrest, which in its most serious form has escalated into endemic community violence. In illustration of the social significance of said community violence, Aisenberg & Herrenkohl (2008) have pointed out that, "one of the problematics of urban America is that exposure to community violence is disproportionately higher among the poor, people of color, and those who live in densely populated urban areas" (p.298). Indeed, it seems that if one would want to study the conflict that stems from social inequality, the American city is the place to be.

Consequently, in order to elucidate the urban predicament of American society, this thesis takes a closer look at the city of Chicago, Illinois. Appropriately, the very elements and processes of (inter)national conflict, as outlined by the curriculum of the Master's specialization track, are also at play in the city of Chicago. Identities, territories and borders are all pivotal components of endemic community violence in the city, that with its high rates of racial diversity embodies a theoretical and actual environment for a critical discussion on conflictual American race relations. After all, academic and popular discourse have emphasized the racialization of Chicago's violence, bringing up critical questions regarding the city's social, economic, and racial circumstances. The idea that race is an important variable in studying Chicago's violence, for instance, is founded on both historical and current understandings of race-based exclusions and divides, made evident by the peculiar fact that crime and violence in Chicago is concentrated in predominantly African American neighborhoods.

Accordingly, this thesis traces the historical urban development of Chicago in an attempt to illuminate the often violent fate of poor African Americans living in the city today. Massey & Denton (1993) point out that, "for urban blacks, the ghetto has been the paradigmatic residential configuration"

(p.19). Even though the concept of ‘ghetto’ conjures up a deeply-rooted white imagination of ‘other’ and ‘disadvantaged’ spaces in Chicago, it surely contains a very real historical substance. At the same time, Anderson (2012) claims that we should be aware of the fact that, “the imagined ghetto as social place is a default position, a social residuum to which anonymous blacks can be conceptually relegated amid the racial give-and-take of urban life” (p.20). In that sense, Chicago’s historical ghettoization is suggestive of a social order in which a particular spatial politics has affected the city’s contemporary urban climate. Within this urban climate, disadvantage is geographically determined and largely conditioned by race. The borders and barriers that confine certain disadvantaged groups to certain urban spaces are not so fragile as many policymakers and politicians might want us to believe. Rather, Ta-Nehisi Coates (2017) writes that, “it’s the myth of the American Dream that with initiative and industriousness, an individual can always escape impoverished circumstances” (p.267). Indeed, escaping the grasp of structural and compounded deprivation is difficult, if not, almost impossible.

Ultimately, then, this thesis engages with Chicago’s urban space by taking a closer look at those urban processes that interact at the micro- meso- and macro-level to sustain an environment of structural disadvantage of which crime and violence appear to be an inevitable outcome. In analyzing these processes, such as racial residential segregation, concentrated poverty and volatile community-police relationships, this research exposes tenacious criminogenic features of US metropolitan areas, of which Chicago is a prime example.

## **§ 1.2 Research objective**

In essence, this thesis attempts to explain the excessive violence of the streets of Chicago by providing useful insights into the relationship between race, space, crime and violence. To do so, this thesis outlines the significance of various structural factors that are responsible for the geography of endemic community violence. Specifically, a discussion on the socio-historical making of space, most notably the formation of the American ghetto, serves to contextualizes contemporary trends of violence in Chicago’s more disadvantaged neighborhoods. By uncovering the ramifications of underlying structural conditions of disadvantage, this thesis provides an explanatory framework for the particular geography of crime and violence in the city. In addition, the critiquing of mainstream criminology allows for a re-reading of Chicago’s spatialities, thereby scrutinizing recent policing strategies which have perpetuated an imagination of exclusionary urban spaces.

With the use of a multifaceted approach and with the employment of a multidisciplinary theoretical framework, this thesis calls for a holistic perspective on social interaction and social relations in Chicago. Moreover, with the collection of empirical data, this research also sets out to provide an authentic narrative within which a central voice is given those people who are actually dealing with crime and violence in

Chicago's urban environment. In that sense, the broader research objective of this thesis should also be understood as an addition to the more general critique of social stratification and racism in American society.

### **§ 1.3 Research questions**

In order to satisfy the research objective, critical questions need to be asked. As this thesis is concerned with explaining the geography of crime and violence in Chicago, the writing on Chicago's urban environment will be structured and conditioned by the following research questions:

#### Main research question

- ❖ *In what ways does the socio-historical making of space and place in Chicago contextualize contemporary trends of urban crime and violence?*

#### Sub-questions

- ❖ *What are the underlying factors contributing to Chicago's excessive community violence?*
- ❖ *How have structural conditions of disadvantaged influenced past and current spaces in Chicago?*
- ❖ *In what ways have race and space intersected to (re)produce racialized disadvantage in Chicago?*
- ❖ *In what ways does the experience of living in Chicago change, depending on location?*
- ❖ *How do social disorganization and broken windows theory normatively construct/produce space ?*
- ❖ *To what extent are police-community relations mediated by representations of space, place and crime?*

### **§ 1.4 Relevance**

#### **§ 1.4.1 Scientific relevance**

The intersection of space and violence has been a recurring theme of urban geography. However, in the midst of significant changes to the American city and urban life, there remains a need for updated research on the explanatory variables for community violence. Because inner cities have begun to change and diverge from how they are commonly portrayed (Perkins & Sampson:2015, p.36), this thesis proves scientifically relevant by offering unique insights into important urban processes in Chicago.

Essentially, violence in Chicago appears much more of a socio-geographical phenomenon than some academic literature has made it out to be, and therefore its studies remain scientifically pertinent. Part of this relevance stems from the need to combine prevalent discourses into a more wholesome and explicable narrative, one that provides new evidence on the cross-cutting adversities experienced by disadvantaged populations.

To begin with, the extensive racial and social class diversity of Chicago's population makes the city a suitable research site for socio-geographical inquiries. Chicago is heavily spatially segregated along racial and ethnic lines and, since 1980, has been among the four most racially segregated cities of the United States (Bernasco & Block:2009, p.9). Accordingly, studying the ramifications of segregation is particularly a scientific geographical project because it entails a clear demarcation of urban spaces, while simultaneously relating these spaces to the broader context of violence in the city. In terms of relating space and violence, for instance, there has been ample research that shows that higher levels of city segregation are associated with higher rates of violent crime for cities (e.g., Peterson and Krivo:2009, Shihadeh and Maume:1997, Ousey:1999, and Lee & Ousey:2005). Nevertheless, while this correlative relationship between segregation and crime has been clearly presented, the much broader etiology of urban crime remains largely understudied. In that regard, the intersection of race and class and the distribution of opportunity and resources should be a central rather than peripheral theme in prevailing urban theories on race, crime, poverty and violence.

The relevance of this thesis is, thus, largely tied to its ability to fill the gaps in geographical literature by application of a qualitative, rather than quantitative, research model. Part of this research approach consists of a rethinking of certain tendencies, theories, views and perceptions that have been previously presented in scholarship. To illustrate, Wacquant (1997) warns us that contemporary urban research continues to, "embrace a century-old view of the black ghetto as a 'morally defective' and 'nefarious place that disrupts and corrupts social life'" (p.341). Forgotten in this 'view' are not only the internal and external processes that have shaped the black ghetto, but also the social connotations that such narratives carry with them. Accordingly, there is a clear desire and need for a scientific discourse that incorporates ethnographic and emic knowledge rather than add to a redundancy of statistical and etic research. After all, there can be no more genuine description of the impact of disadvantage, inequality, racism and violence than that of those whom have experienced it in their daily lives.

Consistent with the 'rethinking' of existing theory and research, however, comes also an awareness of the more practical function of science. If research prescribes policy, and in the case of urban policy it clearly does, then we should take a critical look at what this research is really saying. The application of mainstream criminology, for instance, has advanced a distinct narrative regarding urban space and crime and thereby vindicated the adoption of ineffective policing strategies. Subsequently, a disproportionate and largely discretionary use of police resources have been aimed at communities that fit a certain 'model' as prescribed by ecological criminological theory. The challenge for geographers is thus, as Yarwood & Paasche (2015) point out, not only to, "rethink the spatialities of policing and security but also to promote research agendas that will encourage practitioners to do the same" (p.368). The scientific relevance of this

thesis, then, lies not only in its abstract and theoretical discussion of the city but also in its offering of pragmatic solutions to Chicago's lingering crime and violence.

#### **§ 1.4.2 Societal relevance**

Although in many aspects a great a flourishing city, there is no doubt that Chicago has a problem with crime and violence. In 2017, over 650 people were murdered in Chicago and while this number is lower than the grizzly 781 homicides logged in 2016, which was Chicago's deadliest in two decades (Armentrout:2017, n.p), the city's murder rates remain consistently above the American average. Homicide statistics, however, tell only part of a story; the ending. Rather, the excessive violence in Chicago is first and foremost the outcome of a set of urban processes that have interacted in a particular way.

The societal relevance of a conflict-based research project lies principally in the alleviation and mediation of said conflict. Research has shown that children who witness community violence are at increased risk of internalizing behaviors, psychological problems including anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and posttraumatic stress disorder (Aisenberg & Herrenkohl:2008, p.300). However, to assume that this thesis, by itself, could significantly decrease Chicago's community violence and future homicide rates would be foolish to say the least. Instead, a broader societal relevance can be identified in the uncovering of the underlying causes of Chicago's crime and violence.

To illustrate, violence in Chicago appears to fit within a context of a broader social order that is historically and currently typified by tense race relations. Racism and race prejudice have become adaptive and malleable to survive the constraints of time, and, although legally 'diminished', the historical patterns and arrangements of race-based exclusion continue (Bonilla-Silva 473). What remained, is an American culture of 'structural racism', where the colorblind and post-racial policies have neglected the reality and persistence of prejudicial covert and overt discriminatory practices. Therefore, in a post-Ferguson America, critical research projects, such as this one, are needed to expose when and how racial inequality is exacerbated by urban processes, practices and policy. There is, for instance, an argument to be made that racism in the American city constitutes a particular set of narratives, policies, and interactions that have become tenaciously entrenched in a prevailing social order based on social position (Blumer:1952, p.7).

For instance, Gotham's (2000) findings suggest that, "constructions of race and manifestations of racism are closely tied to meanings of urban space (e.g. residence, neighborhood, community) and that people organize their 'everyday life' within the constraints or opportunities of the built environment" (p.630). Said constraints and opportunity, as this thesis argues, are unevenly but surely geographically dispersed throughout the city, which, amongst other things, has meant that the cumulatively layered effect of racial and socio-economic segregation has impacted generations of African Americans (Bechteler & Kane-Willis:2016, p.46).

In moving beyond a strictly scientific realm, there is much to be said about discourses and narratives that circulate outside of academics. The problematic narrative of the ‘underclass’, for instance, is probably more present at suburban dinner-tables than at academic conventions. The iconic ghetto persists in the imagination of most whites (Anderson:2012, p.23) and there rests a sense of social unworthiness and moral inferiority on those who live in Chicago’s historic Black Belt (Wacquant:1993, p.371). On top of that, I would argue that media portrayals of ‘perpetrators’ and ‘victims’ shape popular perceptions of race more strongly than seminal works by leading geographers. There is no denying that popular discourse influences social relations and interactions in Chicago, and violence is merely an outcome of said relations and interactions. Therefore, there is also societal value in this research as it attempts to subvert these discourses and narratives.

## **§ 1.5 Structure**

This research deals with the interaction between various urban processes and discusses the consequences of that interaction in terms of its influence on crime and violence in Chicago. To do so, chapter 2 provides a theoretical framework within which the terminology and concepts are to be further developed. Essentially, this chapter conceptualizes geographical and criminological theory to fit the overarching objectives of this thesis. First, conceptions of space and place are introduced and defined. With an awareness of the spatial turn, I illustrate the appropriateness of a social constructivist approach to urban space. Additionally, this chapter relates urban spaces of disadvantage to Foucault’s concept of heterotopia, arguing that the heterotopia captures the particular contrast between disadvantaged and dominant spaces. Lastly, this chapter introduces a critique of social disorganization and broken windows theory, suggesting that the ecological tradition of criminology is at times unaware of its normative production of space.

The method is explained in chapter 3. Here, I justify the employment of three methodologies; critical discourse analysis, interviews, and participatory observation. Moreover, this chapter formulates the research design by describing the processes of data collection and data analysis. Specifically, the data analysis, which resulted into a thematically coded table, proves crucial in determining the topics and structure of the empirical chapters.

In chapter 4, a historical context properly situates the research project. By tracing the origins of the African American ghetto in the United States and Chicago, early urban processes responsible for contemporary disadvantage can be identified. These historical processes, which revolve around residential segregation signify the broader state of American race relations and are important considerations in the analysis of community violence. Especially the ‘making’ of urban space, through policy and discriminatory housing practices, has had a significant impact on Chicago’s current racialized geography of violence.

Chapter 5 is the first empirical chapter where thesis actively engages with the collected data. This chapter discusses how the political economy of disadvantage perpetuates the deterioration of heterotopic neighborhoods. Moreover, I sketch a visual of disadvantage and discuss how this visual influences perception of place. In addition, this chapter begins to uncover how the interaction between segregation and poverty and segregation and crime/violence are manifestations of structural disadvantage and thereby explanatory for the geography of violence in Chicago. Lastly, a geography of opportunity is presented and substantiated by a discussion on unequal access to education.

Building further on the empirical data, Chapter 6 analyzes Chicago's violence in terms of community aspects. First, this chapter returns to the issue of housing and illustrates how instances of white flight, suburbanization and gentrification influence the geographical prevalence of crime and violence. Then, a discussion on the demolition of public housing shows how displacement can be criminogenic in that it breaks up community ties and social networks. Furthermore, this chapter addresses the importance of family as a social unit. Here, I argue that unfavorable family structures impede socialization processes and increases the propensity for future crime/violence. Lastly, this chapter includes a discussion on gangs and gang violence, suggesting that recent gang fragmentation has given rise to new forms of community violence.

Chapter 7 returns to the critique of mainstream criminologies and contextualizes the community-police relations in the United States and Chicago. Specifically, this chapter illustrates how police violence has hampered community-police relations and further argues that the media is largely responsible for sustaining a myth of black criminality. Additionally, the critique of social disorganization and broken windows discourse is extended, showing that these theories' problematic readings of space have constituted the implementation of ineffective crime policy and law enforcement strategies.

Lastly, chapter 8 offers a reflexive discussion on limitations and delimitations, recommendations for praxis and concluding remarks. Here, the research objective and questions are revisited, and major findings are summarized.

## Chapter 2 - Theoretical Framework

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### § 2.1 Introduction

A rich body of literature within the humanities and social sciences has engaged with questions of space and crime. Most spatial analyses of crime intersect at geographical and criminological traditions, both of which, in their own way, have contributed to an incorporation of spatiality in theories of violence. Concerned with urban spaces, this chapter frames foundational theory to analyze the empirical data gathered. Moreover, this chapter reviews existing literature by comparing and contrasting seminal works within several academic fields.

Conceptually, similar terms and ideas are presented by different authors in different fields. Wacquant (2008), for example, diagnoses a concept like hyper segregation as primarily a chapter in political sociology, rather than post-industrial economics (Wilson 1987), racial demography (Massey & Denton 1993), or capitalist urbanization (Harvey 1972, 1996). While divergent approaches have put forward different theoretical frameworks and conceptualizations, there remains, however, plenty of overlap. Consequently, in order to holistically frame the concepts at hand, this thesis mentions a range of scholarship from several a variety of traditions.

In providing a theoretical basis for discussing crime and violence in Chicago, this chapter will do several things. First, it conceptualizes and the justifies the use of core concepts belonging to (human) geography. Here, I highlight the significance of the spatial turn and advance a social constructivist and post-structuralist stance on specified geographical terminology, meaning and knowledge. Second, this chapter compares Chicago's historical ghettos and contemporary spaces of segregation and disinvestment with Foucault's concept of heterotopia. By means of a heterotopology, this comparison substantiates the argument that; for mainstream society, the ghetto functions as a 'counter-space' which harbors incompatibilities and fosters manifestations of 'inside' and 'outside' urban spaces. Lastly, I describe and critique two mainstream ecological criminologies that have dominated criminal justice discourse and policy throughout the last several decades. Specifically, this section uncovers the problematic of social disorganization as presented by Shaw & McKay (1942) and Wilson (1987) and that of broken windows as developed by Wilson & Kelling (1982). Ultimately, I suggest that, while both theories are valuable for studying space/place and crime, they need to be construed with an awareness of their normative function and the race/power dynamics that they preserve.

## § 2.2 The spatial turn: conceptions of space and place

As with any work of geography, the writing of this thesis will have to be positioned within a theoretical framework that not only allows for an interpretation and analysis of the data gathered but also serves to conceptualize the terminology used. In that regard, it is important to note that, subsequent to the transformative methodological renaissance in human geography; the ‘spatial turn’, space has increasingly come to be regarded as an influential dimension by other disciplines (Warf & Arias:2008, p.2). Under the guise of modernity, Henri Lefebvre’s seminal 1974 work, titled *La Production de l’Espace*, reiterated the importance of the continual social (re)production of space. Building on Lefebvre, postmodern scholars like Soja (1989) have uncovered some of the more dramatic changes in the way urban space and place has been re-bordered and reinvented over the past thirty years (van Houtum:2017, p.5). Subsequently, with this novel and much firmer locale within the humanities and social sciences, the spatial discipline of human geography and its geographical considerations of space, place and time have become recognized as essential features of the social. Nevertheless, whilst commonplace terms, conceptions of space and place are not always agreed upon and working with this imprecision has been both opportunity and restriction (Withers:2009, p.638).

Conceptualizing space, time and place is essential to this thesis because, as Harvey (1996) submits, “space and time, once they are set, are a primary means to individuate and identify objects, people, relations, processes, and events. Location and bounding are important if not vital attributes for the definition of the objects, events, and relationships existing in the world around us” (p.264). To study urban violence, then, is to study the product of relations and processes that are situated within the world around us, bounded by space and time. ‘Setting’ space and time, but also more importantly place, not only demarcates the theoretical framework but also configures the environment in which this thesis studies social interaction.

The widespread redefinition of space and place as more active and dynamic rather than passive and stagnant is a crucial feature of the spatial turn. Warf & Arias (2008) explain that, “social theory repositioned the understanding of space from given to produced, calling attention to its role in the construction and transformation of social life and its deeply power-laden nature” (p.3). Similarly, Harvey (1996) contends that “space and time are social constructs” (p.210), and that places, like space and time, are too, “social constructs and have to be read and understood as such” (p.326). In following this constructivist tradition, this thesis attempts to illustrate how Chicago, as both constructed space and place, is inevitably corrupted by underlying urban processes that have led to community violence.

In order to make sense of the empirical data, then, Chicago will be theoretically regarded as ‘place’ in all of its meanings and functions. Specifically, I rely on political geographer John Agnew’s conviction that place contains three fundamental aspects; place as location, place as locale, and the sense of place (Withers:2009, p.639). Agnew (2014) distinguishes, “locale, the settings in which social relations are

constituted. Location, the geographical area encompassing the settings for social interaction as defined by social and economic processes operating at a wider scale, and sense of place, the local structure of feeling by way of example, home, school, church and so on form nodes around which human activities circulate and which in toto can create a sense of place, both geographically and socially” (p.16). With this in mind, the social construction of place becomes synonymous for both the constitution of social relations and the very sites and settings where the (re)production of these social relations and interactions take place. When we take the incidence of crime in the ghetto, for example, it becomes clear that it is exacerbated by the ethno-racial closure of space in American cities (Wacquant:2008, p.57). Hence, it is the making of urban space and place (placing) that are essential to social development, social control, and empowerment in any social order, allowing us to submit that such processes interrelate with the social construction of space and time as well (Harvey:1996, p.265).

With ‘place’ regarded as locale, location, and sense of place, this thesis designates violence as a particular form of social interaction in a particular environment, ironically making place both a product of, and a location for, social interaction. In addition, sense of place, which Agnew (2003) defines as, “the subjective orientation engendered by living in a place” (p.608), is very much conditioned by the underlying processes that are being scrutinized in this thesis. Social attachment to a place will vary by subject and location, allowing for interpretation of sense of place as an indicator for experience of specific urban phenomena. After all, places possess social, psychic, and even mythical realities, which are forged out of histories, imaginations and representations. Furthermore, as Massey (2013) points out, “if places can be conceptualized in terms of the social interactions which they tie together, then it is also the case that these interactions themselves are not motionless things, frozen in time. They are processes” (p.232). Studying and uncovering these processes within Chicago’s social order, then, becomes the pinnacle of this research.

### **§ 2.3 The ghetto as a heterotopia of deviation**

Upon ‘setting’ space and place within a larger theoretical framework, it is important to delineate what kind of space(s) and place(s) are being studied. To do so, this section draws parallels between Chicago’s segregated spaces of disadvantage and Foucault’s concept of heterotopias of deviation. I argue that the function of Chicago’s historical ghettos and the function of contemporary neighborhoods of disadvantage allow these sites to conceptually qualify as heterotopias of deviation as put forward by Foucault in his work, *Des Espace Autres (1967)* (Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias (1984)). As a means of contrasting the metaphysical nature of utopia’s, which remain sites with no real place, Foucault alternatively developed the concept of heterotopia. Foucault (1984) explains that, “unlike utopias, heterotopias are “real places— places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society— which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found

within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted.” (p.4). By functioning in non-hegemonic conditions and by containing undesirable bodies, heterotopias theoretically encapsulate physical and mental spaces ‘otherness’.

Essentially, Foucault defined heterotopias as ‘counter sites’, which, for the sake of this thesis, provides a suitable theoretical label for the spaces of racialized disadvantage that are being studied. As a way of mirroring or opposing the mainstream, heterotopias of deviation discursively and metaphorically describe the function of early Chicago ghettos and contemporary neighborhoods of prolonged disinvestment. More importantly, analyzing space and place through ‘heterotopology’ constitutes finding out where, how, and for whom difference erupts and maintains itself (Saldanha:200, p.2081). This power-laden notion of ‘difference’, which manifests itself in the social relations and interaction that reside in the realm of place (locale, location, and sense of place), should be regarded as the basis for the enactment of crime and violence.

In order to thoroughly describe the concept of heterotopia (of deviation), Foucault presented a heterotopology, which along the lines of several principles characterizes the qualities of heterotopic space. After distinguishing between heterotopia of crisis and heterotopia of deviation, of which the latter will be relevant to this analysis, Foucault (1984) submits that, “a society, as its history unfolds, can make an existing heterotopia function in a very different fashion; for each heterotopia has a precise and determined function within a society and the same heterotopia can, according to the synchrony of the culture in which it occurs, have one function or another” (p.5). The function of urban space in the United States, and the city of Chicago particularly, has proven to abide by rules of heterotopic space. For example, in some instances we can clearly observe that certain urban enclaves in Chicago, such as the Black Belt, have historically been used to house poor African Americans. Yet, the function of these some of these enclaves has changed through processes of gentrification to become residential areas for middle and upper-class whites. The heterotopia of previously ghettoized space became to function, over time, as a different urban space according to the synchrony of the culture in which it occurred. Gentrification, but also suburbanization and white flight should thus be understood as the enactment of the changing function and character of (former) heterotopic spaces.

Foucault (1984), then continues to describe that, “the heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible” (p.6). In a similar fashion, Massey (2013) describes that “places do not have single, unique ‘identities’; they are full of internal conflicts (p.155)”. Internal incompatibility appears consistently and destructively throughout Chicago’s disadvantaged neighborhoods. The juxtaposition of spaces that should be safe (such as home or school) unsafe and violent actuality remains an uncomfortable reality of areas on Chicago’s South and West Sides. It is the very amount and prevalence of contradiction and conflict within these neighborhoods that not only

accounts for the measure of crime and violence but also defines the functionalities of these locations as ‘counter spaces’ to the dominant one (invested Chicago) (Dehaene & De Caeter:2008, p.8).

Another principle of heterotopias is explained by Foucault (1984) when he writes that, “heterotopias are most often linked to slices in time—which is to say that they open onto what might be termed, for the sake of symmetry, heterochronies. The heterotopia begins to function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time” (p.6). The American black ghetto came into being, quite literally, as a response to abolition. The heterotopic spaces of segregated Chicago can thus be traced to a break of traditional time where the end of the epoch of slavery gave rise to a fear and anticipation of a race-based paradigm shift. Although the race riots in Chicago in 1919 proved that post-abolition race relations remained as confrontational as they were before, the specific temporal relevance of the Great Migration suggests that Chicago’s black ghetto was both a spatial and temporal response to the influx of African Americans into the city, a theme that will be further developed in Chapter 5.

Additionally, for Foucault (1984), heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both makes them penetrable but also isolates them. In general, “the heterotopic site is not freely accessible like a public place, yet there are others, on the contrary, that seem to be pure and simple openings, but that generally hide curious exclusions” (p.7). Such opening and closing can be understood as a mechanism of (b)ordering populations within a broader scheme of geographical population control. This sentiment of containment and isolation resonates throughout scholarship on American ghetto formation and historical urban development. Morrill (1972), for instance, writes that, “black people were social prisoners of the ghetto” (p.33), and Anderson (2012) points out that “the black ghetto is typically distinguished by the local boundaries that physically separate it from the rest of the city, including wide streets, thoroughfares, or freeways, some of which were deliberately constructed to contain the ghetto” (p.14). Consequently, exclusionary housing practices and perpetual segregation led not only to a physical isolation but also a social isolation (Whitehead:2000, p19), confirming that heterotopias of deviation are ‘other’ also in that they stem from an endless series of differences and contrasts within the space of representation (Cenzatti:2008, p.82). Here, Agnew’s third element of place; sense of place, becomes an important consideration when analyzing the (re)production of difference. Moreover, it illustrates the connotation of the heterotopia as not only a physical but also a social locale/location of displacement and containment.

The last trait of heterotopias, Foucault (1984) notes, is that they have a, “function in relation to all the space that remains” (p.8). This function, as mentioned above, is largely one of contrast and opposition, hence the descriptive term; ‘counter-site’. More importantly, however, is that heterotopic spaces and places are absolutely different from all other sites that they reflect and speak about (Foucault:1984, p.4). Through their difference, the historical ghetto and contemporary areas of disadvantage confirm the normalness, the goodness and the successfulness of all other space, particularly that of mainstream (dominant) Chicago. For

instance, Wacquant's (1997) warning of the tendency to, "exoticize the ghetto and its residents, that is, to highlight the most extreme and unusual aspects of ghetto life as seen from outside and above, i.e., from the standpoint of the dominant" (p.342), sustains the imagination of the ghetto as a counter-site. At the same time, this tendency has been used to reaffirm the justness of American apartheid and the function of the ghetto as spatially separate colonies (Morrill:1972, p.30) or semi-colonies (Blaut:1983, p.38). Ultimately, it is difference through contrast, a typicality of heterotopic space, that enables problematic configurations of race relations and increased social distance.

Interestingly, much of the analysis above can be compared to the discourse of carceral geography (Foucault 1977, Agamben 1998, see also Moran 2015). The binary distinction of 'inside' and 'outside', a fundamental dichotomy in carceral geography, is very much present in my theoretical discussion of the ghetto as a heterotopic space. To illustrate, Allweill & Kallus (2008) point out that, "the rise of new forms of spatial segregation reflects a number of processes of fragmentation in contemporary society, in which the homogeneous space of the nation-state is replaced by multifarious communal forms of affiliation (economic, cultural, ethnic, etc.). This process of fragmentation is accompanied by the rise of the heterotopic enclave as an exclusionary spatial device" (p.192). In this thesis, urban spaces and places are being viewed as sites for contrasting the 'inside' with the 'outside', and these spaces and places are incessantly marked by patterns of exclusion, containment, segregation and disadvantage, which are all, one way or another, quintessential features of heterotopic space.

## **§ 2.5 Critiquing criminologies: social disorganization and broken windows**

In order to holistically approach violence in Chicago, this thesis includes elements of criminological theory. The linkages of crime and space are consistently examined by criminologists who have developed ecological approaches. However, I argue that much of mainstream criminological theory has neglected the normative function of its discourse, subsequently allowing policing policy measures to disproportionately targeted underserved communities and thereby tarnishing police-community relations. To illustrate, Yarwood & Paasche (2015) note that, "policing and security are the spatial outcomes of a particular social order" (p.367). To neglect the significance of the power relations that reside within this social order is to neglect the inception of the very ecological circumstances that are to validate these criminologies. Therefore, literature reviews and theoretical considerations must not only (re)produce existing ideologies, but they must also challenge ideological hegemonies, which can limit the understanding of phenomena (Wall et al:2014, p.3). The following sections will, therefore, challenge the ideological hegemonies of social disorganization and broken windows.

The origin of ecological criminology can be traced to the early Chicago School of Sociology. Urban ecology, as developed by Chicago sociologists, suggested that, "arrangements in social space may

significantly affect human behavior” (Harcourt & Ludwig:2006, p.278). Consequently, Chicago sociologists argued that, “crime is largely a product of unfavorable conditions in certain communities” (Gaines & Miller: 2008, p.47), a theory that was popularized by Shaw and McKay (1942) in their work *Juvenile Delinquency in Urban Areas* and further developed by Wilson (1987) in his book *The Truly Disadvantaged: the Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*. Flowing from such seminal works have been a set of space-based criminologies that have largely shaped popular criminal justice discourse.

### **§ 2.5.1 Social disorganization**

The likelihood of a person committing deviant and criminal acts is, according to Chicago sociologists, determined by residential location (Goode:2015, p.78).With that in mind, Shaw and McKay (1942) laid grounds for social disorganization theory, which hypothesizes that distribution of crime and delinquency is due to variation in the capacity of neighborhoods to constrain its residents from violating norms (Markowitz et al:2001, p.293). Social disorganization was assumed to be endemic to urban areas where social cohesion and positive community fabric lacked. These environmental criminogenic features, then, became the focus of much of the criminological theory that build on the ecological tradition. Largely forgotten in the discourses of these theories, however, is a broader discussion on the underlying processes that give rise to said neighborhood features and conditions. By particularly focusing on these underlying processes, such as segregation, concentrated poverty and displacement, this thesis will attempt to fill this gap in ecological criminology literature.

If we take collective efficacy, for example, a term that describes the social cohesion among neighbors combined with their willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good (Sampson et al:1997, p.918), it becomes clear that cohesion could be viewed as a remedy against social disorganization by means of reinstatement of decayed mechanisms of informal social control. Yet, as Hipp (2016) observes, “scholars must be much more cognizant that collective efficacy occurs from a process, and the dynamic nature of this process must be accounted for when studying it consequences” (p.44). To pathologically assume that social disorganization and levels of collective efficacy simply ‘belong’ to certain neighborhoods is to neglect the fact that there are processes that shape this (perceived) disorganization and/or cohesion in the first place. To that extent, Sampson & Morenoff (2004) critically point out that, “fundamental questions remain about what it is about these communities that might explain the link between structural features of neighborhood environments and rates of violent crime (p.145). To answer these questions, we must dig deeper to uncover the underlying processes and circumstances that might explain spatialized deviance. Linking concentrated poverty with social isolation (Warner & Pierce:1993 p.508, see also Wilson:1987), for instance, points toward the influence of structural factors on social organizational capacity. Norm violation, in this context, is the result rather of socio-economics than a pathology of a normless racialized ‘underclass’.

But, how harmful is the rhetoric of social disorganization theory really? Initially, social disorganization theory's basic premises are rather admissible, and its content remains clearly valuable for discussions on the space-crime nexus. Nevertheless, we should be wary of attempts to understand the ghetto or segregated areas of disadvantage as an 'accumulation of pathology' (Wacquant:1997, p.345). To contrast disorganization with organization is to emphasize the heterotopic features of certain urban spaces. This, in turn, confirms the function of heterotopic space as it designates 'other/outside' space and 'mainstream/inside' space. As such, this thesis seeks to move beyond a rudimentary conception of the ghetto as only a 'disorganized' social formation that can be analyzed wholly in terms of lack and deficiencies, but also, as Wacquant (1997) encourages, "incorporates and identifies the principles that underlie its internal order and govern its specific mode of functioning" (p.341).

### § 2.5.2 Broken windows

Where social disorganization relates social structures to deviance and norm-violation, broken windows focuses on the physical realm of space by underscoring visible signs of decay and disorder. In 1982, James Q. Wilson and George Kelling published an *Atlantic Monthly* article which laid out the theoretical frame of broken windows. Building on earlier experiments done by Philip Zimbardo in 1969, Wilson & Kelling (1982) argued that "disorder and crime are usually inextricably linked, in a kind of developmental sequence" (p.3), suggesting, more practically, that efforts to reduce disorder might ultimately translate into reductions in criminal activity as well (Harcourt & Ludwig:2006, p.280). Simply put, broken windows logic can be designated as the following sequence:

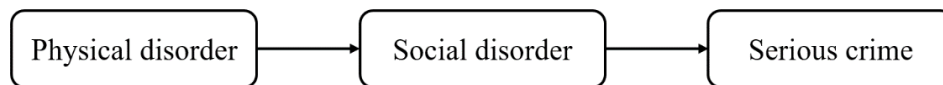


Figure 1. Broken windows logic.

Although rather straightforward, the logics of broken windows, and to a large part those of social disorganization, shape perceptions of space in accordance with a specific space-crime relationship. As Buffam (2015) writes, "like theories of environmental criminology and situational crime prevention, broken windows posits that a neighborhood's built environment communicates messages to its inhabitants about the area's vulnerability to crime" (p.45). The interpretation of these 'messages' by law enforcement and policy makers, however, has not only perceptively affected neighborhood desirability but also justified the implementation of repressive policy measures.

One such policy measures revolves around urban policing strategies and responses. Torres et al (2016) note that, "in efforts to reduce serious crime, proponents of the theory have developed a broken

windows policing strategy” (p.1). This peculiar type of policing, which embodies the application of ecological criminologies, has dictated community-police relations along the lines of environment-based intervention. To illustrate, Muniz (2012) points out that, “unlike community policing, broken windows policing implies a more passive role for residents who are viewed as being unable to battle disorder in their neighborhoods” (p.333). A more passive role for residents reiterates the ‘pathology’ sentiment that resonates throughout social disorganization and broken windows discourse. Moreover, ‘passive’ roles for residents constitutes more ‘active’ roles for law enforcement, a problematic that is emphasized by Muniz (2012) when she writes that, “the broken windows model granted officers broad discretion. Broken windows logic meant they could rely on a litany of charges of disorder to justify targeting the person or group at hand” (p.342). Unsurprisingly, strategies that stem from a superficial reading of urban space as primarily a container for signs of disorder has led to a skewed deployment of police resources targeted at neighborhoods and communities that are most impacted by the spatial distribution of poverty and racial inequality (Brown:2010, p.772).

Unsurprisingly, while broken windows strategies of policing and securitizing are widely employed, various scholars have questioned its validity. Harcourt & Ludwig’s (2006) comparative urban study, for instance, found no evidence that “broken windows policing reduces crime, nor evidence that changing the desired intermediate output of broken windows policing—disorder itself—is sufficient to affect changes in criminal behavior (p.316). Additionally, Torres et al (2016) critically observe that “in a post-Ferguson society, broken windows policing has reignited debates surrounding its efficacy and constitutionality” (p.19). Ultimately, critical scholarship has agreed that the emphasis on criminogenic features can only be valuable if the processes and conditions that give rise to such features are scrutinized as well.

If the adoption of theoretical frameworks warrants policy implementation, then the normative function of such language and discourse needs to be accentuated. The spatial logics of broken windows, as Herbert & Brown (2006) have submitted, are “dangerous because they neglect how space becomes normatively produced” (p.773). An articulation of space as (dis)organized intrinsically and inevitably sets both theoretical and practical norms and standards. In chapter 7, the critique of social disorganization and broken windows theory will be further developed, illustrating its significance to Chicago’s community-police relations.

## **§ 2.6 Conclusion**

outlined in this chapter is a review of literature that provides the basis for a multi-disciplinary theoretical framework. Before explicating into Foucault and ecological criminology, this chapter addressed the more basic conceptions of space and place. Following Agnew (2014) and Harvey’s (1972, 1996) discussions on space, place and time, this chapter advanced the epistemological notion that knowledge and meaning are

culturally and historically situated and socially constructed. To that extent, the theories of space and place that have been adopted in this framework abide by the ontological assumption that agency is largely contextual, and that locale, location and sense of place provide the theoretical setting in which the dynamics of social processes should be studied. I concur with Harvey (1972), when he writes that, “social science formulates concepts, categories, relationships, and methods, which are not independent of the existing social relationships which exist in society. Thus, the concepts used are themselves the product of the very phenomena they are designed to describe” (p.4).

With that in mind, this chapter framed the urban Chicago conceptions of locale, location and sense of place along the lines of Foucault’s heterotopia, which can be used to describe historical and contemporary urban spaces of difference. As a counter-site, racialized spaces of prolonged disinvestment have functioned to mirror mainstream society. Through its divergence from ‘mainstream’ society, as measured by putative ‘middle-class’ standards (Wacquant:1997, p.345), ‘otherness’ and ‘positionality’ are structurally maintained and (re)produced. The spatial and temporal significance of heterotopic space lies mostly in its ability to designate particular processes and patterns that have belonged to racialized areas of disadvantage into a larger framework of urban theory and discourse. Consequently, this thesis will use heterotopic theory to analyze the functionality of urban space in relation to its broader environment.

Lastly, this chapter developed a critique of two mainstream criminologies that have advanced certain ecological presumptions about deviant behavior. Developed by the Chicago school of Sociology, ecological criminal theory has done much to relate space and crime. However, it is important to keep asking critical questions when adopting such theory into research models, or, more importantly, policy measures. A most important consideration revolves around the awareness of the normative function of discourse by appreciation and application of emic knowledge. If we are to accept that certain social and physical features of communities and neighborhoods contribute to levels of crime, deviance, and violence, then we are obliged to dig deeper to uncover the processes that produced these criminogenic circumstances. In that sense, Herbert & Brown (2006) note that, “readings of space and territorial efforts to control it are not inevitable; they do not spring from some primordial base. Rather, they are imminently social creations, and thus are conditioned by an array of social dynamics” (p.764). Therefore, this thesis will partially be concerned with semantics by embedding new meaning in the above-mentioned theories. Essentially, the emphasis on how, where and when structural processes and conditions have, or still are, influencing the spaces of disadvantage in city of Chicago allows for a re-reading of urban space, thereby providing opportunity for the development of more productive policing strategies.

## **Chapter 3 - Methods**

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### **§ 3.1 Introduction**

For a very long time, the city of Chicago has been a popular site for conducting geographical research. Its diverse population and unique socio-historical origins have generated plenty of (mostly) quantitative research that focuses on statistics, demographics, and urban trends. At the moment, however, I find that there is a strong need for research designs that incorporate empirical data with a stronger and more central voice of subjects. Such methodological approaches should be concerned with personal accounts and emic knowledge, while still being cognizant of the observer's own influence on the data collection and analysis. In a somewhat ethnographic fashion, this thesis seeks to transfer the experiences of subjects and their oral histories into a broader discussion on urban life and urban violence. To really capture the underlying processes of urban Chicago, this chapter justifies the employment of three main methodological approaches.

First, as a work of critical scholarship, this research project engages in critical discourse analysis. Consistent with approaches of Foucault and Derrida, articulations of discourse, both in its popular and academic sense, will be deconstructed and evaluated to highlight problematic readings and productions of meaning and knowledge. Second, this chapter describes the use of semi- and unstructured interviews which were held in Chicago between October and November of 2017. Thirdly, the application of participatory observation will be explained and incorporated into the broader research design. Additionally, this chapter describes how raw data was analyzed and coded in such a way that frequent themes became apparent. Here, the design of an authentic coding scheme is explained.

### **§ 3.2 Critical discourse analysis**

Consistent with a constructivist and post-structuralist tradition, I find that the meaning of urban space in Chicago is often articulated, communicated, and replicated through discourse. Situated in language, but also semiotic codes and signs, is the construction of meaning and knowledge with the power to shape perceptions of space and place in abstract but also in rather real ways. Accordingly, I agree with Clifford et al (2016), who suggest that we view language as a form of, "social practice that produces both discursive and material effects", and maintain that discourses have, "tangible, 'real-world' impacts" (p.659). A reflexive and critical discourse analysis must be anthropologically sensitive (Buscholtz:2001, p.181), and emphasize social problems and the role that discourse plays in the (re)production of power relations and domination (van Dijk:2001, p.252). Clearly, critical geographical scholarship must be aware of that fact that the systems of language and signs, which also emerge from a terminology, have the ability to shape our world. Therefore, when discourse is translated into policy, we must be especially critical of its foundations.

If we take a closer look at Bucholtz' (2001) proposition that our discourse analysis must be "cognizant of power, context, history and agency" (p.181), we can quickly identify instances in which such an approach becomes particularly relevant for studying Chicago's urban climate. Through critical discourse and literature analysis, for example, we can recognize how the articulation of certain concepts mediates meaning within the broader context of Chicago's social order. Wacquant (2008) for instance, reveals how the ghetto is, "a product of a novel political articulation of racial cleavage, class inequality and urban space in both dominant discourse and objective reality" (p.47). Responses to urban violence, whether academic or practical, are undoubtedly rooted in reference and language, and the spilling over of constructed meaning into objective reality has given rise to a set of problematic responses which have been discursively justified. If discourse is about the production of knowledge through language (Hall:2001, p.44), then a critical discourse analysis must examine the validity of that knowledge production. Therefore, this research project analyzes both academic and popular language related to urban Chicago, in order to do two things.

First, by contextualizing crime as a product of power-laden practices and structural conditions, this thesis shifts the voice responsible for the production of meaning and knowledge from those on the outside looking in to those on the inside looking out. The post-structuralist approach of deconstruction and Foucauldian discourse analysis, for example, challenge meaning without contextuality. Developed by Jacques Derrida (1967, 1978), deconstruction can serve to maintain an awareness of the constructedness of representations and knowledge. As part of the broader methodology of critical discourse analysis, deconstruction relies on proper contextualization by breaking through binary representations of social spaces, an endeavor that appears consistently throughout this research. Accordingly, rather than focusing on statistical analysis, which could never speak as powerfully as personified empirics, this research relies on subjects' voices to deconstructs dominant representations of space and place.

Similarly, Foucauldian discourse analysis is conscious of societal power relations expressed through language and practice. Understanding discourse in terms of power confirms the notion that heterotopic spaces are constituted by the discourse that shapes them. According to Foucault (1980) (see also Hall:2001), there is no meaning without discourse, and discourses have the power to, "create their own 'regimes of truth' – the acceptable formulation of problems and solutions to those problems" (Foucault:1980 in Mayhew:2015, p.136). The discursive function of heterotopias is thus a sustenance of power-relations based on a discourse (a 'regime of truth'), of 'other' and 'dominant'. Therefore, as a way to effectively mediate subject's experience into language and text, the employment of a qualitative research becomes especially important in critically analyzing popular and academic discourse.

Second, critical discourse analysis will be used to critique the implementation of those ineffective policing strategies that are based on superficial readings of urban spatialities. Specifically, in chapter 7, the discourses of social disorganization and broken windows theory will be scrutinized for constructing

knowledge and meaning based on an articulation of space as an unconditional container of social-ills. Alternatively, this thesis follows Jefferson's (2016) reasoning in calling for a "rereading of inner-city bodies and spaces that would invite deeper conversation about links between structural inequality and crime, which would be conducive to exploring non-punitive, post-broken windows approaches to crime reduction" (p.1288). The methodology of analyzing textual, lingual, and semiotic discourse, then, critiques those policy measures that are based on ostensible spatialities.

### **§ 3.3 Interviews & participatory observation**

While critical discourse analysis is particularly useful in discussing primary literature, empirical data must be gathered as well. Hence, between October 16th and December 1st, 2017, I ventured to the city of Chicago to do hands-on socio-geographical research on urban violence. Whilst there, I conducted a series of semi- to unstructured interviews with a range of people, all of whom have a relationship with space, race or violence in the city. The interviews qualify as semi- to unstructured because, because while some questions recurred, most questions were hardly standardized and many of the interviews remained largely non-directive. The methodological approach of semi- and unstructured interviews is appropriate because they are designed to elicit the interviewee's ideas and opinions on the topic of interest, as opposed to leading the interviewee toward preconceived choices (Zorn:2008, n.p). This is important because, as mentioned above, a large part of this thesis is concerned with knowledge and meaning. If the interviews would be fully structured, meaning could be corrupted or imposed coherent with my own preconceptions. Adding to that, the conversational style of interviews allowed for more personalized answers, thereby getting at the root of lived experience rather than deducing meaning from standardized survey answers. Even though, I did prepare a template questionnaire form (appendix 1.) to guide interviews with possible questions, most interviews deviated quickly from the questionnaire and turned into conversational style communication.

In order to find appropriate interview subjects I combined various sampling methods. First, I engaged in judgment sampling. Based on my research objective and questions, I selected and contacted several people whose perspectives would be valuable to my research. Second, I relied on snowball and opportunity sampling, which is making use of opportunities as they arise (Harrell:2009, p.32). The specific method of opportunity sampling proved effective as it allowed for a diverse sampling group. All together, these sampling methods resulted in the following subjects (Table 1).

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Topic/Focus</b>
<b><u>Wim Bernasco</u></b>	NSCR	Researcher	Spatial analysis of crime
<b><u>Richard Block</u></b>	Loyola University	Professor (sociology/criminology)	Crime and community, space and place
-----	Chicago State investigation /Chicago Police Department	Investigator / Former police officer	Policing high threat crime districts
<b><u>Len Decker &amp; Valerie Bell</u></b>	Loras College	Professors (criminal justice)	Juvenile delinquency & research models
<b><u>Colleen Daley</u></b>	Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence	Executive director	Gun violence
<b><u>Patrick Langan</u></b>	Oakstreet Health	Recruitment manager	Geography of health
<b><u>Kathleen Panozzo</u></b>	6 <sup>th</sup> District, Circuit Court	Municipal department Judge	Chicago courts/judiciary
-----	Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA)	Senior Litigation Counsel	Police accountability
<b><u>Victoria Prewitt</u></b>	City of Chicago	Staff assistant	Community organizing / Austin community
<b><u>Derek Snitker</u></b>	Baker College Prep	Spanish Teacher	Education / opportunity
<b><u>Kendra Freeman</u></b>	Metropolitan Planning	Project manager	Cost of segregation
<b><u>Fr. John Foley</u></b>	Cristo Rey Network	Chair Emeritus and Chief Mission Officer	Education / religion
<b><u>Pamela Bosley &amp; Lamar Johnson</u></b>	Saint Sabina Church	Violence prevention manager & Youth organizer	Victim voices / youth counseling
<b><u>Esther Franco-Payne</u></b>	Cabrini Green Legal Aid	Executive Director	Criminal justice advocacy

*Table 1. Overview of interview subjects.*

The interviews were held, with the exception of a few, at the respective workplaces of the subjects. This way, the environment of the interview contextualized its content, adding semiotic substance to the verbal interaction. While almost all subjects agreed to a recorded interview, some objected due to the nature and sensitivity of their work.

Next to the conducted formal and informal interviews, this thesis includes elements of a moderate participatory observation in its methodological framework and data collection strategies. Observation, as Clark & Holland (2009) point out, “has become a staple method in the social sciences (Angrosino:2005, Wallace:2005), used frequently in research exploring the actions of individuals in public spaces (e.g. Southwell:2007)” (p.348). Particularly relevant for the evaluation of public space are the observations made by the researcher in the field. Comparatively, to ‘experience’ and ‘observe’ changes in neighborhoods while traveling through them can fill the ‘unspoken’ gaps of verbal methods. Furthermore, observation methods enable researchers to understand and document the context within which activities and events occur (Clark & Holland:2009, p.348), a benefit that proves especially important when attempting to contextualize urban

violence. Ultimately, by emerging myself into Chicago's locale and location, by going into stores, churches, restaurants etc., I was able to uncover taken-for-granted aspects of the everyday and holding them up for scrutiny and analysis (Clifford et al:2016, p.179).

The level of participation in the more disadvantaged neighborhoods of Chicago remained moderate in the sense that I mostly maintained the role of a researcher. However, spending time in Chicago in general contributed to a 'lived experience' and by my very presence I was participating as a member of the public (see Clifford et al:2016, p.172). Participation, thus, exceeds a limited textual or archival analysis by inclusion of 'experience' into empirical data. Furthermore, active observation provided holistic, authentic and diverse data, which proved highly valuable. The collection of leaflets and the taking of photographs, for instance, added a complimentary visual element by truly 'capturing' the phenomena that are being studied.

### **§ 3.4 Location / locale / sense of place**

As with any qualitative geographical research project, conceptions of place are important. In returning to Agnew's three dimensions of place; locale, location and sense of place (Agnew 2003, 2011), this research maintains a comprehensive approach to place in Chicago. In order to properly research 'locale', one must truly get out into the field. As a setting for interaction and day-to-day life, locale substantiates location, and, to a certain extent, situates sense of place. Since this thesis is looking for knowledge and meaning, the interaction that takes place 'somewhere' tells us things about that 'somewhere/location'. Interaction in a liquor store in Austin or Englewood, for instance, contains a 'where' of social interaction that goes far beyond the strict address/location of the setting. Therefore, participatory observation methodologically connects a researcher with locale/setting in a particular geographical space. Location, the site in space, related to other spaces, where an activity or object is located (Agnew:2001, p.318), needs some clarification. To methodologically approach the city of Chicago as a whole would be unfeasible. Initially, some demarcation was necessary to eventually infer city wide processes.

With that in mind, the research of this thesis was not specifically limited to a strictly bounded area. Instead, I let subjects and locals decide which 'locations' would be worthy of studying. To find out how locals viewed the geography of disadvantaged and dangerous spaces, I asked several of them to demarcate 'those' areas on a map, as presented in figure 2. Consequently, figure 3. shows that most of the participant observation happened on the West and South Sides of Chicago. To get to these 'locations', or from one location to another, I either walked or used public transportation from Bucktown, where I resided during this period. Chicago's busses and rapid-transit system, nicknamed the 'L', were not only a practical way to move around the city but also served as a 'locale', a setting for particularly interesting social interaction. Not only is the demarcation of invested and disinvestment Chicago largely mediated by its public

transportation system, which divides urban Chicago along lines of racial and economic spatialities, but it also emphasizes the theoretical notion of Chicago as two cities; one thriving and one withered.

Finally, sense of place is developed through a combination of all three methodological approaches; critical discourse analysis,

interviews, and participatory observation. Studying attachment between people and place (Agnew:2003, p.606), really puts the ‘human’ in human geography. While space, in its broadest terms, is important for this thesis, it is the human/social element that really gets at the core of the research questions posed. Especially interviews and oral histories can descriptively substantiate place(s). Accordingly, although hard to quantify, sense of place is more easily presented by a qualitative approach. By touching base on concepts such as community and regional identity, the methodological approaches of discourse analysis, interviews and participatory observation can uncover sense of place as rooted in a particular narrative. Ultimately, how sense of place changes, depending on location and locale, tells us much about how social interaction and social relationships are situated within Chicago’s social order.



Figure 2. Demarcation of disadvantaged and/or 'dangerous' areas.

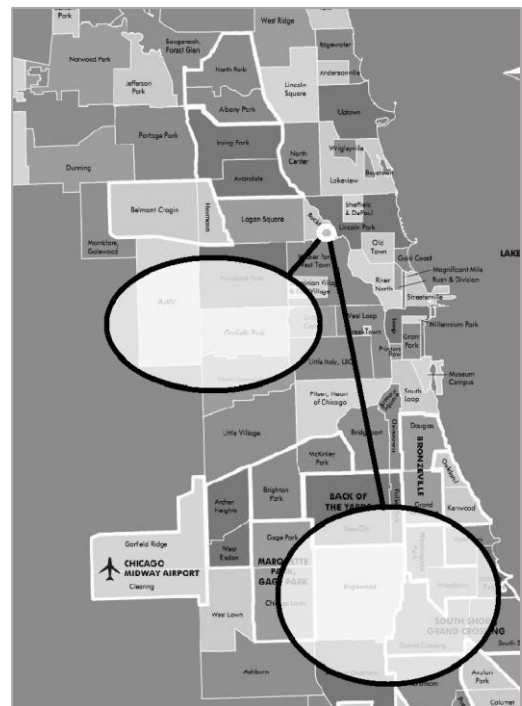


Figure 3. Fieldwork locations.

### § 3.5 Data analysis & coding

Upon conducting and transcribing the interviews, the raw data was analyzed and coded. Coding, in qualitative research designs, has the goal to ‘fracture’ the data and rearrange them into categories that facilitate comparison between things in the same category and that aid the development of theoretical concepts (Maxwell:2012, p.96). Moreover, coding is useful in identifying trends emerging from text

materials (Clifford et al:2016, p.649). Theme-building is essential in qualitative methodology because it translates data and information into common and recurring topics that are theoretically and practically useful for structuring the writing. In other words, coding allows us to go from idiographic themes to nomothetic themes that are frequent to find. Vogt (2005) defines the latter (nomothetic) as research that “attempts to establish general, universal, abstract principles or laws” (p. 207), which, in the context of this research project means attempting to situate underlying causes of urban violence.

Even though qualitative data can be analyzed and coded by software such as Atlas.ti or Transana, I felt that an authentic textual analysis would be a better served by an original coding scheme. This tailor-made method for filtering meaning out of the raw data proved appropriate because; first, a lot of meaning can be found in context and interpersonal interaction and second; because subjects’ use of language varied heavily (slang, intonation, dialect), provoking the possibility of meaning being ‘lost in translation’. Hence, as a method of categorization, I employed an original coding scheme that excavated meaningful themes from the data. Consequently, by organizing the data into such broader themes, I was able to identify the most important and frequent ecological and social topics related to my particular interest in space and crime.

After the inductive analysis of the raw data, which comprised of highlighting frequent themes, a coding scheme and table were developed. The table (appendix 2.) designates ‘codes’ by reference of subject, page number and lines. The highlighted idiographic themes in the raw data were transferred into nomothetic themes in the coded table. These themes can be recognized in the table by their frequency amongst multiple subjects and frequency within single subject transcripts. Clustered together, the nomothetic themes provided a thematic foundation for the structuring and development of both theoretical and empirical chapters.

### **§ 3.5 Conclusion**

In its description of a qualitative methodology, this chapter emphasized the appropriateness of critical discourse analysis, interviews and participatory observation. As a critical research project, the use of critical discourse analysis is necessary to deconstruct text, language and semiotics in order to identify power-laden conceptions and relationships. Interviews, on the other hand, prove methodologically appropriate because they capture direct experience and memory. In that regard, the sample of subjects that contributed to this thesis displays a range of diverse demographics and characteristics, tied together by their relationship to the city of Chicago and its violence. Participatory observation not only helped with the contextualization of interaction but also with the visualization of abstract concepts. In that regard, observation also facilitated data analysis because it situated themes and topics within a framework of ‘experience’.

Data analysis is a crucial step in any research project. Yet, as qualitative researchers, we must be reflexive and aware of our own influence and preconceived notions when trying to make sense of our data.

Even though it is impossible to maintain complete objectivity, we must strive to approach our subjects, environments, and data as impartial and unbiased as we can. Therefore, it is also important to be aware of how aspects of our own identities are significant or might change as we ‘travel (spatially or culturally) to different contexts (Clifford et al:2016, p.99). After all, my position as an able-bodied white male will undoubtedly have had an effect on my environment and subject responses. Moreover, as Clifford et al (2016) note, “our research can never escape from the power relations shaping the situations which we research. Sensitive to the difference our presence makes in the research and how the research itself can shape social relations” (p.98). We need to be careful when trying to extrapolate meaning and findings to similar or dissimilar research contexts. The experience of one subject might appear consistent with that of another, but in the end will never be fully so. Therefore, generalizing from raw interview and observation data is one of the most critical steps of a research project, and this step can only be nuanced by careful scrutiny, introspection and conscientiousness.

## **Chapter 4 – Historical Context: Early Processes of Ghettoization**

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### **§ 4.1 Introduction**

The historicizing of ghetto formation in the United States remains a necessary facet of a comprehensive discussion on racialized urbanization. After all, the manifestation of the black ghetto is, first and foremost, a historical process. Consequently, scholars examining the relationship between race, racism, and urban development have found the origins of racial residential segregation in US cities to be of central concern (Gotham:2000, p.616). Wacquant (2008), for one, maintains that we must, “historicize the state and function of the ghetto in US metropolis and reach beyond its physical perimeter to elucidate its fate after the climax of the Civil Rights movement” (p.46). Unremitting segregation, as this chapter will show, appears to be a protracted feature of a discriminative American society that has upheld a set of geographical power relations that are principally determined by an ethno-racial hierarchy of neighborhood stratification. At its core, segregation is simultaneously a process of, and a result of, structural racism, which is embodied by a type of discrimination that remains the ‘structural linchpin’ of urban poverty, residential segregation and metropolitan development (Gotham:2000, p.617).

To elucidate the development of the racialized ghetto, this chapter draws on seminal historical scholarship. Although there is consensus that certain spatial and temporal factors attributed to the development of racialized residential urban development in the United States, this scholarship remains somewhat divided in its stance on the exact origins of the American ghetto. Within that division, this chapter positions itself in concurrence with Philpott (1978) and, more recently, Logan et al (2015), who contend that ghetto formation started even as early as 1880/1890. Moreover, in reference to Hirsch’s (1998) useful separation of the ‘first’ and the ‘second’ ghetto in Chicago, this chapter describes the emanation of both. Lastly, this chapter contextualizes racialized urban developments in accordance with Massey & Denton’s (1993) claim that, “the black ghetto was constructed by institutionalized discrimination in the real estate and banking industries, supported by widespread acts of private prejudice and discrimination (p.7). Here, an analysis of national and local housing policy shows that struggles over living space between whites and African Americans and the (re)production of structural disadvantage were exacerbated by faulty policy design.

### **§ 4.2 United States ghetto formations**

Was there ever really a black ghetto in the United States before the first world war? The answer to this question concerns more so a matter of semantics than statistical demographics because what we mean by ‘ghetto’ remains somewhat a definitional ambiguity. Nevertheless, an attempt at a common definition is

put forward by Massey & Denton (1993) as they write that, “a ghetto is a set of neighborhoods that are exclusively inhabited by members of one group, within which virtually all members of that group live” (p.19). Along the lines of this definition, many scholars have pinpointed the emergence of racialized ghettos to the beginning of the twentieth-century, when black enclaves in northern cities reached sizeable numbers. However, a more critical look at historical urban settlement patterns shows, at least, that certain distinctive features of the black ghetto could already be identified at the end of the nineteenth-century.

#### **§ 4.2.1 Emergent ghettos: 1880-1910**

The end of slavery in the United States brought complicated the existing American dichotomies of black and white, rural and urban, and north and south. The sudden addition of freed African Americans to the American populace gave rise to a demographic conundrum that uncomfortably revisited conventional social, power, and mostly race relations. In 1870, 80% of African Americans still lived in the rural south, where they were exploited by a sharecropping system created by to replace slavery. A hundred years later, by 1970, 80% of African Americans lived in urban areas, and nearly half were located outside the American south (Massey & Denton:1993, p.18). Ultimately, as Morrill (1972) notes, “the ghettos developed as blacks left the farm and plantation for the hope of better opportunities in the cities” (p.30). This process, which at its onset was fairly gradual, only became more troublesome as the magnitude of the geographical relocation of African Americans expanded.

Early settlement of small numbers of African Americans into northern cities such as Chicago, Detroit, and Cleveland, or even larger numbers into Baltimore, Washington D.C. and Philadelphia, did not immediately result in an urge for the physical separation of the races. African Americans, which in most some northern cities only comprised about 1 percentage of urban populations, moved into white neighborhoods. Due the initial small size of incoming African American migrants, these neighborhoods could not, and for several years to come, would not, be considered predominantly African American. With that in mind, many scholars who that follow the more common definition of the ghetto as an (almost) completely segregated neighborhood, have regarded the lack of size of the urban African American population at the end of the nineteenth-century as a sign that ghettoization would not start until the onset of the Great Migration.

More constructively, however, is Logan et al’s (2015) argument that the ghettos of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century are, “ghettos in formation, or emergent ghettos” (p.1056). In making this claim, Logan et al (2015) use census geocoded microdata to show that, “black-white segregation in major northern cities was substantial even in 1880 when taking into account its actual spatial scale at that time” (p.1056). Furthermore, they find that, “having higher class standing was no more associated with living outside of identifiable black neighborhoods in 1880 than in 1940” (p.1057). With

that in mind, it is safe to say that the core processes of residential segregation had already taken root. Moreover, Morrill (1972) points out that, “some [blacks] did live from the very beginning in small colonies and in incredibly poor conditions in the growing slums close to the city center, often along the main industrial railways or near the wharves” (p.30). Therefore, it is the ostensible statistical insignificance of the number of African Americans moving into northern cities before the Great Migration that obfuscates the fact that processes of segregation were already at play in urban America at the end of the nineteenth-century. Evidently, by changing units of measurements from city-wards to enumeration districts and by effectively redefining criteria standards, Logan et al (2015) are able to substantiate Philpott’s (1987) claim that ghetto formation can be traced to an earlier period [1880] than is generally agreed upon by most scholars [Great Migration/ post-world war I]. Such evidence is important because it correctly historicizes the underlying manifestations of geographically situated race relations, which, although present in discussions on later US urban development, are also pivotal for understanding the genesis of the black ghetto.

#### **§ 4.2.2 The Great Migration**

After 1900, the northward migration of African Americans quickened (Morrill:1972, p.31) and with this growing migration came a deepening of residential racial divide. A most likely hypothesis for the worsening of black-white segregation, which almost always was accompanied by unabated economic and social discrimination, is racial threat. To illustrate, Blalock (1956) links the percentage of a minority or its rate of increase with, “prejudice, conflict, discrimination” (p.588, See also Dollar:2014), of which residential segregation is but one ensuing ramification. Similarly, Philpot (1987) explains that, “white people in the north feared that the negroes, who were their equals in principle, would attempt to make themselves social equals in fact” (p.119). Subsequently, containment through geographical residential isolation became the vehicle within which the black ghetto grew. White fear, embodied by a perpetuated prejudice against African Americans in the early twentieth-century, expanded the social ‘need’ for segregation, resulting in restrictions on African American living-space.

Accordingly, we can trace the Great Migration, the considerable influx of African Americans moving from the rural south to the urban north, as the key feature of the scholarship engaged with the “first ghettos” (Kutzman:1973, see also Kusmer:1978). Primarily engaged with race relations, this scholarship highlights those areas of struggle and conflict that gave rise to an urban landscape in which minority populations would be physically and socially isolated. As mentioned above, the somewhat stable, yet largely oppressive, pre-Great Migration race relations would give way for a period of hyper segregation and continued aggressive ghettoization.

As many as 600,000 rural Blacks moved to the city between 1900-1920 and during World War I ghettos grew rapidly in the industrial cities of the North Central states, as well as in the traditional centers of Chicago, St. Louis and Cincinnati (Morrill:1972, p.31). In the years to come, this immigration would expand exponentially and be followed by varied social responses and residential development patterns in the different northern cities. Regarding those varied responses, Kusmer (1978) writes that, “racial lines hardened most rapidly in such cities as Indianapolis and Chicago, where white hostility frequently led to violent clashes between the races” (p.55). Nevertheless, across the board, there were still some consistencies in American ghetto formation. For one, the ghetto almost always originated in the mixed residential-industrial-wholesale slums on the ‘wrong side of the tracks’ (Morrill:1972, p.32), making the ghetto not only a location, but also a locale that strongly depends on meaning and sense of place. In that sense, the promulgation of the segregationist ideology that would signify much of the century’s race relations relied heavily on a negative imagination of the black ghetto. The racialization of urban space by linking racial and culturally specific behavior to certain spaces and places (locations/locales) in the city, should be understood, as Gotham (2000) discerns, as a “cultivation and development of the racial ideology” (p.617).

About 1.5 million African Americans migrated from the south to the north and west each decade between 1940 and 1970, which partially due to the suburbanization of whites (white flight), coincided with a growing black ghetto, coined by urban historians such as Hirsch (1983) as the ‘second ghetto’. This development, which according to Mohl (1997) dramatically altered the, “demographic character of the modern American city” (p.215), designated urban spaces and places based on racialized social stratification. Hence, as more African Americans moved into the northern cities, distinct African American settlement areas could be identified. Within these areas, geographical location carried meaning in regard to race, class and social capital. The small African American middle class, for instance, would migrate toward the edge of the black ghetto, but rarely beyond it. This dynamic process led to what Massey and Denton (1993) explain to be a, “distinct class gradient in the ghetto, with the poorest families being concentrated toward the center and the middle and upper classes progressively increasing their share of the population as one moved from the core toward the periphery” (p. 39). Interestingly, where the intersection of race with class has, in certain historical cases, allowed for upward mobility, in the peculiar case of the black ghetto this was rarely ever so.

African Americans, along with progressive whites, struggled to transform the structures that subjugated African Americans throughout the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s (Anderson:2012, p.10). Militancy and violent revolt coming from the ghetto and happening within the ghetto seemed to confirm the ‘pathologies’ of the black ghetto, a notion that naively structured much of the social sciences at this time. Apparently, the question of what was ‘wrong’ with ghetto inhabitants was neither one that needed self-reflection, nor one that would look at solutions for its formulated problem. Rather, the ghetto became, even

stronger than it was, a container for ‘otherness’, (re)produced concurrently by racialized public discourse, misinformation, scholarship and urban policy.

Inevitably, ghettos persisted to be an urban problematic for the remainder of the twentieth-century. Even though various, mostly symbolic, civil rights victories were celebrated in the 1960s and 1970s, continued physical and social isolation remained the reality of most African Americans urbanites. In that regard, Blumer (1952) reminds us that tenacious race prejudice has so much been entrenched in America’s prevailing social order that, “its ramifications tend to become chronic and impermeable to change” (p.7). Accordingly, Chicago proves to be an excellent example of a location where the chronic ramifications of tenacious race prejudice have been particularly detrimental.

### **§ 4.3 Chicago’s ghetto origins**

Historical patterns of ghettoization in Chicago have led many urban theorists to refer to Chicago’s past as ‘the model of ghetto development’ (Kusmer:1987, p.708). Indeed, distinct settlement patterns, followed by a long period of racialized public housing birthed what today can only be described as a city tainted by hyper segregation. Although emergent ghettos in Chicago can be identified before World War I, Hirsch (1983) refers to a ‘first’ ghetto of the World War I era and a ‘second’ ghetto of the post-World War II period. Over time, these particular patterns of African American settlement became distinctive of inner-city Chicago.

In order to establish a historical foundation for a broader discussion on the ramifications of segregation later in this thesis, this section describes the origins of the first and second ghettos in Chicago. Compared to other cities in the United States, Chicago is a more racially segregated city with a long history of high-rise public housing (Papachristos et al:2015, p.424). In addition, comparatively, Chicago saw rather drastic increases in its African American population over time. Hirsch (1983) notes, for instance, that, “ten times as many blacks lived in Chicago in 1966 as in 1920. Representing but 4% of the city’s black population in the latter year, blacks accounted for nearly 30% of all Chicagoans by the mid-1960s” (p.2). All in all, such statistics have warranted plenty of academic inquiry into Chicago’s ghetto formations, yet little of this information is incorporated into contemporary policy design.

#### **§ 4.3.1 Chicago’s first ghetto**

Let us start with the ‘first’ ghetto. At the end of the 19th century, African Americans in Chicago were quickly circumscribed to the South Side of the city, a region that would become known as the city’s Black Belt (Buffam: 2015, p.44). Although the area was less than 10% black, this section of the city held over 70% of Chicago’s small black population in 1880. Adding to that; a high degree of racial isolation evident at a fine spatial scale, the entrapment of middle class blacks within the black zone, and a degree of class

separation within the black zone, have led Logan et al (2015) to conclude that, “there was an emergent ghetto in Chicago in 1880” (p.1086). Segregation continued to soar as the years went on and more and more African Americans moved into the inner-city. It was at this time that the settlement of African Americans showed no real signs of geographical dispersion, to which Philpott (1978) observes that, “the residential confinement of blacks [in Chicago] was nearly complete at the turn of the century” (p.121). Indeed, the extraordinary degree of racial residential segregation through geographical confinement had turned Chicago’s South side, a notorious region to date, into a ‘first’ ghetto of significant proportions.

Following this early migration of last part of the nineteenth-century and the first years of the twentieth was the Great Migration, a period in which the black population of Chicago increased more than five times from 44,000 in 1910 to 234,000 in 1930 (Gotham:2000, p.620). As the Black Belt continued to serve as an institution of ethno-racial exclusion (Wacquant:2008, p.51), it also became clear that excessive segregation would coincide with social and economic problems feeding into a growing inequality between Chicago’s African American and white population. Consequently, the period of growing tensions and unstable race relations escalated into the race riots of 1919, where physical violence, mobbing, and murder made local and national headlines. The social aftermath? A reinforcement of African American and white residential separation and an antagonization of ethnic difference through the strengthening of a divisionist narrative (see Kirst:2012 & Philpott:1987).

Hostility would persist and occasionally unfold in further physical conflict. At the same time, white upward mobility, made possible by the pace of economic expansion, brought about an almost surprising dispersal of most (European) white ethnic groups (Morrill:1972, p.31). Ultimately, Chicago’s first ghetto, which at the dawn of the twentieth-century in Chicago had also been home to the various European immigrant groups, proved much less of an exclusionary enclave for those people whose physical features were more WASP-like, than those whose were not. To illustrate, statistics of the 1930s and 1940s show an overwhelming consolidation of ‘black urban space’ and slight growth in Chicago’s black ghetto, which meant only little dispersion of African Americans throughout new (white) territory. By 1940, over three-quarters of African Americans lived in areas that were more than 90% black and almost half lived in areas that were more than 98% black (Hirsch:1983, p.4). Similarly, Massey (2001) reports, regarding Chicago’s dramatic transformation, that the, “the isolation index went from 10 in 1900 to 70 in 1930 (meaning that most African Americans lived in neighborhoods that were 70% Black)” (p.398). Even though the Great Depression significantly slowed down the pace of northward migration and subsequent growth of Chicago’s Black Belt, the ‘second ghetto’, denoted by both familiar and novel features of ghettoization, would soon appear.

### § 4.3.2 Chicago's second ghetto

After World War II, Chicago saw an exacerbation of ghettoization processes through a more active governmental influence on economics and housing circumstances. Buffam (2015) notes that, “as middle-class residents fled the South Side for safer black suburban neighborhoods, the remaining population of the Black Belt faced inflated rates of unemployment” (p.44). Where the first ghetto originated from a sentimental need for racial hierarchy and social distance, the second ghetto also fed into classic class conflict by deepening socio-economic cleavages. In that regard, Anderson (2012) points out that, “the inner-city ghetto became increasingly impoverished and socially isolated, most often because of structural changes in the economy that limited the availability of high-wage, low-skilled industrial jobs” (p.13).

Indeed, the exodus of whites to the suburbs, but also that of middle-class African Americans to the periphery of the ghetto, resulted in a more concentrated ghetto which, besides its racial character, also had to deal with concentrated poverty. Impoverished African Americans Chicagoans were, as Sugrue (2003) puts it, “left behind in the “vertical ghettos” of the city’s infamous Robert Taylor and State Street Homes or in the deteriorating neighborhoods of the city’s South and West Sides” (p.282). The vertical ghetto, also known as ‘the projects’, was an even more densely concentrated manifestation of hyper segregation. It wasn’t long before ‘the projects’, as a location and locale for a distinct community culture, received public attention. Throughout the mid- and later part of the twentieth-century, it was these housing structures that become synonymous for the perceived pathologies of the underclass. As Venkatesh (2009) describes, in his meticulous work, *American Project: the Rise and Fall of a Modern Ghetto*, “the public heard of the challenges to project living” (p.43), a way of life that to the outsider would be merely an exotic imagination of the hardship of living in high-rise subsidized housing.

Moreover, the condensation of impoverished African Americans into crowded urban spaces advanced the two-sided barrier of exclusionary urban space. The insiders, those who ‘belonged’ in the ghetto, were there to stay, while those on the outside would not be required to care for who was within. Essentially, the urban borders that were erected as early as the end of the nineteenth-century, acted as a vestige of a racialized social order that proved much more impermeable than one could imagine.

Even though national attention and empathy for the struggle of African Americans was vivid during the civil rights movement, racialized urban spaces of disadvantage proved much less a site for constructive political resistance than for political violence. Class struggle within the African American community led to a redrawing of the urban color line along a class fracture (Wacquant:2008, p.59), leaving the historic core of Chicago’s Black Belt within the debris of its retained poverty. Together with the uncurbed pushing of African Americans into highly concentrated public housing, this poverty became the face of the black ghetto in America’s most segregated city. While high-rise public housing is no longer an archetypal feature of Chicago’s landscape, heavily segregated neighborhoods such as, Austin, Lawndale, and Englewood

remain strongly characterized by historical ghetto-like features of disadvantaged and difference. These locations, unsurprisingly, have also become sites for chronic and excessive crime and violence.

#### **§ 4.4 Housing policy**

The existence of the black ghetto has not only been perpetuated by racist sentiment but also by the very failure of seemingly benevolent urban policy. The social construction of urban space in the twentieth-century, which in most of urban America carried strong racial connotations, was molded by several significant policy developments. This section outlines some of these developments and argues that, at times, such policy contributed directly to a (re)production of exclusionary urban spaces. To substantiate this claim, this section underlines the formulation of what Gotham (2000) calls an, “exclusionary real estate ideology” (p.621), which associated the presence of African Americans with declining property value and neighborhood instability. Lastly, this section describes how public housing and urban renewal policy has failed to grasp the intersectionality of race and class and thereby confines poor African Americans to disadvantaged location of the inner-city.

##### **§ 4.4.1 National housing policy**

A highly racialized and pervasive urban landscape signified the American city throughout the twentieth-century. This pervasive urban landscape, Frug (1996) argues, “is not simply the result of individual choices about where to live or to create a business, but it is the product of a multitude of governmental policies” (p.1048). As early as the beginning of the twentieth-century, the availability of affordable housing proved to be an impetus to racial conflict and class struggle. At the onset of the century, many urban centers applied racial zoning ordinances as the chief tool to create and enforce residential segregation (Gotham:2000, p.623). In response to the Great Migration and the 1917 US Supreme court ruling in *Buchanan v. Warley*, declaring racial zoning ordinances unconstitutional, however, racially restrictive covenants emerged. Through these covenants, mostly African Americans were legally barred from owning homes or residing in many white neighborhoods in US urban areas, which, as Rose (2016) explains, “substantially diminished the opportunity to break out of overcrowded and overpriced ghetto area” (p.950).

Alongside the discriminative mechanisms of racially restrictive covenants, scholarly research has emphasized the more active role government has played in influencing residential segregation in the post-war era. Roosevelt’s New Deal housing policy innovations, for instance, put in place new institutions, such as the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation (HOLC), in order to counter residential instability during the Great Depression. Gotham (2000), however, points to, “the segregative effect of the Federal Housing Administration’s (FHA) homebuilding and homeownership subsidies that drew whites out of central cities, denied mortgages to blacks and channeled capital into

suburban housing construction” (p.618). Simultaneously, the Federal Housing Act of 1934 effectuated an interplay between the housing and the financial sector that favored the growing white middle class over the African American inner-city poor by developing city surveys and tax systems (appraiser’s manuals) that contained explicitly racist categories and channeled most of the loan money away from communities of color and toward middle and upper class whites (Lipsitz:2006, p.351).

What followed was a slippery slope of Federal policy measures that conspicuously exposed the economic advantages of suburbanization by underlining the pervasiveness of structural inequality and disadvantage. Redlining, for instance, a practice in which certain parts of a city were reviewed as being desirable or undesirable in terms of lending purposes, strongly influenced the selectivity of mortgage support. Certain parts of a city map would be bracketed with red-lines and condemned as risky for mortgage lending. Unsurprisingly, these red-lined areas comprised of neighborhoods in the older districts of the city center and often were disadvantaged African American neighborhoods (Jackson:1987, p.214). Consequently, denying credit to inner cities aggregated a deterioration and decay of already disadvantaged and disinvested neighborhoods. At the same time, the enablement of white flight by massive federal investment in strategically constructed freeways formed barriers between African American and white areas, bringing about later what Massey & Denton (1993) explain to be a “further isolation of urban blacks through federal urban renewal and housing programs” (p.187).

The exclusionary real estate ideology, which was ingrained in the US housing market throughout most of the twentieth-century, advanced a notion that racial homogeneity was necessary to protect neighborhood and property value. However, in response to the overt discriminatory policies that allowed for this ideology to persist, came the new urban legislation of the 1960s. The Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1968, for instance, extended formal legal protection for African Americans against overt racial discrimination in labor and housing markets, while the right of African Americans to participate fully in electoral politics was affirmed by the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Florida & Jonas:1991, p.366). Although such legislative victories embodied obvious progression, they would not alleviate minority populations from their de facto residential marginalization.

To illustrate, low-income public housing of the mid- to late twentieth-century proved a well-intentioned, yet largely unsuccessful, urban endeavor that would do more harm by concentrating poverty than it would help lower-class families of color escape the confines of the ghetto. Specifically, Smith (2012) writes that, “the way in which public housing policy was formulated and implemented severely limited its ability to meet the shelter needs of society’s most vulnerable” (p.21). Since the social democratic principles of public housing seemed unable to account for the socio-economic reality of its aftermath, legislative strategies proved more ineffective in their application than in their design. The Fair Housing Act of 1968, for instance, lacked significantly in its enforcement provisions. Although the targeting of discriminatory

housing practices was a key component of the era's civil rights progression, and although fair housing became more and more a federal government commitment, Massey & Denton (1993) show that, "the systematic removal of the [Fair housing] Act's enforcement mechanisms prior to passage meant that its lofty goals were virtually guaranteed to remain unrealized" (p.192). Consequently, the combination of outright discriminatory practices like redlining and restrictive covenants with benevolent, yet ineffective, urban policy resulted in a perpetuation of residential segregation on a national scale.

#### **§ 4.4.2 Chicago housing policy**

When it comes to Chicago's early public housing developments, there is not a more detailed and in-depth account to be found than Bowly's (1978), *The Poorhouse: Subsidized Housing in Chicago*. Although mainly factual and largely uncritical, Bowly (1978) reveals a context within which to situate Chicago's public housing policy. He explains that amidst a severe housing shortage, "large areas in Chicago, especially in the inner city, were occupied by dilapidated housing, much of it little more than wooden shacks" (p.15). Concentrated poverty and existing slum conditions, exacerbated by the Great Depression, burdened policy makers with social urban predicaments. Consequently, in accordance with national developments and New Deal policy, Chicago saw the construction of three demonstration projects; the Julia C. Lathrop Homes, Jane Addams houses, and Trumbull Park Homes, on the North, West and far South Sides of the city, respectively (Bowly:1978, p.16). The subsequent management of these housing projects fell under the responsibility of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA), a regional branch of the United States Housing Authority (USHA).

Like most urban housing policy, the incorporation of the CHA in 1937 proved unable to rescind the processes of ghettoization that had circumscribed African Americans to Chicago's inner-city Black Belt. Rather, As Wacquant (2008) points out, "white racial violence from below and white political manipulation from above converged to constrict the placement of CHA housing exclusively within the established boundaries of the historic ghetto" (p.77), leading to an institutionalization of its border like never before (Hirsch:1983, p.406). Moreover, the severe housing shortage in Chicago continued into the World War II period when housing construction somewhat stalled. Overcrowding and slum conditions increased ghetto density without many possibilities for outward expansion. In that regard, Smith (2012) reports that, "according to the 1940 Census, 55,157 residential units in Chicago were overcrowded, and 206,103 units were substandard, either with no private bath or needing major repairs. In 1939, blacks occupied nearly 71,000 units, of which almost 60 percent were overcrowded, deteriorating, or both" (p.23). Housing policy and practices, however, focused on 'logical' sites (Smith:2012, p.24) for new housing developments, which were mostly located on vacant land around predominantly white neighborhoods.

After the war, Chicago's public housing activity returned to the inner-city. As mentioned above, the focus of federal and local urban policy at this time was a provision of low-income public housing. Under the supervision of the CHA, high-rise projects were built on previous slum sites and concentrated almost exclusively inside or near the traditional black centers of the South and West Side. The CHA's and the Federal Government's approach to the provision of low-income housing provision was, however, faulty at its conception. Wacquant (2008) critically remarks that, "instead of building low-density housing on cheaper and less congested land outside the central cities, the US government fostered the dumping of shoddy high rises into the most poverty impacted neighborhoods, which amounted to making public housing into 'a federally built and supported slum'" (p.79, see also Hirsch:1983).

Although the measures that were aimed at dealing with the 'problems' of the ghetto were implemented with good intentions, they inexcusably failed to grasp the reality of socio-economic factors. Consequently, the increase in concentrated poverty through the construction of high-rise public housing only furthered the previous trend of a dualization of the housing market along-racial and class lines. Interestingly, Smith (2012) notes that, "because of their predominant focus on racial democracy, black policy elites affirmed the leading role of private enterprise in housing provisions, thereby contributing to legitimizing the capitalist political economy of housing in the postwar period" (p.223). While this political economy contained much less of an explicit racist ideology, it surely realized similar outcomes of racialized class struggle.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Chicago saw a development of its downtown district, which, like Los Angeles and New York, was aimed at attracting the financial sector and upper-class employees. As a hotspot for urban development, the downtown area developed as a location with exclusive residences above expensive warehouses and restaurants. From a policy perspective, however, the focus on boosting and attracting private capital through a diversion of city resources from households to firms and from the bottom to the top of the class structure led, according to Wacquant (2008), to the, "drying up of public investment in the ghetto neighborhoods of the West side and South Side, sentencing them to stasis and decrepitude" (p.85). In a sense, the urban renewal venture of Chicago's downtown left behind, quite unmistakably, those who had no place within the exclusive parameters of the downtown project. Instead, these disadvantaged neighborhoods would be signified by prolonged disinvestment as well.

At the end of the twentieth-century, a shift in federal and local policy transformed Chicago's public housing practices. Upon accepting the failure of its low-income public housing policy, the CHA, in agreement with Washington, began demolishing the high-rise projects that had housed low-income families for several decades (Wilson:2006, p.176). Without proper policy in place to facilitate the relocation of these low-income families, most have been dispersed within the borders of Chicago's heavily segregated neighborhoods, a theme that will be revisited in chapter 6.

## § 4.5 Conclusion

The formation and sustenance of the black ghetto in the United States in general, and Chicago more specifically, is anything but a passive process of ecological serendipity. Rather, as this chapter shows, racial identity and racial difference assumed a material dimension imposed on the geography of the city (Gotham:2000, p.630). In turn, this material dimension was maintained over time in order to perpetuate a bisecting color line that would benefit whites and banish African Americans to specified areas of residential location.

As early as 1880, emergent ghettos in northern cities would provide ‘logical’ destinations for the mass influx of African Americans during and after the Great Migration. In that sense, Kusmer (1978) summarizes that, “the ghettos began to take shape when they did because a period of growing racial hostility coincided with an era of dramatic change in the patterns of urban life” (p35). Such changes in urban life were not only aggravated by the Great Migration but also by both World Wars, which stalled urban development and intensified struggles over affordable living space.

While Chicago’s first ghetto emerged as a sentimental response to large numbers of new African Americans entering the city, Chicago’s second ghetto resulted from the suburbanization of whites and increased concentrated poverty due to high-rise public housing initiatives. Essentially, the exacerbation of rigid racial segmentation remained a feature of a dualized housing market throughout most of the twentieth-century. The policy measures that were installed to remedy this segmentation were, as Florida & Jonas (1991) put it, “to a large extent a ‘failure’ from the start” (p.349). Unable to deal with the tenaciousness of the Chicago’s racial order, housing policy did little for impoverished minorities. The particular displacement of African Americans was distinctively significant because they were confined to zones where segregation was essentially involuntary, practically total, and perpetual (Philpott:1978, p.xvi).

Either way, Public housing in Chicago has been, and continues to be, a deeply divisive issue (Hackworth:2007, p.58). In that sense, I concur with Wacquant (2008) when he suggests that, “The historical myopia of the debate on the ‘underclass’ has obscured the fact that the crumbling of the ghetto at the close of century is but the tailspin of a downward spiral whose initial impetus was given some five decades earlier by Washington’s housing programs” (p.77). The ‘making’ of the black ghetto and the legacies that it has brought forth cannot be deemed as accidental. Therefore, the historicizing of ghetto formation remains an important element of uncovering the inconspicuous urban forces that have sustained segregation and prolonged the structural conditions of disadvantage.

## Chapter 5 - The Political Economy of Disadvantage

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### § 5.1 Introduction

Research on structural neighborhood conditions has successfully managed to foreground the relationship between a group's spatial position in society and its socioeconomic well-being. Although comprising of slight differences, there are quite some concepts that essentially capture very similar social processes. Compounded deprivation (Sampson:2015, Sampson & Sharkey:2008), concentrated disadvantage (Quillian:2012) and structural inequality (Krivo & Peterson:2000, Krivo, et al:2009, & McNulty:2001) are all umbrella terms that refer to an array of structural conditions in explaining the interaction of space with race and violence.

These structural conditions, which are geographically determined, should also be used to explain several urban phenomena related to race, crime and violence in Chicago. Krivo & Peterson (2000), for one, establish that differences in structural conditions must be taken into account for explaining why black rates of violence exceed white rates to such a high and variable degree (Velez et al:2003, p.649) and McNulty (2001) shows that in black neighborhoods with levels of structural disadvantage that are as low as those found in many white areas, the effect of disadvantage on violence is positive and similar in magnitude to that evidenced in white localities (Velez et al:2003, p.649). Indeed, there is overwhelming evidence suggestive of the idea that structural neighborhood conditions directly attribute to high levels of crime and violence. Additionally, Akins (2009) notes that the categories used to classify race, and related concepts such as ethnicity and social class, “mask a great deal of variation in the circumstances of persons living in different socio-economic categories and among persons classified by ethnicity or race” (p.31). Variance in urban circumstances have constituted many explanatory variables in research models on disadvantage and crime. Consequently, incorporating race is not simply a consideration of individual-level demographics but more so a consideration of the spatial embeddedness of neighborhood-level variations in rates of violence.

With concentrated neighborhood disadvantage as one of the most durable predictors of high rates of violent crime (Quillian:2012, p.355, see also Krivo, Peterson & Kuhl:2009, p.1794), one begs the question; what are the specific experiences associated with structural disadvantage and how is this disadvantage (re)produced and maintained over time? To begin to answer these questions, this chapter addresses some of the major themes that emerged from the empirical data. Specifically, this chapter sketches a visual of neighborhood disinvestment by building on Bechteler & Willis' (2016) metaphor of the 'urban desert'. Then, this chapter analyses two of the most significant ramifications of segregation; concentrated poverty and crime/violence. Lastly, this chapter discusses the relevance of a geography of opportunity by explicitly highlighting the importance of access to education.

## **§ 5.2 Urban deserts of disinvestment: sketching a visual**

The visualization of prolonged disinvestment in Chicago uncomfortably coincides with spaces of perpetuated segregation. While theoretical discussions on urban violence often include neighborhood level conditions, they rarely take the time to sketch a proper visual, to paint a picture if you will. After all, if we are to genuinely approach such a fraught topic as urban violence, then the manifestations of inequality in Chicago ought to be displayed.

To ‘experience’ what segregation and disinvestment looks like, one should simply travel west or south from Chicago’s downtown district, and so I did. On the corner of Ashland and Chicago avenue I embarked on the CTA #66 Bus to Austin terminal. It was about 5pm, slowly turning dark, and it had just dropped below freezing. As the bus continued its route through Ukrainian Village and Humboldt Park, something peculiar happened. At about every stop, one or two white people would exit the bus and one or two African Americans would get on. This process continued until I, quite literally, was the only non-African American on the bus.

More importantly, however, was that with the change in passenger demographics came also a change in the physical environment outside the bus. As the buildings on Chicago avenue became more and more dilapidated, the feeling of being in a thriving North-American metropolis gradually diminished. In leaving the high rises of downtown Chicago further behind us, it became clear that I had entered one of Chicago’s heterotopias; Austin. Located on the West Side of Chicago, Austin is projected as one of the most ‘dangerous’ places in the city. A location where the consequences of racial residential segregation and disinvestment appear consistently and destructively throughout the neighborhood’s physical and mental landscape. Here, drugs, gangs, murder and hardship have become ingrained in day to day life.

In discussing the legacies of residential segregation, Bechteler & Willis (2016) characterize American communities of structural disadvantage, such as Austin, as ‘urban deserts’, in which, “economic disinvestment, resident displacement, population losses and the loss of community anchor institutions have, in part, resulted in a community area characterized by significant need” (p.2). The desert metaphor is effectively helpful in capturing an environment that has been depleted through prolonged disinvestment and disadvantage. When traveling through Chicago, spaces and places can, quite instantaneously, change from crowded to deserted, welcoming to inhospitable, and thriving to resource-poor. Not only, however, do the above mentioned real and imagined dichotomies appear to have vindicated disinvestment in Chicago’s heterotopias, but they also confirm the ‘us versus them’ sentiment that is detectable in Chicago’s public discourse.

Accordingly, in order to sketch a visual of these ‘urban deserts’, it is best to rely on statements made by people who have lived in or around them. Esther Franco-Payne, for instance, the Executive Director of Cabrini Green Legal Aid, describes, “so you can just imagine the visual of empty storefronts,

half torn down, half vacant, just looking crazy. Lots of lots. Now you can just imagine a visual of what that does to a community and so, I would start there, just thinking about the transition” (Franco-Payne, personal communication:2017). Indeed, as the images of figure 4. confirm, the physical environment of locations that have been exposed to processes of structural disinvestment and disadvantage show a stark juxtaposition with the more invested locations in the city.

Regarding this juxtaposition, Professor Richard Block explained to me that, “there was this city on a decline so there was a build-up of the central city [downtown] essentially through the years, and so you have this

glittering city contrasted to the really impoverished city” (Block, personal communication:2017). The notion of Chicago as being two different cities in one recurs throughout the empirical data. Lamar Johnson, a youth counselor at St. Sabina church on the South Side of Chicago, believes, for instance, that, “it was always two different cultures and two different cities. This [South Side] is a way different Chicago than if you were to go downtown. A whole lot different, in my opinion” (Johnson, personal communication:2017). From a pragmatic perspective, the existence of two different Chicago's hinders opportunities for collaborative initiatives. To illustrate. Krivo et al (2009) point out that, “when the racial order is preserved through residential segregation, separate and unequal groupings do not share common local interests and thus have little reason for forming coalitions to solve problems, including those that foster crime” (p.1771). Therefore, the ‘us versus them’ mentality that has complicated relations in Chicago constitutes not only a

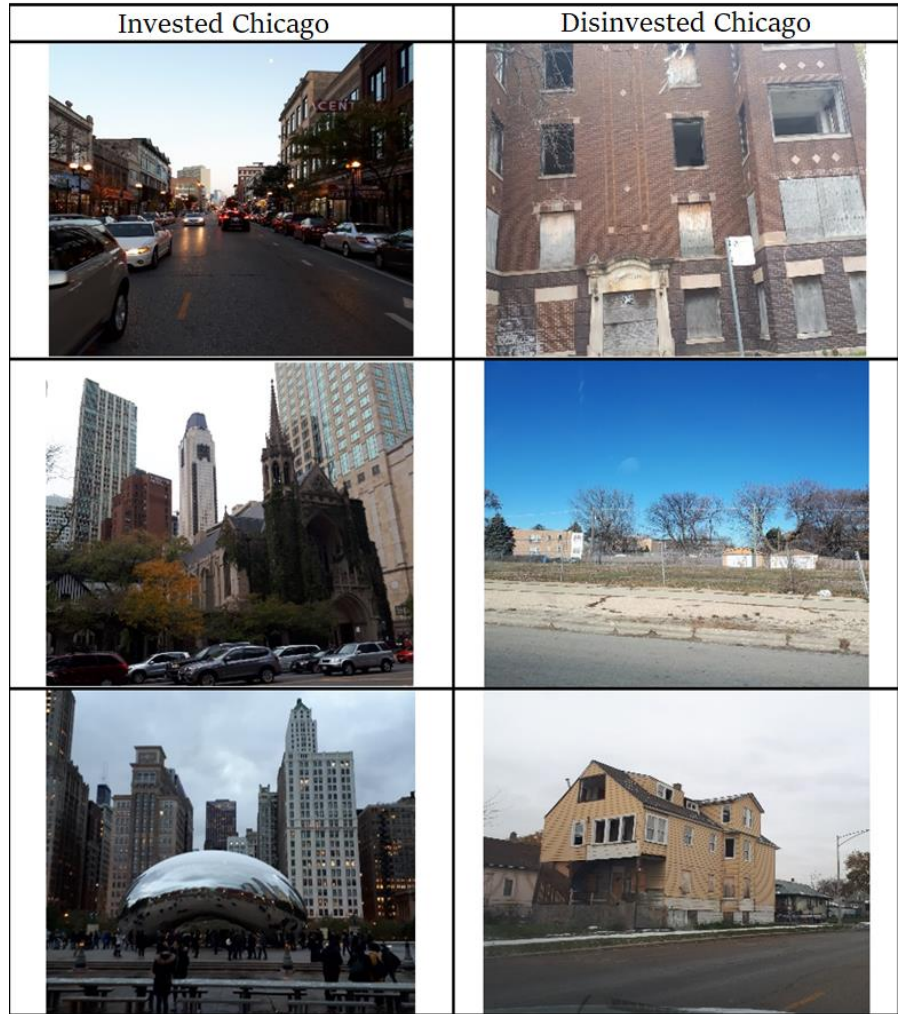


Figure 4. Photos taken around Chicago between October 16<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017

theoretical issue of identity reflection, but also a roadblock to policy implementation aimed at violence reduction.

In returning to the ‘desert theme’, it is striking that the metaphor not only captures place as a location but also captures the essence of locale and sense of place in Chicago’s heterotopias. When speaking with Pamela Bosley, a violence prevention manager at St. Sabina Church, for example, it became clear that the ‘desert-like’ lack of resources on the South Side of Chicago extends to fundamental day-to-day types of items. Bosley told me, for example, that, “it’s [South Side] a food desert, it’s no good produce in stores. You got whole foods and Marianos downtown and we have just one on Weston” (Bosley, personal communication:2017). To this, Johnson added that, “people are celebrating like it is abnormal to have healthy food, that got to me, people celebrating that there is a Whole Foods on the South Side, shouldn’t

you already have healthy food? It is like a slap in the face to me” (Johnson, personal communication:2017). In response to how Chicagoans view aspects of their neighborhood, figure 5. shows that Johnson’s concerns are generally shared by other African Americans in the city. Neighborhood poverty, experienced

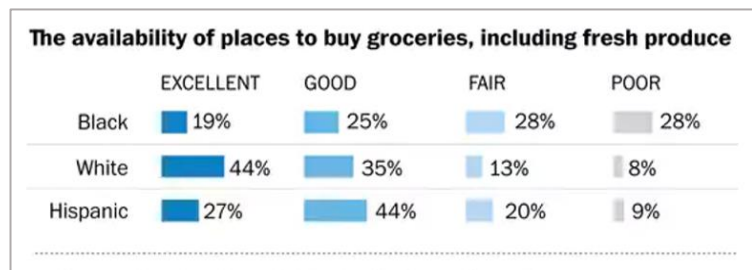


Figure 5. New York Times – Kaiser Family Foundation poll April 21 – May 3, 2016. Source: The Washington Post.

beyond the confines of the home, has a very tangible effect on sense of place and imagined environment. The availability of fresh produce distinguishes invested Chicago from its surrounding heterotopias. Moreover, the essence of sense of place in these heterotopias, translates strongly into perceptions of worthiness and value. Bosley explains, for instance, that, “if you live in our community on the South Side of Chicago you don’t feel valued. They got restaurants and we don’t got restaurants. So, we don’t have the same things. So, if you are in a community like this you don’t feel valued (Bosley, personal communication:2017).

Highlighting diverging spaces within the city of Chicago should come with the acknowledgement of enduring disinvestment. Kendra Freeman, who works with the Metropolitan Planning Council, commented, in that respect, that “Chicago has always had disinvestment. There is always been investment and always kind of staggered investment, so I guess it is not necessarily new, but it feels like the state of disinvestment in communities has gotten worse over time and technically it has gotten worse over time” (Freeman, personal communication:2017). Clearly, disinvestment and disadvantage are crucial processes that inhibit conditions of structural violence and can lead, in turn, to interpersonal and community violence. Nevertheless, the question remains as to why disinvestment and disadvantage in communities like Austin and Englewood is so much more common than in the more affluent and racially diverse neighborhoods?

This, perhaps, is one of the most important questions of this research and future research, as it gets at the core of the discrepancy between one urban space in Chicago and another.

### **§ 5.3 Ramifications of segregation**

As y the historical contextualization of chapter 4 shows, segregation is one of the most the important processes responsible for determining social interaction and social relations in Chicago. By looking at the political economy of segregation we can identify, more specifically, what underlying conditions interact with segregation to sustain an environment of spatialized structural disadvantage. In returning to the deleterious ramifications of prolonged disinvestment, for instance, it can be argued that segregation provides a spatial tool to condense (dis)investment strategies. Freeman explains, for one, that, “you can go down Halsted and start at 41<sup>st</sup> street and go all the way down to the city limits and you won’t see another neighborhood, it is primarily African American neighborhoods. So, in some cases it makes segregation, and the disinvestment that comes with segregation, a lot more convenient when you have this conglomeration of neighborhoods. So, it is easier not to invest in these neighborhoods” (Freeman, personal communication:2017, p.3).

A racial divide in physical space and socio-economic stratification are undoubtedly a Chicago predicament. The extent of this divide is illustrated by Municipal Department Judge Kathleen Panozzo, who told me that, “it’s there in every section of the cit. You look at whether its neighborhoods court systems or housing market, there is a disparity, lines that divide, and it seems to be down racial lines. Its driven that way” (Panozzo, personal communication:2017). Indeed, segregation determines much more than residential racial demographics. In fact, the interaction of segregation with other urban processes perpetuates the very existence of disadvantaged spaces in Chicago.

The following sections takes a closer look at the interaction of segregation with two of those processes, namely concentrated poverty and crime/violence. The first section shows that segregation interacts with macro-economics, leading to a concentration of poverty in segregated neighborhoods, and the second section shows that segregation, as part of a climate of structural disadvantage, leads to higher levels of crime and violence.

#### **§ 5.3.1 Segregation & concentrated poverty**

Found at the intersection of race and class is the interaction between segregation and poverty. Many of the interviewed subjects emphasized the relationship between space, race and concentrated poverty as a major indication of criminogenic neighborhood conditions. Moreover, ‘urban deserts’, which can be recognized by the visual of disinvestment, speak about the geography of wealth and poverty within Chicago.

The interaction between segregation and poverty has been examined by various scholars, most of

whom point toward a set of particular socio-geographical and economic developments in accounting for racialized concentrated poverty. Wilson (1987), Massey & Denton (1993) and Wacquant (2008) all refer to a series of historical changes that, subsequent to deindustrialization, have led to the development of a new post-industrial urban order. Hence, as affluent and poor families came to inhabit new social spaces, a new stratification in the socio-economic sphere was accompanied by a growing spatial separation between classes in the spatial sphere (Massey & Fischer:2009, p.688). Wacquant (2008) observes, moreover, that “the sectoral shift toward service employment spelled massive cutbacks in those job categories traditionally most accessible urban blacks with a generally low level of skill” (p.72). Subsequently, between 1967 and 1987, Chicago more than the half of its manufacturing jobs (Whitehead:2000, p.7, of which a large part belonged to minority populations. At the same time, disinvestment in inner cities at the expense of suburbs meant an increase of disinvestment in African American neighborhoods as opposed to white neighborhoods (Massey & Denton:1993, p.54).

The concentration of unemployment in the United States reminds us of the collateral consequences of racial and economic segregation. Income inequality in Chicago, but also other large cities in the United States, tends to follow racial dividing lines. Perkins & Sampson (2015) illustrate, based on a study on young adolescents in Chicago from 1995-2013 that, “blacks, even the non-poor, are also decidedly more disadvantaged than whites and Latinos in terms of neighborhood unemployment rates and concentrated disadvantage” (p.51). Colleen Daley, the Executive Director of the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence, described to me, that, “wealthier communities are much more diverse than communities that are not wealthy” (Daley, personal communication:2017). Indeed, the interaction between segregation and poverty is one of such processes that encapsulates the reach of compounded deprivation. Moreover, Massey (2001) explains that, “high levels of income inequality paired with high levels of racial or ethnic segregation result in geographically concentrated poverty, because the poverty is localized in a small number of densely settled, racially homogenous, tightly clustered areas, often in an older, urban core abandoned by industry” (p.316). Without segregation, it would be far more likely that poverty in Chicago would be distributed throughout a larger and more racially diverse area. Accordingly, if we can deduce that segregation contributes to concentrated poverty than we can also assume that Chicago’s hyper segregation has led to an extreme form of concentrated poverty.

In dissecting the relationships between segregation and other urban processes, however, it is important to consider how physical space influences social interaction and social relations. As mentioned above, the comparison of multiple urban spaces in Chicago is highly suggestive of broad differences in economic prosperity depended on geography. To ‘live’ in poverty equates living in a place/environment, both locale and location, that ‘displays’ that poverty (figure 6.). This landscape of poverty, and the relationship of people to that landscape (sense of place), then comes to constitute a quintessential feature

of certain neighborhoods (Austin, Englewood, e.g.), but definitely not that of others (River North, Lincoln Park, e.g.). To that extent, if we take Professor Block’s observation of the distribution of poverty, suggesting that it is, “concentrated on main streets and concentrated on rapid transit stations things like that” (Block, personal communication:2017), we can identify ‘poverty places’ and discuss their relation to segregation and violence. For instance, it can be argued that the long-term effects of concentrated poverty and prolonged disinvestment on physical urban space have established the ‘urban deserts’ that Bechteler & Willis (2016) speak of.



Figure 6. Photos taken in Englewood between October 16<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

### § 5.3.2 Segregation & crime/violence

While the interaction between segregation and macro-economic processes explains the manifestation of racialized concentrated poverty, there are more things to be said about the ramifications of segregation. Judge Panozzo told me that, “obviously in certain areas in the city the gun crime is high and that the murder rate in Chicago is extremely high” (Panozzo, personal communication:2017). In looking for explanatory variables for Chicago’s disproportionate rates of crime and violence, much of the literature and empirical data point unsurprisingly toward the relationship between segregation and crime and violence. As Johnson puts it, “some areas have more crime than others. Like the South and the West Side of Chicago and the black neighborhoods” (Johnson, personal communication:2017). Similarly, Freeman explained to me that, what they generally found is that, “places that have less racial and economic segregation have lower homicide rates, so there is a correlation. What the secret sauce is we [Metropolitan Planning Council] are still trying to figure out, but part of it has to do with distribution of resources” (Freeman, personal communication:2017). Johnson and Freeman’s observations are confirmed by figure 7, showing that in Chicago, homicides happen more frequently in more segregated neighborhoods.

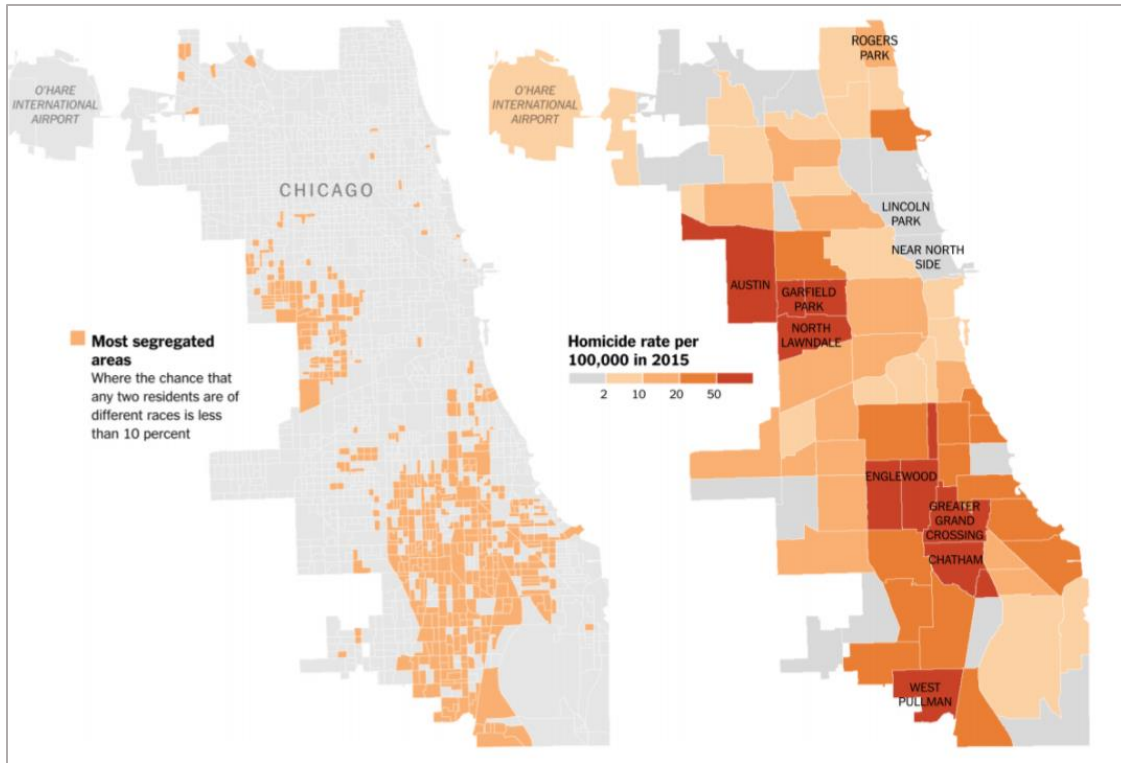


Figure 7. Geography of Chicago Homicides  
 source: nyc.gov; City of Chicago Data Portal May 27, 2016. New York Times

Even though, the nexus of race and crime has been a central feature of social science and criminological research, diverging hypotheses have comprised of contradicting arguments regarding racialized urban violence. Either way, a proper discussion on race and violence must include an analysis of the structural conditions present in disadvantaged neighborhoods and communities. To illustrate, Akins (2009) argues that, “racial segregation is vital for understanding these pronounced ecological differences and the distinct crime patterns that characterize predominantly white or predominantly black areas. The association between race and poverty implies that minority group members are disproportionately isolated in areas where economic, educational, employment, and public service resources are markedly lacking” (p.32). Similar to the concentration of poverty, we find the concentration of crime to be indicative of disadvantaged urban spaces. In essence, there are two major questions that frame the debate on Chicago’s high level of crime and violence. First, why is the rate of crime and violence so high? And second, why does it appear that most of the perpetrators and victims of this crime and violence are African American? To answer these questions, it is necessary to return, once again, to the most detrimental of urban processes: segregation.

To answer the first question, we must take a closer look at the second. Instances of crime and violence are indeed rather prevalent in the city of Chicago. Yet, like poverty, this prevalence is mostly

concentrated in neighborhoods that have seen racial and economic segregation. If we take Krivo et al's (2009) findings that, "local variation in crime is rooted in differences in neighborhood structural conditions, particularly in disadvantages like poverty, family disruption, and joblessness" (p.1769), it becomes clear that there are certain criminogenic community characteristics that cause crime to be unevenly dispersed throughout the city. More so, crime remains concentrated in conglomerated swats of segregated communities on the West and South Sides of Chicago, where poverty, family disruption and joblessness are more typical.

Essentially, crime and violence are not simply features of racial or ethnic qualities as much as they are results of certain structural neighborhood conditions, which, due to segregation, happen to be positioned around racial and ethnic composition. Therefore, I find that high rates of African American perpetration and victimization are not dependent race-specific behavior but rather a consequence of the interaction of segregation with other unfavorable urban processes. In that sense, Ousey (1999) postulates that that, "if white communities featured the same degree of concentrated structural disadvantage that currently plagues black communities, homicide rates in white communities would mirror those observed in black communities" (p.406). This idea is also advanced by Sampson & Moreno (2004) who, through an analysis of spatial regimes, find that "fundamental causes of neighborhood violence are similar across race" (p.164).

An understanding of these logics, however, appears to be somewhat lacking in public and even some academic discourse. The term black-on-black crime, for instance, seems to invoke a notion of crime and violence that is outside or foreign to the social perimeters of 'invested' or 'white' Chicago. Simply put, the concept of black-on-black crime is merely a reference to crime that is geographically situated and demographically framed. Ironically, nobody speaks of poor-on-poor crime, a label that, due to concentrated poverty neighborhoods of disadvantage, would be just as applicable as the reference of race.

In going back to the first question, though, the answer is essentially the same as that of the second; segregation and disadvantage. As noted in chapter 4, Chicago suffers from extreme forms of hyper segregation, in which structural conditions remain unfavorable and relative deprivation keeps taunting minority populations. In terms of this racialized disadvantage, Krivo et al (2009) assert that, "the mechanisms that support segregation limit the potential of African-Americans to escape the most challenging environments that increase violence while furthering the ability of whites, as a privileged group, to locate in the most advantaged communities where violent crime is far away and easily kept at bay" (p.1766). Ultimately, the incidence of crime in disadvantaged neighborhoods is exacerbated by the ethno-racial closure of space in American cities (Wacquant:2008, p.57), where the capture and confinement of African Americans in urban spaces of disadvantages epitomizes the tenacious grasp of the heterotopia. Within the boundaries of the urban desert, violence becomes an expression, a response of social interaction based on very real and imagined comparative disadvantage and inequality.

Ultimately, adding to these layers of disadvantage are the consequences of hyper segregation, particularly concentrated poverty, which has maintained an urban climate that has seen extremely high levels of community violence. Essentially, these neighborhoods characterized by concentrated poverty are criminogenic in a variety of ways. Most notably, scholarship emphasizes; family disruption, joblessness, underemployment, welfare dependency, and limited education opportunity as having the most salient effects on crime and opportunities for the reduction of (in)formal community control (Akins:2009, p.32, see also Massey & Denton:1993). Opportunity, or more importantly the lack of opportunity, in Chicago, seems to be a dependent variable that is closely related to racially and geographically situated urban spaces. Segregation, as an underlying urban process, clearly undermines the dispersion of opportunity, leading to the increased exposure of minority populations to criminogenic conditions and structural disadvantage.

#### **§ 5.4 Toward a geography of opportunity**

If there is one thing that became clear through my time and research in Chicago, it is that opportunity, in all aspects of the word, is unevenly distributed throughout the city. This, of course, is not something that is only particular to the city of Chicago. Rather, I would argue that it remains a quintessential feature of urban America. Identity politics and the distribution of macro and micro-level resources make clear, quite conspicuously, that if you do not look like any of the founding fathers you will have to work twice as hard to potentialize your life chances. In terms of urban Chicago opportunity seems to be distributed even more unevenly than other large US cities. After all, prolonged hyper segregation is accompanied by a whole variety of social processes, dynamics, and conditions that all have negatively influenced the opportunities of those who live in Chicago's heterotopias and urban deserts.

Unsurprisingly, the lack of opportunity thematically summarizes many of the conducted interviews. Daley noted, for instance, that, "a lot of what you see in those communities is communities that are lacking opportunities. Nothing stops a bullet like an opportunity nothing stops a bullet like a job, you hear that all the time" (Daley, personal communication:2017). Similarly, Panozzo submits that, "the kids don't have a lot available to them and they are living in communities where there are not a lot of resources" (Panozzo, personal communication:2017). In developing sense of place, it can also serve as an indication for neighborhood stability, suggesting that the lack of opportunity is typical for certain neighborhoods and communities. Essentially, this lack of opportunity coincides with a strong sense of hopelessness. When I asked Father John Foley, the founder and Chair Emeritus of Cristo Rey Network, where this hopelessness comes from, he answered, "economically, socially, educationally, poverty. That's a no brainer" (Foley, personal communication:2017). Hence, there are numerous factors that work together to positively or negatively affect opportunity and shape perceptions and sense of place.

The idea that, in Chicago's heterotopias, compounded and relative deprivation translates into perceptions of hopelessness was not only confirmed by speaking with various subjects but also by the uncanny feeling one has when walking through 'these' neighborhoods. People going through the motions of life without better prospects for tomorrow. Surviving, as one does in the (urban)desert, is priority number one. In capturing this pessimistic, yet realistic atmosphere, Father Foley explains that, "across the board these [underserved] kids don't have a chance, they have got nothing to lose, there is no hope. It is going to be more of the same. For our kids at our African American school at in Austin it is not unusual that the only one in the household who has a job is the kid, nobody else gets up in the morning, why would they get up" (Foley, personal communication:2017). Even though hopelessness captures the sense of place of most disadvantaged urban space, there are avenues for change and better futures. Education, for one, could potentially alleviate children from the grasp of their spatial confines. Unfortunately, however, education in Chicago proves much less of an 'escape' than it ought to be.

#### **§ 5.4.1 Access to education**

Many scholars include educational opportunity in their discussions on the ramifications of residential segregation and concentrated disadvantage (Akins:2009, Quillian:2012, Massey:2001, Sampson & Sharkey 2008, see also Massey & Denton:1993). Undoubtedly, access to solid education shapes a framework for future opportunity, quality of life and life chances (Quillian:2012, p.355). Yet, by looking at the geography of opportunity in Chicago, it becomes clear that those neighborhoods that suffer from structural conditions of economic disadvantage suffer from a lack of educational opportunity as well. Often exacerbated by residential segregation, the lack of opportunity in the United States is largely geographically dispersed. Sampson & Sharkey (2008) summarize, in that regard, that "residential stratification falls powerfully along racial/ethnic lines and socioeconomic location, especially income and education" (p.25). Unsurprisingly, access to education appeared as a strong and recurring theme throughout the interview data, a pattern that deserves a closer look.

When I talked to Patrick Langan, an employee at Oak street health who has worked on both the South and West Sides of Chicago, he told me that he believes that, "education is a huge part of it", all he hears is that the Chicago public school system is, "underfunded and very poor". According to him, this means that, "the kids in these areas have some of the worst access to education and that [education] support is one of the main things that can help a kid, growing up in these areas, getting out of a situation like that, to figure out how to invest in themselves and their future" (Langan, personal communication:2017). Certainly, school is about much more than the curriculum it provides. It is a locale in which interaction bounds social groupings and where socialization is magnified and replicated. Therefore, if residential

stratification negatively influences educational opportunity, we can add another compelling layer to the depth of compounded deprivation.

As mentioned earlier, the notion that disadvantaged neighborhoods comprise of disadvantaged schools was confirmed by many of the interviewed subjects. Bosley, for instance, suggested that, “we need a better education system because our [South Side] schools are no good at all. Downtown there are great schools but on the South and West Side we don’t have them” (Bosley, personal communication:2017). A similar sentiment was exhibited by Franco-Payne who suggested that, “these selective enrollment schools, which are supposed to be top tier high schools, there are only 3 to 4 on the south and West Side. Right? So, what does that look like, for people, how do they access good education? I don’t even like having my kids in the public-school system and that is unfortunate because I am a taxpayer” (Franco-Payne, personal communication:2017). Considered within the debate on the geography of access to education is, thus, not only the location of certain schools in relation to residence but also the type of schools (public vs private). The discrepancy between public and private school, which remains a topic for debate that extends far beyond Chicago’s borders, seems to be a notable concern. Keeping in mind the consequences of concentrated poverty in urban America, it is especially troublesome that educational opportunity is strongly influenced not only by geography but also by income and race.

As an incubator for future opportunity, schools can provide the means to break free from the grasp of residential stratification. In that regard, Barrow & Sartain (2017) found that students in Chicago reveal that there is a, “significant demand for high schools outside of assigned neighborhood high schools, especially among more-disadvantaged students” (p.25). If we take a look at the poll shown in figure 8, for instance, we see that African Americans survey the availability of quality public schools remarkably lower than whites and Hispanics respectively, adding statistical substance to the idea of a racialized geography of educational opportunity. Moreover, with Chicago’s conglomeration of segregated and disadvantaged neighborhoods it becomes particularly difficult for students to escape the constraints of their respective communities in search for better educational opportunities.

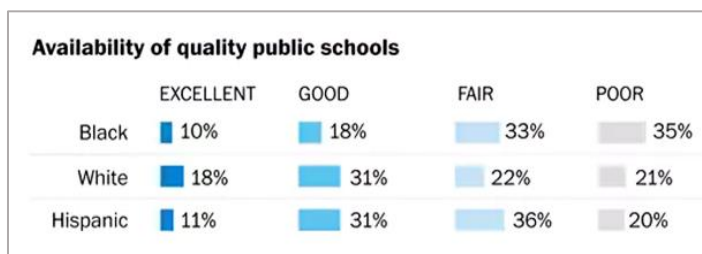


Figure 8. *New York Times – Kaiser Family Foundation poll April 21 – May 3, 2016. Source: The Washington Post.*

From a disinvestment perspective, Freeman explains that, “when you are surrounded by more affluent white neighborhoods or working class middle income neighborhoods, typically you are going to the same school system and you have this overlap, so it is much harder to disinvest in that area (Freeman, personal communication:2017). Evidently, it is not only the level of Chicago’s segregation but also the macro-distributional character of that segregation that makes the education factor geographically

significant. Large areas of segregation on Chicago's South and West Side comprise of mediocre public schools without many alternative options for kids from low-income families. Ironically, it appears that education in 'invested' Chicago has recently been awarded more resources for progressive development. To that extent, Franco-Payne comments, "if you wanted to invest you could but we made a choice not to do that. Fifty schools closed. The city says they have no money, CPS (Chicago public school system) says it has no money, but now the mayor wants to build a multimillion dollar high school in the South Loop, where there already is a nice high school!" (Franco-Payne, personal communication:2017). If we return to the notion of value and worthiness in underserved communities, it becomes clear that the quality of public schools and access to private schools feeds into the imagination of two different Chicago's separated by space, race, opportunity and income.

Either way, the desire for educational opportunities outside of the assigned districts within the boundaries of structural disadvantage can largely be attributed to the underperformance of Chicago's public-school system. To illustrate, Sander (2009) reports that, "the four-year high school graduation rate in public schools in Chicago was estimated at only 54%.<sup>7</sup> Although the high school graduation rate is low in many large cities in the United States, the rate in Chicago is lower than in many other large cities" (n.p). Underperforming and underfunded schools, however, tarnish disadvantaged communities in more ways than graduation rates. School, as a locale, mirrors the community of its students. Disinvestment in public schooling, made visible by the recent closing of schools in predominantly African American communities, equates a disinvestment in future opportunities and strengthens the sense of hopelessness in these communities. Moreover, the closing of public schools in underserved communities communicates strong messages of unworthiness to community members. Essentially, discrepancy in access to education impacts quality of life and quality of life surely impacts the likelihood of current and future deviant behavior.

## **§ 5.5 Conclusion**

There is no doubt that compounded deprivation touches base on a very real and urgent American urban problematic. Disadvantage, it seems, comprises of a spider web of related conditions that all influence opportunity structures. This chapter discussed several of these structural conditions that seem to alienate minority populations into a confinement of heterotopic spaces. The visual of disinvestment illustrates more than an imagination of comparative socio-economics. Rather, it confirms that the physical (location) and mental (sense of place) representation of disadvantage assumes very tangible dimensions. Disinvested neighborhoods, visualized as urban deserts, seem to be inhibited by underserved communities, which, in turn, suffer from micro level structural and cultural disinvestment that at the macro level concentrates poverty (Hagan:1993, p.329).

In these places, crime and violence are the result of certain spatial circumstances that are structurally and unremittingly reinforced by the mechanisms of Chicago's racialized social order. Segregation, for instance, interacts with macro-economics in such a way that disadvantaged communities have inevitably transformed into a criminogenic environment. The economic impact of joblessness, Akins (2009) writes, for instance, is "criminogenic in that it results in unequal opportunities for success" (Akins:2009, p.33). In that regard, we should understand (the lack of) opportunity, in the broadest sense of the term, as a chief indicator for the prevalence of urban violence. A closer look at the geography of opportunity in Chicago points toward an unsettling urban pattern. If we take education, the cornerstone of future opportunity and prosperity, for example, it becomes clear that location determines quality of life and life chances.

## Chapter 6 – Community Aspects: Housing, Families and Gangs

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### § 6.1 Introduction

The qualitative analysis of my empirical data established that the concept of ‘community’, which comprises of multiple themes related to the experience and development of sense of place, is largely depended on the structural conditions emphasized in chapter 5. Situated in a given geographical area, community appears as an indicator for delinquency in that it determines the risk of exposure to criminogenic circumstances. Aisenberg & Herrenkohl (2008) note that, to date, “research has primarily focused on individual-level risks as targets of violence prevention. Only limited attention has been directed to family, school, and community factors” (p.297). I would argue, however, that meso- and macro-level community aspects are at least as important as individual level risks evaluation in uncovering the causes of community violence.

Community is often understood in terms of social cohesion, and those communities suffering from structural disadvantage can thus also bound together by their shared experiences of chaotic (dis)organization, exposure to trauma, crime and violence. Moreover, communities, like other social units, are clearly susceptible to change. Prewitt, for instance, summarized the essence of changing communities when she told me that, “the community [Austin] has changed from everybody on the block watching you to nobody on the block knowing you” (Prewitt, personal communication:2017) and, although such an expression of sense of place is hard to capture scientifically, it surely illustrates that Chicago’s communities are dynamic and ever changing.

In terms of community trauma, Elizabeth Goettl, the President and CEO of Cristo Rey, a catholic school network for underprivileged children, described to me that, “the students that live in Austin [West Side] come from a social culture of violence, through no fault of their own, it is just pervasive in their neighborhood, they come from trauma within their household and from trauma and violence in their whole neighborhood” (Goettl, personal communication:2017). Similarly, Freeman observed that there is, “trauma to segregation and racism and discrimination that people carry, and I saw this played out very much so in the lives of families that we served who have been generational in public housing” (Freeman, personal communication, personal communication:2017). Trauma, which seems inevitable for those who live in Chicago’s heterotopias, not only captures grasp of excessive community violence but also foregrounds the importance of several community level aspects.

The topics of this chapter are selected as the most important and frequent themes related to community in Chicago. In essence, this chapter illustrates how changing communities are manifestations of historical circumstances and depended on particular social conditions, both at home and on the streets. First, this chapter returns to the topic of housing and shows that urban trends and policy have facilitated widespread displacement which, in turn, has led to disorder, crime and violence. Second, this chapter

discusses the significance of family as a social unit. Here, I show that disproportionate rates of incarceration and teenage pregnancy have given rise to generational delinquency. Lastly, this chapter emphasizes the influence of Chicago's gangs on community fabric by illustrating how gang fragmentation has led to new forms of community violence.

## **§ 6.2 Housing & displacement**

Chapter 4 provided a history of residential housing developments in the United States and Chicago. There is, however, more to be said regarding the relationship between Chicago's housing and violence. Housing interacts, as this section will show, in particular ways with various processes and social phenomena to maintain the residential stratification that has historically been established. Especially those households who experience intersectionality in terms of race and class have been seeing the downsides of living in certain locations throughout the city.

Specifically, this section points out that the processes of residential mobility and urban renewal have been largely detrimental for minority populations living in neighborhoods of structural disadvantage. I argue that white flight enabled a deepening of comparative (dis)advantage between whites and African Americans and suggest further that gentrification, although sometimes necessary, can have adverse effects on communities as they must deal with absorbing displaced households. Moreover, in staying with the theme of displacement, this section illustrates how the demolition of high-rise public housing units in Chicago led to a massive displacement of low-income minority households. Ultimately, this displacement put additional strain on neighboring communities and broke up important social networks, which has led to a delay in Chicago's dropping crime rates.

### **§ 6.2.1 Residential mobility, white flight & gentrification**

Changes in neighborhoods and communities have been linked to changes in the rates of crime and violence (Sampson & Sharkey:2008, Talen:2014, Smith:2014). Overall, the interview data were highly suggestive of the influence of changing inner-city Chicago communities on social interaction. It appears that especially in terms of racial composition many communities changed over time but stayed largely racially homogenous in the end. Panozzo recalls, for instance, that in her memories of the mid-70s, "virtually overnight the block I was living in and the community around me [Roseland] changed dramatically from all Caucasian people, I don't even know when I even saw any black people, to an entirely black community" (Panozzo, personal communication:2017). Freeman explains, furthermore, that, "there is an inherent notion that you have concentrated blackness there is white flight, with an influx of blackness there is white flight" (Freeman, personal communication:2017).

Accordingly, segregation should not only be understood as a manifestation of early twentieth-century race relations, but also as a more recent demonstration of urban mobility, or more so the lack thereof. The term ‘white flight’ captures the urban process of white mobility away from certain communities into other regions. In Chicago, concentrated ‘blackness’, as mentioned in chapter 5, is also accompanied by concentrated poverty and concentrated crime and violence. Therefore, white flight is not only a racial or demographic occurrence but also a socio-economic one. After all, the economic benefits that arise from this [white] mobility, often through suburbanization, are most commonly experienced by whites (Sampson & Sharkey:2008, p,12). Subsequently, where inner-city Chicago comprises of white, Latino, African American and mixed neighborhoods, most of Chicago’s wealthier suburbs have been predominantly white. The underlying racial hierarchy of residential mobility is, therefore, confirmed by late twentieth-century patterns of urban flight.

On the flipside of white flight, we find gentrification. Where the transition of white neighborhoods to African American neighborhoods generally led to a decrease of property value, the gentrification of traditionally low-income minority neighborhoods is meant to economically improve those locations. In that regard, Freeman notes that there, “obviously is a relationship between property value and crime” (Freeman, personal communication:2017), and we can generally assume that higher property value equals lower levels of community violence. Nevertheless, even in terms of crime and violence, gentrification is not without controversy. Smith (2014) writes, for example, that gentrification generally refers to “a temporal and spatial churning process of higher income households by directly and indirectly displacing lower income households and changing the character and composition of a neighborhood” (p.571). Consistent with changing neighborhood composition, thus, we find (forced) displacement of minority households. As a result, these households have to relocate to communities that are unable to absorb an abruptly uprooted population, and therefore experience decline due to overcrowding (Talen:2014, p.248). In turn, these changing neighborhoods lose the ability to exert formal and informal social control because those mechanism were designed and molded to fit the original composition of the community. Ultimately, neighborhood change, in both the instances of urban flight and gentrification, can be criminogenic depending on geographic and economic variables.

### **§ 6.2.2 Public housing demolition**

The historical function of public housing in Chicago can be understood as an ethno-racial confinement of low-income families. Professor Block explained to me that, “early, like in the 1960s and 70s and 80s, when the family public high rises existed, violence was concentrated around them” (Block, personal communication:2017). Chapter 4 shows that, although well-intended, high-rise public housing in Chicago concentrated poverty to such an extent that public housing structures, as a locale, became breeding grounds

for crime, violence and mayhem. Even though many of the high-rise public housing structures have been torn down today, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the CHA still serve thousands of low-income households in Chicago. Within the context of changing communities, however, it is important to consider the effects of the high-rise public housing demolition on neighborhood composition and displacement.

Similar to the possible negative consequences of gentrification is the displacement that followed the demolition of large-scale public housing structures. Freeman told me, regarding the transformative nature of Chicago's housing landscape, that, "we had very identifiable tracks of public housing that were neglected for many years, they have been completely vacant and thorn down and in some places it has displaced people and created new communities that are not necessarily the same balance that you had before and in some places you have still lots of land that has been underdeveloped" (Freeman, personal communication:2017). Likewise, Panozzo clarifies that, "when they tore these [high rise public housing] buildings down it displaced all these individuals. Where is everybody gonna go? So, Englewood and the south suburbs absorbed a lot of these people and they came out to various areas but then those areas see the same thing [violence and poverty] because they brought their experiences with them to these new areas" (Panozzo, personal communication:2017). Essentially, from these descriptions we should learn two things. First, the massive displacement of people into other disadvantaged communities has had a negative effect on those particular communities, and second, the lots that were previously occupied by public housing buildings are now often vacant, creating a landscape of urban deserts on the South and West Sides of Chicago.

While the visual of vacant lots in disadvantaged communities mostly influences sense of place, displacement due to public housing demolition is believed to have had very tangible effects on gang and community violence. A study by Hagedorn & Rauch (2007), for instance, found that in Chicago, "policies of forced displacement, interacting with institutionalized gangs and segregated neighborhoods, produced, at the very least, a deadly delay in the declines in homicide that occurred in most US cities by the mid-1990s" (p.451). Moreover, Smith (2014) found that, "public housing demolition gentrification increases gang homicide over time, proposing that state efforts to revitalize crime-ridden areas are actually intensifying neighborhood crime conditions and increasing body counts, at least in the short term" (p.586). The negative consequences of displacement, beyond its exacerbation of the concentration of poverty and disadvantage, lie primarily in the severing of kinship and social ties that had been previously formed in public-housing structures. In terms of gang violence, for example, displacement meant a fragmentation of traditional gang structure, which has paved the way for unique forms of community violence. In essence, the unintended destruction of the positive community aspects of high-rise public housing, such as social networks and support systems, proved to be rather detrimental in the long run.

### **§ 6.3 Family Structure: a geography of broken families**

Within the larger social unit of the community, we find smaller social units that also strongly determine social interaction and social relations. Arguably, the most important of these units is the family. Among both social scientists and the public, there appears to be a widespread agreement that the family plays a key role in child development and socialization (Elrod & Ryder:2013, p.67). Parent-child relationships, family structure, and other factors influencing home-life have been extensively researched in attempts to infer about the family-delinquency nexus. Consequently, there is a general consensus that broken family structures are indicative of the future deviant behavior of children, and research has shown that relative crime rates among broken families are very high (Fagan:1995, n.p, see also Elrod & Ryder:2013). Unsurprisingly, the family theme appeared as one of the most frequent and recurring themes of the empirical data, warranting a closer look at family dynamics in Chicago.

In order to learn more about children and young-adolescents in Chicago, I made an appointment with Derek Snitker, a Spanish teacher at a charter school located between South Chicago and Calumet Heights. From Bucktown, I took the blue-line into the loop and transferred onto the red-line south toward 95th street. At the second to last stop (87th street), I exited the red-line and started walking east on 87th street. On the far South Side of Chicago, Baker College Prep can be found in one of the more desolate areas of one of Chicago's larger heterotopias; the greater South Side. Long streets of low-income housing are connected by large swaths of open space. As I walked these streets I couldn't help but imagine what it would have been like growing up in this area, because here family life resembles nothing like that of Chicago's wealthy suburbs, or most of the Netherlands for that matter.

While talking with Snitker, he told me that he believes that, "it [violence in Chicago] has to be related to home life, it has to be a big part of it. It stems from things like; teenage pregnancy and lack of responsibility in parenting because they are too young and don't understand how things work yet. I feel sorry for kids that grow up in a neighborhood like this" (Snitker, personal communication:2017). Snitker's opinion, which is formed from his daily interaction with children on Chicago's South Side, is shared by many of the other interview subjects. Johnson explains, for instance, that, "the family structures in our community [South Side] are really broken, in my opinion, and that can be due to systemic issues, lack of fathers, some incarcerated or some diseased. There are a lot of varied reasons, there is not one reason why families and homes in our community are broken" (Johnson, personal communication:2017).

Indeed, reasons for 'broken' families vary. Yet, there are a couple of processes that more notably influence family structures and the likelihood of deviancy than others. Therefore, the following section addresses exposure to the criminal justice system, teenage pregnancy and socialization processes, as some of the most significant elements of unfavorable family dynamics. While the discussion on disparate exposure to the criminal justice system explains, to a certain extent, the prevalence of broken families in

disadvantaged neighborhoods, the question as to in what ways broken families prove criminogenic also needs to be answered. Important, in that regard, is that, for the purpose of this analysis, the term broken family should not only be understood as a family structure where one or more members are absent, but also include families where certain family dynamics have created a criminogenic family environment. After all, to trivialize the struggles of some intact families would, considering these dynamics, be rather counterproductive to a holistic understanding of family dynamics and urban violence.

### **§ 6.3.1 Families & mass incarceration**

Consistent with the findings from analyses of disadvantageous neighborhood conditions are the effects of disparate exposure to the criminal justice system. Although the collateral consequences of incarceration extend beyond the confines of the house to also negatively affect educational and employment opportunities, it is the damage that it does to family structures that appears most detrimental. The political shift in American penal policies in the late twentieth-century has given rise to a hungry prison-industrial-complex. Repressive justice policies, such as truth in sentencing and mandatory minimum sentencing signaled a departure from rehabilitation and a turn toward a normative incapacitation punishment model. The wave of mass incarceration that followed would fracture family cohesion and subsequently leading to generational deviance.

The combination of high incarceration rates with a large proportion of fathers among inmates means, as Western & Wildeman (2009) observe, that, “many children now have incarcerated fathers” (p.235). More important, however, is the racial and economic discrepancy in imprisonment figures. Race, age, and educational disparities concentrate imprisonment among the disadvantaged. Among African Americans, more than a million, or one in eleven, black children had a father in prison or jail in 2000. Among white children this was only the case for about 1.2 percent (Western & Wildeman:2009, p.235). In looking at the connection between family structure and delinquency, Wells & Rankin (1991) have established that children from non-intact families are more likely to engage in delinquent activities than children from intact families (see also Schroeder et al:2010 & Fagan:1995). Consequently, we can assume that African American children in Chicago are more likely to grow up without a father than white children and thereby add ‘exposure to the criminal justice system’ as yet another layer of the compounded deprivation that disadvantaged communities suffer from.

Clearly, African American males are imprisoned at disproportionate rates. Subsequently, a gendered analysis of family structures in disadvantaged communities reveals the urban myth of the absent black father. While often anecdotally presented as urban pop-culture reference, the absence of African American men from their families is a serious problem that results in comparatively higher rates of juvenile delinquency in disadvantaged communities. Langan expresses, in that regard, that one thing that he has

learned from people from the areas (South and West Side) that he has worked in is, “the importance of the influence of men, specifically in the African American community, and their role in the family as a father. Being something that is not as present as it should be or that they’re not necessarily the best role model. It is like a perpetual cycle of bad parenting or formation for children” (Langan, personal communication:2017). Even though not all absent fathers in the African American community are incarcerated, the clinging grasp of mass incarceration on disadvantaged communities should surely be understood as a family related condition of relative deprivation.

By relating the absence of fathers, as an indication of broken families, back to urban violence, Almgren et al (1998) suggest that, “the ecology of urban violence is in large part determined by the prevalence of stable employment and two-parent families, because both are powerful normative buffers against violent crime” (p.1475). Even notwithstanding the psychological effects of growing up in a single-parent household, there seems to be a gendered understanding of the benefits of having a (employed) man around. Victoria Prewitt suggested to me, for instance, that, “the presence of the man in the household gives some kind of security”. She recalls that her grandmother used to say that, “even a piss poor man, it gives the women some kind of security, it gives the family some kind of security” (Prewitt, personal communication:2017).

At the same time, however, some local policy makers seem to be unaware of the collateral consequences of their policy implementation. For example, Panozzo told me, regarding ‘the system’, that it is not necessarily setup to benefit intact families. She described, “if a young girl, let’s just say the women in the projects, gets pregnant, the system was set up that you say you don’t know who the father is so you can get the state benefits, but if you knew who the father was they [the state] might deny it” (Panozzo, personal communication:2017). For these particular women it was financially beneficial to deny fatherhood in order to receive state benefits. One of the results, Panozzo explained to me, is “a generation after generation of black women raising these children on their own, without a male in the picture” (Panozzo, personal communication:2017). The things that can be said about benevolent public housing policy also apply to certain family policies. Although single-mothers should surely be supported by the state, it is the bylaws of such policy that can essentially diminish family cohesion.

Lastly, adding to the gendered perspective of the family structure and crime relationship is the notion of an imbalance in male and female role models. Franco-Payne noted that, “you will see families where one person is incarceration and usually it is the grandmother or aunt who is stuck taking on the caregiving duties. 70% of the ‘parents’ are women” (Franco-Payne, personal communication:2017). Without a male role model, especially young boys are drawn to the streets for masculine socialization (See Anderson:2000, Parker & Maggard:2009), which often results in a life of crime and violence.

### § 6.3.2 Teenage pregnancy

Many of the interviewed subjects also emphasized the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in disadvantaged communities. Even though teenage pregnancy rates in the United States have been steadily declining over the last decades, and this also goes for the city of Chicago, there are still things to be said about the geography of teenage pregnancy. While declining, the teen birth rate for the City of Chicago, as of 2009, was about 1.5 times higher than the national rate (57 births per 1,000 teens vs. 39 births per 1,000 teens, respectively) (Gunaratne et al:2015, p.373). More importantly, however, Summer et al (2017) illustrate, that even with this decline, “it remains true that 45% of African-American adolescent females will become pregnant before the age of twenty, and among this 45%, 38% will drop out of school because of their pregnancy” (p.44). In that regard, Prewitt observed in her home community (Austin) that, “you got the parents getting younger and younger and because they are younger and younger educational wise, it is being lost. So, all of that is happening because girls are looking for love in the wrong places. We have so many young parents and how could I be a good parent If I don’t know what a good parent is? (Prewitt, personal communication:2017). Although there is little statistical evidence to support Prewitt’s observation city-wide, her living in Austin must surely contribute to an experience of Austin as a location with disproportionate amounts of teenage or ‘young’ parents. After all, African American and Hispanic teenagers are at particularly high risk for poor sexual health and lower income populations have higher rates of teenage pregnancy (Whalen & Loper:2014, p.347).

If we take these findings and project them on Chicago’s geography, it becomes clear that the city’s heterotopic spaces, conditioned by income and race, are also most prone to teenage pregnancy. To confirm, the Chicago Tribune reports that, “Chicago communities with higher teen birth rates tend to be on the city’s West and South sides, with North Lawndale, West Garfield Park and West Englewood having the highest rates” (Vivanco, 2017). Essentially, family structures in disadvantaged communities are simultaneously signified by disproportionate amounts of absent fathers and young mothers, a dynamic that, according to a life course perspective, structurally determines the likelihood of engagement in crime and violence. Ironically, these two patterns also interplay to reinforce one another. Whalen & Loper (2014) find, for instance, that, “girls who experienced the incarceration of a household member had a greater likelihood of becoming pregnant before age 20” (p.357).

In addition, the ramifications of teenage pregnancy are not only experienced by the young parents, but also the children born to teenage mothers suffer from negative consequences related to life-course development. To illustrate, Summer et al (2017) write that generally these children are, “more likely to have poor academic performance and dropout of high school, have more health issues, be incarcerated during their teenage years, become a teenage mother themselves, and face unemployment as a young adult” (p.44). Clearly, teenage pregnancy undermines life chances for both parents and children alike. Therefore,

the concentration of teenage pregnancy in disadvantaged neighborhoods should be understood as a community level aspect that influences the geography of opportunity in a rather profound way.

### **§ 6.3.3 Family dynamics & processes of socialization**

Where the external factors of incarceration and teenage pregnancy influence family structure, there are also more interpersonal family dynamics that can increase the chances of criminal or violent behavior. As mentioned earlier, many of the interviewed subjects emphasized the causal relationship between family structure and urban violence. At the same time, many of the subjects also referred to a changing community culture in which traditional family values have been gradually declining.

Consistent throughout the data we find the notion that parent-child relationships, or family dynamics in general, are suffering from anomie. Prewitt mentioned, for instance, that, “you got parents that are scared of their children, if you are scared of your son what I am gonna do with that?” (Prewitt, personal communication:2017). In a similar fashion, Snitker reiterates, “I think home life has a lot to do with it. I have seen the way that a lot of parents act around their kids and seen a lot of things that students say and do, and how that can like negatively affect things. I know they didn’t learn that at school from me or another teacher (Snitker, personal communication:2017). Interpersonal behavior within various developmental stages of childhood and adolescence is a crucial ecological determinant of positive or negative family interaction. Therefore, family cohesiveness, social-bonding and socialization are key concepts in discussing a child’s current or future ability to maintain healthy social relationships, thereby contextualizing the preponderance of deviance among communities where family structures and dynamics are unfavorable.

Moreover, in terms of dealing with structural strain, which is a major concern for youth in disadvantaged community, family cohesiveness and family stability can alleviate the pressure of societal conformity. Especially in a cross-comparative context, societal expectations might put more strain on those who fail to live up to societal expectations due to circumstances of deprivation. Closeness with one’s family, Leeper Piquero & Sealock (2010) maintain, “may help to alleviate these pressures of strain and feelings of negative affect” (p.174) and can therefore reduce the chances of children acting out or engaging in deviant behavior.

To put it bluntly, Fagan (1995) writes that, “teenage criminal behavior has its roots in habitual deprivation of parental love and affection going back to early infancy. Future delinquents invariably have a chaotic, disintegrating family life” (n.p see also Elrod & Ryder:2013). Although hard to quantify, deprivation of parental love and affection speak about the broader picture of parent-child attachment. I argue that the unfavorable neighborhood conditions of disadvantaged communities, whether residential, economic, or social, (re)produce unfavorable conditions within the household. One of such conditions is the causal relationships is between a delinquent parent and their child. Without justifying criminal behavior,

it can be said that for some crime appears as the only way to navigate through life in the heterotopia. Normlessness, due to a disintegrated and disinvested physical climate, transfers into a normlessness of the social environment, with crime as a very possible and even somewhat logical outcome. By relating the connection between normlessness and disadvantaged communities back to family dynamics, Elrod & Ryder (2013) suggest that, “we should be aware of the relationship between parental criminality and delinquency (the children of parents who are involved in criminal behavior are more likely to engage in delinquency than youths whose parents are not involved in criminality)” (p.67).

But even lawful parents might struggle with conventional processes of social-bonding and socialization. In regards to social bonding and single-parenthood, for instance, Schroeder et al (2010) suggest that a key part of the social bonding process is, “direct control and supervision from parents that requires a significant amount of time from parents, time that many single parents struggle to find given the competing demands that single parenthood presents” (p.582, see also Gottfredson & Hirschi:1990). Similarly, Leiber et al (2009) confirm that, “among households experiencing weak parent–child attachments, those headed by single parents are less able to effectively socialize and/or restrain their child or children from participating in delinquent behavior” (p.81).

Positive socialization appears to be more effective and successful in families with stable ‘intact’ family structures and healthy family dynamics. On the flipside of effective positive socialization, we find negative socialization. Panozzo, who is experienced in dealing with juveniles, told me that, “that’s what they are learning, it’s no wonder the world is more violent. Of course, the kids are violent and growing up you know, because this is how they are learning to handle their anger or their frustration” (Panozzo, personal communication:2017). Ultimately, learned violence is a generational pattern which typifies the disadvantage in inner-city Chicago. The differences in family structure and home-life between Chicago neighborhoods are immense and, as many other things, coincide with other criminogenic processes.

#### **§ 6.4 Changing gang culture**

The discussion on community fabric in changing Chicago neighborhoods would be incomplete without the mention of gangs. Curry & Spergel (1988) define gangs as, “residual social subsystems often characterized by competition for status and income opportunity through drug sales. They are organizations concerned with territoriality, status and controlling human behavior” (p.401). Especially when considering a geography of violence, gangs should be understood as important geographically determined social units that influence levels of crime and violence. Consistent with that understanding, Panozzo reiterates that, “the neighborhoods that are gang infested in the city obviously have more crime, more drug charges, more drug cases, more shootings, murders, all of that” (Panozzo, personal communication:2017). Often operating in set spaces, gangs influence sense of place, sense of safety, and mobility through ‘gang territory’. Moreover,

geography plays an important role in determining the nature of gang violence because gangs with adjacent turf are more likely to engage in violence compared to gangs without adjacent turf (Papachristos et al:2013, p.438).

In terms of (dis)organizational neighborhood characteristics, I argue that the social networks of gangs replace conventional social networks institutions that might be lacking in some disadvantaged communities. Ultimately, then, for youths in disadvantaged communities, the gang is responsive and provides quasi-stable, meaningful social and perhaps even economic structures (Curry & Spergel:1988, p.401). Research has demonstrated that gang members are more delinquent and commit more crime than non-gang members (Tita & Ridgeway:2007, p.209). With that in mind, we can assume that more gang presence leads to more crime and violence. To contextualize gang presence in Chicago, this section offers first a brief explanation of Chicago gang formation followed by a discussion on gangs as community institutions and gang-fragmentation, all of which have been linked to Chicago's excessive violence by the people that I spoke with.

#### **§ 6.4.1 Gang formation**

The early origins of gang formation in Chicago can be traced to early ethnic groups of European immigrants. Yet, for the sake of this thesis, the analysis of gang formation will refrain from including the criminal networks of before World War II and focus more so on those gangs that have had a significant influence on Chicago's more recent racialized urban climate. Either way, the environments in which gangs formed tell us much about the interplay between above mentioned processes and conditions of structural disadvantage and the need for alternative social network groups.

Howell & Griffiths (2018) explain that many of the gangs in the United States, "incubated in the most poverty-stricken zones of very large American cities. These gangs can dominate inner-city streets and create a feudal-like territory that often leads to ongoing gang wars for turf, dominance, and physical prowess - typically in very small gang set spaces" (p.4). In response to urban anomie and feelings of strain, gangs came to constitute a social network that allowed for a life-style in which conventional societal expectations could be bypassed by the quick and short-term gains of deviancy. In other words, gangs represent an intuitive effort of boys to generate a social environment for themselves where none adequate to their own needs exists (Thrasher:2013, p.37). Logically, gangs formed, first and foremost, in geographical areas where the hardship of structural disadvantage was experienced most severely. These areas, in which social, economic and educational disadvantage are concentrated, can mostly be found on the West and South Sides of Chicago.

Furthermore, in terms of gang origins, Prewitt mentions that, "gangs have been around since alcohol, it is not new" (Prewitt, personal communication:2017), At the same time, however, Franco-Payne

reminds us of the transitional character of certain neighborhoods, suggesting that in Englewood, “first you didn’t have gangs and all of the sudden you do, and you have shootings and drug sales on the corner” (Franco-Payne, personal communication:2017). So, even though the gangs founded in Chicago in the 1950s have persisted for more than half a century (Hagedorn & Rauch:2007, p.444), their territorial demarcation or presence shifted depended on neighborhood change and development. ‘Gang turf’, a geographical area in which a gang exerts its power, makes gang-related violence even more of a geographical phenomenon. In the Chicago of the 1990s, for instance, even the largest street gangs were active only in limited areas. Moreover, some ephemeral gangs might occupy a fixed area for only a few months, where for other gangs a core turf may exist for generations (Block:2000, p.369). Ultimately, where traditional Chicago gangs often displayed particular characteristics like quasi-institutionalization, organizational sophistication and large-scale drug dealing schemes, some of these characteristics, however, have changed in the wake of recent gang fragmentation.

#### **§ 6.4.2 Gangs as community extensions**

The gang, as an institution, is woven into the fabric of a community by giving a certain meaning to the social activity that it facilitates. In that regard, we should also be aware of the fact that a gang might mean something completely different to a community resident than it does to a law-enforcement official or policy maker. The identification of gangs and gang-members with certain neighborhoods relates sense of place to a sense of belonging and heritage. Stronger, perhaps, than non-gang members, do people in a gang speak about their ‘hood’, ‘block’, or even ‘city’, as the meaningful locale and location of their interaction. point out, in that sense, that, “gangs, in that sense, could be viewed as a symbolic manifestation of the neighborhood itself” (Papachristos et al:2013, p.419).

This idea of gangs as an extension of neighborhood and community also uncovers the flipside of gang presence. Panozzo explains that one of the reasons why crime runs down specific geographical lines is because the industry in these communities is selling guns and drugs. To make some money, she notes, “you pledge some allegiance to a gang because they are the one’s giving you protection and watching out for you (Panozzo, personal communication:2017). Ironically, the unsafety that is associated with gang related violence is also (re)mediated by a safety that that very same gang might offer to its members. In that sense, Papachristos et al (2013) observe that, “gangs simultaneously serve as neighborhood protectors and perpetrators, their members toggling between social positions as regular citizens and gang bangers, neighbors and adversaries” (p.419). This dual, almost paradoxical, role that gangs have assumed forces us to dig deeper to understand the greater normative function of inner-city gangs in Chicago.

As quasi-institutionalized social networks, gangs are community level phenomena and should be understood in the neighborhood context (Smith:2014, p.574, see also Venkatesh:1997). If conventional

neighborhood institutions are unable to offer adequate opportunity for social activity and productive socialization, gangs appear to take over those roles. In essence, thus, if these ‘other’ important social institutions, such as schools and family, become play less of a normative role, gangs assume a more active and significant role in ordering individuals’ lives (Stretesky & Pogrebin:2007, p.88). Accordingly, socialization in these disadvantaged neighborhoods is happening less at school or at home and more on the streets. As a result, in some neighborhoods, gangs become the primary social group in which socialization of disadvantaged youths happens. Consequently, because gang membership facilitates offending above and beyond individual level characteristics (Tita & Ridgeway:2007, p,208), these youths are more likely to be socialized in accordance with a lifestyle of crime and violence.

Gangs, as an extension of community, should be understood as a formation of social networks responsive to unfavorable neighborhood conditions. As pointed out in chapter 2, Wacquant (1997) warns against the tendency to only approach the ghetto as a “disorganized social formation that can be analyzed wholly in terms of lack and deficiencies”, and instead argues that we should also, “positively identify the principles that underlie its internal order and govern its specific mode of functioning” (p.432). With that in mind, it would be inaccurate to diagnose gang formation and gang violence only as part of a pathology of the underclass, where disorganization is symptomatic of that underclass’ environment. Rather, gangs are manifestations of alternative ‘organization’ that attempt to fill the gaps of said institutional deficiencies. Even though the lack of conventional institutions might be typical of many disadvantaged neighborhoods, and gang-formation might be a socio-cultural response to such deficiencies, it is important to appreciate the possibility that these gangs might not have formed if it were not for the ecological circumstances of their root. To assume that gang violence entails a putative behavior of a racialized underclass is to overlook the influence of environment (locale and location) and sense of place on behavior and deviant conduct. This understanding becomes particularly important when we consider the attempts to implement policy that deals with (gang) violence, which will be further discussed in chapter 7.

### **§ 6.4.3 Gang fragmentation**

If neighborhoods change pending dynamic conditions and policy, then so do gangs. The overall feeling, expressed within the empirical data, is that gang culture has changed and that this change is influencing community violence. Prewitt remembers, for instance, that, “the old gangs, were structured, so in order for you to kill somebody you have to have gotten an order from a head of the gang. So, what we have now is the grandchildren of this structured entity running buck wild” (Prewitt, personal communication:2017). Similarly, Johnson describes the patterns of recent gang violence as “senseless” (Johnson, personal communication:2017), hinting at a normlessness of the culture of perpetrators.

Now, I would not argue that there really exists such a thing a ‘sensible’ gang violence. Almost all violent crime in Chicago is senseless through its very process of victimization. However, as many of the interviewed subjects recall, gangs in the ‘old days’ upheld some code of ethics and morality. Panozzo told me, for instance, that when she was trying gang cases (back in the day) she noticed that, “you sort of stayed away from families, from moms, there was sort of this unwritten rule that you never really shot a guy going to see his probation officer, stuff like that. Church, you know, sort of this code of honor, even though it was gang related. You certainly never went after kids and all of that is just completely gone” (Panozzo, personal communication:2017). Today, apparently, the ethics and morals of gang violence have been rewritten pending changes in gang mentality.

While comparing contemporary Chicago with the civil-rights era, Professor Block stated that one difference between now and the 1960s and 1970s is that “there were [in the 60s/70s] clear gang alliances, and territories mostly. Those alliances have pretty much broken up, those factions within the alliance are pretty much at war with each other” (Block, personal communication:2017). In essence, gangs in Chicago, but also in other large cities in the United States, have been fragmented into smaller factions and this, in turn, has led to more, or at least new, experiences of community violence. In terms of Chicago, scholars have introduced a couple of reasons for this fragmentation. Greene & Pranis (2017) suggest that, “gang fragmentation and violence were further exacerbated in Chicago during the mid-1990s when the public housing authority shifted millions of dollars from needed maintenance and renovation of the city’s high-rise projects to finance a drug enforcement campaign involving massive gang sweeps” (p.21).

The combination of displacement and shifting drug markets, due to housing and law-enforcement policy, is said to have dismantled gang hierarchy. As Hagedorn & Rauch (2007) describe, “arrests of older gang leaders left the gangs with younger and less experienced leadership. The gangs fractured, and drug markets were sharply contested by new arrivals with few organizational controls” (p.451). Smaller groups of sometimes only a couple of youths are now calling themselves ‘gang’. A former Chicago Police officer told me that now it is not uncommon to meet gang-members with multiple affiliations, depending on where and when they are active. Without the previously identifiable organizational structures and geographically demarcated ‘turfs’, it has been harder for law enforcement and policy-makers to effectuate a strategy that would decrease gang-related crime and violence. Even though fluid and fragmented gang membership has caused some larger gangs to be ‘broken-up’, the detrimental consequences of gangs, with their drugs, guns, crime and violence, clearly remain.

## **§ 6.5 Conclusion**

While writing on the Obama era, Ta-Nehisi Coates (2017) notes that, “high rates of incarceration, single-parent households, dropping out of school, and poverty are not unrelated vectors. Entire families, entire

neighborhoods, deprived in myriad ways, must navigate, all at once, a tangle of interrelated and reinforcing perils” (p.266). Community level aspects are crucial for understanding community violence. Not only the perpetration of violence but also the victimization or even simply the exposure to such violence can strongly shape perceptions of sense of place. Therefore, community means much more than a geographical area. It is not only situated in a specific area but also bounded together by all social interaction and social relationship that happen within that area. At the same time, communities are facing changes and these changes can determine the forms and amount of community violence that happens within that borders of that community’s location.

In its discussion on community aspects and community change, this chapter highlighted three main themes, namely housing, family and gangs. Housing is important because residential circumstances and mobility are indicative of socio-economic stratification and can therefore impact the experience and development of locale, location and sense of place. Key to this discussion are the consequences of urban mobility and displacement. Where suburbanization and white flight reiterated the lack of African American inner-city mobility, gentrification facilitated minority displacement. Additionally, the demolition of public housing in Chicago has resulted in the overall displacement of more than a hundred thousand African-American public housing residents and this displacement has been consistently linked with disorder in US criminological theory (Hagedorn & Rauch:2007, p.453, see also Skogan:1990).

Family also appears as a meaningful social unit for determining the likelihood of delinquent behavior. Residing within the boundaries of the community, family in disadvantaged neighborhoods are more likely to be ‘broken’, which can lead to problematic socialization processes and fewer positive life chances. Essentially, family structures and dynamics are largely determined by broader community conditions. Geographically concentrated incarceration and teenage pregnancy rates, for instance, should be understood as ramifications of broader structural processes that contribute to overall family instability.

Lastly, this chapter described how gangs are a particular community phenomenon that offer alternative means to social embeddedness. The geography of gang formation, combined with an analysis of changing gang culture, explains, to a certain extent, the prevalence of violence in some communities as opposed to others. Ultimately, structural conditions of disadvantage cut deep into community fabric. Even if we narrow the scope from macro-level structures to meso- or micro-environments, it becomes clear that compounded deprivation negatively impacts social networks in disadvantaged communities. If we are to approach Chicago’s violence as a community phenomenon, then future research should contribute to our understanding of how underlying processes have shaped both communities and the social relations that reside within them.

## Chapter 7 - Social Disorganization and Broken Windows Theory: a Context for Community-Police Relations

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### § 7.1 Introduction

In 2014, people in Ferguson, Missouri took to the streets after a white police officer shot and killed Michael Brown, an 18-year-old African American. The Ferguson unrest painfully foregrounded the state of police-community relations in the United States. Questions arose not only about law enforcement methods and the hyper punitive American criminal justice system but also, more broadly, about American race relations.

More recently, BBC 2 aired an episode of Louis Theroux's *Dark States*. This particular episode, titled 'Murder in Milwaukee', realistically painted the portrait of Milwaukee where in some neighborhoods crime has become so rampant and senseless that the atmosphere can only be described as tense. At its core, Murder in Milwaukee captures the very themes that structure this thesis. To illustrate, Theroux, dressed in a bulletproof vest, joins the Milwaukee police department and is quickly confronted with the fact that relationship between the law enforcement and disadvantaged communities is fraught and highly volatile.

As an important manifestation of social interaction in Chicago, this chapter takes a closer look at police-community relations. First, I address some of the most important factors that have influenced the relationship between Chicago's disadvantaged communities and law enforcement. I show that the shooting of Laquan McDonald in 2014 sparked a public outcry and forced a revisit of the police abuse debate in Chicago. Increased forced transparency of the practices of Chicago's Police Department (CPD) is suggestive of institutional racism and systemic failure, which partially explains the geography of distrust of law enforcement in the city. Second, I argue that the media contributes to a racialization of crime and justice by sustaining the myth of black criminality, thereby allowing for a repressive American criminal justice system to feed into a prison-industrial-complex. Lastly, this chapter returns to the issue of mainstream criminologies by illustrating how the normative production of space by social disorganization and broken windows theory has been foundational for the implementation of ineffective crime policy and law enforcement strategies.

### § 7.2 Community - police relations

To say that community-law enforcement relations in Chicago are fraught would be an understatement. Yet, there are large differences in the perceptions on the trustworthiness of both law enforcement and community members depending on where you are and who you ask. Daley explained to me that, "people don't trust cops and understandingly so. When there is a problem, you don't wanna be a snitch, you don't feel like they are helping you". In her own community [predominantly white middle-class], however, people do call the cops and trust them, because "they have never given people in [her] community a reason not to" (Daley,

personal communication:2017). Similarly, Bosley, who lives on the South Side, described to me that, “there is no trust in the police department because the way they treat us”, noting further that in other communities, like Hyde Park or the downtown district “the police puts more effort in solving crime” (Bosley, personal communication:2017).

The ‘trust’ element goes both ways, however. The communicative stalemate between mostly minority communities of disadvantage and law enforcement is the result of a paradoxical relationship between the police and the community members in these neighborhoods. As Johnson puts it, “it is a double standard they [law enforcement] hold with the code of silence. Cuz the hood has a code of silence when we do something. They expect us, when something happens, to call, but we say the same thing, you have a code of silence too! (Johnson, personal communication:2017). Disadvantaged communities blame law enforcement for the lack of effort in solving local crimes but refuse to convey crucial information to the police regarding those crime. While this type of relationship is clearly unproductive, many of the people in disadvantaged communities have lost trust in the CPD due to their own experiences or those of their peers. The following sections address two of the root causes of this community-police paradox; namely police violence and media reporting.

### **§ 7.2.1 Laquan McDonald & the Police Accountability Task Force**

On one of the first days of my stay in Chicago, I joined a former Chicago police officer on a ride along. The officer, who now works for the state’s investigative unit, picked me up in an undercover police vehicle and drove me around some of the beats that he used to work in. After driving through Englewood for a while, we took Pulaski road north toward South Lawndale. While on this road, the former officer told me that on this street, Laquan McDonald was shot and killed back in 2014. Considering that the police officer (van Dyke) who shot McDonald was charged with first-degree murder, I asked the former officer how he felt about the case. Even though I never really got a straight answer, it was clear that, in terms of community-police relations, the shooting of McDonald had added fuel to the fire.

In 2014, Laquan McDonald, a 17-year-old high school student wielding a knife on south Pulaski road, was shot 16 times by Officer Van Dyke within a span of 15 seconds. In 2017, three Chicago police officers were indicted for charges of conspiracy, obstruction of justice, and official misconduct by providing statements that were later contradicted by dash-cam videos (Davey & Smith, 2017). Unlike the Michael Brown shooting in Ferguson, the debate on the shooting of McDonald was not so much about McDonald’s innocence as it was about the excessive use of force by van Dyke, who, as later became evident through dash-cam footage, had shot McDonald in the back and fired more rounds while he was on the ground.

In response to the public outcry that followed the shooting of McDonald, and with the events of Ferguson fresh in his mind, Mayor Rahm Emanuel put together the Chicago Police Accountability Task

Force (CPATF). As a message to the public, the task-force set out to review the departments' mechanisms of oversight and accountability. About a year later, the task force delivered a detailed report, stating, amongst other things that, "the linkage between racism and the CPD did not just bubble up in the aftermath of the release of the McDonald video. Racism and maltreatment at the hands of the police have been consistent complaints from communities of color for decades" (see Recommendations for Reform, CPATF, 2016, p.7). In finding evidence of both racism and systemic failure within the department, the CPATF presented data supporting the notion that the CPD was at least more 'racist' and more 'involved' in police related violence than other large department in the nation, thereby concluding that, "the community's lack of trust in the CPD is justified" (see Recommendations for Reform, CPATF, p.14).

Even before the McDonald incident, however, independent research had already uncovered signs of systemic failure in the CPD. A statistical analysis by Futterman et al (2007) demonstrated, for instance, that, "Chicago has a broken system for monitoring and disciplining its police officers". Their data show that "abuse complaints tend to be concentrated among officers who work in lower income communities of color" (p.290). Indeed, when I spoke with a COPA (Civilian Office of Police Accountability) employee, he told me that the vast majority of police abuse claims were presented by minority populations, mostly African Americans. He further explained that the investigative work that they do can only lead to recommendations toward the department. Ultimately it is the department's decision whether or not to act on those recommendations.

If we look at the above-mentioned findings from a more practical perspective, however, it becomes clear that the fraught relationship between communities and law enforcement manifests itself in both formal and informal channels of communication. A study by Desmond et al (2016) shows, for example, that publicized cases of police violence against unarmed black men have a "clear and significant impact on citizen crime reporting and that major episodes of police violence against black men covered by the press can interface with a general sentiment of legal cynicism within the black community" (p.872). Widespread legal cynicism in communities of disadvantage has done grave damage to community-police relations in Chicago. If community members are cynical about police trustworthiness, they are less likely to work with the police in solving crime and decreasing community violence. Accordingly, the ubiquitous 'us vs. them' sentiment that was expressed throughout the empirical data exacerbates the communicative stalemate that clearly complicates the work of the CPD.

Although task forces and civilian offices responsible for increasing police oversight, transparency and accountability are definite steps in the right direction, they have also brought to light systemic faults in the CPD's practices. Especially, the lack of trust in law enforcement by those community members that should have a closer relationship with law enforcement to begin with is not only justified but also very understandable. The city of Chicago, and the United States more generally, finds itself caught in a

politicized arena of public discourse where white, blue, and black lives are pinned against each other as if they cannot share common goals and objectives.

### **§ 7.2.2 Representations in the media: a myth of black criminality**

The antagonistic relationship between the public and law enforcement in the United States is largely based on popular perceptions, representations, and imaginations of criminality, law and justice. Through various channels, however, people have come to understand the world of justice in black and white, binary terms. The problematic assumption that there is only good and evil or safe and dangerous obfuscated the fact the world is so much more complicated than that. I argue that simplified binary representations of justice frame perpetration and victimization in such a way that it impedes opportunities for positive communication between disadvantaged communities and the police.

One of the most important channels through which both the public and law enforcement have become desensitized to the idea that crime, violence and justice are not easily distinguishable properties of communities, people and places is the media. The media is responsible for the mediation of meaning and knowledge, and therefore holds a powerful discursive and normative function. To illustrate, Hirschfield & Simon (2010) point out that, “dominant representations in the news media depict crime as an individual moral failing, criminals as irredeemably dangerous, victims as innocent, and police as honest and heroic public servants” (p.155). Similarly, Anderson (2010) states that, “in more recent times, broadcast and print media consistently reinforce the notion of the black ghetto as a chaotic place where crime and mayhem are common” (p.10). Conveniently, the media feeds on simplified representations because they are easily conveyed and have a tendency to appeal to a broad audience. Oversimplified representations of crime and violence, however, have contributed to the problematic myth of black criminality. Within the imagination of the myth of black criminality, African Americanism is unconditionally correlated with criminal tendencies. Consequently, Brown (2010) maintains, that racialized mass incarceration relies on a, “criminal- blackman representation of crime in which non-white perpetrators possess a type of inhuman or supernatural force predisposed to criminal, predatory behavior toward safe, white, middle-class victims” (p.772). Even beyond its explicit racist prepositions, the representation of blackness tied with criminality also advances underlying notions of inconspicuous prejudice.

During their interview, Bosley and Johnson both referred to the power of the media in sustaining popular perceptions of ‘black behavior’. Specifically, Bosley pointed out that, “the media shows up and every day when something goes wrong it is black men or when it is a white man they don’t show it. So, when is the media going to stop that perception and stop putting faces up like that?” (Bosley, personal communication:2017). Confirming Bosley’s concern, there appears to be absolutely no shortage of the display of black criminality on popular Chicago news outlets. As depicted by the images of figure 9, the



Figure 9. Media representations of black criminality.

myth of black criminality is (re)produced by the media at the hand of a visual of said criminality. While it is true that there is a disproportionate amount of crime committed by African American men in Chicago, at least a significant portion of that crime is the result of structural neighborhood conditions, and none of it can be attributed to innate racial qualities.

Yet, the media reports little on the consequences of structural inequality in Chicago but does not hesitate to put ‘black faces’ on their frontpages.

On the flipside of black criminality, we also find the myth of pure white victimization. That is, media outlets appear to be more concerned with cases of violent crime if the victim can be portrayed as purely innocent. More often than not, the media glorifies an ideal representation of this innocence through its reporting on white victimization. To illustrate, Professor Block recalled, regarding the shooting of a white woman near his home, that, “there had been in that direction a couple of shootings recently and they barely made the newspaper. Clearly, that kind of purely innocent victim makes it [newspaper], especially if they are white. A white woman gets more publicity at least” (Block, personal communication:2017). In terms of the production of difference and the depiction of heterotopic space, the media feeds into the duality of safe vs. dangerous and white vs. black spaces. In that sense, I would argue that the allocation of imaginative labels of perpetration and victimization to certain racial groups largely mediates the problematic social production of space and place.

Ironically, Hirschfield & Simon observe that, “the victims of police homicide are generally not presented in the same sympathetic manner as are most murder victims. The use of crime frames raises the specter of the predatory criminal, a vilified and racialized media icon” (p.176). It is not uncommon for ‘victims’ like McDonald or Brown to be stripped of their innocence in order to vindicate their victimization. Moreover, the amount and type of media attention that a case receives communicates perceptions of justice to the public. Shootings in disadvantaged neighborhoods, for instance, are often reported as ‘gang violence’, even if this is just not the case. Bosley told me, for instance, that her son [18 years old], who was shot and killed on Church grounds, was treated by the media and police as a black juvenile, rather than an innocent teenager.

The myth of black criminality and white victimization also contributes to police bias and has nested itself in the form of racial profiling. Smith & Alpert (2007) write that at the end of the last century, “the term racial profiling was virtually invisible in the American lexicon. Today, it is part of an ongoing national conversation and is routinely discussed and debated in the public arena and in police circles” (p.1265). Indeed, racial profiling remains a topic for debate that also gets to the heart of the fraught community-police relationship. The fear of being ‘targeted’ is a daily African American predicament. As they move through Chicago’s urban spaces, young black males are continuously stopped and frisked. Not only does this contribute to the unproductive community-police paradox, but it also perpetuates the visual and imagination of black criminality. When I asked the former Chicago police officer what he thought about the racial profiling issue, he told me that many people mistake the very practice of profiling for racial profiling. He explained that a police officer always looks for a criminal element. If that criminal element happens to be found around a car that is driven by an African American, people automatically assume that the color of the driver’s skin was the impetus for the stop. Additionally, he pointed out that when he used to work in Englewood or North Lawndale, almost all people that he would be in contact with would be African American. In a neighborhood where everybody is black, there really is no such thing as racial profiling, he told me. Either way, regardless of a police officer’s own preconceived notions of race and crime, the exposure to images like those of figure 9. must subconsciously affect a police officer’s perception of racialized criminality.

The fact that racial profiling in Chicago remains a divisive issue was expressed by Bosley and Johnson. Bosley explains that profiling isn’t just a law enforcement practice. To illustrate, she describes that, “when you see Lamar [Johnson], who is a good man, downtown, you gonna look and get worried he might gonna take your purse. So, it is the perception. If they stop putting faces up on TV then maybe there is a better perception on African American men” (Bosley, personal communication:2017). To that, Johnson himself added that, “everybody dresses, especially young black man, everybody dresses like the trends and fashion, so they look alike. You don’t know if he is a criminal or not, he could just be a kid going to school, but he looks like selling drugs on the corner” (Johnson, personal communication:2017).

When I walked around the more disadvantaged neighborhoods of Chicago, it was certainly hard to ‘distinguish’ between those kids that were going to school and those that were selling drugs, and I can only imagine it wouldn’t be much easier for police officers. Nevertheless, the racialization of crime reporting has put a target on the backs of people living in Chicago’s heterotopias. With the media’s power to shape popular discourse also comes a responsibility. News narratives should refrain from containing stereotypical qualities that are translated into archetypical attributes of disadvantaged spaces and peoples. Even though law enforcement should rise above the popular perceptions of black criminality, the

representational preponderance of the black criminal dominates the narrative in Chicago and makes looking elements of guilty and innocence particularly difficult.

### **§ 7.3 Critiquing criminologies continued**

Policing high-crime areas is not easy and it is surely expected that high-crime locations are treated ‘differently’ than locations that see little to no crime. At the same time, however, geographically oriented policing and security strategies communicate certain messages to the inhabitants of high- or low-crime areas. Neighborhoods differ in the quality and amount of policing that they receive and this difference in police practices and strategies likely shape, to some extent, residents’ perceptions of the police (Weitzer et al:2008, p.402). Many of the policing responses of the last decades have been developed based on theoretical readings of urban spatiality. As mentioned in chapter 2, this thesis is particularly concerned with the language and meaning of social disorganization and broken windows theory. In essence, my critique of social disorganization and broken windows lies primarily in these theories’ tendency to oversimplify the etiology of crime. Although I, too, assume that geography largely determines criminogenic environment, I find that institutional organization, social disorder and physical decay are, first and foremost, the product of ecological conditions and should always be viewed as such.

#### **§ 7.3.1 a Normative production of space**

Within ecological criminology, social disorganization and broken windows theories frame space in its relation to crime. My concern, however, is that this particular framing and production of space has subverted perceptions of locale, location and sense of place in Chicago. The normative production of space, in both social disorganization and broken windows theory, advances a notion of space as a container of social ills, crime and violence. Certain spaces, these theories maintain, are not only criminogenic, but also more or less criminogenic compared to other spaces around them. Brown (2010) writes, in that regard, that, “spatial governmentality justifies the display of sovereign force through the social production of space” (p.774). The problematic of mainstream ecological criminologies unfolds as the social and normative construction of space vindicates repressive control mechanism. As a result, these theories have given rise to a unique form of geographical population management.

One of the most important consequences of ecological criminologies’ normative production of space has been a representation and imagination of safe vs. dangerous spaces and safe vs. dangerous people. In terms of policing responses, this contrast typifies certain neighborhoods as being disorderly, leading police officers to stereotype residents as uncooperative, hostile, or crime prone, which results in a tendency to approach these residents with greater suspicion, to behave more aggressively, and to act more punitively than they do in other kinds of neighborhoods (Weitzer et al:2008, p.402). Moreover, the binary

representation of safe vs. dangerous constructs an inevitable duality which leaves little room for middle-ground. Brown (2010), for one, describes this duality as being between, “those who must be saved by the systems of law and justice and those who threaten society’s continuation (p.789). Within this duality, the myth of the black criminality grows stronger and stronger because it attributes and designates verifiable ‘bad guys’ to the imagination of dangerous space. Essentially, places in the city are dubbed as “dubious” or “dangerous”, which, according to Harvey (1996), leads to, “patterns of behavior, both public and private, that turn fantasy into reality” (p.322). On top of that, it can be argued that, through these socially constructed dualities, social disorganization and broken windows generate a divisive discourse. The above-mentioned divisions ultimately reinforce the social processes that perpetuate the very inequality that stands at the root of community violence. Within the context of social disorganization and broken windows, spaces are reduced to their propensity for crime and violence, and some spaces are represented as always and inevitably criminal (Herbert & Brown: 2006, p.773). This also constructs certain social groups and communities as being more likely than other groups and communities to threaten particular spaces (Yarwood & Paasche:2015, p.363).

When I spoke with people who live in Chicago’s disadvantaged neighborhoods, it appeared that increased police presence in their community and punitive law and order approaches have only normalized the production of difference that resides within social disorganization and broken windows discourse. This difference is then projected against a backdrop of mainstream society, where crime and violence are abnormal and police activity remains extraordinary. Conversely, ecological criminologies construct space in Chicago’s heterotopia in such a way that it warrants repressive mechanisms of bio-politics. In that regard, we should view the language of social disorganization and broken windows as particularly problematic because it justifies the employment of repressive policing and security strategies in certain spaces because those spaces are expected to harbor crime and criminals. Instead, I would argue that social disorder and physical decay should only be associated with crime when ecological opportunities for said crime exist (Parnaby:2008, p.766). Rather than being pushed to the periphery of discussions on crime and violence, ecological disadvantage should be at the center of any etiology of crime.

### **§ 7.3.2 Crime policy & policing Strategies**

Based on a social disorganization and broken windows framework, crime policy has increasingly focused on a geographical approach to policing. Pragmatically, this shift has constituted an increase of spatial governmentality and place-based population management/control, which has worsened the relationship between the police and disadvantage communities in Chicago. As mentioned above, the juxtaposition of safe and dangerous spaces within the city has strengthened the imagination of two Chicagos; one where police presence is rarely necessary (Edison Park, Gold Coast, Lincoln Park, etc.) and one where police

presence has become the norm (Austin, Englewood, North Lawndale, etc.). Policing strategies should therefore not only be discussed in terms of their influence on local crime rates but also in terms of the broader influence they might have on certain communities.

One of the main broken windows policing strategies revolves around increasing arrests for minor violations in neighborhoods with physical decay in an attempt to deter more serious violent crime. The result of intensifying police presence in disadvantaged communities with physical decay, Freeman explains, is that, “you see the pipeline into the criminal justice system has become very much segregated by 4 or 5 communities that are the highest crime communities in Chicago. They also are the most disinvested” (Freeman, personal communication:2017). Increasing arrests for minor violations in disadvantaged neighborhoods reveals a quality-of-life approach to policing that increases the exposure to the criminal justice system of the inhabitants of these neighborhoods. The idea that ‘dealing’ with disorder and decay through increased policing leads to a decrease of more serious crime completely ignores the social structural causes of crime. In essence, I argue that repressive and hyper-punitive broken windows policing naively overestimated the effectiveness of state-led social control and perpetuates the inability of communities to effectively utilize informal social controls, thereby creating more disorganization (Rhineberger:2003, p.226). Due to the collateral consequences of incarceration, more arrests on minor charges constitutes more broken families and more comparative disadvantage. In addition, many of the those arrested for violent felonies have prior records containing minor arrests, which essentially invalidates the assumption that increased quality-of-life arrests deters more serious and violent crime.

In returning to the community-police paradox, it should be noted that the relationship between disadvantaged communities and the police in the United States has always been volatile. Skogan (2006) reminds us that, “in the 1960s, African American communities could be found organizing to protect themselves from the police. More intensive policing today in the areas they represent could seem as likely to generate new complaints about harassment, indiscriminate searches, and conflicts between police and area youths as it would to solve serious crime problems” (p.46). In other words, while intensifying policing efforts in Chicago’s heterotopias might do little to reduce violent crime, it does increase the frequency of police–citizen contacts, which, inevitably increases acrimonious encounters (Weitzer:2008, p.405). Relying on social disorganization and broken windows theory for effective crime control measures can only be successful in so far the root causes of crime are incorporated into crime policy models. Instead, recent crime policy and law enforcement strategies have been aimed at dealing with the symptoms of the assumed causes of crime, notably social disorder and physical decay. A similar approach was visible during the 1970s, when the War on Drugs became the vehicle for waging a war on drug-users. Rather than targeting the structural conditions that enabled widespread drug use, the American government cracked down on mostly poor

African American drug addicts, thereby facilitating the trend of racialized mass incarceration and deepening structural inequality.

Even when social disorganization addresses a lack of institutional strength in neighborhood context, it is important to adequately examine how the current state of (possible) disorganization has come about. Disorganization does not emerge out of nothing. Rather, as this thesis shows, disorganization stems from inequality and should be contextualized with socio-historical developments in mind. Practically, there are, as Harcourt & Ludwig (2006) point out, “many ways to reduce disorder within a community beyond stepped-up policing against minor crime, and measures of zero-tolerance policing such as misdemeanor arrests need not be very informative about variation across neighborhoods in actual disorder” (p.29). Instead of increased policing, physically decayed neighborhoods should see increased investment. After all, so far there has been no empirical evidence presented that confirms a positive relationship between cracking down on minor disorder offenses and a reduction in violent crime. In that sense, the ineffectiveness of social disorganization and broken windows policing suggests at least that the direct targeting of minor offenses does little to deter from violent crime while certainly having a negative impact on disadvantaged communities.

The intensifying policing of Chicago’s heterotopias has illustrated a quintessential American problem-solving approach. Instead of addressing the root causes of crime, such as unemployment, poverty, broken families and educational failure, repressive crime policy is aimed at ‘controlling’ the ‘underclass’. This largely unproductive strategy signifies a broader shift from a rehabilitation to an incapacitation punishment philosophy. Following the developments of a growing American prison-industrial-complex, much will need to change in order to install a more appropriate law and order regime. Stepping away from superficial readings of urban space, for one, would be a start.

## **§ 7.4 Conclusion**

Let me conclude this chapter by saying that being a police officer in the United States and Chicago has to be one of the hardest jobs imaginable. The communicative stalemate between the police and communities, accompanied by a proliferation of guns, has placed heavy burdens on the shoulders of those in blue. At the same time, part of the community-police paradox can also be traced to systemic failure and institutional racism of the CPD.

To shine light on this predicament, this chapter engaged with critical questions regarding the police-community relationship by uncovering several factors that have made this relationship particularly fraught. One of such explanations entailed the widely debated issue of police violence and the impact that this violence has on the overall perception of the trustworthiness of law enforcement. As this chapter illustrated, police violence and institutional racism have made many disadvantaged communities wary of the

opportunity for a more productive and positive relationship between them and law enforcement. Moreover, popular representations of black criminality in the media have advanced problematic perceptions of racialized justice.

To further contextualize the law enforcement factor, this chapter revisited the normative function of social disorganization and broken windows, arguing that subsequent policing responses are based on a faulty etiology of crime. Of course, spatial proximity should not be ignored in theories of violence (Sampson & Morenoff;2004, p.164), yet, we need to move beyond a politics of crime that is founded on a geographical imagination of space as either criminal or noncriminal, safe or not safe. The imagination of these dualities produces a type of meaning and knowledge that not only leads to ineffective crime policy, but also deepens divide and reinforces inequality. In that sense, the fixation on order maintenance and population control suggests that Chicago exists of demarcated spaces that are in need of 'specific' types of policing and securitization. Conversely, Muniz (2011), rightfully points out that, "the 'utopia' of controlled space, the numbing need for 'civility' and blank walls, is no place to end up" (p.348). To target 'crime' should be to target the causes of crime, not its symptoms. Community policing efforts should be concerned with opening up lines of communication between disadvantaged communities and the police. Then, and only then, can policing efforts be aimed at the root causes of crime and violence.

## Chapter 8 – Conclusion

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### § 8.1 Limitations & delimitations

While the research of this thesis clearly contributes to the body of scholarship concerned with urban Chicago, there are some limitations and delimitations worth mentioning. For one, it should be noted that, although the sample size of the interviewed subjects is appropriate for a master's thesis research project, it remained small when considering the population of Chicago. Consequently, any generalizations that were made from the interviews are based on individual experiences, and these experiences cannot be assumed to be identical to those of other people in the city. Therefore, future research should also work with subject samples from a particular neighborhood in order to make inferences about that specific location and community.

Moreover, this thesis is undoubtedly conditioned by my own, biases, idiosyncrasies and pre-conceived notions of American society. With the use of a qualitative research design, I implicated myself, as a researcher, into the process of meaning and knowledge construction. Even though an active engagement with the interview data was obviously necessary, there is always a risk of this data becoming 'contaminated' through my very own involvement. In that sense, it is impossible to objectively verify any results or genuinely test causality in the context of this social research. On the flipside, the qualitative approach allowed for a more centralized voice of the interviewed subjects, letting their experiences 'tell the story'.

Lastly, I feel the need to explain why this thesis engaged with racial binary; namely African Americans and whites. Clearly, African Americans do not possess a monopoly on marginalization and the Hispanic population of Chicago, which consistent with national trends has been growing in size, also suffers, to a certain extent, from structural disadvantage. Moreover, there are segregated Hispanic neighborhoods, like Humboldt Park, that witness excessive community violence, and Hispanic gangs have lately been involved in aggressive drug trade on the city's West Side. However, the historical making of disadvantaged urban spaces in Chicago was first and foremost an African American issue. In that sense, Freeman explained to me that a realistic conversation about race should involve a mention of the negatives to blackness. Compared to other cities, she said, "segregation in Chicago is pretty much a black and white issue" (Freeman, personal communication:2017).

### § 8.2 Recommendations

The critical writing of this thesis has been essentially concerned with shortcomings of Chicago's society. That is, the particular (re)production of disadvantage in the city has given rise to an accumulation of urban problems, of which crime and violence are but one. Yet, the problem with critical scholarship is that the identification of fault, shortcomings and injustice is only one part of the puzzle. Accordingly, there is more

value in critical writing if it goes beyond the subversion of dominance and actually submits, or at least discusses, the possibility of alternative ways and practices. Therefore, I submit 3 main recommendations to the Mayor's office and the City Council of Chicago.

- Desegregation. It has been one of the main claims of this thesis that racial and economic segregation, both in its historical instance of the black ghetto and contemporary format of racially homogenous neighborhoods of disadvantage, has had a detrimental impact on the city of Chicago. Coinciding with prolonged segregation we find disinvestment, concentrated poverty, drug use, gangs, inequitable opportunities for education and disproportionate rates of crime and violence. If the city is seeking an alleviation of the endemic community violence that it endures, desegregation should be of principal concern. One way in which city government can shape the racial and economic composition of neighborhoods is with proactive policy changes regarding housing. There should be an encouragement of mixed-income and mixed-race public housing. Moreover, urban renewal practices should be aimed at integrating diverging and bordering neighborhoods. For instance, the city could invest in constructing new residences on vacant lots in some of the more deteriorated neighborhoods. While the property value might be low initially, investment can be incentivized through subsidies, thereby increasing overall motivation to work toward racially and economically diverse communities. Even though the process of desegregation will be slow, it's rewards would be great, not only leading to decreases of crime and violence but also facilitating the amelioration of urban poverty.
  
- Law enforcement. There is no doubt that policing becomes easier when communities and law enforcement work together. The antagonistic relationship between communities of disadvantage and law enforcement in Chicago not only impedes criminal investigation but also feeds into an 'us vs. them' sentiment. To better this relationship, the CPD should follow the recommendations made by Police Accountability Task Force in 2016, thereby increasing its transparency, accountability and oversight. Furthermore, there needs to be an honest conversation about policing strategies. The idea that excessive violence can only be countered by repressive policing is too simplistic. While the city should focus on dealing with the root causes of crime (segregation, poverty, e.g.), law enforcement should work on its community outreach. The police force needs to reflect the communities that they are active in. To do so, the CPD should try to recruit officers from disadvantaged neighborhoods in that they, as a police officer, can open up lines of communication with their home communities. Moreover, police academies, nationally, should redesign their training programs and revisit the issue of use of force. Any shooting of an unarmed black teenager

sets back community-police relations and impedes any future and past progress. Lastly, rehabilitation in the United States needs to return as the main punishment philosophy. High recidivism rates point toward structural factors and the trend of mass incarceration only shows that increased incapacitation does more harm by breaking up families and concentrating unemployment than it does good by taking a possible non-violent offender of the streets.

- Education. If there is one thing that could alleviate Chicago from geographically situated marginalization, it would be equal access to education. One of the most detrimental consequences of living in disadvantaged neighborhoods is the lack of (future) opportunity, and education appears to be an essential factor in dispersing such opportunity. Recently, several public schools on Chicago's South Side have closed, displacing its students to surrounding districts. Rather than continuing this trend, city government should do everything in their power to make proper education accessible in areas of disadvantage. Not only would this communicate a sense of worth and value to those communities, but it would also help raise a generation of educated youth in locations where that is most necessary. Instead of closing down public schools on the South Side, the city should work toward investing money in maintaining schools or opening up new schools in these areas. Teachers who, understandably so, would rather work in safer neighborhoods, should be financially incentivized to work in more disadvantaged districts. Moreover, a desegregation of the school system is needed to expose children to racially heterogeneous environments. In terms of a utopia of racial harmony, I believe youth are the answer. As learned behavior, racism and discrimination comes from socialization processes that are happening at home, in the classroom and on the streets. An integrated and better functioning public school system would have an immense impact on such social processes in Chicago. Therefore, education is perhaps the most pressing issue in need of funding.

### **§ 8.3 Concluding remarks**

Ta-Nehisi Coates (2017) writes that, “for African Americans, unfreedom is the historical norm” (p.275) and in terms of Chicago this is unmistakably true. This thesis set out to uncover the ways in which the socio-historical making of space and place in Chicago contextualizes contemporary trends of urban crime and violence. In order to answer this question, I conducted research on the ecological distribution of crime and violence and showed that Chicago's geography and extensity of this crime and violence is largely the consequence of a set of structural conditions. Consequently, I illustrated that these structural conditions should be understood in the context of the legacies of historical segregation, in which African Americans in Chicago were confined to heterotopic spaces. Crime and violence, I argued, are thus the result of

comparative disadvantage and rooted in the very social processes that (re)produce structural disadvantage in urban America.

Theoretically, this thesis advanced a social constructivist perspective which maintained that the social construction of space largely determines the interaction that takes place in that space. With that in mind, I suggested that crime and violence are a particular form of social interaction that is more prevalent in spaces that have been constructed in particular racialized social order. Unfavorable social conditions, which have become quintessential elements of disadvantaged neighborhoods in large American cities, have remained over time to (re)produce an environment of compounded relative deprivation in Chicago. Therefore, because we should be aware of the fact that our theories cannot ignore the consequences that influence the social conditions that cause crime (Markowitz et al:2001, p.314), this thesis incorporated and modeled these processes.

In essence, I tried to get to the core of Chicago's violence by consolidating the voice of marginalized populations. Accordingly, Franco-Payne, mentioned to me the tenaciousness of the self-fulfilling prophecy of violent environment. She told me that, as kids grow up in such an environment, they inevitably, "become a product of it" (Franco-Payne, personal communication:2017). There is no doubt that some crime and some violence are the result of individual choices, and I would never try to defend the transgression of law itself. However, a discussion on crime and violence becomes so much more valuable when the actual etiology of crime and violence is delineated. In that sense, this thesis added to the existing body scholarship by showing that Chicago's urban environment comprises of spaces that are so divergent that they contain completely different peoples and narratives. If we take the heterotopia of Austin, for instance, it becomes evident that relative deprivation has nested itself in all aspects of life. Opportunities are slim, health is poor, wealth is scarce, and, consequently, violence is rampant. To see and experience what the structural conditions of disadvantage can do with such a place, both in its physical representation and its mental imagination, was overall disheartening.

Ultimately, this thesis confirms the idea that American society remains largely unequal in terms of privilege and opportunity. Since its birth, the American city has been a backdrop for the projection of broader societal issues. Especially race relations have dictated daily life in cities like Chicago, where a history of overt discrimination has set the boundaries for African American prosperity. In that sense, I concur with Krivo et al (2009) when they write that, "racial residential segregation, as a source of differential levels of criminal violence, is one of the most glaring racial inequalities in the contemporary United States" (p.1767). If anything, I hope that this research contributes to the ongoing debate of social (in)justice by revealing how certain urban processes are more directly related to crime and violence than one might initially believe.

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## Appendix 1: Interview questionnaire template

Topic list			Probes
Ghetto	Urban policy	Race	<p><b>FOR CLARITY/SPECIFICITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you be more specific?</li> <li>• Can you tell me more about that?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you think?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>FOR UNDERLYING MEANING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is, for you, the meaning of..?</li> <li>• How did does that make you feel?</li> </ul> <p><b>FOR COMPLETENESS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anything else?</li> <li>• Tell me more about..</li> </ul>
Mobility	Crime	Opportunity	
Segregation	Discrimination / Prejudice	Police / Law enforcement	
Neighborhood	Space / Place	Otherness/ Difference	
History	Poverty	Violence	
Community	Disadvantage	Inner-city	
General Questions			Subject specific questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Where do you live?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do you feel safe where you live?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Could you describe the city of Chicago with 3 words?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are some issues that lead to social (or political) division in Chicago?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are your thoughts on Chicago's urban policy? [historically/currently]</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How does race intersect with place in Chicago?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Does Chicago have a ghetto? (if so, where, is there an entrance/exit to the ghetto?)</li> </ul>			<p><b>Law enforcement</b></p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How does feeling "safe" [as an officer/law enforcement] change in different areas of Chicago?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What is the responsibility of community in combating crime?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Would you prepare differently [explain] for working in one neighborhood as you would for another?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> In what ways do space and place influence the relationship between law enforcement and the public?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How does place affect the imagery of criminal behavior?</li> </ul> <hr/>

- What comes to mind when you hear the term [Chicago] Black Belt?
- What are, in your opinion, some of the causes of crime in Chicago?
- Is there a future of racial integration in the city of Chicago? (or United States, more generally)

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### Community groups

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- How can community groups help with alleviating the negative impact of urban marginalization?
- What are some examples of successful community building that relate to place and/or crime
- What can be/is done in terms of life-course intervention to deter youth from a future of crime?
- How do gangs influence urban space and mobility?
- How effective has post-incarceration reintegration been in disadvantaged neighborhoods or communities? (e.g. relate to place and isolation)

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### City Planning

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- How has recent policy worked at desegregation?
- What are some underlying effects/results from continued hyper segregation?
- How do visual elements of urban space influence patterns of crime? (architecture, vegetations etc.)
- In what ways is 'race' included in discussions on private/public housing policy
- Are strategies for place-making different depending on the neighborhood/region?

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### Knowledge Institutes

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- What has recent quantitative research contributed to our knowledge on the relationship between place and crime?
- What contemporary lessons can be learned from Chicago's model ghetto development?

How are physical and social environment studies in Chicago? (creative research approaches?)

What is the reason for Chicago's extreme homicide rates?

## Appendix 2: Coded table

Theme Number	Theme Name	Sub. 1 RB	Sub. 2 CD	Sub. 3 PL	Sub. 4 KP	Sub. 5 VP	Sub. 6 DS	Sub. 7 KF	Sub. 8 FJF	Sub. 9 PB & LJ	Sub. 10 EP
# 01	<b>Exclusive residency</b>	P1L6&10	P1L26-27	P1L10							
# 02	<b>Family structure</b>			P3L77-79 & P4L104	P3L84-92 & P9L275-276	P4L96-97 & P4 104-110 & P8L235 & P12L333 & P12L361	P2L33-35		P3L59	P2L32-40 & P4L114-117 & P5L133	P4L119 & P7L206 & P8L235-238
# 03	<b>Media portrayal</b>	P2L51-52						P4L98		P9L255 & P10L264	
# 04	<b>(Dis)investment</b>	P3L72		P1L23		P6L135		P1L8 & P3L74 & P6L172		P8L228 & P12L347	P1L5-14 & P6L175-180
# 05	<b>Urban/housing Policy</b>	P2L57 & P3L75-78			P3L84-92			P2L51-54 & P5L137 & P6L180			P2L59
# 06	<b>White Flight</b>				P1L6	P4L84 & P8L204		P4L95			P2L52
# 07	<b>Intersection of Race and Class</b>	P1L27 & P4L106-107 & P6L166	P2L30-31 & P2L33-34		P3L107	P3L99		P3L64 & P4L98 & P9L277	P2L49		P1L36-37
# 08	<b>“City within a City”</b>	P5L122-123	P1L18 & P4L114-117					P1L24	P1L14	P3L80	
# 09	<b>Housing Market/Value</b>	P5L124-126 & 146						P2L44-47 & P7L212 & P8L253-258	P1L25 & P2L38		P2L53-55
# 10	<b>Change in gang culture</b>	P5L130-132			P8L221-224	P9L243-245 & P9L255-257				P4L112-114 & P11L288-292	P2L58-60
# 11	<b>Education/School</b>	P5L142		P4L95		P5L130-134 & P6L158-162	P2L68	P2L41 & P7L221 & P10L307	P4L91-92	P8L217-219 & P12L346	P6/7L188-193
# 12	<b>Demarcation (of ghetto/hood)</b>	P6L167-168		P2L40-48	P10L309-315	P7L190-195	P9L253-254	P9L266			P1L5-14

# 13	<b>Neighborhood change</b>		P1L4-7 & P1L16		P1L8-9 & P2L57-62 & P4L127	P4L84-87		P1L27	P1L12	P11L288-291	P1L5-9
# 14	<b>Geography of opportunity/resources</b>		P2L48 & P4L91		P5L129-132 & P5L142 & P10L304-307	P4L111 & P6L164 & P10L293	P8L218	P2L55 & P6L181	P6L169-172	P8L218-220 & P8L228	P4L135
# 21	<b>inner-outer city</b>			P1L11-12			P3L67	P8L231	P2L45		
# 16	<b>Gun Violence</b>		P4L89 & P4L108 & P7L181-182		P4L123	P2L46	P4L104		P5L134	P1L8 & P3L83 & P4L107 & P10L283	P3L70
# 17	<b>Trust of Law Enforcement</b>		P6L164-168		P2L44-49			P6L190-192 & P7L204		P6L172 & P7L175-180	P4L109
# 18	<b>(Hyper)segregation</b>	P4L118	P1L17	P1L18	P10L298		P1L3	P1L21 & P3L64 & P3L92	P1L16-17	P3L77	P2L51
# 19	<b>Geography of drugs</b>			P3L66 & P3L71	P5L144-146	P6L172	P4L110		P5L130	P5L113	
# 20	<b>Religion</b>								P5L149	P11L298 & P11L315-317	P2L48-49

Codes: Sub. = Subject/participant  
P= Page  
L= Line(s)

