

## Symposium Introduction: This Violent City? Urban Violence in Chicago and Beyond

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To many, the city of Chicago conjures up a specter of unremitting urban violence. In 2014, the city was labeled the “murder capital” of the United States.<sup>1</sup> The following year, a video of the police shooting Laquan McDonald became a cynosure of public concern.<sup>2</sup> Commentators as disparate as Spike Lee and President Donald Trump agree: Chicago is uniquely bloody.<sup>3</sup> Predictably, the empirical data about Chicago’s crime and policing trends belie the most dramatic of these claims.<sup>4</sup> Yet if Chicago is not as violent as either Lee or Trump makes it out to be, the city’s experience nonetheless provides a fruitful lens through which to consider the causes, dynamics, and optics of urban violence and the array of potential legal and policy responses. Our home city’s centrality to traditions of urban sociology, its rich tapestries of racial and ethnic diversity, the durability of its residential segregation and economic stratification, and its role in both police reform and

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<sup>1</sup> See Nick Chiles, *Chicago Still Murder Capital, Even Though Murders Dropped Last Year (As They Also Did in NYC)*, ATLANTA BLACK STAR (Jan. 5, 2015), <https://perma.cc/6NJC-WLTY>.

<sup>2</sup> See Jason Meisner, Jeremy Gorner & Steve Schmadeke, *Chicago Releases Dashcam Video of Fatal Shooting After Cop Charged with Murder*, CHI. TRIB. (Nov. 24, 2015), <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/breaking/ct-chicago-cop-shooting-video-laquan-mcdonald-charges-20151124-story.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Lee compares the city to Iraq; Trump compares it to Afghanistan. Compare CHI-RAQ (Amazon 2015), with Cheryl Corley, *Chicago Battles Its Image as Murder Capital of the Nation*, NPR (Aug. 10, 2018), <https://perma.cc/E7U2-5FXC> (“And then you look at Chicago. What’s going on in Chicago? It’s horrible carnage. This is—Afghanistan is not like what’s happening in Chicago.” (quoting President Trump)).

<sup>4</sup> See John Gramlich & Drew DeSilver, *Despite Recent Violence, Chicago Is Far from the U.S. ‘Murder Capital’*, PEW RSCH. CTR. (Nov. 13, 2018), <https://perma.cc/R4GR-AZLS>.

retrenchment—all these provide fertile ground for seeding discussion about the legal and policy problematics of urban violence.

This Symposium gathers a diverse range of empirical, theoretical, and legal perspectives on these problematics as illuminated by the case of Chicago. Scholars from the legal academy and the social sciences take up divergent questions through this lens in the pages that follow. Their contributions touch on both the causes of violence and potential responses. The Symposium thus confronts the following sorts of questions: Why does urban violence, of various forms, arise and persist? How does the frequency and distribution of such violence relate to larger socioeconomic dynamics of urban violence in contexts of concentrated and intractable poverty? What have we learned from decades of massive investments in policing and incarceration, as opposed to noncarceral policy instruments? What are the costs, particularly to historically marginalized groups, of the decision to use coercive rather than supportive interventions? How do various forms of violence—informal and state—interact with each other? And how have initiatives from within communities changed the patterns or stakes of violence?

In two respects, we (as conveners of the Symposium) aim to initiate a debate that is broader than the discussions of urban violence commonly found in the popular press and the academy. To begin with, we frame the problem of urban violence to include both (typically criminal) private violence and (typically lawful) state coercion used by the police and others—phenomena that may be linked.<sup>5</sup> As a historical matter, deaths from police violence once comprised nearly 6% of homicides in Chicago.<sup>6</sup> Police violence obviously remains a flash point for public controversy today.<sup>7</sup> It is hard to see how an analysis of urban violence can account for both

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<sup>5</sup> This possibility is identified in the 1968 Kerner Commission Report. See OTTO KERNER ET AL., NAT'L ADVISORY COMM'N ON CIV. DISORDERS, REPORT OF THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ON CIVIL DISORDERS 157–58 (1968) (“[I]n practically every city that has experienced racial disruption since the summer of 1964, abrasive relationships between police and Negroes and other minority groups have been a major source of grievance, tension and, ultimately, disorder.”).

<sup>6</sup> See Jeffrey S. Adler, *Shoot to Kill: The Use of Deadly Force by the Chicago Police, 1875–1920*, 38 J. INTERDISC. HIST. 233, 237 (2007) (“Between 1875 and 1920, Chicago police officers killed 307 people, accounting for one homicide in every eighteen committed in the city. Chicago policemen claimed three times as many victims as local gangsters during this era.”).

<sup>7</sup> See, e.g., Meagan Flynn, *Chicago Police Slammed a Man's Head to a Curb for Allegedly Spitting on an Officer. That Man Was Charged with a Felony.*, WASH. POST (Dec. 2, 2019), <https://perma.cc/XJR9-8WFK>.

the costs and benefits of policy choices—and, in particular, the election between carceral and noncarceral tools—while losing sight of police violence. Second, as just suggested, we resist the assumption that coercive interventions exhaust the plausible domain of responses to urban violence. There is ample evidence, including important work by some of the participants in this Symposium, that violence rates respond to noncoercive policy levers.<sup>8</sup> An examination of urban violence that assumes away the relevance of noncoercive interventions is necessarily incomplete.

Our modest goal in this Introduction is to assemble some baseline empirics concerning both private violence and state coercion to provide a context for the pieces that follow. In so doing, we aim to mitigate the need for “scene setting” by each paper in the Symposium.

Readers of the Symposium will find here a synoptic guide to some basic facts about the distribution and extent of criminal violence, as well as socioeconomic conditions and police activity, in Chicago. We include, too, several intercity comparisons to facilitate exploration of whether Chicago presents uniquely dystopic dynamics. To the extent feasible, we rely on graphical representations of the data that are easily and quickly grasped. Our aim here is not to tender any single substantive claim but rather to provide some common ground for the analytic pieces that follow. We conclude by canvassing briefly the contributions made by specific pieces in the Symposium.

## I. THE DISTRIBUTION OF CRIME IN CHICAGO

A central component of the problem of urban violence is crime and, in particular, violent crimes such as homicide, assault, and sexual assault.<sup>9</sup> We therefore begin with a series of graphics summarizing the extent and distribution of crime in Chicago over a five-year period between 2014 and 2018. The first three figures depict the incidence of crime in three different offense categories: index crime (Figure 1), murder (Figure 2), and property crime

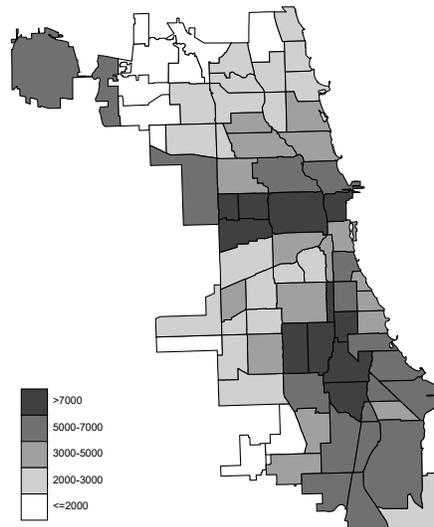
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<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., PATRICK SHARKEY, *UNEASY PEACE: THE GREAT CRIME DECLINE, THE RENEWAL OF CITY LIFE, AND THE NEXT WAR ON VIOLENCE* 162–72 (2018); Robert J. Sampson, Stephen W. Raudenbush & Felton Earls, *Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy*, 277 *SCIENCE* 918, 919 (1997).

<sup>9</sup> On the distinction between crime and violence, see generally FRANKLIN E. ZIMRING & GORDON HAWKINS, *CRIME IS NOT THE PROBLEM: LETHAL VIOLENCE IN AMERICA* (1997).

(Figure 3).<sup>10</sup> The figures report annual averages per 100,000 residents and are broken down by Chicago Community Area (CCA).<sup>11</sup> There are seventy-seven CCAs altogether, many of which overlap with several neighborhoods.<sup>12</sup> The idea is to present a picture of how different kinds of crime vary across relatively small geographic units. To aid readers unfamiliar with Chicago, we also include in an Appendix a map of Chicago labeling its community areas.

FIGURE 1: UCR INDEX CRIMES PER 100,000 PEOPLE BY CCA, 2014–2018



<sup>10</sup> The figures show average annual crime rates per 100,000 people between 2014 and 2018. Population data were obtained from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and are based on the American Community Survey. See *CSV Table: Chicago Community Area (CCA) CDS Data*, CMAP DATA HUB, <https://perma.cc/MB2Y-Q922>. Crime data were obtained from the Chicago Data Portal and include all offenses known to the Chicago Police Department. See *Crimes - 2001 to Present - Dashboard*, CHI. DATA PORTAL, <https://perma.cc/Y27V-8674>. Offense categories are defined as in the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports: index crimes include homicide, criminal sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson; murder includes homicide in the first and second degrees; and property crimes include burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

<sup>11</sup> The CCAs are defined and described at *Community Data Snapshots*, CHI. METRO. AGENCY PLAN., <https://perma.cc/HJK8-DQT6>.

<sup>12</sup> See *id.*

FIGURE 2: TOTAL MURDERS PER 100,000 PEOPLE BY CCA, 2014–2018

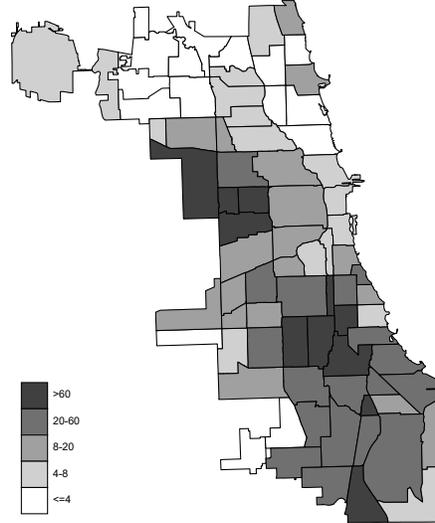
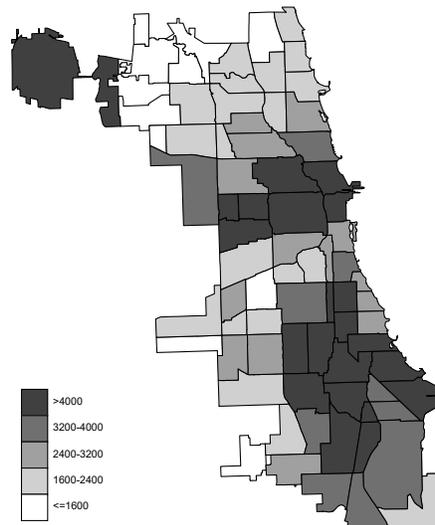


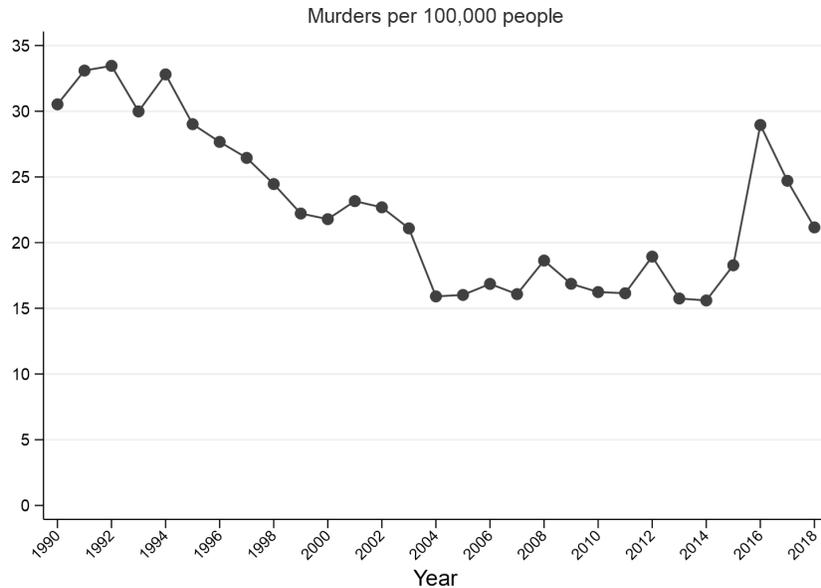
FIGURE 3: UCR PROPERTY CRIMES PER 100,000 PEOPLE BY CCA, 2014–2018



Readers will find it useful, we think, to refer back to these figures when considering data presented below on Chicago's socioeconomic characteristics, especially in Figures 8 through 11. Among other things, that comparison suggests that the general rule that most crime is intraracial—such that the costs of Black

crime, for example, largely fall on Black populations—holds in Chicago.<sup>13</sup> To give a sense of variation over time rather than space, Figure 4 presents the trend in Chicago’s murder rate between 1990 and 2018.<sup>14</sup>

FIGURE 4: MURDER RATE OVER TIME



## II. THE DISTRIBUTION OF POLICING IN CHICAGO

Policing often, albeit not inevitably, involves the use of coercion in the form of nonconsensual stops, frisks, and detentions, whether brief or prolonged. From the perspective of many residents, the coercion entailed by these policing interactions is as much a part of the phenomenology of urban violence as crime is.<sup>15</sup> Race, moreover, predicts exposure to the criminal justice system, the operation of which significantly affects the life course of Black

<sup>13</sup> See Robert M. O’Brien, *The Interracial Nature of Violent Crimes: A Reexamination*, 92 AM. J. SOC. 817, 829 (1987) (finding evidence that crime is more intraracial than would be anticipated).

<sup>14</sup> Data on historical murder rates were obtained from a project based at Princeton University. AMERICANVIOLENCE.ORG, <https://perma.cc/2NJK-6ZBT>.

<sup>15</sup> See, e.g., Amanda Geller, Jeffrey Fagan, Tom Tyler & Bruce G. Link, *Aggressive Policing and the Mental Health of Young Urban Men*, 104 AM. J. PUB. HEALTH 2321, 2324–25 (2014).

men in particular.<sup>16</sup> The distribution and efficacy of various forms of policing as a policy response to violent crime have been subject to intense debate in the Chicago context. Concerns have been raised about the degree of coercion employed in individual cases (especially street stops)<sup>17</sup> and the absence of other, less coercive forms of policing (such as timely responses to emergency calls).<sup>18</sup> A bundle of disparate services, policing might be simultaneously over- and undersupplied to communities in need.

The next three Figures provide a snapshot of policing on the ground in Chicago. The relevant data are not available at the CCA level and are provided instead by Chicago Police Department (CPD) district. CPD districts are slightly larger than CCAs. Figure 5 shows the number of CPD officers assigned to each district as of October 1, 2019. In Figure 6, for each district, we divide this number by the number of murders in 2018 to provide a sense of how responsive deployment is to violent crime.<sup>19</sup> Finally, Figure 7 reports the number of street stops by CPD officers for each police district in 2018, excluding stops of juveniles, which CPD redacts from the data it publishes.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> See Bruce Western & Christopher Muller, *Mass Incarceration, Macrosociology, and the Poor*, 647 ANNALS AM. ACAD. POL. & SOC. SCI. 166, 174–79 (2013).

<sup>17</sup> Concerns about the excessive use of street stops, for example, are decades old. See *Thompson v. City of Chicago*, 104 F.R.D. 404, 404 (N.D. Ill. 1984).

<sup>18</sup> See *Cent. Austin Neighborhood Ass'n v. City of Chicago*, 1 N.E.3d 976, 979 (Ill. App. Ct. 2013) (describing allegedly longer wait times for 911 calls in minority neighborhoods).

<sup>19</sup> Data on the number of police officers per district were obtained from the Office of Inspector General for the City of Chicago. See *Sworn CPD Members*, OFF. INSPECTOR GEN. INFO. PORTAL, <https://informationportal.igchicago.org/cpd-sworn-officer-unit-assignments> (last updated Oct. 1, 2021). Data on murders were obtained from the Chicago Data Portal and include all murders known to the CPD. See *Crimes - 2001 to Present - Dashboard*, *supra* note 10.

<sup>20</sup> The Supreme Court held that officers need reasonable articulable suspicion of criminality to make a nonconsensual street stop consistent with the Fourth Amendment. *Terry v. Ohio*, 392 U.S. 1, 21 (1968). The Fourth Amendment also requires that an officer “reasonably suspect that the person stopped is armed and dangerous” before conducting a protective pat down or frisk. *Arizona v. Johnson*, 555 U.S. 323, 326–27 (2009). Data on *Terry* stops were obtained from *ISR Data - 2018*, CHI. POLICE DEP'T, <https://perma.cc/J3WH-WZW4>.

FIGURE 5: NUMBER OF POLICE OFFICERS BY DISTRICT  
(AS OF OCTOBER 1, 2019)

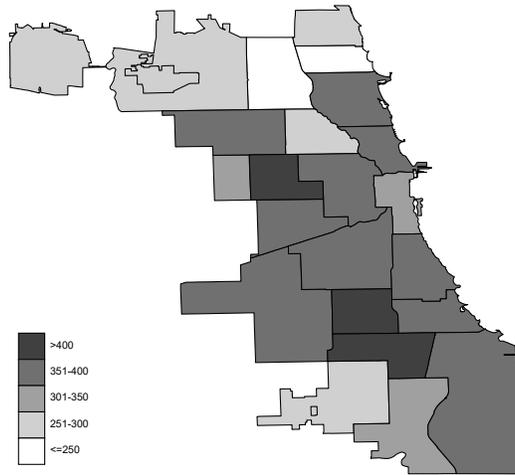


FIGURE 6: NUMBER OF POLICE OFFICERS PER MURDER  
BY DISTRICT

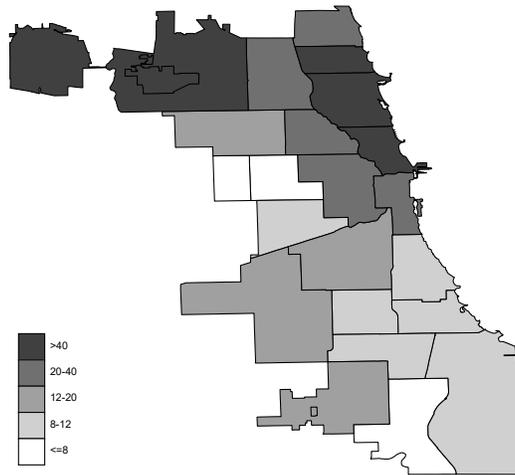
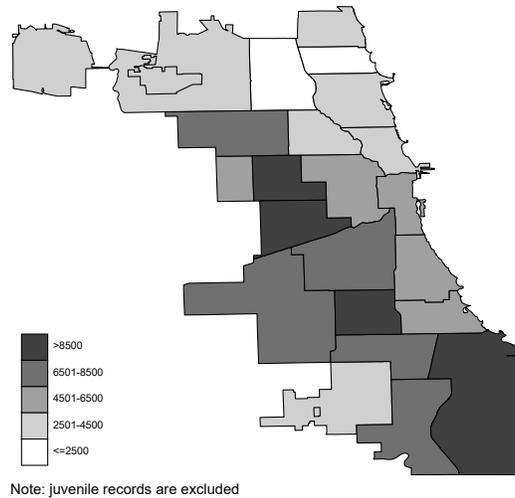


FIGURE 7: *TERRY* STOPS BY POLICE DISTRICT IN 2018

### III. THE SOCIOECONOMIC DIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Chicago is characterized by intense and intensely racialized socioeconomic disparities.<sup>21</sup> As one recent news report observed, Chicago's Red "L" Line is bookended by neighborhoods with average life expectancies that diverge by some thirty years.<sup>22</sup> Such disparities—and the concentrated disadvantage that they imply—are salient first as potential causes of violence. Further, understanding the appropriate policy responses to crime requires a careful comparison between policing and noncoercive interventions targeting those underlying conditions.

Because it would be onerous for the reader to examine detailed socioeconomic data on all CCAs, we select five neighborhoods that exhibit diversity over wealth, racial and ethnic demography, and policing experiences: Lincoln Park, Rogers Park, South Lawndale, Austin, and Englewood. Our five choices are illustrative of Chicago's rich heterogeneity (and we acknowledge that other choices would have served the same end). Table 1

<sup>21</sup> See generally ROBERT J. SAMPSON, *GREAT AMERICAN CITY: CHICAGO AND THE ENDURING NEIGHBORHOOD EFFECT* (2012) (describing racial character of concentrated poverty in Chicago).

<sup>22</sup> *A Ride Along Chicago's Red Line*, *ECONOMIST* (Oct 10, 2019), <https://perma.cc/CUB9-RGH2>.

provides a range of socioeconomic and public health statistics for these five CCAs as well as for the city as a whole.<sup>23</sup>

TABLE 1: SOCIOECONOMIC AND HEALTH STATISTICS FOR FIVE CCAs

	Chicago	Lincoln Park	Rogers Park	South Lawndale	Austin	Englewood
<b>Infant Mortality (per 1,000 live births)</b>	8.6	2.4	6.4	5.9	13.3	13.4
<b>Childhood Lead Poisoning (per 100)</b>	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.8	2.0	2.8
<b>Teen Birth Rate (per 1,000)</b>	50.1	2.1	40.8	77.5	81.8	105.3
<b>Diabetes-Related Mortality (per 100,000)</b>	71.9	50.1	77.1	65.0	113.9	101.8
<b>Crowded Housing (% occupied units)</b>	4.9	0.6	7.9	17.6	5.7	4.8
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	13.3	4.5	7.5	11.5	21.0	21.3
<b>Income per Capita (2011 USD)</b>	25,107	71,403	23,714	10,697	15,920	11,993

Figures 8 through 11 report some basic demographic and socioeconomic data from the American Community Survey for all CCAs. For each CCA, these figures report the largest racial group, median household income, share of the population above the federal poverty line, and share of the population with a high school diploma.<sup>24</sup> In these figures, darker colors are consistently indexed with increased socioeconomic disadvantage and decreased social well-being. This is done to underscore the correlations among these various measures.

<sup>23</sup> Data were obtained from the Chicago Department of Public Health via the Chicago Data Portal. Data definitions and reported years are infant mortalities per 1,000 live births (2005–2009), childhood lead poisoning per 100 children (2005–2008), births per 1,000 females aged 15–19 (2009), age-adjusted diabetes-related mortalities per 100,000 persons (2005–2009), crowded housing as percent of occupied housing (2007–2011), unemployment rate (2007–2011), and income per capita in 2011 dollars (2007–2011). See *Public Health Statistics- Selected Public Health Indicators by Chicago Community Area*, CHI. DATA PORTAL, <https://perma.cc/25HP-HMFQ>.

<sup>24</sup> Data on the largest racial group, median household income, and educational attainment were obtained from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and are derived from the American Community Survey. See *CSV Table: Chicago Community Area (CCA) CDS Data*, *supra* note 10. Data on poverty were obtained from the Chicago Department of Public Health via the Chicago Data Portal. See *Public Health Statistics- Selected Public Health Indicators by Chicago Community Area*, *supra* note 23.

FIGURE 8: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY CCA, 2013–2017

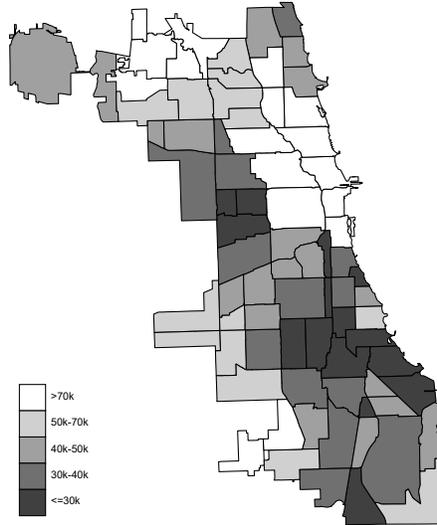


FIGURE 9: LARGEST RACIAL GROUP BY CCA, 2013–2017

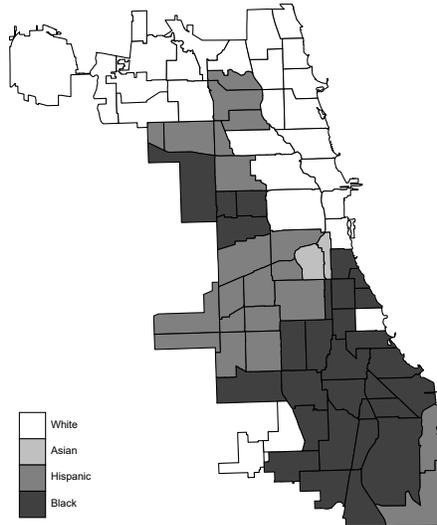


FIGURE 10: SHARE OF POPULATION ABOVE POVERTY LEVEL BY  
CCA, 2007–2011

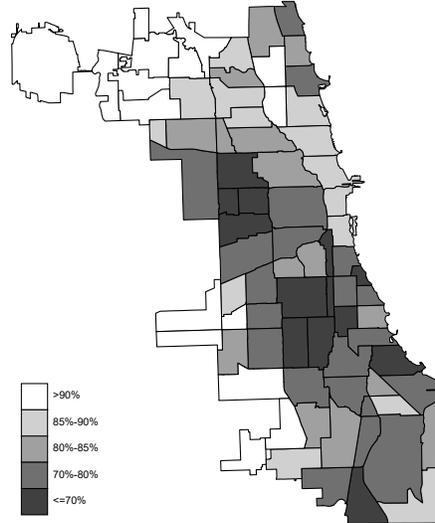
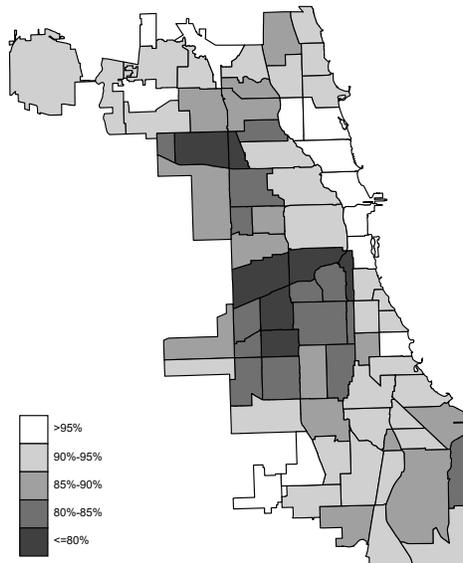


FIGURE 11: SHARE OF POPULATION WITH HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA  
BY CCA, 2013–2017



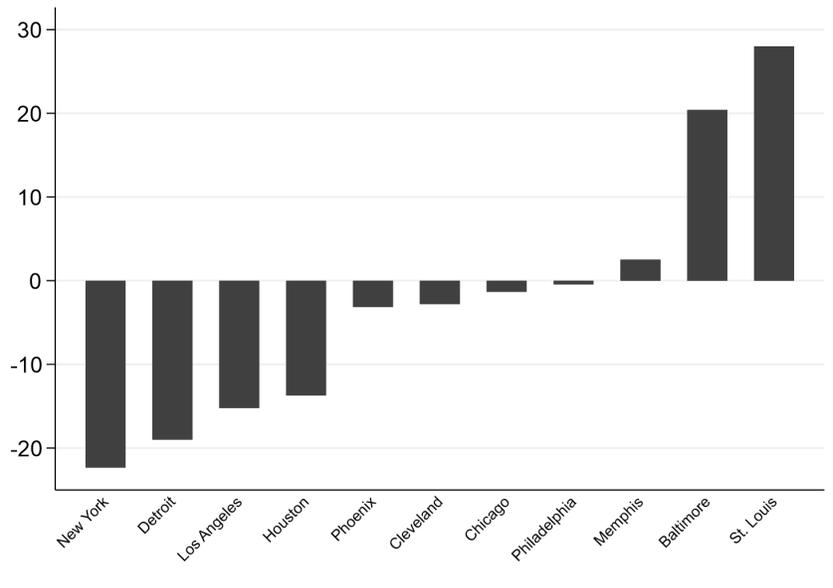
#### IV. INTERCITY COMPARISONS

As we noted at the threshold, Chicago's reputation as a distinctively violent metropolis rests on uncertain empirical ground.

On a per capita basis, for example, Chicago does not appear as violent as many other cities.<sup>25</sup> Our final presentation of data offers a suite of empirical comparisons that situate Chicago in the context of other cities' historical and contemporary experiences with urban violence and policing.

To that end, Figure 12 depicts the change in murder rate for eleven large U.S. cities between 1988 and 2018.<sup>26</sup> The cities are ordered by the size of the change in murder rate across these three decades, which encompass what has been called the “great American crime decline.”<sup>27</sup> Figure 13 plots the number of police officers per 100,000 residents for the same eleven cities using data from 2018.<sup>28</sup>

FIGURE 12: CHANGE IN MURDER RATE, 1988–2018



<sup>25</sup> See Gramlich & DeSilver, *supra* note 4.

<sup>26</sup> Data were obtained from the Uniform Crime Report's Offenses Known and Clearances datasets. *Jacob Kaplan's Concatenated Files: Uniform Crime Reporting Program Data: Offenses Known and Clearances by Arrest, 1960-2017*, INTER-UNIV. CONSORTIUM POL. & SOC. RSCH. (Dec. 12, 2021), <https://perma.cc/DTY4-7XC9>; UNIF. CRIME REPS., *Offenses Known to Law Enforcement*, FBI, <https://perma.cc/MYG5-N532>.

<sup>27</sup> FRANKLIN E. ZIMRING, *THE GREAT AMERICAN CRIME DECLINE* (2006); SHARKEY, *supra* note 8, at 5–7.

<sup>28</sup> UNIF. CRIME REPS., *About Law Enforcement Officers Killed & Assaulted, 2018*, FBI, <https://perma.cc/6SR8-9VNY>.

FIGURE 13: POLICE OFFICERS PER 100,000 PEOPLE

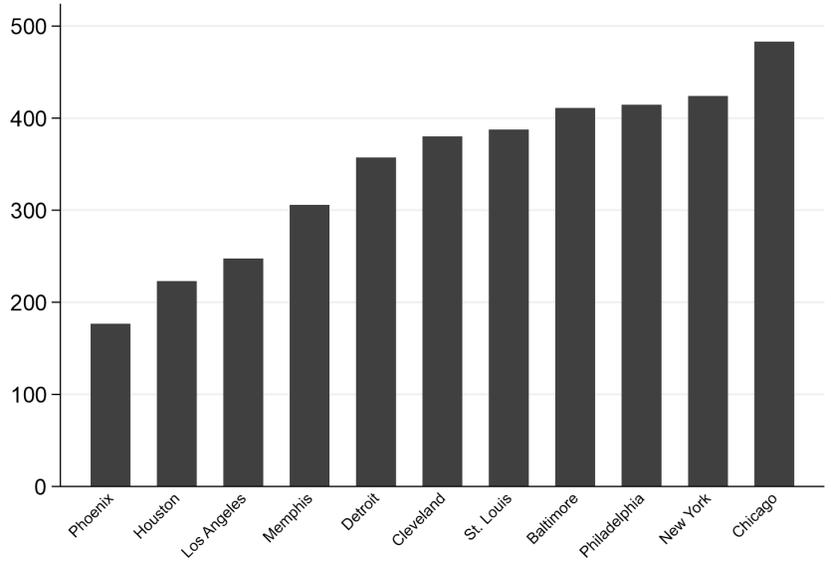
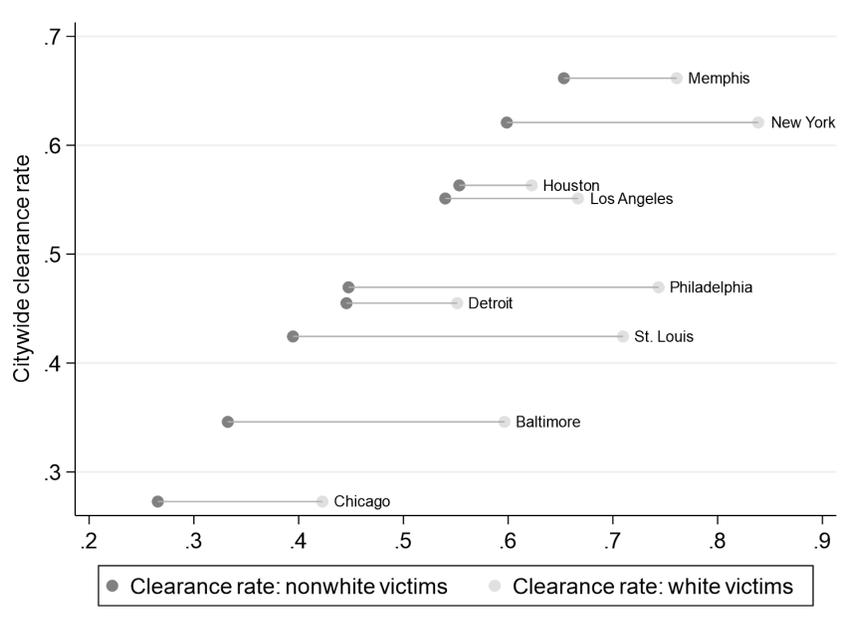


Figure 14 then compares clearance rates for homicides across nine major cities. Inspired by an insightful graphic in the *Washington Post*,<sup>29</sup> we display separately clearance rates for Black and White victims. We count a murder as “cleared” when the police have identified the perpetrator, even if they have not been able to arrest him (for example, because he has died). For every city examined, the clearance rate for Black victims is lower than for White victims. Hence, the figure captures both intercity and intracity racial variance in the efficacy of investigative responses to homicide. Data are aggregated from 2013 to 2016.

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<sup>29</sup> Steven Rich, Ted Mellnik, Kimbriell Kelly & Wesley Lowery, *Murder with Impunity*, WASH. POST (June 6, 2018), <https://perma.cc/W6ML-BW2U>. Data used in Figure 14 were collected by and downloaded from the *Washington Post*, <https://perma.cc/6S78-W428>.

FIGURE 14: CLEARANCE RATES FOR HOMICIDES BY RACE



## V. A SUMMARY GUIDE TO THE SYMPOSIUM

The papers in this Symposium take a number of different methodological and normative perspectives on the question of violence. All are anchored in some fashion in Chicago's experience; all, however, have implications beyond the city. We briefly summarize the directions explored in each piece.

The Symposium's opening contribution by Professors Robert Sampson and Brian Levy builds on Sampson's path-marking work in urban sociology<sup>30</sup> to demonstrate that a neighborhood's well-being depends not only on its own socioeconomic conditions but also on the conditions of neighborhoods that its residents visit and are visited by—connections that form through networks of everyday urban mobility.<sup>31</sup> The authors demonstrate that mobility-based socioeconomic disadvantage predicts rates of violence in Chicago's neighborhoods beyond residence-based disadvantage and other neighborhood characteristics.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> See generally SAMPSON, *supra* note 21.

<sup>31</sup> Robert J. Sampson & Brian L. Levy, *The Enduring Neighborhood Effect, Everyday Urban Mobility, and Violence in Chicago*, 89 U. CHI. L. REV. 323, 323 (2022).

<sup>32</sup> *Id.* at 344.

In the second paper of the Symposium, Professor Patrick Sharkey and Alisabeth Marsteller explore how trends in violence have been distributed across the varied neighborhoods of Chicago. Incorporating data from the hundred largest U.S. cities, their analysis focuses attention on the rise of violence that has occurred, in Chicago and most other U.S. cities, between 2014 and 2020.<sup>33</sup> Then, building on these empirical analyses, they reflect on ways in which concentrated violence is compounded by the spatial concentration of incarceration and police violence.<sup>34</sup>

Professor Wesley Skogan has been a keen and trenchant observer of community policing in Chicago since its inception in 1992. In his contribution to this Symposium, Skogan discusses the state of this style of policing in Chicago now, drawing on interviews, meeting observations, surveys of meeting participants, and analyses of crime, demographic, and beat-meeting-participation data gathered in 2014 and 2015.<sup>35</sup> Fitting the Chicago case into the larger universe of community policing and reform, Skogan's analysis develops some important lessons about why police reform can fail.

Taking a historical and empirical lens to the question of how violence has been framed by government as a policy problem in Chicago, Professor Robert Vargas, Chris Williams, Philip O'Sullivan, and Christina Cano argue that, across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the CPD and the mayor's office have misused data to distort the nature of the city's violence problem.<sup>36</sup> They contend more specifically that police and municipal leaders have aimed to influence public narratives over homicide in ways that repeatedly delegitimized Black social movements, expanded policing, framed homicide as an individual rather than systemic problem, and exclusively credited police for homicide decreases.<sup>37</sup>

The following paper is by a team of legal scholars and computer scientists—Alex Chohlas-Wood, Marissa Gerchick, Sharad Goel, Aziz Huq, Amy Shoemaker, Ravi Shroff, and Keniel Yao. It considers through an empirical lens the contributions of specific

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<sup>33</sup> Patrick Sharkey & Alisabeth Marsteller, *Neighborhood Inequality and Violence in Chicago, 1965–2020*, 89 U. CHI. L. REV. 349, 351 (2022).

<sup>34</sup> *Id.* at 372–74.

<sup>35</sup> Wesley G. Skogan, *Prospects for Reform? The Collapse of Community Policing in Chicago*, 89 U. CHI. L. REV. 383, 385 (2022).

<sup>36</sup> Robert Vargas, Chris Williams, Philip O'Sullivan & Christina Cano, *Capitalizing on Crisis: Chicago Policy Responses to Homicide Waves, 1920–2016*, 89 U. CHI. L. REV. 405, 406 (2022).

<sup>37</sup> *Id.* at 407.

policing tactics to urban violence, whether positive or negative. To explore this question, the authors offer a range of different empirical tests, each of which casts light on the marginal contribution of specific policing tactics to violent-crime control, racial disparities in the immediate experience of state violence, or risks of reform circumvention by police.<sup>38</sup>

The balance of papers train on questions of law rather than empirics. The first of these, by Professor Elise Boddie, brings to bear an analytic lens that is often ignored in a context where the specific police-individual encounter dominates the frame: how the racialization of space mediates those interactions. She explores this problem using the concept of racial territoriality, a form of discrimination that excludes people of color from—or marginalizes them within—spaces that are racialized as “White.”<sup>39</sup> These practices, she argues, criminalize not only Black people but also Black neighborhoods, ostensibly making them natural targets for the police.<sup>40</sup>

Professor LaToya Baldwin Clark’s paper draws attention to the lives of Black children, who experience a disproportionate measure of trauma as a consequence of urban violence. Baldwin Clark identifies U.S. public schooling as a structural arrangement that inflicts violence on Black children’s bodies and elaborates ways in which schools, as social institutions, play a critical role in perpetuating the inequality of opportunity and the unequal distribution of trauma that lead to the premature deaths of poor Black children.<sup>41</sup>

In her contribution, Professor Allegra McCleod draws upon the reflections, writing, organizing, and imaginative visions of contemporary advocates of police and prison abolition to develop an account of the causes of violence and ideas that promise meaningful change. She focuses on the sources of violence in longstanding, historically entrenched practices that create and maintain racialized poverty and economic inequality. She argues for creative work to confront violence by building solidaristic and equitable economic alternatives and by proliferating peaceful and

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<sup>38</sup> Alex Chohlas-Wood, Marissa Gerchick, Sharad Goel, Aziz Z. Huq, Amy Shoemaker, Ravi Shroff & Keniel Yao, *Identifying and Measuring Excessive and Discriminatory Policing*, 89 U. CHI. L. REV. 441, 451 (2022).

<sup>39</sup> Elise C. Boddie, *Racially Territorial Policing in Black Neighborhoods*, 89 U. CHI. L. REV. 477, 477 (2022).

<sup>40</sup> *Id.*

<sup>41</sup> LaToya Baldwin Clark, *Barbed Wire Fences: The Structural Violence of Education Law*, 89 U. CHI. L. REV. 499, 501 (2022).

constructive approaches to violence that do not rely on militarized law enforcement—thereby reallocating resources from militarism toward human flourishing and beginning a just transition to more environmentally sustainable forms of organizing life on earth.<sup>42</sup>

Finally, Professor Joseph Blocher takes up the question of why cities seem to be regulating guns less stringently than their residents would like. Rejecting the Second Amendment as a potential cause, Blocher posits instead that state preemption laws, which fully or partially eliminate cities' ability to regulate guns at the local level, have shaped contemporary gun regulation to a far greater extent.<sup>43</sup>

In their totality, these papers illuminate a sweeping array of empirical, theoretical, legal, and moral questions raised by the problem of urban violence. Even if academic work cannot alone directly reduce the painful human toll of such violence, we hope that the contribution made by these papers clarifies paths forward by which that doleful price can be mitigated.

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<sup>42</sup> Allegra McLeod, *An Abolitionist Critique of Violence*, 89 U. CHI. L. REV. 525, 530 (2022).

<sup>43</sup> Joseph Blocher, *Cities, Preemption, and the Statutory Second Amendment*, 89 U. CHI. L. REV. 557, 559 (2022).

APPENDIX: CHICAGO COMMUNITY AREAS

