

Neighborhood Inequality and Violence in Chicago, 1965–2020

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This Essay analyzes trends in violence from a spatial perspective, focusing on how changes in the murder rate are experienced by communities and groups of residents within the city of Chicago. The Essay argues that a spatial perspective is essential to understanding the causes and consequences of violence in the United States and begins by describing the social policies and theoretical mechanisms that explain the connection between concentrated disadvantage and violent crime.

The analysis expands on a long tradition of research in Chicago, and it studies the distribution of violence in the city's neighborhoods from 1965 to 2020. It additionally analyzes how the concentration of violence is overlaid with police violence and incarceration, creating areas of compounded disadvantage. Finally, it compares the recent trends of violence in Chicago with trends across the hundred largest cities in the United States.

This Essay concludes that addressing the challenge of extreme, persistent segregation by race, ethnicity, and income across Chicago's neighborhoods is necessary for producing a sustained reduction both in the city's overall level of violence and in the disparities in the levels of violence faced by different neighborhoods.

INTRODUCTION

To understand the causes and consequences of violence in the United States requires a spatial perspective. Violence is not evenly distributed across the communities of a city but rather is concentrated in neighborhoods that experience multiple forms of disadvantage, from poverty¹ to segregation² to joblessness.³ The

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¹ See Robert J. Sampson & Jeffrey D. Morenoff, *Durable Inequality: Spatial Dynamics, Social Processes, and the Persistence of Poverty in Chicago Neighborhoods*, in *POVERTY TRAPS* 176, 177–89 (Samuel Bowles et al. eds., 2006).

² *Id.* at 183.

³ See Lauren J. Krivo & Ruth D. Peterson, *Extremely Disadvantaged Neighborhoods and Urban Crime*, 75 *SOC. FORCES* 619, 631–41 (1996).

spatial concentration of violence is driven by long-term patterns of disinvestment in core community institutions that provide the foundation for collective life. This creates neighborhoods of concentrated disadvantage that are vulnerable to violence. And the impact of “[v]iolence reverberates around entire communities,” affecting the developmental outcomes of children throughout neighborhoods and altering daily life and social interactions on streets, sidewalks, and playgrounds, and in schools, parks, and local businesses.⁴

A spatial perspective on violence means that aggregated trends in the nation as a whole—or even in individual cities—are not sufficient to capture how changes in violence are experienced in different types of neighborhoods and by different segments of the population. When violence rose in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s, it was most extreme in areas of concentrated poverty.⁵ When violence fell from the 1990s to the 2010s, the available evidence suggests that the most-disadvantaged communities experienced the greatest declines in violent crime.⁶ We now write after a period (spanning 2014 to 2020) in which violence has risen to the highest levels of this century, but little is yet known about how the rise in violence has been distributed across space.

As part of this Symposium on violence in Chicago, this Essay describes how these trends in violence have been distributed across the city’s neighborhoods. The sharp shifts in violence that have occurred nationwide are mirrored in Chicago, which saw violence rise through the 1990s, then fall through the mid-2010s, and then rise again after 2014. We adopt a spatial perspective to analyze these trends, focusing on how changes in violence are experienced by communities and by groups of residents within the city. This approach follows a long tradition of research set in Chicago’s neighborhoods. In the first half of the twentieth century, Chicago School Professors Robert Park and Ernest Burgess analyzed the sorting of Chicago’s population through the neighborhoods of the city;⁷ Professors St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton

⁴ See PATRICK SHARKEY, *UNEASY PEACE: THE GREAT CRIME DECLINE, THE RENEWAL OF CITY LIFE, AND THE NEXT WAR ON VIOLENCE* 76–80, 87–90 (2018).

⁵ See Krivo & Peterson, *supra* note 3, at 626–31; see also RUTH D. PETERSON & LAUREN J. KRIVO, *DIVERGENT SOCIAL WORLDS: NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME AND THE RACIAL-SPATIAL DIVIDE* 33–37 (2010).

⁶ See Michael Friedson & Patrick Sharkey, *Violence and Neighborhood Disadvantage After the Crime Decline*, 660 *ANNALS AM. ACAD. POL. & SOC. SCI.* 341, 350 (2015).

⁷ ROBERT E. PARK, ERNEST W. BURGESS & RODERICK D. MCKENZIE, *THE CITY* 47–62 (1925).

documented the forces that affected daily social and economic life in the city's racially segregated South Side;⁸ and Professors Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay demonstrated how stable features of specific neighborhoods led to persistently elevated rates of delinquency—no matter which groups of residents moved into and out of the neighborhood.⁹ More recently, Professor William Julius Wilson has put forth his theory on the transformation of urban poverty, using Chicago as his most prominent case study;¹⁰ Professor Mary Pattillo has shown how proximity to areas of concentrated violence altered the lives of the Black middle class;¹¹ Professor Robert Vargas has focused attention on local political power and its relationship to patterns of violence;¹² and Professor Robert Sampson has developed and tested his groundbreaking theories on community social processes and violence with data from Chicago's neighborhoods.¹³

To be clear, Chicago is not representative of U.S. cities, and we will bring in data from the hundred largest U.S. cities in the last Part of this Essay to analyze the most recent trends in violence from a national perspective. However, we believe that there is value in building on the decades of research conducted in Chicago, a city that has served as a laboratory for social scientists for more than a century; features rigid segregation by race, ethnicity, and income; and now has more annual murders than any other city in the nation.

Beginning with the fact that violence is concentrated in areas characterized by racial segregation and economic disadvantage, the first Part describes the historical forces and theoretical mechanisms linking concentrated disadvantage and violence in urban neighborhoods in the United States. Next, we turn to data from Chicago's neighborhoods. Pulling together several data sets, we analyze how violence has been distributed across Chicago's neighborhoods over the past fifty-six years. We then expand outward

⁸ See generally ST. CLAIR DRAKE & HORACE R. CLAYTON, *BLACK METROPOLIS: A STUDY OF NEGRO LIFE IN A NORTHERN CITY* (1945).

⁹ See CLIFFORD R. SHAW & HENRY D. MCKAY, *JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND URBAN AREAS* 67–89 (rev. ed. 1969).

¹⁰ See generally WILLIAM JULIUS WILSON, *THE TRULY DISADVANTAGED* (1987); William Julius Wilson, *When Work Disappears*, 111 *POL. SCI. Q.* 567 (1996).

¹¹ MARY PATTILLO, *BLACK PICKET FENCES: PRIVILEGE AND PERIL AMONG THE BLACK MIDDLE CLASS* 29 (2013).

¹² See generally ROBERT VARGAS, *WOUNDED CITY: VIOLENT TURF WARS IN A CHICAGO BARRIO* (2016).

¹³ See generally ROBERT J. SAMPSON, *GREAT AMERICAN CITY: CHICAGO AND THE ENDURING NEIGHBORHOOD EFFECT* (2012).

to incorporate data from the hundred largest U.S. cities, and we focus on the rise of violence that has occurred in Chicago and most other U.S. cities from 2014 to 2020. Lastly, we consider the way that concentrated violence is compounded by the spatial concentration of incarceration and police violence.

I. THE SPATIAL LINK BETWEEN CONCENTRATED DISADVANTAGE AND VIOLENCE

In cities with relatively high levels of violence, some communities are untouched by shootings and assaults, while others experience extreme incidents of violence on a regular basis. One of the most robust findings about violence is its concentration within a small number of street segments, intersections, city blocks, and neighborhoods.¹⁴ The spatial distribution of violence has been shown to persist over long periods of time and to be tightly linked with segregation by economic status, race, and ethnicity.¹⁵ The question that motivates this Section of the Essay is why.

A. Abandonment and Punishment

From the 1940s to the 1960s, a set of social and economic forces combined with federal, state, and local policies to create a crisis in U.S. cities. Pollution from factories and cars turned skies hazy and made rivers toxic. Federal investment in the interstate highway system federal subsidies for home mortgages led to a large-scale movement of people and firms out of central cities.¹⁶ The migration from central cities was largely restricted to White middle-class residents who were able to afford a car and take advantage of subsidies for home ownership, but it also included Black middle-class residents who took advantage of advances in

¹⁴ See Anthony A. Braga, Andrew V. Papachristos & David M. Hureau, *The Concentration and Stability of Gun Violence at Micro Places in Boston, 1980–2008*, 26 J. QUANT. CRIMINOLOGY 33, 48 (2010); see also Anthony A. Braga, David M. Hureau & Andrew V. Papachristos, *The Relevance of Micro Places to Citywide Robbery Trends: A Longitudinal Analysis of Robbery Incidents at Street Corners and Block Faces in Boston*, 48 J. RSCH. CRIME & DELINQ. 7, 19–24 (2011); David Weisburd, Shawn Bushway, Cynthia Lum & Sue-Ming Yang, *Trajectories of Crime at Places: A Longitudinal Study of Street Segments in the City of Seattle*, 42 CRIMINOLOGY 283, 310 (2004) (examining data from Seattle to find that “crime is tightly clustered in specific places in urban areas” and that “there is a high degree of stability of crime at micro places over time”).

¹⁵ See generally Sampson & Morenoff, *supra* note 1. See also SAMPSON, *supra* note 13, at 97–120.

¹⁶ See Charles J. Orlebeke, *The Evolution of Low-Income Housing Policy, 1949 to 1999*, 11 HOUS. POL’Y DEBATE 489, 497 (2000); Wilson, *supra* note 10, at 583; WILSON, *supra* note 10, at 50–55, 135–38.

fair housing to move into neighborhoods outside central cities. This class-based migration not only reduced revenue for city governments but also led to a new form of concentrated poverty among those left behind. As central-city populations shifted and steady jobs in the manufacturing sector began to disappear, unemployment and dependence on welfare became more common, and poverty, homelessness, and addiction became more visible on city streets.¹⁷ Violence rose sharply in the 1960s and continued to rise through the early 1990s.¹⁸

Political power at the state level shifted from central cities to suburbs, and the people and communities left behind lost political influence and government funding. As city governments were starved of resources, public-housing complexes and schools deteriorated, sidewalks were not maintained, and public parks were left untended. The crisis in U.S. cities culminated in a wave of anger, grief, protest, destruction, and violence that spread through hundreds of U.S. cities from 1963 through 1968, peaking in the days after Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination.¹⁹

A national approach to dealing with the urban crisis formed and solidified during this period. Instead of responding to this set of challenges with investments in central-city communities, the federal government disengaged from urban issues and responded with punitive social policies that have exacerbated the problems faced by urban populations—an approach characterized by abandonment and punishment.²⁰

The abandonment of central cities began under President Richard Nixon, who argued that urban neighborhoods should be left on their own to deal with rising poverty and joblessness. President Nixon's advisor Daniel Patrick Moynihan labeled this

¹⁷ See generally WILSON, *supra* note 10 (discussing the economic, demographic, and political forces that led to concentrated poverty in central-city neighborhoods). See also BARRY BLUESTONE & BENNETT HARRISON, *THE DEINDUSTRIALIZATION OF AMERICA* 49–66 (1982).

¹⁸ See Patrick Sharkey & Robert J. Sampson, *Violence, Cognition, and Neighborhood Inequality in America*, in *SOCIAL NEUROSCIENCE* 320, 328 (Russell K. Schutt et al. eds., 2015).

¹⁹ See Lorraine Boissoneault, *Martin Luther King Jr.'s Assassination Sparked Uprisings in Cities Across America*, *SMITHSONIAN MAG.* (Apr. 4, 2018), <https://perma.cc/C4VF-RY8L>.

²⁰ See Loïc J.D. Wacquant, *Negative Social Capital: State Breakdown and Social Destitution in America's Urban Core*, 13 *NETH. J. HOUS. & BUILT ENV'T* 25, 28–29 (1998) (discussing “state abandonment,” which contributed to “organizational decline” and rising joblessness and poverty in the ghettos of major cities). These patterns were exacerbated by the decline in the influence of central cities in state-governmental policy. See Margaret Weir, *Central Cities' Loss of Power in State Politics*, 2 *CITYSCAPE*, May 1996, at 23, 24–26.

approach when he called for a period of “benign neglect.”²¹ Federal aid to cities rose substantially from the end of World War II to the mid-1960s, but it has been wildly erratic in subsequent decades, especially for housing.²² The fluctuations in aid, combined with the efforts of several presidential administrations to effectively incapacitate the Department of Housing and Urban Development, made it difficult for local housing agencies to create sustained financial support for public housing projects, contributing to the rapid deterioration of projects in many central cities.

Beyond the issue of federal aid to cities, the scale of total federal spending on social transfers has consistently lagged behind other developed nations.²³ In the 1960s, several prominent reports and proposals were put forth to confront the challenge of urban inequality with massive federal investment and collective mobilization, but these plans never became law.²⁴ In the subsequent decades, federal investments in central cities have typically been implemented on a small scale and only for a limited time frame. Never has there been a systematic effort to deal with the problem of urban poverty through sustained, large-scale investments in the people and the institutions of the nation’s urban neighborhoods. Our national urban policy has been characterized by abandonment rather than investment.

Punishment, on the other hand, has been the most consistent response to the challenges of urban crime, violence, and poverty. Criminal justice policy is carried out primarily at the state and local levels, yet the approach and priorities of the federal government influence the policy regimes that are implemented by state, county, and city governments, prosecutors, and police departments. One of the clear signals of the punitive response to the urban crisis came late in Lyndon Johnson’s presidency, when he signed the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968.²⁵ The Act allocated \$400 million in grants to strengthen law

²¹ DEAN J. KOTLOWSKI, NIXON’S CIVIL RIGHTS 173 (2001).

²² See CHARLES M. HAAR & DEMETRIUS S. IATRIDIS, HOUSING THE POOR IN SUBURBIA: PUBLIC POLICY AT THE GRASS ROOTS, 319–22 (1974); Demetrios Caraley, *Washington Abandons the Cities*, 107 POL. SCI. Q. 1, 7–12 (1992); ALEXANDER VON HOFFMAN, HOUSE BY HOUSE, BLOCK BY BLOCK: THE REBIRTH OF AMERICA’S URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS 7–14 (2003).

²³ John Clegg & Adaner Usmani, *The Economic Origins of Mass Incarceration*, CATALYST, Fall 2019, at 9, 43.

²⁴ *Id.* at 34–40; see also NAT’L ADVISORY COMM’N ON CIV. DISORDERS, REPORT OF THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ON CIVIL DISORDERS 11–13, 229–63 (1968).

²⁵ Pub. L. No. 90-351, 82 Stat. 197 (codified as amended in scattered sections of the U.S. Code).

enforcement, provided forgivable loans and grants for officers to receive training and education, and allowed federal funds to be used to bolster police salaries and train officers “to ease tensions in ghetto neighborhoods.”²⁶ This change in approach reflected a widespread shift in public opinion, as both Black and White Americans expressed increasingly punitive attitudes as violence began to rise in the 1960s.²⁷

The punitive response to the urban crisis escalated under President Nixon. It then turned into a large-scale “War on Drugs” under President Ronald Reagan and persisted under subsequent administrations.²⁸ President Bill Clinton added tens of thousands of new police officers to U.S. streets when he signed the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994²⁹ (VCCA). The Act provided grants encouraging states to implement reforms that would require individuals convicted of violent crimes to serve at least 85% of their sentences.³⁰

Although these pieces of federal legislation have received much attention, it was state and local policies that played the greatest role in contributing to the exponential rise in the rate of incarceration in the United States since 1970. Harsh state policies, such as eliminating parole and establishing mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses and violent crimes, combined with more aggressive policing and prosecution at the local level to push more Americans into the criminal legal system and keep them in the system for longer.³¹

While the most consequential criminal justice policies did not come from the federal government, it is essential to recognize the connections between the local shift toward punishment and the federal shift toward abandoning central cities. It is precisely

²⁶ Statement by the President upon Signing the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, 1 PUB. PAPERS 725 (June 19, 1968).

²⁷ See PETER K. ENNS, INCARCERATION NATION 31–39 (2016); Clegg & Usmani, *supra* note 23, at 30–32. See generally JAMES FORMAN JR., LOCKING UP OUR OWN (2017) (describing how Black officials and community leaders played a role in shaping public opinion and punitive criminal enforcement policies); Vesla M. Weaver, *Frontlash: Race and the Development of Punitive Crime Policy*, 21 STUD. AM. POL. DEV. 230 (2007) (discussing the politics and development of punitive crime policy).

²⁸ See ELIZABETH HINTON, FROM THE WAR ON POVERTY TO THE WAR ON CRIME 307–32 (2016).

²⁹ Pub. L. No. 103-322, 108 Stat. 1796 (codified as amended in scattered sections of the U.S. Code).

³⁰ VCCA § 20102, 108 Stat. at 1816.

³¹ See JOHN F. PFAFF, LOCKED IN: THE TRUE CAUSES OF MASS INCARCERATION—AND HOW TO ACHIEVE REAL REFORM 21–31 (2017).

because the federal government did not take the difficult steps required to confront urban poverty, economic dislocation, and the resulting violence and unrest that local governments and officials were left to rely on the police and prisons. Instead of a policy regime based on justice and investment, the nation chose a regime based on abandonment and punishment.

B. Mechanisms Linking Concentrated Disadvantage with Violence

The political, social, and economic forces outlined in the previous Section created the conditions for concentrated disadvantage, institutional decay, and violent crime.³² The first pathway through which these relationships operate is institutional. As political influence and state resources decline, core community institutions like schools, daycare centers, parks, playgrounds, libraries, and other features of the built environment are less likely to be supported and maintained. Fluctuations in funding for public and affordable housing, for instance, led to declining conditions of housing developments in many central cities.³³ Flagging investment in local infrastructure leads to poorly lit spaces, abandoned lots, and empty buildings that are vulnerable to becoming areas of violence.³⁴ Ethnographic research in Chicago and Philadelphia demonstrates how the threat of violence leads residents to retreat

³² See PETER DREIER, JOHN MOLLENKOPF & TODD SWANSTROM, PLACE MATTERS 107–12 (2001); see also DOUGLAS S. MASSEY & NANCY A. DENTON, AMERICAN APARTHEID 9 (1993) (arguing that racial segregation is “the key structural factor[] responsible for the perpetuation of black poverty”); PATRICK SHARKEY, STUCK IN PLACE 5 (2013) (examining how “political decisions and social policies have led to severe disinvestment and persistent, rigid segregation”). See generally Robert J. Sampson & William Julius Wilson, *Toward a Theory of Race, Crime, and Urban Inequality*, in CRIME AND INEQUALITY 37 (John Hagan & Ruth D. Peterson eds., 1995) (developing a conceptual model to explain the connection between concentrated disadvantage, segregation, and violence).

³³ See Caraley, *supra* note 22, at 7–12; Jason DeParle, *Slamming the Door*, N.Y. TIMES (Oct. 20, 1996), <https://perma.cc/58NQ-UNWC>; DREIER ET AL., *supra* note 32, at 107–12; ALEX F. SCHWARTZ, HOUSING POLICY IN THE UNITED STATES 125–43 (2d ed. 2006); VON HOFFMAN, *supra* note 22, at 7–14. See generally Orlebeke, *supra* note 16.

³⁴ See generally Michelle C. Kondo, Elena Andreyeva, Eugenia C. South, John M. MacDonald & Charles C. Branas, *Neighborhood Interventions to Reduce Violence*, 39 ANN. REV. PUB. HEALTH 253 (2018). See also Aaron Chalfin, Benjamin Hansen, Jason Lerner & Lucie Parker, *Reducing Crime Through Environmental Design: Evidence from a Randomized Experiment of Street Lighting in New York City*, J. QUANT. CRIMINOLOGY, Jan. 11, 2021, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10940-020-09490-6>; ERIC KLINENBERG, PALACES FOR THE PEOPLE: HOW SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE CAN HELP FIGHT INEQUALITY, POLARIZATION, AND THE DECLINE OF CIVIC LIFE 63–71 (2018).

from public spaces, creating “no-go zones” that deteriorate over time and schools that resemble prisons.³⁵

A second pathway operates through social processes at the level of street blocks and neighborhoods. Concentrated poverty can disrupt local processes of community mobilization and informal social control that limit violence. Sampson’s research on collective efficacy demonstrates how the concentration of social and economic disadvantage can undermine social cohesion and trust among residents, making it less likely that they will take active steps to reinforce shared expectations for behavior and work together to act in the community’s common interest.³⁶ Using data from clusters of neighborhoods in Chicago, Sampson and his collaborators showed that collective efficacy mediates the relationship between community residents’ economic and demographic characteristics and violence, a finding that has been replicated in a wide array of settings and time periods.

Theory on concentrated disadvantage, institutional decay, and collective efficacy leads to a clear conclusion: violence is a consequence of urban inequality. It is a product of segregation, disinvestment, abandonment, and the resulting decline in community institutions and community organization. But the relationship between disadvantage and violence is reciprocal—urban inequality creates the conditions for violence, and community violence then amplifies inequality, creating the potential for self-reinforcing change.³⁷

The amplifying effects of violence on social and economic inequality work through both direct and indirect pathways. Community violence affects the outcomes of young people living within violent neighborhoods directly, with consequences for cognitive functioning, academic performance, stress hormones, and sleep.³⁸

³⁵ See ELIJAH ANDERSON, *STREETWISE: RACE, CLASS, AND CHANGE IN AN URBAN COMMUNITY* 1–2, 237–52 (1990); DAVID J. HARDING, *LIVING THE DRAMA: COMMUNITY, CONFLICT, AND CULTURE AMONG INNER-CITY BOYS* 72, 151 (2010); ERIC KLINENBERG, *HEAT WAVE: A SOCIAL AUTOPSY OF DISASTER IN CHICAGO* 56 (2002); LOÏC WACQUANT, *URBAN OUTCASTS: A COMPARATIVE SOCIOLOGY OF ADVANCED MARGINALITY* 53–56 (2008).

³⁶ See generally Robert J. Sampson, Stephen W. Raudenbush & Felton Earls, *Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy*, 277 *SCIENCE* 918 (1997).

³⁷ See Sharkey & Sampson, *supra* note 18, at 329.

³⁸ See Patrick Sharkey, *The Long Reach of Violence: A Broader Perspective on Data, Theory, and Evidence on the Prevalence and Consequences of Exposure to Violence*, 1 *ANN. REV. CRIMINOLOGY* 85, 93–97 (2018); Jennifer A. Heissel, Patrick T. Sharkey, Gerard Torrats-Espinosa, Kathryn Grant & Emma K. Adam, *Violence and Vigilance: The Acute Effects of Community Violent Crime on Sleep and Cortisol*, 89 *CHILD DEV.* e323, e326–e330

These acute impacts of violent events translate into long-term consequences, as demonstrated in research showing the impact that growing up in violent neighborhoods has on children's academic trajectories and economic outcomes in early adulthood.³⁹

Beyond the direct effects of violence on community residents, the prevalence of violence leads to disinvestment in communities. Community violence translates into fear of public spaces and leads families to seek to leave their neighborhoods.⁴⁰ The threat of victimization alters young people's behavior and network formation, leading some to form friendships with older peers to obtain protection in public spaces.⁴¹ Increases in murder and robbery in cities are strong predictors of migration from central cities,⁴² which amplifies racial, ethnic, and economic segregation. As spaces empty out, business activity dries up, entry-level jobs become scarce, and physical signs of abandonment and disorder alter the perception of a community in ways that can persist for decades.⁴³

In the context of U.S. cities, concentrated disadvantage and violence frequently lead to a shift in the central institutions and actors within a neighborhood. Representatives of the criminal justice system—including police officers, parole officers, school safety officers, and detectives—become dominant figures in public spaces, and squad cars, sirens, and police tape become common features of the landscape.⁴⁴

(2018) (describing the effects of violence on sleep). See generally Patrick Sharkey, *The Acute Effect of Local Homicides on Children's Cognitive Performance* 107 PROC. NAT'L ACAD. SCI. 11733 (2010) (exploring the effects of local violence on cognitive functioning).

³⁹ See generally Gerard Torrats-Espinosa, *Crime and Inequality in Academic Achievement Across School Districts in the United States*, 57 DEMOGRAPHY 123 (2020). See also Patrick Sharkey & Gerard Torrats-Espinosa, *The Effect of Violent Crime on Economic Mobility*, 102 J. URB. ECON. 22, 29–31 (2017).

⁴⁰ See WESLEY G. SKOGAN, *DISORDER AND DECLINE* 65–84 (1990). See generally Jeffrey D. Morenoff & Robert J. Sampson, *Violent Crime and the Spatial Dynamics of Neighborhood Transition: Chicago, 1970-1990*, 76 SOC. FORCES 31 (1997).

⁴¹ HARDING, *supra* note 35, at 81–84.

⁴² See Julie Berry Cullen & Steven D. Levitt, *Crime, Urban Flight, and the Consequences for Cities*, 81 REV. ECON. & STAT. 159, 165–66 (1999); see also Robert J. Sampson & John D. Wooldredge, *Evidence That High Crime Rates Encourage Migration Away from Central Cities*, 70 SOCIO. & SOC. RSCH. 310, 310–14 (1986); Allen E. Liska & Paul E. Bellair, *Violent-Crime Rates and Racial Composition: Convergence over Time*, 101 AM. J. SOCIO. 578, 599–600 (1995).

⁴³ See SAMPSON, *supra* note 13, at 146 (finding that perceptions of disorder appear to be “a mechanism of durable inequality”).

⁴⁴ In his book *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City*, Professor Elijah Anderson portrays the police as a presence weaved into the disadvantaged urban neighborhoods. See ELIJAH ANDERSON, *CODE OF THE STREET: DECENCY,*

In the next Part, we document how the connection between community characteristics and violence has changed in the neighborhoods of Chicago over fifty-six years. We then expand outward to the hundred largest cities in the nation and document how the rise of violence since 2014 has been experienced across segments of the population characterized by race, ethnicity, and income.

II. NEIGHBORHOOD INEQUALITY AND VIOLENCE IN CHICAGO, 1965–2020

Our analysis begins with a focus on trends in murder in Chicago from 1965 to 2020. Murder counts by 1990 census tracts from the years 1965–1995 are from the Homicides in Chicago data set created and published by Carolyn Rebecca Block and Professor Richard Block, and murder data from more recent years are from publicly available sources including the Chicago Data Portal.⁴⁵ Because census-tract boundaries change over time, we convert all census tracts to 2010 tract boundaries using the Longitudinal Tract Database.⁴⁶

The murder rate is calculated by summing the total number of murders within a specific geography and time period, dividing by the total population of that geography in the time period, and then either multiplying the resulting quotient by 100,000 for Chicago overall or multiplying the resulting quotient by 10,000 for Chicago’s neighborhoods. The tract-level rate is used as the basis for two additional measures: average neighborhood rate and average exposure rate.

The neighborhood rate is a measure of average violent crime within a geographic space, which, for our analysis, is a census tract. To create the neighborhood rate, census tracts are divided into groups of “poor” and “nonpoor” neighborhoods based on

VIOLENCE, AND THE MORAL LIFE OF THE INNER CITY 22 (2000) (describing a police car parked at a corner by a charred McDonald’s sign); *id.* at 140 (describing police presence at a funeral of a victim of a violent crime and how “the cops sit and watch the crowd come and go”); *id.* at 320 (“In the community the police are often on the streets.”). *See generally* ALICE GOFFMAN, *ON THE RUN: FUGITIVE LIFE IN AN AMERICAN CITY* (2014).

⁴⁵ Carolyn Rebecca Block & Richard L. Block, *Homicides in Chicago, 1965–1995 (ICPSR 6399)*, NAT’L ARCHIVE CRIM. JUST. DATA (July 6, 2005), <https://perma.cc/39KB-SRC9>; *Crimes - 2001 to Present*, CHI. DATA PORTAL (Sept. 4, 2021), <https://perma.cc/2Q3W-UBEK>. We include all incidents where the Description field includes the terms “MURDER” or “HOMICIDE” and does not include “RECKLESS,” and the Primary Type field includes the terms “MURDER” or “HOMICIDE.”

⁴⁶ John Logan, Zengwang Xu & Brian Stults, *Census Geography: Bridging Data for Census Tracts Across Time*, DIVERSITY & DISPARITIES, <https://perma.cc/H2TS-HJXH>.

whether at least 30% of the neighborhoods' residents were in poverty. In addition, neighborhoods are divided into "majority-Black" and "majority-White" groups based on whether at least 50% of the neighborhoods' residents were Black or White. We calculate these neighborhood percentages using a five-year rolling average to reduce any noise due to year-to-year changes in neighborhood classifications. The average neighborhood rate is the average of the murder rates for each group of neighborhoods—poor, nonpoor, majority Black, and majority White—in each year. Comparing neighborhood murder rates between census tracts with different population attributes can reveal the extent to which geographic segregation by violence is related to geographic segregation by poverty and by race or ethnicity.

The exposure rate is a population group's average rate of exposure to murder across all census tracts in which members of that group reside, which is computed separately for different groups within the population: all residents, residents living below the poverty line ("poor"), residents not living below the poverty line ("nonpoor"), Black residents, White residents, and residents of all other racial and ethnic groups.⁴⁷ The exposure rate is calculated by taking the average murder rate of all census tracts weighted by the fraction of the city's residents in that group who reside in each tract, as represented by the following equation:

$$\sum_{j=1}^n V_j \left(\frac{P_j}{P_t} \right).$$

Here, j is a census tract in Chicago, V_j is the murder rate per 10,000 residents in tract j , P_j is the total population in tract j of the group for which the exposure is being calculated, and P_t is the total population of the group in the entire city. The exposure rate of a group of residents, when combined with the average murder rate of neighborhoods in which that group is the majority, is an indication of how strongly the group's exposure to violence is related to geographic segregation.

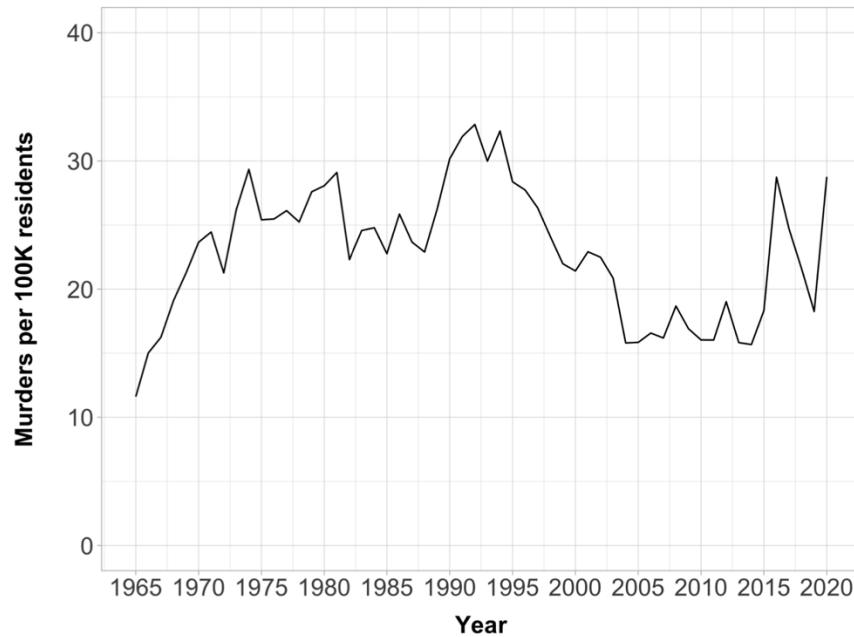
A. Stability in the Spatial Distribution of Violence

Figure 1 shows the murder rate in the city as a whole over a period spanning from 1965 to 2020. From the 1960s through the

⁴⁷ Other racial categories are not included because the 1970 Census did not collect accurate data on the racial status of people who aren't White or Black. All other races are indicated as "[a]ll other races population." U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, *Census Users' Dictionary*, in 1970 CENSUS: USERS' GUIDE 72, 95 (1970), <https://perma.cc/N2CM-KFSY>.

early 1990s, the murder rate rose from 11.6 per 100,000 to its peak of 32.8 murders per 100,000 in 1992. The city then experienced a sharp decline as the murder rate fell to 15.7 murders per 100,000 in 2014. In the six years since, the murder rate has risen back to 28.8 murders per 100,000, erasing most of the earlier decline in violence.

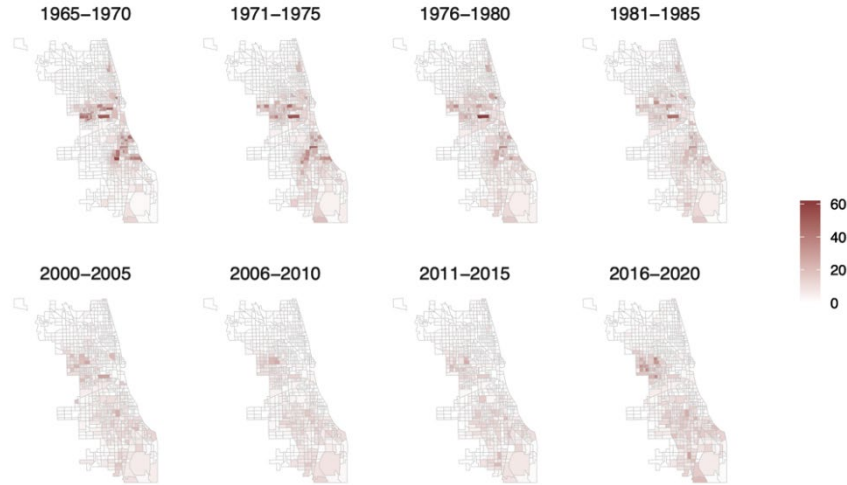
FIGURE 1: MURDERS PER 100,000 RESIDENTS IN CHICAGO, 1965–2020.



Despite the stark changes in violence that the city has been through, the spatial distribution of murders within the city has been extremely stable. Figure 2 displays heat maps showing the number of murders in Chicago's census tracts in five-year increments from 1965 to 1985 and from 2000 to 2020.⁴⁸ Although the precise locations of the most extreme violence within the city have shifted over time, the maps reveal a set of neighborhoods in the South and West Sides of the city that have consistently been the most violent neighborhoods of Chicago. The overall level of violence has fluctuated, but the distribution of violence has been remarkably consistent.

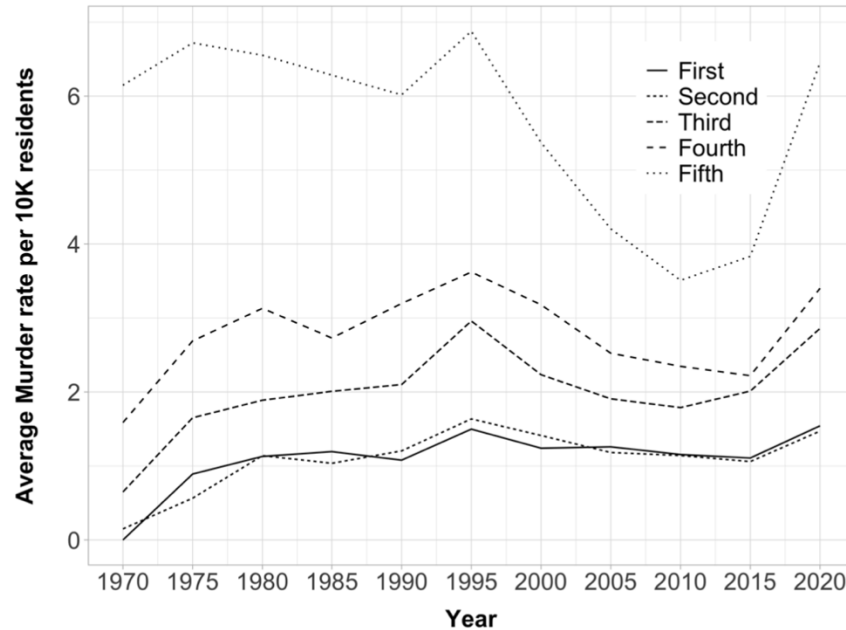
⁴⁸ The homicide numbers for 1965 are added to the 1966–1970 time period.

FIGURE 2: TOTAL MURDERS BY CENSUS TRACT IN CHICAGO,
BROKEN INTO TWO PERIODS, 1965–1985 AND 2000–2020



This conclusion is reinforced in Figure 3, which shows trends in the average murder rate of census tracts divided into quintiles based on the murder rate in the first six years of the fifty-six-year period (1965–1970). For example, the fifth quintile represents the most-violent fifth of all census tracts in Chicago in the time period 1965–1970, and the first quintile represents the least-violent tracts over the same period. Figure 3 shows that the neighborhoods in the first four quintiles move together over this period, with minimal changes in their relative levels of violence. The two least-violent fifths of Chicago’s neighborhoods in the late 1960s remained the least-violent neighborhoods for the next five decades, and both the third and fourth quintiles of neighborhoods remained in the same relative position over the full period.

FIGURE 3: AVERAGE MURDERS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS BY QUINTILE BASED ON 1965–1970 MURDER RATE IN CHICAGO, 1965–2020.



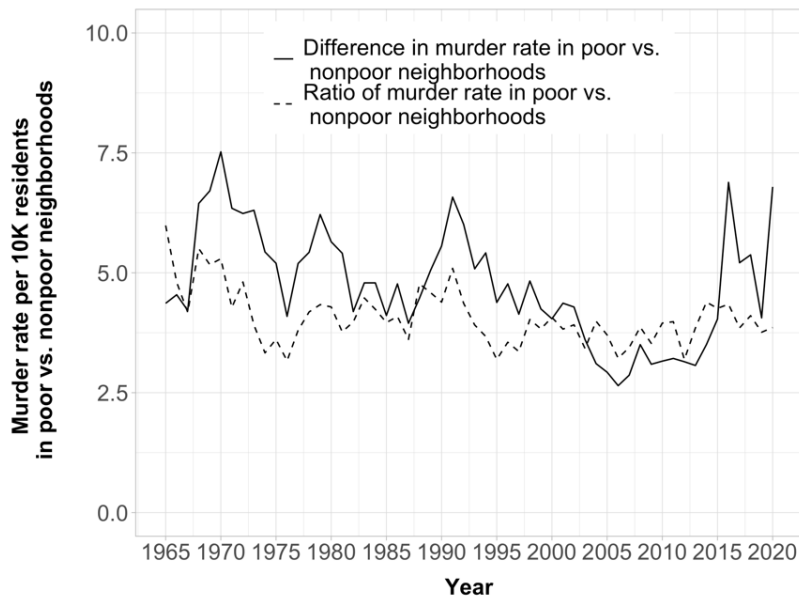
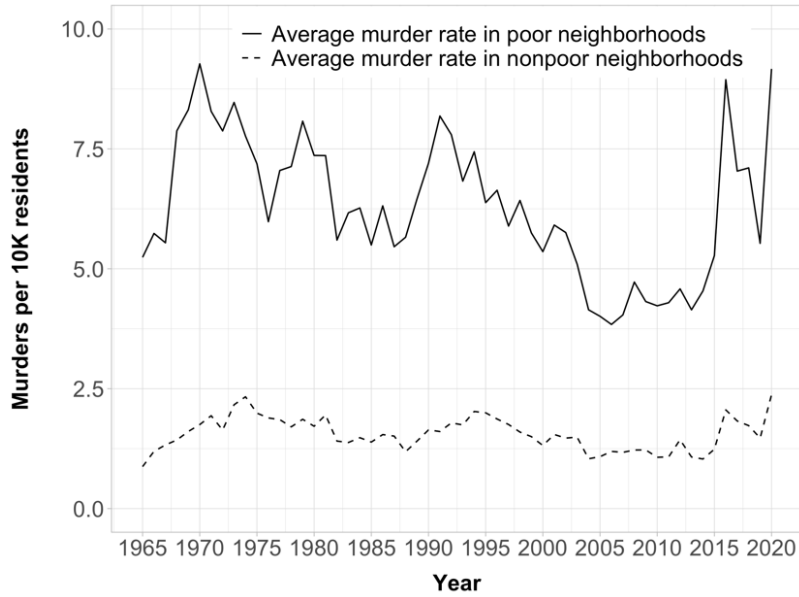
The most-violent neighborhoods in Chicago, on the other hand, have not followed the same trends as the neighborhoods in the remainder of the city. For instance, as violence was rising throughout the city from the mid-1960s through the mid-1990s, the murder rate in the most-violent fifth of neighborhoods from 1965–1970 was steadily falling through 1990. The level of violence in this group of neighborhoods then fell sharply through the mid-2010s before rising again after 2015. Despite these changes, the most-violent fifth of neighborhoods in the late 1960s continued to have the highest level of violence throughout the entire period. There has been very little spatial redistribution of violence over the past fifty-six years.

B. Violence and Segregation in Chicago Neighborhoods

In the next analysis, we assess changes in the connection between the concentration of violence and economic, racial, and ethnic segregation. Figure 4a shows trends in average violence for neighborhoods grouped by poverty level. The average murder rate in poor neighborhoods before the 2014–2020 time period was at

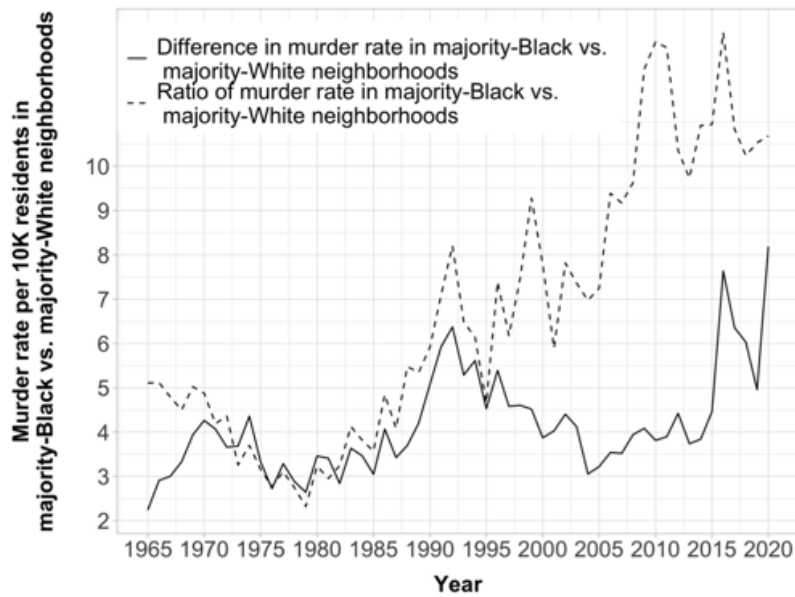
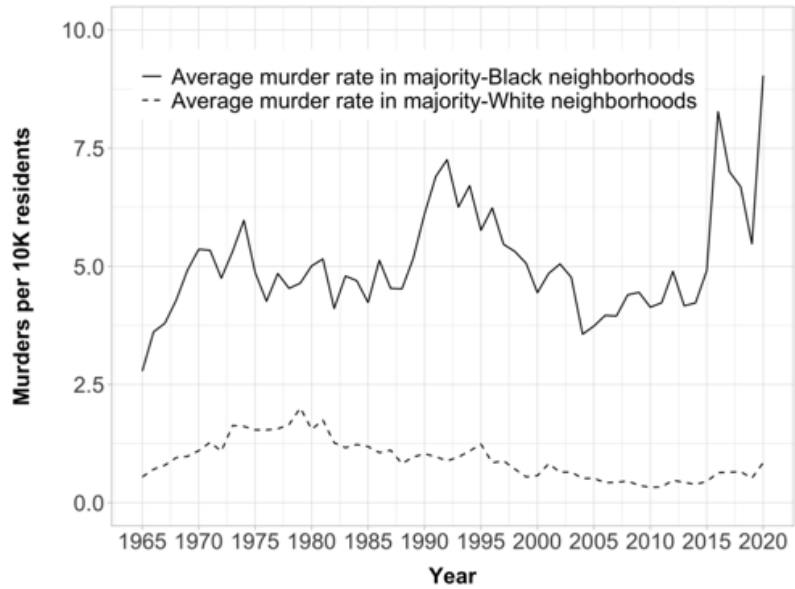
its highest in 1970, with about 9.3 murders per 10,000 residents. The murder rate in poor neighborhoods declined throughout the 1990s and 2000s, reaching 4.1 murders per 10,000 residents in 2013. That period of decline in the murder rate of poor neighborhoods has been almost undone in recent years, as the murder rate has nearly surpassed its 1970 peak with about 9.2 murders per 10,000 residents in 2020. The murder rate for poor neighborhoods follows the same trajectory as Chicago's overall trend—as shown in Figure 1—but with higher peak levels of violence and larger fluctuations compared to the trend in the murder rate of nonpoor neighborhoods, which has remained relatively flat throughout the fifty-six years. Because nonpoor neighborhoods experienced relatively stable levels of violence throughout the time period, Figure 4b shows that both the ratio of and difference in murder rates between poor and nonpoor neighborhoods largely follow the pattern of trends in murder in poor neighborhoods. The neighborhood poverty gap in violence was slightly ameliorated by the decline in murder from the 1990s through the 2000s, but the concentration of violence in poor communities has remained a consistent feature over the fifty-six-year period.

FIGURE 4: (a) AVERAGE NEIGHBORHOOD MURDERS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FOR POOR AND NONPOOR NEIGHBORHOODS IN CHICAGO, 1965–2020. (b) RATIO OF AND DIFFERENCE IN NEIGHBORHOOD MURDERS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FOR POOR VERSUS NONPOOR NEIGHBORHOODS IN CHICAGO, 1965–2020.



Figures 5a and 5b focus attention on trends in violence in majority-Black and majority-White neighborhoods. As shown in Figure 5a, the murder rate in majority-Black neighborhoods has fluctuated largely in tandem with the overall murder rate in the city, but it rose in 2020 to its highest level in the entire fifty-six-year time period with about 9.0 murders per 10,000 residents. The level of violence in majority-White neighborhoods peaked in 1979 and has slowly fallen since then, rising only slightly in the years from 2015 to 2020. These divergent trends mean that both the difference in and ratio of the murder rates between majority-Black and majority-White neighborhoods have grown substantially over time. In the early 1960s, the murder rate in predominantly Black neighborhoods was roughly five times as high as in predominantly White neighborhoods, but by 2020 the rate was over ten times as high in majority-Black neighborhoods as in majority-White neighborhoods. Similarly to the relationship between neighborhood violence and poverty, higher rates of violence are concentrated in communities segregated by race.

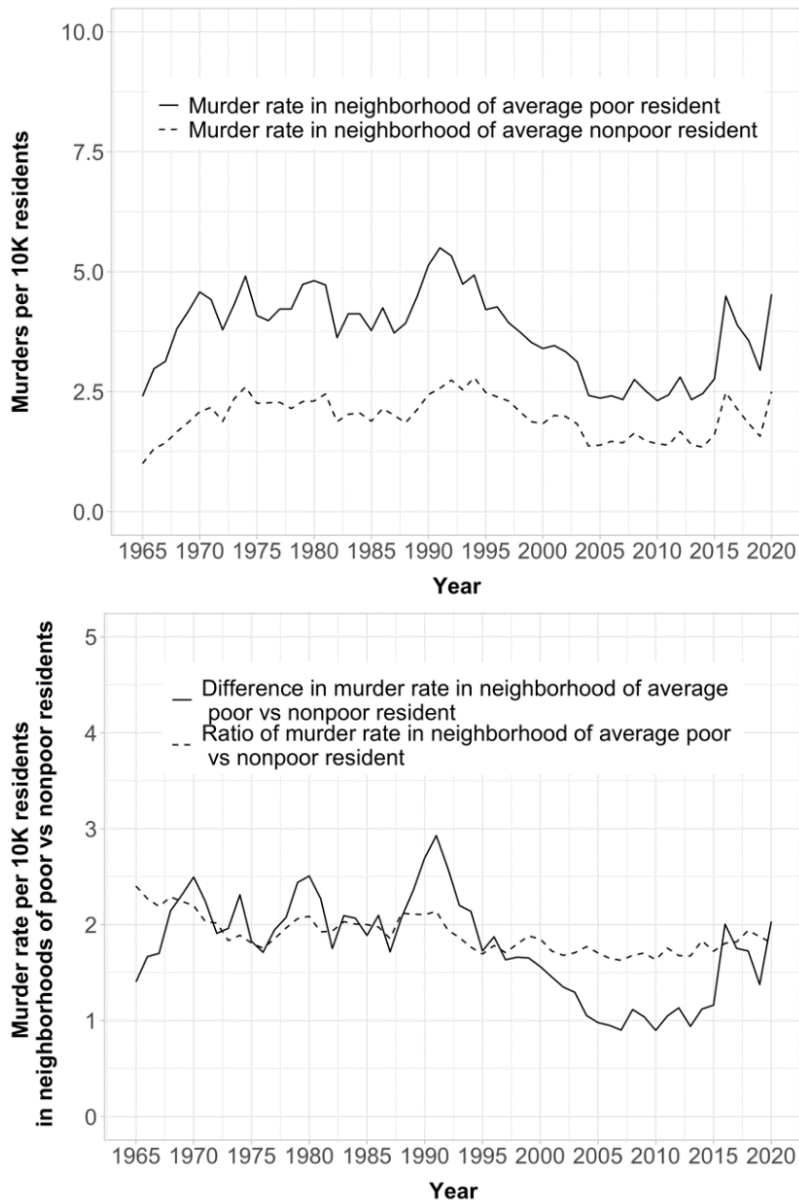
FIGURE 5: (a) AVERAGE NEIGHBORHOOD MURDERS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FOR MAJORITY-BLACK AND MAJORITY-WHITE NEIGHBORHOODS IN CHICAGO, 1965–2020. (b) RATIO OF AND DIFFERENCE IN NEIGHBORHOOD MURDERS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FOR MAJORITY-BLACK VERSUS MAJORITY-WHITE NEIGHBORHOODS IN CHICAGO, 1965–2020.



C. The Distribution of Violence Across Segments of the Population

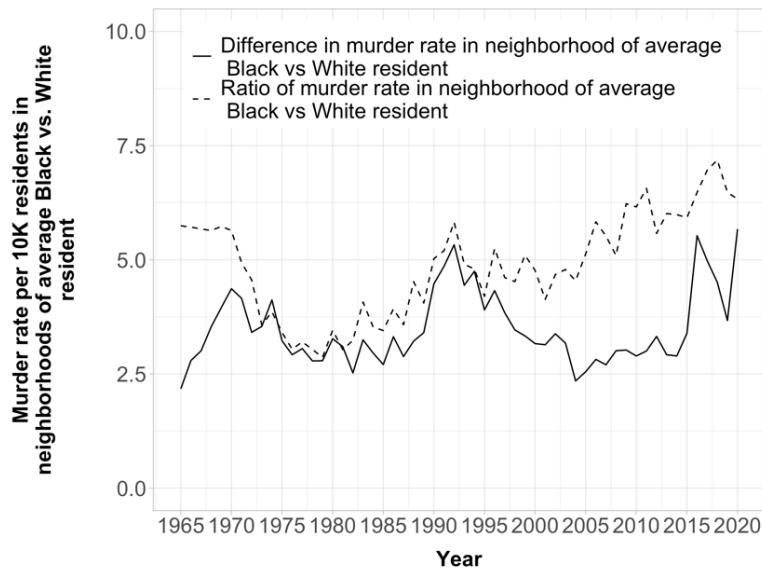
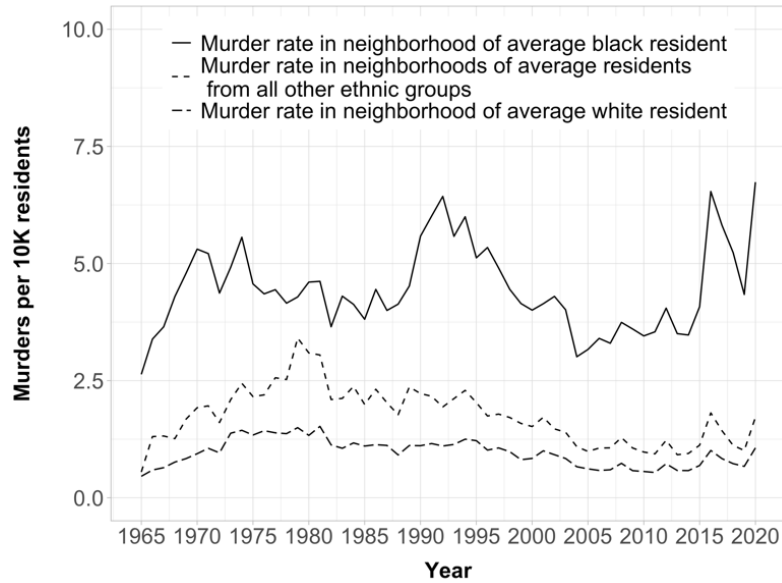
Shifting the level of analysis from neighborhoods to groups of residents, we next consider trends in different groups' exposures to community violence over the full period from 1965 to 2020. Figure 6a shows trends in average poor and nonpoor residents' levels of exposure to community violence. Both groups' levels of exposure to violence have followed similar trends over time, but the average poor resident has consistently been exposed to greater rates of lethal community violence than the average nonpoor resident. Figure 6b illustrates this gap by showing the difference in poor and nonpoor residents' exposure rates as well as the ratio of poor to nonpoor exposure rates. The ratio of the exposure rate to community violence between the average poor and nonpoor resident of the city has remained extremely stable over time, fluctuating just above or below 2 for the period's duration. In other words, the city's poor residents have lived in neighborhoods with roughly twice the level of violence as those of nonpoor residents from 1965 all the way through 2020. The raw difference in exposure rates has followed the overall trend of violence, reaching a peak of 2.9 in 1991 and declining as the overall magnitude in murder rates declined through 2014.

FIGURE 6: (a) EXPOSURE TO MURDERS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FOR POOR AND NONPOOR RESIDENTS IN CHICAGO, 1965–2020.
 (b) RATIO OF AND DIFFERENCE IN EXPOSURE TO MURDERS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FOR POOR VERSUS NONPOOR RESIDENTS IN CHICAGO, 1965–2020.



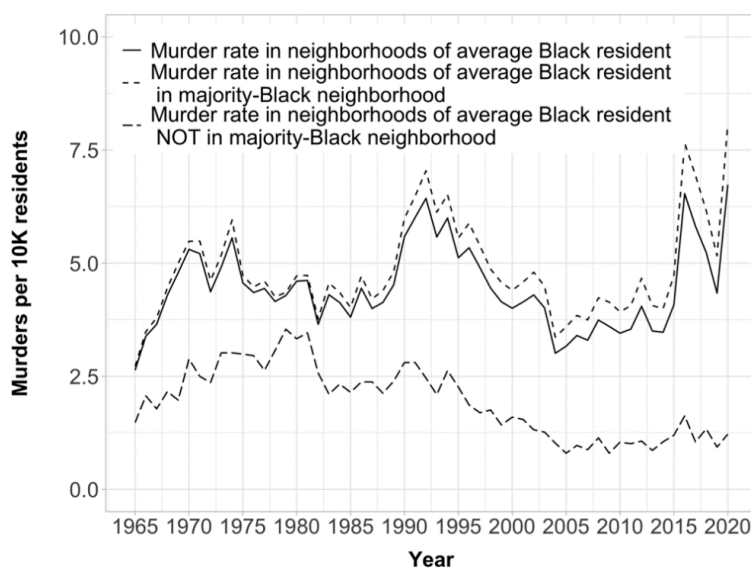
This same analysis is repeated for Black, White, and all other residents of Chicago in Figures 7a and 7b. As shown in Figure 7a, trends in exposure rates for Black Americans have followed the same pattern as trends in violence for the city as a whole (see Figure 1). The overall increase in murders between 2014 and 2020 has disproportionately affected Black residents, as they have experienced an increase in exposure rates from 3.5 murders per 10,000 residents in 2014 to 6.7 in 2020—compared to increases from 0.6 in 2014 to 1.1 in 2020 for White residents and from 1.0 in 2014 to 1.7 in 2020 for all other racial or ethnic groups. In 2020, the murder rate in the average Black resident's neighborhood rose to its highest point in the fifty-six-year period. Similarly, the ratio of the exposure rate for Black residents to White residents has been rising—with fluctuations—since the 1970s. The average exposure rate for Black residents in the late 1970s was roughly three times as high as the exposure rate for White residents at the same time but was almost seven times higher by 2020.

FIGURE 7: (a) EXPOSURE TO MURDERS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FOR BLACK RESIDENTS, WHITE RESIDENTS, AND RESIDENTS OF ALL OTHER ETHNIC OR RACIAL GROUPS IN CHICAGO, 1965–2020. (b) RATIO OF AND DIFFERENCE IN EXPOSURE TO MURDERS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FOR BLACK RESIDENTS VERSUS WHITE RESIDENTS IN CHICAGO, 1965–2020.



The last analysis in this Section pushes further by considering trends in exposure rates for Black residents who live in majority-Black neighborhoods and Black residents who do not. As is visible in Figure 8, trends in exposure rates for Black residents who live in majority-Black neighborhoods precisely mirror the trends for all Black residents, whereas the trends in exposure rates for Black residents who live outside majority-Black neighborhoods follow an entirely different trajectory. This graph reinforces the point that racial gaps in exposure to community violence are driven by spatial segregation. Black Chicago residents live in more violent neighborhoods only if they live in majority-Black neighborhoods.

FIGURE 8: EXPOSURE TO MURDERS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FOR BLACK RESIDENTS OVERALL, BLACK RESIDENTS INSIDE MAJORITY-BLACK NEIGHBORHOODS, AND BLACK RESIDENTS OUTSIDE MAJORITY-BLACK NEIGHBORHOODS IN CHICAGO, 1965–2020.



D. Punishment and Compounded Disadvantage

We began this Essay by arguing that a policy regime characterized by abandonment and punishment created a spatial link between concentrated disadvantage and community violence. The second component of that regime has relied on the institutions of law enforcement and the criminal legal system to deal with the challenges of violent crime and associated problems that are more common in areas with extreme urban inequality. The result is a

spatial configuration of compounded disadvantage in which the concentration of disadvantage and violence is overlaid with the markings of the institutions of punishment.

To analyze the distribution of compounded disadvantage in Chicago, we use data on police shootings from 2014 to 2020 made publicly available by the Gun Violence Archive⁴⁹ (GVA). Police shootings are the total number of victims killed in incidents in which a police officer shot the suspect.⁵⁰ Data on tract-level male incarceration rates are collected by The Opportunity Atlas.⁵¹ Neighborhoods are divided into quintiles based on the ranking of their murder rate across the 2014 to 2020 time period. For simplicity, the second, third, and fourth quintiles are merged into one group labeled “Middle Quintiles.” We calculate a single average police-shootings rate from 2014 to 2020 for the highest, lowest, and middle quintiles and by race or ethnicity and poverty level.⁵² We do the same process for male incarceration rates. The racial and ethnic categories additionally include Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) as well as Hispanics.⁵³

Figure 9 contains heat maps comparing the spatial distribution of murders, police shootings, and male incarceration by census tract. The highest rates of male incarceration are concentrated in the West and South Sides of Chicago—the same two regions of neighborhoods with the most violence. Although harder to identify due to the lower frequency of police shootings, the areas in which police shootings occurred from 2014 to 2020 also match those communities with the highest murder rates. Table 1 quantifies the extent of concentration by displaying rates of male incarceration and police shootings by level of violence from 2014 to 2020, race or ethnicity, and poverty level. Table 1 shows that the neighborhoods characterized by higher rates of violence, a majority-Black population, and a large poor population all experienced rates of police shootings between two and nine times higher than

⁴⁹ *Search Incidents*, GUN VIOLENCE ARCHIVE, available at <https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/query>.

⁵⁰ These are incidents that contain the characteristic “Officer Involved Shooting - subject/suspect/perpetrator killed.”

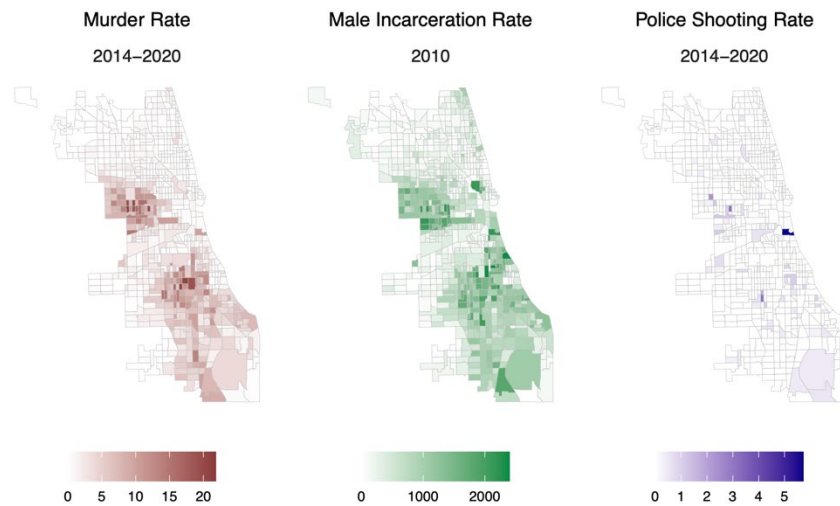
⁵¹ See Raj Chetty, John N. Friedman, Nathaniel Hendren, Maggie R. Jones & Sonya R. Porter, *The Opportunity Atlas: Mapping the Childhood Roots of Social Mobility* 18–42 (Ctr. for Econ. Stud., Working Paper No. CES 18-42, 2018).

⁵² We assign a single poverty level and race/ethnicity classification for each neighborhood by summarizing population data across the entire seven-year period (2014 to 2020).

⁵³ *2010 Census Summary File 1*, in 2010 CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING (2012), <https://perma.cc/6MC3-V4QN>

neighborhoods characterized by lower levels of violence, a different racial or ethnic composition, and a smaller poor population. The same pattern is true for male incarceration rates. Neighborhoods that are segregated by both race or ethnicity and economic status and that are disproportionately affected by higher rates of violence experience the additional disadvantage of higher police shootings and incarceration rates.

FIGURE 9: COMPARISON BETWEEN THE SPATIAL DISTRIBUTIONS OF SHOOTINGS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FROM 2014 THROUGH 2020, MALE INCARCERATIONS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS IN 2010, AND POLICE SHOOTINGS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FROM 2014 THROUGH 2020 IN CHICAGO.



This compounded disadvantage, however, is not a strictly recent pattern. Table 2 shows the same information as Table 1 but is conditioned on data from 1965 to 1970 instead of from 2014 to 2020. The census tracts with the highest murder rates from the 1960s experienced the highest rates of police shootings and male incarceration over fifty years later. Neighborhoods that were majority-Black in the 1960s also experienced higher rates of police shootings and male incarceration in later years as compared to neighborhoods of different racial or ethnic composition, as did poor neighborhoods compared to nonpoor neighborhoods. This explicitly illustrates the persistence of disadvantage in communities that now experience another form of inequality in the form of policing and imprisonment.

E. The National Rise in Violence, 2014–2020

We have shown how the rise in violence in Chicago from 2014 to 2020 erased the declines in neighborhood inequality that resulted from the period of falling violence spanning from the early 1990s to the mid-2010s. Chicago’s racial gap in exposure to community violence is now wider than it has been at any point since 1965. In this concluding Section, we expand our view beyond Chicago to consider the hundred largest cities in the United States, and we analyze the degree to which the findings from Chicago extend to other U.S. cities.

We draw on fatal-shootings data tabulated by the GVA to summarize the recent rise in violence on a national level from 2014 to 2020. Fatal shootings count the total number of victims killed in incidents that did not involve accidental death or death by suicide.⁵⁴ The methods of generating the average-exposure rates and the average-neighborhood rates are the same as those used in the Chicago analysis.⁵⁵ The initial shooting rates (in 2014) are compared to the final shooting rates (in 2020) for all tracts combined—by race or ethnicity and by poverty.

Just as prior research has shown that the benefits of the 1990s decline in violence was most pronounced in segregated, low-income neighborhoods, the recent rise in violence has also been concentrated in areas characterized by poverty and racial segregation. Table 3 shows that across all one hundred cities, the rate of neighborhood-level fatal shootings rose by 76% from 2014 to 2020. The rise in violence, however, was most acute in majority-Black neighborhoods and in high-poverty neighborhoods. Although the fatal-shootings rate in majority-White neighborhoods increased by 64% and the rate in majority-Hispanic neighborhoods increased by 58%, the rate of fatal shootings in majority-Black neighborhoods rose by 87% from 2014 to 2020. Similarly, the fatal-shootings rate in low-poverty neighborhoods rose by 58%, compared to an 91% increase in high-poverty neighborhoods. Majority-Black and high-poverty neighborhoods also experienced absolute increases in their fatal shooting rates that, despite their higher initial shooting rates, were still six to seven times higher than other neighborhoods.

⁵⁴ Fatal shootings are only incidents that include the characteristic “Shot - Dead (murder, accidental, suicide)” and do not contain any “Suicide” characteristics—except for “Murder/Suicide” characteristics.

⁵⁵ See *supra* text accompanying notes 45–47.

The changes in neighborhood shootings from 2014 to 2020 across the hundred largest cities are strikingly similar to the changes in murder rates in Chicago. The rise in neighborhood shootings has had a disproportionate impact on the most-disadvantaged communities and segments of the urban population. Likewise, the convergence of community violence, police violence, and contact with the criminal legal system found in Chicago is reproduced across the nation's largest cities. Table 4 shows that the communities with the highest levels of violence over the period from 2014 to 2020 have rates of male incarceration that are two to three times higher and rates of police shootings that are four times higher than the next most violent group of communities. Majority-Black neighborhoods and poor neighborhoods in other cities also exhibit higher levels of incarceration and police shootings than their counterparts, consistent with both historical and modern trends in Chicago.

CONCLUSION

Chicago has experienced massive changes in the level of violence over the past fifty-six years. Similarly to the situation in many U.S. cities, violence in Chicago rose from the mid-1960s through the early 1990s, fell by roughly half by the mid-2010s, and then rose again after 2015. The murder rate in Chicago is nowhere close to that of cities like St. Louis and New Orleans, but the total number of murders each year is higher than that in any other city.

Despite the enormous change over time, the distribution and impact of violence across space, different types of neighborhoods, and different subsets of the population has been remarkably stable. As the level of violence has risen and fallen, the group of neighborhoods with the highest rates of violence in the late 1960s have remained the most violent neighborhoods in the city throughout the next five decades. This finding hearkens back to the research of Shaw and McKay,⁵⁶ who studied rates of juvenile delinquency across Chicago's neighborhoods in the first half of the twentieth century. Shaw and McKay found that economic deprivation, high levels of residential mobility, and ethnic heterogeneity predicted high levels of violence—even as new groups of people moved in and out of the community.⁵⁷ Their ideas about the

⁵⁶ SHAW & MCKAY, *supra* note 9.

⁵⁷ *Id.* at 140–69.

implications for understanding neighborhood violence have been critiqued and refined over time,⁵⁸ but the basic conclusion from their early work remains very clear: Levels and trends in violence cannot be explained or understood by focusing on individual people. Rather, they are driven in large part by the features of communities.

The most stable features of the Chicago neighborhoods consistently linked with violence have been the persistence of racial and economic segregation. Over fifty-six years, racial and economic segregation have been closely tied to violence. High-poverty neighborhoods have consistently had murder rates that are three to five times as high as lower-poverty neighborhoods. But the most severe disparities in community violence map onto racial segregation within the city. Violence has been concentrated in predominantly Black neighborhoods of Chicago for much of the past fifty-six years, and the level of violence in Black communities in 2020 was higher than at any other point since 1965.

It is crucial to avoid the tendency to report statistics and trends linking neighborhood stratification and violence without an accompanying theoretical and empirical explanation of the link. We began by reviewing research that has been put forth over the past several decades outlining the set of social, economic, and political forces that have led to the association between concentrated disadvantage and violence in Chicago and most U.S. cities. Long-term disinvestment in central-city neighborhoods reinforces segregation by race, ethnicity, and income, thus weakening community institutions and undermining community residents' capacity to work together to solve common challenges. As a result, the problem of violence maps directly onto the concentration of social and economic disadvantage.

The response to violence—and to extreme urban inequality more broadly—has relied heavily on the institutions of punishment. In the U.S. context, this has led to a pattern of compounded disadvantage, where communities with high levels of violence are also places where police violence is more common and where a large segment of the population is enmeshed within the expansive apparatus of the criminal legal system. It is a mistake to look at this spatial convergence and simply conclude that where there is violence, we should expect high levels of incarceration. The pattern of compounded disadvantage is a result of the unique U.S.

⁵⁸ See generally Robert J. Sampson, *Collective Efficacy Theory: Lessons Learned and Directions for Future Inquiry*, in *TAKING STOCK: THE STATUS OF CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORY* 149 (Francis T. Cullen et al. eds., 2006).

response to the challenges that emerged in central cities in the late 1960s, a response that featured the dual strategies of abandonment and punishment.

In Chicago, this approach has not only failed to generate sustained reductions in violence, but it has also led to both a widespread estrangement from the institutions of the state and the development of communities where imprisonment is a common stage in the course of one's life.⁵⁹ The spatial convergence of community violence, racial segregation, concentrated disadvantage, institutional decline, disinvestment, police violence, and incarceration that we have documented lead us to the following conclusion: it may not be possible to produce a sustained reduction in overall levels of violence and community gaps in violence without addressing the challenge of extreme, persistent segregation by race, ethnicity, and economic status across Chicago's neighborhoods.

⁵⁹ See Monica C. Bell, *Police Reform and the Dismantling of Legal Estrangement*, 126 *YALE L.J.* 2054, 2100–14 (2017); see also BRUCE WESTERN, *PUNISHMENT AND INEQUALITY IN AMERICA* 131–67 (2006); Becky Pettit & Bruce Western, *Mass Imprisonment and the Life Course: Race and Class Inequality in U.S. Incarceration*, 69 *AM. SOCIO. REV.* 151, 164 (2004).

APPENDIX

TABLE 1: AVERAGE NEIGHBORHOOD MALE INCARCERATIONS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS IN 2010 AND AVERAGE NEIGHBORHOOD POLICE SHOOTINGS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FROM 2014 THROUGH 2020 FOR CHICAGO OVERALL AND BY QUINTILE BASED ON 2014–2020 MURDER RATES, RACE OR ETHNICITY, AND POVERTY.

	2010 Male Incarceration Rate	2014–2020 Police Shootings Rate
Overall		
Chicago	549	0.06
2014–2020 Quintile of Violence Level		
First Quintile	201	0.02
Middle Quintiles	443	0.03
Fifth Quintile	1,203	0.19
2014–2020 Race		
Majority White	219	0.02
Majority Black	1,089	0.11
All Other Nbhds	402	0.07
2014–2020 Poverty		
Poor	1,089	0.12
Nonpoor	390	0.04

TABLE 2: AVERAGE NEIGHBORHOOD MALE INCARCERATIONS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS IN 2010 AND AVERAGE NEIGHBORHOOD POLICE SHOOTINGS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FROM 2014 THROUGH 2020 FOR CHICAGO OVERALL AND BY QUINTILE BASED ON 1965–1970 MURDER RATES, RACE OR ETHNICITY, AND POVERTY.

	2010 Male Incarceration Rate	2014–2020 Police Shootings Rate
Overall		
Chicago	549	0.06
1965–1970 Quintile of Violence Level		
First Quintile	256	0.02
Middle Quintiles	488	0.04
Fifth Quintile	1,017	0.16
1965–1970 Race		
Majority White	331	0.03
Majority Black	1,158	0.15
All Other Nbhds	474	0.00
1965–1970 Poverty		
Poor	1,242	0.16
Nonpoor	504	0.05

TABLE 3: AVERAGE NEIGHBORHOOD SHOOTINGS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS AND AVERAGE EXPOSURE TO SHOOTINGS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FOR NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE HUNDRED LARGEST U.S. CITIES AND BY RACE OR ETHNICITY AND POVERTY LEVEL.

	Rate of Neighborhood Shootings				Rate of Exposure to Shootings			
	2014	2020	Absolute Change	% Change	2014	2020	Absolute Change	% Change
Overall								
Nation	0.98	1.73	0.75	76.53	0.75	1.29	0.53	70.93
Race								
Black	2.92	5.47	2.55	87.33	1.79	3.17	1.38	77.44
White	0.36	0.59	0.23	63.89	0.40	0.70	0.30	74.62
Hispanic	0.69	1.09	0.40	57.97	0.61	1.00	0.39	64.69
AAPI					0.34	0.53	0.19	57.04
Other	0.70	1.14	0.44	62.86	0.63	1.05	0.42	66.30
Poverty								
Poor	2.30	4.39	2.09	90.87	1.15	2.05	0.90	78.29
Nonpoor	0.57	0.90	0.33	57.89	0.64	1.12	0.47	73.65

TABLE 4: AVERAGE 2010 MALE INCARCERATIONS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS AND AVERAGE POLICE SHOOTINGS PER 10,000 RESIDENTS FROM 2014 THROUGH 2020 FOR NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE HUNDRED LARGEST U.S. CITIES AND BY QUINTILE BASED ON 2014–2020 SHOOTING RATES, RACE OR ETHNICITY, AND POVERTY.

	2010 Male Incarceration Rate	2014–2020 Police Shootings Rate
Overall		
Nation	423	0.06
2014–2020 Quintile of Violence Level		
First Quintile	239	0.01
Middle Quintiles	371	0.04
Fifth Quintile	741	0.16
2014–2020 Race		
Majority White	213	0.04
Majority Black	970	0.09
Majority Hispanic	383	0.07
All Other Nbhds	377	0.05
2014–2020 Poverty		
Poor	817	0.10
Nonpoor	301	0.05