

The Social, Medical, and Economic Consequences of Childhood Exposure to Community

Violence

Elisabeth Balistreri

Washington and Lee University

Abstract

Community violence refers to violent crime that occurs outside of a person's home in their neighborhood. It has major consequences for children growing up in high crime areas that extend far beyond what happens to a perpetrator and victim. Violent crime has major consequences for academic outcomes, physical and mental health outcomes, and economic outcomes, creating problems that develop throughout childhood and extend into adulthood. These problems are especially pronounced for African American children, who are more likely to grow up in high crime areas as well as face the systemic violence of police brutality. Firearms exacerbate the deadliness of community violence, and gun control is an important policy avenue that should be taken mitigate the effects of community violence.

Violent Crime in the U.S.

When many Americans think about the state of violent crime in America, an image of the exceptionally dangerous low-income housing projects characterized by drug trafficking, concentrated poverty, gang wars, and racial segregation of the 1980s and 90s often comes to mind. These decades were the most dangerous in American history; in 1993, 40 percent of big cities had a homicide rate greater than 20 per 100,000 residents (FBI, 2016). Most Americans view violent crime as a continuing and urgent issue, and it still is in many cities, but it is not nearly as bad as many seem to think. In 2014, a national poll questioned Americans about their perceptions of crime in the U.S. One question began, “The government has reported a steady decline in the rate of violent crime over the past 20 years,” and proceeded to ask participants if they thought the government was correct in identifying this trend. Shockingly, the largest group—1/3rd of respondents—disputed the government data, reporting a perception that crime has risen over the past 20 years (Moore, 2014).

In reality, only remnants of this violent image many Americans have in their heads remain in today’s cities, and government statistics have accurately reported a 20-year decline in violent crime across the nation. In 2014—the safest year since crime statistics started being collected in the 1950s—only 13 percent of cities still had a homicide rate as high as that of 1993 (FBI, 2016). In addition, violence has decreased most substantially in the most violent neighborhoods of cities. For example, the violent crime rate in Cleveland, Ohio has declined by 11 crimes for every 10,000 residents in most parts of the city, but in the most violent neighborhoods, it has decreased by 95 crimes per 10,000 residents (Friedson & Sharkey, 2015). These trends have started to balance out cities by making the outward signs and symptoms of concentrated poverty less visible. In most cities, urban poverty has a completely different feeling

to it than it did 20 years ago; children don't have to walk the streets in fear, mothers don't have to worry every time they send their kids to school, families don't have to sleep tucked under their window sills to avoid stray bullets.

However, there is still inequality in the characteristics of neighborhoods that have higher rates of violence, with low-income neighborhoods experiencing more violence than middle- and high income neighborhoods (APA, 2018). In addition there are still parts of the country, while they are fewer than they were 20 years ago, where the violence of that characterized the 90s continues. Places like Flint, Cleveland, Atlanta, Baltimore, Detroit, and New Orleans—among others—remain as violent as they were during the 90s, and places like Milwaukee, Chicago, and Houston have experienced a sudden spike in violence since 2014 that has brought them on par with rates of violence in the 90s (Friedson & Sharkey, 2015). The violence that occurs in these places has serious consequences not only for the victims of violent crime, but also for all members of the community. Violence does not exist simply within interpersonal interactions between a perpetrator and a victim, “[it] reverberates around communities. It affects everyone. And it undermines the community. You don't have to be assaulted to be affected by violence” (Sharkey, 2018).

Cognitive Functioning

Exposure to community violence is a strong predictor of several negative outcomes for children. One of the major consequences of community violence is negative outcomes for academic achievement (Ratner, et al., 2006). Using data from AddHealth, Harding (2009) found that neighborhood violence is a strong mediator in the relationship between neighborhood disadvantage and high school graduation rates; it accounts for about half of the conditional association for males and almost all of the conditional association for females. A study by

Sharkey (2010) points to another mechanism that begins to explain the relationship between neighborhood violence and high school dropout: the effects of violence on cognitive functioning. He analyzed data from the Longitudinal Cohort Study (LCS), a study that, among several other things, collected longitudinal data about the physical development, family changes, and academic progress of children ages 0-18 living in Chicago. The way the study was conducted created perfectly a natural experiment of the effects of community violence on cognitive functioning. Some children happened to be given their cognitive assessment before a homicide in their community, and some children from the same neighborhood were given their assessment a few days or hours after a homicide. This allowed Sharkey to examine the effects of that exogenous event on cognitive functioning. He found that if a homicide had recently occurred in a child's neighborhood, they performed, on average, four tenths of a standard deviation worse on tests of language and verbal skills than children who were assessed at a different time. To put this effect into perspective, four-tenths of a standard deviation accounts for about two years of school; therefore, children exposed to violence regressed about two years academically. This severity of this effects fluctuated based on the proximity of the homicide to the child's home, and Black children, who are more often exposed to violence than any other group, experienced the most severe effects overall. Sharkey replicated these results in a similar Chicago population, and found even larger effects of local violence on cognitive functioning.

Exposure to community violence has also been linked to disruptions in executive function in children, a very important cognitive skill needed for school success among other things. Executive function is the set of mental skills that are important for impulse control, focused attention, and the ability to delay gratification. Using the same methodology as the study on cognitive functioning, McCoy and colleagues (2015) investigated the effects of a recent

homicide on executive functioning by administering a neuropsychological task on a computer and comparing performance of children who had recently had a homicide in their neighborhood to those who had not. The results revealed that living in close proximity to a recent homicide altered processing of social information and affected selective attention. More specifically, children with low trait anxiety who had recently been exposed to violence were faster to attend to negative images than those who were not exposed to violence, but children high in trait anxiety paid more attention to positive images than negative images after being exposed to violence. This tendency to avoid negative stimuli is common among children with anxiety, and while it can be advantageous in protecting them from negative images, it is less adaptive for these children who live in an environment in which they need to be vigilant to avoid danger. The final result of the study was a tendency for all children who had been exposed to recent violence to respond more quickly and less accurately during the computerized task than children who had not been exposed to recent violence, indicating diminished impulse control in this population (McCoy, Raver, & Sharkey, 2015).

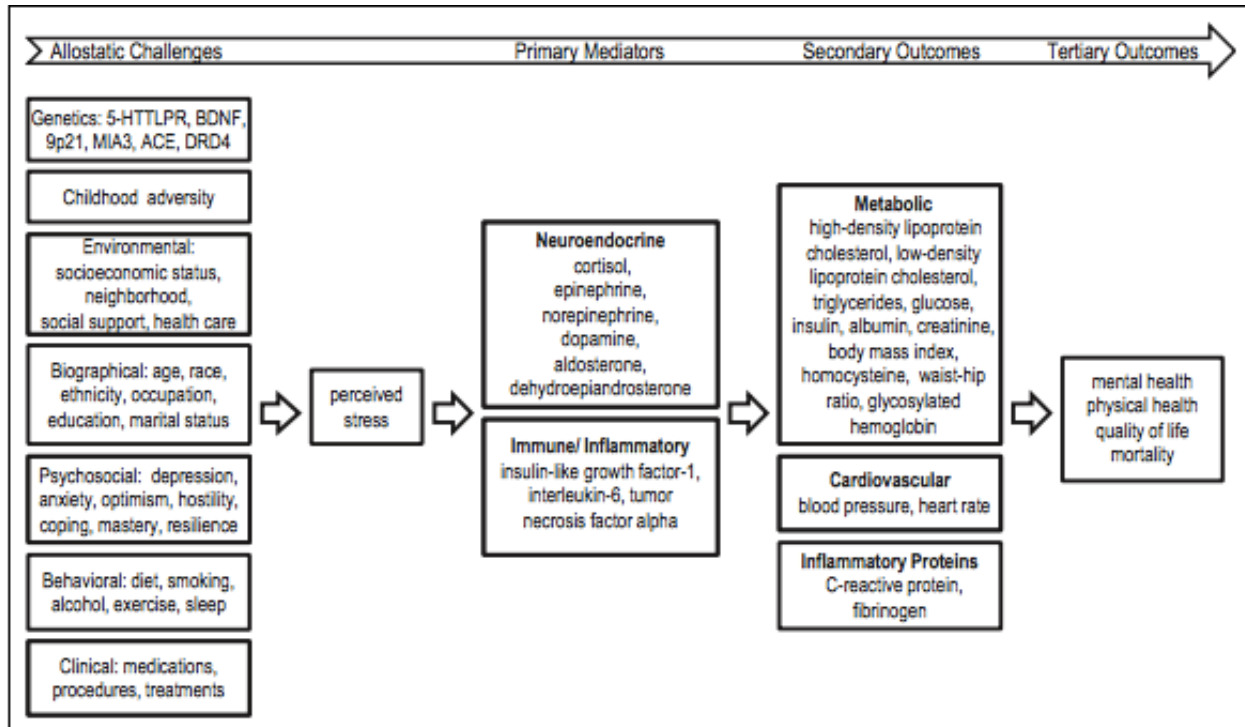
This pattern of cognitive impairment and disrupted executive function following exposure to violence follows the patterns shown in animal models. David Diamond, a cognitive neuroscientist, conducted an experiment that models the effects of threat on the brain with rats in his lab. He did this by placing a cat—a natural predator of rats—outside the cage of some rats, but not others. The rats that were exposed to the cat had a much harder time learning how to navigate a maze than those who were not exposed to the rat. When listening to accounts of children who have been exposed to violence in some way, this effect of violence on academic achievement becomes abundantly clear; a victim of the recent school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, Samuel Zeif, addressed President Trump

about the shooting: “I don’t know how I’m ever gonna step foot in that place (school) again. Or go to a public park after school. Or go walking anywhere. Me and my friends, we get scared when a car drives by—anywhere” (Kirby, 2018). This sentiment is echoed by students around the country—students who go to schools that haven’t experienced a shooting: “sometimes if I hear a loud noise in the hallway, I start thinking is the day I’m gonna die. Or is this the last time I’m gonna see any of my friends, which can be pretty frightening, and it’s hard for me to concentrate on Spanish verb tenses after thinking some guy could just come in to the classroom with a weapon” (Lemoine, 2018). Exposure to violence disrupts the cognitive processes that are essential to learning; this is the weight community violence has on children—it interrupts their learning and forces them to live in a constant state of fear.

Health Outcomes

This is especially true for children living in low-income communities where violence can be an ever-present threat. Recall a time when you experienced fear or anxiety; it might have been right before giving a big presentation or when you leaned too far back in your chair and caught it right before you would have fallen. You can easily think of how your body felt in these moments. Your heart races, your palms sweat, and your attention is completely focused on the current threat. This is how the body and mind respond to stress—it activates the sympathetic nervous system and goes into a state of fight or flight. This signals the adrenal glands to release the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol. The body prepares itself to face and deal with an emergency. After the emergency has been dealt with, the body returns to its resting state; but what if the threat is omnipresent and the body and mind is in a constant state of fight or flight? (Tovian et al., 2018). This kind of stressor—one that is constantly present or at least perceived to be constantly present—is called a chronic stressor, and chronic stressors contribute to what

health professionals call allostatic load. Allostatic load is a construct quantified by the physiological wear and tear on a person’s body that accumulates as a result of chronic stress, as shown in the model below (McEwen, 2012; McEwen & Gianaros, 2010; Beckie, 2012):



Everything the body does in response to a stressor—releasing cortisol, shifting attention to threat, arousing the autonomic nervous system—is meant to prepare a person for action, but when these physiological responses are prolonged, they create dysfunction in the body. Children living in low-income communities are at the highest risk for exposure to community violence, and this exposure sets off a chain of biological and behavioral reactions that lead to negative health outcomes that extend into adulthood. For people living in poverty, allostatic challenges are abundant in the environment, and one in particular that has been identified as harmful to health is exposure to neighborhood violence. Therefore, neighborhood violence is a contributor to higher allostatic load, which in turn strongly predicts poorer cognitive functioning and mental health, higher incidence of chronic disease—including coronary vascular disease, diabetes, and inflammatory and immune disorders—and diminished longevity independent of socio-economic

status. These consequences of high allostatic load usually develop throughout childhood and only appear during adulthood, but there are some health disparities related to stress that primarily affect children. It is these conditions that I will talk about in more depth.

Obesity and poverty are deeply interconnected for a number of reasons. One strong predictor of higher rates of obesity are perceptions of safety in a neighborhood, with areas perceived as less safe having higher rates of obesity (Fish, Ettner, Ang, Brown, 2011). One of the most striking findings of the Moving to Opportunity Experiment, in which families were able to move from high-poverty areas to much safer, low-poverty areas, was the decrease in health disparities linked to stress. Parents and adolescents who moved to safer areas experienced better health than their counterparts who did not move, including significantly lower rates of obesity (Briggs & Turner, 2006).

Recent studies have also identified a strong connection between exposure to violence and rates of childhood asthma. A study of families in New York City found that parental reports of feeling unprotected from crime and unsafe walking around their neighborhood had nearly twice the odds of having a child with an asthma diagnosis (Vangeepuram, Galvez, Teitelbaum, Brenner, Wolff, 2012). Childhood asthma is also associated with other, more concrete, measures of neighborhood safety; a retrospective study of pediatric asthma-related emergency department visits and hospitalizations between 2011 and 2013 revealed that the amount of police-reported violent crime in a census tract accounted for 28 percent of the population variance in asthma-related hospital visits after adjusting for poverty, substandard housing, unemployment, and traffic exposure (Beck et al., 2016).

Exposure to violence is also connected to several risky health behaviors among adolescent girls. Girls who has witnessed violence were 2-3 times more likely to report using

tobacco and marijuana, using drugs or drinking alcohol before engaging in sexual activity, and having intercourse with a partner who had multiple partners than girls who had not witnessed violence. Girls who had experienced violence also engaged in risky sexual and drug-related behavior at a rate 2-4 higher than those who had never witnessed or experienced violence. Those who had both witnessed and experienced violence were the most at-risk for serious risky health-related behaviors, engaging in behaviors such as suicidal ideation, self-injurious behavior, suicide attempts, and the use of drugs before intercourse at a rate 3-6 times higher than those who had neither witnessed or experienced violence (Berenson, Wiemann, McCombs, 2001). Health-related behaviors are often seen as controllable, and perpetrators of unhealthy and risky health-related behaviors are often blamed for any health problems they may have, but the research connecting risky behavior to exposure to violence clearly points to an environmental impetus that affects children in a negative way and leads to this risky behavior. Considering the psychosocial consequences of exposure to violence that I will cover in the next section, it is unsurprising that adolescent girls exposed to violence engage in these behaviors more frequently than those who haven't been exposed to violence.

Psychopathology

There are causal links between adverse early life environments and dysfunction in the stress response systems of children, including hyperactivity in the sympathetic nervous system (SNS) and hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis (McLaughlin, Sheridan, Tibu, Fox, Zeanah, & Nelson, 2015). The SNS is responsible for getting the body ready for fight or flight, and the HPA axis is responsible for releasing stress related hormones and neurotransmitters like cortisol and adrenaline. A child with this type of dysfunction in their stress response systems will have reactions to lower levels of stress than a child who does not have hyperactivity in the SNS

and HPA axis. This physiological mechanism is important in understanding the link between community violence and different types of psychopathology (McLaughlin & Sheridan, 2016).

Learned helplessness is also an important mediator the relationship between community violence and psychopathology. Seligman and his colleagues used animal models to establish the construct of learned helplessness in the depression literature by exposing dogs to either escapable or inescapable shocks and examining their subsequent behavior. Those exposed to inescapable shocks were much more likely to exhibit behavior consistent with depression; rather than continually attempting to avoid the shock by running around, these dogs would lie down and whine until the shock subsided. This behavior characterizes learned helplessness in humans; people who are continually exposed to aversive events they either cannot control or merely perceive that they cannot control are likely to give up and stop trying to affect change in their environment (Overmier & Seligman, 1967; Seligman & Groves, 1970; Seligman, Maier, & Greer, 1968; Seligman, Rosellini, & Kozak, 1975).

Research on battered women indicates that learned helplessness increases the risk of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and major depression in women (Bargai, Ben-Shakhar, Shalev, 2007). Based on the characteristics of neighborhood violence, it is plausible to apply this same model to children and adolescents exposed to violence, and evidence suggests that exposure to violence also contributes to the development of learned helplessness in children and adolescents (Rabow, Berkman, & Kessler, 1983). Havranek et al. (2015) investigated how uncontrollable and unpredictable stress interacts with depression and anxiety using the theory of learned helplessness in a lab setting. The researchers used mild electric shocks to cause stress in their human participants, and they either gave them a way to control and predict the shocks, or made the shocks uncontrollable and unpredictable. Participants in the uncontrollable and unpredictable

shock conditions showed greater anxiety and depression symptomatology, as measured through highly reliable self-report measures, than those who could control and predict their shocks. This model perfectly applies to neighborhood violence as a stressor. The uncontrollable and unpredictable nature of neighborhood violence contribute to the development of learned helplessness, which in turn facilitate the development of depression and anxiety (Pryce et al., 2011). Beyond this, the simple connection between community violence and child and adolescent depression and anxiety has been well-established (Birmaher, et. Al., 1996; Deykin, Levy, & Wells, 1987; Hawkins, Hawkins, & Steeley, 1992).

Unsurprisingly, children who grow up around gun violence develop symptoms of chronic traumatic stress, PTSD, externalizing disorders, and internalizing disorders at a higher rate than children who live in safer neighborhoods (Berton & Stabb, 1996; McCloskey & Walker, 2000; van der Kolk, 2005). A meta-analysis on the effect of exposure to community violence and mental health outcomes for children and adolescents found that violent victimization most strongly predicts internalizing problems, and the effects of witnessing or hearing about community violence equally predicts less severe internalizing problems than victimization (Fowler, Tompsett, Braciszewski, Jacques-Tiura, & Baltes, 2009). It also found that victimization and witnessing community equally predict externalizing disorders, like conduct disorder, above merely hearing about a violent incident. Evidence also suggested that a child who had been victimized by violence was just as likely to develop PTSD as a child who had witnessed or heard about community violence.

This meta-analysis also found that internalizing problems and PTSD are more prevalent among young children exposed to community violence than adolescents, but externalizing problems are more common among adolescents exposed to community violence than young

children. In addition, the meta-analysis also provided data on the effects of recentness of exposure. Evidence indicates that recent exposure is linked more strongly to symptoms of internalizing disorders and PTSD, but the compounding effects of lifetime exposure to violence demonstrates stronger effects for predicting externalizing disorders. These findings about age, psychopathology, and recentness of exposure taken together suggest that short term effects of exposure to violence predict the development of internalizing disorders and PTSD, and the cumulative effects of prolonged exposure to violence predict the development of externalizing disorders.

Intergenerational Mobility

The relationship between exposure to violence and academic disruption is perhaps one of the most concerning effects of community violence on childhood development because it has major implications for intergenerational mobility. Students who struggle in school are more likely to drop out (Kaplan, Peck, & Kaplan, 1997), and high school dropout also contributes to serious economic ramifications. High school dropouts are three and a half times more likely than their graduated counterparts to be arrested (CJJ, 2001). They also have a 40 percent higher unemployment rate, about half of the income as, and a 50 percent higher likelihood of living in poverty than their graduated counterparts. In addition to economic repercussions, the rates of mental and physical health problems are compounded by high school dropout. (Black, 2016). It is associated with higher rates of chronic disease, substance abuse, and suicide (Vaughn, Sala-Wright, & Maynard, 2014). Not only do high rates of incarceration, mental and physical health problems, and unemployment harm the individual, but these injustices are also associated with major societal costs:

“In a comparison of those who drop out of high school and those who complete high school, the average high school dropout costs the economy approximately \$250,000 over his or her lifetime in terms of lower tax contributions, higher reliance on Medicaid and Medicare, higher rates of criminal activity, and higher reliance on welfare” (NCES, 2015).

Beyond the academic implications of exposure to violent crime, there are many other characteristics of violence that make it particularly economically detrimental. It dampens economic opportunities by driving out businesses, and therefore jobs, decreasing commercial investment, and driving housing prices down. It also makes it less likely that high quality teachers will be willing to serve students living in low-income areas for very long (Goldhaber, Lavery, & Theobald, 2015). An analysis of teacher quality throughout school districts and schools within districts in Washington State exposes immense differences in teacher quality between schools in low-income areas and those that are not. The researchers found that teacher quality—as measured by experience, licensure exam scores, and value added—is distributed unequally across every measure of student disadvantage—as measured by free/reduced-lunch, underrepresented minority, and low prior academic performance. These findings from Washington State are characteristic of quality teacher distribution in states across the U.S.; studies from state to state show that students of color in low-income schools are 3 to 10 times more likely to have an underqualified teacher than students who attend predominantly white schools (Adamson & Darling-Hammond, 2011).

Much of the issue of lower quality teachers serving the least advantaged children is due to high teacher turnover rate in those schools. Teacher turnover has been on the rise for decades, and the problem is most pronounced in low income communities, leaving them with the least

experienced teachers (Ingersoll, Merrill, & Stuckey, 2014; Allensworth, Ponisciak, & Mazzeo, 2009). There are many reasons teachers are more likely to leave low-income schools than more affluent schools, but some of this turnover rate can be attributed to the crime rates in a given neighborhood. A study of teacher mobility in Chicago revealed that teachers are 10 percent more likely to stay in an elementary school located in a census block with low crime rates than one with high crime rates. Similarly, teachers are 6 percent more likely to stay in a high school located in a low crime area than a low crime area (Allensworth, Ponisciak, & Mazzeo, 2009). This combination of underqualified teachers and high teacher turnover contributes to lower student academic performance and the many consequences that come along with it. If crime were reduced in these low-income areas, it is possible that teachers would be more inclined to stay with the schools, and these schools would be better able to attract higher quality teachers.

Not only is violent crime associated with teacher flight, it is also associated with resident turnover. There is little evidence that this relationship between resident instability and violent crime is bidirectional, with resident flight being associated with higher crime rates in the following year; rather, research reveals a pattern of higher violent crime in one year leading to more home sales and property values in the following year, contributing to a general process of community decline due to community violence. This trend is even more pronounced in tracts with high ethnic/racial heterogeneity (Hipp, Tita, & Greenbaum, 2009). People who move out of these violent neighborhoods often cite concerns about safety as the primary reason for moving. For example, 73.3 percent of people with housing vouchers cite low crime rate as the most important factor of the new place they are moving to over any other characteristic of a neighborhood (Healy & Lepley, 2016).

Violent crime also disrupts local business, and therefore economic growth, in a number of ways. A study by Greenbaum and Tita (2004) on violent crime and local business decisions in Chicago, Houston, Miami, Pittsburg, and St. Louis using data on business establishments from the US Census Bureau and longitudinal data from the National Consortium on Violence Research suggests that spikes in violent crime change the way local businesses function and the decisions locals make. The researchers use a routine activities perspective, meaning that they investigate the ways in which spikes in violent crime in a given area change the decisions locals make in terms of everyday activities and how those decisions affect local businesses. Their findings suggest that local personal service and retail businesses are affected the most surges in violent crime because crime affects the decisions of individuals in where to shop and where to work. During a crime surge, new businesses are less likely to start up, and existing business experience slower growth. In addition, their research supports existing literature indicating that even after a crime surge, business growth is still slowed because the perception that an area is unsafe is difficult to shake (Wilcox, Land, & Hunt, 2003). The researchers did not find evidence that links surges of violence to increases in business closure, but it is clear that violent crime undermines entire communities and dampens economic growth in local businesses.

The effects of community violence on education outcomes are far reaching and make the cycle of poverty even more entrenched for low-income children. Research by economist Raj Chetty investigating economic mobility in the U.S. has shown that there is great variation in the level of upward mobility between different geographical areas (Chetty et al., 2014; Chetty et al., 2014; Chetty & Hendren, 2016). By comparing the outcomes between families and between siblings who move away from certain counties to those who stay, Chetty and Hendren were able to draw conclusions about intergenerational mobility based on county-level factors of childhood

exposure. Crime was one of the many mechanisms that influences intergenerational mobility they identified. They found that growing up in a high crime areas experience significant reductions in income as adults, and this effect accumulates over time; for children who live in the 25th percentile of the income distribution, moving to a county one standard deviation better may experience a .05 percent increase in income in adulthood for each year they live in that better county. Therefore, a child who grows up in a one standard deviation better county from birth can expect to experience a 10 percent increase in income as an adult.

Sharkey and Gerard Torrats-Espinosa (2017) expounded on Chetty's research to identify why violent crime is such a potent mechanism in explaining why economic mobility varies so extensively between areas. Their research has presented strong evidence that the level of violent crime in a county has a causal effect on upward mobility in that area amongst families raised at the 25th percentile of the income distribution. One standard deviation decrease in violent crime during an individual's late adolescence is associated with a 2-percentile increase in the expected income rank in that individual's adulthood. When looking at only murder rates, a one standard deviation decline is associated with about a 1.5-percentile increase in expected economic rank during adulthood. This study also illuminated clear links between the academic consequences of violent crime and economic mobility; the decline in violent crime during between 1990 and 2010 was associated with a decline in high school dropout at the county level. It is difficult to effectively prove that decreases in rates of violent crime caused this difference in high school dropout rates, but considering the costs of violent crime on cognitive functioning and mental health, it is highly likely that the decrease in violent crime accounts for at least part of this decline in high school dropout.

The effects of community violence on individuals compound to undermine entire communities and reduce economic mobility for their residents. It drives out jobs, reduces housing prices, contributes to resident turnover, and contributes to a lack of quality teachers in local schools. These factors contribute greatly to the cycle of poverty and make it much more difficult for children who grow up in these communities to move up the economic ladder.

Violence and Race

None of the consequences of exposure to violence that I have talked about thus far are complete without an understanding that these effects are experienced most drastically by Black children, the population most vulnerable to being exposed to violence.

“Local violence does not make children less intelligent. Rather, it occupies their minds.

The shock of a local homicide means that everyone who drives through the neighborhood is a potential threat, that a killer might be nearby, that more violence might be coming. It means sirens at night and police tape on the walk to school. For young men of color in particular, it means walking through one’s own neighborhood as a potential target and a potential suspect” (Sharkey, 2018).

It is well documented that Black children experience the largest negative effects of exposure to community violence in terms of academic functioning and mental and physical health (Sharkey, 2010). Black children are more likely to be less successful in school when they are exposed to community violence than their White counterparts. Sharkey’s study on the effects of recent exposure to community violence on performance on standardized tests showed that Black students who were recently exposed to community violence were 3 percentage points less likely to pass their English Language Arts standardized test than those who had not. This difference accounts for 18 percent of the Black-White gap in passing rates for this test; for Black

elementary school students in particular, this difference accounts for 30 percent of the Black-White gap in passing rates (Sharkey, Schwartz, Ellen, & Laco, 2014).

These racial inequalities in the effects of exposure to violence have not been erased by the trend of decline in violent crime throughout America, but looking at the effects of the crime decline on the most vulnerable population tells an interesting story. Overall, states where violent crime has declined the least or remained stable have seen the smallest improvements in student academic performance, and states where violent crime has declined the most have seen the greatest improvements; Black children have reaped the largest benefits from declines in violent crime all over the U.S. In addition, the Black-White academic achievement gap has narrowed the most in places where violent crime has fallen the most, but has remained stable or widened in states where violent crime has not decreased or only slightly decreased (Sharkey, 2018; Ho & Reardon, 2012).

The crime decline has also benefitted Black Americans through the simple preservation of lives. When looking at the measure of Years of Potential Life Lost (YPLL) for Black men due to violence reveals astounding racial disparities in the effects of violence on Blacks compared to other groups. YPLL is calculated by subtracting the number of years lived by the average life expectancy for that group; in the case of homicides, this number is calculated for each person, and summed over all victims of homicide. Before the crime decline, 2,388 per every 100,000 Black men were lost due to homicide. After the crime decline, this number has decreased to 1,341 years of life lost due to homicide per every 100,000 Black men. This number is still astonishingly high compared to White men, who only lose 192 years of potential life for every 100,000 people, but the crime decline has still clearly been especially beneficial to Black men and their families (Sharkey, 2018).

Although the crime decline has greatly benefited Black Americans, it hasn't been without its consequences. Over the years as violent crime has declined, there has been a definite shift in Black children's fears from interpersonal violence, like gang violence, to systemic violence, particularly police brutality. In some cities, tension over police brutality has contributed to a new spike in rates of violent crime. Milwaukee residents, for example, point to prominent instances of police brutality as well as general targeting by police in their community as an explanatory factor in the recent spike in violent crime beginning in 2014. Sociologist Patrick Sharkey sat down with some of Milwaukee's residents and community leaders to get their impressions of the causes for rising violence:

“Some pointed to April 30, 2014, the day Dontre Hamilton, a black man, was shot 14 times by white officer Christopher Manney. Hamilton, a man with paranoid schizophrenia, had been sleeping in a public park when he was woken by the officer and patted down. The interaction escalated...and Manney began shooting. Officer Manney was fired...but he was not prosecuted in court. Some of the leaders in the room thought the killing of Dontre Hamilton had been the final straw for Milwaukee's young people. They gave up on their city...They talked about how the police were destroying their communities, and locking up as many black people as they could” (Sharkey, 2018).

This is an unsurprising turn of events given that government reports dating back to the 1960's, like the Kerner Commission report, have identified the consequences of racial discrimination. The Kerner Commission was assembled by President Lyndon Johnson to investigate why America's cities were erupting in riots. The findings of the study overwhelmingly pointed to deep frustration in systems of racial discrimination and segregation as the reasons for the violence: “What white Americans have never fully understood—but what the negro can never

forget—is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it” (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders & Kerner, 1968). The conclusions of this report were largely ignored in subsequent policy making aimed at reducing the violence. Instead of addressing racial discrimination, segregation, and disenfranchisement, President Johnson passed the Safe Streets and Crime Control Act of 1968, legislation that expanded the funding for law enforcement (Johnson, 1965). Thus began an era of policies that have abandoned and punished poor city-dwellers, expanded public perceptions of Black criminality, and further contributed to racial tensions.

The effects of exposure to interpersonal violence for Black children and adolescents is clear, but the effects of discrimination through police brutality are less clearly differentiated from overall effects of exposure to violence—but an equally important and prominent aspect of any Black child’s life experience. Similar to the fear of violent victimization all children who have been recently exposed to community violence face, the fear of police brutality weighs on Black children constantly because their race is a master status; it is an unchangeable and visible characteristic that allows others to immediately categorize them and make assumptions about them based on stereotypes (Goffman, 1963). Black criminality is a stereotype widely adhered to by individuals in the U.S. (Butler, 2017; Wideman, 2010). This stereotype of Black criminality has severe consequences for Blacks on a systemic level. It serves as a rationale for unjust policies and practices, such as racial profiling by criminal justice practitioners, that only exacerbate the prevalence of the stereotype (Welch, 2007). It also leads to disproportional violence against and incarceration of Blacks. Instances of police brutality against innocent Blacks is all too common, with Blacks being 3 times more likely to be killed by police than

Whites. In 2015, 30% of Black victims killed by police were unarmed, compared to 21% of White victims, and only 31% of all people killed by police were allegedly armed and violent (Mapping Police Violence, 2015).

On the other hand, there are studies that posit that a disparity in police shootings of Blacks does not exist, but that there is a disparity in the use of other kinds of force by police against Blacks like handcuffing without arrest, pepper spraying, or being pushed to the ground by an officer (Fryer, 2016). While these mixed reports of racial disparities in uses of police force exist, the perception of being targeted by police violence exist in the African American community and has valid psychological consequences (Coates, 2015). Discrimination in and of itself contributes to chronic stress, and therefore health disparities, so this perception of being targeted by police brutality in the Black community, whether empirically grounded or not, contributes to the overall negative effects of community violence (Williams & Mohammed, 2008). Government policies for the expansion of law enforcement were a reaction to extreme violence in American cities, but these policies did not address the established cause of the violence: institutional discrimination. While Black Americans have gained a lot from reduction in crime that was partially caused by the expansion of law enforcement, they have also suffered greatly at the hands of discriminatory police and criminal justice practices that have only exacerbated feelings of racial marginalization in the Black community and struck fear into the hearts of Black children and parents.

Guns

Guns are the most dangerous weapon legally available to the general public in U.S.; therefore, guns make violent crime more lethal. Means matter. A person armed with a knife simply cannot do the same damage and take the same amount of human life that a person armed

with an assault rifle can in the same amount of time. While it is difficult to prospectively prove that gun control would work to reduce homicide rates, there are some clues through inter-state and inter-country comparisons that show that restricted access to guns, or certain types of guns or gun accessories, would decrease homicide rates. Whereas other countries approach gun ownership with the assumption that most citizens are restricted from buying guns, as reflected in the average of 17 guns per 100 people, the U.S. instead restricts certain small populations from buying guns based on their past behavior and assumes everyone else can and will use a gun responsibly, as reflected in the average of 101 guns per 100 people in the U.S. (Swanson, 2015). This approach to gun control calls on researchers to predict human behavior—to predict who is likely to misuse a gun in a dangerous way—based on population level statistics. While these population level statistics are helpful to clinicians in therapeutic settings, they are not a fail-safe way to predict individual behavior. Therefore, taking the approach other countries use for gun control would be more effective than attempting to imperfectly predict individual behavior. Further, research reveals that between states and between countries, those that have a lower rate of gun ownership have fewer gun deaths than those that have a higher rate of gun ownership (IHME, 2015; Violence Policy Center, 2016).

In addition, an overturned policy in Washington D.C. passed in 1976 perfectly exemplifies the efficacy of gun control policies. For ten years, D.C. issued a ban on handgun ownership. Firearm homicide and suicide rates were examined within the D.C. area during this time, and a 25% decline in firearm homicides and a 23% decline in firearm suicides were found—saving an estimated 42 lives each year (Loftin, McDowall, Wiersema, & Cottey, 1991). Despite the life-saving power of this law, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the D.C. gun ban in 2008, setting a political precedent that “confers an individual right to keep and bear arms,” and

tasking scientists with the impossible responsibility of deciding who is a danger to themselves or others and therefore should be restricted from owning a gun (District of Columbia v. Heller, 554 U.S. 570, 2008). This indicates that gun violence is a largely preventable problem, and the detrimental impacts it has on communities are generally avoidable.

It could be argued that gun control will not address the root social and economic causes of crime. John Wilson was on the D.C. council in 1975; he was one of the main advocates for the implemented handgun ban. He prepared a statement in his notes to respond to the “root causes” argument:

“Under the heading ‘Gun Controls Do Not Attack the Root Social and Economic Causes of Crime,’ Wilson wrote, ‘Of course they don’t. But they will reduce the effects of crime.’ And D.C.’s black citizens, Wilson thought, couldn’t wait for America to address root causes. As he said in his prepared response, ‘Waiting until society solves its root social and economic problems, when right now we can reduce the loss of life, the bodily harm, and the loss of property that result from crime and accident, makes no sense”

(Wilson, as cited in Forman, 2017).

Addressing the root causes of poverty and racial discrimination are incredibly important goals, but gun control works in saving lives and making communities feel safer, so why wait for such a long process to unfold?

Another benefit of gun control that can be inferred is a decrease in police shootings of criminals and innocents alike. There are countless instances of police shooting unarmed innocents because they mistook an ordinary object like a cellphone or wallet for a gun.

“February 4, 1999. About Midnight. Amadou Diallo, a 22-year-old immigrant from West Africa, had just come home to his South Bronx apartment...Lingering for just a moment

in the vestibule of his apartment building, Diallo suddenly heard the screeching of tires and saw four white men with guns pointed straight at him come pouring out of a car. One of the men yelled something at Diallo. Diallo reached into his back pants pocket and pulled out his wallet, offering it to the men...He heard someone shout, 'Gun!' and the next thing he knew, the men were firing at him" (Lee, 2004).

Diallo was killed by police officers who had been looking for a rape suspect—Diallo was not that person. This is one of many instances in which police mistakenly used lethal force against a person who they thought had a gun. Perhaps if police officers had less reason to suspect that the people they encounter have access to firearms, they may be less likely to use lethal force in high pressure situations.

Data from inter-country comparisons of deaths from police shootings support this hypothesis. Deaths from police shootings in the U.S. far outstrip that of any other developed country: 0 in Japan, 0 in Britain, 8 in Germany, compared to 458 in the United States in 2013 (Economist, 2014). Part of this is likely because the U.S. has a much higher violent crime rate than other countries, and this high violent crime rate is partially due to higher rates of gun ownership in the U.S. This means that police are more likely to be killed by civilians. A study in the American Journal of Public Health found that every 10 percent increase in firearm ownership in a given state correlated with 10 more police officers killed over a 15-year time period (Swedler, Simmons, Dominici, & Hemenway, 2015). Guns make working as a police officer more dangerous and high-stakes, and the widespread accessibility of guns makes it so "police not only *will* encounter more guns, but they *expect* to encounter more guns, making them more likely to anticipate and perceive a threat and use deadly force" (Vox, 2016). The empirical work on the relationship between deaths from police shootings and state gun laws is rather unclear because

there is a death of data, but the intercountry comparisons are more telling of this dangerous relationship. Fewer guns in the hands of civilians will not only curb interpersonal violence and all of its ripple effects, but also decrease instances of police brutality—an especially important factor for Black Americans.

Future Directions and Ethical Considerations

There are certain rights that all people are entitled to. According to Martha Nussbaum's capability approach, there are certain central capabilities that must be promoted to a certain threshold in each person for them to live a life in accordance with their inherent human dignity. By capabilities, Nussbaum means "activities characteristically performed by human beings [that] are so central that they seem definitive of a life that is truly human" (Nussbaum, 1999). She distinguishes between basic capabilities, internal capabilities, and combined capabilities: basic capabilities are the innate equipment necessary for developing more advanced capabilities; internal capabilities build on these basic capabilities to rise to sufficient levels to exercise capabilities; combined capabilities are internal capabilities combined with the external conditions that allow active functioning of capabilities. Combined capabilities are the most relevant to this topic as they are the most important in public policy applications; the function of public policy is to promote internal capabilities as well as make available the external conditions necessary for exercising capabilities. Each human has the right to have his/her central capabilities at least protected, if not promoted up to a certain level of sufficiency (Nussbaum, 2008). Nussbaum has created a list of ten specific capabilities; each child has these basic capabilities, but community violence threatens the development of internal capabilities and combined capabilities because the external conditions that allow active functioning of those capabilities does not exist. The specific

capabilities threatened by community violence are life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses, imagination, and thought; and emotions.

The threat of community violence to life is straightforward. A child living in a community with high rates of violent crime is more likely to die prematurely from violence than a child who lives in a safer community. The threat of community violence to bodily health is related to the effect exposure to community violence has on health over time in the form of health disparities. Bodily integrity refers to the capability of people being able to move freely from place to place without the threat of violent assault. This capability is diminished in high crime areas because the threat of violent assault is ever present, and often parents keep their children in their homes to keep them safe. The effects of community violence on cognitive functioning is a threat to get an adequate education to develop senses, imagination, and thought. The capability of emotions refers to the ability to feel the full spectrum of human emotion without emotional development being stunted by fear and anxiety. The consequences of community violence on mental health impedes the promotion of this capability to an acceptable threshold (Nussbaum, 2011).

Again, combined capabilities are the combination of internal capabilities and external conditions that allow functioning of all capabilities. Those external conditions can be created by public policies that reduce the impact of community violence. It is clear that homicide rates account for the greatest impact on intergenerational mobility over general community violence, and it is clear that guns make interpersonal violence more lethal; therefore, gun control is the place to start. Policies should be made to restrict civilian access to the types of guns and gun accessories that are most responsible for homicides in the U.S.

In addition to gun control policies, low income communities with high rates of violent crime should receive extra funding for resources for promoting children's capabilities after they have been exposed to violence. This would mean providing extra counseling and health care for children in these areas. Schools should also be responsible for providing some of these services after a local homicide to better promote the academic success of their students. There has been a movement in Los Angeles, California to hold schools responsible for incorporating evidence based practices that address trauma for students who live in high crime. Some of these strategies for addressing trauma have been successfully introduced in schools throughout the country (Peter P. et al v Compton U., et al., 2015). Ideally, the social and economic causes of crime would be addressed in an effort to diminish the effects of crime on low-income communities, but this strategy of social reform takes time that children don't have. Gun control and trauma-informed care can reduce loss of life and promote the well-being of children exposed to violence right now. These strategies should be the starting point for any policies that seek to diminish the effects of community violence.

References

- Adamson, F. & Darling-Hammond, L., (2011). Addressing the inequitable distribution of teachers: What will it take to get qualified, effective teachers in all communities. *Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education: Research Brief*. Retrieved from https://edpolicy.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/publications/addressing-inequitable-distribution-teachers-what-it-will-take-get-qualified-effective-teachers-all-_1.pdf
- Allensworth, E., Ponisciak, S., Mazzeo, C., (2009). The schools teachers leave: Teacher mobility in Chicago schools. *Consortium on Chicago School Research: Research Report*. Retrieved from: https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/publications/CCSR_Teacher_Mobility.pdf
- American Psychological Association, (2018). Violence and socioeconomic status. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/violence.aspx>
- Aneshensel, C. S., & Sucoff, C. A., (1996). The neighborhood context of adolescent mental health. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 33, 77-96.
- Bargai, N., Ben-Shakhar, G., & Shalev, A. Y., (2007). Posttraumatic stress disorder and depression in battered women: The mediating role of learned helplessness. *Journal of Family Violence*, 22, 267-275. Retrieved from <https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=241414>
- Beck, A. F., Huang, B., Ryan, P. H., Sandel, M. T., Chen, C., & Kahn, R. S., (2016). Areas with high rates of police-reported violent crime have higher rates of childhood asthma morbidity. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 173, 175-182. doi: 10.1016/j.jpeds.2016.02.018

Beckie, T. M., (2012). A systematic review of allostatic load, health, and health disparities.

Biological Research for Nursing, 14, 311-346. doi: 10.1177/1099800412455688

Berenson, A. B., Weimann, C. M., & McCombs, S., (2001). Exposure to violence and associated health risk behaviors among adolescent girls. *Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine, 135*, 1238-1242. doi: 10.1001/archpedi.155.11.1238

Berton, M. W., & Stabb, S. D., (1996). Exposure to violence and post-traumatic stress disorder in urban adolescents. *Adolescence, 31*, 489-494. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/8726906>

Birmaher, B., Ryan, N. D., Williamson, D. E., Brent, D. A., Kaufman, J., Dahl, R. E., et al. (1996). Childhood and adolescent depression: A review of the past 10 years. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 35*, 1427-1439.

Black, D. (2016). *Ending zero tolerance: The crisis of absolute school discipline*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

Briggs, X. D., & Turner, M. A., (2006). Assisted housing mobility and the success of low-income minority families: Lessons for policy, practice, and future research. *Northwestern Journal of Law and Social Policy, 1*, 25-61. Retrieved from <https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1004&context=njlsp>

Butler, P., (2017). *Chokehold: Policing Black Men*. New York City, New York: The New Press.

Center for Juvenile Justice, (2001). Abandoned in the back row: New lessons in education and delinquency prevention. *Annual Report*.

- Chetty, R., et al., (2014). Where is the land of opportunity? The geography of intergenerational mobility in the United States. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 129, 1553-1623.
- Chetty, R. et al., (2014). Is the United States still a land of opportunity? Recent trends in intergenerational mobility. *American Economic Review of Papers and Proceedings*, 104, 141-147.
- Chetty, R. & Hendren, N., (2016). The impacts of neighborhoods on intergenerational mobility: Childhood exposure effects and county level estimates. *National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Papers no. 23001 and 23002*.
- Coates, T. N., (2015). *Between the World and Me*. New York: Spiegel and Grau.
- Department of Justice, (2018). Children exposed to violence. Retrieved from <https://ojp.gov/programs/cev.htm>
- Deykin, E. Y., Levy, J. C., & Wells, V., (1987). Adolescent depression, alcohol and drug abuse. *American Journal of Public Health*, 77, 178-182.
- Diamond D. M., Park, C. R., Heman, K. L., & Rose, G. M., (1999). Exposing rats to a predator impairs spatial working memory in the radial arm water maze. *Hippocampus*, 9, 545-552. doi: 10.1002/(SICI)1098-1063(1999)9:5<542::AID-HIPO8>3.0.CO;2-N
- Federal Bureau of Investigation, (2016). Crime in the United States. *Uniform Crime Reporting Publication*. Retrieved from <https://ucr.fbi.gov/ucr-publications>
- Fish, J. S., Ettner, S., Ang, A., & Brown, A. F., (2011). Association of perceived neighborhood safety with body mass index. *American Journal of Public Health*, 100, 2296-2303. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2009.183293
- Forman Jr., J. (2017). *Locking up our own: Crime and punishment in Black America*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Fowler, P. J., Tompsett, C. J., Braciszewsk, J. M., Jacques-Tiura, A. J., & Baltes, B. B., (2009).

Community violence: A meta-analysis on the effect of exposure and mental health outcomes of children and adolescents. *Development and Psychopathology*, *21*, 227-259. doi: 10.1017/S0954579409000145

Friedson, M., & Sharkey, P., (2015). Violence and neighborhood disadvantage after the crime decline. *The Annals of the American Academy*, *660*, 341-358. doi:

10.1177/0002716215579825

Fryer, J., (2016). An empirical analysis of racial differences in police use of force. *National Bureau of Economic Research*.

Goffman, E., (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity*. New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Goldhaber, D., Lavery, L., & Theobald, R., (2015). Uneven playing field? Assessing the teacher quality gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. *Educational Researcher*, *44*, 293-307. doi: 10.3102/0013189X15592622

Greenbaum, R. T., & Tita, G. E., (2004). The impact of violence surges on neighbourhood business activity. *Urban Studies*, *41*.

Green, B., Horel, T., & Papachristos, A. V., (2017). Modeling contagion through social networks to explain and predict gunshot violence in Chicago 2006 to 2014. *Journal of the American Medical Association Internal Medicine*, *177*, 326-333. doi:

10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.8245

Harding, D. J., (2009). Collateral consequences of violence in disadvantaged neighborhoods. *Social Forces*, *88*, 757-784. doi: 10.1353/sof.0.0281

- Hawkins, W. E., Hawkins, M. J., & Steeley, J., (1992). Stress, health-related behavior and quality of life on depressive symptomatology in a sample of adolescents. *Psychological Reports, 71*, 183-186.
- Healy, L., & Lepley, M., (2016). Housing voucher mobility in Cuyahoga County. *The Housing Center: Housing Research and Advocacy Center*.
- Hipp, J. R., Tita, G. E., & Greenbaum, R. T., (2009). Drive-bys and trade-ups: Examining the directionality of the crime and residential instability relationship. *Social Forces, 87*, 1777-1812. doi: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40344999>.
- Ho, A. D. & Reardon, S. F., (2012). Estimating achievement gaps from test scores reported in ordinal ‘proficiency’ categories. *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics, 37*, 489-517.
- Ingersoll, R., Merrill, L., & Stuckey, D., (2014). Seven trends: The transformation of the teaching force. *Consortium for Policy Research in Education*. Retrieved from: http://www.cpre.org/sites/default/files/workingpapers/1506_7trendsapril2014.pdf
- Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, (2015). Global burden of disease study. Retrieved from <https://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare/#>
- Johnson, L. B., (1965). Statement by the president following the signing of law enforcement assistance bills.
- Kaplan, D. S., Peck, M. B., Kaplan, H. B., (1997). Decomposing the academic failure—dropout relationship: A longitudinal analysis. *The Journal of Educational Research, 90*, 331-343.
- Kirby, J., (2018). Parkland shooting survivor Samuel Zeif to Trump: “How did this not stop after Columbine?”: A Parkland survivor delivers and emotional plea during President Trump’s

- listening session at the White House. *Vox*. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/2018/2/21/17038310/parkland-shooting-survivor-samuel-zeif-trump>
- Lee, C., (2004). 'But I thought he had a gun'—Race and police use of deadly force. *Hastings Race and Poverty Law Journal*. Retrieved from: https://scholarship.law.gwu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1793&context=faculty_publications
- Lemoine, B., (2018). Gun control protest: Homestead students to walk out of class March 14 ahead of national rally.
- Loftin, C., McDowall, D., Wiersema, B., Cottey, T. J., (1991). Effects of restrictive licensing of handguns on homicide and suicide in the District of Columbia. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 325, 1615-1620. doi: 10.1056/NEJM199112053252305
- Mapping Police Violence, (2015). Retrieved from <https://mappingpoliceviolence.org/>
- McCloskey, L. A., & Walker, M., (2000). Posttraumatic stress in children exposed to family violence and single-event trauma. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 39, 108-115. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10638074>
- McCoy, D. C., Raver, C. C., Sharkey, P., (2015). Children's cognitive performance and selective attention following recent community violence. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 56, 19-36. doi: 10.1177/0022146514567576.
- McEwen, B. S., (2012). Brain on stress: How the social environment gets under the skin. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, USA*, 109, 17180-17185.
- McEwen, B. S., & Gianaros, P. J. (2010). Central role of the brain in stress and adaptation: Links

to socioeconomic status, health, and disease. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1186, 190-222. doi: 10.1111/j.1749-6632.2009.05331.x

McLaughlin, K. A., Sheridan, M. A., Tibu, F., Fox, N. A., Zeanah, C. H., & Nelson, C. A. (2015). Causal effects of the early caregiving environment on stress response system development in children. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, USA*, 112, 5637-5642.

McLaughlin, K. A., & Sheridan, M. A., (2016). Beyond cumulative risk: A dimensional approach to childhood adversity. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 25, 239-245. doi: 10.1177/0963721416655883

Moore, P., (2014). Poll results: Government statistics. Retrieved from <https://today.yougov.com/news/2014/05/08/poll-results-government-statistics/>

National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, & Kerner, O., (1968). *Report of the national advisory commission on civil disorders*. Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

NCES, (2015). Trends in high school dropout and completion rates in the United States: 1972-2012. *Compendium Report*.

Nussbaum, M. C., (1999). *Sex and Social Justice* (57). Oxford University Press.

Nussbaum, M. C., (2008). Human dignity and political entitlements. In *Human Dignity and Bioethics*. Washington, D.C.: The President's Council on Bioethics.

Nussbaum, M. C., (2011). *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard

University Press.

Overmier, J. B., & Seligman, M. E. P. (1967). Effects of inescapable shock upon subsequent escape and avoidance learning. *Journal of Comparative and Physiological Psychology*, *63*, 23-33.

Peter P., et al. v Compton U., et al., (2015). Summary and key documents. Retrieved from:

<http://www.traumaandlearning.org/summary--key-documents>

Pryce, C. R., Azzinari, D., Spinelli, S., Seifritz, E., Tegethoff, M., & Meinischmidt, G., (2011). Helplessness: A systematic translational review of theory and evidence for its relevance to understanding and treating depression. *Pharmacology & Therapeutics*, *132*, 242-267. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pharmthera.2011.06.006>

Rabow, J., Berkman, S. L., Ronald, K., (1983). The culture of poverty and learned helplessness: A social psychological perspective. *Sociological Inquiry*, *53*, 419-434. doi: 10.1111/j.1475-682X.1983.tb01232.x

Ratner, H. H., Chiodo, L., Covington, C., Sokol, R. J., Ager, J., Delaney-Black, V., (2006). Violence exposure, IQ, academic performance, and children's perception of safety: Evidence of protective effects. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, *52*, 264-287.

Razza, R. A., Martin, A., & Brooks-Gunn, (2010). Associations among family environment, sustained attention, and school readiness for low-income children. *Clinical Psychology Review*, *29*, 1-23.

- Riley, C., Roy, B., Abraham, M., Greene, A., Harari, N., Lucas, G., et al., (2014). Community resilience teams: Leveraging social cohesion to address gun violence in New Haven neighborhoods. *Conference: 142nd APHA Annual Meeting and Exposition 2014*.
- Sampson, R. J., Raudenbush, S. W., Earls, F., (1997). Neighborhoods and violent crime: A multilevel study of collective efficacy. *Science Magazine*, 277, 918-924. Retrieved from <http://www.d.umn.edu/~jmaahs/MA%20Theory%20Articles/Sampson%20et%20al%20collective%20efficacy.pdf>
- Seligman, M. E. P., & Groves, D. (1970). Non-transient learned helplessness. *Psychonomic Science*, 19, 191-192.
- Seligman, M. E. P., Maier, S. F., & Greer, J. (1968). The alleviation of learned helplessness in the dog. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 74, 1-9.
- Seligman, M. E. P., Rosellini, R. A., & Kozak, M. J., (1975). Learned helplessness in the rat: Reversibility, time course, and immunization. *Journal of Comparative and Physiological Psychology*, 88, 524-541.
- Sharkey, P., Schwartz, A. E., Ellen, I. G., Laco, J., (2014). High stakes in the classroom, high stakes on the street: The effects of community violence on students' standardized test performance. *Sociological Science*, 1, 199-220. doi: 10.15195/v1.a14
- Sharkey, P., (2010). The acute effect of local homicides on children's cognitive performance. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences in the United States of America*, 107, 11733-11738. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1000690107>
- Sharkey, P. (2018). *Uneasy Peace: The Great Crime Decline, The Renewal of City Life, and The Next War on Violence*. New York: NY: W.W. Norton and Company Ltd.

- Sharkey, P., (2018, January 16). The Great Crime Decline and the Comeback of Cities. *CityLab*. Retrieved from <https://www.citylab.com/life/2018/01/the-great-crime-decline-and-the-comeback-of-cities/549998/>
- Stein, B. D., Jaycox, L., Kataoka, S. H., Rhodes, H. H., & Vestal, K. D., (2003). Prevalence of child and adolescent exposure to community violence. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 6, 247-264. doi: 1096-4037/03/1200-0247/0
- Swanson, J., (2015). Firearms, mental illness, and the law [lecture]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tUkjuUb4a_E
- Swedler, D. I., Simmons, M. M., Dominici, F., & Hemenway, D., (2015). Firearm prevalence and homicides of law enforcement officers in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health*, 105, 2042-2048. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2015.302749
- The Economist, (2014). Policing: Don't shoot—America's police kill too many people. But some forces are showing how smarter, less aggressive policing gets results. Retrieved from: <https://www.economist.com/news/united-states/21636044-americas-police-kill-too-many-people-some-forces-are-showing-how-smarter-less>
- Tovian, S., Thorn, B., Coons, H., Labott, S., Burg, M., Surwit, R., et al., (2018). Stress effects on the body. *American Psychological Association*. Retrieved from: <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/stress-body.aspx>
- van der Kolk, B. A., (2005). Developmental trauma disorder: Towards a rational diagnosis for children with complex trauma histories. *Psychiatric Annals*, 35, 401-408. doi: <https://doi.org/10.3928/00485713-20050501-06>
- Vangeepuram, N., Galvez, M. P., Teitelbaum, S. L., Brenner, B., & Wolff, M. S., (2012). The association between parental perception of neighborhood safety and asthma diagnosis in

- ethnic minority children. *Journal of Urban Health*, 899, 758-758. doi: 10.1007/s11524-012-9679-5.
- Vaughn, M., Salas-Wright, C., & Maynard, B., (2014). Dropping out of school and chronic disease in the United States. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 51, 265-270.
- Violence Policy Center, (2016). States with weak gun laws and higher gun ownership lead nation in gun deaths, new data for 2014 confirms. Retrieved from <http://www.vpc.org/press/states-with-weak-gun-laws-and-higher-gun-ownership-lead-nation-in-gun-deaths-new-data-for-2014-confirms/>
- Vox, (2016). American police shoot and kill far more people than their peers in other countries. Retrieved from: <https://www.vox.com/cards/police-brutality-shootings-us/us-police-shootings-statistics>
- Welch, K., (2007). Black criminal stereotypes and racial profiling. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 23, 276-288. doi: 10.1177/1043986207306870
- Wilcox, P., Land, K. C., & Hunt, S. A., (2003). *Criminal Circumstance: A Dynamic Multicontextual Criminal Opportunity Theory*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Williams, D. R., & Mohammed, S. A., (2009). Discrimination and racial disparities in health: Evidence and needed research. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 32. doi: 10.1007/s10865-008-9185-0
- Wilson, W. J., (1996). *When Work Disappears*. New York: Knopf.
- Wideman, J. E., (2010, October 6). The seat not taken. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/07/opinion/07Wideman.html>