



# COMMUNITY RESPONSES TO CRIME

SOC 2202: Cities and Society  
Fall 2019

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## BUSINESS MATTERS: MIDTERM ONE

- ▶ Midterm papers must be uploaded to OneDrive by 5 pm on Friday, October 25.
- ▶ Additional Office Hours
  - ▶ Thursday, October 17
  - ▶ Friday, October 18
  - ▶ NOTE: Professor Greene is **NOT AVAILABLE** on Thursday, October 24.

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## BUSINESS MATTERS

- ▶ Monday, October 21: Guest Lecture by Marcelle Medford
  - ▶ CHANGE IN READINGS:
    - ▶ Read Chapter 1, 3 of Andrew (*Undocumented Politics*)
    - ▶ Skim Medford's article (available on Course website) — **“Racialization and Black Multiplicity: Generative Paradigms for Understanding Black Immigrants.”**
- ▶ Working on Response Problems on Course Website

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PREVIOUSLY ...

- Crime and Policing
  - Theories of crime
    - **social disorganization**: “the inability of a community structure to realize the common values of its residents and maintain effective social controls” (Sampson and Wilson 1995: 45).
      - results from the predominance of secondary ties over primary ties
      - Low economic status, ethnic heterogeneity, and residential mobility led to the disruption of community social organization, contributing to crime and delinquency rates (Shaw and McKay 1942).
    - Broken Windows Theory
  - Crime and Race
  - Explaining Decreasing Crime Rates

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PREVIOUSLY ...

- Forrest Stuart, Down, Out, and Under Arrest
  - **Neoliberalism**: an intellectual and political movement which “emphasizes the need to mobilize the state on behalf of the market while embracing market logics — such as supply and demand — as the optimal device for organizing human activities and distributing goods and services” (Stuart, p. 9).
    - the rise of non-profitization and privatization of functions once in the purview of local and state governments.
    - the neoliberal state seeks to produce citizens who are more willing and capable of entering the market.
      - the poor are envisioned as lacking the skills and willingness to manage their daily activities.

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PREVIOUSLY ...

- The effects of neoliberal policies leading to the rise of **therapeutic policing**: a paternalistic brand of spatial, behavioral, and moral discipline designed to “cure” those at the bottom of the social hierarchy of the individual pathologies deemed irresponsible for their abject circumstances.
  - police draw on a combination of “broken windows style” policing (community based policing) to coerce the citizens of Skid Row to adapt new attitudes, habits, and disposition.
    - The community based policing results in increased surveillance (even over noncriminal activities) and intrusive regulation.
- *Is this effective?*

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## PREVIOUSLY ...

- ▶ For inhabitants of Skid Row, therapeutic policing is seen as obtrusive.
  - ▶ Develop skillsets to manage and mitigate interactions with police.
    - ▶ become **copwise**, developing a cognitive framework to minimize the probability of detrimental police contact.
      - ▶ engage in a “folk ethnography of policing,” imagining their world through the eyes of police officers, to exploit the blind spots of surveillance and regulation
      - ▶ this also includes organizing inhabitants of Skid Row to turn the tables and surveil the police.
- ▶ *Do these strategies reflect the production of different types of “community”?*

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Hyper-police control and the Safer Cities Initiative have put more pressure on citizens living in Skid Row to enforce social control in order to avoid negative consequences with the police. The three chapters illustrate the tactics of different groups with exerting their “cop wise” knowledge. Is it the social responsibility of those who are more knowledgeable to look out for others?

**-CATHERINE A., EXPERT QUESTION**

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## TODAY

- ▶ “Community Saved” Paradigm
- ▶ Theories of Social Control and Community Efficacy
- ▶ Robert Vargas’ Wounded City

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## COMMUNITY SAVED

- **1950s and 1960s:** scholars began questioning how far human ecology and urban ecology could explain urban forms and urban social life.
  - Does structure shape community?
  - Began doing ethnographic “community studies,” using survey and fieldwork techniques to gauge sentiments and attachments toward community.
- **THRUST:** Individuals do not wander in a vast urban metropolis. Rather, they organize networks of kinship and common values.

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## MAJOR FINDINGS

- Shift from “**folk communities**” (built on the bonds of extended family and clan membership) to communities as “conscious social constructions,” facilitated by the creation and maintenance of local community institutions.
  - Community actors as active agents.
- A loss of community in one dimension (ecological, socio-structural, cultural symbolic) does not mean an complete “loss of community.”
- The effects of economic and racial segregation on the formation and persistence of “parochial sentiments” within American communities.
- Communities are integral for identity production and maintenance.

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## FROM “FOLK COMMUNITIES” TO “STREET CORNER SOCIETIES”

- “**folk community**”: communities based around extended-family and clan-based associations (i.e. shared places of work and residence; shared cultural production and consumption practices; religious homogeneity; face-to-face communication).
- “**street corner society**”: social worlds comprised of primary social ties created in and around street corners and street corner institutions.
  - “street families” (Elijah Anderson, 1999)
  - the value of sidewalks as sites of community creation and culture production.
  - ephemeral, yet lasting.

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## EMPHASIS ON BLACK URBAN SPACES

- ▶ Studies emphasizing the extent to which sociopolitical and economic segregation (along with institutional isolation) has shaped primary relationships in working class areas, namely black urban spaces.
  - ▶ street corner societies as spaces of mutual support.
  - ▶ street corners as sites where men manage their respectability in the face of bleak socioeconomic realities (Liebow, *Tally's Corner* (1967); Anderson, *Streetwise* ([1979]; 2003)).
  - ▶ urban realities result in the creation of unique cultural forms that bind communities together (Ulf Hannerz, *Soulside* (1969)).

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## SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION

- ▶ **social disorganization:** “the inability of a community structure to realize the common values of its residents and maintain effective social controls” (Sampson and Wilson 1995: 45).
  - ▶ results from the domination of secondary ties over primary ties.
- ▶ Low economic status, ethnic heterogeneity, and residential mobility led to the disruption of community social organization, contributing to crime and delinquency rates (Shaw and McKay 1942).

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## SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION

- ▶ Fell out of vogue in the 1960s and 1970s:
  - ▶ Many inner-city neighborhoods characterized by poverty and violence were, in fact, highly organized with strong group ties.
    - ▶ distinct culture that responds to structural problems (loss of jobs; deindustrialization, and racial segregation)
  - ▶ Sudhir Venkatesh's, *Off the Books*: “underground economy”
  - ▶ Ulf Hannerz, *Soulside*

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ELJAH ANDERSON  
CODES OF THE STREET

- “decent” versus “street families”
  - **decent families** attempt to accept mainstream values and attempt to instill them within their children.
  - **street families**: affective communities forged around “mutual support for and encouragement for an alternative lifestyle that appears highly attractive to many adolescents, regardless of family background.
- **codes of the street**: a set of informal rules governing interpersonal public behavior, including violence.
  - includes how to comport oneself in the street and how to respond to violence.
  - focuses largely on gaining and maintaining respect.
  - cultural adaptation of a fundamental mistrust in the police and judicial system.

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MARY PATTILLO  
BLACK PICKET FENCES (1999)

- Black middle-class neighborhoods have higher poverty rates and are closer to poverty areas than white middle class neighborhoods, creating unique forms of social organization.
  - Higher proportions of low income residents with limited job opportunities, combined with an unstable middle class footing, means that crime is an attractive option to a significant minority of residents in the neighborhood and surrounding areas.
- While residential stability and dense social networks do not prevent criminal activity, they do work to circumscribe the criminal activity that does exist by “holding the neighborhood delinquents within the bonds of familial and neighborhood associations” (p. 748).
  - Criminal leadership shares mainstream desires for social order; however, in a different way.
  - Community investment in the neighborhood (to keep it safe) enables criminal minority to have a certain degree of latitude to operate in the neighborhood.

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ROBERT SAMPSON  
“A THEORY OF COLLECTIVE EFFICACY”

- **Certain aspects of social disorganization theory worth saving**: community-level variations in social control contribute to varying rates of crime.
  - strong interpersonal ties can impede efforts to establish social control.
  - networks connect do-gooders and the underbelly of social life.
  - shared expectations for social control and strategic connections can exist in the absence of thick neighborhood ties.
    - the importance of trust; not affect.

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ROBERT SAMPSON  
"A THEORY OF COLLECTIVE EFFICACY"

► **collective efficacy:** a neighborhood-level process involving both the willingness of individuals in a neighborhood to work together toward a common goal and mutual trust.

- requires a sense of working trust and social interaction.
- yet it is not necessarily dependent on deep, affective relationship (strong ties) among neighborhoods or institutional agents.
- shaped by:
  - racial and socioeconomic stratification
  - immigration
  - residential stability

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Do the residents of Little Village exercise collective efficacy?

How do they maintain social control? Can we think of them as functioning as a community?

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The gangs in Little Village incite fear within their community through the enforcement of the "code of silence." The threat of the "code of silence" leads to witnesses of crimes becoming unwilling to discuss the events they observe due to the danger of being targeted by gangs. This produces a cycle, whereby through means of self-preservation, residents create spaces for gang activities to occur and inadvertently contribute to displacing their own community.

Increasing the mobilization of police forces leads to surges in gang violence, thus, damaging communication and connections between the influential actors of the community. The cycle of distrust and the immediate threat of danger establishes a state of powerlessness and stagnation within the city making it near impossible to promote and sustain positive change. Taking this into consideration, if you were given a finite budget and a task aimed to restore communal relationships in Little Village, what would you invest resources into? What changes would you prioritize and begin with? Why?

—CESAR D., EXPERT QUESTION

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Since 1997, unlike the West Side, the East Side has been consistently gerrymandered, thereby restricting the development of organizational infrastructure for acquiring and distributing resources to East Side blocks. Gangs fought with police to maintain drug operations and control over residents eventually creating a code of silence. What can members of the East Side do collectively to mitigate violence in their community?

—YADIRA C., EXPERT QUESTION

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In 2009, CPS received \$260 million from President Obama’s federal stimulus legislation, of which \$40 million was allocated to create one of the largest and most expensive violence reduction initiatives in the city’s history: the Culture of Calm. The Culture of Calm established a mentoring program and a crossing guard program called Street Watchers. However, nothing was done for the East. How can the government better serve the residents of East Little Village?

—YADIRA C., EXPERT QUESTION

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