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Restorative v. Retributive: The Search for Effective Violence Prevention in Chicago

Project description

Today in the city of Chicago, there are many violence prevention organizations. My qualitative research, gathered through key informant interviews, allows me to categorize these organizations into two groups, retributive and restorative, to analyze their respective success. While retributive organizations may appear to succeed in the short term, their methods compound problems of violence, rendering their results antithetical to their mission. In comparison, restorative organizations align in a process centered on reducing violence by helping the individual. I recommend that traditionally retributive organizations adopt characteristics of restorative organizations in order to better prevent violence in Chicago both in the short-term and in the long-term.

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Restorative v. Retributive: The Search for Effective Violence Prevention in Chicago

Abstract: Today in the city of Chicago, there are many violence prevention organizations. My qualitative research, gathered through key informant interviews, allows me to categorize these organizations into two groups, retributive and restorative, to analyze their respective success. While retributive organizations may appear to succeed in the short term, their methods compound problems of violence, rendering their results antithetical to their mission. In comparison, restorative organizations align in a process centered on reducing violence by helping the individual. I recommend that traditionally retributive organizations adopt characteristics of restorative organizations in order to better prevent violence in Chicago both in the short-term and in the long-term.

"Those issues have to be addressed first because I can talk to a guy all day saying "Stop shooting", but if those issues haven't been dealt with on the inside, then it's not going to take much for him to click again. He's going to resort to what he knows." – Demeatreas Whatley

In the quest to end gun violence in Chicago, there are many actors. State sponsored organizations like the police and community organizations like BAM share the same goal: stop the violence. In these violence prevention groups there are varied approaches and varied effectiveness. Some have incredible success, others do nothing, and some compound the

problem. In this paper, I will examine what works and what doesn't in violence prevention organizations, focusing on organizations that either dramatically succeed or fail. I will consider how the methods of violence prevention organizations impact their results and what common themes emerge from comparison. My research will demonstrate trends in philosophy with groups that work and groups that don't. One philosophy, which I will call the retributive philosophy, focuses on punishment for violence by targeting violent actors, these groups seek to make an example to stop future violence. Other groups follow what I will call a restorative philosophy. This philosophy focuses on how the behaviors of adolescents develop and how to change or adapt negative behaviors with an approach that cares about the individual.

Restorative organizations support individuals, recognizing the environmental factors that affect people. My research will focus on the interplay between these groups and the question of which group tends to succeed, why they succeed, and what we can learn from that success. In short, my research has found that while retributive organizations may have short term success, they fail to address the root causes of violence. In contrast, restorative organizations directly confront the behaviors that lead to violence. They truly address the issue raised by Demeatreas Whatley by changing what a shooter knows. I emphasize that the line between restorative and retributive organizations is not firm. In fact, my research has shown that reforms to retributive organizations could lead to a change in philosophy. By examining both retributive and restorative violence prevention organizations in Chicago, I will demonstrate the need for retributive organizations to adopt restorative methods to end the cycle of violence in Chicago.

“There’s a lot of history there and we need to have an understanding of that history” –

Rosana Anders

My research highlighted the need for solutions to violence that account for the environment in which they work. Gun violence in the city of Chicago has a long history with important impacts on the present day. In the city of Chicago today, gun violence attributed to gang activity is a real problem. The Chicago Police Department has suggested that “85 percent of the city’s gun murders in 2015 can be attributed to gang violence” (Neyfakh 2016). The systematic dismantlement of large organized gang nations by federal actions such as Operation Ceasefire, has led to “a messy, vicious war between the dangerous shards” (Neyfakh 2016). These shards, “cliques”, present a fresh set of challenges for anti-violence workers.

Despite the structural shift from gang to clique culture, underlying systemic issues remain relevant to a discussion on why adolescents join cliques. As discussed by Chad Broughton, the effects of racial segregation from the establishment of the color line leave a powerful legacy in the city of Chicago. The new urban poverty of “poor segregated neighborhoods in which a substantial majority of individual adults are either unemployed or have dropped out of the labor force altogether” has not disappeared from the city of Chicago (Wilson 1996, 19). This leads to an environment “that lacks the idea of work as a central experience of adult life” (Wilson 1996, 52). This environment leaves adolescents with few job opportunities and little motivation to find a job, while cliques and illegal activity provide an opportunity to gain an income. This baseline puts children in these neighborhoods at a disadvantage even before they are born (Thornberry 1998, 48). Additionally, adolescents may grow up with parents or even grandparents who were gangbangers or did illegal activities. This

can create an expectation in the minds of children that they will also be involved in criminal activities (Mangino 2009, 150). Additionally, many of the parents of youth are absent due to incarceration or violence related causes. This leads to a lack of parental engagement, which is detrimental to youth development (Mangino 2009, 151).

While the literature on cliques provides a solid background for developing preventative methods, there is no single solution. There is no individual reason for violence in gangs, as it is the result of a process that can take many forms. Yet it is clear that Chicago's history of violence among and against communities of color is critical to understand violence in Chicago today. Therefore, understanding these processes and possible reasons are essential to understand preventative measures. Through my research, I will explore how retributive violence prevention organizations in Chicago feed into this background, while restorative organizations work to break it down and address it. Through this process, I hope to understand the possible benefits and flaws of each to assess success.

“A sense of realistic evidence based optimism” – Harold Pollack

From the immense body of literature on violence prevention organizations, I will highlight recent literature that directly relates to my study of retributive and restorative organizations. Literature on retributive violence prevention organizations suggests flaws in their methodology and possible solutions, on which I will base my study of similar institutions in Chicago. In *Punished*, Victor Rios frames his discussion of Oakland crime in terms of hypercriminalization and punitive social control, emphasizing a system of intense regulation of to highlight an overarching system of regulating the lives or marginalized young people, what I

refer to as punitive social control” (Rios 2015, xiv). This system of social control with racial overtones is echoed in other police departments and criminal justice systems across the country (Cureton 2009; Stewart et. al.; Zimring 2011). Yet there are many stories in programs, like Ceasefire in Boston, focused on police crackdown in crime (Kennedy 2012; Levitt 2004; Travis, Western, and Redburn 2014; Zimring 2011). Their system of “focused deterrence” was intended to stop gang violence in Boston with vengeance against offenders (Kennedy 2012, 54). Their message was “keep shooting your guns and will make your life miserable.” (Kennedy 2012, 54). Ceasefire successfully targeted violence, and also partnered with groups providing support for nonviolent offenders (Kennedy 2012). Both Kennedy and Rios suggest that support for delinquent adolescents must form an aspect of the process (Kennedy 2012; Rios 2011). In my paper, I will to explore themes from the foundation of Rios’ terms in my analysis of retributive methods. I will distinguish my work by discussing state legitimized organizations as a specific form of violence prevention organization. In this way, I will use the theory from Ceasefire as a model to view the police in Chicago. I will explore the relationship of retributive instructions, and the possibility of a retributive organization to become more restorative, through my interviews with key informants.

Restorative violence prevention organizations demonstrate enormous potential to create systemic change. Recent research on Youth Guidance’s program, BAM, a violence prevention program in Chicago suggests an up to 50% reduction in violent crime arrests for participants at an extremely low cost (Heller, et. al. 2013). The large takeaway is that improving the lives of adolescents can be as simple as changing cognitive skills and behaviors, in this case automaticity (Heller, etc. 2013; Beck 2011; Heckman and Kautz 2013). BAM’s method to affect

this change, by using well educated counselors with shared experience to teach, is not new or exclusive, but was in fact used in the Chicago Area Project in 1930 and by other violence prevention workers such as violence interrupters (Lopez-Aguado 2013). This method can only come from the community itself, demonstrating a key role for community members (Hayden 2004; Rodriguez 2001). These organizations as a whole highlight the important role of the community in responding to violence (Lopez-Aguado 2013; Sharkey, etc. 2017). These methods often do not directly address violence, as exemplified by BAM, but they work on a community level to address structural problems. There is an acknowledgement of the failure of state sponsored violence prevention efforts to address those same structural problems in their programs (Rosenfeld 2004; LaFree 1998). Community based organizations have a much better opportunity to change the structure (Sharkey, etc. 2017). I will examine the method of these restorative community based organizations in the city of Chicago today. By examining organizations that claim to prevent violence in the city, I will show how failed violence prevention organizations are connected by their philosophy of retributive social control, which leads to long term results antithetical to the stated goals. Thinking on a systemic level, I will engage with the philosophies of restorative organizations, to demonstrate trends of success. I will find the connections between data supported restorative violence prevention organizations to make a broader claim about violence prevention methodology that leads to the most effective and permanent results.

“We have to go find them ... and send them the message that we aren’t going to give up”-

Evelyn Diaz

To further understand my research topic and learn about current violence prevention efforts in Chicago, I collected qualitative data by interviewing key informants. My goal was to develop my understanding of perspectives on gun violence by finding key informants to talk about successful violence prevention efforts. Though my thesis changed multiple times over the course of my work, I remained focused on the interplay between different violence prevention methods throughout. The diversity of violence prevention methods in Chicago was reflected in my interviews, each of which provided unique insight.¹ Whether in class or in the community, I conducted all interviews in a controlled environment such as a classroom or office. I chose to record all interviews in order to keep the ability to find direct quotes and also so that they could be shared with classmates. In my opinion, this method did not change the honesty or realness of conversations in interviews. My interviews provided a wealth critical information and perspectives that have shaped my findings.

Many of my interviews were arranged in a classroom setting by my professor, Chad Broughton. These provided a wide range of perspectives, including former gangster disciples such as Demeatreas Whatley, research experts such as Andrew Papachristos, community organization leaders such as Evelyn Diaz, and public employees like Cara Smith. My individual research was centered around effective approaches to violence prevention. I reached out to Ryan Priester due to his personal and leadership experience in violence prevention, specifically focused on the Woodlawn Public Safety Alliance and the Safe Passage program. I reached out to Dave Simpson and Marshaun Bacon at Youth Guidance in order to learn more about the Becoming a Man program at Youth Guidance. I joined an interview with Rudy Nimocks due my

¹ See Appendix I for full summary of interviews

interest in his unique perspective as a police chief and anti-violence advocate. I joined the interview with Norman Kerr to understand trauma focused prevention methods used by UCAN.

In my interviews, I asked a similar set of questions aimed to give the key informants a chance to address themes without using leading questions. I aimed to learn gain perspective on the systemic issues common to neighborhoods where gangs are prevalent, the idea of a gang and what it means to adolescents, and the variety of effective or ineffective strategies for violence prevention. I adapted the style of the interview based on the answers of the informant and asked follow up questions to learn more about the life perspective of the informant or to guide the conversation to key themes.

It could be argued that by interviewing key informants who unanimously support restorative violence prevention, I talked to people who have similar sorts of opinions. Yet the diversity of backgrounds represented in my interviews and support for opinions by empirical data demonstrates that this in fact shows a wide consensus supporting my thesis. I relied on my informants to support their claims and trusted statements about personal experience. This relationship based research has given me a wealth of information on gun violence in Chicago, but it is important to note my reliance on their testimony for my project. By going directly to the people working on the front lines of violence prevention today, in a number of different strategies, I was able to get a good sense of the world and philosophies of violence prevention today. My interviewees were well informed and focus their careers on violence prevention. While this may bias results, it means that I can expect that opinions expressed are the result of direct experience. Though I noticed different perspectives depending on closeness to violence

of informants themselves, a strength of my method was that I interviewed both. My research method provided me with useful qualitative data.

Retributive Organizations: “The thoughtlessness ... is stunning” – Cara Smith

One might ask if the means of using a little violence to accomplish the end of a lot of violence prevention is justified. Another might suggest that setting examples of people who commit violent acts might discourage other people from doing the same. These methods of violence prevention have been used throughout history, with varying success. I define these methods as retributive. These methods use punishment as the main tool to prevent future violence. I will examine the process and results of groups using these methods in Chicago history and on Chicago today as discussed by my key informants. My research shows that while violence prevention organizations, like the Gangster Disciples, police, and criminal justice system, may appear to succeed in the short term, their methods compound problems of violence, rendering their results antithetical to their mission.

“We are not better off under a cartel situation” – Andrew Papachristos

The Gangster Disciples, a street gang central to Chicago in the second half of the 20th century, have a reputation of a violence prevention organization among the aging generation that grew up as disciples. The community protection provided by the Gangster Disciples (GDs) forms the basis for this classification. It is critical to recognize how the community origins of the gang impact their legitimacy in the community. According to John Walker, “It wasn't so much about violence as it was about being vanguards of our community. ... It was our responsibility to

control that, to keep outsiders from coming in a victimizing and taking from our community.” This supports Demeatreas Whatley’s assertion that, “The gang protected communities.” To Whatley and Walker, the gang served as a protective organization. It’s important to note that the Gangsters Disciples were protecting their communities from other gangs to assert their control, but for the communities controlled by the disciples, the organization was like a shield. Many of my interviewees suggested that the GDs provided a “sense of order.” Nicole Vaughn said that “it was a more controlled type of environment. When someone robs someone you could get belongings back by the end of the day.” Walker added that “I could basically go anywhere in Chicago that there were Gangster Disciples and I would be covered.” These testimonies demonstrate the legendary ability of the GDs to support communities and prevent violence. My research examines the method used to create this environment.

At this time, the GDs served as the official power. As a community organization seeking to assert authority over territory for commercial reasons, they used discipline and violence to assert their power. As Walker put it, “They had this whole respect thing down to a science because it was really all based on fear. The fear of consequence makes me follow the rules correctly.” Whatley explained that this fear came from the fact that “discipline was swift back then. ... If you broke one of those guidelines, they'd set an example.” Violence was used to create what Pollack called “a monopoly of control over that territory.” The extent of this is clear upon examination of empirical data. As Andrew Papachristos described, violence in Chicago was at its peak when the city was under the control of gangs like the Gangster Disciples and since their takedown in the 1990s, “violence under gangs has gone down.” Papachristos emphasizes that “we are not better off under a cartel situation with the gangs.” The Gangster Disciples

created a system of order in Chicago communities by creating and maintaining a monopoly of violence. Arguing that they are a successful violence prevention organization is unsupported by data. This example emphasizes the need for an examination of the methodology of a violence prevention organization before assessing its success.

“Officer Friendly does not exist” – Nicole Vaughn

The fall of the GDs and reassertion of state control of Chicago started a drop in gun violence measured by number of deaths that would not stop until 2016. This drop, often attributed to the reassertion of police control, seems to be a success story of violence prevention. Yet, by using dominance to control communities, the police create a system similar to the system of Gangster Disciples, based on fear and violence. This was highlighted by Ryan Priester, who noted from his point of view “police came in after sharp spike in violence and outlined a classic military strategy.” While this may have successfully reestablished state control over the city of Chicago, it did not eliminate violence, and in fact eroded police legitimacy amidst the community. Nicole Vaughn emphasized this when she said, “One thing is trust. We can't trust the police. ... Officer Friendly does not exist.” Craig Futterman highlighted that this has led to “fundamental alienation from law enforcement and fundamental distrust of police” among adolescents in South Side communities. This is due to the assertions of power by police that affect the lives of adolescents often on a daily level, or in Katherine Boganegra’s words, “the normalization of [police] involvement in the intimate lives of people in the community.” Futterman emphasizes that not all police act in a way that alienates communities, but the experience of adolescent is shaped by the police who do engage in these actions, the “bad

apples”, because those police officers are protected by the department. The Laquon McDonald video itself, and the fallout, as described by Professor Chad Broughton, epitomizes how the police, a violence prevention organization, have contributed to violence.

Another more implicit way in which police action in communities supports rather than prevents violence comes due to a growing lack of legitimacy. Futterman suggests that “the absence of trust can hurt and can exacerbate violence” because of failure of the community to support the police. The lack of police legitimacy has a direct effect on the ability of police to solve crimes and prevent violence because if no one in the community works with them, they cannot be effective. Preister summarizes this into the idea of “a culture of omerta, or silence, among the people.” Futterman notes that “the areas with the least trust of police, are the very same areas where police are least effective in solving crime,” providing empirical support that without community support, police are hamstrung in their own violence prevention efforts. This demonstrates how a lack of legitimacy is counterproductive for the police as a violence prevention organization. Police methods have led to a system with increased violence and little hope of eradicating violence. The counterproductive mentality of the police, that military action is necessary to stop violent individuals from hurting themselves, can reduce violence, but the tradeoff is community alienation. It is not a long term solution. A critical look at the criminal justice system will show a similar trend.

“What’s the point of a society that imprisons people?” – Jadine Chou

In society, the criminal justice system is often defined as the method by which a criminal pays for their crime. Traditionally and presently in the city of Chicago, this system is retributive

in philosophy. It emphasizes the punishment as a discourager of future law breaking. As Kim Foxx put it, "we've been conditioned to believe [justice] is a long prison sentence. We don't want this person to hurt anyone else." In this retributive philosophy, the prisons and criminal justice system serve as a violence prevention mechanism by disincentivizing violence. The testimony of my informants demonstrates that this method fails, and in fact leads to unintended consequences that exacerbate violence.

My interviewees suggest that prisons are not effective at disincentivizing violence in the broader community. When the Gangster Disciples were a major force in Chicago, the prisons were counterintuitive. Though they were supposed to punish people for violence, Whatley and Walker noted how their time in prison allowed them to rise up in the gang, because they had the chance to meet with gang leadership. Whatley said that "I moved from one part of the streets to another part of the streets" when he went to prison. This emphasizes the fact, brought up by Nimocks, that "There's no such thing as rehabilitation. ... as long as you send incarcerated people back into their same environment." Prison simply does not disincentive people from committing violence. Prisons don't address the lack of jobs or incentives to join gangs. Though they make it more dangerous to engage in illegal action, the continued violence and illegal activity demonstrates that making a bigger and bigger stick doesn't work. For youth today, who may not even know the punishments for illegal activities, the criminal justice system is just a part of everyday life. Cara Smith emphasized that "for a lot of the people that end up in the Cook County jail, the criminal justice system is so normal." Smith emphasized that the problem is compounded by the "thoughtlessness and lack of care and compassion that the system treats people with" and that "the system just churns people up." There is no attempt to

change behavior, just an attempt to punish and disincentive crime. Smith captures the problem when she says that “no one ever gets made whole.” The normalization of the criminal justice system has impacts outside the prisons as well.

Policy changes in the 1980s and 1990s led to soaring populations in Chicago area prisons. Through the War on Drugs and mandatory minimum sentencing reform, violent and nonviolent offenders were punished more often and longer. Jadine Chou pointed out the philosophical problem with this reform by asking, “what's the point of a society that imprisons people, especially when we're really kind of imprisoning a disproportionate amount of a certain race and a certain class.” She emphasized the fact that these reforms have, intentionally or not, had a disproportionate effect on often poor and African American communities impacted by gun violence already. One of the many consequences of this action is that this systemic locking up of a generation of citizens has left many children parentless and removed adults from the community. Kim Foxx talked about how “the devastation that we deal with is increased incarceration, neighborhoods have been devastated, folks who come out with convictions and inability, and this based on reactionary [policy] affect all of those other numbers.” While life for people, when they leave prison, is greatly impacted by the prison sentence, life for friends and family outside of prison while the person is imprisoned, is similarly affected. When Whatley discusses his childhood, he points to this fact. He says, “I know what was missing. Not having a father figure there. I think that's part of what's missing for a lot of guys..” This experiential sentiment is echoed in the research community by Harold Pollack, who says that for young men, “The biggest thing that they see at home is what they don't see. Which is adult men in their lives who are acting as successful admirable adult men who are succeeding in ways that

they can see themselves doing." He suggests that "adolescent norms often fill the backdrop," pointing to gang involvement as a result of a lack of positive male role models. The impact of the criminal justice system is far reaching and has wide effects on communities. The retributive nature of the criminal justice system does not succeed in preventing violence, but points to possible solutions. My research shows that a lack of care for the individual and failure to consider their circumstances is not effective. Since the police and criminal justice systems are state run, they, unlike the GDs, are permanent institutions. As they now contribute to the problem of gun violence rather than attack it, they themselves present new challenges in the effort to eradicate gun violence. My research on restorative violence prevention organizations provides insight into possible methods by which to make these retributive organizations actual violence prevention organizations.

Restorative Organizations: "The focus needs to be on behaviors" – Andrew Papachristos

In this section I will detail my research on how key traits of restorative programs align in a process centered on reducing violence by helping the individual. All of these programs recognize the structural challenges that lead to a deep impact on the kids. Then they address internal and external behaviors and mindsets that result from this to lower probability for violence and move toward reclamation into society. Throughout the process these organizations approach adolescents with understanding and love. I define this as the restorative method and will outline how it is modelled by restorative community organizations such as BAM, using techniques described by a variety of informants.

“The shooter gets the blame, but they are all victims” – Tamar Manasseh

Restorative violence prevention organizations each start from the basis that there is a gap in environment or some behavior that needs to be addressed. These organizations look at the causes of violence in youth as something that stems from their environment. In this section, I will highlight how organizations and people discuss the role that traumatic experience plays on adolescents, leading to a cycle of violence. This is not the only cause of violence discovered in my research, but through a deep dive into trauma as a reason for violence, I will demonstrate the approach of restorative violence prevention organizations.

Simply recognizing that trauma is something that exists in communities which experience violence is a critical first step. Trauma is a part of daily life in societies where violence is prevalent. As Whatley put it, “they grew up seeing shootings, they grew up seeing dead bodies, they grew up in a community where that’s is the norm.” Bocanegra emphasized the importance of the closeness to violence, saying that “Exposure to gun violence is extremely traumatic. That doesn't necessarily mean direct victimization.” This continued exposure to trauma has deep and lasting effects on adolescents that aren’t often recognized by the community. Norman Kerr addressed the lack of understanding of basic physiological impacts, noting that “a lot of people don’t understand how trauma impacts brain development, impacts your respiratory system.” Bocanegra and David Simpson each addressed how this can be misdiagnosed as mental illness, noting the enormous and visible impact it has on adolescents. Therefore, as Chou points out, “the kid’s carrying it, whether he’s aware of it or not.” Trauma plays a large role on an adolescents’ entire life. It impacts mental and physical health and cannot be compartmentalized from the daily experience of being a teen. Unfortunately, this is

often unrecognized, or passed off just an excuse for kids. The traumatic experience must be addressed, because of its effects.

The traumatic experience translates to violent behavior by adolescents. Bacon conveyed this sentiment by saying that “Hurt people hurt people. It’s the idea that if you’re in pain you’re more likely to cause people pain inadvertently.” Whatley noted the direct link between trauma and violence saying “it’s trigger on why they’re acting out like that.” These testimonies emphasize the enormous importance of trauma and the environment on individual action. Chou described this process as, “a kid witnesses a violent act or they lose a friend, then that trauma kicks in and then they find themselves reacting a certain way.” An environment in which trauma is a part of daily life has a direct link to continued violence action by individuals. This recognition of the environment is an essential step to addressing the problem. Bacon notes how narratives of violence in communities of color often center around “character deficit”. The success of violence prevention organizations that do not directly prevent violence points to the prevalence of environmental factors leading to violence in the population. If some people were just inherently more violent than others, these programs would not be effective. Yet in a world where environmental factors contribute to a culture of violence, these methods are very effective. By recognizing the environmental factor of trauma, restorative organizations, such as UCAN, are able to effectively work toward violence prevention.

“I know what was missing” – Demetreas Whatley

Another key aspect of restorative organizations is the way in which they interact with the adolescents that they serve. Restorative organizations cannot change the fact that people

were born into certain environments, but they can provide help with love. By “valuing the lives of the young men that are in these networks and treating them as victims,” as Papachristos suggests, these organizations gain trust and legitimacy. Their method of service affects their success and provides a key support for adolescents.

A key distinction between restorative methods and retributive methods is the willingness of restorative methods to meet adolescents where they are. This starts with a willingness to acknowledge that violence is the key target, not gangs themselves. As Papachristos bluntly put it, “I think the focus needs to be on behaviors rather than trying to tell them their friends suck.” This sentiment, also expressed by Bacon and Diaz, highlights that the common thread in restorative violence prevention strategies is to focus on building kids up rather than breaking them down. Instead of saying “no”, these organizations say “do this instead”. This methodology leads to trust. Additionally, these programs address a key difficulty in the implementation of therapy, that it is rejected by the people it seeks to serve because it is seen as for someone else or only for the weak. By changing the image of therapy, feelings that might lead to violence can be addressed in a positive way. Kerr suggests that in therapy, “the clinicians look like you do ... and they don’t carry themselves in this way that you’re like, that person’s a clinician.” Simpson notes that the BAM program attracts kids by promoting itself as a masculinity group, not a counseling group, then uses counselors with shared experience. Through clinicians who can relate to the experience of adolescents and are trained in well educated, restorative organizations can start a conversation with adolescents.

Restorative organizations demonstrate to adolescents that they care about them by simply listening. In many cases, this is an enormous need for adolescents. As Whatley

suggested, “A lot of time they're just crying out for help, they need some help, they're just trying to talk about some stuff.” Pollack suggests that “talking to young people in a way that is genuinely respecting them and listening to them is really important.” By hearing the pain of kids, who have had to deal with violence as an ever present part of their lives, restorative organizations gain a cache that enables them to treat the issues. This shows adolescents that the restorative organizations care. Kerr’s point that “we all need somebody to talk to” is glaringly true in society as a whole. It’s what friends do to show that they care about you. By modeling this, restorative organizations bring people together and create relationships, as Chou suggests. Restorative organizations, by listening, demonstrate that they will walk the talk. They will provide services to help youth in meaningful ways that also lead to violence prevention.

“Helping young men go from head to heart” – Marshaun Bacon

Once an organization recognizes a problem and gains the trust of adolescents, an effective solution can be created to treat the problem. In this following section, I will discuss one such method. This method, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), seeks to directly impact the behaviors of youth. My informants highlighted how focusing on helping kids change their behaviors and improve decision making allows organizations to restore adolescents and provide something missing from their environment.

The goal of CBT and the conversations started by restorative organizations is a behavioral shift and development of social skills. The paper “Thinking Fast, Thinking Slow” showed the incredible success of BAM through quantitative measures. Talking to the architects of BAM allowed me to gain insight on the methodology of the program to better understand

restorative organizations as a whole. Marshaun Bacon pointed out that the goal of a program like BAM is to “hold students accountable for their behavior” in which “students develop skills to stop them from pulling the trigger”. By “teaching habits that will let you deal with what life throws at you,” BAM helps youth change behaviors. Pollack notes the goal is behaviors, not values, saying “it's about teaching them how you can in that moment slow yourself down and do the thing that actually if you stopped and thought about it, you would want to do.” This characterizes BAM as a method to help adolescents “slow down” to do what they know is the smart, which Diaz and Sun also emphasize in their work.

A key aspect of BAM’s work is convincing adolescent males to do this, bucking ideas of masculinity that they have been taught. As described by Bacon, their program centers around “helping young men go from head to heart. Particularly in our culture, where men are taught and orientated to go away from their feelings and not emote.” This wide encompassing approach teaches life skills that, if applied, will prevent violence. By “preparing folks for those experiences and things that can be done in advance,” as Futterman puts it, the BAM program and other CBT programs give something of enormous value to adolescents. They restore some of the things lost by environmental challenges. This is both practical, what Simpson describes as a program “that keeps kids out of the next level of intervention”, and caring, shown by Bacon’s assertion that “our program is therapeutic in nature.” This restorative intervention, proven to be successful, addresses the real problems facing kids and changes behaviors.

“If there’s nothing to be ready for...” – Dave Simpson

Yet even if a restorative organization recognizes the environment and addresses behaviors, there is still an important element of restoration missing, namely the practical realities of adolescents. The lack of economic opportunity in many communities where violence is a part of daily life leads to the reality that adolescents need to make money somehow. Ryan Priester suggests that “[mentorship] has got to be connected to meeting that basic need.” By providing professional development and opportunities for employment, restorative organizations help kids in the long term find a place in the legal economy, giving an adolescent something to do and giving an adolescent a way to support himself.

My research suggested that people join gangs because of a lack of other things to do. Nimocks, Bacon, and Simpson all suggested that if you gave a gang money and ignited a passion, such as music or botany, the gang would focus on that rather than illegal activity. I think that Jerusha Hodge put it best, suggesting that “you can't tell someone to put the gun down unless you can replace it with something else.” This highlights the need to incentivize kids. Jobs are an effective solution they address this possible reason, and also give kids the opportunity to make money. Priester describes the allure of gangs well when he says that “gangs are viable employment that pretty much hire anyone and pay more than McDonald's on average.” On the whole, gangs give the opportunity to make more money than low skilled jobs and can lead to community respect. When thinking about legal jobs, you have to ask, like Bocanegra, “What's the carrot? ... What opportunities or horizons can I inspire him to reach for?” As Kerr suggests, restorative organizations use jobs as a form of exposure, to allow kids to “[see] that the world is bigger than the three blocks that you have around you.” If kids have nothing to be ready for, nothing to aspire to, no hope for the future, it's a lot harder to

incentivize engagement. Thus, by targeting the practical needs of kids, restorative organizations provide an actual incentive for kids to engage with programming. These programs provide a tangible visible takeaway that adolescents can see.

The other key takeaway from these job programs is the professional skills which develop in adolescents. Since many adolescents in these communities suffer from a lack positive adult role models, there are few people to model what going to work looks like. As Chou put it, "These kids don't just wake up and then suddenly show up on time every day." Restorative organizations that provide temporary jobs also address this concern. Priester directly engaged with this in WPSA programs, providing "some of the guidance that we had that a lot of us had that we don't realize that everyone doesn't. Supported Employment." According to Dave Simpson, the BAM program itself fills this void for their kids. By providing supported employment, or combining the idea of behavior change with jobs, programs can make a lasting impact on the lives of adolescents. This provides adolescents with a much more certain future and builds them into functioning members of society. This restorative method is a deep change that is an effective preventer of violence.

Restorative violence prevention organizations are often organizations led by and mission driven on behalf of the community. Led by people who deeply care about the population they serve, these organizations do not exist because they have to. They exist because someone cared enough to create them. Both all-encompassing organizations like BAM and targeted organizations like UCAN have a very important role to play in the restorative process. By working on the process at all, they contribute to the collective goal. While the restorative process does not to change the systems in the short term, there are important long

term implications. The environment, devoid of positive role models and filled with opportunities of traumatic experience, forms the basis for the problem. On a generational level, each generation is impacted by the previous generation. We see the negative results of retributive organizations on this generation. Therefore, a new generation formed by restorative organizations can lead to systemic changes and meaningfully reduce gun violence in Chicago.

Discussion: "Everybody's gotta be saying the same thing" – Norman Kerr

The model of restorative violence prevention that leads to long term impacts is demonstrated by community organizations. Their focus on the restorative philosophy leads to a restorative mission, which leads to restorative programs, and finishes with restorative outcomes. The connection of these restorative organizations to the community logically informs their method and their focus on individuals. The method of these community organizations provides key takeaways with which to inform other violence prevention organizations that are not rooted in the community, such as the police and criminal justice systems. These organizations are traditionally retributive and disconnected from the communities that they serve. My research provides a solution. By adapting the restorative methodology of successful violence prevention organizations, state legitimized organizations can move from retributive to restorative policies and contribute to the environmental change necessary to prevent violence in Chicago.

Programs in the police and in prisons that use restorative methods are not unheard of. In my research, I found specific programs that modelled restorative practice. In the police, community oriented attitudes are a key way to contribute to the restorative process. This

action benefits the ability of police to do their own job and gives power back to the community. According to former police officer Rudy Nimocks, "There's nothing more important for a beat police officer than to be perceived in a favorable way by the people that he or she is attempting to serve." This does happen today. Futterman talked about "stories, that students in hyper policed communities share, of officers who take a sincere interest in their lives, who treat them with respect, who give them basic human dignity, who are kind." These are success stories, where police recognize the benefit of an attitude of care for the individual. Police also benefit from organizations like Ceasefire, that use the restorative method. Whatley suggests that "[Ceasefire] actually makes their job easier. If we stop a shooting in their particular beat, then they don't have too much to worry about in their beat." This highlights that police can benefit from working with community organizations and engaging in the restoration process.

The criminal justice system can pivot from retributive to restorative by reexamining how its policy relates to its goals. Bocanegra calls for the criminal justice system to "think about what victims want" and engage the predominantly people of color which the system claims to bring justice to. She emphasizes that "what [victims] say is they want the person to be held accountable and they want the person to reckon with and feel the depth of what they did. And they want there to be some period of incarceration but more importantly rehabilitation." She emphasizes that rehabilitation, not retribution, is on the minds of the victims. This translates into policy in the SAVE program. Smith describes this program as taking young men from violent zip codes and providing therapy and support. She says that the success of the program has been demonstrated by "a group of young men who would be shooting each other on the streets of Chicago sort of living, for the most part, harmoniously." Programs like SAVE suggest

that a jail sentence can emphasize the restoration, not punitive punishment. My research has shown that the punitive methods used by retributive organizations fail. With this in mind, the criminal justice system should look to reform based on the philosophy of rehabilitation.

Norman Kerr suggested that “everybody’s gotta be saying the same thing. If you’re bringing in law enforcement, it’s gotta be that law enforcement is saying the same message as some of these organizations. We love you and we want to support you.” My research suggests that this is extremely accurate. Therefore, I recommend that retributive entities, such as the police and criminal justice system, incorporate research tested aspects of restorative organizations into their own work and adopt a restorative philosophy. By partnering with restorative organizations like in Boston’s Ceasefire program, the police can demonstrate a recognition of the environment and engage with the restorative process. Though zero-tolerance policy toward police brutality, and more effective training of community policing, as modeled by cities like Las Vegas, the CPD can start to regain the trust of the community by working in a restorative way. Programs like SAVE can reframe the criminal justice system as restorative rather than retributive to improve long-term outcomes for individuals. It is clear how a mentality of restorative practice as a policy philosophy can inform everything from laws to implementation. My research has demonstrated the success of restorative organizations through a process of understanding environmental factors to address internal and external behaviors in a loving fashion. By adopting this guiding purpose, public violence prevention organizations can accomplish their true stated purpose, permanent prevention of violence.

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Appendix I: Interviews

Key Informant(s)	Qualification	Team of Interviewers
Tamara Manasseh, Ryan Priester, Kim Foxx, Roseanna Ander	Evidence Based Approaches to Gun Violence	Event
Demetreas Whatley	Former Gangster Disciple	Class
John Walker	Former Gangster Disciple	Class
Jerusha Hodge, Nicole Vaughn	CeaseFire Illinois/Cure Violence	Class
Ryan Priester	WPSA; CPA	Addison, Owen
Cara Smith, Kathryn Bocanegra	Cook County Jail/UChicago SSA professor	Class
Norman Kerr	UCAN Vice President of Violence Prevention	Meera, Vivek, Addison
Marshaun Bacon	Becoming a Man Counselor	Addison, et al.
Rudy Nimocks	Police and Violence Prevention Work	Josh, et al.

Andrew Papachristos	Professor, Yale	Class
Dave Simpson	Director of Counseling, Youth Guidance	Addison
Evelyn Diaz, Harold Pollack	President of Heartland Alliance/UChicago Crime Lab	Class
Craig Futterman	Clinical Professor of Law	Class
Jadine Chou	Chicago Housing Authority	Class

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EDUCATION

The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL *Bachelor of Arts*, expected June 2019
Double major in Public Policy and Economics; GPA 3.82/4.00

Pope John Paul II High School, Lacey, WA *Diploma*, June 2015

Honors: Valedictorian, GPA 4.511, William E. Bakse, Jr. Courageous Leadership Award (2015), Washington State Honors (2015), National Merit Scholar (2015), *Northwest Catholic* Male Athlete of the Year (2015), AP Scholar with Distinction (2015)

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Office of Alderman Brendan Reilly, *Intern*, October 2016-January 2017

- Helped to engage and empower individual citizens via conversations on the phone and in person
- Drafted official office correspondence to be sent to constituents and other governmental agencies
- Managed many constituent cases in various stages of completion with attention to detail
- Independently managed special projects related to Illinois policy in a timely manner

Illinois GOP, *Intern*, June 2017-September 2017

- Conducted research and completed briefs for statewide campaigns on voters, issues, and competitors
- Worked on a team to organize grassroots support by updating mailing lists and identifying voters
- Developed interpersonal and conflict resolution skill by engaging in a challenging environment
- Gained key skills for a career in political engagement in a fast-paced campaign environment

Campus Catalyst, *Participant*, *University of Chicago*, March 2017-June 2017

- Collaborated with colleagues to develop mission tracking strategies as a consultant for a non-profit
- Represented our non-profit in interviews with peer organization leaders to gain relevant information
- Developed and implemented an immediately usable and research driven impact evaluation system
- Compiled findings in a professionally written deliverable of recommendations on a deadline

American Medical Association, *Extern*, *Board of Ethics*, March 2017

- Conducted research on issues of medical ethics to be debated at full board meetings
- Summarized information on key issues into talking points to guide ethics board debates
- Attended briefings on key issues, leading to successful independent research projects

Taking the Next Step, *Student Coordinator*, *University of Chicago*, September 2016-January 2018

- Professionally invited a diverse and passionate set of alumni candidates to the event
- Worked well in a professional team setting with alumni on the day of the event to organize the panel
- Briefed alumni on the panel and roundtables, leading to an engaging and impactful event for students

Ballroom and Latin Dance Asocc. (BLDA), *President*, *University of Chicago*, December 2015-present

- Utilized project management skills to double operating budget and increase campus presence
- Created and promoted new events through a digital media campaign, achieving organization goals
- Built coalitions on campus to grow awareness of BLDA and create interesting new events