

## Q&A – 11 November 2021 – Prof. Shannon Linning

- 1. From urban geography perspective, this kind of neighborhood upgrade through gentrification leads to crime reduction, but it also leads to population displacement, which probably increase a potential of a new risky facilities elsewhere. The question is whether this dismantling of a particular risky places redistribute the crime risk to other locations in the city?**

It is possible, but we would need more research to know for sure. Studies of displacement mostly show that displacement does not occur much and diffusion of benefits is more likely. Much of this occurs because suitable crime opportunities are not available at nearby places. In the example I gave, police found no evidence of displacement, even to other neighborhoods. The key players in the criminal network were arrested so they could not go elsewhere. Police indicated to me that offenders tend to choose places, particularly for drug dealing, that optimize sightlines to avoid oncoming police or other offenders who might try to rob them. Other locations are not optimal for avoiding these threats. Police also indicated that offenders are often reluctant to “set up shop” in other neighborhoods, due to lack of familiarity with those areas and to avoid infringing on territory of other offenders. But again, we need more research on this to know for sure.

- 2. Do financial institutions help?**

Yes, they certainly can. Financial institutions can act as super controllers and influence the decision making of property developers and business owners (Sampson et al. 2010).

See Sampson, R., Eck, J. E., & Dunham, J. (2010). Super controllers and crime prevention: A routine activity explanation of crime prevention success and failure. *Security Journal*, 23(1), 37-51.

- 3. Comment regarding financing of this approach: In the U.S., much of this type of development has been funded by redevelopment policies, which has a special type of funding (tax increment financing). For example, Los Angeles, New York City, other big cities have used this mechanism extensively to try to redevelop rundown, presumably high crime areas. There are some successes but also many less than successful projects.**

Thank you for the comment, these are excellent points! Yes, TIF districts are used in many cities. There was one in a neighborhood adjacent to the one I studied to attract new business owners. I think we must acknowledge that neighborhood redevelopment is an ever-evolving process. And what works for one neighborhood may not work for another. One of the factors we discuss in the book that is important to understanding this is history. Often, understanding the history of neighborhoods is helpful in determining what to focus efforts on first (e.g., converting one-way streets to two-way streets; focusing on revitalizing retail establishments first as opposed to residential ones; knowing which unique amenities draw people to the neighborhoods). Some redevelopment foundations have also done great work trying to mitigate unwanted effects. Often this comes from observing and interacting with those who are redeveloping other neighborhoods, particularly when their work started a few years before. But it's certainly a process that is continually evolving.

**4. Does the age & life cycle mix in a residential area have same consequences for mixing timing of eyes on the street?**

This is a great point! Jane Jacobs states in *Death and Life* (1961) that her ideas apply to urban areas. She was not a fan of the suburban/residential model. However, I think some ideas could be modified to work in these areas as well. As I mentioned in the presentation, all places have place managers. So the homeowners of suburban/residential homes are the place managers of those properties. The activities/behaviors they engage in can have an impact. The ages and life cycle of place managers could increase the number of eyes on the street. If some are middle-aged and at work during the day, older residents who are retired and home during the day could be the “eyes”. Again, the diversity on street blocks to create the constant succession of eyes could theoretically work if people of different ages are stationed in a similar/staggered way that I showed in the presentation. It’s certainly possible and worth exploring!

**5. How to combine conflicting interests in location of particular establishments? For example, in retail, cluster of same type of stores (pharmacies, electronics, e.g) is thought to maximize profit. According to your model, you state that these should be located not close to each other to maximize surveillance. (Conflicting goals: what might be good for the particular owner/manager (profit) may not be for the whole neighborhood, and perhaps vice-versa)**

Excellent question! We certainly need more research on this. It’s seldom discussed in criminology, and based on my interviews with place managers, they don’t seem to know how much ability they have to influence crime opportunities. I think the first step is bridging this gap. More criminologists need to study these ideas, and more property developers, business owners, etc. need to understand the role they can play. Regarding the “space” between places, I don’t know that it needs to be too terribly far. Recall from my presentation that Wright’s concept of “walkable connections” means these places would be within sight of each other. Instead of placing a pharmacy and electronics shop next to one another, for example, we could have them on adjacent blocks. I’m seeing more and more development of “villages” in urban areas. And from what I see, it’s often spearheaded by a single developer who builds dozens of buildings on multiple blocks. Those developers then have the ability to decide who occupies each storefront unit on the street and the residential units above. Decision-making/planning by these developers in terms of Jacobs’ “constant succession of eyes” could be quite powerful. We would also want to educate the prospective business owners about this plan. After all, if the idea works, it could create safer areas which would attract more customers. So it could be in their best interest.