“Gotham and darkness, like Batman”:
Undergraduates’ Racialized Perceptions of
Crime and Safety at the University of Chicago

By
Anil Sindhwani

Presented to the Departments of Sociology and Public Policy Studies

in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the BA Degree
The University of Chicago
April 17, 2018

Readers: Robert Vargas, Ph.D. and Jerel Ezell, MA and MPH
Abstract

Discrimination persists throughout in-person American discourse, regardless of various attempts to alleviate racism. Considering students’ self-reported perceptions of crime and safety—racialized domains—in Chicago, I explore how students employ semantic moves to distance themselves from their intended statements. These semantic moves vary in quality and type, ranging from neutralizing language to euphemisms. Drawing from 20 interviews of undergraduates at the University of Chicago—a medium-sized, liberal university surrounded by poorer, Black neighborhoods—my results demonstrate that students’ semantic moves reflect the discourse of other students regarding racialized domains, like affirmative action. I contextualize my results by investigating the history of urban renewal in the US and Hyde Park. For the latter, I focus on the University’s role. I then interpret this using Salomon’s New Governance theory, Vargas’s work on “turf wars”, as well as Lipsky’s Street Level Bureaucracy, and conclude with recommendations to increase contact between undergraduates and Chicagoans to normalize surrounding neighborhoods.
# Abstract

1

# Introduction

3

## Theoretical Framework

4

- The Puzzle of Modern Racism
- Discourse in Crime and Race—Background
- The Case of the American College Student

## Data and Methods

10

- Data
- Analytic Approach

## Results

13

- Geographic Overview
- Neutralizing Language
  - Rationalization
  - Word Replacement—Euphemisms
  - Referencing the Built Environment
- Community Guide
- Personal Preferences and Experiences

## Discussion and Conclusion

29

## Policy Implications

32

- Historical Overview
  - National Action
    - University of Chicago and Hyde Park
- Theoretical View
  - Salamon—The “New Governance” and the University as a public actor
  - Vargas—Boundaries, the Distribution of Resources, and Material Outcomes
  - Lipsky—Government at the Street Level: Bureaucrats and Private Policing
- Policy Recommendations
  - Development of New Businesses
  - Improve Staff
  - Expand Internship Programs
- Conclusion—Policy Implications for the Future

## References

63

## Appendix

76
Introduction

In 2017, Rapper Joyner Lucas released the song “I’m Not Racist”, which delved into “uncomfortable race talk” by portraying a passionate discussion about race relations between a white man and a Black man (Criss 2017). Covering a whole range of racialized stereotypes, each stanza ends with the refrain “I’m Not Racist”; as in other scenarios, this refrain works to distance the person who says it from whatever racist discourse follows or precedes it. Lucas’s song points to a key dynamic of race relations—the discourse of race. From Hillary Clinton’s labelling youth “superpredators” (Taylor 2016) to Reagan’s infamous “welfare queen” (Glanton 2018), the discourse of race in America remains a relevant strand in how Americans interact with race. Yet, less is known about how discourse is used to camouflage those harmful stereotypes in various realms of discussion (Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000; Myers and Williamson 2001; Bell and Hartmann 2007; Feagin 2010). To begin to confront this gap, I conduct an examination of perceptions of crime—a domain of American life bound up with race (Russell 1998)—and how those perceptions are talked about, rationalized, and understood. I particularly explore how respondents employ semantic moves, defined as discursive strategies or verbal tricks (Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000), when discussing their views on crime, safety, and surrounding neighborhoods that are predominately Black and poor. I demonstrate, using this approach, how respondents employ semantic moves to obfuscate or otherwise make ambiguous their feelings regarding race and crime.

1 In this footnote, I’d like to acknowledge a few people who have made this thesis possible. First, of course, my advisor Professor Robert Vargas and my two preceptors: Jerel Ezell and Austin Kozlowski. Without them, the project before you would not have been impactful or incisive in any form. Thank you also to the University of Chicago Dean’s Fund for monetarily supporting my research. I am indebted to Rafaela Brosnan, Pradnya Narkhede, Archana Ram, Kiana Amini, Charlotte Lewis, Anthony Rodriguez, Davis Larkin, Elizabeth Brandon, and Michael Lynch for their comments and suggestions which undoubtedly improved my thesis; I regret however that there is not enough space to list everyone who has been supportive. A special thanks also to all my fellow sociology majors, most importantly to Christina Cano, Charlotte Scott, and Frankie Sierra for their support in this project. Lastly, I must acknowledge my parents—without whom I would not have made it at all. Thank you to everyone!
My data consists of in-depth interviews with 20 students at the University of Chicago (U of C). Each interview employed questions about respondents’ perceptions of adjacent communities, as well as sample safety alerts and maps. I focus on this university because its neighborhood (Hyde Park) has been described as an “oasis”, an “island of harmony” (Myers 1985) in areas significantly more Black, more poor, and with a higher density of crime. This characteristic means that, when students leave Hyde Park, they must frequently confront racial and economic differences that they might not have had to face before beginning their time at the University. I find that, in line with Bonilla-Silva and Forman’s (2000) research on the discursive strategies employed by white students when discussing racially sensitive topics, U of C students use similar semantic moves that camouflage discussion of race and crime. These semantic moves vary in their content, obviousness, and logical implication—however, their power as discursive tools sometimes generates a pervasive feeling of fear. Conversation is rife with semantic moves, and this work seeks to peel back this practice through the lens of race as it relates to crime in the context of Chicago and Hyde Park.

**Theoretical Framework**

*The Puzzle of Modern Racism*

The election of Barack Obama as the President of the United States—in conjunction with research suggesting that racial attitudes in the United States have improved dramatically in the past few decades—has prompted some to call America a “post-racial society” (Dawson and Bobo 2009). This is demonstrably not the case (Dawson and Bobo 2009; Feagin 2010). Therefore, a conundrum arises: *How can whites claim to be in favor of racial equality and yet perpetuate that very racism through their discourse?* To answer this, Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith (1997:16) propose “laissez-faire racism,” which is marked
by “persistent negative stereotyping of African Americans, a tendency to blame Blacks themselves for the Black–white gap in socioeconomic standing, and resistance to meaningful policy efforts to ameliorate U.S. racist social conditions and institutions.” This achieves the same goals of a racist society without explicitly using racist rhetoric. What remains under-explored is the actual methods by which laissez-faire racism is produced, entrenched and sustained discursively.

Several scholars have proposed various theoretical, interlocking mechanisms to explain the use of ostensibly race-neutral—but evidently racist—language when individuals interact. Though my work concentrates on “semantic moves,” which are discursive strategies that people use to avoid seeming racist, other explanations exist. One rests on two competing definitions of racism: individual hate and structural inequality (Doane 2006). The former refers to an individual’s clear hatred for people of color, while the latter speaks to the ways in which society is structured to systematically oppress non-whites. In this view, the paradigm shift from structural inequality to individual hate appears to absolve an individual’s actions by allowing for an individual to deny their hate. Research from discourse analyses of diversity lends support to this view (Bell and Hartmann 2007), as it reveals assumptions about the normality of whiteness, assimilation as a means to an end, and the conflation of individual ideals and group-based commitments. Are all tinged with a distinct lack of awareness of structural inequality. Feagin (2010) proposes the theatre analogy of “front stage” and “back stage” to explain that whites use explicitly racist language around those with whom they feel safe—overwhelmingly just other whites—but retreat into ostensible race-neutral rhetoric when confronted with people of color. Still more exist (Bonilla-Silva 2019).

The last mechanism—the one of focus in this work—is the concept of “semantic moves,” i.e. discursive devices, choices, or phrases that serve to distance the speaker from potentially racist or
discriminatory views. Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000:50), in their study of the racial attitudes of white college students, first propose semantic moves in relation to race. A common semantic move is the phrase, “I’m not racist but...” followed by vague, stereotyped statement such as “Where are their fathers?” or “They’re all welfare queens”, which are founded on explicitly racist logics. Another such rhetorical strategy is to substitute specific racial categories (criminal Black men) with general, shared categories (e.g, superpredators). In this way, the facade of race-neutrality is preserved as the speaker’s choice affords them some plausible deniability when accused of racism.

The above explanations are powerful and cover a wide range of racial discourse’s roles in maintaining racial inequality, especially since race is socially constructed (Omi and Winant 2014). Discourse, in other words, helps construct race and associated categories through these theories. Yet, most of these works explore society as a whole—the wide variety of racial attitudes held by large samples of the American population might be muddling the discourse analysis that is pertinent to interpreting the puzzle of white-perpetuated racist rhetoric and color-blindness. As such, examinations of smaller or more intimate interactions in this regard may prove more illuminating in this regard. Since, as noted above, race is a deep and social aspect of American life, we should expect to see these explanations reified in many different aspects of discourse, from the macro- to micro-levels. With this in mind, the study at hand focuses on an analysis of semantic moves as they apply to crime. As explored below, race and crime are essentially linked, and therefore the notion of semantic moves should also be applicable to crime. This work emphasizes the discourse of face-to-face interactions by transposing the study of semantic moves from race to crime.
Discourse in Crime and Race—Background

Current literature on racial discourse centers around exploring the qualities, implications, and varying styles of this type of discourse, which Myers and Williamson (2001:4) term “race talk”: the deliberate inclusion of racialized stereotypes into conversation. Race talk is found in a wide variety of fields, such as housing (Korver-Glenn 2018), the judiciary (Van Cleve 2016), everyday conversation and private discourse (Myers and Williamson 2001; Feagin 2010; Hagerman 2018), theoretical explanations in the race-crime gap (Burt, Simons, and Gibbons 2012), and education (Vaught and Castagno 2008; Pollock 2009; Lewis and Diamond 2015). Other work has looked at health outcomes (Crowder and Downey 2010; Sewell 2016), employment opportunities (Pager, Western, and Bonikowski 2009), and economic or social class (Reay 1998; Sanders and Mahalingam 2012). Racial and racialized discourse permeates various aspects of society, with significant material implications. One illustration is the process of home buying. Korver-Glenn (2018) found that key actors in the homebuying process—from real estate agents to bank loan officers—relied on ostensibly race-neutral language and practices that perpetuate racial housing segregation. Actors of all races, including homebuyers themselves, used background and available stereotypes to massage the homebuying process to best fit their needs and biases. Another case is found in the work of Sanders and Mahalingam (2012), who research of the discourse of American college students on social class and find that economic position—beyond being racialized and tinged with stereotypes—is taboo in topic of conversation. Economic privilege for students seems “natural” (Sanders and Mahalingam 2012:213) as a result of the taboo of social class. Of note is that non-white students “teased apart and recognized the simultaneous impact of their race and class status more readily” than their white
counterparts (Sanders and Mahalingam 2012:121). Yet, none of the existing literature hones in on how discourse relates to race and crime.

By the same token, the literature on the discourse of crime concentrates primarily on measuring the role of media in constructing criminality (Ericson 1991; Potter and Kappeler 1998; Banks 2005; Gregoriou 2012), the role of the police (Skogan and Steiner 2004; Stuart forthcoming), the fear of crime and its various implications and possible causes (Addington 2016), and finally general investigations of how race and crime seem to be related (McCarthy et al. 2006; Gabbidon and Greene 2019). Much of this literature has worked to disaggregate theoretical explanations (Warr and Stafford 1983; Ferraro 1995), the breakdown of fear among racial groups (Warr 1987), and best practices in managing fear (Kelling and Coles 1998; Harcourt 2005). While this discourse is ostensibly race-neutral, perceptions of Black folk as criminals have played pivotal roles in (the discourse of) criminality, policing, and safety (Russell 1998). A general theme from this body of work is that an individual’s perceptions are mediated strongly by the discursive practices of the news media and cultural objects they consume (Gregoriou 2012). Though some work has explored how crime has been racialized (Russell 1998; McCarthy et al. 2006; Gabbidon and Greene 2019), very little has explored this phenomenon at the person-to-person or individual level. This paper attempts to fill that gap by analyzing semantic moves that obscure racialized discourse about crime.

The Case of the American College Student

Following Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000), this paper looks at the racialized discourse about crime and safety of college students. Beyond being a convenient sample, investigating college students at a liberal university offers key insights into the racial conundrum spelled out above. Education is tied
with less antagonistic racial attitudes in survey data (Jackson 1978; Bobo and Licari 1989). However, in other implicit measures of racism, education does not appear to have a significant impact (Jackman and Muha 1984; Kuppens and Spears 2014). Of additional interest is that universities are also institutions that are near-total in character (Fitz Gibbon, Cantebury, and Litten 1999), as they isolate and bureaucratize the interactions of their members (students) who share nearly all aspects of their lives. As a result, universities and other students shape individuals’ identities and self-perceptions in nearly all areas of life—which may include the political and racial. These findings are in line with expectations from the above body of work. Yet, since higher educated whites are less likely to self-report racism (Kuppens and Spears 2014), the disconnect between implicit and explicit racist attitudes demands further study. Analyzing the discursive methods used by college students could be used as a comparative case to further build upon the existing literature. The case of crime is specifically useful due its racialized character (Gabbidon and Greene 2019) and the visceral emotions and reactions it elicits (Addington 2016). No such research has been done on this topic, and I seek to fill this gap in the literature. While I do not claim to make generalizable claims about racial attitudes, this paper seeks to explore—as Bonilla-Silva and Forman’s paper (2000) did—how that aforementioned disconnect manifests.

Unlike Bonilla-Silva and Forman, however, I extend my sample to include students of all racial backgrounds. There is reason to believe that the background racism inherent in American society has permeated to people of color as well (Eslea and Mukhtar 2000; Hall 2002; Pyke and Dang 2003; Hunter 2007), and as a result the same discursive strategies used by the white students in Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000) might be comparative to those of students of color. This is particularly true since race is socially constructed (Omi and Winant 2014)—meaning that the
meaningful demarcations between racism are not inherent—and it permeates nearly all aspects of life (Feagin 2010). Given the prevalence of Black-white only literature (see Deliovsky and Kitossa [2013] for a discussion), and consequent lack of research on the racist stereotyping among people of color, my work seeks to fill this gap by reaching at the discourse of race as it relates to crime.

Data and Methods

The analyses of crime discourse presented in this paper is based on interviews with undergraduate students at U of C, a medium-sized, elite, university located in Chicago’s South Side. Data at U of C was collected over a 4-month period from June to October 2018, cataloging security alert emails and conducting interviews with students.

Data

Elite universities offer informative sites for studying the interaction between institutions and their members, and U of C is no different. Its strong undergraduate culture (Bronner 1998), relative distance from the city’s urban core and history of gentrifying adjacent neighborhoods (Hirsch 1983; Cholke 2017; Eldred 2017) make it the ideal location for studying the dynamics of (near-)total institutions, their constituent members (Fitz Gibbon, et al. 1999), and more importantly the discourse of those members. The neighborhood that U of C sits in (Hyde Park) is surrounded by areas with significantly more crime, less wealth, and less infrastructure (Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning 2016). This unique circumstance means that students are often wary of leaving Hyde Park and that crime sometimes spills over from these neighborhoods. Residents of Hyde Park—the “oasis” (Myers 1985) of Chicago’s South Side—live physically close but socially far from
adjacent neighborhoods. As a result, this university serves as a strongly instructive location for understanding the relationship between total institutions, their members, and those members’ perceptions of adjacent geographics.

The first portion of the analyses centers on uncovering that complex relationship between student and university, and how it heightens fears among students. I shed light on this relationship through semi-structured, in-depth interviews with undergraduates. I conducted 20 interviews with undergraduates (Table 1), each lasting between 45 and 70 minutes. The names in this thesis are pseudonyms. Undergraduates were preferred because they overwhelmingly live on or near campus\(^2\) and have their social life to a much greater extent constrained within the University. Undergraduates, generally, live a formally administered life in which its many aspects—work, play, sleep, consumption, and so on—are in the same place and related to the same authority. Undergraduates of many races were interviewed, as aforementioned. I also ensured that interviewees were split evenly between second, third, and fourth years.\(^3\) Research shows that length of stay in a neighborhood is positively correlated to perceptions of crime (Hipp 2010), and so I attempted to avoid muddling perceptions with length of stay.

Each interview was semi-structured, starting with a common collection of questions and topics but left open to other related topics as relevant. In each, the interviewee and I discussed the following, in order: their personal history, including their hometown; their perception about dangerous areas in Hyde Park (e.g., if an area feels dangerous because it looks dangerous); personal experience with crime in Hyde Park, whether they were a victim or heard from victims; experience with undergraduate culture at U of C; opinions about the University of Chicago Police Department

---

\(^2\) Traditionally defined as Cottage Grove Ave to Woodlawn Ave; 55th Street to 61st Street.

\(^3\) I was unable to interview first years since they had not yet matriculated to the University.
(UCPD) and the city police (CPD), with an emphasis on what they thought the role of the police is; and finally a high-profile incident in which an undergraduate was shot by UCPD (Lee and Grieve 2018). Also utilized were two research tools: an electronic “cognitive” map and a sample security alert email. The first asked interviewees to place, within a 2-3 block area, the areas in which they feel most and least comfortable. I term these “comfort” and “discomfort” zones respectively.  

I used snowball sampling, in which past participants recruit new interviewees. I started with a core group of four other undergraduates known to me. I chose this method for both its ease and to avoid self-selecting participants, who may be over-eager to share their thoughts on what is a politically-charged topic.  

The limitations of this data source do not severely hamper the study. Although I focus only on one elite university, schools like U of C overwhelmingly attract well-off students who may not understand the nuances of crime in big cities—which additionally makes the case of the University of Chicago instructive. Furthermore, as aforementioned, college students are expected to be more liberal than their less-educated counterparts; the existence of semantic moves therefore may be more prevalent as students bid to save face. My analysis is, given its geographic nature, Midwest-centric. Other big cities may have different dynamics of crime but the Midwest is notable for its segregated cities, history of economic collapse, and tense race relations (Kent and Frohlich 2015).

**Analytic Approach**

All interviews were recorded with my mobile phone, transcribed with Temi, and analyzed manually. My analysis used a combination of deductive and inductive qualitative coding (Saldaña 2015).  

---

4 I asked that they not include campus since this was not an area of study.

5 Figure 1 in the Appendix
Interviews were coded initially on the topics mentioned; once that was completed, I inductively identified new themes not explicitly discussed by myself or the interviewee. Initial analysis of student interviews focused on two distinct themes: the identity-forming function of the university as a total institution and how U of C students view crime in Hyde Park. Other themes, including the existence of semantic moves, emerged inductively. One such example is how students responded physically or habitually and in their rhetoric, which was not in mind when I began interviewing. Rhetoric and discourse became more instructive and intriguing as coding continued. Interviewing as a method is suitable here because it permits me to understand “the imagined meanings of [participants’] activities, their self-concepts, [and] their fantasies about themselves (and about others)” (Lamont and Swidler 2014:159), which would not appear in a strictly survey-oriented or observational methodology.

Results

My results focus on how undergraduates at U of C use ambiguous and vague language (semantic moves) to talk about the issues of crime and safety in surrounding communities such as Woodlawn or Kenwood. I highlight a few particular discursive strategies: neutralizing language, community guide and personal preferences. These semantic moves—to be defined below—are often utilized when discussing changes in behavior or reasons why one would hesitate going to those neighborhoods. I begin this section with a sketch of how students generally understood geographic space in Hyde Park-Kenwood-Woodlawn. Whereas this section is divided into three subsections by semantic moves

---

6 Table 2 in the Appendix
that are unique to the present study, also highlighted are discursive strategies found in Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000), since those discursive tricks are used when discussing race generally.

*Geographic Overview*

Before analyzing the used semantic moves, this subsection provides an overview of how the interviewees interpreted spaces in and around Hyde Park, with the primary focus of understanding the cognitive maps of Hyde Park and surrounding neighborhoods that interviewees filled out.

As noted above, interviewees were asked to decide two two-to-three block regions in and around Hyde Park in which they felt the most and least comfortable, respectively. I termed these “comfort” and “discomfort” zones, respectively. Students chose the zones without any input from me, save my asking them to not choose campus. “Campus” was also not defined for the students. Of note is that 40 percent of students put their discomfort zones as 63rd Street and Cottage Grove, the highest proportion. Significantly, of that cohort, three-quarters (30 percent of the total sample) admitted that they either had never been to this corner or had simply passed through once or twice in a ride-share. Sharon, a white female second year, who put her discomfort zone at 63rd and Cottage Grove, explicitly noted for example that she had “been there a couple of times and it was in a car.” The lack of students visiting this corner imply that interviewees are developing perceptions without the basis of a lived experience, or are otherwise being taught about this location by others.

As a contrast, all comfort zones were areas familiar with interviewees. The most common comfort zone, 53rd Street and Harper Avenue, was selected by one-quarter of respondents. This corner is rife with many eateries and shops. Sharon is again representative of the interviewee cohort

---

7 In the appendix is a descriptive table of my findings (Table 3).
when she says, “during the school year I was always walking around to 53rd street.” Indeed, every student, save one, selected zones including or near where they lived. This one interviewee, John, chose his comfort zone\(^8\) since it was “upscale” and “peaceful.” Half of all students chose comfort zones within one block of campus. Notably, no student chose an area south of 61st Street. These results—which span all years—do not necessarily square well research that indicates longer residency is positively correlated with perception of crime (Hipp 2010). This is especially true since students across all years chose areas either frequented by students (53rd St. and Harper Ave.) or within one block of campus. Instead, I propose that perception of crime is more strongly mediated through other processes, the presence of which is revealed through investigating students’ semantic moves.

Neutralizing Language

This section highlights “neutralizing language,” what I term language that serves to make appear racially neutral a fear of or discomfort with crime and adjacent neighborhoods. Neutralizing language constituent semantic moves in that their purpose is to save face for the user or to appear not racist. I analyze three subtypes: rationalization, euphemism, and referencing the built environment. This broader category gestures at commonalities between each of the semantic moves, in that each are attempts to disguise discomfort or fear but simultaneously reach at common understandings of crime between both people in a conversation.

\(^8\) 55th Street and Hyde Park Blvd., the site of an old U of C dorm.
Rationalization

Rationalization occurs when interviewees use ambiguous and ostensibly race-neutral justifications for (a change in) behaviors. On-face, they do not appear to have a fear of crime as their roots, but rather appear to be rooted elsewhere. Behaviors that change vary from the types of transportation that interviewees used to alterations in interviewee's schedules. By using indirect language and masking fear behind ostensibly sensible reasons, students frame their concerns as ambiguous and unrelated to crime. These constitute semantic moves because their “strategic function” is to “save face” or “avoid appearing ‘racist’” (Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000:79). One instructive instance is found in my interview with Julia, a female white second year:

Q: Is there a reason you don't stay out later [than 9:00 pm]?
Julia: If I'm by myself in downtown, I think I would rather just like not take the bus [back to Hyde Park] at night as much. So I'll typically just go home a little bit earlier.
Q: Is there a reason why you would prefer not to take the bus [at] the night? Just do you feel like unsafe on the bus at night?
Julia: [If] I'm just by myself, I think it's just probably better to be back [to Hyde Park] in time. And also I don't like, I know the Chicago public transport but like I'm not an expert on it so like if I screw up or something I don't want to be like stranded somewhere like 10 at night.

In this above portion, Julia’s justification for taking a ridesharing service is ostensibly not related to crime. Rationales like “it's just probably better to be back in time” and “I don't want to be like stranded somewhere like 10 at night” displace the logic of her altering behavior away from fear and onto other concerns. Particularly, phrases like “I’m not an expert...” and “if I screw up or something I don't want to be like stranded” build on the shift by indicating that Julia’s impulse to shun public transit and use ride-sharing stems from worrying about being lost. Her use of “I” statements reinforces her shift away from crime to other explanations, which will be elaborated in the Personal Preferences and Experiences section. This is especially troubling as Julia earlier admits to frequently using rideshares when she feels unsafe; these two explanations are either in conflict or there is another
reasoning that Julia is declining to admit. Moreover, Julia’s ambiguous allusions point to shared understandings about transportation use, such as it being less comfortable than using a rideshare, and to the sense that not being in Hyde Park is the same as being stranded somewhere. Lastly, such rationalization reveals a knee-jerk discomfort with areas that are neither downtown or Hyde Park, even if these locations are not suspect.

Word Replacement—Euphemisms

The next semantic move is the utilization of euphemisms for concepts like “unsafe” or “dangerous”. Euphemisms such as “minority group” instead of “oppressed” both have material implications and are prevalent in everyday speech (Nibert 1996), and so they remain relevant to my study of discourse. Beyond allowing for the reification of oppressed/oppressor dynamics, euphemisms perhaps fit most cleanly the definition of semantic move: discursive maneuvers which mask (preceding or succeeding) negative statements to save face for the user. Eve, a Black female second year, is one such example:

Q: Are there some areas near and around Hyde Park that you would be really hesitant to go to?
Eve: After 63rd, I want to say.
Q: And why's that?
Eve: Just because it's... it's like. Again, I don't know that much about it but I do know that's where things start getting a little bit shaky
Q: What do you mean by “shaky”?
Eve: Like... less safe.

Of interest in this segment are two phrases: the common refrain of “I don’t know, but...” and the word “shaky.” The former might indicate that the interviewee has some notion that they would like to excuse or lessen. The euphemism “shaky” speaks strongly to semantic moves. By literally replacing the word “dangerous” or “unsafe” with another word, Eve does two things by using a
word that implies something unstable, which in turn implies something dangerous. First, she reveals the existence of shared understandings as she assumes I would know what “shaky” meant in this context. Second, she mentally distances herself from her disquiet about Woodlawn. She only explicitly makes the connection to safety after being prompted. Eve is not the only student to use this kind of euphemism. Yasmin, a mixed-race female third year, said the word “sketch” or different form thereof a total of ten times throughout our interview. “Sketch” and “shaky” likewise reflects shared and assumed understandings. Both Yasmin and Eve assumed that I knew what these euphemisms meant—and especially that we indeed agreed on their definitions. When prompted to define “shaky”, Eve was momentarily at a loss for words, as if she were confused. Though I did not ask Yasmin to define “sketch”, it is not unrealistic to imagine that she would react similarly. When students use these euphemisms, they gesture to underlying conceptions and notions; these constitute semantic moves purely because they are attempts to save face.

Not all of the instances were about a neighborhood, people, the built environment, or the time of day—though these were the most frequent uses. Yasmin noted for example that “the idea of like [UCPD] having something that's super deadly [a gun] sketches me out a bit.” While students may be employing euphemisms unconsciously, some were able to peel back the verbal mask and actively recognize the semantic moves in play. Mary, an Asian female fourth year, noted that euphemisms were deliberately concealing preconceived notions about neighboring communities in the following excerpt:

Q: Do you remember if anyone in some sort of bureaucratic position in housing, it could be an RA, RH, RM,9 someone in housing... has anyone in that sort of position said something to you about safety in general?

---

9 Resident Assistant, Resident Head, Resident Master/Dean are key staff members of the University’s Housing Department, with bureaucrat purview over students.
Mary: I remember most of the safety information came from the RAs... The RAs would be the one like disseminating all the, like between the lines, like references of like “sketchy.” They would use like the word “sketchy” and stuff. Um, but like I don't think that the RHs or RM said anything (Emphasis mine).

Q: Okay. And what were the sorts of things that they would say? Can you think of something?

Mary: Yeah, they'd be like, if someone would be like, “Oh, is the Green Line actually unsafe?” And they'd be like, “Oh, you know the area, can just be sketchy at night. Like I just, if I were you, I wouldn't go.”

Her explicit acknowledgement of “between the lines” concretely gets at the implications of euphemisms when talking about crime and safety, which are especially potent given power dynamics between students and Resident Assistants (RAs), who are agents and staff of a (near-)total institution (Fitz Gibbon et al. 1999). Staff of total-institutions have particular power to shape the institution’s culture and the dispositions of its members, i.e., to influence how students move through Chicago and the world at large. Mary, in fact, acknowledges the results of this power when she says, “for awhile, yeah, I avoided the Green Line” up until partway through her third year. Whereas some use these euphemisms, other U of C students recognize how they hint at expected and shared understandings of adjacent neighborhoods.

Euphemisms are used in other circumstances than when discussing feelings of physical unsafety. For Grant, a Black male third year, one euphemism appeared in his description of the first security alert email he received as a student. Noting it was a shooting that occurred near his dorm, he said:

So when that happened, it just increased my awareness. I don't think it really changed my behavior in any way. But, and I don't know, I'm just like very imaginative I guess, and because you had those situations that are like described from time to time, um, it always keeps that... That scenario pops up. And obviously if you're walking by a certain address, it's like, “Oh, I think this wouldn't be an unlikely place for like there to be a security alert about the next day.”

His use of the word “imaginative” belies an expectation of future crime that could in fact happen to him without resorting to the word “fear” or “afraid”. The word in question, albeit perhaps used cynically by Grant in this passage, evokes positive definitions and feelings—like “creative” or
“innovative”—which are unlikely to be associated with crime or fear of crime, and therefore might distance the interviewee from that fear. “Imaginative” also calls forward shared assumptions about what is being imagined as well as what the word itself means—without a context for the euphemism, its meaning is lost. Not only does declining to call a crime by what it is obscure and lessen the impact of such an event—indeed as in neutralizing language—but also these euphemisms saliently reveal the hidden, shared understandings that must exist a priori the use of euphemisms. They are additionally widespread: “sketch” or a variation thereof appeared nearly one hundred times across all of my interviews. Euphemism is perhaps one of the most prevalent semantic moves and perhaps one of the least noticeable. Its power however is not diminished by its furtiveness.

Referencing the Built Environment

The last form of neutralizing language is referencing the built environment. Some students use this semantic move when explaining their rationales for certain behaviors, specifically citing how run-down areas south of Hyde Park are. In some sense, this discursive strategy harkens back to the Broken Windows Theory (BWT), which posits that visible signs of physical disorder—e.g., broken windows, prevalent graffiti, or littered sidewalks—create a social milieu that encourages crime and more disorder (Kelling and Coles 1997; Harcourt 2001). Even though BWT concerns actual disorder, research has shown that signs of disorder are perceived to be racially coded (Sampson and Raudenbush 2004). In fact, Sampson and Raudenbush (2004:336) found that “social structure proved a more powerful predictor of perceived disorder than did carefully observed disorder.... residents supplement their knowledge with prior beliefs informed by the racial stigmatization of
modern urban ghettos.” Since my sample is diverse, we could expect their social milieus to be quite different than those that surround Hyde Park; this must be kept in mind during this section.

While not as neat as a semantic move as, for instance, apparent admission—a “formal statement of support” with a policy like affirmative action (Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000:60)—grounding fears in the physical environment could also be considered a semantic move. This is because it still serves to save face for the user. Referencing the built environment is a particularly salient form of neutralizing language. When asked why he put the 63rd and Cottage Grove Green Line stop as his “discomfort zone,” John, a male Latino second year, answered:

I wouldn't even say I feel like unsafe there because I use [the 'L'] to commute [downtown] because my apartment's like right over there. So I'm still relatively close. It's just.... things there just feel very, kind of like worn down almost in comparison to things you'll find further north and it's just that area.... Close around, darkish, it's kind of, eh, like you feel a little bit weird around it probably just because it was just like the looming shape of the, uh, the station overhead, so creates like a weird kind of almost like Gotham and darkness, like Batman kind of feel. And that's kind of how I would feel around there.

He begins by insisting he does not feel unsafe at the stop, and then proceeds to undercut his claim by grounding his concern in the built environment. The association between “worn down,” “darkish,” “looming shape of the station,” and “Gotham and darkness, like Batman” all gesture at John tying his discomfort with the area to its physical characteristics. John makes clear links between the quality of the environment and his feeling of safety. The mention of Gotham and Batman are especially telling as shared understandings; Gotham is often understood as a dangerous place, and indeed a few Batman movies were filmed in Chicago (Gomez 2014). John is drawing a comparison between the Green Line stop and the seedy, crime-ridden world of the Batman comics when he mentions Gotham. John’s rationale is problematized when considering our discussion immediately after this: when asked if he would feel the same disquiet if the area immediately around Green Line stop were as physically nice as some of the stops on the North Side 'L,' John said that he would feel
more comfortable there—an area of Chicago that is mostly white (Ali 2016). In other words, John roots firmly his concerns in the given built environment, even though he insisted that he was not afraid of his “discomfort zone.” To wit: he contends that he is not afraid of the 63rd Green Line stop but willingly admits that he would feel less afraid if the area were not “darkish”. The contradiction in thinking reveals John’s use of the physical environment as a semantic move, for a few reasons. First, in this segment, he makes the jump in logic from discomfort to the seediness and danger of Gotham, an assertion that speaks volumes about shared understandings of what is not being said—namely that areas which feel dangerous are dangerous. Second, John’s deflecting his concerns onto the built environment makes it a proxy for an unsaid factor to both justify his logic jump and explain the contradiction of why he is both afraid and unafraid of his “discomfort zone.” One can only guess what this unsaid factor is. Third, the words he uses for that proxy—particularly “darkish”, “darkness”, and “looming”—generate a sense of the unknown, which he might not have since he frequents that location, itself another contradiction. These three interlocking threads expose the semantic moves that John engages in to justify his choice of the 63rd Green Line stop as his “discomfort zone.” The adjectives “darkish” and “darkness” are especially troubling because of the high concentration of Black Chicagoans living in Woodlawn: one wonders if this is what John is referring to. Key to John’s segment is the presence of this unsaid factor. As noted above, the contradiction and ambiguous speech present indicate that John is considering this other factor, and perhaps alludes to it without explicit mention. Other students report feeling uncomfortable with the Green Line stop. In fact, of the 40 percent of students who placed their discomfort zone at 63rd and Cottage Grove, seven of the eight commented on it seeming “run-down” or in the words of Thomas, a male Black second year from California, “uninhabited” and as a result “eerie.” As the
students above, both John’s and Thomas’s references to the built environment gesture at shared assumptions about the relationship between the environment, how safe those locations are, and perhaps the people who live there too.

Referencing the built environment is also used in ostensibly positive ways as well. Just like in the negative case, this type of reference works to classify certain neighborhoods as unsafe in relation to—and as the opposite of—others, which are considered safe or nice. One case is with Michelle, a white female fourth year, who described her “comfort zone” as follows:

Probably like this area right by [International] House because it’s all like very like suburban residential-y kind of stuff and I feel safe there... I guess part of it, like it’s residential in a different way where it’s like families. So I feel like if I was a criminal, it’s not really good pickings, you know, [to] have people walking around, everyone there has cars and whatnot and it’s just kind of farther away from anything.

In this segment, Michelle relates a few concepts with an undergirding conception of the area next to I-House. First and foremost, she relates the “residential-y” area to being safe. Second, the type of residential neighborhood matters. In her mind, zones that are “suburban” and are predominantly occupied by families with cars are much safer than others. Third, Michelle reveals that she assumes crime occurs or does not occur as a function of the environment: “if I was a criminal, it’s not really good pickings, you know, [to] have people walking around.” In Michelle’s excerpt, she defines what she feels comfortable with—what is not said, however, is that locations that are the opposite of her “comfort zone” would not feel as safe. Explicitly said, Michelle suggests that areas that are not “residential-y” or “suburban” would be unsettling—perhaps like 63rd and Cottage Grove or other regions south of campus. These threads bind together the semantic move of projecting fears onto the physical, built environment. Recalling the research of Sampson and Raudenbush (2004), it may not be a surprise that Michelle feels safer in an area that appears to be much more similar to her

---

10 Approximately defined as 58th Street to 57th Street, Blackstone Ave. to Kimbark Ave. on her cognitive map
11 A dorm just outside of campus, located at 59th Street between Dorchester Ave. and Blackstone Ave.
hometown, and that John feels uneasy in a rundown, “darkish,” and urban location. While not as flagrant as other discursive strategies, the relevance of referencing the built environment thus remains strong. Additionally, the relation between the qualities of a space and its inhabitants allows for judging that space by its inhabitants. If a student therefore fears a certain type of person who is believed to live in a given area, it appears that students are likely to fear that area too.

These threads are why referencing the built environment is such a salient form of neutralizing language: it literally seeks to avoid discussing the human aspect of a neighborhood, and yet still express discomfort with those that live there. In doing so, referencing the built environment is a striking form at disguising discomfort while reaching to shared understandings. Rationalization and Euphemisms also exhibit this neutralizing, though the effects are not as pronounced. The three semantic moves under this umbrella therefore work to shift discomfort or fear onto something neutral, by either not talking about it or masking those feelings under something else.

Community Guide

Another discursive strategy of note concerns the act of visiting locations adjacent to Hyde Park. Some respondents mentioned or implied needing what is tantamount to a human guide to visit the University’s surrounding neighborhoods. Undergraduates in general express concern about entering these neighborhoods; again, in fact, three-quarters of those interviewed located their “discomfort zone” in Woodlawn. When asked if there were areas around Hyde Park she would avoid or be hesitant to go to, Sophia noted that she would be unlikely to go to adjacent neighborhoods, saying,

I don't know if there's anywhere that I would say “I would absolutely never go there.” It's more so just like what are, what are the circumstances I guess? Like I'm not going to wander to somewhere I've never been before in the middle of the night. But if I was with someone who I guess knew the area, and [they said] “Hey, there's this really cool thing in this area, would you want to go see it?” Yeah, sure, of course.
Sophia, a mixed-race second year female, explicitly states a condition for her entering into adjacent neighborhoods is contingent on a human guide—in particular, one who is familiar with these communities or even perhaps someone who lives in or is from those communities. This is accentuated by her qualifying question of “What are the circumstances?” and her saying “wander[ing] to somewhere I’ve never been before.” In Sophia’s mind, she would only visit Woodlawn and Kenwood if she were “wander[ing],” perhaps if she were lost, rather than going deliberately by herself. It is unlikely that Sophia would be able to find such a guide as (near-)total institutions by definition insulate social networks (Fitz Gibbon et al. 1999). If taken at face value, Sophia would almost never go to any places of interest in Woodlawn or Kenwood with such a condition, but uses rational-sounding justifications like “if I was with someone” who “knew the area” to abstract away from that reality.

Others also mentioned community guides. Andrew, for instance, when answering the same question, detailed a time he went to Washington Park with a university program that introduces selected students to many of Chicago’s neighborhoods while starting hard conversations about social justice issues. Andrew (a white male fourth year) noted that, typically, the program brought community activists to speak to the students—but in this instance, the activist had not been able to come and the program members were asked to explore the community in groups. He recalled accidentally disrupting a funeral when his group was trying to learn about Washington Park communities; Andrew then stated:

there were various things like that and I feel like a part of the problem, I guess part of the discomfort... came from the fact that we were trying to like learn about the community without knowing anything beforehand. But I think that like I would definitely, I would probably go anywhere if I was going with someone who knew the community already or was like from the community.
As with Sophia, Andrew expressed the same implicit contingency of needing a human guide. Unlike Sophia, Andrew in the above segment ties his needing a guide to wanting to be able to learn about a community (Washington Park) properly: he notes that his “discomfort” was rooted in his group’s accidentally disrupting a funeral, which perhaps has caused anxiety about this community to Andrew. For him, the rationale is making sure that he does not disrupt some other communities. Even for students who try to be extra-sensitive to being an interloper into communities, the ambiguity and conditioning remains. His response also echoes the logics behind Sophia’s response: entering other, nearby neighborhoods require extra caution to the point of needing a human guide. He noted that his concern from earlier stems from, in his words, an “outsider effect.” These two illustrations are instructive. Note that both use apparent admission in these segments—Sophia says “I don't know if there's anywhere that I would say ‘I would absolutely never go there,’” while Andrew plainly states “I would probably go anywhere.” Yet, this discursive move is conditioned on having a community guide. The upshot of community guide is responsibility is displaced from the speaker to others, i.e., the user indicates that their discomfort is not because of an internal feeling but is instead a factor beyond their control.

Personal Preferences and Experiences

The next semantic move is for respondents to make sweeping statements about controversial topics and then subsequently recenter the conversation on their own personal experiences or feelings. I term this action “recenter(ing) to self”, though the semantic move chiefly concerns personal preferences. These sweeping statements are frequently neutral but need not be. “Recentering to self” is often similar to apparent admission. They are however ultimately different since there is no
explicit admission of acceptance; instead, the admission is implicit in those sweeping statements. Elizabeth’s answer to my asking her opinion of Chicago’s Police Department is illuminating. At first, she acknowledges that there are “hot topics that have happened in the last two years”—perhaps referring to the Laquan McDonald shooting and subsequent cover-up—then immediately states “but personally I have never had an issue with the Chicago police.” A white second year female from Elizabeth thereafter described one personal incidents she had with Chicago police:

...one night when I had been walking to meet up with a friend who, um, before walking home together off campus last year and a police had saw me walking alone in the car and they like pulled up next to me and like asked me if I was okay and if I wanted a ride to where I was going just because they didn't like, didn't know if I was walking far, if I felt safe. And like I thought that was really nice. It was a good note to have with them. And so I've never personally had any issues with the police. But I do know there's hot topics (Emphasis mine).

Quickly moving back and forth between recognizing CPD’s failings and contrasting those with her individual experience with Chicago Police render that initial acknowledgement suspect. This recentering and apparent admission is also noticeable when Elizabeth was asked about University of Chicago police. At first she mentions a highly publicized incident in which an UCPD officer shot a fellow student (Harris and Grieve 2018), but then she states, “my safety's very important to me and I feel like they are protecting that. Um, though I know that some people have had more issues with it than I have personally.” This quotation strongly reflects the above excerpt about Chicago Police. By referencing her needs (her safety and comfort), her admission of CPD and UCPD failings is qualified through how they impact just her—but no one else.

The generalizations that interviewees subsequently qualify or modify through recentering are also about neighborhoods or geographic locations. For instance, Amelia—a female white third year—mentioned she would be “hesitant” to go past Cottage Grove, the virtual western boundary of the university campus, by herself. She explained why by saying,
I'm a small white girl from suburbia and my Dad and I had a long conversation about just like the neighborhood and about perceptions around the neighborhood and about perceptions of the university. And so my place within that community is kind of very, very different if I'm walking into that space alone, and so I probably wouldn't just fuck around in Washington Park by myself is basically what I don't think... Like I think that, that's probably unsafe.

Amelia’s statement reveals a few semantic moves—including a reference elsewhere in the interview to community guide—but key to this specific semantic move is the first emphasized clause, “my place within that community is kind of very, very different if I'm walking into that space alone.” This clause does a few things. First, it recenters perception and safety as being contingent on Amelia’s deliberate act to (not) go into Washington Park alone. Her “place within that community” is a function of her being a “small white girl from suburbia,” meaning that her skin color determines where she can and cannot go. Beyond simply recentering to herself, Amelia never notes actual rejection from the Washington Park community or similar communities; this is all conjecture. One on hand, this conjecture reveals a strong connection with her feeling unsafe because of the racial composition of Washington Park. On the other, she is preemptively rejecting the community by assuming that they would reject her. This rejection is tantamount to her being unsafe. Though this may not be the case but Amelia will never find out. Second, it shifts the logic behind being hesitant areas west of Cottage Grove from the characteristics of that place to her physical body—rendering these neighborhoods as implicitly unvisitable. Third and last, her pinning her safety and “place” on being “small white girl” implies that she is unsafe from the opposite: big, Black, and man. This echoes the existing biases and criminalization of Black men (Russell 1998). Perhaps Amelia did not intend to do so, but her “recentering to self” works to save face and make her appear not racist in these ways.

The undercurrents in both interviews reveal how “recentering to one’s self” and the use of personal preferences works as strong semantic moves. By speaking in a way that is similar to, but
ultimately different than, *apparent admission*, interviewees save face by recasting their fears as a simple personal preference. Even when respondents may appear to be race-conscious, their words reveal discomfort with racialized locations by the very act of recentering.

Some undergraduates ergo use semantic moves when discussing crime and safety in Hyde Park, Kenwood, and Woodlawn. These moves serve to mentally distance some undergraduates from their fears of crime and danger. Using tactics such as euphemisms; recasting concern as personal preference; projecting concern onto other factors, such as the built environment; and lastly, intimating that getting to know neighboring communities was safe or permissible with someone who knew that area. The result is to often justify fears or changes in behavior that result from a sense of crime by referencing alternative reasons or otherwise suggest shared understandings between students that intimate reasons that are *not* said aloud.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

The present work investigated the mechanics of how college students used verbal and discursive strategies called *semantic moves* when discussing crime, as it relates to race, in order to distance themselves from their fears and opinions. By recounting five semantic moves that appeared throughout my research, I revealed a few important dynamics. First, many students—although sometimes pleading ignorance—have preconceived notions of the interplay of crime and geography. While some took an approach that emphasized the built environment, others centered on a rational choice approach, and still others focused on structural forces like poverty and discrimination. Second, some students displace their hesitation of entering some neighborhoods onto the communities that live in those locations, often noting that they feel as if they need a resident to
“show them around.” Third, students sometimes recenter the conversation to their own, personal safety or concerns, shutting out structural issues. Lastly, students use neutralizing language, such as euphemisms, to discuss racially sensitive or controversial topics by replacing connotative words with non-connotative ones. When bound together, such concepts function together as discursive strategies that obscure or distance users from their intended statements. These strategies mimic those used in other racialized circumstances, such as in Bonilla-Silva and Forman’s (2000) work on affirmative action and interracial marriage. Given that crime is thoroughly racialized (Russell 1998; McCarthy et al. 2006; Gabbidon and Greene 2019), it is perhaps no surprise that semantic moves appear in the discourse of crime as well. These strategies have particular interest as universities are near-total in character. Semantic moves have the potential of reverberating to other undergraduates, influencing their perceptions as well. It is very possible that specific semantic moves become ingrained in the culture of the total institution—and assist in forming aspects of that culture itself—thereby generating constrained perceptions of what is safe and what is not safe.

The above examples are not to argue that more crime does not occur in Woodlawn or in Hyde Park. In fact, Woodlawn (as of 2019) was the 26th most dangerous12 community area,13 while Hyde Park is the 42nd most dangerous (Chicago Police Department N.d.a). Indeed, I am not arguing students are not victims of crime either; several interviewees—e.g., Mary, Sharon, and Elizabeth—were victims of crime or knew others who were victimized. Rather, the above analysis illustrates an apparent discomfort in admitting both a fear of higher-crime areas and as a result obscuring that fear. It is these semantic moves which demand exploration as their very existence

12 By total number of index crimes, defined as homicide, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, burglary, larceny, vehicle theft, arson (Chicago Police Department N.d.b)
13 Static, statistical areas defined with consistent boundaries that approximate neighborhoods. Chicago has 77.
indicates an underlying mental process that drives these undergraduates to distance themselves from the realities of crime and admitting that discomfort.

Nonetheless, at least three limitations of the present study warrant future research. First, though the geographic situation of Hyde Park is unique, semantic moves regarding crime are likely not unique to U of C students or residents of the neighborhood. Further investigation should delve into how semantic moves are employed in different circumstances and locales to provide a more complete picture of how race intersects with crime through discourse. For instance, students at other Chicago-area universities in wealthier, whiter neighborhoods (such as Loyola University or DePaul University) might use semantic moves differently or not at all, as those neighborhoods are surrounded by similarly situated communities. Alternatively, research might be done outside of the city, in suburban or even rural contexts. Words like “urban” evoke particularly racialized notions of cities (Silverman 2015), so the semantic moves I uncovered could reflect that instead of true or untinted perceptions.

Second, this study only captures emotions and feelings during one slice of a student’s four years of undergraduate education. I cannot explore or show how students learn, adopt, and normalize these semantic moves after their matriculation to a university. My results, however, suggest starting points for other studies. The repeated references to information disseminated by the University gestures at the need for a closer look at the role of total institutions and the process by which members interpret the world around them.

Third, my own “position”—that is, my own race, gender, and so on—might have influenced interviewees in some way. Existing research has found that the race of an interview can impact an interviewee’s responses (Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000; Bourke 2014), and therefore the outcomes
of a study. Future work may improve on this issue by utilizing researchers of different positions in order to garner a more complete picture.

Even with these limitations, the present research’s emphasis on using close reading to analyze verbal strategies employed by interviewees assisted in shedding light on what semantic moves were used and in what contexts they were used. In doing so, this case-study illustrates how discomfort with discussing race and drawing implicit boundaries about certain communities can contribute to racialized understandings of other locales. Just as previous research has found that relying on stereotypes can have material impacts (Pager, et al. 2009; Van Cleve 2016; Korver-Glenn 2018), analyzing how those stereotypes are perpetuated but obscured can fully reveal that process.

Lastly, my paper suggests that stakeholders and policymakers think critically about what is not being said when talking about race, crime or fear of crime. Unintended, unconscious, and perhaps well-meaning phrases and tools have the potential to entrench—instead of roll back—existing racial stereotypes and fear through the use of semantic moves that gesture at shared, racist understandings. This is especially fraught when considering policing practices for deeply segregated cities and towns, universities and other institutions who hire armed guards, and even neighborhood watch programs. I develop some of these notions in the following section, which is geared more to public policy. More generally, it speaks to the processes by which racial stereotypes are upheld in the era of “laissez-faire racism” (Bobo et al. 1997), opening avenues for policymakers to deconstruct processes that (re)create a racially hierarchical society.
Policy Implications

Considering the sociological research presented above, I next turn to the relevance of public policy to this discussion. Scholars already recognize the effects of (public) policy on perceptions. Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000:77) write that their research, for example, “casts serious doubt” on the notion that “class-based or color-blind policies can unite” both whites and people of color. This recognition also surfaces in their concern about respondents retreating to the adage of “the past is the past” when asked about government intervention to help people of color. The reverse—i.e., the effects of perception on public policy—is also readily considered but perhaps to a lesser degree. Again, Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000:78) make reference to this, stating that discursive moves “allow Whites” to “criticize any institutional approach” that strives to “ameliorate racial inequality.” Changes in policy like removing affirmative action are colored by the perceptions of whites that are revealed through the research of Bonilla-Silva and Forman and others. Perceptions and public policy therefore exist in a dialectical relationship: the first impacts the second, which inevitably effects the first. The result is something new, beyond the two strands.

The above is not the only relevance that policy has to the case at hand. As I have noted elsewhere, (near-)total institutions like universities exert enormous influence over those that are their members. As members continue being a part of such institutions over time, their perceptions of the surrounding world are tinted by aspects of the institution; perceptions might even change or reverse. Policy changes in the institution ergo may dramatically shift perceptions. Alternatively, the insularity of social networks in (near-)total institutions may likewise mean that an exogenous change in perceptions for one or a few individual(s) could reverberate through their social networks, causing an institution-wide change. One example is an incident in which a student was the victim of a
robery on the Midway Plaisance; two students of different social networks mentioned being apprehensive near the Midway because of this event. Even though they do not know each other, this change in perception was caused by the same event, passing through different social networks. Policy has the potential to alter or halt this dissemination. As a result, policy and perceptions have strong dialectical effects and must be considered with regards to the present sociological research.

The section below here focuses on rolling back the so-called Hyde Park “oasis” (Myers 1985). Hyde Park was and is intentionally designed to be exclusionary and racist space, a notion which will be developed below. This intentional design contributes strongly to the racialization of adjacent neighborhoods among the undergraduate population. In order to address this, I will begin with an historical overview of urban renewal and the University of Chicago’s role in renewing Hyde Park. Next, I will present a theoretical interpretation of this history using three existing theories of public policy. Finally, I will develop three policy recommendations to help alleviate the social distance between student and resident, given the findings of my research.

**Historical Overview**

**National Action**

Urban renewal—a bundle of “government programs for acquiring, demolishing, and replacing buildings deemed slums” (von Hoffman 2008:281)—has been understood to mean the collective, forced removal of so-called slum-dwellers (Badger 2016), resulting in the destruction of vibrant communities of lower-income residents who were often, but not always, of color (Jacobs [1961] 1992; Gans [1962] 1982). The roots of urban renewal date back to the late 19th Century: Progressive reformers like Jacob Riis strongly pushed for upgrades to tenement districts in New York, eventually
passing more effective and stringent regulations such as fire escapes and larger windows. While reformers saw these changes as tools to reduce crowding, “inmorality and vice”, diseases, and “corruption” (Zipp 2012:369), conditions did not improve. In the inter-war period, reformers returned to the notion of renewing urban cores; as eminent domain policies were relaxed, some cities began to aggressively utilize eminent domain to acquire land and build parks, rationalize the urban landscape into grids or resell the land to private developers (Zipp 2012). Collectively defined as slum clearance, this practice continued as the 20th century progressed.

The Great Depression turned this narrative on its head: the next generation of reformers began to blame the creation of new slums on private developers, asking the government to step in and develop public housing that was uncoupled with the private market. While the private market resisted (von Hoffman 2008), Congress passed the Housing Act of 1937, which permitted the federal government to assist state-chartered, locally governed public housing authorities in municipalities that opted into the program (McCarty 2014). Rents likewise provided much of the funds for public housing authorities. Of significance to the present work is that the Housing Act of 1937 required that “for each new unit of housing built, an unsafe or unsanitary unit had to be eliminated” (McCarty 2014:2). World War II shifted the program’s focus away from providing housing for the indigent as the war began to consume more of the economy.

Large scale and national urban renewal programs did not start until the 1949 Housing Act, which precipitated a few key new movements (von Hoffman 2008). Most importantly, its emphasis on public housing caused private actors to react by adopting the notion of conservation and rehabilitation of existing slums—encapsulated in the Baltimore Plan, this new movement emphasized “independent city department[s]” that could “set and enforce minimum housing
standards, and, where necessary, demolish delinquent buildings” (von Hoffman 2008:286). The Baltimore Plan movement was effective in nationwide action, including a pilot program in New Orleans and significantly influencing President Eisenhower’s housing policy platform. The platform emphasized the use of federal money to finance municipalities looking to engage in rehabilitation, renewal, and relocation of the indigent populace. These efforts culminated in the Housing Act of 1954. This third Housing Act sat in a “middle ground between fiscal responsibility and the New Deal” (von Hoffman 2008:292) by lowering the number of public housing units mandated while also promoting the use of the private housing market through federal housing loans (Flanagan 1997). However, it began increasingly obvious that the policy was not working as intended (von Hoffman 2008) but the damage had been done. As novelist James Baldwin noted, urban renewal meant “negro removal” (Badger 2016), as federal action—including highway building (Stromberg 2015; Semuels 2016; Miller 2018)—forced out or entrenched the isolation of poor communities in many cities throughout the country (Jacobs [1961] 1992; Gans [1962] 1982; Rosen and Sullivan 2012; Ammon 2016; Rothstein 2017). The upshot from this historical overview is that urban renewal was, generally, a government policy, which used government tools (eminent domain and highway construction) to cause change. While business and private actors heavily influenced the policy behind government action, it was the (often municipal-level) government that led many urban renewal efforts.

University of Chicago and Hyde Park

As the national urban renewal movement progressed, the University of Chicago not only worked to reinforce existing residential segregation on the city’s South Side, but also to redevelop Hyde Park and displace existing business and Black residents. Through two organizations—the South East
Chicago Commission (SECC) and the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference (HPKCC)—the University exerted immense control over development adjacent to campus. SECC remained an arm of the University of Chicago until 2017 (Cholke 2017); HPKCC is, and always has been, a resident-led group (HPKCC, “About Us” N.d.). By coordinating with these two groups, as well as buying up and redeveloping property in Hyde Park and adjacent neighborhoods, the University of Chicago effectively displaced many poorer, Black Chicagoans.

While universities playing a role in urban renewal is not new (Carriere 2010), the University of Chicago administration’s involvement with perpetuating explicitly racist housing policies is deep.\textsuperscript{14} The University’s actions were intended to push back against the slowly expanding Black Belt. As Black Americans fled North from the South during both First and Second Great Migration, the Black population of Chicago swelled. At this time, Black folk were legally only allowed to live in Bronzeville (Rothstein 2017), a neighborhood just north east of Hyde Park. The Black Belt—as this region was called—started becoming overpopulated (Ewing 2018) and so Black Chicagoans began to look elsewhere to live. Fearful of living near Black Chicagoans, Whites began to leave the city in droves; white flight was the norm (Rothstein 2017). The expansion of the Black Belt was haphazard and without rational planning, as unscrupulous realtors engaged in predatory practices to sell homes to new Black Chicagoans (Biles 2001). This was especially true because public housing in Chicago was concentrated in neighborhoods that were overwhelmingly Black (Biles 2001:35-6). The sprawling ghettos created from this concentration kept expanding as the Black population exploded.

The University’s urban renewal and planning efforts began early. Between 1933 and 1947—in the heydays of the Second Great Migration—the University of Chicago “spent $100,000

\textsuperscript{14} Juliet Eldred’s thesis “A Highly Complex Set of Interventions” was indispensable for this overview and is much more comprehensive than the history presented here.
on legal services to defend [racial] covenants”\textsuperscript{15} and “evict African Americans” in the neighborhood (Rothstein 2017:105). During this time period, the University also (re-)organized local property associations in Hyde Park and Woodlawn to serve as “protective” organs (Hirsch 1983:145). These so-called organs—HPKCC included—fought against “localized blight” such as “Bars” and “jazz clubs” along 55th Street, “especially on 55th and Lake Park” (HPKCC “Timeline” N.d.). The University’s then-President, Richard Maynard Hutchins, vigorously defended the efforts in 1937, writing “[the University] must endeavor to stabilize its neighborhood as an area in which its students and faculty will be content to live” (Rothstein 2017:105). University administrators did not hide their racist inclinations (Eldred 2017), noting the problem in explicitly racial terms, describing regions as “becoming darker by the day” or as “turned completely colored” (Hirsch 1983:146). After \textit{Shelley v. Kraemer}, which rendered racial covenants legally unenforceable in 1948, the University needed another method to maintain a “controlled, integrated environment” (Hirsch 1983:137) that kept out unwanted residents. This environment was not necessarily a new development; rather, it came from a long history of the University closing itself off from the rest of the world (Eldred 2017:134).

During this time, non-University-affiliated residents themselves began to look to centralize their efforts and complement those of the University. In 1949, over 300 residents representing about 50 organizations came together to form the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference (HPKCC “Timeline” N.d.). Then, as now, Washington Park and the Midway Plaisance were physical boundaries that defined Hyde Park, Woodlawn, and Kenwood. The organization’s steering committee therefore decided to focus on HPKCC’s activities between Cottage Grove, Lake Michigan, 59th Street, and 47th Street. Cottage Grove was seen as a “race line,” not to be crossed by

\textsuperscript{15} Housing contracts or deeds that explicitly prohibited Blacks and other people of color from purchasing, obtaining, or otherwise residing in the applicable residence. See Rothstein (2017) for a deeper discussion of the mechanics, history, and spread of racial covenants.
either whites or Blacks, while the Conference opted to include areas up to 47th Street. The northern boundary was chosen at the insistence of KAM Israel—a synagogue whose members played key roles in HPKCC’s formation—and because of Kenwood’s mansions (HPKCC “Timeline” N.d.).

The Conference’s original policy goals were sweeping but its activities primarily involved creating block clubs in the neighborhood. In this objective, the Conference was wildly successful. In 1956, it had four-thousand members and sixty related Block Groups or clubs (HPKCC “Early” N.d.). Block clubs are a long standing Chicago tradition: introduced during the Second Great Migration of southern Black Americans to Chicago as methods of acclimating migrants to the city, block clubs morphed into voluntary organizations that “focused on the physical environment” by “beautify[ing] parkways,” providing childcare, and sometimes “fixing sidewalks, removing garbage” or other municipal responsibilities (Seligman 2016:6-7). For the Conference, however, block clubs sought to integrate themselves with the broader city efforts of urban renewal by complementing the larger work of HPKCC. Block clubs were sources of legitimacy, funding, and media attention for the Conference. Yet for the goal of urban renewal, the Conference and South East Chicago Commission overlapped so much so that founding figures in the HPKCC “lamented” the separation as a “mistake” (Seligman 2016:36-8). Hirsh (1983:138) writes, in fact, “by 1958, HPKCC’s primary purpose was that of securing the requisite public support for the SECC program.” HPKCC and SECC originally clashed frequently over urban renewal efforts, but since the University of Chicago effectively lobbied for a change in law that allowed for easier access to eminent domain powers, HPKCC was effectively neutered (Hirsch 1983:158-60). While citizen-led efforts played an important role in urban renewal, the University’s financial and political clout—channeled through the SECC—caused these efforts to be subordinated to those of University.
The South East Chicago Commission, founded after the University exploited a sensationalized crime—exploited in the literal sense, as Chancellor Lawrence A. Kimpton would explicitly note—in 1952, was originally designed to combat a fear of rising crime in Hyde Park (Hirsch 1983:143-4). Though the University had been engaging in other urban planning before the formation of the SECC, chiefly by buying up real estate, the creation of the Commission strengthened the University’s activities in the realm of urban planning and redevelopment. Once allowed the use of eminent domain by the amending in 1953 of the 1941 Neighborhood Redevelopment Corporation Law, SECC rapidly began to acquire land and property (Hirsch 1983). The Commission, headed by Julian Levi, and its affiliate organizations were responsible for significant changes to Hyde Park. In line with earlier suggestions that the University acquire land from 60th to 61st Street (Hirsch 1983:148), it opened the new Law School campus at 61st and University in 1959 (HPKCC “Timeline” N.d.); followed by a residence hall in 1962 to its east, located at 61st and Kimbark (Manhardt 2014); as well as the the relocation of the University’s School of Social Service Administration to 61st and Ellis (University of Chicago N.d.a). SECC also focused on areas just north of campus, revamping 55th Street from Cottage Grove to Lake Park: “redevelopment plans called for the construction of a shopping center to replace many small retail outlets that had clustered along 55th Street” (Hirsch 1983:158). Also developed was Kimbark Plaza at 53rd and Kimbark, University Park Condominiums on 55th between Blackstone Ave and Harper Ave, as well as the Hyde Park Shopping Center at 55th and Lake Park (HPKCC “Timeline” N.d.). The scale of these efforts was nothing less than extraordinary. Eldred (2017:147-8) writes that the University's plans

---

16 Equivalent to President.
...called for the demolition of 193 acres (or 20 percent of the community); cost $120 million ($730 million when adjusted for inflation), approximately half of which was public funds and the other half private; displaced more than 30,000 people; and enabled the University of Chicago to add 41 acres of land to its campus.

It is no understatement to say the University radically transformed the neighborhood. Areas between 43rd and 47th—while technically part of Kenwood—were however deemed undesirable, and therefore SECC’s purview stopped at 47th. Left to fend for themselves, residents of North Kenwood (43rd to 47th) were “written off by urban developers and lending institutions”, without institutional support. As a result, North Kenwood “looks like London after the blitz” (McClory 1993), bereft of people, buildings, capital, and economic infrastructure.

The Commission's direct work would not stop until the mid-1980s, when Levi left SECC and the University President at the time, Hanna Holborn Gray, opted to focus the administration on the University campus and community instead of urban renewal (University of Chicago N.d.b). Other initiatives continued—for instance the University directly purchased the Hyde Park Shopping Center at 55th and Harper Ave. in 1984 (HPKCC “Timeline” N.d.)—but the aggressive urban renewal programs all but ended.

Over this four-to-five decade period, the University of Chicago enacted extensive change in Hyde Park, Kenwood, and Woodlawn, largely following explicit racist views (Hirsh 1983:153-4). The boundaries of SECC and HPKCC sought to reinforce, in the words of Kimpton, the “University’s island” (Hirsch 1983:159) by keeping Black residents out of Hyde Park. The two key men—SECC Director Levi and Chancellor Kimpton—had wide ranging influence over the direction of their organizations and therefore the urban renewal operation (Hirsch 1983:153). Both men candidly noted the racial fears that undergirded the SECC. Hirsh notes,

Kimpton explicitly sought an economically upgraded and predominantly white neighborhood. He viewed upper income housing as "an effective screening tool" and as a means of "cutting down [the]
Levi on the other hand, expressed a simple disinterest in preserving much of the neighborhood’s Black housing and communities. Speaking about the fear of Hyde Park of becoming “100% Negro,” Hirsch (1983:159) writes,

...Levi was less willing to surrender any ground. He felt that although things would "get worse for a while," it was possible to sustain a "holding action," and then, "as the urban renewal plan goes into effect, ... [have a] 'rollback.' "The corporation's redevelopment site extended from 55th to 59th streets, from Cottage Grove to Woodlawn Avenue (excluding the University of Chicago campus).

This case is instructive for a handful of reasons. First, it represents one of the largest private attempts at urban renewal; while governments were frequently undertaking such efforts, the University of Chicago and the Commission were given wide leeway in their projects. Second, the success of the urban renewal process meant by definition that other, surrounding neighborhoods did not receive the investment and assistance required to uplift existing citizens. The resulting material impacts persist today. Third and last, the same institutional logics behind urban renewal in Hyde Park—building a community that caters to students and faculty, just as President Hutchins would argue just over three-quarters of a century earlier—continue to drive the University of Chicago’s limited, but real, urban redevelopment projects today (Eldred 2017).

Theoretical View

This portion analyzes the preceding two subsections using three interlocking theories in the public policy space: Salamon’s “new governance” theory (2001), Lipsky’s “Street Level Bureaucracy” (2010), and new sociological research from Vargas (2016) that reveals how institutionally-marked, geographic boundaries also have real impacts through an uneven distribution of resources. The first
two seek to better comprehend, in terms of actors and results, policy implementation through reinterpreting how these actors of implementation function rather than considering those actors and their policies as static. I connect Salamon and Vargas to enrich my analysis of actors located in Hyde Park within the urban renewal field.

Salamon—The “New Governance” and the University as a public actor

This theory is the formalization of a major change in the delivery of government services or implementation of policy that “blend[s]” the formerly disparate public and private spheres together (Salamon 2001:1633) through a complex, interlocking system of public and private actors. Salamon (2001) argues that, in the latter half of the 20th century, government services have increasingly been delivered by a cornucopia of intricate partnerships between government at all levels and the market, what he terms “new governance.” One illustration is public housing: recall that in 1949, the federal government began to subsidize local public housing authorities (McCarty 2014) but overwhelmingly utilized the private home loan market to build the suburbs (Rothstein 2017). Convoluted relationships permeate the public housing field.

This shift is significant: by Salamon’s calculations, the federal government’s direct involvement amounted to only 28 percent of its total involvement (2001:1616) in the realm of social planning. In other words, the transferring phenomenon is widespread and systemic; the implications, therefore, touch nearly all aspects of American life. New governance theory emphasizes a unique few aspects; to the present work, however, the following are the most salient. First is the transfer of roles, namely the government transferring its authority and prerogatives in housing and urban planning to a private entity (The University of Chicago). Second is the notion of networks: bundles
of private and public actors that “substitute” a government agency’s work (Salamon 2001:1628). With this in mind, I contend that the history of the South East Chicago Commission strongly reflects the new governance theory.

Of primary note is that SECC was a private actor that took and takes on the responsibilities of the municipal government with its explicit blessing (Hirsh 1983), as the municipal government was concurrently investing in millions of dollars to build public housing across the city (Rothstein 2017). In this way, the city with its resource of eminent domain—which only it typically has access to—is able to collaborate with, and offload its role as urban planner to, a private actor (the University of Chicago), which is “already actively involved” (Salamon 2001:1633) in the specific field of urban renewal in Hyde Park. In return, the University of Chicago took responsibility for a lion’s share of the effort. The mutually reinforcing relationship is unique to Salamon’s theory: this blend is only fully appreciated in “new governance” (Salamon 2001:1632).

This also holds true for networks, collections of various public and private actors that substitute the activities of a particular government agency (Salamon 2001:1628). The extant case strongly embodies this: SECC, HPKCC and its constituent block clubs, and even construction firms, architects, and related businesses were private actors in this case; several layers of public actors include city council members, the city administration, federal grant agencies, and so on. Salamon (2001:1630) analyzes this mesh of relationships through the principal-agent problem; succinctly, this economics and political science theory posits that the principal (e.g., the government) and its agent (e.g., the University, SECC, and other private actors) are constantly at conflict because of a difference in preferences or opinions. The agent, being closer to the action, usually has the upper hand. While not necessarily an issue with SECC, the principal-agent problem’s relevance within the
theory of new governance is better understood by the example of the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference.

As noted above, HPKCC was fully the Commission’s subordinate by 1958; the organization was frequently tasked with defending SECC’s vision and activities, “dealing with crises” (Hirsch 1983:157). HPKCC was often the subject of immense pushback by its rank-and-file block groups and members, who charged the Conference with breaking its “commitment to community discussion” (Hirsch 1983:156). The principal (dues-paying members of the Conference) and the agent (HPKCC’s administration) were at conflict here, and the agent in fact won out, since the administration was much closer to SECC’s activities. SECC’s gains were solidified with a turnover in leadership at the Conference (Hirsch 1983:157). While this tension is perhaps intrinsic in attempts to devolve state authority onto local communities (Herbert 2005), the new governance approach maps well to the case of HPKCC and SECC.

Vargas—Boundaries, the Distribution of Resources, and Material Outcomes

In a multi-method study of the Chicago neighborhood of Little Village (La Villita), on the city’s west side, Vargas’s *Wounded City* (2016:5) attempts to understand one fundamental question—“how could different blocks in the same neighborhood have such different experiences with violence?” More specifically, the east side of the neighborhood seems qualitatively much closer to the media-sensationalized notion of *Chiraq*, with desolate streets and strewn trash. The west side is the opposite, with a lively atmosphere (Vargas 2016:4-5). Vargas (2016) concludes that gerrymandering in La Villita plays an important role in the distribution of resources that flow through governmental channels. Gerrymandering, in this case, is the result of a *political* maneuvering, in which politicians
and political organizations jockey for the power and influence. Little Village, the location of a largely Latinx, independent political organization, has been fighting other factions for influence for may decades. By divvying up the neighborhood across several wards, hegemonic powers in City Council were able to dilute La Villita’s political power (Vargas 2016:58-64) The impacts are both material and long-lasting. For instance, the residents of Little Village’s west side—which is in one political unit—have been successful in coupling together municipal resources and community nonprofits (Vargas 2016:55-58). While resources are often limited and residents still sometimes lose out on the west side (Vargas 2016:85), La Villita’s east side is worse off. It is “disconnect[ed] from an effective nonprofit and political structure” (Vargas 2016:91) that stems from gerrymandering. Key to the present work is the recognition that borders on paper—while not real, constructed boundaries—have the potential to influence relationships between key actors, the distribution of (social, cultural, and economic) capital, as well as a community's propensity to be effective in collective action (Vargas 2016:171-6).

Taking this concept as a point of departure, Vargas represents Salamon’s theory of new governance in reverse. New governance theory centers on the impact of private actors on public action; Vargas conversely demonstrates how public actors can gain and utilize on-the-ground influence through community-level private parties or surrogates. The University of Chicago and its related organizations sit at the juncture between these two theories. On one hand, the University took on much of the government’s duties through its urban renewal organizations, in line with Salamon. On the other, local organizations attempted to sway policy outcomes—and those ever important boundaries—through politics at the local level. Recognizing that *Wounded City* primarily
focuses on the political fights that cause gerrymandering and with the above comparison with Salamon in mind, I compare the case of La Villita to Hyde Park in the next section.

The complex relationships between the University of Chicago—through its South East Chicago Commission—the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference, and Chicago’s municipal government is similar to those between nonprofits and the same municipal government of Vargas’s study of La Villita. However, instead of politicians deciding the relevant boundaries as in the case of Little Village, HPKCC and SECC played that role. This decision was of course not without political turmoil. Some residents north of 47th Street—in now what is called North Kenwood—have repeatedly expressed frustration and anger at their being left out of SECC’s “Final Plan,” the massive plan to revitalize Hyde Park (HPKCC “Timeline” N.d.; Eldred 2017), explored in detail above. Newspapers recount residents responding with “indignation” at “being left out in the cold” (McClory 1993). Political fights are also reflected in the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference subordination to the SECC. Just as the independent political organizations of La Villita fought and fight for recognition and sway over policy, so did HPKCC (Hirsh 1983). Residents in North Kenwood and Oakland (another community north of North Kenwood), eventually created their own organization, called the Kenwood-Oakland Community Organization (KOCO), to represent their interests. This is analogous to Little Village’s 22nd Ward Independent Political Organization (IPO), which was founded by residents to represent their interests against a more powerful group—the Democratic Machine in charge of Chicago politics (Vargas 2016:38-9). In some sense, HPKCC and KOCO have not been successful, as North Kenwood and Oakland are still economically depressed (CMAP 2016), perhaps mirroring the failures of the 22nd Ward IPO and related nonprofits seen in Wounded City (Vargas 2016:38, 47-51). In Hyde Park as in Little Village, the
material impacts have been significant. The implications of Vargas’s theories are caught in a binary tension: neighborhoods that suffer from being outside of the boundary are often in very close proximity to those that are within the boundary and therefore prosper.

The clear landscape of economic inequality from 63rd Street to 47th Street neatly encapsulates how drawn boundaries generate those very inequities. As noted earlier, blocks north of 47th were deemed “too blighted” (HPKCC “Timeline” N.d.). SECC’s “Final Plan” only included 47th Street to 59th Street between the lake and Cottage Grove Ave (Hirsch 1983:161). Recall Eldred’s (2017) description from above. The deliberate decisions to not include blocks outside of these zones meant that University and city resources were focused within a two square mile area. North Kenwood, “left out in the cold”, was even omitted from the Kenwood Historical District, which would protect existing structures (McClory 1993). Recall McClory’s (1993) description of the neighborhood as London after the Blitz. Without nonprofit or institutional support—KOCO would not come into existence until the 1970s, meaning the community was without necessary support—North Kenwood was the site of some attempts at new private development. Residents as a result were afraid of being pushed out. In the present day, Black Chicagoans who reside in North Kenwood consistently have lower land values, experience more (often violent) crime, and live in closer proximity to poverty (Shelton 2016). These material realities persist decades after the decision to leave North Kenwood out of the Final Plan, because of that decision. Hyde Park and South Kenwood, having benefited from institutional support is on the other hand, an “oasis” (Myers 1985) and a “showpiece neighborhood” (McClory 1993).
Lipsky—Government at the Street Level: Bureaucrats and Private Policing

Concisely speaking, Lipsky’s theory of street-level bureaucracy posits that public servants who interact directly with the public (i.e., street-level bureaucrats) and notably “orient and provide the social (and political) contexts” in which the public acts. Examples of street-level bureaucrats include social workers, teachers, and so on. Noteworthy to this section is that police are often considered street-level bureaucrats (2010:3-4). As physical representations of the state to those they serve, street-level bureaucrats are often the primary location of political conflict and play impactful roles in shaping resident interaction with government (Lipsky 2010). While HPKCC’s relationship with its block groups certainly reflects a similar—but ultimately different—set of circumstances, I focus this subsection on the University of Chicago Police Department, since police are a quintessential street-level bureaucrat (Lipsky 2010:3). This is especially pertinent as UCPD and Chicago Police share responsibilities within the Extended Patrol Area (Fan 2014), meaning that the University’s policing arm reflects a sharing of roles like in Salamon’s new governance theory. While UCPD is a private organization, its functions as a police department—especially as it shares responsibility with the city’s police—place it within this realm.

The University of Chicago’s police department in its present state did not exist until the mid-1970s, after a series of rapes in student dorms. Some faculty and students began to commute from Chicago’s North Side; others began to carry guns. By this time, UCPD had nearly one hundred officers (Fan 2014). However, the concept of a private police force dates back to around the time of SECC’s founding in 1952. At this time, the university’s plan revolved around effectively badgering Chicago Police to respond to complaints, “no matter how trivial” (Eldred 2017:154-5), even though an early private force did exist. In fact, some of the first uses of private law enforcement were to not
only protect faculty and students, but also to force out private businesses in line with the Commission’s urban renewal policies (Larson 2012; Eldred 2017). Over the next few decades, the University of Chicago police sustained several accusations of racial profiling and stoking race tensions. These rumors included one that all Black residents “coming across the Midway are stopped and frisked” (Fan 2014). Indeed, UCPD in its early history disproportionately policed younger Black residents (Eldred 2017:155-7). While the history has been murky, perception of UCPD has improved in recent times (Fan 2014), even with a persistent reputation of racially profiling younger Black residents and students (Fan 2014; Gold 2014; Gold 2015; Newman 2016; Eldred 2017; Kartik-Narayan 2018).

It is at this juncture that I begin my analysis of UCPD as a street-level bureaucracy. These types of bureaucracies are unique in that they grant their constituent bureaucrats a wide range of discretion and relatively high autonomy. First, police, by definition, are expected to invoke the law selectively (Lipsky 2010:14), i.e., use discretion in interactions. This is true for a few reasons. For one, officers are necessarily involved in situations that can not be reduced to a neat schematic. Officers are also tasked with being able to modulate interactions to respond to the “human dimensions” of a given case (Lipsky 2010:15). Given the overrepresentation of Black men in stops made by UCPD officers relative to the population (Newman 2016; Eldred 2017), as well as the force’s lukewarm reception among some older Woodlawn residents (Fan 2014), it appears that officers are exercising immense discretion. Perhaps some are unfairly discriminating against younger Black men, but not older men; perhaps, conversely, other officers are letting the elderly get away with crime. Regardless, discretion is clearly at play. Officers are also highly autonomous; until April 2016, UCPD officers were not required to wear body cameras (University of Chicago Department
of Communications 2016) and so had limited oversight. While such an arrangement need not necessarily be harmful, street-level bureaucrats naturally try to expand autonomy, often against existing regulations (Lipsky 2010:19). Such a conflict can lead to bureaucrats treating *people as clients*, with limited humanity (Lipsky 2010:29-32, 59-70). The above discussion of discretion ergo reveals how UCPD act as a street-level bureaucracy even though they are a private entity, especially regarding oversight and the relative overpolicing of Black residents.

Street-level bureaucracy’s two unique characteristics shape how police interact with those they police, but also those they are meant to protect in ways beyond simple discretion. Lipsky (2010:59-60) notes that street-level bureaucrats play a role in constructing the social category of *client* as distinct from *person.* I focus on two ways: teaching the role and structuring the context. First, bureaucrats socialize those they serve into clients through their interactions. One way is that bureaucrats frequently imply to their clients that few services should be expected. For instance, the refrain “nothing more can be done” is a classic reflection of this notion (Lipsky 2010:63). This surfaced in my interview with Julia—she needed to enter a campus building since she forgot her phone there; she called UCPD who noted that their “departmental policy” prevented them from opening up the building, even though they were physically able to. Present, in other words, is this implication of few services. Julia’s interaction with UCPD also reflects the power of expected patterns. Julia’s call to UCPD informed them of an expected interaction with a student, ensuring that they would be in Julia’s eyes “super nice.” Being called to an active crime scene—or to investigate a suspicious person—creates a completely different expected pattern of interaction with a client (Lipsky 2010:62). These varying expectations inform how bureaucrats react and therefore the outcomes of an interaction.
Second, bureaucrats structure the context of interaction in order to prepare people to be clients and maximize the use of resources. Bureaucrats have control over the location of interaction, the frequency, and who commands what resources (Lipsky 2010:62). University of Chicago Police therefore often structure the context of policing. From “officers systematically search[ing] all of the black men on a public bus” to stopping “local teenagers who go out of their way to walk down King Drive”, a major street a mile west “rather than Ellis Avenue to avoid the UCPD” (Fan 2014).

Department-wide policies thus filter through street-level bureaucrats, who have immense influence and power in how those policies transfer from paper to reality. Even though the University of Chicago Police Department is a private entity, their role as a police force means that their officers are street-level bureaucrats. This is revealed in two ways: first, their wide discretion, seen in UCPD’s overpolicing of Black residents; second, how officers socially construct the category of client, through structuring the context and teaching the role.

Policy Recommendations

With these theories and histories in mind, I conclude by suggesting three policy changes that seek to rectify the so-called Hyde Park “oasis” (Myers 1985). Research regarding racism and fear of other races has shown that regular contact with people of other races reduces racism (Emerson, Kimbro and Yancey 2002; Brown, Brown, Jackson, Sellers, and Manuel 2006; Lopez 2016). With the outcomes of the historically racist practices of the University of Chicago in mind—as well as its continued redevelopment efforts—the following proposals emphasize increasing contact between the University of Chicago-affiliated people and (the predominantly Black) residents of Woodlawn, Kenwood, and Washington Park.
Development of New Businesses

First, the University should establish, support the development of, or otherwise incentivize rent-controlled commercial development (in the style of Daley’s at 63rd and Cottage Grove Ave. and Robust Coffee at 63rd and Woodlawn Ave.) on the South Side, in particular Woodlawn and Washington Park. Several long-standing agreements between the University and community organizations prevent the University from buying more property in some regions, and this ought to continue. New commercial properties can be developed with University assistance (e.g., with loan assistance or entrepreneurship programs through the University’s Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation) or in existing University properties like dorms, the Harris School of Public Policy, or other already owned University properties. These new developments—which ought to be owned by current residents of the associated neighborhood—must have strong community oversight, through the Alderman’s office or a dedicated group of members and leaders of the communities in which these developments are located. The University of Chicago should finally establish a program in which students can use their Maroon Dollars (money attached to their school ID cards via their student accounts) at these new businesses. The University ought to, likewise, incentivize existing businesses in Woodlawn to become new members of this program.

This program would incentivize students to frequent Black-owned businesses within the neighborhood, not only spending their cash as an economic stimulus, but also to frequently interact with or simply be near Black Chicagoans. We might expect a few results from increased contact. One, reduced fear and discomfort among students regarding surrounding neighborhoods:

17 I place particular emphasis on the University of Chicago not buying more land and property since this is the mechanism by which the University gentrified and displaced many residents, as seen in the Historical Overview.
racially-coded perceptions breed fear, and removing those perceptions and biases ergo ought to diminish this fear.

Two, diminished policing and oversight near these businesses. As more and more students and University-affiliated people spend time in surrounding neighborhoods, the University of Chicago Police Department, and perhaps Chicago Police, may start spending less time policing those locations as a result. More students visiting such locations may disincentivize overpolicing by the UCPD as to not scare away students, businesses, or even perhaps other investors.

Three, beyond just reducing biases through repeated contact with Black residents, this program may potentially dispel the prevalent myth that Woodlawn, Kenwood, Washington Park, etc. have no stores or locations of interest. The last part is especially pertinent since a common refrain among my respondents was that such communities had no places of interest.

I lastly recommend that these developments be both rent-controlled and exclusively owned by Black-businesspeople to stave off gentrification, establish a (limited) form of economic stimulus, and finally as an option for the University to begin to right some of the wrongs it committed. Rent-controlling the developments will safeguard that businesses will not be pushed out by other developments. The economic stimulus will come in the form of the University promoting new business. Lastly, the University of Chicago can begin to right past wrongs by assisting in the redevelopment of depressed neighborhoods. Community oversight should ensure that such communities are revitalized without gentrification or other ills.
**Improve Staff**

The second proposal is to both improve staff training to be more sensitive of the realities of Hyde Park’s adjacent neighborhoods, as well as to hire more Black staff in visible, non-service positions. The paradigm of “cultural competence” is useful for this proposal: defined as “the ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures,” this paradigm must be kept in mind when training staff. Several methods of being culturally competent exist, including but not limited to, “assesses[ing] organizational diversity” and “practic[ing] strategic planning that incorporates community culture and diversity.” (Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies 2016) With this paradigm in mind, I turn to elucidating why training is important and suggest one way of doing this training.

Several of my interviewees recalled staff members implicitly or explicitly telling students to not go to certain areas, such as not to use the Green Line or to avoid going south of 63rd Street. Words like “sketchy”, as noted in the Euphemisms portion of my analysis, not only reinforce biases and stereotypes of surrounding neighborhoods, but also the residents thereof. Consequently, staff should not be doing that reinforcement. As officially sanctioned agents of the total institution, university staff can—and do—significantly influence its culture: recall Mary’s overt and years-long hesitation at using the Green Line. Likewise, university staff might be the first people knowledgeable about Chicago that incoming students interact with. In other words, it is possible that all subsequent experiences that students have are shaded by what staff tell them. Staff lastly must *actively* work to dispel racialized myths about adjacent neighborhoods. Without the presentation of a competing narrative, the consistent conception of the criminality of Black folk might induce students to be afraid of Hyde Park’s adjacent communities even without tacit University approval. The same
boundaries and effects might arise regardless. Consistently presenting counter-narratives could allow students to make up their own minds, as well as perhaps lay the foundations for lower fear later on.

One suggestion to improve cultural competence is to have University housing staff spend some time interacting with residents of Woodlawn, North Kenwood, and Washington Park as part of their training. Cultural competence requires an incorporation of “community culture” (CAPT 2016), and so housing staff must be able to understand the cultural logics of adjacent neighborhoods. Said interaction also allows the community, residents of adjacent neighborhoods in this case, define themselves. Self-definition is integral to developing cultural competence; Hyde Park’s neighbors deserve the chance to define themselves with respect to the University and its community. Also encouraged is building relationships with those residents, in order to lift the veil of bias that surrounds those corners.

I also recommend that the University hire more Black staff in visible and non-service positions, such as in housing or student life-related departments. As noted earlier, increasing interracial contact is important (Emerson, Kimbro and Yancey 2002; Brown et al. 2006; Lopez 2016). Having more Black the University of Chicago staff in positions of authority—such as Resident Heads (RHs), Resident Assistants (RAs), or Resident Deans (RDs)—makes such interaction unavoidable. The three listed positions routinely interact with new students and therefore might have the deepest or longest-lasting impacts. Moreover, interactions with Black staff in these positions is has lower stakes than interacting with Black Chicagoans: RAs, for instance, are intended to not only act as agents of the University, but also to help students resolve issues and to “develop House communities” within the University of Chicago (Housing and Residence Life of the

18 This could also be seen as an argument for increasing Black enrollment at the University, which would likely have similar results (i.e., reducing bias among students but also among staff and professors as well). However, my proposal is about staff and thus I do not touch on this subject.
University of Chicago). All students who mentioned their RAs (about one-quarter) did so positively, often reporting having strong bonds with them, and so interfacing with a Black Resident Assistant is perhaps easier for students. This is likely true of RHs and RDs. Such staff must also be from the right geographic and economic background: while ideally new hires would be from surrounding communities, I strongly suggest that they at least be from similar neighborhoods. This is because it is not clear that the experience of being Black from economically depressed areas is the same as that of thriving communities. The right kind of hire matters; the right race is not good enough.

In sum, the University of Chicago ought to both hire more Black housing staff and have staff work to dispel bogeyman myths about the South Side. This twofold proposal, like the first, is designed to augment student interaction with Black folk personally (e.g., through housing staff) and law the groundwork for more interaction off-campus.

Expand Internship Programs

My third and last proposal is to expand internship programs, e.g., Metcalf internships or Institute of Politics internships, to more organizations located in underserved communities throughout Chicago. Such internships would necessarily increase contact, even if the hosting organization does not do direct work such as social work or tutoring. Such expansions must be designed in order to incentivize the most number of students to actually do these internships, and I consider a few methods of doing so in this section. First, expanded programs must offer a wide variety of organizations to cater to the broad tastes of the student populace—institutions must offer many motivations in order to acquire compliance with its overall mission (Besharov 2014). Besharov (2014:1497-9) finds that integrating together often conflicting motivations is key to success. Some
students might identify more with learning relevant and important skills, improving their own resume, or simply interested in helping a for-profit entity make money, perhaps analogous to Besharov’s “capitalists” (2014:1494). Others could be far more invested in the “societal values” of the organization, such as “health, natural foods, community, and environmental sustainability.” Termed “Idealists” (Besharov 2014:1491), expanded internships programs must make space for these students as well. Such delineations are often quite blurry in the real world (Besharov 2014:1495), and yet Besharov finds that these categories still have real effects on the work behaviors of different workers (2014:1495-6). Heterogeneity in host organization is accordingly important to the success of this proposed expansion.

In order to further incentivize students, this expansion should take advantage of existing mechanisms that offer course credit, as well as be paid. Such opportunities accordingly must be widely publicized. Though perhaps a departure from University of Chicago academic culture—which prides itself on the theoretical—offering course credit for internship experiences does indeed already happen. The Public Policy Studies Department, for instance, already offers elective credit for internship experience (The College of the University of Chicago N.d.). Perhaps other departments might create more opportunities in line with the Public Policy Studies Department, e.g., the Economics Department. Each department may place different requirements and restrictions on this course credit, but ultimately the most important dimension is that the most number of students possible are incentivized to engage with Black Chicagoans throughout the city. This is also why I propose these internships be paid. Lastly, the expanded programs must be highly publicized, through academic advisors, easy access on job posting websites, and so on. Without high visibility, these internship programs will have few students in the field.
To review, I present three policy proposals: assist the development of new Black-owned businesses for students to patronize; improve staffing, including hiring more Black staff; and expand internship programs. University of Chicago undergrads, in large part because of the isolating nature of universities—and especially because of the University of Chicago’s deliberate urban renewal policies—maintain a strong bias against and discomfort with communities surrounding campus. These policy proposals are ergo intended to increase contact and familiarity with Black Chicagoans in order to reduce this bias. The first policy (new development) should incentivize students to cross the so-called boundaries of 63rd Street and Cottage Grove Avenue and come into contact with Black residents. The second (improve staff) also has the effect of increasing contact but with the added dimension of such contact being low stakes and with familiar people—such staff of course must be in a position in which this is possible. The third and last proposal (expand internship programs) would place students at various for-and-non-profit organizations throughout the city. Not only would students be interacting with Black Chicagoans frequently but also the University of Chicago undergraduates would be, in some ways, assisting Black residents of the city *en masse*.

*Conclusion—Policy Implications for the Future*

The history of the University of Chicago’s urban planning and renewal efforts reflects a departure from the national urban renewal trend. At the national level, the federal government was largely responsible for policies that sought to revitalize and rebuild urban communities, first through slum clearance and then later through conservation. The former was intended to literally clear neighborhoods that were deemed to be slums, and replace them with either new structures or parks. The latter emphasized conserving existing housing stock by bringing them up to code or otherwise
building new public housing. Encapsulated in the Baltimore Plan, conservation remained dominant, even as federal policy ultimately culminated in displacement of many residents of color, especially Black Americans. In Hyde Park, Chicago, however, urban renewal was the purview of the University of Chicago. A private actor, the University pushed to maintain Hyde Park as a white enclave in the city even as white flight surged. While the municipal government needed to confer the powers of eminent domain, the University played the biggest role. From paying lawyers to enforce racial covenants to constructing new buildings in Woodlawn; from purchasing and ultimately demolishing decrepit buildings to redesigning streets, the University of Chicago—through its urban development arm, the South East Chicago Commission (SECC) and the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference (HPKCC), an ostensibly community-led organization—radically transformed the Hyde Park, Kenwood, and Woodlawn.

I then explored this history through three theoretical lenses: Salamon’s New Governance, Vargas’s work on Little Village, and Lipsky’s notion of Street-Level Bureaucracy. Using these lenses, I examine aspects of the University’s urban renewal and planning apparatus: the first two theories concern the SECC and the HPKCC, while the third revolves around the University’s police force. Using Salamon, I demonstrate how SECC and HPKCC neatly reflect the concepts of new governance: a reliance on private actors, the relevance of networks of social service organizations, and finally the interplay of the principal and agent (in this case, HPKCC’s members and administration respectively). Vargas’s work speaks to how government actors can gain and utilize on-the-ground influence through community-level private parties or surrogates, especially how boundaries on paper translate into geographically-decided, material outcomes. SECC’s and HPKCC’s decision to choose boundaries from 47th to 59th meant that key institutional support and resources
ensured that communities within that boundary prospered, while those outside did not. Those boundaries, decided by local politics, still have power today. Lastly, I examine the University of Chicago Police Department using Lipsky’s Street-level Bureaucracy. As interacting directly with residents is an essential aspect of policing, UCPD is an apt example of street-level bureaucracy. Discretion—reflected strongly in the relative over-representation of Black men in policing statistics but through other means as well—and UCPD’s role in constructing the role of client in multiple ways are strongly reminiscent of street-level bureaucracy. UCPD officers construct the role of client by not only teaching the role but also structuring the context of interaction. The role is taught when officers intimate that few services should be expected with the refrain of “nothing can be done.” The context of interaction is structured by officer’s control over the location thereof, the frequency, and resources. A history of over-policing mirrors a structuring of the context of interaction.

The theories ventured in the present work suggest several ways of considering the interplay of perceptions and policy, as well as the impact of urban renewal beyond material dimensions. The role of perception is a constant undercurrent within each of the above theories. Perceptions of residents as criminal—as Black men are frequently judged to be (Russell 1998)—do not exist in a vacuum. UCPD’s history of and current practice of over-policing Woodlawn residents perhaps stems from these perceptions. Similarly, perceptions of certain neighborhoods or corners as being blighted led to boundary lines being drawn which have clearly impacted Kenwood and Hyde Park. These perceptions were not held by low-level bureaucrats; key actors in the University’s urban renewal process like Julian Levi and Lawrence Kimpton also believed in these boundaries. The University’s need to even engage in urban renewal is itself a product of biases against Black Chicagoans moving into Hyde Park in the first place. Such threads are particularly complicated in an era of new
governance, in which government oversight becomes increasingly difficult. Multiple and sometimes conflicting perceptions drive action, which may result in unintended, negative consequences. Street-level bureaucracy creates another wrinkle—street-level bureaucrats, with discretion and limited oversight, have immense power over outcomes. Their perceptions matter, even if they are in conflict with overarching policy, and ergo cannot be ignored.

As noted in the introduction, policy and perceptions exist in a dialectical relationship. But beyond perhaps trite observations, acknowledging this relationship might also reveal new ways of interpreting given justifications for urban planning projects. Recalling the notions of semantic move and discursive strategies, progressive-minded social analysis may consider thinking more critically about how urban planning and renewal agencies rationalize their choices; it is certainly likely that rationalizations rely on semantic moves in order to save face. Revealing the undercurrent beneath such justifications would allow for a better appraisal of urban planning projects.

I conclude with three policy proposals: develop new Black-owned businesses, hire more less-well-off Black staff and expand (paid) internship programs. These proposals are designed to increase contact between students and Black residents of Chicago, as interaction can reduce bias, fear, and ultimately change perceptions about nearby spaces. Ultimately, discomfort can only be overcome with familiarity—yet that very same discomfort often arises from the inertia of historical forces. These policy proposals are merely the first step to overcome that inertia and reverse over nine decades of exclusion.
References


Sindhwani 65

*Competence* | *SAMSHA.* Retrieved April 4, 2019

(samhsa.gov/capt/applying-strategic-prevention/cultural-competence).

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). 2016. “Chicago Community Areas” *Community Data Snapshots.* Retrieved April 7, 2019

(cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/126764/_Combined_AllCCAs.pdf)

Chicago Police Department. N.d.a *CLEARMAP Chicago Police Department Geographic Information System.* Retrieved February 20, 2019

(gis.chicagopolice.org/website/clearMap_crime_sums/viewer.htm).

Chicago Police Department. N.d.b *Crime Type Categories: Definition & Description.* Retrieved February 20, 2019 (gis.chicagopolice.org/website/clearMap_crime_sums/crime_types.html#INDEX)


Sindhwani 67

New York Press.
of Crime and "Deviance". Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.


Housing and Residence Life of the University of Chicago. n.d. “Staffing Opportunities.” Retrieved April 4, 2019 (housing.uchicago.edu/about-us/staffing-opportunities/).


The Huffington Post. Retrieved March 3, 2019
(huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-9-most-segregated-cities-in-america_us_55df53e9e4b0e7117ba92d7f).


Kuppers, Toon and Russell Spears. 2014. “You Don’t Have to Be Well-Educated to Be an Aversive Racist, but It Helps.” *Social Science Research* 45:211–23.


_Crain's Chicago Business_, October 2. Retrieved March 10, 2019


Skogan, Wesley G. and Lynn Steiner. 2004. *Community Policing in Chicago, Year Ten: An Evaluation of*

(skogan.org/files/Community_Policing_in_Chicago_Year_Ten.pdf.)


(vox.com/2015/5/14/8605917/highways-interstate-cities-history).


(collegecatalog.uchicago.edu/thecollege/publicpolicystudies/#courseinventory).

University of Chicago. n.d. “School of Social Service Administration | Architecture at the University of Chicago.” Architecture at the University of Chicago. Retrieved March 10, 2019

(architecture.uchicago.edu/locations/school_of_social_service_administration/).


(president.uchicago.edu/directory/hanna-holborn-gray).

University of Chicago Department of Communications. 2016. “University of Chicago Police


Appendix

Figure 1:

This is a sample “cognitive map”, drawn from my interview with Andrew. Each interviewee was requested to fill out an identical map. The blue, in this image, is the “discomfort zone” whereas the red is the “comfort zone.” These are areas which interviewees chose when explicitly asked if there are locales in which they felt least and most safe, respectively. Also delineated are the four quadrants of Hyde Park, which I determined using two major streets: 55th Street and Woodlawn Avenue.
Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name*</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type of home neighborhood**</th>
<th>Been to Chicago before visiting U of C?</th>
<th>What quadrant in Hyde Park do they live in?***</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amelia</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Urban/Suburban</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>NW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eve</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White/Asian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>SW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julia</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristen</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maddy</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Suburban/Suburban</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharon</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Urban/Suburban</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White/Asian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yasmin</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Arab/White</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Urban/Suburban</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = Pseudonym  
** = As described by interviewee  
*** = See Figure 1 in Appendix
Table 2:

Presented here is a sample of codes corresponding to a topic as a coded my transcripts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Topic</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Sample Quotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boundaries</strong></td>
<td>Implicit Area No Go</td>
<td>“I mean, I wouldn't say I have a specific boundary in the sense, like I’ve told myself, ‘don't go above that.’ I haven't found a need to go much north of 53rd.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiating between good and bad streets</td>
<td></td>
<td>“I, I just again, I just feel safer on campus I guess because we feel safer there.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceptions</strong></td>
<td>Of how crime works</td>
<td>“I guess there was one kid that I knew that was walking down a pretty innocuous street and got mugged, like middle of the day and that was like, eh, because we are kind of, I feel like college students are particularly walking targets, especially here where everyone's got like Canada Gooses and like the new Iphone, like pretty easy pickings. So I would say that was probably illuminating and that it's pretty easy for us to get picked on at anytime.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of the Built Environment</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Do you know how like it's like kind of rundown? It's like the same thing downtown where it's like the streets were the 'L' downtown, they have like all of the buildings right next to it. It's kind of like, they're like not as nice. Does that make sense? I don't know why, but I get the same feeling from those streets there as I do from the Green Line.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conceptions about Chicago</strong></td>
<td>From Family, Friends, or Community</td>
<td>“Hyde Park was super different in the nineties and my parents were super nervous about it especially because like it was pretty violent and like my parents didn't really... My mom especially like didn't really want to live here when they moved to Hyde Park. Um, and so like they had a perception that like Hyde Park was like super dangerous and it wasn't a good place to live”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From other UC People</td>
<td>“I think that that was reinforced by the university conversation of 'Below the midway? Who's that? We don't go there.’”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Semantic Moves</strong></td>
<td>I don’t know +</td>
<td>I imagine if you're someone in these communities you would feel that way too, but then I don't know how it would affect you to be like I'm being policed by these, this one rich white neighborhood in the... You know what I mean?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discomfort Zone</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Comfort Zone</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>63rd St/Cottage Grove Ave</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53rd St/Harper Ave</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other areas north of campus</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>All other areas north of campus</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other areas south of campus</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>54th Place/Woodlawn Ave</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62nd St/Drexel Ave</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>57th St/University Ave</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61st St/Ellis Ave</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>54th Place/University Ave</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54th St/University Ave</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>57th St/Dorchester Ave</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53rd St/Everett Ave</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>All other areas south of campus</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows the frequency count for the cognitive or mental maps used in my interviews. Note that some students placed their discomfort and comfort zones in more than one place so that the numbers do not add up to 20 each.