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A PARTNERSHIP'S CAPACITY for COMMUNITY IMPACT UNDERSTOOD THROUGH NEOLIBERAL TECHNOLOGIES OF RISK and RESPONSIBILIZATION: A LOOK at WORCESTER MASSACHUSETTS' SENATOR CHARLES E. SHANNON JR. COMMUNITY SAFETY INITIATIVE PARTNERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

A PARTNERSHIP'S CAPACITY for COMMUNITY IMPACT UNDERSTOOD
THROUGH NEOLIBERAL TECHNOLOGIES OF RISK and RESPONSIBILIZATION:
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Since 2006, the Charles E. Shannon Jr. Community Safety Initiative has sought to reduce

youth and gang violence in multiple Massachusetts cities through partnerships of

community organizations, research institutions and police departments. Worcester,

Massachusetts was an original recipient of Shannon funding due to its historic and

increasing problem of youth and gang violence. Using a framework of governmentality,

one of the ways crime is problematized and controlled is through the use of neoliberal

technologies of risk and responsibilization, underscoring neoliberalism's emphasis on

personal responsibility. When risk is used to govern and assigned to individuals and groups

of people living in relegated spaces, interventions become structurally blind. The

framework of governmentality and risk and responsibilization was helpful in

understanding Shannon's capacity for a community impact in Worcester that would

address structural barriers to equality and de-individualize interventions. Interviews and

documentary analysis were conducted to understand the capacity of Worcester's Shannon

partnership. The findings revealed successes in increasing awareness of youth violence

and inter-agency communication. However, because the Shannon Partnership in Worcester

continues to be responsive to neoliberal technologies of risk and responsibilization,

espousing a narrow interpretation of the Comprehensive Gang Model (CGM), and lacking

community participation and voice, the partnership has not, and will not, move beyond individual programmatic responses to more structural responses to youth and gang violence, further maintaining the status quo. In Worcester, Massachusetts, a post-industrial gateway city, the disadvantaged ecological context of many youth's lives disallows progress to be made solely through programmatic services provided by the partnership's strategy.

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Introduction

The neoliberal state, where free-market ideology and emphasis on personal responsibility are prolific, has created and maintained marginalized spaces where individuals and groups are held responsible for desolate conditions (Keene & Padilla, 2014; Padilla, 2013; Slater, 2015; Wacquant, 2010), and where individuals are being responsibilitized by programs prioritizing brutal independence, decontextualizing the environment in which they live (Goshe, 2014; Goldson, 2005). Free-market ideology has prioritized enterprising individuals over the social reproduction of labor, further marginalizing communities, because opportunities are not available with the same frequency across all spaces and neighborhoods (Young, 2014; Vidal, 1995). Urban desolation has left many youth without opportunities for social or economic participation, creating geographic gaps in opportunities (Wacquant, 2010; Vidal, 1995). Young people who grow up in poor families and poor neighborhoods where disadvantage is correlated with economic hardship, life distress and social isolation, are more likely to be delinquent (Thornberry, Lizzote & Krohn, 2003, p. 35).

"Governmentality literature offers a powerful framework for analyzing how crime is problematized and controlled" (Garland, 1997). Governmentality scholarship was introduced by Michael Foucault and continued by Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller who describe governmentality as conducting conduct, with conduct being governed when it has appeared problematic and amenable to intervention (Miller & Rose, 2008, p. 14). Crime is problematized and controlled partly through the use of neoliberal risk and responsibility technologies. Remedies for problems like crime and anti-social behavior are ideas like

moralization and the promotion of individual responsibility, instead of wider social-structural factors (Goldson, 2005). When risk is assigned and targeted to individuals and groups of people living in relegated spaces, interventions become structurally blind. The individual is problematized and contextual factors are ignored.

The matter of 'criminality', especially youth offending, has shifted from a purely criminal justice matter to a matter that includes problems of education, health, employment and the risks of social exclusion and anti-social behavior (Muncie, 2006). This has caused governments to attack these problems through multi-agency partnerships (Muncie, 2006). Taking Rose and Miller's analysis of governmentality's function of conducting conduct, partnerships are tasked with intervening to change the behavior of individuals. Partnerships are a form of governmentality as they encompass a "broad repertoire of technologies that operate across the entire social field" (Dahlstedt, 2009). The move to limited government in the U.S., and other western cultures, has supported this situation. Blurred lines between public and private spheres has the state reliant on actors from multiple sectors to engage in collaborations to solve contemporary challenges that the state is unable to address (Dahlstedt, 2009). Power is now decentralized and organized in a way that provides these "governing entities" of partnerships with the power to "conduct conduct" (Dahlstedt, 2009).

Community partnership models have become preferred and essential in western culture for the purpose of undertaking aspects of youth justice, delinquency and violence like prevention, intervention and suppression (Goddard, 2014). In 2006, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, through the Executive Office of Public Safety and

Security (EOPSS) provided funding to several communities across the state through an $11 million dollar grant program called the Senator Charles E. Shannon Jr. Community Safety Initiative, or 'Shannon' which was "created to support regional and multi-disciplinary approaches to combat gang violence through coordinated programs for prevention and intervention" (Van Ness, Fallon & Lawrence, 2006). Worcester, Massachusetts was one of the original recipients of Shannon funding, due to its historical and increasing problem of youth and gang violence. There are now fifteen communities or "regions" that receive Shannon funding.

A Shannon eligible youth is defined by EOPSS as a youth between 10-24, living in a high-risk area within the community, and at-risk or high-risk of becoming involved, or currently involved, in gang activity (Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 2016). Shannon uses the Comprehensive Gang Model (CGM) from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) that combines intervention, prevention, suppression, community mobilization and organizational change components into a violence reduction and gang prevention/intervention strategy. The CGM is considered an evidence based practice (National Gang Center, 2010).

The issue that inspired examining the Shannon Partnership in Worcester was that the partnership is in its ninth year and the structure of programmatic responses to a community problem of youth and gang violence is still the central tenant of the partnership, and any community impact from this sustained effort is not clear. I define community impact as the intentional acknowledgement and removal of structural inequalities, like gaps in education and wealth between classes and races, and the de-

individualization of interventions. Community impact is defined in this way to prevent scapegoating individuals for community problems like violence, by examining how individuals are at the mercy of larger societal contributions to community problems.

Through interviews with Shannon stakeholders and documentary analysis from nine years of Shannon documents I developed an understanding of the capacity of the partnership to make a community impact. Shannon documents emphasized the partnership's focus on individual reporting metrics and risk factors, and interviews with stakeholders communicated the attention given to the risk levels of individuals, and the limited participation of the wider community. These factors limit moving interventions beyond the individual and widening the narrow interpretation of the CGM. The challenges Shannon faces in making a community impact are underscored by neoliberal technologies of risk and responsibilization that create structurally blind interventions because the individual is assigned blame and scapegoated as the essence of the problem.

This paper does not seek to provide recommendations, because I believe that neoliberalism and its effects are as much of a philosophical exploration of the socio-political, as are a state of our humanity. Any recommendations would be too dramatic to be considered realistic. However, this paper does explore what is possible in the neoliberal state for the community to start moving toward thinking about structural and systemic change. This can provide a platform for which recommendations are developed. This paper does develop means of describing the structure and mechanisms of control of a system, in order to understand how a strategy aimed at reducing a problem rooted in that system is achieved. "Unless, however, one can develop some means of adequately

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describing the structure of a system, one can hardly turn to what is perhaps a more fascinating problem of describing structural change within that system" (Laumann and Pappi, 1976, p. 5).

An Ideological Shift and its Impact on Governing
Universal Welfare to Neoliberalism

During the 1930's and 1940's, during the FDR era of United States politics, the concept of welfare offered universal economic security and "protection from the worst consequences of life's ordinary hazards", and was based on a certain idea of citizenship (Katz M., 2001, p. 4; Rose, 1999 p. 253). The state tried to grant universal economic security by ensuring high levels of employment, social security, health, and economic progress through the use of the tax system, investments, state planning and intervention in the economy, and an extended bureaucratic system for social administration (Miller et al., 2008, p. 71-72). However, by the 1960s, the notion of welfare changed; the 'War on Poverty' which started in the mid- 1960s "created an underclass, stripped of self-reliance and self-respect, equipped with a client based mentality, degraded and dependent" (Rose, 1999 p. 256; Katz M., 2001, p. 4). This was partially a result of the "selectivity of welfarism" that was prioritized over "collectivism of welfare", meaning benefits were targeted upon the least well-off (Rose, 1999, p. 256). The 'War on Poverty' was widely supported because of the idea that it would restore the economic and social character of central cities (Vidal, 1995).

Neoliberalism broke with welfare by reviving liberal skepticisms of government overreach, efficiency and bureaucracy (Miller et al., 2008, p. 79). The shift from collective welfare acceptance to neoliberalism reframed the narrative around welfare; the United

States' narrative was to get people off, to give people a 'hand up' not a 'hand out', and to link welfare to work or preparation for work, with the mission of creating an 'active citizen', as welfare dependency implied a person with a lost a sense of responsibility as a citizen (Clarke, 2005; Young, 2002; Garland, 1997). In 1996, President Bill Clinton signed a welfare reform bill known as the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act to "end welfare as we know it" which effectively signaled a war on dependence, echoing the critics of welfare who pronounced it as promoting a dependency culture and a disincentivized will to work (Katz, M., 2001 pg. 5; Young, 2002).

Social organization is regulated through neoliberal principles of the market, no longer including state based social provisions (Garland, 1997). The ethos of neoliberalism emphasizes choice, personal responsibility, control over one's own fate, self-promotion and self-government (Rose, 1999 p. 249), designed to maximize entrepreneurial activity (Garland, 1997). Economic entrepreneurship replaced regulation, and in doing so encouraged individuals to optimize the quality of life for themselves and for their families (Miller et al., 2008, p. 79). However, this segregates and vilifies those who are welfare recipients, void of opportunities for neoliberal optimization. The marginalized underclass, this model of welfare creates, cannot represent or organize themselves, they have to be represented, while they are simultaneously unified spatially in 'marginalized' areas (Rose, 1999, p. 259). Neoliberal discourse moved the blame for the degradation of spaces where segregated groups of people live onto those individuals and groups (Padilla, 2013; Wacquant, 2010).

The shift from welfarism to neoliberalism is best understood from the reorganization of political rationalities that is in line with contemporary technologies of government (Miller et al., 2008, p. 80). Active agents or citizens are not necessarily an invention of recent political regimes, but instead active citizenship, in an active society, can be understood as the most fundamental and generalizable set of characteristics in the neoliberal rationality of government (Miller et al., 2008, p. 41).

Free Market Ideology

Welfare was once described as "the subordination of market price to social justice" by sociologist T.H. Marshall (Katz, M., 2001, p. 4). However, social policy is now subordinate to economic policy, and the market price has superseded social justice (Gray, 2009; Jessop, 2002 p. 9; Katz, M., 2001, p. 5). The shift from the 'Fordism' era signified by mass consumption, production and full employment to 'Post-Fordism' represented by neoliberal values of free-market capitalism, a flexible workforce and production for purposes of being competitive in the global market has created economic disadvantage and has contributed to vast inequalities of wealth, the development of a socially excluded underclass with high rates of structural inequality and social exclusion (Young, 2002). These inequalities are concentrated in marginalized communities that are the outcomes of historical and structural processes, like the globalization of the labor market (Keene & Padilla, 2014).

"The settings in which children grow up in speak volumes about their value as present and future members of particular societies", observed by the neglected social reproduction in underfunded and disadvantaged geographical areas (Katz, C., 2001). The

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reproduction of work, knowledge, and the skills and maintenance of the forces and means of production are the political-economic aspects of social reproduction that maintain and reinforce class and other categories of difference (Katz, C., 2001). Over the last several decades enterprising individuals have been prioritized over welfare programs in order to secure the social reproduction of labor (Rodriguez, Jones & Wagman, 2015; Gray, 2009; Miller et al., 2008; Katz. C., 2001). This has been encouraged through the move away from a full labor force as a main objective in economic policy making, the bolstering of internal trade policies that do not support wage growth, and a prominent neoliberal framework that cleaved off collective welfare as a priority, replacing it with free-market economics and capitalism (Rodriguez, et al., 2015; Gray, 2009; Miller et al., 2008; Katz. C., 2001).

Using Risk to Govern
Circuits of Inclusion and Exclusion

With markets having replaced planning as regulators of the economy, the role of the state to provide for the populace is superseded by the expectation that individuals are to exercise personal responsibility in order to govern their own conduct and manage risk, like unemployment, ill health, old age (even as a victim) in order to optimize their lives (Miller et al., 2008, p. 214-215, 79; Muncie, 2006; O'Malley, 2008; Garland, 1997). If one is not seen as being a rational actor, responsible for his or her own risk, or observed as normal, hardworking and decent, that individual can easily become part of the underclass as the 'demonized other' (Garland, 1996; Young; 2001), which increases the energy around the 'war on dependency' spreading the concept of 'othering' and placing blame on families, individuals and communities who rely on assistance from the state. Contemporary welfare reforms have sought to micro-manage the behavior of welfare recipients in order to re-

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moralize them (Rose, 1999 p. 263). The re-moralization of welfare recipients is illustrated

in the former Mayor of New York City, Rudy Giuliani's, declaration that welfare

recipients ought to scrub graffiti and clean streets to receive benefits (Rose, 1999, p. 263-

264).

     'Circuits of inclusion', theoretical and physical spaces of self-reliance, bring in

"prudent", "enterprising" individuals who have assumed the responsibility to manage their

own risk, by taking it upon themselves to secure property, self and family (Rose, 1999 p.

247; Garland, 1997). Social inclusion also indicates being part of the 'flows', with the

freedom to transverse space and experience a high degree of mobility (Warr, 2015) as well

as being targeted for the social reproduction of labor (Katz, C., 2001). Peter Miller and

Nikolas Rose describe the affiliated as those who have the financial, educational, and

moral means to 'pass' in their role as active citizens in responsible communities (2008, p.

98). 'Circuits of exclusion', abstract and visible zones of the dependent, capture and

regulate 'risky' individuals or those who are 'unwilling or unable' to manage their own

risk (Rose, 2000), often in spaces that have been marginalized, seen as a threat to public

contentment and political order (Miller et al., 2008, p. 98) and are susceptible to sparse

flows, disconnected to outside the neighborhood and not targeted for the social

reproduction of labor (Warr, 2015; Katz, C., 2001). Having limited access to broader

networks forces a reliance on the immediate neighborhood, local environments, and

networks of family and friends to satisfy needs (Warr, 2015). This becomes problematic

when those spaces and networks are beset with disinvestment, poverty and violence.

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Social exclusion is multi-dimensional, including economic, political and spatial exclusion, meaning lack of access to information, medical provisions, housing, policing and security (Young, 2002). This limits individuals' capacities to develop spatial diversity and diverse socio-economic networks, reinforcing feelings of marginalization (Warr, 2015). The circuit of exclusion is where a disproportionate number of young offenders originate (Gray, 2009; Young, 2002), labeled as "'criminal', 'near criminal', 'possibly criminal', 'subcriminal', anti-social, disorderly, and potentially problematic" using risk to classify the individuals targeted for intervention, that dismisses the universality of welfare for all children (Goldson, 2005).

Risk Factor Prevention Paradigm

When thinking about governing "risky" youth, there are parallel processes of control happening framed by neoliberal technologies of governmentality: the individualization of risk and the responsibilization of young offenders (Gray, 2009). Many western countries have employed the use of the risk factor prevention paradigm (RFPP) for crime prevention, allowing the targeting of individuals in specific geographical locations for prevention, intervention and suppression strategies (Goddard, 2014). The risk factor prevention paradigm (RFPP) became popular in the field of criminology in the 1990s (Farrington, 1999), supported by an influential 1970's Cambridge study on the risk factors for crime (Armstrong, 2004; O'Mahony, 2009; Farrington, 1999). The RFPP's theory is that a reduction in crime will exist through the identification of individual risk factors paired with intervention aimed at that risk factor (Armstrong, 2004).

One approach to looking at a youth's criminal career, which examines criminal activity over time, is through the positivist paradigm that is focused on predicting criminal careers using a list of risk factors, like the RFPP (Corr, 2014; O'Mahony, 2009). The other approach is interactionist, setting itself apart from the previous paradigm in three ways. One it considers the social, cultural and political processes that impact individuals' lives, informed by France & Homel's recommendation that there should be greater emphasis on the social pathways, and societal access in and out of crime (2007, p. 23; Corr, 2007). Two, it incorporates the perspectives of the research participants, namely the meaning and understanding they attach to their lives and experiences (Corr, 2014; France & Homel, 2007, p. 23). Lastly, it considers 'contingencies' that encompass the situational nature of choices made, helping to remove the foci from individual micro-level interventions to policy interventions (Corr, 2014).

There have been many critiques of the positivist paradigm's reductionist methodology, which fails to include any social structural contribution to the construction and reproduction of offending behavior (Armstrong, 2004). Negotiation, power and legitimacy are the social processes that the RFPP has neglected to incorporate, but are important because, "risk and risk taking can be understood as negotiated processes, yet criminological studies of risk have largely ignored the ways in which young people negotiate and interact with their social worlds" (Armstrong, 2004). Furthermore, youth living in poor areas often feel powerless over prospects for a successful future (Arcidiacono, Procentese & Di Napoli,2007).

Another critique of the RFPP is that it serves as an obstacle to determining a true understanding of youth crime, with most of the identified risk factors serving as vague proxies for criminality (O'Mahony, 2009). "The concept of offending is so value laden and indeed ambiguous and the actions of offenders are so tied to personal and social contexts, emotional experiences and accidents of history that there can be no such limited, generalizable set of causal mechanisms" (O'Mahony, 2009). By using popular styles of risk assessments, young offenders needs are equated to personal deficiencies, (Kemshall, 2008) while histories of multiple disadvantages and social and structural factors, like poverty are dismissed and become inferior targets of intervention (Muncie, 2006, Kemshall, 2008; Goldson, 2002).

When risk level is assigned to entire families and communities, it is read as a precursor to criminality associated with willful irresponsibility, incorrigibility and family and/or individual failure (Muncie, 2006). It is suggested by critics of the RFPP that more emphasis needs to be placed on the resources young people have to enable them to make the 'right choices' about risk (Kemshall, 2008). However, the approach taken to assist youth in making the right choices about risk can dematerialize and decontextualize the situations in which young people live (Goldson, 2002, p. 392), if a responsibilitizing methodology is used, which places emphasis on individual responsibility and ignores available resources, opportunities, ecological and biographical contexts.

'Structurally Blind' Interventions

The concept of responsibilitizing youth can lead to "structurally blind" practices for youth justice that prioritize and implement policies focused on individual risk factors,

personal responsibility and agency rather than on structural contexts (Goshe, 2014; Kemshall, 2008; Goldson, 2005). This can be summed up by what Elliot Currie (1985) calls the "fallacy of autonomy" which presumes that the larger social context is separated from what goes on inside the family (Goddard, 2012). Problems like unemployment and homelessness are looked at as problems within the individual (Rose, 1999, p. 254), not society.

In youth justice there is more emphasis on creating responsible agents than on transforming structural barriers (Gray, 2009). Sonya Goshe argues

> …there is less pressure to change the collective lot of youth when the job is considered to be primarily a familial or parental responsibility and the cultural mindset prioritizing brutal independence works to strip government bodies of the duty to invest in supportive policies while leaving communities, families and parents on the hook with scarce resources to dedicate to the task (2014).

When investment in supportive policies is lacking and brutal independence is emphasized, systemic poverty, violence and dependency are allowed to persist because opportunities are not available in disinvested spaces where many youth live. This could lead to punitive punishment of youth living in these areas, however, Kevin Haines states, "it is not socially or morally acceptable to simply punish a young person without placing them and their actions in social context" (2000).

Structural context is consequently important to consider when creating policy. Offending behaviors are located within powerful, structural determining contexts (Scraton & Haydon, 2002, p. 325-326), like areas of economic disinvestment. Structural barriers do

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not necessarily limit a young person's agency, a universal human attribute (Garland, 1997)

to make choices, but it does his or her freedom, the capacity to chose without restraint, to

make a 'responsible' choice as it is clouded by external structural constraints in disinvested

areas (Clarke, 2005; Mizen, 2006; Gray, 2009; Garland, 1997).

Structural Barriers to Equality in Massachusetts

"Massachusetts, one of the wealthiest states in the nation has the ability to build an

economy in which everyone can participate fully" (Rodriquez et al., 2015). However, the

overarching neoliberal, Post-Fordist framework prioritizes the enterprising individual over

a full workforce (Rodriguez et al., 2015; Gray, 2009; Miller et al., 2008; Katz. C., 2001).

The Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center released a report that highlighted structural

incongruities between class and race and spotlighted how the black community and

communities of color are faring in terms of equality in education, economic opportunity

and health (Rodriquez et al., 2015). This report provides clear evidence that essential social

necessities are not available to everyone with the same frequency.

Poverty

The Children's Defense Fund sets the poverty rate for children at 20% (Goshe,

2014). In Massachusetts, 31% of black kids and 38% of Hispanic kids live in poverty with

close to 25% of black kids and nearly 30% of Hispanic kids living in communities with

concentrated poverty. Impoverished areas result in higher crime rates, underperforming

schools and poor housing conditions with limited access to jobs (Rodriquez, et al., 2015;

Deuchar, 2009). These areas are under-resourced, threatening long term living conditions

of poverty (Rodriquez, et al., 2015; Deuchar, 2009). Those who live in poverty are likely

to be there because of factors that limit their inclusion into the economic system, like

educational success (Garbarino, 2014). However, disparities exist when defining poverty, as Rose illustrates by stating, "Poverty and many other social ills are cast not in economic terms but as fundamentally subjective conditions" (1999), creating ideological contentions of the cause and solution of the problem.

Education

Various studies show the economic payoff of investment in early childhood education, but Massachusetts has cut funding to early childhood education by 20% over the last 15 years, with only 36% of three and four year olds receiving public support from Head Start or a Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (MDEEC) subsidy (Rodriquez et al., 2015). Worcester, a gateway city with a large percentage of families of color is beset with fewer resources and lower incomes with roughly one third of three and four year olds receiving no support at all for early education (Rodriquez et al., 2015).

Real Estate Policies

A higher concentration of low-income kids of color exist in a small number of high poverty districts, with a presumed connection between this and historical real-estate policies, like redlining neighborhoods or refusal to provide mortgages to families of color, spurred by the creation of the Federal Housing Administration in 1934, which prevented families of color from obtaining wealth by owning property or moving to suburbs or more affluent parts of cities (Rodriquez et al., 2015, Katz, 2001 p. 49). In the 1930's the first public housing regulations sought to preserve the "neighborhood composition guidelines", or, "the racial status quo" (Katz, 2001 p. 49). Accumulation of wealth is vastly different among white and black households of the same income levels. On average, a black household will hold only 15 percent of a white household's wealth even at the same

income level (Rodriquez et al., 2015). This could be a result of policies in the late 1990's and early 2000's by the mortgage companies to charge higher interest rates to families of color even if they had the same income as a white household who qualified for market rate loans (Rodriquez et al., 2015).

Since the mid 1970's the Congressional representation of suburbs has been greater than that of cities (Katz, 2001, p. 6). Dramatic inequalities in services stem from the disparity between the tax bases of suburbs and cities (Katz, 2001, p. 6). Furthermore, during the Reagan and Bush years, cities saw a halt to federal funds, facilitating the stagnation of economic and physical development, putting further strain on the urban poor (Katz, 2001, p. 122-123).

Roots of Violence and Gang Involvement

In the post-industrial society, crime is filling a cultural, economic and social void (Pitts, 2001, p. 145). Crime satisfies the important functions of income, power, control and status, making it harder to control (Pitts, 2001, p. 146).

> [Crime] embodies the translation of poverty, homelessness, and frustration into rage; it records the acting out of blocked aspirations in robbery; it traces the consequences of low wages and joblessness in drug dealing. It follows heightened poverty and inequality as they arc back toward the affluent in the form of street mugging, burgled homes, and smashed windshields. It maps the consequences of urban redevelopment that have turned city centers into places of danger by leaving them devoid of activity after dark (Katz, M., 2001 p. 54-55).

Violence can either be seen as a 'thing' that stands alone with an objective meaning of harm, pain or death, or it can be seen as a 'moment' along a continuum of other moments linked together and related to other social processes (Springer, 2012). When violence is perceived as a 'thing' much of the ecological context of violence is lost, and it becomes easy to demonize the perpetrators.

Children being and knowing they are poor, coupled with the realization that they do not have what others have, can cause shame and can be an instigator of violence toward the self or others (Gabarino, 2014). Anger that stems from the powerlessness felt over lived conditions of oppression and lack of opportunity can lead to violence (Arcidiacono et al., 2007). Shared experiences of marginalization can create oppositional attitudes toward other socioeconomic groups and social institutions (Warr, 2015). The street gang is an outcome of marginalization, and of "multiple marginalities" (Diego Vigil, 2010, p. 158). When kids feel a sense of social exclusion through marginalization and stigmatism, other forms of social capital could be sought in the form of a gang (Deuchar, 2009). In the neoliberal state, that emphasizes personal responsibility, an effort to remedy the underlying cause of the "threat" to social and economic life is nonexistent (Kaplan-Lyman, 2014).

Corr's research on youths' opportunity for leisure suggests that youths' choices are bound by lack of access to legitimate funds at the personal level and lack of suitable amenities at the community level (2014). However, it is important to note that poverty and disadvantage do not in and of themselves lead to criminality, but more so what the variables are linked to: psychological processes of discredited identities, injustice and inequality (O'Mahony, 2009).

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Youth and Gang Violence in Worcester

A Snapshot of Worcester

Worcester is a city of over 183,000 people (Census, 2014). The median household income from 2009-2013 was just over $45,932 compared to the state rate of $66,866 (Census, 2014). The homeownership rate is 44.4%, compared with the state rate of 62.7% (Census, 2014). Approximately 21.4% of people live below the poverty level, compared to 11.4% statewide (Census, 2014). There are over 11,000 businesses in Worcester, of those 7% are owned by black business owners, and 6.5% are owned by Hispanic business owners (Census, 2014). Hispanics make up over 20% of the population, and Black or African Americans make up over 11% (Census, 2014).

The first indicator of a gang problem in Worcester's Post-industrial era occurred during the early 1990's when the police witnessed a surge of unrelated violent crimes that could not be pieced together. In 1992, the Main South area of Worcester was seeing destructive behavior being perpetrated by two "groups" of youth. A series of high profile shootings in the early 90's indicated a solidification of the gang structures that were once acknowledged as "loosely knit" and lacking organization (Wiley, 1992a). Around this same time, the city and police witnessed signs of potential gangs, like colors, clothing and graffiti (Wiley, 1992a). However, some residents and students in the city schools, denied the existence of gangs, and explained the groups as "just kids who hang around together" (Wiley, 1992a). On the contrary, the Mayor of Worcester firmly believed that if young people called themselves a gang, they were a gang (Wiley, 1992a). It was in 1992 that the police developed a formal definition of a gang, but concern was voiced from the public

about using the "gang" label so readily, as they believed a group of kids called a gang would seek to live down that reputation (Wiley, 1992b; Monahan, 1992).

In 1993, the violence and gang activity that was "brewing", surfaced in a more violent way. In November of 1993 a high number of shootings and two murders occurred (Wiley, 1993). Also in 1994, the number of assaults with a dangerous weapon in the city of Worcester was growing faster than the national average, surpassing any other city in Massachusetts, Rhode Island or Connecticut (Whearley, 1994). The Worcester Gang Task Force formed in 1994, beginning the strategic cataloging of gang members and deliberate surveillance of gang activity (Wiley, 1995). In 1995, it was reported that the city had 20 gangs, with over 200 members (Wiley, 1995; Wiley, 1995). Murders continued to rise in the subsequent years. Nine murders were reported in 1998 (the average age of the suspects was 20) and 14 reported in 2007 (Croteau &Whearley, 2007).

In 2010, Worcester saw an uptick in the number of shooting incidents in the city; the year was cited as one of the most violent in in the city's history prompting the Worcester Police Department to implement an additional patrol unit (Croteau, 2010). In 2011, the homicide rate reached an all time high (Worcester Quarterly Report, 2015). The Worcester Police Gang Unit believed the violence to be driven by gangs and gang involved youth, the majority being youth of color (Worcester Quarterly Report, 2015). The pattern of increased shooting violence continued into 2013 with a 50% rise in nonfatal shootings compared to 2012 (Croteau, 2014). Knife violence in the same year increased at a rate of 22% compared to 2012 (Croteau, 2014).

This rise in crime was cited as an effect of the gang activity (Croteau, 2014).

Currently there are around 1,000 "certified" gang members on the Worcester Police

Department's Gang Unit list, however the Gang Unit has identified only a select number of

high impact players (Worcester Quarterly Report, 2015). Only about three city gangs are

driving most of the violence, and gang membership has grown in those three gangs

(Worcester Quarterly Report, 2015). In 2015, prosecutors in a case typified the violence as

a "gang war" between Main South and East Side gangs (Allen, 2015). An Assistant

District Attorney in Worcester commented on the serious series of shootings that have

occurred in 2015 saying, "These are very dangerous times and very serious incidents we're

dealing with" (Allen, 2015).

Purpose of Partnerships in Youth Justice

Welfare bureaucracies have been replaced by new logics of competition, market

segmentation and service agencies with community entities linked up in circuits of

surveillance and communication designed to minimize the riskiness of the most risky

(Rose, 1999, p. 259-260). The matter of 'criminality', especially youth offending, has

shifted from a purely criminal justice matter to a matter that includes problems of

education, health, employment and the risks of social exclusion and anti-social behavior

(Muncie, 2006). This has caused governments to attack these problems through multi-

agency partnerships (Muncie, 2006). Governing through partnerships has become more

and more common in areas like crime policy, with community partnership models

becoming preferred and essential in western culture for the purpose of undertaking aspects

of youth justice, delinquency and violence like prevention, intervention and suppression

strategies (Dahlstedt, 2009; Goddard, 2014). Western culture is distinguished because of the decentralization of governments.

According to Michael Foucault, who termed the concept of governmentality, governance comprises a "broad repertoire of technologies that operate across the entire social field" (Dahlstedt, 2009). Taking Rose and Miller's notion of conducting conduct, partnerships are undertaking this function of governmentality and using practice guides, transferable models, and evaluations help to constitute governmental spaces and subjects (Larner et al., 2005), subject to risk prediction models (Goddard, 2012). Partnerships are a mix of specialist institutions that provide meaningful services, while also delineating youth's space and organizing their time (Goldson, 1997, p. 22), in an effort to responsibilitize and manage risk. In this space emerges a set of managed socializing activity (Goldson, 1997, p. 22), a form of governmentality.

The move to limited governments in the U.S. and other western cultures has supported this situation, as the central government is not in control of day-to-day operations of the partnership (Goddard, 2012). Furthermore, the blurred lines between public and private spheres has the state relying on actors from multiple sectors to engage in collaborations to solve contemporary challenges that the state is unable to address (Dahlstedt, 2009). The decentralization and reorganization of power has happened in such a way that provides the "governing entities" of partnerships with power (Dahlstedt, 2009), like that of "conducting conduct". The pressure of thwarting crime and enacting change is now less of an objective of government action and more of an objective placed on organizations, institutions and individuals of society, or the 'everyday life world' (Garland,

1996). This is 'governance-at-a-distance' that leaves the state more powerful than before because of its influence on organizations outside of the state, and the dissolution of the state as the primary protector and the public's representative (Garland, 1996).

The fundamental idea of partnerships is that they are "built on overlapping interests that converge on the aim of improving community conditions" (Baum, 2000). A partnership is formed under the premise that by acting together more can be accomplished than through acting alone (Baum, 2000; Caplan & Jones, 2002; Green, 2001). However, with the power to "conduct conduct" can come fantasies about what can realistically be accomplished; it is often the case that the problems are bigger than the capacity of the collective capacity (Baum, 2000). "Advocates may exaggerate partnerships' potential, minimize their requirements, and ignore evidence that development is often disjointed and tenuous" (Baum, 2000). They may imagine that "simply creating a partnership magically produces resources that will solve problems without realistically analyzing the problems, strategizing to address them and organizing necessary resources" (Baum, 2000).

When a partnership assumes it is able to solve youth violence without addressing structural inequalities, due to lack of wider community participation, resources, capacity, or will, individual risk factors become the target of intervention. Strategies for intervention are developed around personal responsibility to solve youth violence, in turn minimizing the importance of addressing issues like poverty. The problem is considered addressed and taken care of through a very narrow approach.

Engaging the Community Voice in Partnerships

With a partnership's goal of improving community conditions, it is able to incorporate more of a focus on "bottom-up" development rather than "top down", because of the inclusion of grassroots organizations and community voice in the development of partnership strategy (Larner & Butler, 2005). Furthermore, the Office of the Surgeon General (2001) stated that public health science revealed youth violence prevention programs were most effective if they were science based, comprehensive and included coaction by schools, communities and families (Backer & Russ, 2007). The emphasis in this section is on the inclusion of communities, families and I go as far as to say even the individuals affected by the interventions.

Community based participatory research (CBPR) is revered for its inclusion of the community in decision making processes (Bidwell, 2009). Through an emancipatory process of research and action the community is empowered to control the decision-making and are given legitimate voice (Bidwell, 2009). CBPR, or community engaged research (CER), similar to CBPR could be a part of a community mobilization effort in youth violence prevention. CER is defined as "a collaborative approach to research that democratically involves community participants and researchers in one of more phases of the research process" (Nation, Bess, Voight, Perkins & Juarez, 2011). The method of CER relies on the understanding of the target of research and the integration of the learned knowledge into the action to improve the community (Nation, et al., 2011). Participatory research approaches aim to democratize the creation of knowledge, legitimizing the world view of the powerless (Stoecker & Bonacich, 1992). Furthermore, the aim is for

knowledge to lead to empowerment (Stoecker, et al., 1992). Knowledge should not rest only in the minds of the professionals used to study objects, but the knowledge, and theories of oppression, should be created and used by oppressed and powerless communities as well (Stoecker, et al., 1992).

There is concern voiced in the research as to how much research is applied to a community but developed through a relationship between the grant agency and researchers rather than between the researchers and the community (Green et al., 2001). Partnerships with the greatest potential for action include overlapping understanding of the public's perceived needs and actual needs as well as the resources to carry out the action (Green et. al, 2001). Partnerships have the power to increase understanding of the public's actual needs (Green et al., 2001), however, this most likely requires participatory research or organizational development and community mobilization.

Critical to this approach is the following consideration: "communities are somewhat unaware of how power and structural forces influence their lives, and this awareness must first be addressed via empirical evidence in order to provide a foundation for subsequent critical action" (Nation, et al., 2011). Integrating this type of community based approach into violence prevention efforts would require acknowledgement and agreement about the root of the problem, and the encouragement of dissent and acknowledgement of power differentials between groups (Nation, et al., 2011).

The ideal model of CBPR can often fall short of what is possible in reality due to factors like bureaucracy of government agencies or lack of interest, or irreconcilable power differentials (Stoecker, et al., 1992; Nation, et al., 2011). Even with CBPR principles in

place, a political framework that no longer guarantees public welfare exists. However, CBPR can be, and should be used to push on the status quo of development and community intervention, and the ideals of this model should be what partnerships striving for community impact should evaluate themselves against (Stoecker, et al., 1992).

Using a Framework for Service: The Comprehensive Gang Model

Gang prevention programs that utilize the Comprehensive Gang Model (CGM) embody the theory that gang violence is an outcome of social disorganization, where key organizations are not collaborating, and where there are insufficient resources to target youth (National Gang Center, 2010). This theory calls for organizations to work together in a coordinated manner that is team focused, integrated and inclusive of law enforcement, social welfare organizations and grassroots organizations (National Gang Center, 2010). Shannon grantees are expected to utilize the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP) CGM that EOPSS endorses. This model incorporates five areas: Suppression, Social Intervention, Opportunities Provision, Organizational Change and Community Mobilization. The CGM can be described as a "script" (Garland, 2012) given to the partners by the state.

The CGM is also termed the "Spergel Model" because in the late 1980's OJJDP conducted a juvenile gang suppression and intervention research and development program led by the late Dr. Irving Spergel, a professor from the University of Chicago (National Gang Center, 2010). The five strategies that eventually became the CGM were consolidated from a national assessment of organization, agency and community groups' responses to gang problems in the United States (National Gang Center, 2010). The

findings from this national assessment identified the strategies these groups used for violence reduction, which then become the CGM (National Gang Center, 2010).

The CGM is considered an evidence based practice, and violence reduction is thought to occur with investment into each of the five areas. The Little Village Gang Reduction Project (GVRP) in Chicago's gang ridden Little Village utilized the CGM in their response to the ongoing youth and gang violence (NIJ, Program Profiles). The GVRP was evaluated using a quasi-experimental design. Three groups of youth were included in the design, youth who were part of the program group, youth who received some services, and youth in the comparison group who received no services. Changes in arrest histories for a four and a half period before the program and a four and a half year period program period were compared. The GVRP saw reductions in arrests for violent crimes and drug crimes, but did not appear to have an effect on property crimes or total arrests (NIJ, Program Profiles). The Model Programs Guide from OJJDP rates this program as promising, this is the only evaluated program in the Models Program Guide that used the CGM as a framework for violence and gang reduction (NIJ, Program Profiles).

Limits of the CGM in Addressing Structural Barriers

Although the CGM is seen as promising and is promoted as an evidence based strategy, it promotes increased programmatic activity and communication between entities, with an acceptance for narrow implementation by users. Given this, there are limitations of this model in addressing structural barriers, like inequality of wealth and systemic violence and racism that will inevitably limit its capacity to reduce and prevent youth and gang violence.

Social Intervention

Social intervention practices are usually based within local community-based organizations that facilitate programs aimed at socialization and community protection, with an emphasis on mainstreaming gang youth (Spergel, 1995, p. 185). The critique of early intervention is that it is associated with risk; if early intervention is delivered based on assigned risk levels then the right to belong in 'circuits of inclusion' if non-criminality is sustained, will be reinforced (Kemshall, 2008). Early intervention programs are only as effective to the extent that the larger social system supports them (Garbarino, 2014), and resists further marginalizing people and places by removing the emphasis on responsibilization.

Opportunities Provision

Opportunities provision is the provision of additional social opportunities through specific educational, training and employment programs (Spergel, 1995, p. 184). Worcester Shannon's main focus is providing opportunities to youth, mostly in the form of job opportunities. However, there is little to suggest that brief employment, not connected to any other aspect of a youth's life, will cause a reduction in delinquent behavior, taking into consideration the age of the target population and the environment where the youth reside (Alstrohm & Havighurst, 1982; Apel, Paternoster, Bushway & Brame, 2006; Bushway & Reuter, 2002; Collura, 2010; Crowley, 1984; Mihalic & Elliot, 1997; Paternoster, Bushway, Brame & Apel, 2003; Pilavin & Masters, 1981; Ploeger, 1997; Smith & Thompson, 1983; Staff, Osgood, Schulenberg, Bachman, Messersmith, 2010; Staff & Uggen, 2003; Sullivan, 1984; Sviridoff & McElroy, 1985; Uggen & Wakefield, 2008; Votey, 1991; Wald & Martinez, 2003; Wright, Cullen & Williams, 1997). Research

conducted by Hazel, Hagell, Liddle, Archer, Grimshaw and King (2002), cited in Gray,

evaluated the value of detention employment training programs and found that while in

detention many youth had positive attitudes about employment and were fully

participating, however when released, less than one fifth of participants were involved in

work (2009). This could be a result of youth returning back to the same environments they

were in before they were sent to detention.

Shannon programs focus on the supply side of unemployment with emphasis on

the individual's motivation. When assessing individual behavior and focusing on

responsibilitizing youth through jobs, failure is understood as a lack of motivation rather

than lack of opportunity from poor economic conditions. Poor economic conditions

produce low wages, and low quality jobs (Hannah-Moffat, 2005) that stand in the way of

sustained employment and livable wages. "The concept of transformation has become

depoliticized and detached from any association with radical structural reform through the

redistribution of resources and opportunity or through direct government intervention in

the economy to stimulate demand for youth labor or regulate the types of work being

created by the free market" (Hannah-Moffat, 2005; Mizen, 2006). A strategy like this will

not intervene to invigorate the structural links between poor neighborhoods and labor

markets (Pitts, 2001, p. 147). Without the government regulating employers and the labor

market, young people will continue to participate in low quality work training and low

wage, low-skilled, short term employment (Mizen, 2006, p. 197).

Suppression

Suppression through the CGM is defined as formal and informal control procedures like surveillance, supervision and monitoring of youth by police and community-based agencies (Spergel, 1995, p. 185). Swaths of space are opened to surveillance, a mechanism of control disproportionately affecting youth of color because the places youth of color are most likely to live are spaces that are governed, socially ordered and managed through a RFPP (Goddard, 2012). Even though crime and high risk victimization have an uneven social distribution, they are perceived as facts of modern life (Garland, 1996), increasing the threat felt by the public and the justification for potentially punitive punishments and surveillance. There is essentially a punitive bind where police officers are tasked with applying punitive sanctions on disorderly individuals but these sanctions do nothing to get at the underlying causes of violence (Kaplan-Lyman, 2014).

Suppression efforts remain insufficient if not in collaboration with other areas of the CGM (Spergel, 1995, p. 185). The CGM dictates work happen on both ends of the spectrum, prevention and suppression, which begs the question: are youth seen as endangered innocents, or dangerous and unworthy (Tilton, 2010), or both, and how does the public, and Shannon partnership reconcile this dichotomy? The dichotomous CGM provides no answer or guidance to understanding that question.

Community Mobilization and Organizational Change

Community mobilization was first utilized as a way to counter social disorganization (Spergel, 1995, p. 172). In the 1980's and 1990's it grew into a strategy to develop and involve coalitions of justice agencies with schools, community groups and even former gang members with local, state, federal agencies and resources to deal

collectively with the problem of gangs (Spergel, 1995, p. 172). Through Spergel's

explanation of community mobilization, police are in key coordination positions to deal

with problems (1995, p. 172). Not mentioned in the community mobilization strategy is the

importance of community participation and accountability by community members.

Organizational change calls for the previous strategies to be organized and

integrated depending on the scope of the problem and the mission of the organization

(Spergel, 1995, p. 185). Critical elements of this strategy are agency collaboration, joint

planning and information sharing (National Gang Center, 2010). Organizational change, as

it is defined, does not call for putting pressure on larger systems and policies, it does

however call for the organization policies and practices to be inclusive and community

oriented (National Gang Center, 2010). The lack of clarity of what organizational change is

and should be does not easily encourage a discussion and move toward incorporating

systems change into the CGM.

Methodology

The primary research question that the current research was aimed at answering

was "can a youth and gang violence prevention partnership that employs programmatic

strategies and neoliberal technologies of risk and responsibilization have a successful

community impact?" Documentary analysis and interviews were used to gather

information to inform this research question. Themes from the interviews and documents

were then compiled and given meaning through existing literature on associated topics.

Primary qualitative research was obtained from both documentary analysis and

interviews. Shannon documents from 2006-2016 such as yearly reports, grant proposals,

The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security's (EOPSS) Availability of Grant

Funds, quarterly progress reports, meeting minutes, Local Action Research Partner

(LARP) publications and newspaper clippings were examined. These documents

contained information on the history of Shannon, Shannon goals, communication between

partners, outcomes of programs, challenges, the scope of Shannon programs, the current

climate of the city's youth violence problem illustrated by news clippings, anecdotes and

data, and the outcomes of Shannon in respect to strengthening partnerships and achieving

outcomes.

Qualitative research was also obtained from interviews with eight stakeholders of

the Shannon partnership. These participants were selected because of their varying

experience in Shannon and the information they could provide about the value of Shannon

to the community. The interviewees were two senior researchers with Clark as part of the

LARP; a Sergeant in the Worcester Police Department who serves as the Shannon Program

Coordinator; a Caseworker with the Boys & Girls Club (BGC); the Outreach Coordinator

with Straight Ahead Ministries (SAM); the Job Coordinator with the Worcester

Community Action Council (WCAC); the Director of Planning at the WCAC and the

previous Grants Coordinator for the City of Worcester; and the Director of WCAC's Jobs

and Education Center.

These participants were either recruited at a Shannon Advisory Committee

meeting, through an email, or both. All participants signed a consent form agreeing to

participate. Participants were either representatives of programs, members of the LARP or

situated at the decision making level. The interview contained questions about individual

and organizational roles of Shannon, Shannon's role in addressing youth and gang violence, the function of the partnership, and organizational culture.

Findings
History of Shannon

Worcester, Massachusetts was one of the original communities to receive Shannon funding due to its historical and increasing problem of youth and gang violence. Shannon funding was not the first effort made to address the problem (Phase 1 Case Study, 2006). However, the influx of new money from the Shannon program allowed for the expansion of existing organizations, the formalization of relationships with community outreach organizations, increased staffing of the Worcester Police Department (WPD), greater information sharing, and the development of a referral system that helped to define organizational roles and responsibilities and lessen potential duplication of services. (Phase 1 Case Study, 2006).

Worcester Shannon Model

Currently, Worcester Shannon has allocated funding into four areas: Suppression, Opportunities Provision, Social Intervention and Community Mobilization. The Worcester Police Department through tactical response teams, and the Project Night Light program handles suppression. Even though Organizational Change is not a funded strategy the funding of a sergeant in the police department to manage Shannon provides the opportunity for organizational change. The Worcester Youth Center (WYC) and BGC through case management and job placement services handle opportunities provision. Social intervention is done through police youth recreation programs, the Final Notice program, the WPD Summer GANG program, the Police-Clergy-Youth partnership and

SAM street outreach. Community mobilization practiced through a Clergy Mentoring program. Partners come together through Steering Committee meetings or Advisory Committee Meetings that happen as frequently as quarterly to as in frequently as twice a year or less.

Partner Roles

The functions the Shannon partner organizations have, academic, programmatic, or managerial, provide an understanding of any hierarchy that exists within the partnership when it comes to decision making and strategy formulation. It also illuminates the capacity of the partnership when determining its current ability to harness grassroots and community voice.

Clark University

Clark University's role in Shannon is as the Local Action Research Partner or LARP. The LARP, according to the WPD, was responsible for providing the Worcester collaboration with the tools necessary to determine if the programs are reaching the correct audiences and achieving the intended results. Two senior researchers have been involved in Shannon for nine years.

Early on, a lot of the work done by the LARP was trying to understand what Shannon required and building the proper framework to encompass the requirements. The LARP also spent time early on explaining its role, discussing data at meetings, and focusing on small projects. The first program implemented was an employment program. The LARP's role was to develop research around this program, ultimately providing recommendations on how the program should be tailored to fit the needs of the kids, partially done by assisting with interviews conducted with kids in the programs. Both

senior researchers remarked that Shannon was very program focused in the beginning, and still operates using a program model for services. The LARP's role is action research, action research is a cyclical process of problematization, data collection and analysis, and reflection (Riel, 2010-2016). In this model there is not an expectation of CBPR, instead it is more of an insular research model where knowledge is generated and shared within the partnership. The improvement of the community is a goal of action research (Riel, 2010-2016), however knowledge generated and developed by research for research undermines the necessity of community empowerment, effectually maintaining the status quo.

Worcester Police Department

A Sergeant within the WPD was selected by the city to be the Program Coordinator for Shannon within the Police Department. The Program Coordinator stated that he believed the purpose of Shannon was to increase the collaboration of the police with community organizations. The emphasis on community policing in the last several decades has created an expectation for police to work through networks and partnerships for crime prevention (Fleming, 2006 p. 87). Since 1996, the Program Coordinator has served in the Gang Unit, and has been a Sergeant since 2006. The WPD has control over funding allocation to partners. The Program Coordinator explained that the money decisions are made between himself and the Chief and another woman within the police department. He does not think his role has evolved much since the beginning; in the beginning it was a lot of building, and the work happened with one or two community partners. He stated that the city has been tough about bringing new people in and he has had to vouch for a lot of people to really build up the partnership and the coalition stating, "It is tough to bridge

those partnerships since many organizations don't necessarily fall within the purview of Shannon and it is hard to make the case that they do".

Straight Ahead Ministries

The Director of Outreach at Straight Ahead Ministries (SAM), a faith-based organization that has been part of the partnership since 2012, describes his role as primarily outreach and he likes to think he has some decision making power in the Steering Committee meetings when it comes to the direction and implementation of outreach services through Shannon. The Director of Outreach describes SAM's perspective of the problem from a relational perspective, advocating for the youth, trying to understand the whole dynamic and the whole family, the needs of the family, and the specific needs of the youth. He believes the role of outreach is to be out in community, seeing what the needs are, thinking about socio-economic needs and trying to develop a relationship with the youth. He believes that outreach can only impart hope and choices, outreach workers are not out there to say this is "good or bad", but instead to provide other options. Since he sees the gangs and violence as more generational, he believes youth see the violence and gang membership as what they aspire to be, and through outreach he able to give another option, and to share his personal experiences and upbringing to show them something different.

Boys and Girls Club

The Case Manager with the Boys and Girls Club described his understanding of Shannon is that it is a preventative program targeted for youth at risk of joining gangs. A lot of the work he is doing with Shannon is already a part the Boys and Girls Club's mission. He describes his work as forming relationships with youth and supporting youth

to make the right decisions, noting that some youth are in a place to receive it and some youth are not.

Worcester Community Action Council

The Worcester Community Action Council (WCAC) was the main programmatic partner offering a summer jobs program through their job and education center. WCAC's, jobs coordinator, Director of Planning, and Director of Jobs and Education were interviewed. The job coordinator described that about 10-15% of his work with WCAC is Shannon related. The Director of Planning remarked that the partners all know their roles and what they are supposed to be doing, so the role of WCAC has not changed, despite changes in funding and program structure over the nine years. The Director of Jobs and Education voiced that she is not familiar with much of what the other partners are doing, but she is very invested in providing services through WCAC that are in line with the mission of Shannon.

Partnership Capacity in Making a Community Impact

The rise of partnering to solve community problems, with partnerships being an extension of governmentality, as power is decentralized at the state level and reorganized in entities like partnerships, raises the question of whether Shannon has the capacity and power to make a significant community impact with the strategy employed. Through the interviews with Shannon partners several themes emerged regarding both the challenges and successes of Shannon in making a community impact. The challenge that neoliberalism poses to moving beyond individual responsibility is illuminated through the findings that individuals are the identified targets of intervention. Because of this there is a pressure on and expectation of partners to show outcomes based on individual

measurements that decontextualize a youth's life. Shannon is also faced with having to be responsive to the punitive public attitudes of justice that individualize and decontextualize behavior. Additionally, a siloed and centralized structure exists within the partnership that hinders the partnership from moving beyond coordinating to collaborating. This structure and narrow interpretation of the CGM also limits the capacity of Shannon to bring missing community voices into the planning and decision making process, effectually preventing alternative interpretations of the problem and potential solutions from being explored. These alternatives could work to break the individualized focus of Shannon. Given these challenges, some successes have been described as less competition, more comfort in the partnership and the individual success stories.

Barriers & Challenges
Individuals as Targets of Intervention

Pragmatic "quick fixes" are usually prioritized over critical research and policy proposals that have the potential for transformative change (Muncie, 2006). To really challenge the status quo the real target must be systems change, but without systems change being the shared "phenomena of interest" in Shannon it becomes impossible to challenge the status quo in a significant way (Seidman, 1988). From the interviews with stakeholders and Shannon documents it was clear that the 'phenomena of interest' is individualized or is an aggregate of the individual (Seidman, 1988). Interviewees agreed that the shared phenomenon of interest in Shannon is 'at-risk' or 'high-risk' youth, supported by information in Shannon grant proposals. The three prongs of the CGM that are utilized in Worcester are focused on individual targets that function to "conduct conduct" and responsibilitize youth.

During the first few years of Shannon the LARP created a logic model that laid out the overarching goal of Shannon and shared with the partners. The overarching goal was preventing vulnerable youth from becoming involved in gangs or adopting gang behavior, reducing current gun and gang violence, improving quality of life for at-risk youth, increasing education, job skills, and job opportunities for re-entry offenders. The assumption was that an interdisciplinary approach of criminal justice, community service, educational and job training services and re-entry strategies and life skills activities are important to the overall violence prevention/reduction plan (LARP, Year Two Final Report, 2009). However, this strategy was not outside of the confines of the CGM's provisions and did not include community mobilization or organizational change activities. Youth who fit the aforementioned description of "vulnerable" and "at-risk", as well as some "high risk" and "proven risk" youth are still the targets of intervention. A Shannon eligible youth is defined by EOPSS as a youth between 10-24, living in a high-risk area within the community, and at-risk or high-risk of becoming involved, or currently involved, in gang activity (Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 2016).

In 2015, the Shannon grant proposal required all programs to implement a risk assessment to determine Shannon eligibility and aid in case management. When the target of intervention is the individual, the response becomes heavily biased toward programs and the use of risk to identify individuals.

Research on youth offenders' leisure careers in Ireland revealed that responses to youth offending must move from a focus on the individual to one that incorporates an understanding of the broader socio-economic and cultural context because of the finding

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that the onset of youth offending is nestled in the context of disruption and disadvantage (Corr, 2014). One of the senior researchers rhetorically questioned how an opportunity can supersede an environment by asking how it is possible for a youth to see a real, genuine opportunity given to them as a chance for success if that youth's biographical narrative is marked by family or neighborhood distress with generational histories of violence, and exposure to inequality, violence and negative behaviors? SAM's Director of Outreach stated: "[Youth] could have a job and a GED, but are still in shit situation, or the other way around." It becomes impossible to separate the opportunity from the context and to see the opportunity as equally accessible across diverse spaces and between all youth.

Much research supports the notion that "young people in trouble with the law have complex systematic patterns of disadvantage which lie beyond any incitement to find work, behave properly or take up the 'new opportunities' on offer (Muncie, 2006), or the opportunities might simply not be there (Vidal, 1995). SAM's Director of Outreach expressed that, even though he is appreciative of the unique voices present at the table, the biggest barrier he sees in making concerted progress in youth justice is the difficulty some people have in suspending their views and natural way of thinking about what success looks like, like thinking that a kid is not worth the investment, or that the kid won't make the investment themselves. Essentially, there is a modality of thinking that supports the responsibilization notion and ignores structural barriers.

When youth fail to be 'responsibilitized' they are often excluded in various ways by society (Muncie, 2006). This then creates a cyclical pattern of condemnation and abjection. The Program Coordinator represented this notion by sharing how some police officers are

quick to write off a youth who has failed to change his or her behavior after punishment. Some could argue that when individuals are given a sense of autonomy to be enterprising and responsible it equates to greater freedom, which echoes police officers' frustrations as to why a youth did not change when given a chance. However, "it would be wrong to mistake this independence for freedom, since autonomy must be exercised responsibly" (Clarke, 2005). Essentially, youth who are most likely to come into contact with the justice system are most likely captured in some way by programs or partnership efforts, however the opportunities on offer from those programs do not grant them broader freedoms to be autonomous and productive given biographical and ecological milieu addressed in earlier sections of this paper.

In a way, since police have no control or perhaps might be lacking nuanced and sensitive knowledge over the youths' milieu, it is understandable as to why frustration would stem from repetitious negative behavior. Moreover, police do not have specialized competence in addressing the underlying causes, like poverty and mental illness, of the disorder they are policing (Kaplan-Lyman, 2014). However, these tense relations between police and youth do little to increase trust and respect between police and youth and make progress toward reducing youth and gang violence. By extension, it can be argued that the partnership as a whole does not have the power to address the underlying causes of the disorder they are trying to control, however since it is a form of governmentality it is tasked with controlling crime and behavior, and it doing so with a focus on individual responsibility in line with neoliberalism and the greater goals of the state.

Pressure to Show Outcomes

SAM's Director of Outreach and other interviewees expressed how much pressure there is to show outcomes. Most funding cycles require resubmission of applications with some sort of outcome measured. He said, "How am I supposed to show anything after two years? Sometimes it takes ten." Another problem with the pressure to measure outcomes is that it only shows a snapshot of what is going on with that youth (Goshe, 2014), emphasizing the individual. SAM's Director of Outreach said you could give a kid four hours a day of services and support, but we have no control of what goes on the other 20. If a measurement such as recidivism is used to measure outcomes, those youth who fail to recidivate could still be enduring a great deal of suffering in their environments, as they are sent back to their unchanged social surroundings and potentially continuing to engage in negative behavior whether they are caught or not (Goshe, 2014). Even though it should be top social priority, it is out of the current capacity of the partnership to prioritize youth's physical, material and emotional security (Goshe, 2014). WCAC's Director of Planning expressed how when outcomes are measured it is done through numbers, and numbers hardly show a true picture, stating that you cannot interpret anything from a quantitative measurement of how many youth completed a job training program, and wishes stories could be incorporated to show a fuller picture.

When pressure for cost-effectiveness of programs is put on agencies, administration may get in the habit of 'stacking the deck' with kids who are not in need of as much (Goshe, 2014). This was reiterated by a senior researcher who remarked in the first four to five years, Shannon partners would come to meetings ready to talk about successes and

little conversation about problems, challenges or failures would arise. There is also

evidence of this from Worcester's Shannon population numbers, over half of all youth

served in Shannon programs are considered to be "at-risk". During a technical assistance

meeting coordinated by Northeastern University, a senior researcher remembers a speaker

asking: "Is your failure rate high enough? If not, you're not going after the highest risk

kids." Targeting non-gang members or former gang members is a waste of a program's

resources and could produce secondary deviance (Decker, Pyrooz, Sweeten, Moule, 2014).

It is easy to work with low-risk kids. It makes sense that the pressure to show

individual outcomes in hopes of relaying positive results to ensure the procurement of

sustained funding is the tendency of many organizations in this field. Many of the

Shannon programs are prevention based, meaning an inherent focus on prevention

programs, and younger lower risk youth. Taking the efficacy of focusing on individual

interventions instead of structural interventions out of the question, if the problem is youth

and gang violence, and most programs are prevention based, is it safe to conclude the right

population within the target is being reached to achieve a measurable community impact?

Public Attitudes of Justice

Youth are economically and legally dependent on their parents until a certain age

which makes them a good target for help, but even within that structure, there is a

hesitance to being 'too soft or coddling' (Goshe, 2014). Neoliberalism has contributed to

the rise of 'law and order politics, with punishment being profoundly respected and seen as

essential to ensuring personal accountability for 'choices' (Tilton, 2010 p. 6, 106; Goshe,

2014). The examples below highlight public perception, or those who voice opinions on

social media, of youth punishment. Not illustrated by the quotes below, but there was a definite difference in responses to a program that was perceived as holding kids responsible and a program that was perceived as letting kids off the hook, with the latter comments hostile and the former more welcoming.

Comments on the article: "Teen Caught Stealing Money from Inside a Vehicle"[1], were:

- "I agree, I'd never leave my wallet in my car but that's not the point. The point is the guy's a scumbag and hopefully justice is served. Then again, this is Worcester... The suspect, although legally an adult, will probably get treated like a little kid and get a slap on the wrist."

- "I hope someone goes and robs his parents now that his address is published. Payback. Loser."

- "Lazy scumbag who won't get a job , but will steal from people who do..Trash."

- "Bring back reform schools. Nip it in the bud."

    o "How about corporal punishment instead?"

- "I would have smashed his head in with a metal bat to many laws protect theses little punks .. mess with a bull you get the horns.. this group of kids gonna get it soon..".

A memo was posted on the WPD Facebook page titled, "The Worcester Reentry Program"[2], which explained the program as a way for high-risk offenders leaving prison to

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[1] "Teen Caught Stealing Money From Inside a Vehicle",
https://www.facebook.com/WorcesterPolice/posts/896919083663195

be offered wrap-around services in an effort to prevent them from reoffending. Commenters expressed feelings about this being a waste of money. One commenter wrote, "…they should just be kept locked up". The "fairness" of this program was addressed by this man's comment, "I've never been arrested can I get employment training and participate in educational programs or do I need to be arrested first?" to which others followed suit.

Although this representation of comments is not a true sample of the population, the sentiment of favoring punishment is an overwhelming share of what is seen in the media, and what Shannon is faced with having to be responsive. The macro-systems are defined as the "big social and institutional blueprints of society", or social cultural forces, even as big and abstract as they are, they are imbedded in the consciousness of children, parents and policy makers (Garabino, 2014). The notions of 'law and order', 'fairness' and 'justice' are embedded into the minds of the populace, though the interpretation of these concepts varies. SAM's Director of Outreach describes the other end of justice and fairness by describing the area of justice Shannon is not touching. He wishes for 'justice' and 'fairness' that supports positive action. One example of this he gives is the unequal legal representation of all youth, stating: "I have worked with a lot of kids, because of their background they don't have attorneys and a simple charge, trespassing, turns into assault and battery, it is a sad state of affairs, they are losing that battle because the charge turns into a sentence, they end up with a plea deal, and there goes their future."

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[2] "The Worcester Reentry Program"
https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.634918159863290.1073741841.33740223961
4885&type=1

Shannon is not only fighting against the preference of punitive punishment, but the negative media portrayals of spaces and people, according to WCAC's Director of Planning. Negative attention to places and people can reinforce territorial and individual stigma (Wacquant, 2010), something beyond the capacity of Shannon to address.

Siloed and Centralized Structure

It was expressed by almost all of the interviews that organizations are doing what they would have done without Shannon, although through funding they are theoretically able to do more. A Clark senior researcher stated that there is no organized vision, and that Shannon is very centralized, and the pieces of the puzzle do not make a picture. Many partners expressed that each organization is just doing a piece. Shannon supports programs if they are in the general area of youth development and fit somewhat into any area of the CGM. Essentially, there is a lack of an overall theory of change and strategic vision. The CGM is the assumed theory of change, however, this is merely a script for strategy that is narrowly interpreted.

Without more regular meetings of the partners it is also hard to strategize, or discuss challenges and troubleshoot. WCAC's Director of Jobs and Education expressed how she feels disconnected from Shannon overall, with the Director of Planning adding that if partners met more it could help with cross communication. In this sense, the partnership is coordinating services and cooperating, but not collaborating, these are different characteristics of partnerships (Carlton, Whiting, Bradford, Dyk & Vail; 2009). Cooperation is where people work together to achieve a goal, whereas collaboration

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embodies a high degree of dialogue, creativity, evolution and excitement (Carlton et al., 2009).

With partnerships as a response to the decentralization of power at the state level, there has been a move from a vertical structure of government, where the state is dictating conditions, to a horizontal structure of governance where the state is instead one of the partners (Dahlstedt, 2009). The decision making power rests within the governmental agency of the police department, this was understood by all the stakeholders. The Program Coordinator shared that the state thinks the advisory committee has much more power than it does, decision making continues to be centralized and controlled in one entity, limiting collaboration. In Shannon the police department has assumed the role of the state, and has not created an egalitarian environment where power is shared or developed outside of the department.

There have been attempts to move beyond programmatic responses, as both senior researchers realized early on that Shannon needed to move past programs to incorporate a focus on structural barriers and systemic violence, however the other partners were not interested in entertaining the idea of broadening the interpretation of the CGM to incorporate a system's level theory of change, which has kept individuals as the targets of intervention.

Missing Voices in Planning and Decision-Making

To move to a theory of change that is accountable to the voices of oppressed groups and the structural barriers they face would require the addition of CBPR principles into Shannon. This would start to put pressure on the status quo of problematizing individual

behavior. CBPR principles operate without a preconceived conceptualization of the problem and desired intervention (Nation, et al., 2011). Without the inclusion of oppressed groups, the problem and strategy formulated by the professional class, will continue to rest on individual risk and responsibilization, with the individual becoming a scapegoat for structural inequalities.

Over the life course of the Shannon partnership, communities, families and youth have been essentially left out of the decision-making or strategy formulation process. During the first few years of Shannon youth were interviewed about the employment program so it could be tailored to their needs, and they were solicited for feedback for the Clergy-Police mentoring program. However, youth, community nor family were incorporated into any strategy formation or given a decision-making role. Goddard cites Skogan (1988), and Cherney and Sutton's (2007) identification of "insurgent groups" and their belief that long-term crime reduction happens through challenging the existing economic and social arrangements (Goddard, 2014). However, without those voices, we are bound to the other group Skogan terms 'preservationists', who advocate policies that continue the status quo (Goddard, 2014). Inclusion of "insurgent groups" could pressure larger systems, by acting as an agent of change not being deemed a voiceless target. CBPR principles, community coaction, and the inclusion of diverse voices could hold Shannon accountable to be responsive to the community need identified by the community.

Both senior researchers expressed that Shannon perpetuated the jockeying for money, however this is problematic given that these organizations could be more interested in obtaining the money for their programs than for advancing a shared community vision

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within a partnership. "Organizations that seek to exploit the gang program simply to obtain funds to narrowly enhance existing program efforts that may be unrelated to the goals and objectives of the comprehensive, community-wide model may have to be bypassed or terminated form the project. A special effort may need to be made to include grassroots groups" (Spergel, 2010, p. 239). Shannon's Program Coordinator expressed the need for the voices of grassroots groups as they are more connected to the community, however he experiences a barrier in bringing them into Shannon. WCAC's Director of Planning provided a potential answer as to why. Since Shannon is a reimbursement grant, grassroots groups may not be able to do any work without funding provided upfront. This leaves bigger organizations at the table competing for funds, potentially removed from what is happening on the ground. The partnership relies on money to keep flowing from the state to the partnership and there is not a structure built into the grant to allow for the inclusion of grassroots groups, affirming how the partnership is an extension of governmentality and the maintenance of the status quo.

SAM's Director of Outreach voiced that he thought the input and participation of former gang members in Shannon would add a lot of value to the program and the youth's experience being provided services through the program. "A fairly common strategic organizational failure is the lack of interest or capacity of a program to employ former gang members or influential as team members" (Spergel, 2010, p. 241). Part of community mobilization is the inclusion of former gang members (Spergel, 1995, p. 172).

The implementation of the community mobilization strategy is very narrowly implemented and lacks integrity. At the same time, there is no accountability or

expectation that this component be integrated into the model, no clear direction about what

community mobilization means, and no expectation that action research include

community participation.

Shannon's Successes and Partner Recommendations

Since 2010, there have been decreases in the number of aggravated assault and

simple assault victims and offenders. It is hard to say if this is correlated to Shannon and

the other youth serving partnerships in the city, or if the trend is correlated to something

else. However, a youth and gang problem still exists and is perceived as big enough to

dedicate a partnership to tackling.

Even with the barriers and challenges facing Shannon, various perspectives of the

successes of Shannon were shared during interviews. A common theme emerged in which

people expressed that the partnership was able to bring awareness to the issues of youth

and gang violence. However, the answers to what the community impact of the

partnership has been were divided. Some of the interviewees identified success as

reaching as little as one youth who was impacted in a positive way by services. WCAC's

Director of Planning said that when she used to collect all the info for the quarterly reports,

she felt Shannon was absolutely working. She and others remarked that Shannon was a

slow incremental process, with subtle changes to address emerging needs. Other interviews

said "nothing", meaning nothing is changing as a result of the partnership. Another

sentiment shared by the B&GC case worker is how the partnership is cutting down on

competition, leading to a more friendly relationship between service providers and greater

information sharing, collaboration and dialogue. Because power has been devolved to

more localized entities like partnerships, it is expected that agencies would be more likely to engage in active information sharing and collaboration to develop a robust network of services. It is important to note that through Shannon the barrier of a CORI check was removed to help kids get jobs through a referral system that may not have been possible otherwise.

Several interviewees expressed different perspectives exist within the partnership, but that those views are able to come together for the mission of reducing youth and gang violence. Even though various organizational cultures exist, SAM's Director of Outreach expressed that there is space for all voices. Suppression and intervention are working on different sides of the spectrum, but both WCAC's Director of Planning and Director of Jobs and Education voiced that all the pieces are necessary, and that one organization cannot do it all. It could be argued that the CGM and Shannon allow that model of dichotomous collaboration to exist, as neither outreach nor police efforts outside of Shannon include each other in their strategies. Shannon's model could be understood the following way, "Modern youth justice appears as forever more hybrid; attempting to deliver complex and contradictory amalgam of the punitive, the responsibilising, the re-moralizing, the inclusionary, the exclusionary and the protective" (Muncie, 2006).

The recommendations made by interviewees were in response to the question of what allows a youth to desist from violence and achieve success? SAM's Director of Outreach stated that there needed to be more funding for something radical, his idea is being able to take more trips outside of Worcester with kids in the program. The few times this has happened the kids go to a neighboring rural town and they ask if they are still in

Massachusetts. Other interviewees echoed this by saying the best thing you could do is to get these kids out of Worcester. This reinforces the power that poverty, lack of tangible opportunity and territorial stigma have in dictating outcomes that exceed the individualized opportunities that Shannon provides. However, his characterization of this recommendation as radical seems overstated; it is not radical enough to de-individualize interventions because it does not address ways to break down structural barriers and change the status quo that limit the successes of the youth targeted by Shannon.

Discussion

I concluded that there have been successes in increasing awareness of youth violence prevention and inter-agency communication. However, Worcester's Shannon partnership is an extension of governmentality tasked with conducting conduct, responsive to neoliberal technologies of risk and responsibilization, and espousing a narrow interpretation of the CGM that excludes the voices of oppressed groups. Given this structure Shannon has not and will not move beyond programmatic responses to youth and gang violence. The status quo will be further maintained by the current function of the partnership.

These findings also reveal that Shannon is not a partnership, but instead is a funding stream that connects service providers allowing programs to keep doing what they have been doing. The Worcester model of Shannon is not radical; it is not putting pressure or responsibility on systems or shifting the status quo, meaning it is in effect chasing problems instead of developing solutions to root causes. If this is the case, the Shannon partnership is not the way to solve the problem, and it is overstating the power it has in

solving youth violence. It is taking up too much space in youth violence prevention, limiting the exploration of ideas other than individualized interventions.

Researchers cannot tell policy makers or practitioners what the best course of action is, because the best course of action is beset by individual and organizational values and relies on assumptions about shared belief systems and shared objectives (Armstrong, 2004). Some of these belief systems and objectives are, in fact, using risk and responsibilization technologies to govern. However, without an overall theory of change within the partnership, developed through CBPR principles, an honest account of what the partnership can accomplish, is reduced to a narrow interpretation of the CGM's suppression, intervention and prevention modalities.

It is important to mention that these findings could be interpreted in a different way. It could be argued that the purpose of Shannon is to provide opportunities for youth and the capacity of the partnership to do anything more lies beyond the purview of Shannon. These opportunities are provided in the form of programs, which are not unworthy of investment. Services provided by outreach and case management reach a lot of youth and connect those youth to services they may have otherwise not been able to access. However, without a parallel process that digs into addressing structural and systemic barriers the programmatic responses to violence will always fall short of achieving the overarching goal of reducing youth and gang violence because poverty and stigma will still exist.

It could also be argued that the difference between doing good and doing bad are choices, and that everyone has the ability to make the right choice. In effect, Shannon is

offering the opportunity for youth to make the "good" or "right" choice. Services like street outreach and case management do provide youth with opportunities for "good" choices. However, I argue that not all youth have access to "good" choices or access to sustain those choices because of the multiple disadvantages that are embedded in many youth's lives.

The limitations of this study are the missing voices within this analysis. The knowledge the youth, whom Shannon directly impacts, have in providing recommendations and analyses of the capacity of the programs is invaluable to developing a comprehensive analysis of Shannon's true capacity for community impact. This would be a direction for future research.

Conclusion

The problem of youth and gang violence does not deserve a reactionary approach to a solution (Goshe, 2014). Unless there is serious discussion about transforming structural barriers and 'contending with the welfare of youth' (Goshe, 2014), Shannon will never get ahead of the problem. However, "the transformation of wider society to reduce the criminal effects of poverty and relative deprivation is certainly an even more challenging task" (O'Mahony, 2009). This transformation ultimately does lie outside of Shannon to address. However, Shannon has the power to increase awareness of the structural factors that are producing the problem the partnership is trying to solve, by incorporating a theory of change that is not operating blindly to structural limitations. Localized debates for transformational politics and further governmental innovation (Muncie, 2006) as well as

the integration of CBPR principles are needed before real change is produced and the

limits of what Shannon can realistically accomplish are realized.

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