

An Examination of the Role of CeaseFire, the Chicago Police, Project Safe Neighborhoods, and Displacement in the Reduction in Homicide in Chicago in 2004

CHARLIE RANSFORD, CANDICE KANE, TIM METZGER,
ELENA QUINTANA, AND GARY SLUTKIN

Violent crime and homicide rates have historically been much higher in the United States than in most other developed nations. The homicide rate reached a peak in 1991 at 9.8 homicides per 100,000 people and thereafter began to decrease slowly throughout most of the United States. By 2004 it was down in many areas to the lowest level since the 1960s, at a rate of 5.5 homicides per 100,000 people (FBI 2004), followed by a slight increase to 5.7 homicides per 100,000 in 2006 (FBI 2006).

The reason for the decline in the homicide rate has been hotly debated, with many possible explanations suggested: increased police activity, increased incarceration rates, stricter sentencing, easing of the crack market, reduction in segregation, increased opportunities for minorities, reduced use of guns, decreasing domestic violence, the aging of the population, improvement in the economy, and even the delayed effects of the legalization of abortion (Blumstein and Wallman 2000). The extent to which any of these explanations accounts for the decline is difficult to determine and has not been established (Maltz 1998).

Although an understanding of the cause of the reduction in homicides across the United States may be elusive, it may be better ascertained by minimizing the number of variables that need to be considered as possibly affecting the homicide rate. In this chapter, we examine the reduction in homicides in one specific geographic location, over one short time period, thus systematically eliminating other variables from consideration.

In 2003, Chicago had 598 homicides, giving it a rate of 20.7 homicides per 100,000 residents. To put that rate in context, in 2003 New York had a homicide rate of 7.4 per 100,000 residents and Los Angeles had a rate of 13.4 (FBI 2004). Most European cities had even lower rates, around 1 to 3 homicides per 100,000 residents.

One year later, in 2004, homicides declined in Chicago by 25 percent, to a total of 448, a rate of 15.5 homicides per 100,000 residents and the lowest number in Chicago since 1965. Similarly, shooting rates in Chicago declined by 40 percent from 2003 to 2004,¹ and public violence with a firearm declined by 13 percent (Rosenbaum and Stephens 2005).

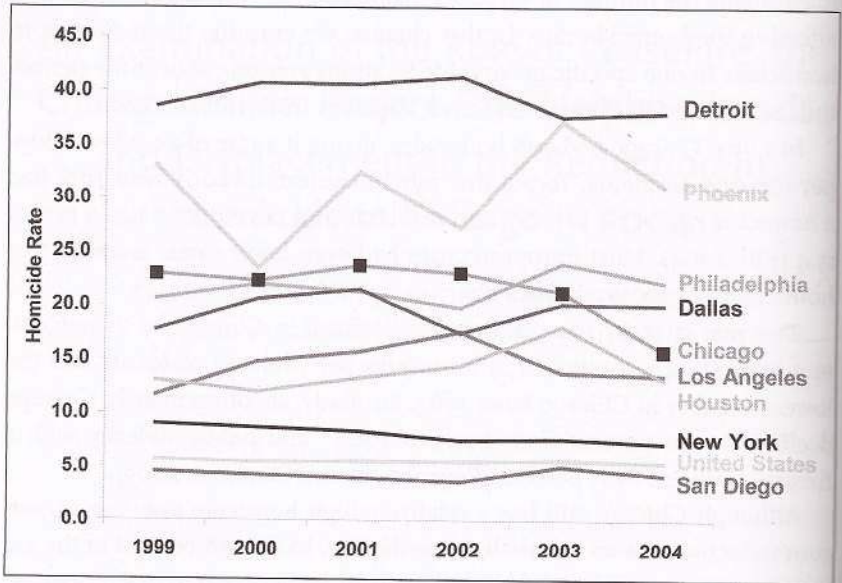
Although Chicago still has a relatively high homicide rate, the 25 percent reduction was an unusually large decline. In fact, 38 percent of the 2.4 percent reduction in homicides nationally in 2004 occurred in Chicago. As shown in figure 4.1, other major cities in the United States did not have similar reductions in homicides.² Something unique occurred in Chicago in 2004 that did not occur in other cities, something that caused a sharp reduction in homicides.

This large drop was also, notably, unique to homicides. As shown in table 4.1, although all categories of crime decreased, only homicides and arson had large declines.³ No other category of crime had more than an 8.1 percent reduction. These data suggest that something unique happened in Chicago specifically with regard to homicides.

The reduction of homicides in Chicago in 2004 offers a unique opportunity to analyze homicide reduction in a less complex situation.⁴ It is notably less complex because it allows us to focus on a limited time frame of one year and the limited geography of Chicago, rather than seeking to understand common causes of changes across a region or the entire nation. The short time period in which this reduction occurred allows us to exclude variables that occur over long periods of time, such as the aging of the population. Though the aging of a population could affect homicide rates, the distribution of ages in the population of Chicago did not change drastically enough in one year to affect them substantially. The single geographic

FIGURE 4.1

Trends in Homicide Rates per 100,000 in Major Cities in the United States



location permits the exclusion of factors that did not occur specifically in Chicago in this time period. For example, gun laws could have an effect on homicides, but Chicago did not have any significant changes in its gun laws during this time period.

Our research has identified four primary reasons for the decline in homicides in 2004 in Chicago. Three of these are connected to different policies and programs that were intentionally focused on reducing homicides and violent crime—particularly focused on gang violence—through violence prevention, suppression, and aggressive prosecution strategies. These are the CeaseFire violence prevention program, more-effective police strategies, and the introduction of Project Safe Neighborhoods. A fourth factor, the relocation of key violent offenders out of the city, may also have had an impact and may have been partially attributable to the influences of some of these programs and partially the result of other factors. Each of these factors, we argue, played an important role in reducing homicides in Chicago in 2004. Table 4.2 summarizes these factors, which we discuss below. Before exploring them in greater depth and examining their impact on the *reduction in homicides in Chicago in 2004*, however, it is important to

TABLE 4.1

Percent Change in Categories of Crime in Chicago (Compared with Previous Year)

TYPES OF CRIME	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
VIOLENT CRIME										
Homicide	-11.1%	-3.9%	-4.4%	-7.5%	-8.8%	-1.7%	5.5%	-1.8%	-8.6%	-25.1%
Criminal Sexual Assault	-9.5%	-3.0%	-9.5%	-5.3%	-8.7%	-5.2%	-2.6%	2.0%	-8.4%	-7.0%
Robbery	-11.2%	-10.8%	-5.6%	-9.0%	-13.4%	-3.3%	-4.6%	0.6%	-6.6%	-8.1%
Aggravated Battery/Assault	-19.1%	-5.2%	-1.1%	-0.1%	-9.3%	-4.5%	-3.8%	-2.1%	-20.8%	-5.3%
Total Violent	-15.2%	-7.6%	-3.5%	-4.2%	-11.0%	-4.0%	-3.9%	-0.9%	-14.4%	-6.9%
PROPERTY CRIME										
Arson	10.6%	6.4%	-1.3%	-17.1%	-7.0%	-10.6%	-5.5%	1.8%	-7.5%	-17.2%
Burglary	-8.3%	0.6%	0.6%	-11.7%	-16.9%	-5.2%	-8.2%	-2.3%	-1.2%	-2.7%
Theft	0.4%	-1.9%	0.3%	1.5%	-8.1%	-5.1%	-7.6%	-1.5%	0.7%	-4.0%
Auto Theft	-9.1%	-6.1%	-1.7%	-5.0%	-4.2%	-2.3%	-6.9%	-8.9%	-9.7%	0.1%
Total Property	-3.2%	-2.1%	0.0%	-2.5%	-9.1%	-4.6%	-7.6%	-3.0%	-1.5%	-3.2%
Total Crime	-6.5%	-3.5%	-0.8%	-2.9%	-9.5%	-4.5%	-6.7%	-2.5%	-4.5%	-4.0%

TABLE 4.2

Summary of Major Programs and Factors that Affected the Decrease in Homicides in Chicago in 2004

PROGRAM OR FACTOR	GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE OF CHICAGO	POPULATION SERVED	QUANTITATIVE DATA	QUALITATIVE DATA	OTHER
CeaseFire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active in 11 of the most violent communities in Chicago 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serves those who are at highest risk for committing violent crimes Works with 40 of the most violent gangs in Chicago Works during days and times when violence is most likely to occur External evaluation confirms program works with highest risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreases in homicides and shootings in target communities that are greater than neighboring and comparison communities and twice the percentage reduction in the city as a whole 152 documented conflicts mediated External evaluation confirms large reductions in shootings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of outreach workers by 300% in 2004 Tripled the number of communities in 2004 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also showed positive results in the suburb of Maywood
Project Safe Neighborhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active in two of Chicago's 25 police districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serves parolees who have been convicted of a gun crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreased homicides in its two districts Reached over 50% of gun offenders in its two districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Began program in late 2003 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborated with CeaseFire for its forums CeaseFire tripled its efforts in one of PSN's districts

TABLE 4.2 (continued)

Summary of Major Programs and Factors that Affected the Decrease in Homicides in Chicago in 2004

PROGRAM OR FACTOR	GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE OF CHICAGO	POPULATION SERVED	QUANTITATIVE DATA	QUALITATIVE DATA	OTHER
Chicago Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active throughout Chicago 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serve the whole city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25% decrease in homicides in 2004 across whole city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New strategies in 2004 (cameras, DOC, gang unit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar strategies have worked in other cities
Displacement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occurred throughout Chicago 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affects a large variety of people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in gangs migrating to collar communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in crime in collar communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased police activity and prosecution influence displacement

understand why many of the typical explanations for the decline of violent crime and homicide do not apply to Chicago in 2004.

Factors That Likely Did *Not* Play a Role in the 2004 Reduction in Homicides in Chicago

Several possible explanations that are frequently offered for the dramatic reduction in violent crime and homicide in Chicago in 2004 can be excluded from consideration. Among them are the idea of a reduction in the “supply side” of criminal youth because of abortion policy, changes in the distribution of ages in the population, changes in the drug market (particularly the diminished popularity of crack cocaine), the advent of community-oriented policing, broader economic changes, changes in the availability of guns, increasing incarceration of violent offenders, increasing police resources, and the reduced lethality of violence when it does occur. We briefly consider each of these possible explanations in turn.

Abortion

Abortion has been advanced as a factor in the decline of crime and specifically the decline in homicides in the United States, primarily because of the popular book *Freakonomics* (Levitt and Dubner 2005), in which Steven Levitt reiterates the analysis from his paper “The Impact of Legalized Abortion on Crime” (Donohue and Levitt 2001). The theory states that the legalization of abortion in the mid-1970s resulted in a reduction in crime in the 1990s, twenty years after abortions started occurring at a higher rate. This conclusion rests on three assumptions: (1) legalization led to fewer “unwanted” babies’ being born, (2) unwanted babies are more likely to suffer abuse and neglect and are therefore more likely to exhibit criminal behavior, and (3) violent crime begins to be exhibited by those older than 20.

The legalization of abortion in Chicago occurred thirty years before the 2004 decline in homicides. Because more than 70 percent of homicides were committed by people under the age of 30, the legalization of abortion happened too long ago to have had a drastic effect on homicides in 2004. In addition, crime rates for the first generation after the legalization of abortion did not decrease, as claimed by Donohue and Levitt. In 1993,

those 14 to 17 years old—who were part of the first generation after the legalization of abortion—were actually 3.6 times more likely to commit murder than 14- to 17-year-olds in 1984 (Sailer 1999).

Aging

Homicides are predominantly committed by and perpetrated on males between the ages of 15 and 25 (Pridemore 2003). Research has shown that the probability of violence for males of all races peaks at ages 17 to 18 and falls back almost to the starting point by age 25 (Earls 2005). Therefore, the age composition of the population could have an effect on the homicide rate if the number of males aged 15 to 25 declines relative to the population as a whole.

This theory makes intuitive sense but fails to explain the rise in homicides in the late 1980s, when the proportion of individuals aged 18 to 24 was declining and violent crime was increasing (Fox 2000). More specifically, in Chicago the population of 15- to 24-year-olds has increased slightly in the past decade, by about 4,000, and represents only a slightly smaller percentage of the overall population (down by 0.5 percent). This small decline does not seem to be a logical explanation for the dramatic drop in homicides in Chicago in 2004.

Change in the Drug Market

The large increase in homicides in the late 1980s and the subsequent decline between 1991 and 2004 coincided with the rise and fall in the use of crack cocaine (Blumstein and Wallman 2000). When crack appeared on the drug market, it proved to be a highly lucrative product that took over much of the drug trade for a time and was strongly tied to the violent use of handguns, largely in regard to disputes over drug territory. The crack market eventually subsided and has been largely replaced by other drugs, such as marijuana and heroin, a transition that may have had an effect on the level of violence. The reason the crack market subsided is not clear, but possible explanations include a strong police response and the negative effects of crack, which a new generation of drug dealers and users recognized (Grogger 2000).

Although Chicago did experience a decline in homicides since the early 1990s that may be linked to the crack epidemic, no major changes have occurred more recently; therefore the large reduction in 2004 did not likely have any connection to a change in the drug market.

Community-Oriented Policing

Community policing is a method employed to help build relations between police and community residents with the intention of increasing residents' confidence in police, encouraging resident assistance for police, and decreasing fear of crime, which ultimately could increase the effectiveness of police. Typical elements include holding community meetings to hear resident input and feedback and having officers stay in one community to increase residents' familiarity with individual officers and officers' familiarity with the community.

Results of community policing have been mixed. In terms of satisfaction with police, of seventeen studies identified, eight showed a positive effect, eight found no change, and one showed negative effects (Zhao, Scheider, and Thurman 2002). Studies have found that community policing does not decrease fear of crime (Scheider, Rowell, and Bezdikian 2003; Zhao, Scheider, and Thurman 2002), nor have its effects on crime been demonstrated.

The Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS), Chicago's community policing program, was started in 1993. It encourages police officers' turf orientation by maintaining long assignments in police beats, training in problem solving, and monthly beat meetings and district advisory committees. Although some studies have claimed that CAPS has been successful, no clear link to a reduction in crime has been demonstrated (Skogan 2004). Indeed, though an extensive evaluation performed on the Chicago CAPS program covering ten years of its implementation provided strong evidence of the effectiveness of community policing on neighborhood dynamics and fear of crime, no clear link was established between the program and a *reduction* in crime (Skogan 2004). Furthermore, because no changes were made in the program in 2004 or in the years preceding 2004, CAPS is not a good explanation for the significant reduction in homicides that occurred in 2004.

Economic Changes

Economic changes are not directly related to crime but do act as an indirect influence through employment. Put simply, when more jobs are available, there is less incentive to turn to crime. However, this fails to explain the dramatic drop in homicides in Chicago in 2004. The economy in Illinois did not experience any dramatic improvement during 2004 or in the period preceding 2004. Indeed, the overall employment rate of working-age Illinois residents fell by 4 percent between 2000 and 2004 (Sum et al. 2005). The employment rate for teens fell by almost 10 percent (Olszewski 2005), making Illinois one of the five worst states for teen employment (Sum et al. 2005). This same trend also occurred in the Chicago metropolitan area, as well as in the city of Chicago, where the employment/population ratio had double-digit reductions for teens from 2000 to 2003 (Sum et al. 2005). The Chicago metropolitan area employment rate fell overall from January 2003 to June 2004 (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2008).

Gun Availability

Most homicides in the United States are committed with a firearm. In 2004, 66 percent of homicides in the United States and 75 percent of homicides in Chicago were committed with a firearm (FBI 2004). Therefore, the availability of guns, which is influenced most notably by gun laws, could have a significant effect on homicides. Research has indicated that the rate of household gun ownership is correlated with the homicide rate (Kellerman et al. 1993; Killias 1993; Sloan et al. 1988) and that the reduction in homicides in the 1990s can be traced to a reduced use of handguns (Surgeon General 2001), but there is mixed evidence regarding the effect of local gun laws on gun violence (Kleck 1991; Loftin et al. 1991). In Chicago, handguns have been illegal for more than twenty years, but guns are still prevalent due to prolific gun trafficking. Chicago police seized just over 10,000 guns per year between 2002 and 2008, with 10,509 seized in 2004 (Chicago Police Department 2004). Because there was no major change in gun laws and because gun seizures were at typical levels, gun availability is an unlikely factor in the 2004 drop in homicides in Chicago.

The type of guns used is also important, because most gun violence could be less lethal if the guns or ammunition used was less lethal. Hand-guns, semiautomatic guns, and higher-caliber ammunition were cheaply available and increasingly used in the late 1980s and early 1990s and were partly responsible for the increase in homicides (Wintemute 2000). It is not clear if there was any change in the cost of more-lethal weapons or the general availability in the past several years, but it is unlikely that a major change occurred specifically in 2004 in Chicago.

Incarceration

The prison population in the United States has been increasing at a rate of between 2 percent and 4 percent each year for the past decade and reached 2,135,901 prisoners in federal, state, and local facilities in 2004. With the number of people incarcerated increasing every year, some analysts have offered the hypothesis that crime is decreasing because the individuals that are most likely to commit crimes are safely out of society and in prison (Spelman 2000) or because a purported increased threat of incarceration deters individuals from committing crimes (Levitt 1996). Although incarceration may have played a part in the gradual decline in homicides in Chicago over the past two decades, there is no evidence that it was a factor in the sudden 25 percent drop in homicides in 2004. Indeed, the number of incarcerated adults remained constant in Illinois, with less than 1 percent difference from 1999 to 2005 (Illinois Department of Corrections 2005).

Increased Police Force and Budget

In the past decade, police departments across the nation have increased in size to attempt to address the crime problem. Operating budgets increased 20 percent from 1990 to 2000 (controlling for inflation). The number of full-time law enforcement employees increased 20 percent from 1990 to 2000—a 9 percent increase in police per capita. In addition, advancements in technology were achieved, with increased computer use for police in large cities (Reaves 2002). However, increases in the number of police and the size of the budget do not necessarily result in better outcomes.

Some studies have claimed that the level of law enforcement may not matter at all (Philipson and Posner 1996).

In Chicago, the number of police officers and the size of the budget played no role in the 2004 reduction. Chicago had the second-largest police department in the United States, at 13,466 officers in 2000, fourth in officers per capita (Reaves 2002). However, in 2004, when the large reduction in homicides occurred, there was not a substantial increase in police personnel or budget. In fact, the number of police *decreased* from 2003 to 2004 by 3.5 percent, and the budget decreased minimally from 2003 to 2004 (Chicago Police Department 2004).

Lethality of Violence

A decrease in homicides could be a result of gun violence being less lethal, which would occur if response times for emergency calls improved. When a person suffers a life-threatening wound, the length of time that it takes to receive medical attention is extremely important to the likelihood of survival, and slight improvements can potentially increase the survival rate and therefore decrease the number of homicides. Although data on response times are not immediately available, what is known is that the number of shootings, which would not be affected by response times, declined in 2004 by 40 percent⁵ and aggravated assaults and batteries with a firearm declined by 18 percent, suggesting that response times did not have a substantial effect on the homicide rate. Whatever played a major role affected people *before* a shooting occurred.

Factors That Likely *Did* Play a Role in the 2004 Reduction in Homicides in Chicago

Having provided an analysis of a set of factors that are often offered as possible explanations for the reduction of violent crime and homicide in the United States and shown how they are unlikely explanations for Chicago's dramatic reduction in homicides in 2004, we now turn to an examination of three factors that, we argue, *were* important contributors to this phenomenon: new police activities (including directed patrols, surveillance cameras, and specialized gang units); aggressive prosecution strategies

(especially Project Safe Neighborhoods); and violence prevention programs (specifically, the CeaseFire program). A fourth factor, population displacement, whose effects are more speculative, is also discussed.

New Police Activity

In general, police suppress criminal activity by making crime costly to individuals through the enforcement of laws. Police are the intermediary between the criminal and the criminal justice system, which punishes criminal offenses.

The evidence is mixed with regard to the effectiveness of suppression in general (see chapters 2 and 3 of this volume for brief reviews). Some studies have claimed that the effectiveness of suppression is dependent on its being part of a multi-agency, community-based approach rather than a stand-alone strategy (Spergel and Wa 2000).

Although the use of police is obviously pervasive throughout the United States, in Chicago the police began using some new methods in 2003 that may have increased their effectiveness and that likely contributed to reducing the homicide rate. The Chicago Police Department had several new initiatives that were active in 2004, including directed patrols, the use of cameras, and increased gang task force activity.

DIRECTED PATROLS

A popular method of addressing crime is the concentration of police resources in the areas where crime is most likely to occur, such as near bars, street corners, parks, parking lots, crack houses, and other places that have a history of crime (Washington 1996). Increasing police resources in those areas can address crime in general and thus address the homicide problem.

Directed patrols saturate high-crime areas and therefore increase the risk of an individual's being caught if he or she commits a crime in these areas. Often this strategy is accompanied by traffic stops, which are used to check for any other criminal activity, such as possession of guns or drugs. Because criminals can respond to police activity by moving their operations, particularly those related to drugs and the violence that often

accompanies drugs, crime-incidence data are used on a regular basis to reallocate resources to the areas where crime is occurring. This method also employs the important element of accountability. With up-to-date data for each area of the city, police chiefs are able to determine whether area commanders are successfully addressing crime in their areas and can hold them accountable if the data suggest they are not.

One example of this data-driven response is the CompStat program in New York City. With CompStat, commanders of the New York City Police Department meet on a weekly basis and use current crime statistics to target their officers for patrols exactly where the crime is occurring. Many cities have increased their use of this method, and many articles have been written in support of it (Cordner 1981; Marvel and Moody 1996; Sampson and Cohen 1988; Sherman et al. 1997; Tita et al. 2004). Specific evidence of success has been offered for programs in Kansas City (Sherman, Shaw, and Rogan 1995), San Diego (Boydston 1975), Indianapolis (McGarrell, Chermak, and Weiss 2002), and Boston (Kennedy 1998).⁶

The Chicago Police Department employed a data-driven, targeted response in the summer of 2003 with its Deployment Operations Center (DOC) meetings, which are very similar to New York City's CompStat meetings. Chicago's program had the commanders of all the police districts in Chicago meet once a week, discuss the trends and patterns of gun violence in the city, and plan strategies for deploying units to combat the problems.

Few data are available on the outcomes associated specifically with the DOC meetings, and it would be difficult to determine what is actually attributable to this program. That the communities targeted are areas that have experienced major reductions in homicide and that the use of these meetings began in the summer of 2003 suggest that the meetings could have had an effect on the homicide rate in 2004.

CAMERAS

Police cannot be everywhere at every moment to suppress criminal activity. In response, police departments in cities such as New York, Chicago, London, and Washington, D.C., have begun using cameras to monitor activity in public places. Mounted in bulletproof cases on tall poles, these color video cameras are capable of monitoring street activity for several blocks.

The cameras are usually mobile, so they can be taken down and moved to a new location relatively easily.

Although there is anecdotal evidence of individual arrests and of individual streets being cleaned up because of the cameras, it is not clear if overall crime is affected or if cameras only displace crime to another street, to the alleys, inside buildings, or otherwise out of view of the cameras. It is also not clear if the cameras have any specific effect, positive or negative, on violent crimes. Although it might be intuitive to assume that having the ability to monitor streets and having the effect of moving criminal activity away from areas would decrease violence, homicide, and crime overall, those capabilities could also, in theory, have the opposite effect. Disrupting drug territory could increase violence by creating turf conflicts or moving individuals to areas not as visible to the public.

The installation of cameras in Chicago began in 2003, and by the end of 2005 a total of approximately eighty cameras were in place. Cameras are usually left in a location for at least a month and up to two years. Most of the cameras were put in locations on the west side of Chicago, in neighborhoods with high levels of criminal activity, such as Garfield Park, Humboldt Park, Lawndale, and Austin. Information on the location of the cameras and the duration of the cameras at particular locations is not currently available, thus making it difficult to determine whether the cameras had any effect.

GANG UNITS

For decades, police have deployed teams of officers that specialize in particular types of crime in order to utilize the benefits of specialization. Officers specialize in areas such as homicide, drugs, organized crime, and traffic control. This approach is worthy of mention here because of the development of specialized officers to address urban street gangs. As the problems posed by urban street gangs reached a peak in the 1990s, the need grew for specialized officers who would know the intricacies of gang organization, relationships, and culture. By 2002, special units to address gangs were used in 84 percent of cities, and special units to address the similar issue of juvenile crime were active in 68 percent of cities (Reaves 2002).

Chicago has a significant gang problem, with about 70 gangs, more than 600 factions, and about 70,000 members. In 2003 Chicago police began

to target gang shootings by utilizing a new Gang Intelligence Unit, resurrecting the old Gang Crimes Unit that was disbanded in 2000. Through this unit and other police activities, the police targeted specific gangs and made many arrests of gang members. This targeting of violent gangs was successful in incarcerating many violent individuals, but it also created violent situations. When gang leaders are locked up, younger gang members compete for control, and when old leaders return from prison, they compete to reclaim leadership. Because the location, size, and duration of Gang Intelligence Unit assignments have not been made public by the Chicago Police Department, the overall effect of the strategy, positive or negative, is not known.

Aggressive Prosecution

The theory behind increasing the aggressiveness of prosecution for crimes is much the same as that for improving police activity. With more vigorous prosecution, criminals face a higher cost for committing crimes, which should, if criminals are rational decision makers, prevent some individuals from choosing to commit crimes. In addition, more vigorous prosecution leads to more criminals being locked up in prison and therefore being unable to commit crimes in society.

Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), a program run by the U.S. Department of Justice, began operating in two of Chicago's most violent police districts in 2002 and by 2004 had reached more than half of the individuals convicted of a gun crime in those districts. Since 2002, PSN has been the national program to increase the aggressiveness of prosecutions. Funded with \$1 billion from 2001 to 2004 and modeled on existing programs, such as Project Exile (Richmond, Virginia) and Operation Ceasefire (Boston), PSN is active in some capacity in all ninety-four United States court districts. PSN's mission is to reduce gun crimes across the country. It addresses this mission by targeting those who have at least one prior gun offense and are living in targeted districts, prosecuting criminals federally, and holding forums to warn felons of the consequences that they face if they continue to commit crimes. In addition, PSN establishes and utilizes a partnership between the U.S. Attorney's Office, state's attorney's offices, local police, local prosecutors, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) to use all available resources to target gun crimes.

Another important element involves developing a strategic plan for each district so that the intricacies of each district's problems are addressed. These strategies are consistently reviewed to provide accountability for outcomes achieved. The U.S. Attorney provides reports that describe the status of its plan and any emerging trends in the district.

Through the U.S. Department of Justice, PSN has also implemented an advertising campaign aimed at gun violence. The campaign, geared toward warning criminals that there are tough consequences for committing gun crimes, includes such messages as "hard time for gun crime" and "when you commit a gun crime, your family pays the price." All messages are designed to make would-be criminals aware of the costs of crime.

In Chicago, PSN started in 2002 in two of Chicago's twenty-five police districts, with forums starting in 2003. The districts chosen are home to the Garfield Park and Austin neighborhoods, two of the most violent neighborhoods in the city. At the end of 2004, two more police districts were added. In Chicago, 70 percent of the individuals targeted by PSN had a prior offense and 40 percent had a prior gun offense. All of the individuals resided in the designated districts. The forums also reached every individual who was paroled to a PSN district by requiring participation as a condition of their parole.

Because it was implemented in 2002–2003 and specifically addresses gun violence, PSN could have played a significant role in the decline in 2004. An evaluation of the Chicago PSN program reported successful results (Papachristos, Meares, and Fagan 2007), but the study failed to control for other interventions, such as CeaseFire or the operations of the Chicago Police Department, and therefore a much more rigorous evaluation would be required to determine the actual effect of PSN. Evaluations of Project Exile, on which PSN was modeled, have been mixed, with initial evaluations claiming reductions in homicides due to the program, but subsequent reviews claiming no effect on homicides (Raphael and Ludwig 2003).

In addition, because this program was implemented nationwide and because similarly large decreases in homicides have not occurred in most other communities, it seems unlikely that PSN by itself played a large role in the reduction in Chicago. Because PSN has worked closely with the Chicago Police Department and with CeaseFire,⁷ and because the program targets the same individuals with another intervention, PSN could have an effect as it interacts with these other efforts.

Violence Prevention Programs: CeaseFire Chicago

CeaseFire is a violence prevention program whose sole mission is to reduce homicides and shootings.⁸ In 2004, it was active in Chicago and three smaller Illinois cities, and through an influx of funding, it tripled its efforts during 2004. The only program with that single focus in Chicago, CeaseFire targets specific communities that have violence problems and implements a program with a public health strategy, an approach that is supported by the World Health Assembly (Pridemore 2003) and the U.S. Surgeon General (Department of Health and Human Services 2001). The appropriateness of taking a public health approach is also supported by the prevalence of homicide, making that a leading cause of death in the United States; as a leading cause of death, it is a threat to the health of a community and is therefore a public health concern (Kellerman et al. 1998; Philipson and Posner 1996). As a public health strategy, CeaseFire takes a preventive approach and includes outreach to high-risk individuals, public education to promote the message of violence prevention, involvement of faith leaders to influence the thinking and behavior of the community, involvement of law enforcement to share information and coordinate efforts, and community mobilization. Central to all its work is the desire to change the norms and thinking of individuals and communities so that they reject violence as an acceptable form of behavior.

Other violence prevention efforts that preceded CeaseFire demonstrated some success. One example was the Little Village Gang Violence Reduction Project (GVRP), which operated between 1992 and 1997 and involved a set of interrelated strategies similar to those of CeaseFire, involving community mobilization, provision of social opportunities, violence suppression, and organizational change and development. Also like CeaseFire, GVRP used outreach workers to target high-risk youth. An evaluation of GVRP found significant reductions in crime, particularly violence and drug crimes (Spergel 2007; Spergel and Wa 2000; see also chapter 3 of this volume).

The success of CeaseFire, like that of all community interventions, is difficult to ascertain, precisely because of the number of other variables present in the communities in which the program operates. All of the communities in which CeaseFire operated experienced a drop in both homicides and shootings, but given the presence of other interventions, such as police activity and Project Safe Neighborhoods, in many of these communities, it is difficult to determine the relative impact of each individual

program in reducing shootings and homicides. There are data available, however, that offer strong evidence that CeaseFire reduced homicides in 2004. Three types of evidence support this conclusion: programmatic, statistical, and circumstantial.

The programmatic evidence lies in the where, when, and with whom CeaseFire operated. For a violence prevention program to be effective, it must locate where the problem is. In 2004 CeaseFire operated in eleven of the most violent communities in Chicago. The level of violence in these communities was highly variable, but several of the communities experienced homicide rates in excess of 50 per 100,000 residents in 2003. The magnitude of violence in these neighborhoods is further supported by an outside evaluation of the program that found that the neighborhoods where CeaseFire worked were "plagued by high rates of violence" as well as having high rates of poverty, gang activity, and low levels of community activism (Skogan et al. 2008).

A violence prevention program must also operate when the problem is occurring in order to be effective. CeaseFire outreach staff members work during the evening hours on *Tuesday through Sunday*, when violence is most likely to occur.

And finally, in order to affect the rate of violence, a program needs to work with the population that is most likely to commit violent acts. Many studies have identified several key indicators to target individuals likely to commit violent acts. They include membership in a gang, having previously committed a violent act, and being between the ages of 15 and 25. These three indicators (with some variation) were also used in identifying high-risk youth for the Little Village GVRP mentioned previously (Spergel 2007; Spergel and Wa 2000). Using these and similar indicators, in 2004 CeaseFire worked with more than 1,300 clients who were deemed to be at high risk of committing a violent act. An independent survey of CeaseFire clients confirmed that most were high-risk individuals: 82 percent had been arrested (45 percent had been arrested more than five times), more than 90 percent were involved in gangs, 76 percent were in need of employment, and almost 60 percent had only a grade school education (Skogan et al. 2008). In addition, CeaseFire worked to decrease violence with forty of the most violent gangs in Chicago, both with outreach clients and in conflict mediations. For example, the program documented 152 conflicts mediated in 2004; in each instance the outreach worker thought the situation could likely have resulted in a violent crime. Although the

Table 4.3 Reductions in Shootings in CeaseFire Zones 2000-2005 (Versus Neighboring Beats, Comparison Beats, and the City)

CeaseFire Community	Beat	'99	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	Year	First Imple- mentation	Since Imple- mentation	Neighboring Beats (based on first implemen- tation year)	Compari- son Beats ² (based on first imple- mentation year)	City (based on first imple- mentation year)	Ratio Between CeaseFire and Com- parison ³
W. Garfield Park	1115	44	→ 14	15	21	15	9	8	'68%	-82%	-25%*	-20%**	0%**	3.4	
W. Garfield Park 2	1114	13	10 → 12	17	16	7	6	20%	-40%	+53%	-17%	0%	<0.0		
Auburn	611														
Gresham	612	42	54 → 42	45	33	20	11	-22%	-80%	-24%	+32%*	0%	>5.0		
W. Humboldt Park	1111														
	1112	85	61	75 → 52	43	22	44	-31%	-41%	-5%	-20%	-6%	1.6		
Southwest	823														
Chicago	825	30	42	55	72 → 24	23	16	-67%	-78%	-34%**	-38%*	-24%**	1.8		
Logan	1413														
Square	2525	30	52	47	50 → 33	12	8	-34%	-84%	-34%	-7%	-24%	4.9		
Rogers Park	2422														
	2424														
	2431														
	2432	48	37	37	38	26 → 14	10	-46%	-62%	-50%	-23%	-40%	2.0		
Average % change									-42%	-69%	-14%**	-15%**	-12%**	2.8	

*p<.05 **p<.01 → Full CeaseFire implementation with 4 or more workers

¹Comparison beats are police beats with shooting rates similar to CeaseFire zones the year before CeaseFire was implemented in that zone. All comparisons are with the first year of implementation.

²The ratio is a comparison of percentages for CeaseFire versus comparison communities for its first year implementation. For Auburn Gresham, the ratio was arbitrarily assigned >5.0 because the comparison communities had a positive increase (ratio is larger).

outreach workers may have been biased reporters, the fact that a weapon was present in 60 percent of these conflicts lent credence to their assessment that the conflicts could have resulted in a shooting or a homicide.

The statistical evidence demonstrates specific reductions in homicides in CeaseFire communities. The data on where the reductions in homicides and shootings in 2004 occurred show that areas where CeaseFire was operating experienced greater reductions than other areas. As table 4.3 shows, reductions in shootings were greater in CeaseFire zones than on neighboring beats, comparison beats, and in the city as a whole. These data are consistent with results observed in CeaseFire zones between 2000 and 2003. CeaseFire zones experienced an average decline of 42 percent in shootings after the first year of implementation (Chicago Project for Violence Prevention 2005). The external evaluation of CeaseFire confirmed these findings using a variety of types of statistical analysis at seven program sites. The evaluation found that the CeaseFire program decreased shootings (including attempted shootings) by 17 to 24 percent at six sites, decreased actual shootings and homicides by 16 to 34 percent at four sites, decreased the size and density of shooting hot spots at four sites, decreased gang homicides at five sites, and decreased retaliatory homicides at four sites (Skogan et al. 2008). These are among the most significant and comprehensive findings for a violence prevention program to date.

Additional evidence of CeaseFire's effect lies in the timing of the large drop in homicides and shootings in 2004, which coincides with a substantial increase in CeaseFire efforts. In February 2004 CeaseFire received additional funding from the State of Illinois that it used for an immediate expansion from five to fifteen communities and from twenty to eighty outreach workers. Thus, although CeaseFire had been in operation since 2000, this large expansion could account for why there was such a significant reduction in homicides and shootings in 2004 and not previously. The new communities to which CeaseFire expanded had a 51 percent reduction in shootings, with neighboring beats, comparison beats, and the city having smaller reductions. In 2004, overall reductions in shootings in CeaseFire zones were 45 percent, which was significantly and substantially higher (twice as high) than the change experienced outside CeaseFire zones.

As a result, there were several significant "firsts" in CeaseFire zones in 2004. The 11th District, formerly the most violent district in Chicago and an area where CeaseFire tripled its efforts, had its first month without a homicide in many years. Police Beat 1413 in Logan Square, which had the

most homicides in Chicago in 2003 and where CeaseFire tripled its efforts in 2004, had no homicides in 2004.

CeaseFire also worked in areas outside of Chicago, in places such as Maywood, Illinois, offering a chance to look at CeaseFire's effects without many of the other confounding factors. Maywood is a western suburb of Chicago that has a substantial violence problem. The community has its own police department and is therefore not affected by the new initiatives of the Chicago Police Department. It is also not affected by Project Safe Neighborhoods because it is not one of the areas in which that program operates. CeaseFire began operating in Maywood at the end of 2003. In 2004 Maywood had a 50 percent drop in homicides and a 62 percent drop in shootings. And for the first time in years, Maywood had no homicides in 2004 from April to mid-June.

Displacement

A decrease in crime in one geographic area may occur simply because the perpetrators of crime move out of that area and into another area, thereby displacing crime rather than actually diminishing it. To analyze whether such displacement occurred, the potential causes of the displacement and the expected outcomes can be examined to determine to what degree they existed in Chicago around 2004.

CAUSES OF DISPLACEMENT

Many factors strongly influence people's decision to move; two that are relevant to our discussion here will be discussed. Gentrification, or the upgrading of deteriorated urban property by middle-class or affluent people, often results in displacement of lower-income people as well as of certain criminal populations. Another possible cause of displacement is an increase in aggressive police activity and prosecutions, which increases the risk and cost of committing crime in one area and may therefore cause criminals to move to areas with a lower risk and cost.

The level to which gentrification has occurred in impoverished neighborhoods in Chicago recently is not completely understood without detailed economic and housing information. In Chicago, this type of information

from 2000 showed gentrification occurring in some communities, including Garfield Park, Logan Square, and the Near West Side, while other areas, such as Englewood, Roseland, and Auburn Gresham, showed weak gains (Taylor and Puente 2004). In addition, many of Chicago's public housing projects have been torn down, forcing residents to relocate, either in the city or out of the city. In 2001 the number of units rebuilt was only 40 percent of the number of units torn down (Berdik 2003). So to some degree, gentrification is occurring in some Chicago neighborhoods, leading to resident relocation.

Increased police activity and prosecution can also cause migration of criminals. For example, if police in one area initiate a program to enforce drug laws more rigorously, a drug dealer may be motivated to move to an area where he has less risk of being caught, which may also offer less competition from other dealers. Federal officials have cited stronger police activity and prosecution in cities as a cause of dealers' fleeing to rural areas (Butterfield 2002). In many areas of Chicago, police activity has increased in high-risk neighborhoods and therefore could be a potential cause of displacement.

If crime is being displaced into other communities because people are moving out of the city, one indication would be shifts in population. In Chicago, general population shifts did occur. From 2000 to 2004, 260,000 people moved out of Chicago.⁹ Counties outside Chicago but in the Chicago area grew by 344,000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2004). Population figures from 2000 also show population losses for African Americans and Hispanics in Chicago and gains for non-Hispanic whites, a statistic that suggests gentrification based on income disparities between races. However, the data do not provide detail on which specific neighborhoods experienced changes, making it impossible to definitively tie the population losses to the high-crime neighborhoods. Similarly, more-recent data show the trend reversing for Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites. From 2000 to 2005, the Hispanic population in the city of Chicago increased 10 percent, while that of African Americans and non-Hispanic whites decreased (Metro Chicago Information Center 2005).

OUTCOMES OF DISPLACEMENT

Although population shifts indicate the possibility of displacement of crime, such displacement does not require large numbers of people flee-

ing the city. If a few key individuals leave an area, it could have a large effect on crime, particularly if those people are gang members and drug dealers. Many studies have looked into evidence of gang migration, with mixed results. Some have found little evidence of gangs' branching out to new communities (Decker and Van Winkle 1996; Hagedorn 1998; Zevitz and Takata 1992). On the other hand, a survey of law enforcement officials reported a substantial perceived connection (Knox et al. 1996), with 69 percent of responding law enforcement jurisdictions citing gang migration as a cause for their gang problem. According to the National Youth Gang Center (2007), 37 percent of cities reported their gang problem was getting worse, up from 25 percent in 1999.

It is not clear, however, if this is a result of migration from larger cities such as Chicago, individuals who are native to the community, or simply a law enforcement perspective based on types of crimes. Some officials, such as the DuPage County assistant state's attorney, claim that the majority of the gang members in their counties come from Chicago. Michael Smith, from the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, stated:

We are seeing a gang migration out of Chicago. The vast majority of it is heading south, some west. Black gangs, Hispanic gangs, some whites. It started three years ago when a number of big gang leaders wanted to get out from the watchful eye of the Chicago Police. So they moved out to places where nobody knew who they were and the police departments were small and ill-equipped. They figured they could get away with more out there without being caught. (Keegan 2004)

Note that these officials reported increased gang migration but that this migration is also said to have been occurring for years. Though that would seem to argue against displacement being a factor specifically in 2004, there could be a delayed effect of the displacement, or key members who have greater effects on homicides could have moved later.

One way to gauge whether this migration of gang activity is occurring is to look at crime trends in surrounding areas. Nationwide, according to FBI data, arrests fell in cities by 11.2 percent and rose in rural areas by 10.5 percent. From 1990 to 1999, the percentage of drug-related homicides tripled in rural areas but fell by nearly half in large urban areas. Specifically, in the Chicago area in 2004 homicides increased in suburban Cook County by 9 percent and by 6 percent in the collar counties (Illinois State Police 2004).

Although it could be argued that rural communities are more cohesive and therefore likely to report crimes at a higher rate, it is also true that rural police departments have fewer officers to investigate crimes, which could lead to lower levels of reporting. Furthermore, because rural areas probably have fewer conflicts over turf since they are more geographically spread out, certain crimes such as homicide and aggravated assault and battery might not increase in rural areas even if gang members are moving into the area.

Overall, although there is not specific evidence to claim that displacement played a role in the reduction in homicides in Chicago in 2004, there is also not sufficient evidence to rule it out.

Conclusion

Homicides have been decreasing in the United States for the past decade. A large decline in crimes occurred in the 1990s, as shown by FBI reports of crime, the National Crime Victimization Survey, and health statistics on homicides. The homicide rate among adults has been in decline since 1980 (Rosenfeld 2004). Nationally, homicides have declined, with rates ranging from 10.5 per 100,000 in 1991 to 5.0 per 100,000 in 2004. There has also been a steady decline in violent crimes since 1994 (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2006). In 2004 the reduction in the United States continued, with the homicide rate declining by 3.3 percent, to the lowest rate in forty years. Although the homicide rate in the United States is declining, it is still much higher than in other countries with established market economies (Pridemore 2003), and there is evidence that it is stabilizing at this high level (Catalano 2004).

Despite the many theories about why homicides have been decreasing, the exact cause has been elusive. Discovering the cause for this reduction is of great importance, because homicide is among the top five causes of death for individuals under 34 years of age in the United States (CDC 2004). In Chicago, homicide is the leading cause of death for individuals under 34 and accounts for 48 percent of deaths of individuals under the age of 24 (Harper-Jemison, Bocskay, and Thomas 2008). In addition, homicides affect the community and the residents who live in areas with homicides by creating fear, uncertainty, and stress and adversely affecting businesses (Lehrer 2000), economic conditions of the area (Lehrer 2000), and mental health (Fleming et al. 1992; Reich, Culross, and Behrman 2002).

The reduction in homicides in Chicago in 2004 offers a unique opportunity to examine the variables that affect homicides.¹⁰ In looking at all of the crimes in Chicago in 2004, the one statistic that jumps out is that only homicides and shootings dropped substantially. Although there were modest reductions in other crimes, crimes involving a gun—and gun homicides in particular—were where significant declines occurred.

It is true that homicide is often the fatal outcome of many other, different crimes, such as domestic abuse, armed robbery, unlawful use of weapons, and the selling of drugs (Maltz 1998). However, when looking at the factors that likely contributed to the substantial reduction in homicide in Chicago in 2004, the ones that are most important are those that focused on shootings and homicides, particularly those concentrating on reducing gang-related violence. CeaseFire, new police initiatives, and Project Safe Neighborhoods emerge as the only strategies that specifically addressed shootings and homicides in Chicago in 2004. A fourth factor, the relocation of key violent offenders out of the city, may also have had an impact and may have resulted, in part, from the influences of some of these programs.

Determining how much of an effect each of the four identified factors had is difficult because all or most of the factors were present in the neighborhoods that experienced the greatest reductions. For example, the 11th Police District has had the largest absolute and relative drop in killings of any district in Chicago since 2001 (from 72 to 25 killings). This is the district where CeaseFire has been most active for the longest period of time, with the largest continuous effort and with a tripling of activity in 2004, including the addition of eighteen outreach workers; it is where PSN has been most active and has had a high percentage of gun felons attending forums; and it is where police have been highly active, locating cameras in the district and targeting efforts on high crime areas. Which factor was responsible? What combination was responsible?

We have identified three factors in the reduction in homicides in Chicago in 2004, with a fourth possible factor needing more research. If a complete analysis of these programs were to be undertaken, variables such as education, employment, social service resources, and housing—just to name a few—would need to be quantified. In addition, more-precise measures for these factors would be needed in order to provide more-precise levels of program activity and location.

With CeaseFire, much of this work has been accomplished. The external evaluation of CeaseFire, funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, was

extensive and was able to quantify the effects of the program, showing its large and significant effect on shootings as well as its effect on high-risk clients. With regard to new police initiatives, Project Safe Neighborhoods, and displacement, without more data all that can be said is that these factors may have played a role in the reduction. There were more substantial reductions in Project Safe Neighborhoods target districts, and increases in targeted efforts by the Chicago Police coincided with the large reduction in homicides. Whether these efforts produced those results has not been established, but they may have contributed to the overall effect.

It is our hope that looking at the specific causes behind the decline in homicides in Chicago in 2004 can tell us much about how to reduce crime in other cities. The evidence presented here suggests that large urban areas in the United States would benefit from implementing a program similar to the CeaseFire intervention to reduce shootings and homicides. Also, more directed police patrols, police cameras, gang units, and more aggressive prosecution of gun crimes could be considered as approaches that might reduce shootings and homicides. With the notoriety of programs such as CompStat in New York City and a nationwide rollout of Project Safe Neighborhoods in all court districts, some of these efforts have already spread to many urban areas. What is lacking in most cities is the specific public health outreach and community mobilization components that have recently proved effective and that offer alternatives both to potential offenders and to communities plagued by violence.

Notes

1. Statistics are derived from data provided by the Chicago Police Department. Shooting rates, technically termed "aggravated batteries with a firearm," are affected by a change in definition of a shooting by the Chicago Police Department in June 2003. This change decreased the number of incidents reported as shootings, and thus part of the 40 percent reduction in shootings is strictly a result of the definition change. Levels of aggravated assaults and batteries with a firearm, which collectively are not affected by the definition change, give us a more unadulterated statistic. Aggravated assaults and batteries decreased by 18 percent.

2. Houston and Phoenix also experienced large reductions in homicides; however, the reduction in Chicago remains unique because neither the reduction in Houston nor that in Phoenix was sustained in 2005. Homicides in Chicago in 2005 were at approximately the same level as in 2004, while Houston

had a large increase in crime, partly the result of the effects of Hurricane Katrina, and Phoenix was highly variable from 1999 to 2005, with a 10 percent increase in 2005.

3. Though arson decreased considerably in 2004, it is a highly unstable statistic, fluctuating frequently, and is very unlikely to have any connection to the reduction in homicides, because of its relatively low frequency.

4. The interventions that address homicides that we discuss in this chapter for the most part involve homicides that are committed with guns and that occur with street gangs or within the context of the street culture. Although these types of homicides constitute a large proportion of the homicides in the United States, particularly in cities such as Chicago, we acknowledge that there are many other types of homicides that we do not address here, such as those resulting from domestic violence.

5. As previously mentioned, this reduction in shootings is affected by the change in the definition of a shooting.

6. Although CompStat is widely held up as an example because of New York's large decrease in homicides, there is little evidence to support this conclusion. The homicide reduction in New York City started happening long before CompStat was initiated, and there is little evidence that the program accelerated the existing declines (Eck and Maguire 2000).

7. CeaseFire played a role in some of the offender forums that PSN held in Chicago. The forums were designed to warn past gun offenders of the harsh new consequences they would face if they were arrested for another gun crime. CeaseFire's role was to talk to the offenders about the services the CeaseFire program offered to help them change their way of life, such as outreach, job training, job placement, drug treatment, and education.

8. This chapter is intended to address the reduction in homicides; however, shooting reductions are also discussed. Although shootings do not always result in homicides, shootings are highly related to homicides and fluctuate directly in relation to homicides. Furthermore, with some programs operating in small neighborhoods, analysis of homicides can present problems because of the relatively small number of homicides. In these instances, analysis of shootings will be used to determine program success, with the assumption that a reduction in shootings is directly related to a reduction in homicides.

9. The city population overall declined by 34,000 after immigration and births were accounted for.

10. As stated previously, the interventions described in this chapter address homicides that are gang-related or involve street activity. Other classifications of homicides are not addressed.

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ROBERT J. CHASKIN



Columbia University Press *New York*