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**Punishing the victims- the paradox from failing to repair
inequalities.**

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Abstract

Homicide is today the major cause of death of young people in Brazil. The risk of death by homicide for males between 15 and 24 years old is much higher than that of traffic accidents. As in other countries, in Brazil violence is not homogeneously distributed throughout society. Homicide has grown all over the country, but the growth seems to be concentrated in the poorest areas of the Metropolitan Regions. This growth of homicide was brought to the awareness of society over 15 years ago but no coordinated effort has been made by governments at local, state and federal to reduce the number of homicides. Nor has civil society pressured the authorities to act.

A number of interpretations have emerged to explain this growth of homicides some appealing to a "culture of violence" that would have numbed people's sense of justice, reducing public indignation and fostering a sort of acceptance of lethal violence as part of life. The purpose of this paper is to examine this interpretation: we focus on the exposure to violence and on possible effects of this exposure on attitudes, values and beliefs about violence, human rights and on the social capital (defined as the "resource potential of personal and organizational networks" Sampson et al., 1999) of the communities thus affected, to protect children and youth from this violence. In particular the paper explores the contradictions in the demands for public security policies and for punishment that emerge as the involvement of youth in violent episodes as victims and as victimizers grows.

Background

Homicide is the major cause of death of young people in Brazil. The risk of death by homicide for males between 15 and 24 years old is much higher than that of traffic accidents. In 1995, in the Municipality of São Paulo, while 430 young people between 15-24 years of age died as a result of traffic accidents 2,080 youth in the same age group died as result of homicide.

Violence is not a widespread phenomena in Brazil or in Latin America. Violence is concentrated in certain cities and within cities in certain areas. It victimizes young males living in the poorest areas of cities (the deprived areas at the peripheries of the cities which were opened up and made habitable by the people themselves) where the public services that now exist arrived precariously after people had settled the area. This pattern seems to be the same for São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, Recife, Vitoria and in most metropolitan regions in Brazil as well as in Cali, Bogota (Concha 1998) or Caracas, Venezuela (Sanjuan 1998). What such cities have in common is that they have all experienced fast population growth with limited resources invested in catering for the new inhabitants, in very unequal societies. That fast urbanization could be risky for some social groups was known but that the process could have particularly perverse effects on youth has been less studied. Rapid urbanization seems to present major risks for youth in particular in emerging economies. Stoiber and Good (1998) state that "living in urban environment may accelerate the rate at which adolescents engage in early sexual activity, gang behavior and substance abuse". If this is so, what in the urban environment would enhance the risks of problem-behaviors? Stoiber and Good, reviewing the literature on youth and risk/resilience, assert that at present, urban youth are considered to be more given to risk taking behaviors. This is considered to be the result of a particular combination of socialization and contextual factors that expose youngsters to multiple negative influences: peer group instability, neighborhood violence, family stressors and poverty.

Homicides in Brazil

Metropolitan Areas	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	Total
Country Total	28757	31989	30750	28436	30610	32603	37129	38894	40507	41916	341591
Population rate/100.000 inhab.	141 mil. 20,29	144mil 22,2	146mil 21,04	148 mil 19,06	151 mil 20,2	153 mil 21,21	155 mil 23,83	157 mil 24,76	159 mil 25,37	161 mil 25,91	
Belem	273	297	378	386	276	368	333	322	366	404	3403
Fortaleza	346	412	416	372	468	430	638	578	652	486	4798
Natal	101	115	110	87	119	109	133	137	146	133	1190
Recife	1379	1219	1552	1392	1482	1390	1487	1643	2240	2788	16572
Salvador	242	381	43	230	802	967	733	971	1069	435	5873
Vitoria	446	438	563	496	722	813	804	828	1070	1227	7407
B.Horizonte	390	400	471	437	466	421	584	618	723	861	5371
Rio de Janeiro	5062	2889	4254	3260	4450	5392	7187	6999	7003	6583	53079
Sao Paulo	6785	6508	7520	6912	6887	7535	8903	9247	9202	10122	79621
Santos(baixa	273	297	346	327	328	342	393	506	633	705	4150
Curitiba	317	305	283	300	358	379	431	475	604	552	4004
Porto Alegre	764	676	780	741	511	671	721	785	864	787	7300
Metro areas	16378	13937	16716	14940	16869	18817	22347	23109	24572	25083	192768

Sources: IBGE (Fundação Instituto Brasileiro de Estatística) and Datasus (Brazilian Ministry of Health)

Certain physical and social economic characteristics of neighborhoods or communities are supposed to influence risky behavior such as experimenting with drugs and or using violence to solve conflicts. It is generally acknowledged that these characteristics are not, or have not been systematically explored. Still it is also accepted that communities vary in the: access that youth have to substance use, in the presence or absence of physical or social traits that promote or demote substance use, and in the social norms about use (Allison et al., 1999).

Communities differ as well, in their human and economic resources to support or to reduce the probability of use, in particular in the capacity of the members of the community to fend off the threats from drug use and trade (resilience) i.e. the community's capacity to exert social control in order to protect its most vulnerable members, thus they vary in what has been named "social capital" or yet "collective efficacy" (Sampson et al, 1999) of the community.

This is not a small problem. Research has shown that being exposed to certain behaviors affects how youth themselves behave. This may enhance their risks. For

instance the perception that there is easy access to alcohol (availability) seems to lead to greater alcohol consumption by males. More, the acceptability of drinking in public by males, seems to increase the levels of alcohol consumption by females. Thus greater availability would encourage alcohol consumption as it creates both: more opportunities for people to consume as well as "normative expectations about appropriate drinking behavior" (Jones-Webb, 1997). Thus greater access moulds expectations as well as fosters opportunities affecting what Kadushin et al.(1998) named the "interpersonal support system" that interacts with the "substance supportive neighborhoods".

It would seem then, that neighborhoods could be providing models for youth behavior be it of drug use or of using physical force to solve conflicts. Transmitting local norms about use of force, drug use or else the community signals what is acceptable and what is not and thus influencing actual use (Allison et al, 1999) the same applies to violence-should a community be willing to intervene when conflicts arise to stop violence from taking place a clear signal is being provided that the use of force is not sanctioned by the community. In this case contributions from social learning theory could be incorporated to better understand the role that the physical context plays in fostering opportunities and patterns of interaction.

Physical and social disorder in a community have also been found to be related to the incidence of certain criminal offences: "areas with greater cues of disorder appear to be more attractive targets for robbery offenders, perhaps because disorder increases the potential pool of victims without full recourse to police protection, such as those involved in drug trafficking and prostitution. Wright and Decker's (1997) research has indicated that robbery offenders are especially tuned to local drug markets where they perceive drug dealers and their customers as prime targets with cash in hand" (Sampson & Raudenbush, 1999). This explains the overlap between the presence of drugs dealers and the greater number of robberies, muggings and even of homicide¹.

The perception, by residents, that their neighborhood has much social and physical disorder seems to have impact on their collective efficacy. This is defined as "the linkage of cohesion and mutual trust with shared expectations for intervening in support of neighborhood social control (Sampson et al. 1997). Just as individuals vary in their capacity for efficacious action, so too do neighborhoods." (Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999).

Social capital/social efficacy or collective efficacy/social control and resilience

Social capital or social efficacy refers to the "resource potential of personal and organizational networks" (Sampson et al., 1999) while collective efficacy was defined by Sampson et al. (1999) as "a task specific construct that relates to the shared expectations of mutual engagement by adults in the active support and social control" in favor of some group i.e. as a source of protection.

In this sense collective efficacy could be interpreted to represent some collective forms of provision of support to vulnerable groups and as such to have a character of

¹ This in turn encourages drug dealers to arm themselves which leads to further violence, as documented by Chaiken, 2000 in a study in Washington, D.C.. In this study the author discovered that although drug dealers were less violent than other criminals because they more often carried weapons more often assaults involving them led to lethal outcome. So even if drugs themselves do not necessarily produce violence, the context in which they are transacted is conducive to violence, and this in turn relates to the nature of the social exchanges that take place in the community.

resilience. Expresses the potential or yet the willingness that residents have to get together and act in defense of their fellow neighbors, in particular in defense of the most vulnerable groups: children, youth and the elderly. The role of the community in communicating, what is acceptable or is not-, the collective normative expectations has been stressed by many authors, as have the consequences of the withdrawal of residents from the collective/public sphere. The role that crime or drugs play in de-mobilising social forces in communities has been less stressed.

The importance of the role examining interactions between the quality of social interactions and the existence or not of collective efficacy and the presence in the community of disorder, crime or substance abuse was stressed by Brooke, Nomura and Cohen (1988) in one of the earliest studies seeking to determine the connections between the physical context and drug use. In this study, the authors examined what they called "neighborhood aspects of the network of influence on adolescent drug involvement" as well as the role of reference groups and role models. In the literature reviewed, neighborhoods have been studied from the perspective of the quality of the interaction within the community expressed by: the level of satisfaction with the neighborhood (perception of the neighborhood and willingness to move out), degree of mutual help and sharing, cohesion, personal ties, conflict, and fear (not walk alone).

In communities where people are fearful, they are encouraged to avoid others, which in turn reduces social control. Where there is less social control there is more dereliction, as people who should have a stake in the community withdraw from public spaces. These will be neighbourhoods where there are no signs that "if a potential offender should cross territorial boundaries, residents are expected to take some defensive action such as calling out, calling for a neighbor, or calling for the police" (Perkins, Meeks & Taylor, 1992).

The opposite was found by Sampson and Raudenbush (1999). Where there is collective efficacy there is lower crime rate and "observed disorder, after controlling for neighborhood structural characteristics." Thus collective efficacy has been found to inhibit physical and social disorder being a mechanism of social control over public space. Also Sampson's et al. (1999) study about the spatial dynamics of collective efficacy, presents some thought provoking contributions to understand how social organizations and what social mechanisms and processes can protect children from certain conditions, usually associated to concentrated urban poverty. To do so, the authors explored the role three dimensions play in social capital or collective efficacy: the social network of parents in a community- the knowledge people have of each other; the nature of interfamily contact- the level of mutual help that takes place in a community/informal mutual support, and the forms of social control or the expectations that the members of the community will act or intervene in favour of a vulnerable group- children (in the specific study), if adults see them involved in risk behaviour.

What affects social efficacy? Concentrated affluence or disadvantage, population instability, population density and the spatial location of the neighbourhood in relation to other neighbourhood seem to be key variables. Why would it be more difficult for poorer neighbourhoods to react and to protect their children and adolescents from criminal activities including drug trafficking?

Firstly, in such communities more often than not there is much population instability. Social efficacy requires cohesion and this in turn demands interpersonal trust.

Cohesion and trust develop over time and this demands a continuity in the structure of the community. This continuity is measured by Sampson et al. (1999) by the population turnover, i.e. the ratio of population gains and loss. Lack of continuity/permanence in the composition of the population weakens interpersonal ties and fosters institutional disruption. If, on top of that violence also prevails there is even more incentive for people to move out. Communities where there is violence and fear people are more likely to fear or mistrust strangers.

Crime and fear of crime tend to overlap with concentrated disadvantages, such as unemployment: "poorest neighborhoods tend to have not only the lowest incomes but also higher rates of unemployment, financial dependence, and institutional desinvestment" (Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999). Where there is unemployment, there is also more uncertainty and some form of economic dependency, as result people will be less available for collective action since their psychological and physical investments will be directed towards ensuring their economic survival. It is understandable then the conclusion that Sampson et al. (1999) reached based on their Project on Human Development, in Chicago, that: "Apparently the concentration of multiple forms of disadvantages depresses shared expectations for collective action regarding children". This is a powerful obstacle for collective action. It does not come as a surprise then that concentrated affluence, low population density and residential stability² are key factors in collective efficacy for the protection of children.

Another important result, from Sampson et al. (1999) Chicago study, is that of the importance that the relative position of the neighbourhood in the larger city plays in collective efficacy. Physical capital and human capital are unevenly distributed, not only across neighborhoods in the United States as the authors claim, but in most societies. The more unequal the society, the greater the gap between neighbourhoods in all senses. If negative events in one neighbourhood tend to spill over (or to contaminate) to neighbouring sites, it should not surprise then that the authors have identified a positive spill over effect as well: "collective efficacy in surrounding neighborhood has a direct positive relationship with a given's neighborhood internal collective efficacy, regardless of population composition"... "Some neighborhoods benefit simply by their proximity to neighborhoods with high levels of adult-child exchange and shared expectations for social control."

This has led the authors to encourage further research into what they call the "study of spatial externalities in social mechanisms, along with racial differences in spatial advantage/disadvantage". The authors suggest some questions that ideally should be answered by future research and two of them could be adapted for the issue of substance abuse: "Do spatial externalities of children centered social control protect children from violence? What mechanisms of 'prosperous' communities influence children health and how are they spatially distributed?"

² Population stability measured by the number of owner occupied dwellings and the number of vacant houses. Higher rates of home ownership are interpreted to mean that people will be more settled in the area and as having higher stakes in conformity and in preserving the neighbourhood well-being. Also used to measure stability (Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999) are: population density, non-residential land use- because "illegal activities feed on the spatial and temporal structure of routine legal activities" and public transportation modes to examine if they encourage large flows of population to come to the area under study. Ignored by this literature are other types/variables that may influence of population stability and or cooperation: rapid population growth and the breakdown of interpersonal ties/knowledge, and or competitions between neighbours for; transportation, water, electricity, telephones etc.

When one considers the process of urbanisation that took place in cities like São Paulo, it would seem that most conditions for collective efficacy are absent. On the one hand residents, in cities that underwent rapid urbanisation, had to adapt to the process of massive inflows of new people with heterogeneous backgrounds. The newcomers, on the other hand, had to adapt to very new surroundings in most improvised circumstances. New neighbourhoods were created some of which abided to buildings codes, while others did not- resulting in much heterogeneity in terms of quality of life. Some of the old neighbourhoods underwent massive changes, for instance moving from predominantly low-rise buildings to high rise, or from being residential areas into mixed residential and non-residential or yet rural areas were incorporated in the urban limits of the city as people moved in to build houses or industries. As result, the profile of the residents changed with many new people moving in, some old timers remaining and some moving away. Increases in the population density led to changes in the way people interacted.

This process was not uniform across the city but its strength is greater where the physical changes were also greater. Thus today the city has some areas (few ones) that were not touched by the inflow of new people, while others are not recognisable when compared to what they looked like 30 years ago. The fact is that continued population change has become the norm as opposed to stability in the composition of the population. Districts where people have lived for decades or even generations are rare. Moreover the change from low rise: houses, to high rise- apartment introduced yet another powerful element in the social patterns of interaction.

This means that there was much work to be done by people to re-establish a sense of community. Some contexts, as seen above, are more amenable to this effort than others. Contexts that allow face to face contact between neighbours is one such context. Positive opportunities to get to know each other is another one. People living in high rise buildings may well avoid contact with neighbours instead of encourage contacts, if they already feel that they have too much forced proximity and little privacy. The same may be true for people living in densely occupied areas with little audio or visual privacy, or in high crime areas, where there is little trust between neighbours. It seems that there is some progress in identifying features of the neighbourhood that keep people apart. Still the question, that remains not answered, is whether there are, and if so, what are the features of the built environment that would encourage trust, connectivity and foster interpersonal knowledge so that communities can act in defence of their vulnerable groups and ensure quality of life, moreover in a context of continued exposure to violence a process which is thought to have a perverse effect of driving people away from collective action?

This question is particularly poignant in the context of the poor neighborhoods of major cities in Latin America where social capital or collective efficacy would be a much demanded resource in order to prevent violence at its roots: improving the overall quality of life, reducing the overlapping deprivations. Communities plagued by violence, lack most basic amenities: from creches to shopping facilities. This level of need means that collective initiatives to reduce then deficits will be very stressed as their agendas for change will be very lengthy and difficult to fulfill.

Do variations in social and economic factors influence the impact of risk and protective factors on youth?

Violence that victimises youth is often associated, by law enforcement agents, in Latin America, to drug use or sale. But drugs are used by youth in general irrespective of

their social economic status whereas violence victimises poor youth. What accounts for the differences in outcomes from what should be a similar process? There is little literature comparing the consequences of drug use by youth of different social economic status. The authors reviewed report that the pattern of risk of violence and the "causation" of drug use seems to differ between affluent and inner city youth. In the USA affluent youth often use more drugs, according to the authors' findings, because they have more financial resources to do so and are less afraid to experiment whereas "inner city youth have observed the serious effects of long-term drug use" and are also more likely to be victimised as result of drug use. They also report association between greater use of drugs and more self-reported psychological problems such as anxiety and depression. This anxiety could be expressing the pressures these youth feel to achieve. Wealthy youth are, according with the authors "driven to excel academically as well as in extra curricular activities", while feeling very alone, having a great deal of unsupervised time, as both parents work or have many activities outside the house, and have "ample money to do as they wish".

Poor inner city youth would be driven to substance use because of the challenges elicited by their social economic circumstances: serious economic deprivation, neighbourhood disadvantage, racism, limited opportunities for legal employment, and exposure to community violence. Their worse ratings by teachers, when compared to that of affluent white youth, in the authors view, may be reflecting the existence of two standards: 1- suburban youth (Whites) may present better behaviour in class than inner city, i.e. they may be realistically more conforming to rules than inner city youth (Blacks) or else, 2) teachers in suburbs may be more tolerant of youth behaviour than teachers in inner city schools. If this is so, behaviour that is considered to "creative self-expression in the suburbs" would be rated as rowdiness in inner city schools.

The major conclusion reached by this study is that "there is little question that the correlates of substance use vary substantially across different subgroups of adolescents: females as opposed to males, and relatively affluent as opposed to economically disadvantaged". Furthermore, the authors emphasise that the consequences of drug use may also vary across group, and that in fact "long-term ramifications of even trivial experimentation with drugs can be far more serious for the disadvantaged and minority youth than others." Quoting work by Kandel and Davies (1996) and that of Luthar et al. (1992), they say that it has been found that siblings of low socio-economic status drug addicts "who had ever tried drugs as teenagers have been found to be almost 5 times as likely as others to manifest serious problems of drug abuse as adults". The same point has been made by Kadushin et al. (1998), in terms of the relation between ethnicity and dependence: "With dependency, the relationship between ethnicity and drug use in the United States changes, with White/non-White differences eliminated or even reversed (Kandel, 1991; Warner et al., 1995).

In the United States, ethnicity is related to social class, education level, urban residence, and neighbourhood, so these variables must be taken into account in order to understand the impact of ethnicity on drug use and misuse". This does not mean that others youth groups be ignored in substance use studies but that, as dramatised by the broad drug use, researchers should be aware that: "Economic advantage or residential location may offer only limited immunity from the risks of the adolescent years. (Takanishi, 1996)" in Luthar and D'Avanzo (1999).

The fact that most violence and drug prevention programs ignore that there may be specific causes and dangers associated to substance use and to violence victimisation, by different youth groups, enhances the likelihood such programs will fail to fulfil their aims. This research points to the continued need for comparisons because: "Although several researchers have documented levels of substance use and associated problems in particular groups of teens, there have been few attempts to compare groups that are sociodemographically so different" (Luthar and D'Avanzo, 1999). Another major conclusion is that by Kadushin et al. (1998) that "the pervasive effect of neighborhoods on both substance use and dependence. Substance supportive neighborhoods are differentially located in poor and in Black communities". As result this author advocates that promoting neighbourhood improvement is a basic ingredient in preventing substance use.

This literature review, if did not answer the questions about what in the urban environment explains greater or lesser vulnerability to violence and to drug use, at least it has provided some support for some tentative ideas raised in earlier documents:

- a) the quality of the environment seems to matter- physical incivility coupled with social incivility seem to signal a lack of collective efficacy by adults in the area, and this may be taken as a cue for criminals to take over public space;
- b) overt drug and alcohol use, trade as well as the presence of people under the influence/intoxicated or high on drugs besides providing the idea that substances are easily available, could also be communicating to youth normative expectations that facilitate substance use such as that there is nothing negative about doing it or that the community accepts such use. As such availability also encourages use;
- c) availability also encourages the peer group to exert pressure for use;
- d) concentrated disadvantages reduce the potential for collective efficacy, social and physical incivilities being part of the "concentrated disadvantage" syndrome;
- e) the risk of substance use is not homogeneously distributed, moreover the causes for substance use by wealthier youth may differ from those that drive poor youth to substances. Furthermore there are signs that while affluent youth may consume more substance than poor youth, the consequences of substance by both groups will also differ: while for affluent youth substance use may represent an experimental use, poor youth may have a higher risk of becoming dependent.

Risks for youth in São Paulo: the exposure to violence

If we are to identify what elements of risk and of resilience that can be found in the context of the city of São Paulo, then we should try to identify how risk and resilience are distributed across the city. This was done by means of identifying what are the elements of protection and those of risk for the population living in most violent areas of the city in comparison to rest of the city. As we search for explanations for greater risk and for signs of resilience what becomes clear is that the most violent areas have been so for some time: violence started to grow in the past and through recent years has not only consolidated but spread to neighbouring areas as indicated on Maps 1, 2 and 3- Distribution of Homicides across São Paulo for the 1999, 1998, 1997.

The most distant areas of the periphery present the higher ratios and the greater risks for homicide. What are these areas like? What could explain the higher risks and what impact does this have for social capital/collective efficacy? For this presentation we will single out the extreme south part of the city in order to explore the elements of protection and of risk. This area encompasses 5 census districts and houses close to

1.000.000 inhabitants. We will focus more in depth in four such districts as they present homicide rates that are between 40% and 80% higher than the average rate for the city.

Lack of deterrents?

Impunity/poor performance of the criminal justice system

Between 1992 and 1996 homicides in the area totalled 3048 cases, 2787 (91,44 %) were registered as having been perpetrated by “unknown persons”. This is much superior to the already very high percentage average for the city: 84,47% of unknown perpetrators. So there is a strong possibility that poor functioning by the criminal justice system may help understand greater risk.

Overlapping deprivations or concentrated disadvantages?

Social cohesion is considered to be major source of protection against violence that victimizes children and youth. This in turn is thought to be effected by the degree of stability of the population in the area. The year 2000 Census data tells us that in the four districts considered: Campo Limpo, Capão Redondo, Jardim Ângela e Jardim São Luis. The Census data reveals that the four areas have continued to grow at a faster rate (on average 3 times) than the city of São Paulo. As result the districts continue to present larger numbers of children and youth than in other areas of the city as well as less older people (table I- Population distribution appendix). Greater population growth results in ever growing net population density (persons per hectare) and greater probability that there is overcrowding of the houses as this was a problem identified in the mid 1990's and since little has been done in terms of large scale housing projects the problem could be worse at present. Larger numbers children and adolescent in relation to adults means also there are less adults to intervene for the protection of youth and less adults available to supervise their activities and keep them away from trouble.

Overcrowding has been found to encourage psychological withdrawal, reduce social interaction, to increased stress and to reduced social information processing – meaning paying less attention to “interpersonal cues and other types of social information” (Evans et al, 2000) all risky coping strategies as they entail the possibility that as people become less sensitive to other people's reactions they also are more likely to have their own behaviour misread by others without means to set the record straight. In highly charged environments misunderstandings can add up and result in explosions of temper and or violence. Overcrowding is greater in the districts that are most affected by homicide. (Map 4 Overcrowding across São Paulo)

To measure the presence of concentrated disadvantages (Sampson et al., 1999) – we have used the following indicators: percentage of families below poverty level, percentage of single parent families, of low education achievement, child mortality rate, and access to jobs. Concentrated advantages are measured by percentage of families with high income, of heads of household with university level education and by percentage of heads of household in managerial position. The four districts present strong indicators of the presence of concentrated disadvantages: a) there is a strong concentration of low income families- more than 1/5 of the heads of household **without** any income in the city of São Paulo live in the area. More than 50% of the heads of household present income levels below the poverty level- 3 minimum wages (roughly US\$ 210,00) per month. This

concentration of low income families has grown in the past decade, in particular in the districts where homicide also grew most: in Jardim Angela and in Jardim São Luis.

Similarly to income there is a concentration of poorly educated heads of household which in part helps to understand the lower incomes. Parental low educational level represents a risk to the children as it increases the probability that children will achieve their full potential in school. In Jardim Angela, for instance, while 30% of heads of household had at most 4 years of school- (the average for the city of São Paulo being 17,8%) while only 1,8 of the heads of household had 15 years or more of education- while the average for the city is 14,1%. So this area has almost twice the number of poorly schooled while it has much fewer of the better educated.

There are less one parent families in the four areas considered than in the rest of the city which goes against the current in terms of explaining disadvantages and risks. This does not necessarily mean that there are no broken families in the poorer areas but that if families do break up new partnerships are formed, which in turn would represent new sets of variables with risks and protections attached to it.

Despite the continuous decline in child mortality rates in the last two decades this decline is not uniform. In three of the four areas the child mortality rate as expressed in terms of deaths per 1000 live births is 20% higher than that of the city of São Paulo. While the city has on average 15,8 deaths per 1000 live births in the first 12 months of life, at Jardim Angelathis rate is 18,9. Higher child mortality rate goes hand in hand with: less income, with more precarious housing, with less access to sewage, with more crowded houses and poorer access to health services. In some of the districts considered despite the fact that t they house almost 300.000 people, there are no hospitals.

Access to Public Security- Law enforcement personnel

Another variable to consider in terms of risks and protections against violence is the presence and distribution of law enforcement personnel. Data from the Military Police (the uniformed police force in charge of prevention) and by the Civil Police (the judiciary police) show that there are 660 police officers and 67 cars to patrol the areas: resulting in one (1) police officer per 1.501 inhabitants and one (1) car per 14.790 inhabitants. This is total number of Military Police personnel irrespective of whether they are doing bureaucratic or street work. The average for the city is to have one (10 police officer per 550 inhabitants and one (1) car per 6.425 inhabitants. So on the most violent districts there are 3 times less police personnel and two times less cars to patrol more complex areas than the inner parts of the city. The distribution of Civil Police officers is as skewed: one (1) civil police officer for each group of 4.237 inhabitants and one (1) car per each group of 19.819 inhabitants, while the city average is one (1) civil police officer per 1.531 inhabitants. This lack of police personnel could help explain the poor police performance in terms of clearing homicide cases fostering impunity and feelings of powerlessness among the population. The data presented above points to a concentration of disadvantages in the four areas. What role does violence play in the continued presence of deficits? Since the history of the occupation of these areas indicate that whatever public investment was made in the areas followed the population, generally after much collective pressure, and since so much remains to be done to ensure that the people in the area have access to better standard of living, in how far is violence one of the key hindrances to collective action and to the exercise of the social capital or collective efficacy that exists there?

In order to start exploring the impact that violence in areas that suffer from overlapping deprivations has on collective efficacy a survey was carried out last October

(2001) in three of the four areas: Capão Redondo, Jardim Ângela and Jardim São Luis (the South in the tables). Questionnaires were used in face to face interviews in the respondents residence to 341 persons 16 years old or more.

The same survey was also applied to 700 inhabitants of the city of São Paulo and the data collected allow for comparisons between the 3 areas and the rest of the city. In this survey the respondents' exposure to violence was measured as well as their integration in the local community, their evaluation of the immediate surroundings in terms of the perception of social disorder and incivility, their trust in their neighbours, their perception of their neighbours' willingness to act in defense of vulnerable groups, the perception that the inhabitants have of the level of integration and trust within the community, satisfaction with the community, as well as the perception and power delegated to the police forces. A exposure to violence index was developed, combining the responses to three questions: one about whether they had been victims of violence in the previous year and two others about having witnessed violence and or having heard about cases involving close friends or relatives.

Direct experience with violence was greater in the three areas as expected. On average there were 1,03 violent incidents per person in the sample for the city and 1,28 incidents per person in the most violent areas. Verbal assaults, threats to life of relatives, having drugs offered and, relatives hurt by gunfire or knife, and feeling the need to arm themselves were the most frequent events in both samples the city and the three districts. Not only there was more experience of violence in the three districts but the violence was also more serious: personal injuries, armed robberies and losing relative due to homicide.

Table II- Victimization

"Different things can happen to people. In the last 12 months did you experience any of the following in your neighborhood?"

	SPaulo	%	South Area	%		
Verbal assault	135		19,3		80	23,5
A relative had his/her life threatened			93		13,3	58 17,0
Drugs were offered to you			77		11,0	41 12,0
A relative was hurt by a knife or fire arm					76	10,9 59 17,3
You felt the need to be armed			72		10,3	30 8,8
A relative was murdered.	31	4,4	23		6,7	
Gun threats forced you to surrender property					52	7,4 34 10,0
Physical assault			35		5,0	24 7,0
Assault or mistreatment by a police officer					36	5,1 25 7,3
You were asked to find drugs					28	4,0 18 5,3
You moved to another residence for fear of violence					22	3,1 15 4,4
You were extorted by a police officer					22	3,1 10 2,9
A relative was kidnapped			17		2,4	8 2,3
Knife threats forced you to surrender property					14	2,0 6 1,8
You were hurt by a fire arm					11	1,6 6 1,8
Total	721	103	437		128,2	

Source: NEV/CEPID-2001

A similar pattern was observed in terms of witnessing violence: in the city 2,56 violent incidents per person on average were reported as witnessed, while in the three districts there were 2,8 incidents per person. Mostly they witnessed people using drugs in public (considered to be na indicator of social disorder) or violent incidents between third parties. It is also interesting that people report much less hearing about friends having witnessed violent events: 0,93 incidents per person were reported in the city and 0,94 in

the three districts suggesting people may be avoiding the theme of violence in their social conversation as result of the intense exposure they have.

Table I a- Witnessing violence

“And in the past 12 months did you or did you not witness anyone”:

Percent answering yes	S.Paul %		South %			
Being robbed	258	36,9	120	35,2		
Who was killed	167	23,9	105	30,8		
Being shot at	144	20,6	90	26,4		
Gunshots	237	33,9	138	40,5		
Being arrested	251	35,9	137	40,2		
Gangs' disputes		103	14,7	53	15,5	
Being assaulted		191	27,3	104	30,5	
Smoking marijuana/consuming drugs			357	51,0	156	45,7
Being threatened by a knife		85	12,1	52	15,2	
	1793	256,1	955	280,1		

Source: NEV/CEPID-2001

Table II b

A friend witnessed someone:

Percent answering yes	S.Paul %		South %			
Being robbed	132	18,9	52	15,2		
Who was killed	96	13,7	52	15,2		
Being shot at	84	12,0	40	11,7		
Gunshots	77	11,0	43	12,6		
Being arrested	60	8,6	29	8,5		
Gangs' disputes		60	8,6	38	11,1	
Being assaulted		59	8,4	29	8,5	
Smoking marijuana/consuming drugs			51	7,3	23	6,7
Being threatened by a knife		31	4,4	14	4,1	
	650	92,9	320	93,8		

Source: NEV/CEPID-2001

Our exposure to violence index was constructed combining the answers from the three questions above, plus isolating the type of violence in terms of the threat to their physical integrity. This resulted in a exposure to violence scale with six categories: “no exposure” grouping people who neither experienced directly nor indirectly any of the conditions listed nor heard about it from friends; a “light” condition of exposure grouping people who did not experience or witnessed any violence but heard about it from friends; a third category “moderate” included those who experienced the less serious types of violence such as verbal assaults but no direct threat to his her person or family and who did witness or hear about cases including serious violence³; a fourth category “serious exposure” grouping people who experienced one type of violent offense⁴, heard about it happening to friends but did not witness other events; a fifth category grouping people experienced violent offenses but only one event and who also witnessed or heard about moderate and violent episodes- the “very serious exposure” and finally the last category

³ Witnessing/hearing serious violence - someone: being robbed, who was killed, being shot at, being threatened by a knife, Gangs' disputes, gunshots.

⁴ Experienced serious violence: gun threats forced you to surrender property, knife threats forced you to surrender property, you were hurt by a firearm, a relative had his/her life threatened, a relative was hurt by a knife or fire arm, a relative was kidnapped, a relative was murdered.

grouping people who experienced very serious offenses more than once and who also witnessed and heard about serious violence: “most serious exposure”. As expected there is more exposure to violence in the violent districts as well as more exposure to the most serious types of violence and with greater frequency- multiple exposure.

Table III- Exposure to Violence
Exposure to violence

	SPaulo %	South Area %
no exposure	17	12
light exposure	10	11
moderate exposure	15	18
serious exposure	24	22
very serious exposure	22	21
most serious exposure	12	17
Total	100	101

The Impact of Exposure to Violence: the Neighborhood

Population stability

A key element for trust to develop is that people know each other. This mutual knowledge demands some stability in the population in a given area. It is known that when major shifts occur in the composition of the population of an area that violence also grows because traditional ties are broken and because suspiciousness, fed but lack of knowledge about who is who, is encouraged. How stable is the population in the different areas of the city? Are we dealing mostly with consolidated neighbourhoods where people have lived for generations and know each other well or a mixture of consolidated with recently formed (or in the process of being formed) neighbourhoods? Is the city broken up in strong communities with dense and profound social exchanges? What can we deduce to be the main patterns of neighbourhood interaction. Are they based on trust and marked by cohesion or the opposite, marked by mistrust and disunion? Are the nature of interpersonal relations assets for social capital/collective efficacy to develop or obstacles for such development?

The data about stability suggests that people have been living in the areas long enough to have established some ties to the area. Whether they feel part of a community or not is something else 31% have been in the area between 5 and 15 years, 27% have been between 15 and 25 years and 26% are newcomers. Also impressive is the fact that 16% have been there for more than one generation, over 25 years. Feeling part of a community would be a necessary condition for social capital to be exercised as social power. People have to feel that they stand to lose something valuable if they do not act as a group to protect their community in order for the potential of social capital to become reality. If they feel they are “in transit” they will have little motivation to do so. When asked how they feel about their neighborhood there is a split, just over half of the respondents feel it is “just a place to live” and the other half that they “belong to a community”. It is a positive sign that even in very violent neighborhoods about half of the inhabitants express feeling part of a community suggesting there is potential for much collective action that is not activated. Another indicator of the stability in the area is the fact that most respondents –80% own their houses, and in theory have much at stake in the area. In theory again there is much potential for social capital when people are stable in the area and have long

standing investments. But do they feel part of a community and the answer is that most do not: 57% feel that they “bairro” is just a place to live in while 41% feel that they belong to a community. This could be one of the perverse side effects of the greater exposure to violence

What impact the exposure to violence has on people's lives; what does it mean to people to be exposed to this high number of homicides and to live in a state of fear of being victimized; is high exposure fostering collective action or the contrary? How does it affect the trust in law enforcement agencies and in the laws?

The literature on violence shows that it affects different age groups differently and that living in high-risk areas increases the chances of victimization (Sampson and Laub, 1994). This seems to be the case in our three areas where people are being more victimised both by direct experience as well as by witnessing more. Greater exposure to violence affects school performance provoking post-traumatic syndrome; children exposed to constant stress have been linked to violence within schools. Studies (Lorion and Saltzman, 1993) in the U.S. showed that children from violent neighborhoods were so frightened that sometimes they hid in their schools to avoid going home at the end of the day. Similar facts were observed in São Paulo in another recent study by NEV/USP (Núcleo de Estudos da Violência, Universidade de São Paulo, Universidade de São Paulo-Center for the Study of Violence, University of São Paulo).⁵ The emotional development of the children is also affected: they are more irritable, anxious, less adventuresome, and they lack self-confidence (Osofsky, 1995). Again studies show that families play a key role in moderating the effects of the exposure to violence (Richters and Martinez, 1993). Less is known about the impact of this exposure on social trust.

Who is more exposed to violence?

Exposure is not homogeneously distributed across the population: in the three areas, young males, with average education, working, are the group that is more exposed to violence in general as well as the most exposed to multiple forms of serious violence. Blacks are much more exposed than other groups. The group less at risk is represented by older, white females. So age, gender and race as well as educational attainment are all involved in defining risk of exposure.

Exposure to Violence and Social capital

How the level of exposure to violence affects the perception of the neighborhood

The exposure to serious violence was found to be statistically related to a series of variables that are bound to affect people's predisposition for collective action. The group more exposed to serious violence seems to have a totally different experience of their surroundings from that of their neighbours that have not been exposed to violence or that were exposed to minor forms of violence. The more they are exposed to serious violence the more:

- Dissatisfaction with the neighborhood- the more people feel that their neighbourhood deteriorated in the past year, the less they approve public services.
- Perception of incivilities between people:

⁵ Pesquisa “As condições de vida das crianças que circulam pelo campus da USP” (Street Children in the University Campus), sponsored by Instituto Ayrton Senna.

1. People throwing refuse in rivers/streams,
 2. Bus drivers not waiting for elderly/handicaped/infirm person to board the/exit the bus
 3. Adults consuming alcohol/illegaldrugs in front of children,
 4. Couples fighting cursing in front of the children,
 5. People partying with loud music until late at night,
 6. People being mistreated by the police for being poor,
 7. Parents fighting in front of their children,
 8. Migrants being mistreated by civil servants for being from outside the state.
- Perception of social disorder in the area, i.e the perception that in their neighbourhood there is a lot of:
 - Vacant or abandoned plots of land
 - Unpaved roads
 - Streets without lighting
 - Abandoned cars
 - Abandoned houses/apartments
 - Broken windows
 - Empty houses or apartments
 - Graffiti on walls or facades
 - Unlicensed bars
 - Alcohol consumed in public
 - Drugs used in public
 - Drugs sold in public
 - Car theft
 - Houses broken in
 - Disturbances/disruption at night/ noise
 - Clandestine transport –vans
 - Rubbish/ litter on the pavement

This bad image of the neighbourhood is related to the exposure to serious violence. Which way the causal connection we do not know: whether the bad image precedes the exposure or follows it we can not ascertain, the fact remains that despite the level of overlapping deprivations that are shared by most of the inhabitants of the area, in particular the lack of public services and facilities, people who are less exposed to violence or to serious violence have a much better perception of their neighbourhood.

Paradoxically, despite the worse image that the group exposed to more serious violence has of their neighbourhood, they also maintain a much better image of their immediate neighbours and reveal more trust in their immediate neighbours than do the people who are not exposed to serious violence. Again we can not affirm that this is caused by their experience with violence but the data suggests the possibility that maybe the trauma they lived brought them closer to their immediate neighbours and that this explains why they are more optimistic about their neighbours acting to protect vulnerable groups such as: the elderly and children from violence. The groups more exposed to violence are the ones that express more certainty that their neighbours will act, in case of need, to protect the children, and the elderly. They also express having more: social contact, trusting relations - asking them for instance to look after their house when they travel and sharing working tools with immediate neighbours. The suggestion is that if exposure to violence draws people apart it does so in the broader context- in the

neighbourhood understood as the more anonymous level but it could have the opposite effect at the level of the street block, bringing people together.

If there is the possibility that not all exposure to violence result in total disaster for all social life as forecasted, this exposure has very negative impact on the image of law enforcement agencies and for some aspects of human rights and for the potential for collective efficacy to be realized and for social change to take place. The group more exposed to violence:

- is not satisfied with the kind of policing that exists in the area,
- evaluates policing in the area as having deteriorated in the last year, they
- does not feel able to convince a police officer to investigate a crime in which they were victims,
- does not feel that the police ensures the security of persons like him/her.

Furthermore they perceive the police as never or rarely:

- Responding promptly to their calls,
- Keeping their streets safe,
- Being polite when searching citizens,

Or worse they perceive the police as often:

- Using excessive force when searching youth,
- Accepting bribes,
- Protecting drug dealers,
- Are afraid of the drug dealers.

Despite this abysmal image of the police forces, and despite the fact that there is na overwhelming feeling that the laws do not protect them- 77,2% of fully agreeing with this, part of this group more exposed to violence is willing to allow both the judiciary and the police to use force to extract information form suspects or even to accept evidence obtained through torture to be used in court- 24, 1% of the respondents in this group totally agrees with this use. There are multiple signs that for aprt of this groups at least, multiple exposure to violence may be strengthening authoritarian traits such as: greater willingness to grant all powers to the authorities to adopt measures to reduce violence (77,2% agree), perception that a lot of suspects escape the laws through legal technicalities (66,7% -agree), less trust that prison sentences can produce rehabilitation (20,7% disagree), or that all are entailed a fair trial even people who are accused of rape (29,3%-agree) or yet that the government can strip a person of his/her nationality if she/he represents a threat to the nation (63,6%-agree), and the death penalty (47,4%-agree).

Of course this rgoup is not the only one to present some authoritarian traits, but it is very paradoxical that mistrusting law enforcement agents as they do, probably grounded on the kind of experience they have had after their experiences as victims of serious crimes, that they will grant so much power to the state and to the same agents they mistrust.

The dilemma is then not that there is no social capital, or social trust or collective efficacy, the dilemma is that the effects of such intense exposure to violence may be different from what is forecasted in the literature. Some social life seems to be strengthened by the expreience but that part of the social experience that takes place in broader context seems to be very much affected. People will cooperate at the micro level but not at the macro level, barriers to collective action will be maintained if people are scared and are interacting through stereotypes. The experience of being exposed to violence seems to also stregthen a more punitive streak, this is humane but in their

circumstances it could lead to further harm, as it opens doors not only to gross human rights violations but also to the maintenance of the obstacles for their access to social and economic rights.

If exposure to violence seems not to be erasing social capital from collective life, there are indications that greater barriers to the expression of social capital into action may be found in surviving forms of socially rooted authoritarianism: in forms of acquiescence, in reticence, expressed as fear of challenging powerful groups and in doubts about the fairness of the justice system.

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Appendix

Table I- Population distribution									
2000								Popul. tot.	
	0 - 4 years	5 - 9 years	10 - 14 years	15 years	16 - 17 years	18 - 19 years	^{91/00} geometric growth rate	Ageing index	
São Paulo	8,43	7,93	8,49	1,77	3,74	4,00	0,88	25,87	
Campo Limpo	9,87	8,90	9,30	1,98	4,01	4,30	2,06	12,58	
Capão Redondo	10,03	9,25	9,75	1,97	4,29	4,43	2,46	9,81	
Jardim Ângela	11,38	10,20	9,98	2,00	4,28	4,39	3,63	6,58	
Jardim São Luis	9,78	8,80	9,26	1,93	4,18	4,46	1,77	12,08	
Fonte: FIBGE: Censo Demográfico 2000									

Table II- Housing conditions							
	Homicide rate	Net Density	Persons per dwelling	Persons Per room	Percentage	Percentage owner occupied	Percentage houses
District	100 000 inhab.				Subnormal housing		Connected to sewage system
	1999	2.000	2.000			2000	2.000
	(a)	(f)	(f)	(p)	(q)	(f)	(f)
Total city	66,89	121,89	3,46	0,70	7,61	69,38	87,44
Campo Limpo	93,83	158,42	3,66	0,88	13,65	68,57	84,80
Capão Redondo	93,02	180,50	3,71	0,95	18,65	70,86	80,13
Jardim Ângela	116,23	165,30	3,77	1,07	15,75	72,86	62,77

Jardim São Luis	103,75	131,91	3,60	0,94	21,01	70,05	70,05
Fonte: FSEADE: Sistema de Estatísticas Vitais (2000)							
taxa de mortalidade por homicídios/ 100 000 habitantes: (a)							
		(g) Área Urbanizada 1996, cf: Infurb (Deak)					
		(g) Densidade líquida = População Total					
		Área Urbanizada (há)					
(f) FIBGE- Censo 2000							
Fonte: FIBGE: Contagem Populacional 1996. (p) / - I							
Aglomerado subnormal definido como ocupação desordenada e sem posse ou título do terreno: (q) ;							

Table III- Income					
	Homicide rate	Percentage of heads of household without income	Percentage of heads of household – minimum income		Renda
District	100.000 inhabitants	No income	Up to 3 wages	Over 20 minimum wage	Average income (min.wage)
Year	1999	2.000	2.000	2.000	
	(a)	(c)	(c)	(c)	2000 (c)
Total MSP	66,89	10,43	29,63	9,44	9,8
Campo Limpo	93,83	11,52	35,59	3,78	6,35
Capão Redondo	93,02	15,03	39,89	1,32	4,71
Jardim Ângela	116,23	19,83	42,29	0,43	3,76
Jardim São Luis	103,75	14,26	37,27	1,97	5,34
Fonte: FSEADE: Sistema de Estatísticas Vitais (2000)					
Taxa de mortalidade por homicídios/ 100 000 habitantes: (a)					
Fonte: FIBGE: Censo Demográfico 2000 (c)					

