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A Study of After-School and Summer Programs: The Effectiveness of Law-Related Youth Educational Programs for Adolescents in Marginalized Communities

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A STUDY OF AFTER-SCHOOL AND SUMMER PROGRAMS:
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LAW-RELATED YOUTH EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAMS FOR ADOLESCENTS IN MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
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by

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ABSTRACT

It was the interest of this project to determine if law-related educational activities – when incorporated into after-school and summer programs that are rooted in marginalized communities – were effective when applied to adolescent residents. The current study is informed by theories of place, social class, social disorganization and juvenile delinquency. Using ethnographical methods, this project followed after-school and summer programs developed for youth in a South Louisiana black community characterized by pockets of poverty, blight and disorder. Through qualitative data analysis, the themes of how community operated in the target neighborhoods, how community members responded to neighborhood disorder and thoughts on the after-school and summer programs were found among the 24 interviews conducted with program participants, their parents, program volunteers and community leaders, and among the observational fieldnotes taken during the programs. Thematic connections were found that told the story of this divided South Louisiana black community and the adolescents who are growing up in those neighborhoods. The primary effect of the programs on participants with more supportive home environments and more social capital were to challenge their existing skill sets and knowledge base while encouraging teamwork, analytical processing and argument building. Younger adolescents from lower social groups with less parental involvement experienced a confidence boost after completion of the summer institute, but were at times less engaged and more easily distracted. Findings suggest that law-related youth educational programming – which is designed to be applicable to a wide spectrum of students ranging from gifted to delinquent – held within a marginalized community was effective to varying degrees for all program participants, regardless of social class, gender or age group.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

A narrow state highway that cuts through one South Louisiana black community characterized by pockets of poverty, blight and crime divides the rampant disorder of the ghetto from the more socially organized neighborhoods. The local news media has called this slum property an “oasis of blight” as it remains rundown and stagnant while the real estate market surrounding the community flourishes (Riegel 2013). A little more than 10,000 residents from varied social classes reside in this area of suburban neighborhoods and apartment complexes overseen by a state-legislated crime district board (Riegel 2013). Middle-class and lower-income neighborhoods existing in such close proximity tend to be the norm in black communities (Pattillo 2013), and neighborhoods exhibiting signs of disorder attract crime and delinquency (Kubrin et al. 2009). Adolescents growing up in disadvantaged neighborhoods with limited resources face compromised life chances because of cultural and structural effects, such as disorder, social disorganization and decreased social control (Sampson 2012; Wilson 2010).

Within this community exists a need for after-school and summertime safe havens for adolescents, so attracting appropriate programs to this area was important to the crime district and to residents “because parents want a way to keep their children away from drug dealers and criminals while they are at work” (Broussard 2013). Because delinquency takes place most frequently during the early teen years (Kubrin et al. 2009), formation and strengthening of social bonds of at-risk or marginalized teens with their parents, schools and community organizations can prevent adolescents from going “decent” to “street” (Anderson 1999). Marginalized youth are more likely to drop out of school only to “face a life of poverty, despair, and legal punishment” (Smith 2000:293). Researchers have found that adolescents committed to conventional activities were less likely to become involved in delinquent behavior (Kubrin,

Stucky and Krohn 2009:71), thus supporting the idea for developing programs that engage adolescents with positive learning experiences within their communities. For instance, after-school clubs and group mentoring programs have helped adolescents from socially disadvantaged neighborhoods learn to cope with their environments (Halpern 2002), and law-related educational programs were found to engage a broad spectrum of students, from gifted (Jacobson and Palonsky 1983) to high risk or delinquent (Buzzell 1991).

Just as the experiences of these community residents are important for understanding the neighborhood processes that affect many African Americans, the after-school and summer programs that take place within the studied community and occupy the time and attention of their children are relevant in this article. A local non-profit foundation responded to the request of the crime district board by developing two law-related educational programs, an after-school law club that incorporates group mentoring and a one-week summer institute that culminated with a mock trial for area adolescents ranging in age from 12 to 16. My role, as an employee of this foundation, was to assist the program administrator. This provided me access to the programs, from planning to implementation, during which I used ethnographical methods make observations and to collect the narratives of participants, parents and volunteers.

The current study discussed the narratives that adolescents and their parents shared regarding their experiences with the law-related educational programs that were developed in their community, which was important because limited research exists that studies the effectiveness of such programs for marginalized communities. The substantive areas of investigation in my research involved theories of place and juvenile crime prevention, including those of Sampson (2012), Pattillo (2013), Kelling and Wilson (1982), and Sampson and Wilson (1995). I used the interpretive lens of social constructivism to answer my research question,

which investigated the effectiveness of law-related educational programs for adolescents residing in marginalized communities. I coded the qualitative data to identify common themes and made connections that, when viewed in its entirety, told the story of a divided black community in South Louisiana and the adolescents who are growing up in those neighborhoods. The findings suggest that the use of interactive law-related educational lessons, such as mock trials, and group mentoring are excellent ways of engaging young people from marginalized communities. The results also suggest that this particular black community requires a continuity of programming to have long-lasting impact.

CHAPTER 2 OVERVIEW OF LAW-RELATED YOUTH EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

What began as a conversation between two neighbors about their shared concern for the wellbeing of local youth resulted in positive programs for adolescents that were brought directly into their community. The concerned neighbors just happened to be the local crime district board president and a law-enforcement officer who provided security detail work for a teen court diversionary program that incorporated law-related youth educational programming. At the time, crime in the neighborhood was up. Karen, president of the crime district board, was faced with finding new ways to constructively fill the after-school and summertime hours of the youth who reside within the borders of the crime district. The board decided that 2014 was the year it would make a real investment in area youth, recognizing that such an investment was actually an investment in the future of the community. Crime districts are a state-legislated way of raising fees to tackle neighborhood-level crime, and this particular crime district board chose to invest in community youth by funding several programs to be administered by non-profits to curb low-level criminal activities among juveniles, such as truancy, fighting and theft from unlocked cars (Foley 2013). At Antonya's invitation, Karen attended a session of the teen court and was so impressed with what she saw that, with the backing of the crime district board, she requested the local bar foundation to bring a teen court-like program into her South Louisiana black community. The resulting programs were an after-school law club, and eventually a summer institute, that relied on law-related youth educational programming. These programs, however, did not operate within a vacuum; instead, they were based on other programs previously developed by the foundation for other segments of the population, including the teen court diversionary program that had impressed Karen so much. At the foundation's disposal was a large group of ready volunteers who were as enthusiastic about working with young people as

they were about providing legal careers options and lessons in the law. In addition, many of the existing programs pull lessons from the Streetwise lesson series and other resources, including ideas from law professors and their law students, judges, paralegals, lawyers and police.

The foundation experienced success with many of its law-related youth educational programs in the past. For example, the foundation's teen court diversionary program accepts actual criminal cases involving minors who have admitted guilt and provides them with their day-in-court with a jury of their peers. The Junior Partners Academy introduces interactive law lessons to inner-city school children enrolled in third- through fifth-grade. Legal professionals and law-enforcement personnel have been volunteering to work with the youth through the JPA since it was established in 2011. In addition, several of the foundation's youth educational programs originated decades ago, including the regional high school mock trial competition, which is held each spring for schools with mock trial teams within a multi-parish region; an award-winning Law Day ceremony that attracts 900 middle and high school students and their teachers each year; and the lawyers-in-the-classroom program, in which lawyers make presentations about the legal system, as requested by civics teachers from area schools.

Research supports the application of law-related education to a broad range of students, from the gifted (Jacobson and Palonsky 1983) to those considered at-risk youth (Wright 1994) and even for high-risk or delinquent adolescents (Buzzell 1991). Marri (2010:41) defined law-related education as "education to equip non-lawyers with knowledge and skills pertaining to the law, the legal process, and the legal system" that encourages interactive activities, are supported by bar associations and uses attorneys and law enforcement as resources. More importantly, such programs emphasize the role of due process and the relationship between citizens and society, and nurture critical thinking and civic participation – as in the case of this study – through

emphasizing problem solving, communication, teamwork, reasoning and participation (Marri 2010). Wright (1994) argued that, in teaching the skills needed to become responsible citizens, law-related education can help youth overcome adverse environmental conditions, such as disorganized neighborhoods; can promote bonding with responsible adult role models; and can encourage at-risk youth to think before acting by using role-play strategies, such as mock trials. In addition, law-related educational programming is frequently used to develop positive attitudes among young people “toward the law, legal systems, and legal processes” (Jacobson and Palonsky 1981:49).

The crime district board agreed to provide funding for a period of two school years and two summers. In all, four different organizations were approached with the promise of funding, and all four agreed to find a way to bring their services to the youth of the area. During this time, the crime district partnered with Crime Stoppers and promoted the crime district heavily on billboards and in radio advertisements asking listeners to report any suspicious activity. The culture of the young people in the community frowns on snitches, so the crime district faced this challenge head-on, encouraging youth to “say something if you see something.” Other programs taking place in this community, but not necessarily funded by the crime district board, included a sports-related youth alliance, which is a grass-roots effort by a local volunteer coach who works with youth and team sports. It has a facility next to a community initiative, which is run in affiliation with the church community outreach program that rented out its church van and driver to the bar foundation for transportation services for its summer institute. This community initiative building is, as of January 2015, where the law club holds its monthly meetings.

The after-school law club is the product of a collaborative effort of a local bar foundation – the non-profit arm of a professional association of lawyers and judges – and the oldest crime

district in the area. The club was developed to provide middle and high school students opportunities to meet other teens, increase their community involvement and learn about the law and career options in the field of criminal justice. The five-day summer institute held in June was a natural extension of the after-school program, using law-related education and team-building exercises to engage the institute participants and to teach them about the juvenile justice system. The interactive lessons led to a mock trial, and the program concluded with field trips to city hall and a courthouse, followed by an awards ceremony. Certain African American cultural elements were added to the program, including a brief discussion of historically black colleges and universities (HBCU), which was held after the completion of the mock trial and followed by an intense question-and-answer session. Lessons used in both programs were recycled from the foundation's teen court and other law-related youth educational programs, and attorneys and law students served as resources. The institute provided breakfast in the morning, followed by classroom seminars until the start of a 45-minute catered lunch. Each afternoon for the first three days of participants worked in groups with the help of law student coaches until 2 p.m. The mock trial took place on the Thursday. On the last day was a fieldtrip, concluding with lunch and a closing ceremony, where certificates of completion were given to all participants. In addition, special awards such as "best attorney" and "best witness" were presented. Parents were invited to the mock trial competition and to the tour and awards ceremony.

Nineteen adolescents attended the summer institute, while the after-school program had regular attendance of five teenage girls, all of whom also participated in the summer institute. The local church provided its van and a driver for institute participants who needed transportation, and more than one-third of the participants used this service. Participants from middle-class families were referred to the summer institute by the crime district board or by a

subdivision association leader, while the majority of the teens from low-income or fixed-income families were referred to the institute by a local church / community outreach program.

The program used volunteers who were similar to the participants in racial and ethnic makeup to provide the youth with professional role models – including law students, law professors, lawyers, judges and law-enforcement personnel – with whom they could relate. As far as mentoring is concerned, research has suggested that differing backgrounds can strain the development of strong relationships (Deutsch et al. 2013; Spencer 2006; Herrera et al. 2000). It was hoped that the adolescents participating in the law club and the summer institute would consider a future legal career, but at minimum, the purpose of the programs are to provide options. Organization and planning of the law club and summer institute for this South Louisiana black community were conducted in a similar fashion to programs that have been created for other segments of the city's population.

Only one full-time bar foundation employee administered the law club and summer institute, and she worked closely with the other youth education programs that are run by the foundation. The program administrator, an African-American woman who is a law school graduate with a long history of working with young people, had a great rapport with the teens. Assisting with the summer institute were the administrator, two foundation staff members on occasion and myself. The two law students interns, both of whom worked for the bar foundation that summer, served as mock trial coaches. The morning speakers were legal professionals who were experts in their areas. During the afternoon trial preparation sessions, guest coaches visited with the youth. On arrival, each guest was introduced and shared briefly the story of his or her educational and career journey. Many of the guests were lawyers, but the stories of how they became who they are today varied.

As the primary researcher of this study, I served a dual role as a graduate student and employee. I informed all adolescents and parents about what I was doing from the beginning. I observed the inner workings from the top-down and took notes regarding the planning process, documenting the efforts of the foundation throughout 2014. Follow-up interviews were conducted following the completion of the summer institute to determine the attitudes of participants, parents, program volunteers and community leaders regarding the studied programs. This study follows an after-school and a summer program in a South Louisiana black community to investigate the effectiveness of law-related educational programs for adolescents in marginalized communities.

The program administrator was given six weeks to plan and implement the summer youth legal institute, so she relied on existing resources and borrowed ideas from programs that share similar goals for minority youth. One of these programs was a two-week minority law and research institute held locally in June that was hosted by a historically black law school in partnership with a non-profit organization, which provided full scholarships for program participants. In 2014, a total of 38 high school students from seven states attended the institute, which served the purpose of exposing under-represented students to the legal profession. Law professors served as the speakers for this program. A second program was a free one-week summer legal institute held in New Orleans and was designed for junior and senior high school students. This program was administered by a non-profit that partnered with the state bar association. The institute was an abridged law school, which was followed by a two-week internship program that allowed students to shadow local law offices. The curriculum was highly interactive. A third program, held in late July 2014 in New Orleans, was a no-cost two-day professional development workshop for law and civic education. The non-profit that organized

the Justice Catherine D. Kimball Summer Institute partnered with the state bar association and assists schools with their law-related youth education programs, provides training in the delivery of law and civic education, and promotes the practical understanding of the law statewide.

In sum, the development of the two studied programs – the law club and the summer youth legal institute – were initiated by a request from the president of one of the oldest crime districts in the city, which represents the residents of a South Louisiana black community. The local bar foundation accepted the challenge, and agreed to develop and implement two years of law-related youth educational programs that incorporated mentoring for teens. During this same two-year timeframe, the crime prevention district board requested that programs for adolescents be brought into the community by three other non-profits to ensure there would be positive alternatives within the borders of the community to occupy the time and attention of the youth in the community. The beauty of law-related education was that prior research had suggested that such programming was effective for a whole spectrum of students, from the gifted (Jacobson and Palonsky 1983) to the delinquent (Buzzell 1991). Wright (1994) suggested that law-related education can help youth overcome adverse environmental conditions, including disorganized neighborhoods; can promote bonding with responsible adult role models; and can encourage at-risk youth to think before acting by using role-play strategies or mock trials. Also in the community were pre-existing grass-roots programs, including a sports-related youth alliance and an after-school tutoring program.

CHAPTER 3 THEORIES OF PLACE AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

The content of the interviews conducted as part of this study highlighted the importance of neighborhood- and individual-level factors for understanding issues that youth in this community face. While the prior overview of law related-educational programming on youth in marginalized communities provided examples of positive alternatives, discussions of the importance of neighborhood-level effects highlighted the potential impact of social disorganization. The classic social disorganization framework was a theory of place interested in the geographic non-random occurrence of crime (Kubrin et al. 2009). Neighborhood occurrences of crime and delinquency have been of interest since the 1920s when Shaw and McKay (1967) used Park and Burgess' concentric zone theory to describe the spatial distribution of delinquency in Chicago. Shaw and McKay (1967) found that delinquency was most concentrated in the zones of transition, which were characterized by rapid changes in their economic and social structure. They argued, yet never empirically assessed, that the influence of social structural factors in shaping delinquency rates were moderated by strength of the local community (Sampson and Groves 1989; Sampson et al. 1997).

The disorganization framework was criticized by Kornhauser (1978) for presenting a tautological argument and unclear conceptualization of disorganization. One response to these critiques was developed by Sampson and colleagues (Sampson 2012; Sampson and Groves 1989; Sampson, Raudenbush and Earls 1997), who introduced the concept of collective efficacy, which is defined as “the linkage of cohesion and mutual trust among residents with shared expectations for intervening in support of neighborhood social control” (Sampson 2012:127). To measure this concept, Sampson et al. (1997) analyzed data on Chicago neighborhoods and residents that were collected as part of the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods. The

researchers were able to estimate the effects of neighborhood-level structural characteristics (concentrated disadvantage, residential instability and concentration of immigrants) and social processes (collective efficacy).

Research has attributed residential cohesion and informal social control to reductions in violence (Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson 2012), and disorganized neighborhoods with low informal social control tend to experience high levels of crime and deviance (Silver and Miller 2004). Sampson and Groves (1989) found that structural factors produce social disorganization without being linked to crime. Later, Sampson et al. (1997) explained the link between violence and concentration of poverty, pointing to collective efficacy, which is a property of neighborhoods, as a major predictor of violent crime. Informal social control, as defined by Sampson et al. (1997:918), is a group's ability "to regulate its members according to desired principles – to realize collective, as opposed to forced, goals." Residential mobility impedes neighbor interaction and social tie formation, thus weak social ties lead to less informal control, which indirectly lead to high crime rates in communities with elevated residential turnover (Sampson et al. 1997).

Not so different from the view of Sampson and his colleagues, contemporary theorist Pattillo (2013:21) argued that social class shapes the daily life of middle-class black Americans, blaming residential and social segregation as the cause of the disproportionate poverty of black communities. She pointed out that diverse African-American neighborhoods often exist within even larger black communities, and black middle-class neighborhoods tend to be juxtaposed with predominantly high-poverty areas (Pattillo 2013). Sampson (2012:56) defined a neighborhood as "a geographic section of a larger community or region (*e.g.*, city) that usually contains residents or institutions and has socially distinctive characteristics," and noted that "neighborhoods are

nested within successively larger communities” (2012:54). Sampson (2012) found that neighborhood effects have an enduring quality and a negative impact on the lives of children who are raised there, especially when multiple generations grow up in the same neighborhood. In addition, residents in communities with highly mobile tenants are less trusting of their neighbors and lack collective efficacy, resulting in less social control over the activities of area youth.

Another response to Kornhauser’s (1978) critique of the disorganization framework was the broken windows thesis, which emphasized the physical appearance of neighborhoods and held that the first sign of decay is read as a sign that disrepair of the whole neighborhood is imminent (Haney 2007:970). Kelling and Wilson (1982) coined the phrase and explained how disorder attracts crime at the community level, indicating that “one unrepaired broken window is a signal that no one cares.” According to Sampson (2012:125), “signs of disorder serve as a signal of the unwillingness of residents to confront strangers, intervene in a crime, or call the police.” When neighbors worked together to rid their community of physical incivilities, the residents’ level of collective efficacy increased as did their concern about neighborhood safety, and as their collective efficacy increased, crime rates decreased (Sampson 2012). In addition, Haney (2007:986) found that neighborhood physical disorder was a strong predictor of residents’ self-esteem level in a study of the effects of living in a poor neighborhood.

While social disorganization takes place at the macro-level, social bond theory is more of an individual-level approach that is applicable to understanding juvenile delinquency and its prevention. Social bond theory, a product of social control theory, is concerned more with why we choose not to engage in deviant behavior. Hirschi (1969) theorized that deviance is innate, and his theory argued that one’s behavior can be controlled once the ties that bind individuals to society are known. Attachments to parents, peers or school are what make an adolescent consider

the potential consequences of delinquency (Hirschi 1969; Hirschi 2004). The mere existence of rules of conduct makes people feel more attached to the group, and this feeling of attachment adds meaning to group membership. Regarding neighborhoods, the more socially integrated they are, the better they are “in exerting informal social control to regulate behavior” (Kubrin et al. 2009:169).

Hirschi’s (2004:178) social bond theory, which stressed the importance of youth involvement in conventional activities, attachment to peers and adults, and exposure to positive role models, supports the rationale of after-school programs, including clubs. Hirschi used social control theory to explain why youth behavior results in delinquency and indicated that “delinquent acts occur when an individual’s bond to society is either weakened or broken” (Kubrin et al. 2009:169). Four dimensions of the social bond are attachment, commitment, involvement and belief. The assumption that engaged youth are too busy to participate in delinquency (Hirschi 2004) may be imperfect as committing a crime takes little time, but heavy involvement in conventional activities at least deters delinquency. Attachment to one’s teachers or school involvement, on the other hand, assumes attachment to conventional societal goals (Kubrin et al. 2009). Regarding belief, Hirschi (1969) found support for his hypothesis that youth who fail to respect the police lack respect for the law. In a way, this supports the use of law-related educational programs that teach lessons about the law while youth participate in conventional activities, such as after-school clubs or summer institutes.

Research on the social bond theory produced mixed results. Some research has suggested its positive impact in inhibiting deviant behavior, such as in school bonding or in bonding to positive adults, which can increase developmental experiences and can buffer the effects of risk (Catalano et al. 2004). Krohn and Massey, however, found that social control theory explained

less serious crimes most effectively (Kubrin et al. 2009). A weakness in Hirschi's research was his lack of longitudinal data, but Agnew (1985) noted stability in delinquency over time, that the power of social control on youth diminishes as they enter the later teenage years, and that peer-pressure is a deviance-enhancing force.

In sum, theories of neighborhood effects – including the street-level influences of social disorganization, broken windows and collective efficacy – and individual-level theories of social bonding intersect to provide support for delinquency prevention programs that use law-related educational components when working with adolescents in marginalized communities. Neighborhood theories suggest that place matters more than race, providing an argument for the improvement and maintenance of physical amenities as a prevention of potential disorder and delinquency. In addition, neighborhood effects have an enduring quality and a negative impact on children who are raised in such communities (Sampson 2012) and physical disorder can affect residents' self-esteem (Haney 2007). Individual theories suggest the importance of adult intervention and role models regarding adolescents' social bonds with their communities, schools, parents and peers. Together theories of place and juvenile delinquency help to inform the current study by providing a better understanding of the structural and cultural influences marginalized communities have on the youth who live there.

CHAPTER 4 PROGRAMS FOR AT-RISK OR MARGINALIZED ADOLESCENTS

Establishing a presence in marginalized communities was important because “individual memberships in organizations are not as important as the mere existence of the organizations and community events” (Denton 2013:3). This applies to neighborhood-based after-school programs as well. As mentioned previously, involvement by youth in such conventional activities is instrumental in establishing social bonds (Hirschi 2004). Studying the relationship of education and delinquency among marginalized youth requires qualitative research techniques that allow the youth to provide narratives of their experience (Smith 2000:308). Marginalization happens when “a whole category of people is expelled from useful participation in social life and thus potentially subjected to severe material deprivation and even extermination” (Smith 2000:309; Young 1990:53). The studied South Louisiana black community can be considered marginalized because of its treatment by local government, which has failed consistently to provide adequate infrastructure necessary for safety – including sidewalks and lighting – and because of its location, which is on the outskirts of the city limits and tucked away in a slum area of low-rent apartments that juxtaposes middle-class neighborhoods. Within the community, there are no major grocery stores, limited access to fresh produce, and lack of public parks, other than the open field where a sports-related youth network holds football practice.

Regarding after-school programs, Woodland (2008) described three different types. The extracurricular activities model emphasized use of sports, arts or other academic outlets, which have been found to have a positive impact on academic achievement, reduce involvement in violent or risky behaviors and has been associated with a decrease “in youth crime, drug use and police reports of drug activity” (Woodland 2008:543). The mentoring model connects adult mentors with youth. This model has been associated with decreases in first-time drug use, school

absenteeism and violent behavior (Rhodes and DuBois 2008; Woodland 2008). The cultural rites of passage model emphasized “culture-based interventions” to support black youth in their transition from childhood to adulthood (Woodland 2008:542); encourages “[b]lack youth to embrace African cultural ideals” and incorporates parent workshops, field trips and a public ceremony to mark the completion of the program. The law-related educational programs evaluated in this study incorporate elements of all three of the previously mentioned models, but the law club and summer programs fit best with the extracurricular activities model, even though it incorporates career mentoring and provides adult role models. One grassroots program taking place in this community that follows the extracurricular model is a sports-related youth network that encourages young boys to engage in team sports. Following the mentoring model and also located in the community is a branch of the Boys & Girls Club, which provides after-school programs for youth ages 5 to 12. In addition, a community initiative effort that has acquired a building in the area and offers afternoon tutoring services for youth agreed to provide meeting space for law club meetings.

Evaluations of programs developed primarily for African-American adolescents in marginalized communities found that participants experienced positive effects depending on the curriculum and the qualifications of the program administrators and staff. Posner and Vandell (1994:455) found that “formal programs located in children’s communities have great potential as a protective factor for children living in high-risk environments. Those most likely to benefit from youth mentoring programs are youths of disadvantage or environmental risk backgrounds” (DuBois et al. 2002). Regarding after-school activities of low-income youth, Posner and Vandell (1994:454) wrote that children attending “formal after-school programs were exposed to more learning opportunities than children in other forms of after-school care.” For students of color,

use of culture is one of the core elements of after-school programming, and Woodland (2008:548) stressed the importance of integrating “culturally relevant interventions into the traditional school and after-school curricula of children of color.” In addition, numerous studies provided positive outcomes for parental involvement in their children’s education and school achievement (Hill and Craft 2003).

Further, research indicated that after-school programs frequently offset some of the negative effects of risk factors, including poverty, community violence and family distress, with which children growing up in inner-city neighborhoods face. Posner and Vandell (1994:454) found “extensive positive effects for low-income children who attended formal after-school programs,” including an association with better conduct while in school, grades, peer relations and emotional adjustment. The findings of DuBois et al. (2011:57) “support the effectiveness of mentoring for improving outcomes across behavioral, social, emotional, and academic domains of young people’s development.” The mentor-mentee connection is the key to successful mentorship programs, especially when working with adolescent girls because the relationships developed during group activities, and not just the activities, are important in fostering such connections (Deutch et al. 2012; Rhodes and Dubois 2008). In addition, adolescent girls tend to express less satisfaction with shorter mentoring relationships (Deutch et al. 2012). Peer interaction was found to serve as an incentive to help sustain involvement during group-based mentoring (Deutch et al. 2012), thus, making friends in programs in which adolescents participate may encourage continued participation.

In sum, when designing after-school or summer programs for adolescents residing in marginalized communities, it is important that these neighborhood-based programs be located in the communities being served and to occupy the minds of the adolescents with positive messages

and interactive lessons in a safe environment with adult supervision. Of the three models of after-school programs as mentioned by Woodland (2008), the extracurricular activities and the mentoring models best characterize the law-related youth educational programs that were studied as part of this project. After-school programs have been shown to offset some of the negative effects of risk factors that youth from disorganized communities face, including poverty, community violence and family distress (Posner and Vandell 1994). Generally, building bonds of trust between the youth participants and the adult volunteers is essential to the success of the program, but developing a strong bond is even more important when working with adolescents in marginalized communities, such as that described in the current study, where the danger of violent crime is the status quo.

CHAPTER 5 RESEARCH DESIGN

This project draws on qualitative methods to examine the effectiveness of the understudied area of law-related youth educational programming for adolescents in marginalized communities. Specifically, this study examined a marginalized black community in South Louisiana and it documented the development of two programs for adolescents of varying social classes in a community with varying levels of social disorganization. This ethnographical study included interviews with 24 individuals who were involved in the law club and summer institute in a variety of roles, including club members, institute participants, parents, program volunteers and community leaders. My role, as an employee of the association arm of the foundation that planned the programs, was to assist the program administrator. This professional relationship provided me access to the programs, from planning to implementation, during which I made observations, took fieldnotes and collected the narratives of volunteers, participants and parents. From the start, I informed all law club and camp participants and parents that I was a graduate student studying the programs. When scheduling follow-up interviews, I reiterated my dual role. My 15-year history with the association as the communications coordinator provided me the opportunity and flexibility to assist with the new programs. I had input during the planning stages of the programming primarily in the area of public relations and communications. I designed the law club and summer camp registration forms, coordinated the creation of the summer institute logo, ordered the institute T-shirts and backpack-style tote bag, and produced copies of the materials binder that each participant received. During the summer institute I photographed all group activities, speakers and participants. In addition, I was asked to work individually with a few summer institute participants in developing their opening statements and closing arguments.

Interviews were conducted with program participants, their parents, volunteers and community leaders in their homes, offices or in neutral locations, including a church, a public library and an ice cream shop. Primary questions inquired about their experiences with the community and with the programs. I asked them to evaluate the programs and to share what they learned. Secondary questions investigated the issues of community investment, parental involvement and perceptions of neighborhood and personal safety.

The summer program had a roster of 19 participants ages 12 to 16, while the after-school program had a membership of at least nine youth, five of whom attended regularly. Youth were referred to the summer institute by at least one of several sources, including the crime district board, one or more neighborhood associations, the law club or the bar foundation itself, which invited teen court volunteers who lived in the community. Study findings provided much more than just a summary and evaluation of the programs as experienced by the adolescents and their parents/guardians. The narratives provided suggestions for future programs as well as insight about the community and about how the southeastern part of the community has managed to overcome social disorder. All field research, planning meetings, programs and interviews took place between February and December 2014. The law-related summer institute included a population of 11 females and eight males, and of the 19 participants, 12 adolescents – six females and six males – agreed to be interviewed.

I interviewed 12 adults, two of whom were summer institute law student volunteers (one female, one male); three were community leaders (all female, one of whom was also a parent); and seven were parents or guardians (of which only one was male). The ages of the parents ranged from 32 to 45 years old, while other guardians (including aunts and grandparents) were

older. All parents of summer institute participants and law club members were African American, with the exception of two of the mothers, who were of Asian and Samoan ethnicity.

In-person semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants and their parents as well as with law club and summer institute participants, parents and volunteers four months following the institute's completion. The IRB approval for this project came through two months after completion of the summer camp. I strategically scheduled interviews to begin at the start of the new school year to allow families time to complete their summer vacation or other plans. Interviews varied in length from 10 to 36 minutes. Some were conducted individually, others involved parent-child duos; and one involved the entire family. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and analyzed for consistent themes and thematic connections (Emerson et al. 1995). I engaged in open coding and created a lengthy list of categories while reading the transcripts. I then re-read all transcripts and used NVIVO qualitative analysis software to assign a list of nodes, creating some as I went along. While using NVIVO, I wrote analytical memos summarizing fieldnotes and connecting associated themes. Information from interviews was used to support the theories discussed in the review of the literature. Descriptive statistics were used to present demographic information for the club members and institute participants. I triangulated data by collecting information in several ways – descriptive statistical data derived from registration forms and surveys provided by the program administrator, transcriptions of observations made during planning meetings and the programs themselves, and in-person semi-structured interviews. By using limited descriptive statistics with observations and semi-structured interviews, I ensured the credibility of the data.

A brief discussion of the limitations and challenges of this study is in order. Interview participation was voluntary and began four months after the completion of the summer institute,

so contacting parents and teens and encouraging call-backs or scheduling interviews was a challenge. Selection bias may have occurred during the interviewing process. While I was satisfied with a 63 percent response rate from the summer institute participants, the parents and guardians served as the information gatekeepers.

More middle-class families expressed a willingness to be interviewed, but working class parents often provided permission to communicate with their child while abstaining from being interviewed. This supports Sampson's (2012) observation that those who reside in disorganized neighborhoods tend to be less trusting of outsiders. From the interviews, I learned that some teens spent the latter part of their summer out of town with relatives, on a family vacation or engaged in other camps or volunteer activities. I engaged the cooperation of two trusted community leaders (Karen, crime district board president, and Murrelle, director of the church outreach program and the community initiative) to request interviews on my behalf with parents and their children, which helped tremendously in the scheduling process. As a non-traditional student, my age more closely matched that of the parents. This may have played a role in getting the middle-class adults I interviewed to open up to me when discussing the programs, their neighborhoods and their lives, but I was still an outsider. I was not a part of their community or a member of their churches. In addition, I did not share their racial and ethnic background. Being associated with the foundation that had brought a law-related youth educational summer institute and law club into their community, however, provided me with the credibility I needed to gain trust of those I needed to interview. Scheduling interviews to accommodate busy schedules of parents or guardians and adolescents busy with school, extracurricular activities and sports-related activities proved to be difficult. The majority of the participants and their families are active with their local churches, which schedule weekend activities, and their remaining time

was occupied by prior commitments. One participant lacked telephone service and another had moved in the months following the summer institute. One institute participant's mother agreed, at first, to be interviewed, but later changed her mind.

The strength of the law club was parental participation. Several parents attended programs or encouraged their children to attend. They provided transportation and often waited outside in the car for the program to conclude. Two parents attended law club meetings regularly with their children, but choose to sit in the back to listen to guest speakers while their children participated at the front of the classroom. The parents who attended the summer institute mock trial or the courthouse tour and closing ceremony were also supportive. The children of parents who attended were some of the best behaved youth during the earlier part of the week and they thrived in the competitive environment. Not all parents have the scheduling freedom to attend programs in which they enroll their children, but parental support is important for both the success of youth and for the success of the programs (Hill and Craft 2003).

A limitation of the institute itself is that this was the first summer camp that the foundation had organized. There was a limited amount of time to plan the summer institute, resources were tightly budgeted and the usual glitches occurred. Some scheduled speakers were unavailable at the last minute, but substitutions were found in time to include all pertinent names in the institute schedule. Planning meetings were held often and around other existing projects. Regarding the after-school program, the meeting location of the law club was eventually changed to better accommodate more of the adolescent residents and was moved into a local community center located on the "other side" of the street or the northwestern side of the community, but closer to walking traffic, and the time of the law club meetings were adjusted to better fit some of the members' schedules.

In sum, this ethnographic research project examined the effectiveness of the understudied area of law-related youth educational programming for adolescents in marginalized communities. Interviews were conducted with 24 individuals who were involved in the two studied programs in a variety of roles. The data included the narratives from the interviews along with observational fieldnotes that were taken during the 10-month research process. This was the first time these programs – the law club and the summer youth legal institute – had been developed and implemented by the bar foundation, and as with any first attempt, a few rookie mistakes were made. While the strength of the programs was parental involvement, a limitation of the study of these programs was selection bias.

CHAPTER 6 THEMATIC RESULTS

Theories of place and neighborhood effects come to life in this South Louisiana black community. In this study of after-school and summer law-related youth educational programs for adolescents in marginalized communities, interviewees were asked evaluative questions about the programs and open-ended questions about the quality of the community in which the teens and their parents live, how well they knew their neighbors, and if they felt safe in their neighborhoods and in their homes. Common themes expressed during these interviews included thoughts on the summer institute and after school-program, how community operated in the target neighborhoods and how community members responded to neighborhood disorder. Sub-themes included critiques of the summer institute, career choices, self-reflection, extracurricular activities, effects of law-related education on participants, parental involvement, and the law club. The two other thematic groups were “disorder/the other side” (safety concerns, juvenile crime, disorder) and “order/community” (community, how things used to be and importance of education). Because these two themes were a common thread woven throughout the data and were of major importance to this study, I discuss them together in the next section.

A Community Divided

Adolescents attending the summer institute brought elements of their home environments with them. Those from parts of the community characterized by disorder tended to be more disruptive in class, while youth from the more tightly-knit parts of the community with more supportive parents brought with them confidence and better social behavior. By the time the mock trial began, all disorder among the group had dissolved; they behaved, followed instructions, dressed and acted appropriately, and fulfilled their assigned roles. Parents were on

hand to watch along with a videographer from a local television station. It was an impressive transformation.

The majority of the law club and summer institute participants during June 2014 lived in the studied South Louisiana black community. Those residing in the southeastern portion of the community belong to neighborhoods with resources, social capital and a sense of community under the protection of a vast network of crime watch groups, neighborhood associations and caring property owners who view their homes as investments in their families and community. Those living in the northwestern area of the community (or the “other side”) face blight, disorder, poverty and unfettered crime. Less than a community and more of a temporary and disordered place to stay, these rental properties experience high mobility. With no personal investment and no structure, these tenants and their neighbors fall victim to low informal social control and low collective efficacy. On the “other side” exists a labyrinth of rundown properties rented by transient folks, many of whom have Section 8 housing certificates.

As a means to better control crime on both sides of the street, two crime prevention districts have formed in the area in the last decade. The president of the oldest crime district in the area, which also includes the slum rental property area in the northwestern part, was direct with me about what her board hoped to accomplish by their investments: “We want them to learn something, to take positive experiences back home with them. Take pride in themselves and their community.”

Antonya, age 45, who is a home owner, law-enforcement officer, wife and mother of two, said the following about the “other side” of the community:

Most of the property owners just own the land and have someone else who manages it for them. They don’t live there. The only interest they have in the property is in the ability for it to bring in income, and there are always people who will rent. The Section 8 certificates are guaranteed money.

Antonya discussed the difficult cycle that many holders of Section 8 housing certificates experience. Because there is no one to ensure that rental apartments maintain certain standards after a tenant initially moves in, ultimately there is no one other than the landlord with whom to file complaints. As a result, complaints may jeopardize the well-being of the tenant, so the tenant remains quiet just to maintain his Section 8 housing certificate and, in turn, a roof over his head. The “other side,” according to Antonya, has no cohesiveness and no unity.

Antonya and her family live on the southeastern side of the community in one of the largest and most organized subdivisions in the area, which also has its own crime district. For two decades, she has lived next door to Karen, who presides over a separate crime prevention district. When asked why she stays, Antonya said: “What’s kept me there is not a financial issue but what I have in my neighbors.” She described the extended family she feels she has in her neighbors, the strong support system and the trust that has developed among the residents of the first four-to-six houses on her street, which in time has grown to a dozen. When her children were young, she worked in another city, and her husband handled 12-hour law-enforcement shifts in another parish. During that time, her daughter would get off the bus and go directly to her babysitter just two houses away: “My neighbor had a home-daycare center. It was wonderful. She raised both of my children. I didn’t have to worry about it. If I had to go to work early or if I needed to stay late, it was all systematically worked in.”

Supporting the sentiment of her next-door neighbor, the crime prevention district president told me that continuing to live in her home of 24 years is both a choice and an investment. “I choose to live here,” Karen explained. “I choose to raise my children here. I have an investment here, not just my home but also in my family. There’s a big difference in how we

do things as residents who live in the area versus a property owner who chooses to live outside the area.”

Trinell, the mother of Kyron, is a middle-aged educator and a resident of the community. She and her husband own a home in a neighborhood on the southeastern side of the community, but years ago, prior to this marriage, she resided on the “other side.” When asked about her community, she said:

I feel safe in my neighborhood. I think when people talk about [my community] I don't think they are specifically talking about this area; I think they are more talking about the apartment areas, and I think anytime you put a large group of people in a small area that you are more likely going to have problems than when people have more space.

Randy, age 44, is an educator and architect who characterized his neighborhood as quiet and devoid of crime. He and his wife have four children, two of whom no longer live at home. Their youngest, Da’Ryan, age 16, attended the summer institute. The family has lived in their home for 17 years, expanding it to 4,000 square feet in 2001. Their house is now the largest one on the block. When asked how he ensures the safety of his family, Randy said:

I guess the big picture is when people speak, they kind of characterize the entire area, but we've been living here for some time and we don't have any problems. The neighborhood for us is really quiet. When we have guests from out of town, and they step outside, they notice how quiet our street is. They always question, “Is it always so quiet in this neighborhood?” And we say “yes,” and yes ... [there may be] a disturbance here and there, but that comes with all neighborhoods.

Trionne has three boys between the ages of 12 and 16 – all of whom attended the summer institute. She works two jobs and her husband works one, but she spends a great deal of time taxiing her boys around to extracurricular activities. Her family of five has rented a duplex for more than 13 years on the southeastern side of the community. Trionne, who finds the time to be involved in her sons' lives, said about her neighborhood: “We have a low-crime area in comparison to the entire area that we live in. We've never had any problems with crime in terms

of break-ins. I don't believe you're 100 percent safe anywhere, but we haven't had any problems so far."

Teresa, age 34, lives on the edge of the main subdivision, but on the southeastern side. Her daughter, MaKayla, attended the summer institute. When I asked Teresa if she feels safe in her home of more than 13 years, the single mother of four shook her head slowly and said:

No, I'm just tired. People have broken into my vehicle before. We stay on a corner lot so there's a lot of passing through. Walking and going to the gym and stuff like that. I'm ready to move. We have an alarm system . . . Some people broke into our house about three years ago, and it was some young kids that live across the way . . . It was teenagers. We called them [the police] but they didn't do anything about it.

Quinceya, a teen mother and institute participant who lived on one of the roughest streets in a concentrated low-rent area of duplexes on the "other side" of the dividing highway, said the following when asked if she was concerned about safety on her street:

I mean, I don't worry about it, but I mean, half the time, I wish I was scared to walk outside, but . . . the people around us is, it's like too much, it's outrageous. Mostly a lot of violence and bad decisions are being made. Just untrained people. [*I asked: Untrained?*] I mean they are rude, disrespectful and just don't care about nothing, and like carry themselves in the wrong way. [*I asked: Best to avoid them?*] Yes, ma'am.

Since the 1980s, this studied South Louisiana black community has suffered much neglect, experiencing a downslide and earning its reputation as an unsafe, high-crime area with "rundown neighborhoods trashed by litter" (Bethencourt and Broussard 2014); however, more recently, the area has experienced positive changes. Murrelle, who is involved with a church outreach program in the area, suggested that disputes on the "other side" are territorial. Growth in violent crime occurred in the community after a major hurricane a few years ago, and around that time there was an influx of Hispanic residents. She estimated the community is 15 to 20 percent Hispanic today. "In 2008, there were eight murders within this 3.39 square mile area, and

that's when the city decided to establish a substation to deal with those murders," she said, telling me about the collaboration efforts of her organization, the local sheriff's office and the crime district. Murrelle provided examples of community policing, townhall meetings and tearing down the language barriers that exist between the Hispanics in the community and their African-American neighbors. More recently there was a decrease in violent crime in the area. She explained that her organization is actively working to change the community's negative image – that of a violent disjointed area of disorder.

Effects of the Law-Related Educational Programs on Participants

The primary effects of participation in the after-school and summer programs was the development of self-confidence and overcoming shyness and self-doubt, especially in those teens with less resources and those with less supportive home environments. For instance, Quinceya's summer institute experience made her feel good about herself. The institute taught her: "[t]hat I can do anything that I put my mind to, because mostly I'm just shy and in this little shell." Quinceya, who lives in an area of the community that is ripe with disorder, explained that the summer youth legal institute had encouraged her to overcome her shyness. She said that her participation in the mock trial had left a lasting impression on her:

My favorite part throughout the whole institute was the mock trial because, you know, I'm very shy, and for me to just get out there, and like, I don't know, kind of express myself, but just to do something that big was very exciting. And, like, it was kind of changing, not life-changing, but, like, it helped me a lot.

Kianta expressed his insecure side when he explained how he felt at the start of the institute: "At first I was nervous because I thought I was going to mess up. During the mock trial, I got excited and I just went through it and it was all good."

A parent who regularly attended law club meetings noticed changes that occurred within her nieces, both of whom are law club members and attended the summer institute. Karen said:

MaKayla is growing into her own self. She's not so much in [her sister's] shadow anymore. She's actually speaking up more. Kelly was always outgoing; MaKayla is starting to break out of her shell. She's blossoming, I guess we can say. And they have loved going to the law club meetings.

Irma, age 41, who is raising her daughter on her own, noticed a change since the start of Ryane's participation in the programs. "She's a little more outspoken. She [*chuckling*] likes to debate a little bit more, she doesn't accept a simple answer, she wants to carry it on and on."

The primary effect of the programs on participants with more supportive home environments and more social capital were to challenge their existing skill sets and knowledge base while encouraging teamwork, analytical processing and argument building. Trinell was impressed with the skills that her son, Kyron, learned at the summer institute: "I would love for him to be a part of the law club at school, if they have one, just because I thought that the comprehension and research skills and the speech or communication skills that they had to use at camp were all beneficial to him, even if he has no desire to be a lawyer."

Another effect of the program, which was also a theme that surfaced during interviews, was the power of positive thinking and the law. Few of the participants had given much thought to practicing law prior to their exposure to the programs. Ryane, age 14, said she would like to one day become "a teacher, a lawyer or, probably, a music producer." She and her mother, Irma, age 41, live in a small garden home in the next subdivision over from the crime district president. When asked what she learned about herself during the summer program, the high school freshman said:

I learned that I can be a lawyer if I actually put my mind into to, if I put in the work and the time and the effort, and focusing on what I need to do, and what needs to be done at a certain moment, and that I need to be serious and not just

play around all the time, and that there's a time for playfulness and there's a time for seriousness.

Quinceya, who is raising her young son in the northwestern part of the community, told me that her own mother "is incarcerated right now," but should be coming home soon. She and her son live with her father, her uncle and her little sister in a bright green duplex rental in one of the most rundown yet highly populated areas of the community. They were without telephone service at the time of the interview. From what I could tell, Quinceya's parents had little involvement with her education or her life decisions, while her grandmother was influential in her church involvement. She mentioned that her family was very supportive with helping to raise her son, however. The summer institute participant, a nearly six-foot-tall volleyball player, expressed how she overcame self-doubt during the institute:

At the beginning, I just didn't think I could do that. Like, I had to write a speech ... to make the case clear. That was hard for me. I thought, 'I cannot do this.' But I had a lot of help, a lot of support. And like when I finally did it, and said it, it was, like, awesome [*she said smiling*].

A willowy thin high school freshman being raised with his two younger sisters by his grandparents, Kianta expressed a similar self-realization after the completion of the summer institute. When asked what he had learned about himself, Kianta said:

I can do anything I put my mind to. At first I kept thinking, 'I can't do this, I don't wanta be a lawyer. And what if I mess up?' And once I started preparing, I realized I can do this. And if I mess up, it will be all good, because I can always get back up again.

Although he and his family do not reside in the studied community, Kianta was active with his church youth group, so many of his church friends attended the summer institute. He said that he would soon be moving to Oklahoma. Unfortunately, his grandmother was unable to attend the interview due to health reasons, but his grandfather had dropped him off at our agreed upon meeting location. Regarding his experience at the summer institute, Kianta said:

I think it's a good experience for young people to do over the summer, to keep them occupied, because, as we know, they have a lot of stuff that goes on in [this city] and it's a good and safe experience for people to learn what happens in the court system.

The importance of an education was a theme that resurfaced throughout the project's fieldnotes and interviews. During the summer institute, Gail, a former juvenile prosecutor, told the participants to "work hard and do your very best" from the start in high school. She explained the phrase "going get it," which meant working for the A and to establish a strong foundation. Gail stressed the importance of a strong GPA, especially in the high-competition environment that exists in high schools today.

During one of our conversations, Karen explained the need to make people aware of the consequences of not achieving an educational level where they can function in society. She summarized it with her sister's favorite saying: "Education will determine your address. Now, where do YOU want to live? You could live over here in these houses, or you could live on the 'other side' of that street in those apartments. Which would you rather?" She said it works the other way as well, where a person's address also determines the quality of education he gets. Low-income neighborhoods typically feature poor school districts. Karen explained that access to better employment equals the ability to obtaining housing in a better neighborhood with a better school district, in turn, making a better life for the next generation. "Everybody wants their kids to have a great school district. Education is very important," she said. This supports Sampson's (2012) claim of the enduring quality of neighborhood effects.

Summer Institute and Law Club Program Evaluations

Participants, parents and volunteers were encouraged to evaluate the summer institute and the law club during the follow-up interviews, resulting in both positive commentary and

constructive critiques. Allowing participants to provide feedback about their experiences with the law-related educational programs months after forming their initial impressions provided them time to fully appreciate the value of the programs compared to other summer activities in which they were involved, while also providing valuable information with which the programs can be improved to better serve adolescents who reside in marginalized communities. The following discussion provides a summary of these findings.

Participants

Some institute participants were, at first, less than enthusiastic about giving up a week of their summer vacation to attend a law-related educational summer institute, especially if attending the program was their parent's idea. They soon changed their minds, however, as Kyron, age 15, admitted: "I did not want to go [at first]. Because one, I really wasn't interested in law. She [mom] told me, with my speaking abilities, I might want to go, but I didn't want to because law wasn't anything I was interested in." Kyron is involved with the gifted and talented drama program at his high school.

Another initially reluctant participant was Da'Ryan, age 15. He said: "Well, when I first thought about it, I felt the same as any kid would, and I didn't want to go. But when I got to the place, it was actually a good experience. I knew most of the kids. We talked to the people, and everyone was friends during most of the thing, so it was fun." Although Da'Ryan and Kyron live two streets from one another, neither had realized that the other would be at the summer institute until the first day. The boys eagerly volunteered to be on the same team and worked well together. Da'Ryan's favorite part of the institute was the mock trial preparation: "I enjoyed – me and Kyron – we enjoyed putting the pieces of the puzzle together or [being] part of the defense

team and it was nice.” Kyron’s favorite part of the program was “the day before the mock trial when we got to talk to the witnesses. When they split up the different attorney teams ... the prosecutors ... we got to talk to the people who were reading the different stories about what they saw.” In general, participants liked the mock trial and the preparation for the mock trial the most. Once the youth understood the objective of the institute and became more familiar with the mock trial case, their competitive spirit became evident.

One institute participant, Sydney, age 12, felt the summer program was “perfect the way it was,” but others suggested ideas for improvement. When asked about the programs, MaKayla, age 13, said: “I liked attending the law club meetings, and my favorite part of institute was that we got to do the mock trial. I was on the defense side.” Her older sister, Kelly, age 14, was part of the prosecution. When asked about her initial impression of the institute, Kelly, who was transitioning between eighth grade and high school that summer, said:

When I first got enrolled in the summer camp I knew it was gonna be fun because Ms. Lynn [the program administrator] was putting it together, and when we got there it was even better because we had different volunteers come speak to us. We had law students volunteer with us the whole week.

MaKayla and Kelly accompanied their aunt, Karen, to most of the programs that were funded by the crime district board. As explained by Kelly:

This summer we went to a lot of camps, with teen court and law club, and we did a lot of volunteering, basically. My favorite camp this summer was the law institute because we got to learn to be like lawyers and stuff, and we got to go to the district court downtown. That was fun too.

Sydney, 12, explained why the mock trial and the final strategy meeting were her favorite parts of the institute:

It [the mock trial] actually gave us a feeling of what a trial would be like. And if you were a lawyer, or someone like a defendant or prosecutor, it gave us the feeling of what they go through and what they do, and what the accused person goes through and what other persons who defend the accused go through. My

other favorite part was kind of, well, probably the final strategy [meeting] for the mock trial because it actually it let you hang out with people and talk about what you knew, so you can make new friends and all that.

A high school sophomore, Quinceya admitted that without the law-related summer institute she would have been limited to church activities. She and her son, who was six months old at the time of the summer institute, lived with her grandmother all summer. Quinceya admitted that her favorite part of the institute was the preparation for the mock trial. “I had never went through anything like that before, so when I did it for the first time, and I liked it. For a moment it made me think about being a lawyer.”

Interview responses indicated that participants had mixed feelings about the program volunteers and speakers. Da’Ryan commented that the volunteers “were amazing” and he thought the institute should be extended to two weeks, “as interesting as it was.” When asked what she would change about the institute, Ryane, age 14, said:

I would probably add more volunteers. There were four volunteers [mock trial coaches] and they were helping individually, but everyone had questions. People would wait and try to ask their questions ... There were some things that I didn’t understand all the way, and I had to clear it up.

Providing a more critical eye, Kyron, age 15, said he would have liked to have had more guidance, while Jordan, age 14, said he needed more inspiration from the volunteers who served as mock trial coaches. Quinceya, age 15, found the speakers to be less exciting than she had hoped, and on more than one occasion during the summer institute she could be seen napping on her desk after lunch. During her interview, she suggested more activity was needed:

You know, all those speakers we had, we mostly had speakers. I guess you can make it more exciting. Every single day we were sitting there, bored, cause you know. We should move more. Just sitting for that long time made it not, like, entertaining. After dinner we got all tired and sleepy and stuff. And our minds would just drift off.

The general consensus regarding the institute's timeframe was that one week was not enough to prepare for a mock trial; however, several participants said that shorter days might be more conducive to teens. Kianta, age 14, complained about the 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. schedule: "The time was definitely too long for me. We woke up so early and then once we were there, it felt like it was never going to end." Kianta, who rode the church van to the institute each day, spent the better part of the morning just getting there. Kolby, age 12, who also rode the church van, said: "We need to be on time when we are picked up and dropped off. That way we can learn everything." Kolby and his brothers were dropped off as early as 7 a.m. at a neutral location, but the van did not arrive at the institute until 9 a.m., just after breakfast.

Ryane provided positive feedback on the institute's timeframe and volunteers:

We didn't have a long time to prepare for [the mock trial], but it still came out good – well, better than good – it came out organized, everybody knew what to do, everybody knew what to say, and everybody was in character. I think the fact that we had three actual attorneys who were there judging our case, and how they were ruling, and they had time to debate and everything.

Parents

Some parents were more involved in the educational lives of their children than others. Parental involvement with the studied law-related educational program was beneficial to positive outcomes for both the program and to the youth, as past research has suggested a link between parental involvement in children's education and achievement (Hill and Craft 2003). I made an interesting observation on the final day of the summer institute regarding parental involvement:

While all parents were invited to attend the field trip and the closing ceremonies, [only] parents of the kids who excelled in the program ... showed up. The parents of the kids who didn't listen, who started rumors, [and] who relied on name calling and misbehavior failed to show up. The kids who relied on the church bus for their transportation tended to be less polite, louder and more rambunctious than the other kids. (*fieldnote excerpt*)

Irma, a single-parent raising a teenage daughter, regularly attends meetings of the after-school program while she waits for her child. Irma commented about the law club:

I think it's a positive program ... [that] shows the kids the positive side of the law and encourages them to maybe consider that as an option for a career. I like that they have motivational speakers – their speakers are very motivating – and have good topics, and they encourage the students to interact, and that I like. A lot of times they talk about current issues that the kids can relate to, therefore increasing their interaction with the meetings. So I enjoy it, I enjoy sitting in and listening, and I think the kids enjoy attending the sessions as well.

When questioned about her thoughts on the summer institute, Irma explained how the timing of the institute worked well for her because she had recently returned to the workforce and was in need of childcare for her daughter:

I liked the fact that it [the summer institute] gave them something to do, because it's really hard – you know, as a working parent or for parents who work – to find something for kids past the age of 12. They don't offer summer camps, they aren't old enough to work, but there aren't any summer camps or anything for them to attend, so it kinda helped out with that – with her having a little something extra to do as well – and it kind of helped me out a lot too, because I had just started back to work, so it came right on time.

Irma shared the peace of mind she received knowing that her only child was involved with such a positive and educational activity during her summertime hours: “Just knowing she was doing something other than just sitting in front of the TV, or possibly doing something she didn't have any business doing ... it just kind of kept her occupied in a positive way, so I enjoyed that part.”

Teresa, age 34, expressed the importance of providing her daughter, MaKayla, age 12, with options: “It's a good opportunity for kids now to learn. When I was young, I didn't have the opportunity to go to summer camps, where I'm from, um, so that's why I, like, get her to do different things and learn different things.” In addition, Teresa vocalized the impact of providing law-related educational programming to youth: “It's something for the kids to learn at this age,

what goes on in court, the process of being in court, and you know, the lawyers and judges, we see this all the time on TV, but not in real life, so it's an experience for them to do."

A long-time educator, Trinell commented on the case materials that were made available to the institute participants: "[J]ust to see the information he was bringing home in the binder, and what they had to do with it, how they had to break it down, and then bring it back together to present their case, you know, I was very pleased and impressed with the task they had to complete." Kyron received the "best attorney" award during the closing ceremony because of his performance during the mock trial. When asked about her son's win, Trinell said: "I was just excited. I just thought the entire thing was so dynamic and I'd love to see something like this continue in this community."

Karen, crime prevention district president and guardian to her two teenage nieces, said:

They didn't want to go to that summer camp. They said, "We want our summer off. This is like going to school." The first day they came home and said, "Oh, that camp is so good!" I said, "Oh, be quiet." But they weren't the only ones. My other two neighbors' kids said the same thing. . . . And they had a ball starting with the first day. Whatever you guys did, it got their attention and when they put on the mock trial that day, oh my God, you should have heard them all week. They were really paying attention to their notes. They put forth the effort, I will say that.

Parents in the community noticed all the after-school and summer programs in the area, according to Karen, and they expressed their appreciation to their local crime district board:

For years I have watched my nieces, and we put them in different programs each summer at [the local university]. And that's not cheap, but that is an investment that I choose to make. But a lot of people don't have the resources to make that happen. So we were able to bring programs out to them. The parents appreciated it. They noticed the number of programs that were in the [community] area, which made a big difference.

Karen, who noted that the institute was well-organized, shared her vision of what she's like to see accomplished by future law-related educational programs:

Well, we'd definitely like to see them do it again this summer. And they can take the kids who went there last summer to the next level. They would be senior-level students at an advanced summer camp. I would like to see the bar foundation and the law club follow the kids till graduation. And just try to track them to see how they perform, and encourage them to go to law school.

Volunteers

Sheji, a law student coach and summer intern, would have liked to have more input prior to the start of the institute: "I wish, possibly, that I could have helped more in the early planning stages of it so that I could have more input on how it was overall setup – even before the students got there." She would have liked more time to work with the students, suggesting that if the institute had either been longer or organized differently, the students' mock trial performance might have been improved. She said:

... [W]e really didn't get to get into how to conduct the mock trial itself, like where to stand, and really have them practicing that. To teach it to them that so close to the final project [date], it's kind of like they just really didn't fully get it. Some of them picked up on it, some of them didn't. And I feel like the witnesses did good, but had a lot of time on their hands. They needed more structure.

Another law student volunteer and summer intern, Dejean, shared his first impressions of the institute and the participants: "My first impression of the camp was that it was a great one and beneficial to the students. I had said from the beginning that I wish I could have gone to a camp like this when I was young. It taught them a lot about being a lawyer, it got them more interested in the law and gave them a great perspective about what lawyers do." Dejean noted that institute participants who were assigned witness roles seemed less engaged than those involved with the prosecution or defense teams, thus he suggested that specific activities should be provided for the witnesses:

The witnesses were just kind of hanging out together. A lot of them – I guess they didn't understand what was going on or they were disinterested because a lot of the witnesses were being distracted by other things instead of practicing their role.

Members of plaintiff and defendant teams volunteers, while those who were witnesses included all who chose not to volunteer. Younger participants and those who were unfamiliar with law-related educational programs were more timid about volunteering, so this is how the groups came to be. Regarding Dejean, he was pleased with the result of the institute and the mock trial: “In the end, it all came together. By the final day, even the witnesses, they became more engaged, they began to practice their characters and some of them actually practiced accents to their characters, so it all worked out in the end.”

In sum, this chapter provided the thematic results of the data analysis that was conducted on the narratives of those who were interviewed about their experiences with two law-related youth educational programs and the observational fieldnotes that were taken throughout this study. In this project, “A Community Divided” is a combined discussion of two thematic groups: disorder/the other side, which included safety concerns, juvenile crime and disorder; and order/community, which included community, how things used to be and importance of education. The law-related educational programs had certain effects on the adolescents, including encouraging the development of self-confidence, overcoming shyness and self-doubt in teens with low resources and from highly disorganized home environments. Participants with more supportive home environments and more social capital felt challenged by the programs as they used their existing skill sets and knowledge base. Another effect of the program was the power of positive thinking and the law. In addition, an evaluation of the programs as provided by the participants, their parents and program volunteers is included.

CHAPTER 7 DISCUSSION

In this study, I observed the development and implementation of two law-related educational programs for adolescents residing in a concentrated area of a mid-size city in South Louisiana. This area had a reputation for being a high-crime, low-resource “oasis of blight,” so bringing the programs into the community provided a much greater impact than if the programs had taken place elsewhere. Numerous follow-up interviews were conducted with program participants and their parents to evaluate their experiences and to document their lives and the events that had taken place in the months since their participation in the programs. This project involved a study of the development of a law-related educational after-school law club and a summer youth legal institute for adolescents residing in a marginalized community. Findings suggested that parental involvement in the lives and education of the interviewed program participants vary by social class, but success of a program is usually determined, in part, by active parental involvement. Community leaders and program volunteers stressed the importance of education and of occupying the time of adolescents with positive experiences.

For the most part, the adults whom I interviewed accepted the law club and the summer institute with open arms, while the participating youth were a little more reluctant at first to become involved, but quickly overcame their shyness and some even expressed enthusiasm. The parents overwhelmingly provided positive feedback about the programs and were excited that their children had been given the opportunity to participate in them. Some parents noticed the quality of the educational programs, while others were just eager to have childcare services provided at no cost.

The local non-profit foundation had responded to a request by the crime prevention district board, which wanted to bring such a program into the community to provide options for

local residents. Rather than forming their own community program, the crime prevention district board chose to fund an existing project administered by a foundation with an experienced staff and the necessary resources at its disposal. The two-year agreement between the two entities ensured continuity of programming and a building of trust and collective efficacy among the crime district, the foundation, the youth and their parents, which, as suggested by Sampson (2012), is an excellent way to create community and to combat crime.

A few themes emerged during this research, including the effectiveness of the studied law-related educational programs on participating youth. Institute participants, their parents and the volunteers expressed enthusiasm for the law-related education programs during their interviews. Law club members enjoyed listening to guest speakers who provided information about careers in the law. Institute participants enjoyed preparing for and participating in the mock trial, which was the key component of the summer program. No matter if law was an ultimate career goal or not, the law-related educational program participants took with them new experiences, skills, self-confidence and friends. As to be expected, because of the social bond theory, adolescents experiencing more parental involvement in all areas of their lives provided more positive feedback on the programs (Hirschi 2004; Hirschi 1969).

Two of the sub-themes falling under the effectiveness of the programs included “self-reflection” and “effects on participants,” which included the power of positive thinking and instilling confidence. Institute participants from higher social classes appeared to excel in the interactive portions of the programs, as they brought with them more social capital or skills, such as knowledge of drama or theatre, while youth from working class or poor families experienced an increase in confidence and self-esteem, several of whom were new to the interactive team-building and critical thinking that is characteristic of law-related educational programs (Marri

2010). Further, the law-related educational programs provided the participants the opportunity to form attachments with peers and to gain exposure, as explained by the social bond theory (Hirschi 2004). Consistent with other law-related education studies, legal professional role models helped the participants form social bonds with adults (Wright 1994). This social bond formation with both peers and positive adult role models encouraged the adolescents to adopt conventional values (Wright 1994; Hirschi 2004; Hirschi 1969).

A discussion of the sub-themes of “career choices” and “extracurricular activities” will follow. While several institute participants considered law as a career after experiencing the programs, the majority maintained their original career aspirations. Students who were already involved in other programs organized by the bar foundation, including teen court and the law club, expressed excitement and enthusiasm about the summer institute. Many of the interviewed adolescents were involved with church activities, but each had varied outside interests, including music, drama or theatre, sports, dance team, academic clubs or community volunteering. Involvement with community organizations is yet another way to reinforce conventional values and social bond formation (Hirschi 2004).

Most of the adolescents understood the “importance of an education,” which was a reoccurring theme throughout the project. Education stressed by guest speakers during the law club and the summer institute. In addition, one interviewed parent mentioned that the level of education one attains is closely linked to the quality of neighborhood one can afford, and vice versa, which led to a discussion of the concept of being a product of one’s neighborhood, which supports theories of place and disorganization (Sampson 2012). The importance of starting high school with a strong grade point average was emphasized during the summer institute by one of the speakers, and this message was reiterated by some of the interviewed program participants.

Theories of place and neighborhood effects were evident in this South Louisiana black community, and the delineation of disorder/“the other side” versus order/community was as easy to find as it was to look to the left and to the right of the highway that divided the community. Neighborhood associations provided a means of support and communication that strengthens bonds among neighbors and builds communities, which increases formal and informal social control resulting in more awareness and less crime opportunities. Organized communities, according to social disorganization theory, have community solidarity, cohesion and integration (Sampson and Groves 1989; Sampson et al. 1997), all of which the left side of the highway, or the southeastern portion of the community, has accomplished. Neighborhoods lacking in solidarity among residents and without cohesion, much like the Section 8 housing certificate and rental property area on “the other side,” have been found to be ineffective in combating crime. The importance of collective efficacy, including knowing one’s neighbors and maintaining open communication with the homeowners’ associations, in combating crime in socially organized neighborhoods is another theme that shines through interviews with residents of the neighborhoods bordering the southeastern side of the community.

Investing in the youth of the community and cleaning areas of blight were the two main goals of the crime prevention district board that was held responsible for the extra policing and upkeep of the studied community. Investments were made through the provision of grants to organizations to form within the community after-school and summer programs, including the law-related youth educational programs that were examined in this study. The crime board’s efforts to decrease crime in its community by controlling the visible signs of disorder are supported by Kelling and Wilson’s (1982) broken windows thesis, which emphasizes the physical appearance of neighborhoods and holds that the first sign of decay is an indicator that

disrepair of the whole neighborhood is imminent. The crime district board's efforts to clean areas of blight, according to Karen, by holding community gatherings that encourage picking up trash and mowing vacant lots or having local police remove abandoned cars are measures to prevent neighborhood deterioration while building community pride. As evident from an excerpt of my fieldnotes recorded after driving around the community in September 2014 with Karen, the crime district board president, the clean-up efforts were really making a difference, especially compared to my first visit to the community, which was made six months earlier in March 2014:

There was much less blight, less garbage, no abandoned cars on blocks and no Pit bulls tied up on stakes outside of apartments. The broken windows had been replaced with plywood. The lawns were mowed. Some areas still looked rundown, but much cleaner than the last time we had driven through the area. This was the effort of a summer of community policing and neighborhood cleanup walks and hiring extra patrols. The local court has a new blight court and local ordinances prohibit abandoned cars, so Karen took advantage of this by encouraging her board to actively complain about abandoned cars on the streets and in front yards.

Class differences were evident among the institute participants who came from several different neighborhoods, social classes and maturity levels and attended numerous schools located mostly outside the community. This was significant because no matter which neighborhood they came from, by the end of the week, all participants had learned lessons from the summer youth legal institute, supporting law-related education's applicability to a wide spectrum of students (Wright 1994). Those families residing on the more organized side of the street included a mix of middle and working class. Not surprisingly, middle-class families expressed during their interviews that living in their community was a choice. They feel close to their neighbors and they watch each others' children, evidence of collective efficacy. They support their children's educational endeavors. On the other hand, one working-class two-parent family who enrolled her three sons in the summer institute rented for 12 years a duplex

apartment, which is located on the edge of the community. The mother has two part-time jobs, the father has one full-time, and together they support a family of five. Another working-class one-parent household is raising her four children on a secretary's salary. Her 12-year-old daughter attended the summer institute and together they live on the opposite edge of the same neighborhood. Unfortunately, she is a homeowner who is tired of dealing with car break-ins and random crime in her area of the neighborhood, but cannot afford to make a move. She encourages her children to do well in school, but admits that often she misses her daughter's basketball game because she just cannot get off of work.

All who reside on the southeastern side, regardless of social class, were aware of the disorder of the "other side," and they believed crimes in their neighborhoods were being committed by teens from the "other side." They warn their children to do well in school so that they could be free to choose where they lived, and would not end up having to live in one of those "other side" apartments. As mentioned earlier by Karen:

Education will determine your address. Now, where do YOU want to live? You could live over here in these houses, or you could live on the 'other side' of that street in those apartments. Which would you rather?

Not everyone has the luxury of being able to relocate if the neighborhood succumbs to disorder. For the most part, those who reside in the rundown apartments do so because that is what they can afford. The high level of mobility means most people keep to themselves and are trusting of their neighbors while less informal social control exist, and fewer witnesses will report suspicious activity that takes place on the street, which is evident of social disorganization theory (Shaw and McKay 1967).

Without neighborhood associations to protect anyone on the "other side," tenants have less protection from their landlords and are forced to live in less than ideal locations without

issuing complaints for fear of eviction. As evident by theories of place, the “other side” remained a high crime area regardless of the ebb and flow of the residents who moved in and out of the apartment units (Sampson 2012). The impoverished families who reside on the “other side” deal with structural limitations daily, yet still must to raise their children or sometimes grandchildren. If mere survival is a struggle, it can be assumed that helping children with homework or attending school functions will not be a priority. While several of the students who participated in the summer institute were from low-income families and they agreed to be interviewed about the program, no parents or guardians of this social class attended the mock trial or the field trip, and none agreed to be interviewed.

One last sub-theme under “order/community” was “the way things were,” in which adult interviewees recalled specific examples of how the communities in which they now live vary from the ones they grew up in as children. Middle-class adults with fond memories of growing up in close-knit small-town communities vocalized the importance of raising their children in safe neighborhoods where they knew and trusted their neighbors. They valued building communities and forming bonds with their neighbors, and said they noticed a decrease in informal social control within today’s neighborhoods. The interviewed parents suggested that the changing community dynamics provide an uncertain future for their children, compared to when they were growing up, especially with less stay-at-home moms and less available support from extended family, as in generations past.

The efforts of the crime district were integrated with the law club and summer institute. The crime district president attended many of the law club meetings, but while she was unable to attend the summer institute mock trial, she consulted with neighbors who had. She referred many of her neighbors to the summer institute during the application process. Karen provided her ideas

of what she wanted to take place at the summer program during the planning phase of the summer institute, and again during her post-program interview. At the end of the summer, a crime prevention district board meeting was held and representatives from all funded programs, including the law club and summer institute, made presentations and submitted reports about the completion of their activities or summer programs.

By providing learning opportunities for area youth and by encouraging them to continue their education, the crime district board intended to improve the future of the community. The law club and summer institute are not designed to improve the community per se, such as ridding the area of blight. Instead, the crime district sponsored other programs, such as “neighborhood clean-up days,” so that parents and their children could be more invested in their neighborhoods and so that the garbage and blight could be addressed, thus preventing the ultimate fate of the broken windows thesis (Kelling and Wilson 1982).

While efforts are being made to rid the blight, the rental apartments are still rundown in the low-income areas. Middle-class parents remind their children often that their education determines their address, and the “oasis of blight” is a visual reminder of the importance staying in school. Often, in attempt to keep their children safe, parents enroll their children in team sports or in music, drama and theatre or in other activities that keep them away from the street culture or potentially anyone who might be a negative influence, as supported by Hirschi’s (2004) social bond theory, which suggested that involvement with community organizations is another way to reinforce conventional values and social bond formation.

Adults interviewed expressed safety concerns about the major highway that divides the community. Along this major highway are open ditches, lack of sidewalks and few streetlights. Children cross the street to get to the ballpark on the northwestern side of the community and

families cross in both directions to get to school and city bus stops. A community initiative center, also located on the “other side,” attracts pre-teens and teens from throughout the area to its after-school tutoring sessions, little library and book lending programs. This center is an attempt to build community and it was established on the “other side” for a reason. It is a ray of hope in an area that has experienced its share of gun violence resulting in injury or death. Such issues are common in communities that suffer from disorder, and according to social disorganization theory, youth who grow up in such an environment are likely to be considered at-risk for engaging in delinquency, substance abuse or other antisocial behavior (Wright 1994).

In sum, the current project studied a law-related educational after-school law club and a summer youth legal institute for adolescents residing in a marginalized community. Several themes emerged during this research, including the effectiveness of the studied law-related educational programs on participating youth, along with the sub-themes of “self-reflection,” “effects on participants,” “career choices,” and “extracurricular activities.” The themes of “disorder/“the other side” and “order/community,” which included the sub-themes of the “importance of an education” and “the way things were,” made up the discussion about the divided community. Findings suggest parental involvement in the lives and education of those program participants who agreed to be interviewed varied by social class. In addition, institute participants from higher social classes excelled in the interactive portions of the programs, as they brought with them more social capital or skills, while youth from working class or low-income families experienced a self-confidence boost.

CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this project was multi-fold: It examined a marginalized black community in South Louisiana; it documented the development and application of two programs held in the community for adolescents of varying social classes; and it investigated the effectiveness of law-related youth educational programming when used in a community of varying levels of social disorganization. The studied community from where the youth in the programs reside was structurally similar to the neighborhoods described in Pattillo's (2013) *Black Picket Fences*, all in close proximity with areas of middle-class that border slum areas, all segregated in one large area and apart from the majority of the non-black neighborhoods. One of the few elementary schools located in the community was established the year before this study began, but most of the participants of the law club and the summer institute attended middle and high schools outside the community, ranging from magnet schools to public schools to charter schools. The majority of the program participants were from the more organized areas of the community. Only a handful of the adolescents live on the far northwestern corner, or the "other side," of the community, and even fewer of those agreed to be interviewed. The solidarity of those who reside in the southeastern portion of the community was highly evident, and the youth from these subdivisions did well in both programs. The disorder of the "other side," or the northwestern part of the community, was visible by the near invisibility of their youth in the programs, which were made readily available at no charge to anyone from the community who was interested in participating. While some program participants expressed hesitation prior to attending the summer institute, participants grew more enthusiastic after the completion of the first day. Only one camp participant expressed disengagement with the afternoon speakers when she chose to nap after lunch. During our interview, I realized that her exhaustion had more to do with her

busy schedule and new baby than with the quality of our program. When the institute ended each day, she rode the church bus to the community initiative building to volunteer with another summer program until early evening, after which she would return to the home of her grandmother, who cared for her infant son. The prosecution and defense teams worked well together, but the witnesses were less engaged. Some of the pre-teen boys were easily distracted and wheeled around in their chairs during trial preparation. One pre-teen boy who was assigned the role of witness said, when interviewed, he became bored after he had memorized his script. He, in turn, suggested more structured individualized coaching as a remedy.

Findings suggested that law-related youth educational programming was effective for all involved in the program, regardless from which social class, gender, age group or school the adolescents belonged. Sampson (2012), Pattillo (2013), Kelling and Wilson (1982), and Sampson and Wilson's (1995) theories of place, social class and disorder worked together to explain the cultural and structural frames of the studied community, the families who live there and the adolescents who participated in the law-related educational programs that are the heart of this study. Hirschi's (2004) social bond theory helped to explain individual-level influences of the programs on the youth.

Critics of the program might suggest that, with such a small group, the needs of neighborhood youth might not have been met; however, no young person was turned away and law-related youth educational programming has been found applicable to a wide spectrum of students, from gifted to at-risk to delinquent (Wright 1994). There initially was more interest expressed in the law club when it started meeting in March 2014, and the number of attendees varies each month. Limitations such as lack of transportation and time conflicts occurred. To respond to this, the law club meeting times were moved from 4:15-5:30 p.m. to 5-6:30 p.m.

Attendance increased once the location of the law club meetings was moved to a community initiative building located on the “other side” of the community. Students who were already receiving tutoring assistance could now just go downstairs to attend the law club meeting at 5 p.m. In addition, the new location posts meeting dates of the law club, and this serves as an additional reminder to those kids without access to email or telephones. Reminder letters about the meetings were mailed to all parents, but a club like this is not intended for a large group. As for the summer institute, the camp was limited to 20 participants so that each child would receive adequate attention and so that expenses would stay on budget.

Attendance at the next institute could be expanded, depending on demand. Because smaller classrooms of youth are easier to command the attention of and to maintain control of, it is expected that attendance will continue to be limited to a small group. In this way, each child could receive two institute T-shirts, a binder filled with educational materials, breakfast and a catered lunch each day, transportation to the field trip, and transportation to and from the institute each day for those who required it. Snacks and bottled water were also provided.

This program could be potentially expanded to meet the additional needs of youth; however, these programs were funded by the local crime district with the understanding that the topics of law and crime prevention would be the focus. Based on the topics that came up during interviews and discussions during the programs, future topics that should be addressed are teen dating violence and a self-defense demonstration as these topics fall under the crime prevention arm of the local crime district’s concern, which up until now had not been addressed. The original focus at the law club was career options and lessons in the law. In addition, the club provided school supplies to the members and to a school supply giveaway event in the community. In addition, the law club had a presence during a “trick-or-treating with the officers”

event for the last two Halloweens, where neighborhood children were invited to a community center on the southeastern side to visit with friends, to receive candy and treats from participating sponsors, and to meet with local police officers.

Recommendations for Future Youth Programs

Based on my own observations and on feedback from the institute participants, I have several recommendations for the organizers of the next summer institute. Initially, many of the adolescents had mixed feelings about attending the legal institute, but were present because of a choice that was made by their parent or guardian. Each student was referred to the summer institute, as promotion for the new program was primarily by word-of-mouth and through an email list of past teen court volunteers who resided in the area. Once the summer institute participants understood the purpose of the program, they were placed in groups and became more comfortable with their peers, they were less reluctant, became more engaged and even thrived in the competitive environment of the mock trial. In addition, the participants expressed positive comments about breakfast and lunch, which was provided daily.

The majority of the institute participants wanted the next institute to be extended to two weeks, while at the same time they requested shorter days. Two participants requested more physical activity or movement during the day, especially after lunch, to break up the afternoon. Members of the defense or prosecution groups were heavily engaged during the teamwork exercises, but the witnesses were less involved. Each witness had an individual task, so while they worked side-by-side, very little teamwork was involved, and some participants became distracted. In addition, those participants who did not volunteer to be on the defense or prosecution were left by default to serve as a witness, so members of this group might have been

less interested in what was going on because they felt less invested in their assigned role. To resolve this issue, future institutes should discuss the importance of the role of the witness (assuming the groups will be broken into this same three-group format). A discussion of witness responsibility, ethics, safety, risks faced by witnesses as well as specific laws that protect witnesses would be useful. Because the roles of the witnesses are scripted, the participants' assignments were to memorize their lines and to build a character. Incorporating a 30-minute or more acting seminar that featured improvisational techniques would be both useful and entertaining for this group.

I suggest that adding a public speaking seminar that incorporates non-verbal communication for the entire group would be helpful. Many of the participants were unaware of important concepts such as eye contact, posture, body language, voice control, enunciation, all of which are important parts of communicating one's message in a courtroom setting or anywhere else. This lesson could also incorporate interview etiquette, if time allows.

Days prior to the start of the institute, an orientation and training session should be held for staff and volunteers so that each person is clear about his or her assigned role in the summer institute and the goals of the program. While many volunteers are well-versed in their topic areas, others who will be working with the adolescents – including any new volunteers, law students, interns and mock trial preparation coaches – may need more guidance with handling disruptive students so that any corrective action of the youth does not become more of a distraction than the misbehavior. In addition, audio/video limitations of the facility should be determined prior to the start of the summer youth legal institute.

A few recommendations for the law club program include ideas that surfaced during interviews. Presentations about career options and personality tests have taken place along with

community service project; however, considering the mission of the crime prevention district board is to prevent crime, it seems reasonable to include a future presentation by Crime Stoppers on the law club agenda. Future discussions can include reporting crimes, staying safe, crime prevention and teen dating violence, as was suggested by Karen. A self-defense demonstration might be useful, especially because most of the regular law club attendees are adolescent girls.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should include longitudinal case studies of youth participating in law-related educational programming. Regarding the studied program taking place in a black community in South Louisiana, funding was approved for a second summer institute and the after-school law club will continue through the summer of 2015. As a future research project, both new and returning institute participants as well as volunteer presenters should be interviewed immediately after the completion of the 2015 program. Another area for future research would be an examination of the crime prevention district board, or a comparison of the two existing crime districts in this community. One last idea for further research is a closer investigation of other programs, some of which are grassroots in nature, which were developed for this particular black community in South Louisiana and engage youth who reside in marginalized communities.

In sum, this study examined a marginalized black community in South Louisiana in which two law-related youth educational programs that featured group mentoring were developed for adolescent residents of this community. The majority of the program participants were from the more organized areas of the community, while several adolescents live on the “other side” of the street. Theories of place, social class and disorder worked together to explain

the cultural and structural frames of the studied community, the families who live there and the adolescents who participated in the law-related educational programs that are the heart of this study. In addition, social bond theory helped to explain individual-level influences of the programs on the youth. An understanding of these theories along with narrative feedback provided by program participants provided a more complete picture of this South Louisiana black community and the challenges that are being faced by residents. While law club members provided only positive feedback, I would like to suggest that an aspect of crime prevention should be added to the program to better fit the crime district board's goals (crime prevention and the law). My suggestions are to add discussions on the topics of crime prevention, teen dating violence and personal safety along with offering a self-defense class. Regarding the summer institute, I offer the following recommendations for future programs:

1. Participants requested a two-week camp, but shorter days
2. Add a special seminar and additional coaching for witnesses
3. Hold an orientation and training session for staff and volunteers
4. Rules of conduct should be agreed upon at the start of the camp
to counteract potential discipline issues and to encourage group bonding
5. The participants requested more physical activity, especially after lunch
6. Add a public speaking course for everyone
7. Schedule an improvisational techniques seminar for the witnesses.

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APPENDIX A
IRB APPROVAL

ACTION ON PROTOCOL APPROVAL REQUEST



Institutional Review Board
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair
130 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
P: 225.578.8692
F: 225.578.5983
irb@lsu.edu | lsu.edu/irb

TO: Michael Barton
Sociology

FROM: Dennis Landin
Chair, Institutional Review Board

DATE: August 1, 2014

RE: IRB# 3514

TITLE: A Study of After-School and Summer Programs

New Protocol/Modification/Continuation: New Protocol

Review type: Full Expedited **Review date:** 7/31/2014

Risk Factor: Minimal Uncertain Greater Than Minimal

Approved **Disapproved**

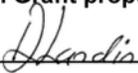
Approval Date: 7/31/2014 **Approval Expiration Date:** 7/30/2015

Re-review frequency: (annual unless otherwise stated)

Number of subjects approved: 25

LSU Proposal Number (if applicable): _____

Protocol Matches Scope of Work in Grant proposal: (if applicable) _____

By: Dennis Landin, Chairman 

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –
Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.
8. SPECIAL NOTE:

**All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at <http://www.lsu.edu/irb>*

APPENDIX B
CONSENT FORMS

PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM

This study, A STUDY OF AFTER-SCHOOL AND SUMMER PROGRAMS, is being conducted in Baton Rouge. The Principal Investigator is: Dr. Michael Barton, Assistant Professor, LSU Dept. of Sociology, 225-578-5311. The co-investigator is: Pamela Labbe Graduate Student, LSU Dept. of Sociology, Phone: 225-205-5042.

The objective of this study is to document the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation's initiative to form a law club and a summer camp for local youth who reside in the Gardere area. The law club and the summer camp feature a law-related education curriculum and mentoring specifically for middle and high school students. The development and growth of this law club is being documented to help the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation determine the needs of local area youth and for program evaluation.

This study focuses on program participants (minors and their guardians or parents) because participation and involvement of young people with this after-school program determines the success of these programs.

Participation is voluntary, and a child will become part of the study only if both child and parent agree to the child's participation. At any time, either the child may withdraw from the study or the child's parent may withdraw the child from the study without penalty. There are no known risks to adults or children participating in this study.

I will use open-ended interview questions. I will ask to audio-record the interviews and will seek your permission to do so. This will also be voluntary on your part, with no penalty for declining.

The interviews and observations will be kept confidential by the research team. Unless legally compelled to do so, we will not identify adults or children specifically by name. There is no cost for participation in the study, and there is no payment or compensation to the adults or children for participation.

Signatures:

The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigator. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, contact Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair, Institutional Review Board, Louisiana State University, 130 David Boyd Hall, Baton Rouge, LA 70803, 225-578-8692 phone, irb@lsu.edu, www.lsu.edu/irb.

I will allow my child to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form.

Printed Name of Parent

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Date

[FOR USE IF PARENT IS UNABLE TO READ]

The parent/guardian has indicated to me that he/she is unable to read. I certify that I have read this consent form to the parent/guardian and explained that by completing the signature line above he/she has given permission for the child to participate in the study.

Name Printed

Signature of Reader

Date

CHILD ASSENT FORM

Pamela Labbe, who works for the Baton Rouge Bar Association and is a graduate student at Louisiana State University, is doing a research project on after-school and summer programs, and specifically the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation Law Club and the Summer Youth Legal Institute. Pamela would like to ask for you to be a part of this project. You won't have to do anything you don't already do. You might sometimes talk with Pamela about your law club activities or about what you learned while attending the Summer Youth Legal Institute, your opinion of the programs, and what you hope to become as you grow up. You can talk by yourself or with other kids or with your parent or guardian. You will never have to talk with Pamela if you don't want to. You can stop at any time you want without getting into trouble.

I, _____, agree to be in a study about the law club and/or about the Summer Youth Legal Institute. I will not have to do anything I don't already do. If I want, I will talk with Pamela Labbe about my law club / summer camp experience, what I think of the programs, and what I hope to become as I grow up. I will never have to talk with Pamela if I don't want to. I can stop at any time I want without getting into trouble.

Child's Signature: _____ Age: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

A STUDY OF AFTER-SCHOOL AND SUMMER PROGRAMS

This study is being conducted to fulfill the requirements of a master's thesis (SOCL 8000) at Louisiana State University. If you have questions about the study, contact the Principal Investigator, Michael Barton (Assistant Professor, LSU Department of Sociology, 129 Stubbs Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803, mbarto3@lsu.edu), or Co-Investigator, Pamela Labbe, a graduate student with the Louisiana State University Department of Sociology and an employee of the Baton Rouge Bar Association; email: plabbe3@lsu.edu / phone: 225-205-5042.

Purpose of the study: The development and growth of a local Law Club and the Summer Youth Legal Institute are being documented to help the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation determine the needs of local area youth and to determine if the law-related educational programming that it is using as part of both programs are proving beneficial to the participants.

Subject inclusion: All stakeholders of the law club and the summer institute, including administrators of the law club; funders of the project; adult volunteer who assist with the club; and guest speakers. Specific interviews or conversations will be held with youth participants along with their parents or guardians to determine what effect (if any) these programs had on the participating youths. Two sets of follow up interviews will be conducted with the same groups of children and adults to document their progress after participation in the summer program (and in their continued participation with the law club).

Study procedures: Observations made while attending both programs through field notes and conducting open-ended interviews of participants and their parents or guardians. I will ask for permission to audio record interviews.

Benefits: By agreeing to be interviewed for this project, you will make an important contribution to social science research of after-school or summer programs and you can help us determine a better understanding of the process of developing after-school or summer programs and the needs of the participating youth.

Risks: There are no known risks associated with participating in this study. You may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time. If you do withdraw, the digital audio files and other documentation will be destroyed.

Privacy: Results of the study may be published, but no names or identifying information will be included in the publication. All subject identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

Signatures:

As part of the interview process, and a legal requirement, we are asking you to sign a legal release form, which facilitates two agreements.

- (1) The first part is your agreement to participate in the interview; this will be signed after the informational meeting in which the process is explained to you. By signing this form,

you are admitting that this study has been discussed with you and all of your questions have been answered. This study has been approved by the LSU IRB. For questions concerning participant rights, please contact IRB Chair Dr. Dennis Landin, 130 David Boyd Hall, Baton Rouge, LA 70803, Phone: 225-578-8692, Fax: 225-578-5983, or irb@lsu.edu. **I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form. I have received an explanation of the study. I understand that my participation in this study is strictly voluntary.**

Name of Participant (Printed)

Signature of Participant

Date

(2) The second signature agreement transfers the rights of the contents of the interview to Louisiana State University. Signing this form will make it possible for this graduate student to consult your interview and other collected data and use their contents for research purposes. The student conducting this interview will carefully read this form to you and explain the implications of its contents. Once this project is completed, we will be glad to discuss the interview process with you and to identify areas we can strengthen.

I agree to be interviewed and/or to have my discussion contributions recorded using an audio recording device.

- Please use my name and my organization's name in the study publications.
- Please keep my name and my organization's name CONFIDENTIAL in the study publications.

Name of Participant (Printed)

Signature of Participant

Date

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

VITA

Pamela Anne Labbe, a resident of Baton Rouge, La., for the last two decades, received her bachelor's degree at the University of Southwestern Louisiana (University of Louisiana at Lafayette) in 1991 and her master's degree at Louisiana State University in mass communication in 1995. After working in the communications field for years, she decided to enter graduate school in the Department of Sociology at Louisiana State University. She is a candidate to receive her master's degree in May 2015. She has worked for the Baton Rouge Bar Association for the last 15 years.