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SPEAKERS

Juwan Bennett, Jenn Tostlebe, Jose Sanchez



Jose Sanchez 00:14

Hi, everyone, welcome back. My name is Jose Sanchez. I will be your host for today of The Criminology Academy, where we're criminally academic. Unfortunately my co-host, Jenn Tostlebe won't be joining us today as she had to be called away to tend to some matters. But in this episode we'll be speaking to doctoral candidate and the American Society of Criminology's is 2020. Gene Carte student paper competition second place winner, Juwan Bennett about his winning paper on the impacts of perceived legitimacy and perceived opportunities on delinquency.



Jose Sanchez 00:50

Juwan Z. Bennett is a PhD candidate in the Department of Criminal Justice at Temple University. He is originally from the Philadelphia area and received his bachelor's in criminal justice from Temple University, graduating Magna Cum Laude in 2013. During his undergraduate studies, he was a Ronald E. McNair Research Scholar and worked with Education Professor Dr. James Earl Davis examining how alternative education programs can be successful at preventing delinquency. Juwan's research interests include the relationships between education and crime/delinquency, developmental and life course criminology, and juvenile life without parole. Juwan is also the co-founder of the Temple University Urban Youth Leadership Academy, a program designed to equip the next generation of leaders and is a recipient of multiple prestigious awards including the ASC

Gene Carte Student Paper Award (Second Place), the Bill & Melinda Gates Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research Diversity Scholarship, the Ford Predoctoral Fellowship Honorable Mention List, The Temple University Diamond Award, and the Temple University Faculty Award. A fun fact about Juwan is that he is an accomplished musician, performing live for President Obama. Welcome, Juwan, thank you for joining me today. You're quite the accomplished scholar.



Juwan Bennett 02:19

Thank you so much for having me. And I just feel like now, I didn't feel any pressure, but after that great introduction, I feel like I have to live up to the introduction. So maybe hopefully, I'll say something important that people can take away from my conversation today.



Jose Sanchez 02:33

Oh, I'm sure you will. And I don't know that I put us up there with performing in front of Barack Obama.



Juwan Bennett 02:40

That was in my old days. I went to a music High School. And so part of my high school, Barack Obama came to Pennsylvania Convention Center. And we got to sing and I was a part of the little jazz group. And we had to, you know, play a little dinner afterwards. And so that was like my probably five seconds of fame, my Barack Obama story.



Jose Sanchez 03:03

That's a lot more than I can say. So for today's episode, so we're gonna talk about legitimacy and compliance. We're going to talk about your award winning paper for ASC. And then we're going to talk, we want to talk a little bit about your involvement with the Inside-Out program.



Juwan Bennett 03:23

Yeah.



Jose Sanchez 03:23

So with that being said, let us move into sort of this more general discussion about

legitimacy and compliance. And so we've discussed legitimacy a couple of times now, on two different episodes, actually. So Episode Four with Lee Slocum and Andres Rengifo, and Episode 16, which will come out soon, with Ajima Olaghere, but the legitimacy in the context of your work, we'll be discussing it is based more on Tom Tyler's work on legitimacy, which can be thought of as the belief that authorities and systems are proper and just. In other words, legitimate authorities and institutions are those who have officially sanctioned structural power and exercise their power fairly, and can justify the actions to those that are being affected by their decisions. Does that sound like a fair sort of definition of Tyler's work?



Juwan Bennett 04:26

Yeah, I mean, legitimacy is just this concept that Tyler really writes about. It is just really just this the this belief, that individuals believe in authorities and I think the key word for my paper, not only authority, but systems that they're proper and they're just. And that people will have a fair interaction with law enforcement and systems, whether it be transparency, mutually respect, and just an overall kind of a gainful respect for the process. So yeah, I would definitely say that's kind of the just of what Tyler talks about his work, his seminal work.



Jose Sanchez 04:58

Great. So how people develop their perceptions surrounding legitimacy of the police and institutions.



Juwan Bennett 05:06

Yeah, I think that's really interesting. So people develop their legitimacy in interactions in a lot of different ways, primarily two ways: direct experiences, whether they've been in direct experience with the police officer, or judicial system, or maybe some contact with corrections. Or they can be indirect as well, when they can get those experience what they call vicarious experiences meaning that they can experience perceptions of legitimacy through other's accounts, whether that whether it be witnessed, like on TV with the recent killings of like unarmed black men, and then we're watching the George Floyd trial now. Also can occur through legal socialization, so things that have been passed on from parents and friends as well. So people develop their legitimacy perceptions, either directly through some type of experience or doing a vicarious experience through others experiences with legal authorities.



Jose Sanchez 05:59

And does one of those matter more than the other? Or I guess, a better way to ask is, is vicarious experience just as impactful as a direct experience?



Juwan Bennett 06:09

Yeah, I mean, there's a lot of research now. And I think it depends on the person in the context, but those vicarious experiences are, can be just as impactful to the person and I would go to continue further step further, Carla Shedd, she writes in her book that sometimes people develop legitimacy perceptions without even having any contact with a criminal justice entity. She details a lot of her work and I talked about a little bit in the paper about how people come in contact with systems, sometimes even like educational systems will become almost like criminal justice like in their policies and their actions and their doings. And so people can develop perceptions about legitimacy in the law, from not even have any interactions with the criminal justice system. So I think that's particularly salient.



Jose Sanchez 06:57

So it's often noted in theory and research that strong perceptions of legal authorities and institutions and the law positively influences compliance or obedience with the law. Can you elaborate on how legitimacy leads to or can influence compliance with the law?



Juwan Bennett 07:18

Yeah, I mean, Tyler has so much work around this assemblages work. But really, the concept is, you know, by nature, human beings - we're following. I mean what he kind of documents was really interesting is that when people feel as though they have the respect, and they have transparency, and they're treated fairly, that they are more likely to comply with the law, even in such [situations] when they don't even get the outcome that they want it. So for example, even if they're found guilty, or even, it's an unfavorable outcome to them, the mere fact that the process was fair, transparent, and they were treated with respect and dignity, that's enough for them to comply with the law, see legal authorities, as just.



Jose Sanchez 07:59

And, you know, I'm not super familiar with Tyler's work, but I believe he mentions sort of two different perspectives: instrumental and normative. Can you tell me a little bit more

about those two?



Juwan Bennett 08:14

Yeah, his work is really interesting. So Tyler 1990, he talks about these are two different distinct perspectives on why people choose to follow the law, which I think is really interesting. And he talks about this first perspective, which is called the instrumental perspective on why people obey the law. And it kind of shared similarities if people are familiar with the deterrence literature. And these approaches kind of really contend that legitimacy is achieved by how effective law enforcement officials are at addressing crime and social disorder in communities. And the other kind of side to the same coin, is this idea of a normative perspective. And these normative perspectives on why people obey the law are more concerned with the influence of what people regard as just and moral, so not about the actions of law enforcement and trying to solve crime, but what people kind of influences with just and moral. And these approaches, when individuals perceive legal authorities as objective and ethical, they're more likely to comply with the law. Now, and this is like the really interesting caveat, really here of the two types of legitimacy and the reason why so in that paper, I talk more about normative legitimacy of the two types of legitimacy. It's not so much of what police officers do to solve crime and disorder in neighborhoods, but normative legitimacy has been shown to be critical, extremely critical, for gaining citizens' compliance. I mean, citizens acceptance of police policies, judgments, or actions.



Jose Sanchez 09:41

Okay, so it sounds like the normative perspective seems to matter a little more, at least within the community than the instrumental perspective.



Juwan Bennett 09:50

Yeah.



Jose Sanchez 09:50

Okay, so well, legitimacy has been linked theoretically and also in some research to compliance with the law. A review by Charlotte Gill and her colleagues found that efforts to build trust and increase legitimacy have not actually been effective for crime control. And this is something that you touch upon in your paper. Are there any indications on why this is happening? Or why we're not seeing effectiveness in crime control with increasing legitimacy?

J

Juwan Bennett 10:22

Yeah, I think that's particularly relatively interesting, you would think that as police kind of solve crime, and neighborhoods that that will trust but there's this idea of this fair process, and I think there's a lot of things here at play. I think it goes to what we talked about earlier about people's direct experiences and vicarious experiences with understanding how fair systems are, but also harking back on Shedd's work, she has a piece as well, where she highlights that as it relates to police legitimacy, most individuals are going to develop legitimacy, perceptions, what they perceive about authorities, without physically ever having any contact with the criminal justice system. And so the reason why we make and speculate as to why probably better policing efforts are not reducing crime control is because we also have to take into [account] a myriad of other factors, particularly in one's environment, as to how people are gaining these legitimacy perspectives. So police can be very effective at their job. But if people are not believing in the system, as, you know, as those actors are legitimate, that's not going to be compliance with [the law]. And one thing she talks about is an example of zero tolerance policies in schools. I mean, how these policies, you know, for really trivial offenses kind of operate criminal justice-like and so people begin to have perceptions of the system as if it was a criminal justice entity, and that has really devastating consequences. And Victor Rios details in his book a lot and talks about the youth control complex, where youth are really having these kind of interactions in school and family and recreation centers. So it seems like they never can kind of escape the kind of omnipresence of the hand of the criminal justice system.

J

Juwan Bennett 10:26

Right. And, and how important would you say, Okay, so I guess I should give a little context. So in my undergrad, I had to take a class on policing. And one of the projects that we had to do was, we, I can't remember how many people it was, I think, was like five people, four sort of normal people, quote, unquote, and then one person that was involved in the criminal justice system somehow either like a police officer or a professor or something along those lines, and talk to them about their experiences with the police. And something that kept coming up that I thought was interesting was, you could have people sort of have good experiences with the police. But just one not so good experience, would sort of completely throw all those other good experiences out the window. And then that not good experience, whether it was just mildly awkward to they thought they were extremely unfair, but that seemed to then become sort of their perception of the police. And so I never thought about it too much because it was just a class of, like, 15 people. But you know, if that sort of sort of backed up by the results were like that, like one experience can really sort of change someone's perspective on the police?



Juwan Bennett 13:23

Yes. You know, I think first, as scholars, we cannot underestimate the effects of the extreme trauma that people feel with legal actors, such as police or just with the criminal justice system. It really has significant trauma. And people, those experiences people never forget, you know, forget those, you know, so. And this is that kind of old adage, like people never forget the way you kind of make them feel. And the issue is when people feel like police, and we'll talk about this more in the findings in my paper, if they feel like the police don't treat them fair, there are other systems as well, you know, that that people will begin to think are not fair. And so basically what happens when people kind of experience even one or even multiple negative interactions with the criminal justice system, we know from Sarah Brayne's work, they're less likely to interact with other systems, like the financial, labor market systems, educational systems, which we know, which can improve like life outcomes and legitimacy. But it puts them in any possible contact to increase efforts with the police, things get interesting. So what I argue in the paper and what the research shows is that we can't take for granted that police and citizens do not kind of interact independently of each other, but rather within a larger social structure where there are disparities in how people kind of view different opportunities that are available to them. So yeah, one kind of negative experience could really kind of have a domino effect for other life factors. And we see it now more, you know, I know you probably as a criminal justice major undergrad, I was too, like, look at background checks, jobs, you know, [inaudible] Goffman wrote a book talking about how, like people on probation and parole may not be able to, like, go to the hospital far as like financial documents, having like, produced your name, if you're on some, you know, you can't get a passport, you know, so like these things can really kind of, you know, affect your everyday life.



Jose Sanchez 15:21

Sort of on that topic, some sort of getting back to what you were saying that, you know, all of this doesn't really happen in a vacuum. So, some research has suggested that legitimacy, that there may be differential effectiveness of legitimacy, depending on one's racial or ethnic group. And this is, you know, a really big and broad question. But how does race play into the building of trust and legitimacy, as well as the issue of the association between legitimacy and crime control that we just talked about?



Juwan Bennett 15:56

Yeah, you know, race is a really interesting dynamic, it's another kind of monkey wrench to kind of throw into whole legitimacy, crime control, opportunities debate. I mean, what we know from Hirschi's research that, and what he emphasizes that the legitimacy of the criminal justice system becomes compromised when you have individuals, you know,

depending upon race that have weak bonds, or don't have convictional connection to conventional systems. So, you know, as I kind of talked about, you know, in the paper, and as we kind of, you know, get the history of kind of black people in America in this country, we know that they have weaker ties to conventional systems than other Americans. And so we know that they have greater distrust in educational systems, may have more economic and related stress, or may have experienced significant changes in the labor market system. And so compared to other racial groups, they all have higher rates of offending, because of these weak beliefs in educational systems, I'm sorry, conventional systems. Which those conventional systems because they have those weak beliefs in those conventional systems, it's damaging because those systems actually can promote positive legitimacy perceptions of the criminal justice system.



Juwan Bennett 16:18

Okay, so I think we've been sort of dancing around your paper a little bit. Maybe it's time that we just kind of get straight...



Juwan Bennett 17:18

Dive on in there.



Jose Sanchez 17:19

So like I mentioned, this paper was authored by Juwan. It's titled "A multiple group cross lag analysis of perceived legitimacy, perceived opportunities, and compliance with the law." The paper won the American Society of Criminology's 2020 Gene Carte student paper competition; it took second place. And in this paper Juwan aims to explore the relationship between legitimacy, perceived opportunities measured through perceptions of educational and employment opportunities, and delinquency. Multiple waves of data from the Pathways to Desistance study and multiple group structural equation models were used to analyze how perceptions of legitimacy, perceptions of conventional opportunities, and delinquency impact one another over time and across racial/ethnic groups. The Pathways to Desistance study includes data on serious adolescent, adolescent offenders as they transition from adolescence into early adulthood. Now, Juwan, was that a fair description of your paper? Did I miss anything?



Juwan Bennett 18:27

No, you got you gotta, you gotta the nook and crannies. Using the good old pathways data. It has serious adolescents, and really just had this question about the role, we

understand the legitimacy to compliance literature, Tyler documented that and so I was really curious to see how that differs by racial group. And also, how does the perception of opportunities, you know, begin to affect those relationships between legitimacy and as well as criminal behavior?



Jose Sanchez 18:57

And, you know, it just occurred to me so before we like, truly dive in, I think, like I mentioned, we talked about legitimacy in a couple of different episodes. But just as, like a quick reminder, is legitimacy sort of its own unique construct or is it part of like a larger theoretical construct? I know we have, like procedural justice, legal orientations. Are they all one in the same? Or are there differences between them?



Juwan Bennett 19:27

Yeah, so like, procedural justice has its own, its own measure. And so, it gets really interesting because sometimes legitimacy, people measure things different ways in different articles, but sometimes legitimacy is wrapped in different procedural justice. But for this particular paper, I'm using the Pathways data has 11 index items for legitimacy. And some of the items are really like "I feel people should support the police," like, you know, those type of questions and so there's a 11 of those and had a really good you know, internal consistency. So what I'm talking about legitimacy for this paper is really about trust in police, how people feel towards the police, their perceptions of legitimacy, how their treatment has been.



Jose Sanchez 20:10

Alright. Alright, so So far we've touched on what legitimacy is, we just quickly summarize that and how you measured it, and how legitimacy connects to compliance with the law. We'd like to sort of continue setting up the framework of your paper, right before we get into the meat and potatoes of your findings. So you mentioned in your paper how certain aggressive policing practices can have adverse consequences when it comes to positive opportunities. So the first question is, can you elaborate on some of the policing practices that can lead to these negative consequences? When you say aggressive policing practices, what exactly are we talking about?



Juwan Bennett 20:52

I think one example that's been talked about in the literature is sometimes the use of like stop and frisk. And so you know, there was a lot of articles. And so we have kind of those

aggressive policing practices where, you know, stop and frisk was supposed to, you know, be able to individuals, [inaudible] they come and you know, they see crime, police can stop and pat you. But because of those kind of aggressive policing strategies, which is like more on the, I guess, you'll say, instrumental crime side, because police are, you know, trying to see, but it actually kind of does more harm than good, because if individuals don't have those pat, will they create more opportunities to have a less positive experience, just because most of the stop and frisk data, it was disproportional to people of color. And the whole goal of stop and frisk was to really like, you know, get guns and like serious offenders. And it was like kind of regular everyday citizens that were kind of harassed in the process. And there was I know, in Philadelphia, I can't speak for other states. And I think it had some issues in New York, too. But in Philadelphia, the likelihood of the police finding a gun was very low. And it was like, I don't know how many stops, they did, but they didn't really find as many guns. So what you have was a policing tactic that kind of really created negative interactions with kind of everyday citizens. And also, were geared towards a particular group of people, because it was disproportionately people of color who were caught up in the stop and frisk policies.

J

Juwan Bennett 22:19

And which is interesting, because we can kind of see, like, some of this anonymous, in another system is the educational system when we think about things like zero tolerance, and so one of my research interests comes in the nexus between education and crime, I love to like go to schools and study schools, and often I do professional development in schools. And so I asked teachers, you know, I'm talking about climate and culture, and you want to talk about zero tolerance policies, and we need zero tolerance. We know we need to be able to, you know, have order and discipline in the school. And then I, you know, I asked them, I said, Do you, like I said, is zero tolerance, like, you know, core to the fabric of like, educational system? Like, yes, like, you know, like, like, you know, like, it's a lot of people believe that zero tolerance were birthed out of educational settings, but actually, that term comes from criminal justice. It was like attorney Peter Nunez, yes, they were over, like, sea vessels that were importing and exporting drugs, you know, in United States, and they said, we're gonna have a zero tolerance, like for this, you know, for individuals that think they can, like, try to, you know, transport drugs, you know, in and out of the United States. And that language picked up to like, random things like skateboarding. And one of the things that really caught fire is in the educational settings. And so a lot of educators/administrators are surprised, because they don't even know that where the term originated from. And they're actually operating like a criminal justice entity, when zero tolerance is not really essentially fabric of educational system. And so that's creating, so when the youth has may have a negative interaction with police, and they go to school, and they kind of like, you know, getting harassed or, you know, getting, you know,

picked on for minor things. And there's a there's like zero tolerance policy, they may view it as not fear, it's like, well, I just kind of experienced the same thing over here in this setting and now and I go here, and I experience it in this setting. And then when I may go to my employer, I may experience some unfairness and another setting. And so it becomes to really become this, this perplexing cycle. And I think it goes to what Victor Rios says again, about this control complex that like this omnipresent of these criminal justice-like negative experiences, which can be detrimental to perceptions of how people perceive things as legitimate.



Jose Sanchez 24:35

Right, and talking about an educational setting. So I've had this discussion with my wife because she works in schools--she's a school psychologist--and we've had this conversation around SROs [school resource officers]. And would you consider that sort of, like an aggressive sort of policing policy, putting an SRO inside at a school?



Juwan Bennett 24:56

I think it depends, and I say that because I think we've seen I think the most egregious aspect, it was on YouTube, I think is went viral, the SRO in like, I think it was South Carolina, North Carolina when a girl she was like sitting in a desk and the SRO picked her up and slammed her because she didn't want to leave. And so I think interactions like that are definitely negative and definitely aggressive. Here in Philadelphia, Kevin Bethel, who actually was a high ranking officer in the Philadelphia Police Department. He retired and paired up with Drexel University with a Stony fellowship. And when he was a police officer was really interested in when he will go to schools he would get called and the SROs would be there. And like this kid, one day, he brought pepper spray to school, I think he was like in kindergarten or first grade, and sprayed it on his sandwich because he thought it was like pepper spray and not for eyes. So he sprayed it on [his sandwich]. And so he cleared the whole lunch room out. So you can imagine a bunch of kindergartens and one year olds like fleeing but that was a subject where because the school had a zero tolerance policy, it called for immediate suspension and I think removed from the school. And it was another one where it was a he came to a call, it was a couple of kids, they were a little bit older, but she took her mom's taser, and it was pink. And now this they were like couple kids got they were using on each other and tasing each other in school. But this goes to say that like, and also in Philadelphia, he was there when somebody brought scissors, and they were longer than they were supposed to be. And so he said for these really truly, you know, things we shouldn't be sending kids to these traumatic experiences, though, like the criminal justice system. So he created a reverse incentive. So when school resource officers were not kind of like pestering kids for small amount of offenses, and

also they created a diversion program. So like some of those instances happened, that they will get services, and it would be no kind of law enforcement context. And so basically, however many law contacts, I mean, referral contacts the SRO made, and the less kind of arrest and minor things they arrested people for, they were rewarded for that. So a kind of reversed incentive. So I think, you know, I say it depends, it depends on the incentive structure, and also in relation with the school. But we know, from what our eyes tells us, and also, from the research, Aaron Kupchik has detailed a lot about this how, you know, schools are kind of operating, especially with SROs with kind of this more punitive approach.



Jose Sanchez 27:16

Right. Yeah, I remember reading an article, mainly, again, stemming from these conversations with my wife, because it's not really my area, but where they mentioned that schools that have SROs, tend to, like, rely on the SRO, a little bit more than than schools that didn't have one where they kind of maybe try to, I think they called it turned it into, like a learning or teaching experience that other schools will, schools with SROs would tend to refer to the SRO pretty often. So, and then you have the just the experiences can vary with the SRO. Okay, so we know that these experiences can have a negative impact on legitimacy, or at least someone's perception of legitimacy. How then, does this impact life outcomes like employment and education?



Juwan Bennett 28:10

Yeah, so that becomes, you know, really, really interesting. So when people kind of view police as less legitimate, like I said before, using Sarah Brayne's work, they're less likely to kind of like, they're more likely, I would say, to avoid systems, especially systems that may put them in contact with law enforcement. So like, if you think about like, in your case, for example, like you said, there was more SROs, that was creating more, you know, issues in those particular schools. And so you may have a youth who, who has a negative experiences, and they may avoid school now because they know that the SRO is there. So a normal, probably juvenile thing, maybe like a small fight or maybe some inappropriate language, there was a report came out I think it was youth for change, or the Advancement Project where zero tolerance policy were supposed to be used for serious things like for people will bring guns and violence, but felt like people were getting suspended and expelled for chewing gum, getting out their seat for a classroom.



Juwan Bennett 29:07

And how this kind of impacts life outcomes for crime really, is that criminologists in

criminological theory point to schools as kind of a key system for crime control. I mean, so we know that, you know, education is the birthright for especially for young people, however, you know, that they're not they don't receive a lot of adequate educational opportunities. And that has a lower expectation when people don't, you know, go to college, you know, they don't graduate high school. This affects crime. And in the long run, I think scholars such as, and I'm blanking on the name, okay, no, Lochner and Moretti, they find that opportunities provided in school significantly reduce the probability of incarceration, and those impacts were found for murder, assault, and even kind of motor vehicle theft. So that's kind of one kind of really aspect.



Juwan Bennett 29:56

So basically what happened as far as legitimacy wise, we have these individuals who may have low levels of legitimacy, that then in turn for them to avoid other systems, which could actually promote positive forms legitimacy. We think of schools, we think of work opportunities, we think of maybe community centers where mentoring is happening. So they avoid those systems, if they feel like they will come in contact with law enforcement. And then when they don't get that service, that resource from those places like school or recreation centers, we know that that has a direct link to not be able to decrease crime.



Jose Sanchez 30:33

Right. Okay. So you kind of touched on a little bit, but can you tell us a little bit more about how opportunities like education and employment impact crime and criminal behavior?



Juwan Bennett 30:45

Yeah, that's really awesome. And so. So basically, we know that educational and occupational opportunities can lower the probability that individuals engage in certain criminal activities. I know Moretti, in his piece in 2003, specifically found that educational opportunities can affect criminal behavior by increasing economic returns to legitimate work, increase the cost of committing crimes, and altering the decision making process. So these are some of the ways that opportunities can affect crime. And also, we know that there's a big, big gap between youth who are 16 to 24, they call them opportunity youth, they're not really engaged in school, when they're not going in the market field. And so when these youth are not involved in occupational opportunities, this leads to them engaging in more crime as well as it becomes harder to integrate into conventional activities and also the mainstream society.



Jose Sanchez 31:38

Right. Okay. So one more set up question. And then we'll be good to go.



Juwan Bennett 31:44

All right.



Jose Sanchez 31:46

Based on your framework, can you describe for our listeners, the association, or how the association between perceptions of legitimacy, perceptions of conventional opportunities, and delinquency should vary by race? Like how does race come into play?



Juwan Bennett 32:05

As it relates to the findings or just says just sort of in general?



Jose Sanchez 32:08

So like, in your framework, just in general, how is it or I guess your hypotheses or how you hypothesize that race would interact with legitimacy, conventional opportunities, and delinquency?



Juwan Bennett 32:22

Okay, so yeah, that's a really interesting question. So I think to answer that, I'll talk a little bit about the model. I use a group based SEM [structural equation modeling] model, it's a cross lag panel model, which means that you use six waves across the Pathway data, so we had legitimacy, opportunities, and delinquency, operating all together. So in the overall model, without just using race, obviously, we would expect that legitimacy will have a direct effect on crime. And we also, you know, would expect how opportunities will play that that opportunities will also have an effect on delinquency as well. And that legitimacy should also affect those opportunities. And because the model, you can run it with race, you don't need to have like, so strong hypothesis. But given the setup in the literature review, in doing this test, how I kind of wrote the paper it's believed that Black individuals, particularly Black Americans, would have lower levels of legitimacy, which would affect the delinquency and we respect that opportunities may be able to decrease their delinquency as well. So that's what that's what the paper is really setting up. Really it's a test of like understanding how differently legitimacy affects the three groups, which I

use, whites, Blacks, and Hispanics, as well as those opportunities in those delinquency structures. And the findings became really, you know, interesting, and what we, what I found about how those, these these things operate specifically with this sample from the Pathways data.



Jose Sanchez 33:49

I guess we we might as well get into it. Can you hit us with your findings?



Juwan Bennett 33:55

Yeah, sure. So really, like in the nutshell, what we found is that just overall, legitimacy, perceptions and opportunities, and delinquency, they all had significant kind of cross lag findings, meaning that they all were impacting each other. I guess they're really the juicy stuff really is when we kind of parse things out by race. What we found is that for whites and Hispanics, that there was a--with the cross lag model and allows you to do is to find direct effects and also indirect effects-- and so there was a direct effects that legitimacy directly affected delinquency, for whites and Hispanics, and that was not the case for blacks. But what's also interesting is that there was this kind of direct cross lag relationships with Blacks where opportunities decreased the amount of crime and also and vice versa as well, where individuals who predicted more delinquency, the opportunities were limited, and that was not found for whites and Hispanics. And then for the indirect effects, we got to see how legitimacy was kind of operating. And so it's interesting that for whites and Hispanics, the more perceived opportunities increase to more perceptions of legitimacy, which also may decrease crime. Where the process work differently for blacks were, as they seen authorities as more legitimate then that kind of they perceive the opportunities to be more prevalent, which then kind of decrease crime. So two different processes operating for the two, the three groups, and also those direct effects and those indirect effects.



Jose Sanchez 35:26

And just for our listeners that might not be terribly well versed in stats [statistics], can you tell us really quickly what an indirect and what a direct effect is?



Juwan Bennett 35:38

Yeah, so a direct effect is really like kind of how one thing affects one another, like there's no intermediate variable in between. So we saw like legitimacy had a direct effect on crime, which means that like, as peoples, for whites and Hispanics, so as they view the

police as more legitimate, that directly decrease the amount of criminal behavior that they were involved in.



Juwan Bennett 36:04

And the indirect effects really talks to that there's a process by which legitimacy plays out. So the indirect effect is like, A leads to B, which leads to C, right? There's a more drawn out process where for whites and Hispanics, that the more, legitimacy plays out in this roll, right? So the more opportunities that they perceive that are available to them, then increase how they saw police as more legitimate, which then affected their delinquency, which for blacks, it was legitimacy, the more they perceive the police as legitimate, then they perceive their opportunities as more in their particular neighborhood context, which then had an effect on their delinquency. So delinquency is decreasing. But it's just two different process when we look at a indirect effect and we thrown legitimacy. But a direct effect is really like how legitimacy or opportunities are affecting crime. And we see those process working differently, depending upon which racial group one belongs to.



Jose Sanchez 37:07

Okay, so one of the findings that you talked about was the indirect impact of increased legitimacy on increased perceived opportunities, decreasing delinquency among Blacks, but not whites or Hispanics. Why do you think that was?



Juwan Bennett 37:22

I think that's really interesting. I think it talks to this idea of what opportunities people may see in their communities. We know that in Black communities, they tend to be more over policed, and they can kind of go to what I was talking about earlier as that, because it's such it may also have effects not only for those experiences directly [inaudible] police officers, but it bleeds over into different social outcomes in their lives. So that's why we may speculate as to why opportunities had a direct effect on delinquency. And that was not the case for whites and Hispanics. And it's really interesting, we look at the indirect effects is like legitimacy, as a perceived legal act seems more legitimate, then it's like, okay, I also can see other social or different various domains in my life being legitimacy, and that was related to them, and being less involved in delinquency.



Jose Sanchez 38:17

And sort of towards the end of your paper in the discussion section, you highlight this term, "community justice," in reference to your finding that opportunities are important for

legitimacy. Can you tell us more about what community justice is and how it ties into legitimacy and outcomes, life outcomes?

J

Juwan Bennett 38:40

Yeah, so you know, Todd Clear, I was a fan of his work since undergrad. And he talks about this in his book in 2007. But we know perceptions of opportunities and perceptions of legitimacy. They don't occur independently of each other. So this kind of really suggests that the legitimacy of various systems have to be considered holistically as improving legitimacy in one context could improve perceptions in another and vice versa. And so opportunities are important for legitimacy and consideration and really gets out to what Todd Clear talks about as community justice. So community justice is a term that refers to kind of all aspects of crime prevention that give community members decision making abilities, and commitment to quality of life issues. That's kind of like an explicit stated goal. And, you know, Clear talks about like at the jest of it, so to speak, is to help make places where people work, live, and raise their families, good places to do so, to do these things. But what's really interesting is that community justice is not just focused on legitimacy or procedural justice just as a concept but also places equal weighting or emphasis on opportunity structures, racial justice, and social and economic equality. And like kind of adopting what I contend in the paper, a community justice approach as it relates to opportunities and legitimacy perceptions could be particularly useful or beneficial, because under the umbrella of community justice, police will not just be responsible for just managing crime, which is kind of the instrumental approach, but also to contributing to the quality of life. And in such, when police kind of do this, they will kind of be rewarded for their efforts, because the community will see them as more legitimate, perceive them as more legitimate.

J

Jose Sanchez 40:34

Right. So just it's all intertwined, right?

J

Juwan Bennett 40:38

Yes.

J

Jose Sanchez 40:39

One will impact the other, which will then have like a reciprocating effect. And so it's not just an arrow pointing in one direction, right?



Juwan Bennett 40:48

Yeah, it really is both and I think that's why a lot of research shows like you asked me earlier about how come you know if police are, you know, improve upon their tactics for managing crime? Why is that not no reducing to lower crime? And I think, you know, Clear really challenges us to think about the community's role in this part. And so we're not talking about police actions tied to community goals and what's happening in one's environment, I think what he kind of tells us is that we're missing the mark, and that there's bigger things at play here.



Jose Sanchez 41:24

Okay. And now to sort of bring us home on your paper. Could you tell us a little bit about sort of what implications your paper has for research, and also for policy?



Juwan Bennett 41:38

Yeah, I think that's really, there's some really strong implications. I won't give you all of them for the sake of time. I think the kind of really meat and potatoes in here that, you know, that the paper kind of has really shown me is that the inner-play between legitimacy and opportunities, they matter. We can't be thinking of them as in a vacuum. And because we know that the process is working differently, especially how we saw opportunities had a direct effect for delinquency for Black youth, that the group probably most in need of opportunities are African American youth, which is really interesting, because we know how that can have a direct effect on their delinquency. And when one of the other key implications to takeaway is that legitimacy and opportunities either had a direct or indirect impact, depending upon race and ethnicity. And I think that's interesting to see the process working differently, and something I talked about earlier about Victor Rios work talks about the youth control complex, especially for black youth. They talk about like this, one of my favorite quotes, he says in the book that like, like, Man, it's like everyday, you know, teachers gotta' sweat me. You know, police gotta check on me, mom's gotta trip on me. And my POs got to stress me. It's like a zookeeper watching us at all times. ["Man, it's like everyday teachers gotta' sweat me, police gotta pocket check me, mom's gotta' trip on me, and my P.O.'s gotta stress me... It's like having a zookeeper watching us at all times."]



Juwan Bennett 42:50

And so it's this idea of the police kind of having this omnipresence. And when people have these negative interactions that it can affect these other domains of their life as well, and

I'm seeing kind of seeing their perceptions of legitimacy.



Jose Sanchez 43:04

Great. That sounds great, Juwan. And yeah, it was a really interesting paper, top to bottom. You know, it was a thought it was a interesting framing. The methods were interesting, and I thought the findings were also pretty interesting. So thank you, we're glad we were able to talk about it.



Juwan Bennett 43:24

No, thank you so much for reading. And I appreciate the opportunity to come and talk to you about the paper and the work and it was a really exciting paper for me. I was very nervous about even submitting it to the paper of competition like all you know why little paper, but it was really birthed out of some conversations I was having at the time. I was co founding a organization called Urban Youth Leadership Academy, which is a middle school program. mentoring program, in the college education and kind of operates only one of its kind. They're at Temple where we actually bring students as early as middle school and have them come on to the college and treat them as college students with the whole goal of them become Temple University students in this last year, we had a young woman we knew since eighth grade, and she was in our system and stayed with us in high school. And she actually started Temple in the fall semester. So this is her fall and spring semester. And it was really interesting to me is they talked about this idea. They also talked about how the SROs at their schools, but they're also talking about negative interaction that police. And Temple, I don't know if you ever been to Philadelphia, it's kind of situated in North Philadelphia. So we have like residential homes around it. And also, there's a middle school that actually sits in the middle of Temple's campus where we recruit our students from, and before we even devised the Urban Leadership Academy program, and we were kind of really initially starting, the kids in the middle school walk through Temple's campus every day, they walk past things, but they never seen it as an opportunity or a place that could increase their social mobility or just their access into mainstream and conventional activities. And so you had individuals and they got in the program like, "Wow, this is the library" and like "I didn't know about college and like, wow, you can make that much money being a business major?," but prior to them coming, you know, to our program, they walked past the campus every day and never saw it as opportunity that can improve upon their particular life. And I think that goes to a lot of the youth talk about how they had negative experience, not only with police, but also in school. And so they never even thought of college or any other entity that could, they're like, the school was not in my cards, because you know, what I experienced, you know, in this context. So it really came full circles for me to think about that and as I begin to

approach this paper, and kind of really understanding the data, and also given the recent killings of unarmed black men, and you know, in this time, and I think it's particularly salient now with the George, you know, Floyd trial, about how people are seeing the police, and what are those implications? Are those consequences for everyday life?



Jose Sanchez 45:57

No, yeah, that's awesome that you're doing that. It's really commendable.



Juwan Bennett 46:02

Thank you.



Jose Sanchez 46:02

And so, oh, man, I kinda wish we had thought to talk about that, but maybe we'll bring you another time to talk about the program that you're running out of Temple, but we actually want to talk to you about another program that you're involved with. You are busy, busy person, Juwan.



Juwan Bennett 46:18

I try to keep myself busy. I try.



Jose Sanchez 46:21

But so and this is a bit of a departure from from your paper, and, you know, legitimacy and crime. But want to talk to you about your involvement with the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program. And correct me if I'm wrong, but you've been involved with this since 2016. Correct?



Juwan Bennett 46:38

Yes and no. There's an interesting story behind that. I've been involved, I became a think tank member in 2016. But my first so I'll let me just backtrack by saying so Temple was the first university to take students outside of the college classroom and take them to jails and prisons to have conversations with incarcerated individuals. They started in the 90s. And so it sounds like a cool idea now, but our founder, Laurie Pompa, it was somewhat controversial that students were going to be coming out of their nice college classrooms and going into these, you know, scary prisons and jails. But Laurie firmly believed that if

we're going to get a deeper understanding of these issues as it relates to criminal justice that we have to get proximate to these individuals, and also see the individuals who go through the experience as the experts.

J

Juwan Bennett 47:25

And so when I was an undergrad, can't think of the year, I think it may be 2013/2012, I took my first Inside-Out class at a woman's facility called Riverside Correctional Facility. And we were, the class was around women's issues. And it completely changed my life. The Inside-Out pedagogy, it's awesome. We sit in a circle, we only use first names, there's no hierarchy. And we explore. We have inside students and outside students. And we explore a topic during the course of 15 weeks.

J

Juwan Bennett 47:54

So when I came to Temple, fast forward, I get accepted to the Ph.D. program, I said, Man, no, that was a great, you know, it was a great experience. I really enjoyed that. I didn't know at the time how you know that we had our own center. And you know, me being a good researcher, I just looked up and say, Oh, there's a whole Inside-Out center. So I go and I walk over to the center. And you know, I introduce myself and say, you know, I really loved this class when I was an undergrad, is there any way I can copy papers, staple, staple papers? And they were like, no, we actually have this thing called the think tank. And so basically, what happened was for people like myself, I guess the classes were so dynamic, both for the inside students and the outside students that they wanted to continue to meet outside of just the 15 weeks. And so in 2016, I joined the Graterford Think Tank, which is now the Phoenix Think Tank. And so every Wednesday, a group of incarcerated men and professors layman, you just sign up to be part of Think Tank. And we would meet every Wednesday to hold workshops and do things out in the community. So we would invite DAs, we invite judges, and we will have different conversation. Well, that was already a blast for me. And I was so excited.

J

Juwan Bennett 49:03

But one of the things that the think tank does is they train instructors. So in order to teach in the prison or jail, you have to be a certified Inside-Out instructor. So Laurie asked me one day said you ever thought about teaching your own Inside-Out class? And I was like, me? No. So I took the training to become a certified instructor for Inside-Out to teach my own course. And so I took the training and that that was awesome. And I said, you know, pat myself on the back for making it out. And then she said, when she did you ever think about teaching your own section. So I actually taught Inside-Out and actually my class

was the first class I think in Inside-Out history that was not taught in a jail or prison. I taught the first class that was actually in a community correctional facility or halfway house. And so that was the first time that Inside-Out had extended into the halfway house. And so we were exploring community issues and it was really fascinating because this community correctional facility that I taught him, even though people had the ability, they weren't handcuffed or shackled, it was still like, locked and secure. And so students were often confused. As you know, it's like got this barbed wire, I see dogs, but people don't have handcuffs. So it was a great class.

J Juwan Bennett 50:16

And just recently over the summer, I'm just an Inside-Out lifer, I actually became, went to a training a train a trainer program, so to actually train other professors and others to teach their own Inside-Out courses. And this summer, I actually will be doing my first training as a training instructor. So really excited about that. So I've been with Inside-Out at all the stages, now. It's just been a great experience for me and for my research practice, for just my service to the community, and just my thought process and all.

J Jose Sanchez 50:47

Yeah, that sounds great. Sounds like quite the journey. Can you sort of tell us pretty explicitly what exactly the Inside-Out program is? Sortaof what what is it? What is it trying to achieve?

J Juwan Bennett 51:01

Yeah, so basically, what is trying to achieve is not your traditional criminal justice classroom, and let me just say Inside-Out is an international program. We have inside courses in Mexico and the UK, Australia, Inside-Out all over the world. And basically, if you, they probably have somebody teaching Inside-Out at your state, and I could probably find out for you. But basically, it provides the criminal justice student with real experience. And I don't know about you, but I took Inside-Out in my senior year of college. And it wasn't until I took Inside-Out that you know, you can go your whole criminal justice undergraduate career without ever going to a courtroom, without ever going to a prison. And so it really gives the student and puts them in the environment. And they get to learn with people who are experiencing that system. Inside-Out is really great, because we don't have an agenda, we don't have a catch or spin, we're not trying to convince people about a particular issue about as it relates to politics or the carceral experience. It's this idea that the people who go through this system are actually the experts, and not us. Because we, some of us may never know how it feels to have cold handcuffs on your

wrists, to be separated from your family, to have to reintegrate back into society. And so we lose a little bit of that by just getting the secondary textbook knowledge. And so what Inside-Out does is the ability to learn and hear from the horse's mouth. And it's not just one perspective, it's not just us learning from the men and women who may be in the inside, but also bring an outside perspective, to really get the both the inside and the outside experiences to really understand these really complex and nuanced issues. And I always taught in my Inside-Out classes that a lot of these criminal justice issues and we can go down a list and name them, it's not a black or white thing, a lot of times there's a lot of gray area, and it's in that gray area, when we get proximate to the issue. And I bring my experience as a Black male, and somebody may bring their other experiences in incarcerated person, but we begin to wrestle with those issues and really get to some heart of the matter there. So that's what Inside-Out is really doing. You can teach an Inside-Out class you can, as an instructor, as a professor, you can take an Inside-Out class as a student. And even if you're just interested in these issues, you can sign up, you go to our website, the insideoutcenter.org, and on there, you'll find the different trainings if Inside-Out is being taught in your state. We have a whole center. So there, I'm Eileen Ferris [?], and who who probably answer your call, she's awesome. She's amazing, even if you want to go visit. Inside-Out was great, because people you can go visit a jail or prison and get the experiences you don't have to be involved in Inside-Out. And Inside-Out is also just not limited to criminal justice courses. There is biology courses being taught, sociology courses being taught, poetry courses being taught. So Inside-Out is a pedagogy, but the subject, it could be political science, it could be anything to do in that particular context. So I'm definitely an advocate. I'm definitely a fan. And I think everybody should get the opportunity to be able to learn from individuals who experience this system, I think, as it relates to our field.



Jose Sanchez 54:23

Yeah, no, that sounds that sounds awesome. I'm gonna have to go check it out.



Juwan Bennett 54:26

Don't worry about it. I get you connected, I'll get you all connected.



Jose Sanchez 54:29

Yeah. And for listeners, we'll put all the links and all the information in the episode description when it comes out. So you don't have to rewind, and like, www what? Thank you so much, Juwan. It was great having you and talking to you not only about your paper, but the Inside-Out program, which sounds fantastic. It sounds like something,

something people should experience. You know, I didn't get the chance to do Inside-Out in undergrad or my master's but we did get to visit jails, juvenile camps in Malibu. So, you know, I wasn't wasn't part of the program, but I can say that those experiences can really stick with you. You know, if people can be part of something like this, I would also highly encourage it. But so Juwan before we close out, is there anything you'd like to plug, anything coming out that you want people to keep an eye out for?

J

Juwan Bennett 55:25

Lots, working on lots of different projects. Like I said before, the Urban Youth Leadership Academy, which we think is going to be a game changer, you know, in the field. What is really doing, you read my bio was a part of the Ronald McNair Scholars Program. It was for undergraduate students to get PhD studies. And so what we're trying to do is we're trying to equip the next generation of leaders, I have my potential bias, I'm trying to make the next group of budding criminologists. And I think that we have to start that process very early, especially for students of colors, even though Urban Youth Leadership Academy is open to all students, but to equip the next generation of young people because they're going to lead, and to go into guide us. I'm finishing a dissertation right now on juvenile lifers, men and women who are sentenced to life without parole as children in Pennsylvania. As you know, Pennsylvania has the most juvenile lifers in the world, over 500 and 300 come from my city, Philadelphia. And so I have been documenting their experience before prison, during prison, after prison. And there's been a lot of news release, thinking the Washington Post, Joe Ligon, who was incarcerated close to Philadelphia, he's from Philadelphia. He's about 82/83 years old, he's done like over 60 years of incarceration. So the United States, the only nation in the world that actually sentence children as young as 13/14, they were under 18, to life without parole in prison, or as we better known as death by incarceration. And so that will be coming out soon. So I would love to get people's thoughts on that. And also just to be able to share these dynamic stories, as these individuals who've been incarcerated for some 40/50 years, they went in as teenagers, they came in as older adults, tried to re-enter into society for the first time.

J

Jose Sanchez 57:11

Yeah, that sounds, that sounds heavy. We'll definitely keep an eye out for that stuff. And you know, whenever the work starts coming out, let us know. And we'll be sure to post it so people can find it easily.

J

Juwan Bennett 57:22

Thank you so much. I want to say thank you for just inviting me on the podcast today. Please give Jenn my regards. And I don't take it for granted to have this opportunity, just to share with you and your audience has been really a pleasure for me and just kind of doing the whole process of planning. And it's so great to finally meet you and have the conversation. I know, we've been, we've been planning for months, and we had to switch dates around. So it's really great to be here and have this conversation with you.



Jose Sanchez 57:48

Yeah, likewise, I know we we sort of met in passing in Atlanta.



Juwan Bennett 57:52

Yeah. Yes, we did.



Jose Sanchez 57:55

Hopefully, we can run into each other again in Chicago later.



Juwan Bennett 57:58

Yes.



Jose Sanchez 57:59

I was assuming that you're going but I don't know. Are you planning on going?



Juwan Bennett 58:03

After not having a conference for a year. I'm ready for my bad coffee. I want my conference bag. I want my pen. I just miss it so much. Hopefully, you know we can get all the vaccinations and enjoy it safely, social distantly, but I'm really excited. Wouldn't miss it for the world. And I'll be presenting some of the juvenile lifer work at the conference. And I'm excited to come your sessions if your presenting and Jenn, as well. And so hopefully, we definitely can get together.



Jose Sanchez 58:28

Oh, yeah, definitely. Yeah. Hopefully we're not presenting at the same time because that

would be unfortunate. But where can people find you? Email? Twitter, social media?



Juwan Bennett 58:39

So email is great. Juwan.Bennett AT temple.edu. Also on the Temple University graduate student website. I'm really not a big social media person. I do have LinkedIn though. And I do check that regularly. But email is always better for me because I check it frantically every every second. I see emails popping up now and I'm like Juwan stop looking at the email. So yeah, please email me. I love to have conversation if people are interested or have follow up questions or clarity about anything that I shared today.



Jose Sanchez 59:10

Great. Thank you, Juwan. We really appreciate it.



Juwan Bennett 59:12

Thank you so much, sir. I really appreciate you as well.



Jenn Tostlebe 59:15

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