

# LanfearCTA Done

Mon, Jul 10, 2023 3:03PM 1:06:32

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, disorder, collective efficacy, criminology, informal social control, theory, gun violence, chicago, violence, respondents, crime, social disorganization, gang, shootings, kids, paper, research, windows, talking, places

## SPEAKERS

Jose Sanchez, Charles Lanfear, Jenn Tostlebe

---

### J Jose Sanchez 00:14

Hi everyone, my name is Jose Sanchez. And I am going to be your only host for this episode of The Criminology Academy podcast, where we are criminally academic. Unfortunately, Jenn was not able to make it for this one, so I'll be flying solo. But in today's episode, we're speaking with Professor Charles Lanfear, about communities and crime. Special Topics highlighted in this episode include community theories of crime, context and exposure to firearm violence, and reproducibility and open science practices in the discipline of criminology.

### J Jose Sanchez 00:48

Charles Lanfear is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Criminology in the University of Cambridge. He was previously a Research Fellow at Nuffield College in the University of Oxford after receiving his PhD from the University of Washington in 2021. His primary research focuses on communities, crime, and social control and has been published in Criminology and the Annual Review of Criminology. Charles is currently researching gun carrying and gun violence over the life-course as a member of the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods research team. The team's first paper on life course exposures to gun violence was published last month in JAMA Network Open. Charles is also an advocate for open science and teaches courses on research design, quantitative methods, and programming for social scientists. Thank you for joining us, Chuck. We're excited to have you on the podcast. And we look forward to our discussion with you.

### C Charles Lanfear 01:41

Yeah, thank you very much for having me. It's an honor to be on.

### J Jose Sanchez 01:44

We're gonna kick off discussing communities and crime. And so this first part of the episode is related to your long running work on communities and crime. You had a piece in the Annual Review of Criminology in 2020, with Ross Matsueda and Lindsey Beach. And so you note, in that piece, that there's a contemporary criminological controversy surrounding the interrelationship among neighborhood disorder and formal social control, and crime. And this controversy really stems from two branches of theoretical ideas that explain the interrelationship between these concepts, you know, broken windows and theories of informal social control, you know, and I'm actually really looking forward to hearing your answer on this, because, you know, I'm teaching a, we call it Crime and Society. But it's really an Introduction to Criminal Justice course. And so whenever we get to policing, we talk about these theories. So, but before we really get into like the nitty gritty of it, no, I want to take a quick step back and discuss some of the buzzwords or key terms that I just dropped. So can you start by explaining, what is it that we're talking about when we say neighborhood disorder?

C

Charles Lanfear 02:57

Right? So that's sort of like the classic question here. So there's sort of two sides to what is disorder, right? There's objective phenomena, things that are actually like occurring out in space, physical things or behaviors, and then the meanings people take away from them. So like, objectively, it's disorder is sort of a vague blanket term, that can mean any of a large number of things or behaviors. It could be things like litter on the ground, graffiti, the proverbial broken window. But also, like youth loitering on a corner or abandoned buildings, you know, these are all really different phenomena that all get sort of lumped together, the more complicated thing is the meaning of these things. So as soon as you invoke the word disorder, you're implying it's something unwanted to someone. But beyond that, what that actually means depends on the context and the individual people involved. Right. So yeah, and sort of as a result of that, I should say, because there's this variation in objective and subjective elements, different sort of types of disorder can be caused by the same thing or caused by different things, different types of disorder can cause the same things or cause different things. So like an accumulation of litter or a young man out drinking on a street corner might both be caused by a lack of supervision or intervention, but only the young like the man hanging out and drinking on the corner is likely to turn into a fight, the litter isn't going to spontaneously jump up and start fighting each other or something like that. And also either means to pacify is context dependent, in some places, young men drinking on the street, nobody's going to be bothered by it, because they know those kids, they're not going to cause any trouble or something like that. To other places, I've been in neighborhoods where I've run field experiments and people are horrified when there's litter on the ground, and they basically will cross the street, you know, to avoid it. So the meanings are different. Yeah. So sort of from an empirical perspective, trying to tease these things out is really challenging and figuring out like what things might cause are not as quite showing, so that alone, there's an entire literature on that.

J

Jose Sanchez 04:57

And can you tell us a little bit about physical versus social, and how that fits into disorder?

C

Charles Lanfear 05:02

Yeah. So the physical versus social dichotomy thing is this idea that there's this physical disorder that manifests as things like litter, graffiti, broken windows, or also vacant lots and abandoned buildings. These are sort of features of the environment that aren't people or behaviors. Social disorders, typically things that are people more specifically things people are doing. So in the classic broken windows article, Wilson and Kelling talked about things like pan handling, loitering on the street, drug dealing, and prostitution. So it's just kind of one of them was behavioral the other one is sort of evidence of a behavior. Like litter is evidence that somebody littered, which is the behavior. A broken window, somebody broke it, and so on.

**J** Jose Sanchez 05:41

Right. Alright, so, Clifford Shaw, and Henry McKay. They're like, pretty much the people who introduced, what we call social disorganization theory to the discipline coming out of the Chicago School, borrowing some concepts from, you know, from their colleagues, specifically, the concentric circle that I think anyone that's taken a, you know, crim 101 class, or crim theory 101 class has seen the circle with like, the red dots that show the concentration of crime. And so, you know, what they did was they took a map of Chicago, kind of were going through court cases for juveniles and kind of just like, I know, this is probably a super foreign concept to a lot of people listening to this now, but they actually had a physical map. Not Google Maps, like an actual paper map, and had little push pins that they would put into it. There were no computers when Shaw & McKay were doing this. And so after they put all the pins in the map, they observed where Crime and Delinquency appeared to be most heavily concentrated in Chicago. You know, can you give us like a rundown of what conclusions Shaw & McKay reached based on their mapping?

**C** Charles Lanfear 06:57

Yeah. So this is one of the most like monumental achievements in data collection. I've remember seeing, you know, the maps, everything. But also, I mean, the book is fantastic. If you read it, it's an it's an amazing set of data collection. But the basic thing that they observed was, what they did is they figured out and mapped the residences of where kids who had been convicted or gone to juvenile court. So juvenile delinquents, where the juvenile delinquents lived, so not where they committed crime, which is something we often focus on where crimes happen, they were focused on where the delinquents live, that is what is the process of generating delinquency. And from seeing that they were that like, delinquents were essentially where they live were clustered in these neighborhoods, they went and they looked at what characterizes these neighborhoods. Basically, they were unstable, disadvantaged areas that overtime had transitioned, had racial and ethnic turnover throughout but consistently had high rates of delinquency. And these areas were characterized by social and physical disorder having many delinquents, and having an age-graded transmission of delinquency occurring within. So sort of gangs that have older kids training younger kids into it. So basically, they came up with a theory of the production of delinquents as much as of delinquency itself.

**J** Jose Sanchez 08:07

Again, since you know, I kind of headed that direction. Can you give us a rundown of, and I mentioned social disorganization theory. Can you give us a rundown of that? And I would say, I think that's a very important thing. But I think that that's a very important thing that has been

don't know how controversial it is. But I know that that's custom controversy, but you know, there's inclusion of cultural transmission.

**C** Charles Lanfear 08:23

Yeah. Oh, yeah. Well, that's sometimes it's a touchy one. But the basic theory is a multi level theory. The idea is that, like, the classic things are poverty, heterogeneity, and population turnover is what modern models can use. These things lead to weak and uncoordinated institutions. These are things like family in schools, community organizations, and them being weak and uncoordinated makes it harder to regulate the behavior, particularly of kids, mostly boys. So when they're in these sorts of conditions of weak institutions, you get more delinquency because kids are poorly monitored. The thing is, is poorly monitored kids tend to flock together with other poorly monitored kids, resulting in things like the formation of youth gangs. And the thing is, is gangs are persistent. Members change over time, but they tend to be sort of locationally defined like a particular neighborhood has particular gang of kids, the older kids bring in younger kids into the gang, teach them and sort of socialized them in certain ways. And this creates this sort of age-grade, right? That's the cultural transmission element of it, which is kind of based on Sutherlands differential association theory.

**C** Charles Lanfear 09:27

So this sort of theory of social disorganization and cultural transmission at the time was a really progressive theory, because it was saying basically, it's about social context and social processes, but it has nothing to do with race or race specific cultural type things. They were saying if you swap out the race, ethnicity of the kids the process would be the same. It was also for the time extremely advanced empirically, it was actually mixed methods. They did spatial quantitative analysis, not only did they do those maps by hand, they calculated correlations by hand. You know from this incredible spatial data. They also did an early network analysis and they linked these things to qualitative life histories of the delinquent. So it's actually really empirically grounded in the evidence for for that kind of work at a time. In my opinion this is like this book if you're trying to find it, often libraries don't have it good luck buying a copy of it. I've been telling Rob, Rob Sampson for a while that we need to reprint get this book reprinted because you just can't get it and there's no digital edition. But yeah, that's the general theory.

**J** Jose Sanchez 10:28

Yeah, I wanna say I have a copy, but I'm not sure. If I do. I might. I might have to cash in.

**C** Charles Lanfear 10:35

Yeah, Ross left me a copy. I have a 1960 Was it 67 or 69? I forget the second printing of it. But it's rare. I saw one online for like \$400 in bad condition.

**J** Jose Sanchez 10:45

Yeah. Like I was gifted a first edition Thrasher. Yeah. Collecting like classics is a hobby of mine.

---

And you know, I often give David, my advisor, not a hard time, but every now and then I'll mention that I, I managed to pick up a Kornhauser for about 20 bucks. He had to pay 200 for his copy.

**C** Charles Lanfear 11:05

Yeah, yeah, I gotta Kornhauser up there. And I've got a, my crowning glory is a first edition Sutherland Criminology up there, which is like the 1920-whatever. Yeah, same thing. I love the classic books.

**J** Jose Sanchez 11:19

Yeah, I've been hunting for one of those. I have one of the, I think the earliest I've been able to get fourth edition. But anyway, like, I don't want to turn this into a book hunting episode. But yeah, I love collecting the classics.

**J** Jose Sanchez 11:36

Okay, so back to Shaw and McKay and their theory. Oh, I think what prompted the Kornhauser thing is, you know, I wrote one of my comps on social disorganization, and I kind of sided with Kornhauser a little bit and went let's just kind of ignore the control transmission stuff that's kind of unnecessary, but I think that's a completely different episode. But you know, so Shaw and McKay, they didn't actually spend a lot of time focusing on the informal social control mechanisms of their theory. So, and I think this was actually somewhat common during the time like, I know, Sutherland often gets critiqued for being kind of vague, like, what is the definition? And so it's kind of been left to us to kind of start to fill in those gaps. So in the 80s, we started seeing scholars trying to build on or improve or clarify social disorganization. One way that scholars tried to do this was by illuminating the social mechanisms by which social disorganization in the neighborhood actually contributed to high crime rates. What exactly does a lack of informal social control actually look like? Right, like that's kind of the central question. Two scholars that tried to do this, Sampson and Raudenbush, they put forward their idea of collective efficacy, which combines informal social control with social cohesion. Can you tell us in more detail how collective efficacy ties in with disorder, informal social control, and crime?

**C** Charles Lanfear 13:07

Yeah, so collective efficacy is sort of interesting. It emerged as ideas from social disorganization theory with these ideas from social capital theory that were sort of emerging in the late 80s, early 90s, some stuff which is implicit from like Coleman, and things like that. So it differs from social disorganization in some key ways. But one of the main contributions it sort of brings is sort of clarifying this causal mechanism that translates social context into crime and disorder that was frequently critiqued in social disorganization. It's something that was responded to by Kornhauser and then operationalization of Kornhauser's model like Sampson and Groves 1989. So collective efficacy is this sort of latent capacity for action rooted in social capital. Capital

being like trusting neighbors, cohesion, expectations for action. And social capital is specific to tasks like you might have a friend who's good for supporting you socially, but you're not going to get a job through them. But another friend, you can get a job through. It's tasks specific.

C

Charles Lanfear 14:05

With collective efficacy, we're typically focused on crime control and things relevant to the control of crime. The basic idea here with collective efficacy is that places where people share norms and are empowered to enforce those norms exhibit lower crime. And thus, rather than focusing on the production of delinquents, like Shaw and McKay did, the focus and collective efficacy is on control of behavior within places. So this is a big difference. This implies for instance, that a place with high collective efficacy may produce delinquents, they're just not going to offend there, they might go somewhere else and offend. So it's quite different from social disorganization, which is more focused on processes of socialization and upbringing. So collective efficacy also is a macro theory. It's not very specific about micro level mechanisms. Sometimes they're usually applied to be things like interventions. This is both in direct it's going on and yelling on kids on the street, but it also includes the invocation of formal authority, so collective efficacy does encompass calling the police. There's also mechanisms that aren't related to intervening at all, which is norms. If you know a place is a place you are likely to have the police called on you, you don't go there or don't offend. And so there's a normative protection thing, you're aware of people's capacity. Like my ongoing theoretical and empirical work, a lot of it is on specifying these mechanisms it operates through - turning it from a macro theory to a micro theory. So I had a paper last year in Criminology that was about bringing in environmental opportunity and urban political economy into it, talking about how collective efficacy might be used to alter the built environment. This is something that's ongoing research. I'm also presenting at the European Society of Criminology in September on unifying micro and macro theories and collective efficacy, broken windows and routine activity theory, all kind of speaking the same language. So this is like active for me.

J

Jose Sanchez 15:50

Right? Yeah, really interesting paper, you know, unfortunately, we didn't have enough time to, or we won't have enough time to get to it. But we will link it in the episode description on our website, because it is a really good paper, you know, macro micro, I know Sampson's a big proponent of it. And I would say that, I don't know who wouldn't be like, I feel like it's one of those things. I'm sure there's someone that's out there, like, no.

C

Charles Lanfear 16:16

Oh yeah.

J

Jose Sanchez 16:17

But okay, so, you know, correct me if I'm wrong, but if I'm understanding this correctly, focusing on disorder is misguided, and maybe a little bit of a fool's errand. And instead, we should be focusing on building trust and cohesion within the neighborhood?

C

Charles Lanfear 16:32

The question is now. And so this is something that I'll probably talk about later in it, but it's sort of like, it's great the idea of being able to build trust and cohesion, but it's not something it's easily manipulable. Right, you know, it's hard to go and be like let's build trust and cohesion. And the other thing is that if you base things on requiring people to intervene to solve problems, in a way, you're kind of saying, Well, why don't we just let those people solve their own problems. So high collective efficacy neighborhoods are often characterized by simply not having anything you have to intervene against, you know, so like, the classic or, for me, one of the urban political economy examples is nobody tries to, like, open a liquor store in a rich neighborhood in your city, because they know it's never going to work, you know, one, they might not even have a \*inaudible\*, but why bother? Because they're just gonna fight it until it doesn't work. You can't even get an apartment building built in a neighborhood like that. So they have so much power, both like social and political, that you don't even need to do anything. So one of the challenges here is, you know, it's the places that have to work the least, are often the places with the most capacity to do things. And the places with the least capacity to do things are the ones where the most effort would be required. So the question really, for me is how do we reduce the amount of the work people have to do rather than making it easier for them to do that work? My personal opinion.

J

Jose Sanchez 17:45

Yeah. Okay. So I think now we can kind of get to the flip side, or the alternative, where we have Wilson and Kelling's broken window thesis, which says that disorder and crime are directly or causally linked, as well as indirectly linked, can you give us a quick summary of the broken windows theory pieces?

C

Charles Lanfear 18:08

Yeah. So to lead into it, first, we'll say in collective efficacy, the basic theory there is that both crime and disorder are caused essentially by a low capacity to control those things. Contrast this with broken windows, which says, Yes, this is true, there's a low capacity of control, but the system is more complicated. Broken windows is actually a multi level theory that is about effects of context on individual perception. The idea in broken windows is that if a person say walking through a neighborhood or who lives in a neighborhood sees disorder, they interpret disorder of different types as a signal that the area is poorly regulated or monitored, which makes sense if nobody prevented that disorder, or whatever being on the street, then obviously, you know, it looks like nobody's trying to stop it. So if you're somebody who's considering offending, it makes sense to want to offend in a place where it looks like nobody goes out and stops you versus a place that's well regulated, looks like people might stop you. So basically, from a deterrence mechanism, you can say disorder reduces the perceived certainty of intervention and receiving sanctioning. However, if you're somebody who is not interested in offending, you see that same signal saying a place is poorly regulated. And you might worry about being a victim because if nobody's going to stop people from offending somebody else who wants to offend you... So it's being interpreted the same way between people. So rationally, you might want to avoid places that are more risky. But if you avoid those places, and everyone avoids those places, there actually is a lower likelihood of people

intervening and actually makes it less regulated. So there's a perceptual side and actually there's fewer people there. So it's an elegant theory, because it's very intuitive because Wilson and Kelan were writing not to an academic audience, but to a public audience. It's compelling. It's well written. The whole thing though hinges on this interpretation of disorder. Do people see disorder interpreted in this way, which is usually a controversy.

J Jose Sanchez 19:56

Can't remember exactly, was it the Atlantic where it was published?

J Jose Sanchez 20:01

Yeah, 1982.

J Jose Sanchez 20:02

Yeah. So it wasn't like it wasn't an academic journal that this was released in. And that's maybe why it caught fire the way that it did because it you know, this wasn't behind some paywall for one of those, like major journal companies like this was in basically a media outlet.

C Charles Lanfear 20:20

Yeah, Wilson is a major conservative thinker in the area of government and policing, you know, he was around a long time. And it's fundamentally it's a paper about policing the theory is almost, you know, it's there and it's embedded in it, but it's almost it's sort of a explanation for why policing should be used in a particular way. But the focus is very much on community policing, basically.

J Jose Sanchez 20:40

Right. And that's kind of what it feels like. You often hear broken windows theory and broken windows policing kind of used interchangeably. I think there's a little distinction there, but it kind of, you know, gave rise to broken windows policing. And I believe it was in 2014, where I think Kelling actually said, Because broken windows theory has actually gotten a lot of backlash, because of the way that it's been implemented by police departments. But in 2014, Kelling came out and said, Yeah, that's not exactly what we were saying, you know, you took what we're saying, and you kind of became like this overzealous, like zero tolerance policy, that wasn't exactly what we were trying to advocate for.

C Charles Lanfear 21:25

Yeah, if you read the actual article and read it carefully, and critically, it is remarkable the sorts of policing that often got done in the name of it when you read it. I mean, they say sort of, you need to make sure that your policing isn't racially biased, you need to make sure that it's



enforcing community norms, not outside norms. That's all in the article. And then you see what was done with it. You're like, oh, this doesn't really make much sense. But you know, so it goes.

**J** Jose Sanchez 21:49

Yeah, I think, you know, they probably read the you have to police the real minor stuff to avoid getting it snowballing into something bigger and stop there.

**C** Charles Lanfear 21:56

That's what they wanted to hear.

**J** Jose Sanchez 21:57

Yeah. We have our marching orders. Here we go. So based on your review of experimental and observational studies on on disorder and informal control and crime, what conclusions did you reach about the state of this body of work?

**C** Charles Lanfear 22:13

It's mixed. I think that evidence is, so this is going to be in some ways an unsatisfying answer. I think evidence is weaker for informal control and broken windows theories than many proponents argue but it's also stronger than many or if not most opponents arguing in a number of these pathways. So with regard to broken windows, I think evidence is pretty poor for a direct broken windows effect. That is the especially the interpretive mechanism of seeing that. One of the best things on this, in my opinion, is Peter KP St. John's pockets of crime, which basically he was like, well, if we're thinking that offenders might recognize disorder as a sign essentially of opportunity, why don't I just go when you interview active offenders and ask them if disorder signals opportunity. It's the most the simplest idea. And he finds no, they base it entirely off of different things. It's extremely compelling evidence. It's a glorious book. Evidence for the indirect effect in broken windows is a little bit better. That is for disorder, perhaps causing reductions in social control capacity. My opinion, the best evidence for broken windows is actually based on opportunity mechanisms, which are outside the original theory. These are technically different micro mechanisms, this thing saying that some forms of disorder generate opportunities for crime against, it's the thing I was saying earlier about, if you've got a bunch of kids drinking on the street corner, well, drinking kids get together like that, and maybe they get in a stupid argument they get in a fight, or maybe some you know, something like that. It's like conflicts like that. That's an opportunity mechanism. It's not based on deterrence, it's based on some things provide objective opportunities. And some of the experimental work that's been done like John McDonald and Charlie Bron's work in Philly with the abandoned building and vacant lot remediation sort of is based on these kinds of ideas. There's some other good work like that, I think that's more compelling.

**C** Charles Lanfear 24:00

A part of key thing we brought out of this is, it's really hard to study these things, it's actually

A sort of key thing we brought out of this is, it's really hard to study these things, it's actually really difficult to test community theories, which is why I love this area and why I'm in it, it's the puzzles are so difficult, I find it it's a fantastic place to be. And the reason for that is most of the key factors we're interested in things like social control aren't really manipulable directly in experiments, and especially not at scale, you might be able to manipulate disorder in a small area, but you can't go and like drop a helicopter full of garbage on an entire neighborhood, right? You can't do that kind of intervention. And broken windows it's macro in its respective, its entire neighborhoods, you know, you can't manipulate those things. So you're trying to figure out how you can get at these things. So it's really difficult. I think that there's good there's evidence for informal social control, but when people test it narrowly, in some ways, it doesn't really work because the mechanisms are more complex. So it's mixed. But I think there's a lot of opportunity for good work in these areas. And main thing is realizing where are the gaps, which, you know, I think we kind of get at some of that.

C

Charles Lanfear 24:07

While we're on that topic, what would you say is next for the research on disorder, informal social control, and crime? Like, what are the questions that we should be answering at this point?

C

Charles Lanfear 25:12

Yeah, so in my opinion, and as somebody who's very much into this micro macro stuff, and analytical sociology and criminology, I think the big thing is, you know, we have to hit the theory hard, get precise with our concepts, precise with our mechanisms. Our macro theories are incomplete without micro links. So figuring out how these macro things influence individual behavior and situations, the work, the theory isn't complete without it. And this includes both macro micro so how does something like neighborhood contexts influence individual behavior? It's also incomplete without knowing how individual behavior influences macro context. So what are the conditions that generate real social context and neighborhoods? So basically, we need research to get at, What generates situations like selection into situations? Why do people go to places they do and interact the way that they do? Emergence within situations. How do people learn and communicate things and knowledge about areas? And also, I mean, this micro macro stuff is also goes above and beyond, like higher level than collective efficacy and broken windows. What is it that generates these neighborhoods in this way in the first place, which is urban political economy? To me, it's something I'm very interested in is, you know, what are the processes by which the urban environment is generated the way it is? So that's the theory side of it. Empirically, I think we should also hammer mechanisms, we need better measures, we need to embed - a big one I'm an advocate for and have done a lot of myself is - embedding field experiments, but also qualitative work inside of large scale survey data collection and other administrative data. So put your experiments in places you have ecological data, do qualitative work alongside your experiments and your survey data to figure out mechanisms. Qualitative work is one of the best ways to get mechanisms, which is really vital for this. Also collect novel measures like mobility. You know, something like collective efficacy is about crime, like not happening here, because there's control but Shawn McKay's social disorganization, like said, delinquents are generated in certain places, but if they all just have really good transit and go commit crime elsewhere, that's an important thing to know. But to know that we need to know where people go. And then the big one, I think, which is there's been some good criticism I think of the entire vein of social disorganization literature from ACC

and co authors recently is how do we make any of this stuff even relevant to fixing any problems? So as I said before, it's hard to manipulate collective efficacy or something well, how does that make it like relevant to solving it? Is it something we can manipulate and do it? I'm a big, I'm very interested in basic science, not necessarily how can I change things to reduce crime? But it is a good question, it might be the case that this informal social control stuff is really powerful and important, but the process is so endogenous and self reinforcing that it's not really amenable to small scale intervention, when maybe you need larger scale sorts of social change, which I had to do that stuff. Anyway. So a lot of area to work.

**J** Jose Sanchez 27:53

Right? Yep. I think that's great. I think it's interesting because it's something that, in some ways I've, kind of always been a part of, but haven't always sort of recognized that I was a part of it. So, you know, anyone that's listened to this, for any amount of time knows that I really started off as, like a gang scholar, that's kind of really what my research focus was, I've kind of broaden it a little bit more to community violence, in general, which gang violence tends to be a big part of, but you know, I got my start doing research with the gang reduction and youth development program in Los Angeles. Right. And so like, their whole thing is we're going to identify what are essentially gang hotspots throughout the city, and we're going to, like dump all resources into those, they call them grid zones. But you know, they're essentially, you know, gang hotspots. And so, but yeah, trying to, but something that, and I'm also a big proponent of, you know, the mixed methods approach. So here in Denver, we conducted a randomized control trial on the gang reduction program here and we also did qualitative data collection. That was kind of what my job ended up being. So I was spearheading the qualitative stuff. And we ended up with these what you would consider counterintuitive findings because we found that people that go through the program, we saw reductions in violence, but we saw gang embeddedness move in the wrong direction and active gang membership was also in the wrong direction. And so you know, the question then becomes well, it's a gang program so on the surface, these gang findings are not exactly what you would hope to see, but the behavior is trending in the right direction. And so, you know, part of my dissertation is to kind of try and with all the qualitative data to kind of try and see if we can disentangle Well, how did we end up here? Right, and so, you know, we have a few ideas, a few hypotheses as to why that is. And so now it's kind of my job to just sift through, like three years of qualitative data and try to offer an explanation as to why that is.

**C** Charles Lanfear 30:09

Yeah, that's fun. I love, that's one of the things that I love. And whenever possible people should do is embed this qualitative data collection alongside RCTs and things because you can just get so much insight. It's like, it's one thing to know, a treatment didn't do what you want to do. But it's another thing to know why and what else that you might not have been looking at that it may or may not have done. Granted, that then makes you then maybe need to do another RCT later, because you don't have the same advantages of the RCT setup. It's so important to do that stuff when you can. And I imagine you're gonna find a pile of really interesting stuff doing that. So it's going to be super cool.

**J** Jose Sanchez 30:40

Oh, yeah, absolutely. But you know, one of the things that we kind of started to think about was, you know, like, this is an individual level program, right, like, so it's only working with individuals, but it's, so one of the things that we were discussing was well a lot harder to change, like the gang landscape, right, like the communities. And then we started seeing a lot of this conflating of the gang with the community. And so like this being intertwined, and so yeah, so trying to like, disentangle that relationship of the community and the gang, and how it's impacting the individuals and so kinda and then, so then I started to really look into, like, the macro theory, stuff like the social disorganization, routine activity, kind of, how can we set the stage for what we're seeing here, you know, in Denver. So real interesting stuff.

J Jose Sanchez 31:33

Okay. So, now we're going to pivot a little bit and want to talk about some of the work that you've done, like with context and gun violence, you know, working with the PHDCN Project on Human Development in Chicago neighborhoods. So when we were emailing and setting up the episode, you mentioned that a lot of your time has been devoted to work that you have been doing on this project, PHDCN. Can you tell us more about the project itself, you know, just in general terms, and the work that you specifically are doing?

C Charles Lanfear 32:07

Yeah, so the PHDCN is one of the largest data collection efforts in the social sciences in recent decades. So it's focused on Chicago, but it constituted Community Survey or two waves of a community survey of 8000 plus people, a cohort study which followed 6000 plus kids of ages 0, 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, and 18 in 1995, and followed them for now a very long time. Also systematic social observation that's like videotaping streets and coding what they find to get disorder measures, and also interviews of elite networks in Chicago. It's an incredibly comprehensive effort. The main work I'm involved on is the continuation of the cohort study. So in this cohort study, which started in 1995/1996, basically started tracking kids in the 95/96, where now we have completed the fifth wave of data collection in 2021, with cohorts of kids who were born in 1981 1984 1987 and 1996, so their age in 2021, is between 25 and 40. And these kids were tracked from when they were between at birth or from before they were born from 15. So we have this huge span of time covered which, which allows us to do a lot of cool stuff on the life course. The current focus with the fifth wave has been on guns and gun violence over the life course. But we're also doing work on legal cynicism, experiences with the legal system, physical and mental health. So it's sort of a rare opportunity to observe people with these really rich measures over a very long period of time when the sort of historical context was changing a lot across this time. So a lot of neat stuff going on.

J Jose Sanchez 33:48

Yeah, I'd be lying if said I'm not a little jelly. That sounds like such an awesome project. And as part of the research team, you recently published a paper on life course exposures to gun violence with colleagues, Rebecca Bucci, who is a TCA alum, David Kirk, and Robert Sampson, who also is a TCA alum, and the papers titled, Inequalities and exposure to firearm violence by race, sex, and birth cohort from childhood to age 40, 1995-2021. In this paper, the authors examine race, sex and cohort differences in exposure to firearm violence, as well as spatial

proximity to firearm violence in adulthood. To do so they use a representative Longitudinal Study of just over 2400 children from the PHDCN. The participants included Black, Hispanic, and white correspondents from Chicago, Illinois, and four age cohorts with modal birth years of 91, 94, 87, and 96. So, we're going to start off our discussion of this paper with a question on historical context.

**J** Jose Sanchez 34:56

How has gun violence changed over time as it relates to the four age cohorts that you were examining in this study?

**C** Charles Lanfear 35:03

It's changed so much over the periods. So this is one of the things that's a strength of the study with regard to violence and gun violence in particular. So up until fairly recently, the prior peak of gun violence in the United States was this early 1990s period. So in the early 1990s, our oldest cohort born in 1981, were sort of just coming into their teens their maximum period of potential exposure to violence. But then our 1984 and 1987 cohorts came of age in this rapid decline of violence in the late 90s, and then entered this stably low period of violence in the early 2000s. So they were much more shielded from serious violence. But then violence surged again, gun violence just shot up in 2016. And then really shot up in 2020. Actually, in 2020, Chicago, even past the level of gun homicides in the early 1990s, to reach their highest level that we have recorded in our data. Our young cohort was born in 1996. So these spikes in 2016, and 2020, got in their sort of early 20s was, again, a high exposure period for violence. So it's sort of lining up where there's just tremendous intercohort difference in the social context of violence.

**J** Jose Sanchez 36:12

How many respondents in your study had been shot or had seen someone get shot?

**C** Charles Lanfear 36:18

Yeah, this one's kind of crazy. So we estimated at 6.5% of respondents in the study had been shot by age 40. And 50%, had seen someone shot by age 40. So these are event history models. So they're accounting for censoring basically. It's not the exact count, but it's the percentage of them. If you weight these estimates to the population composition of Chicago, we can estimate that for the sort of cross section of kids who were alive in Chicago at this time, if you projected them forward to age 40, we would estimate 46% of kids in that situation have seen someone get shot by 40 in the city of Chicago. So this is not present residents of Chicago, but if you grew up in Chicago of these ages in the 90s, we'd estimate 46% of people had seen someone shot by the time they turned 40.

**J** Jose Sanchez 37:07

Yeah, that's that seems like a pretty high number

Yeah, that's, that seems like a pretty high number.

**C** Charles Lanfear 37:10  
It's skewed.

**J** Jose Sanchez 37:11  
Yeah. And you know, when it came to race and/or sex, did you see any differences in exposure to firearm violence?

**C** Charles Lanfear 37:19  
I mean, it's huge. So the race, ethnicity and sex differences are big. So over 7% of our non Hispanic Black and Hispanic respondents had been shot, and 55% had seen someone shot compared to 3% of our non Hispanic white respondents had been shot and 25%, so half, less than half as many had seen someone gets shot. So exposure differences are very large, more than double for non Hispanic Black and Hispanic respondents. And then on sex differences, enormous differences, some you would expect, and some you might not. So 11% of our males had been shot, estimated by age 40. And 2% of women shot. Huge difference, you know, five times. But the difference in seeing people get shot are small 58% of male respondents and 43% of female respondents. So this means female exposure to seeing shootings is much larger than like shooting victimization data indicates. Women are much more exposed than we get if we just looked at statistics on people getting shot, basically.

**J** Jose Sanchez 38:23  
Yeah, those are, again, pretty big numbers. Okay. So given that we've just discussed they were looking at different age cohorts, I think it'd be reasonable to expect to see differences in exposure to firearm violence based on cohort differences. Were there any differences on exposure, based on the age cohort?

**C** Charles Lanfear 38:42  
Yeah. And so this is something that again, sort of like what I was starting to get at before was, our 1981 cohort sort of came of age in the period of peak violence in Chicago in the 90s. And correspondingly, they have the highest exposure to gun violence, both being shot and seeing shootings, you know. Because gun violence declined rapidly in the early 90s, exposure is substantially lower for 1984 and especially the 1987 cohort. The 1987 cohort was at its highest risk years in the lowest period of gun violence in Chicago in the last, you know, 30 plus years. But then gun violence surged up in 2016 and 2020. And corresponding to that, and 1996 cohort is more highly exposed. They look a lot more like the 1984 and 1981 cohort, they're much more exposed. Yeah. So it seems to be large cohort differences.

**J**

- J** Jose Sanchez 39:28  
And then I'm guessing the race and sex of holds pretty steady across the cohorts?
- C** Charles Lanfear 39:35  
Yeah, the differences are fairly proportional within the cohorts. Yeah, we didn't see any like interactions with cohort or race or sex. It's sort of fairly stable.
- J** Jose Sanchez 39:44  
So in 2021, the fifth wave interviews were conducted, your research team obtained all incidents of gun violence throughout the US that occurred within 250 meters or miles?
- C** Charles Lanfear 39:57  
Meters.
- J** Jose Sanchez 39:58  
Yeah, I have like a horrific sense of distance. So it actually doesn't even matter if it's miles. There's no way for me to even imagine what that is. So okay...
- C** Charles Lanfear 40:09  
It's about the full length, diagonal length of a Chicago city block.
- J** Jose Sanchez 40:13  
Okay. I'm sure that helped people that are actually more spatially competent than I am.  
\*laughter\* Okay, so gun violence throughout the years that occurred within 250 meters of the respondents addresses in the year prior to the fifth wave interview. Did you find any disparities in race, sex or cohort as they relate to the spatial proximity to firearm violence in adulthood?
- C** Charles Lanfear 40:38  
Yeah, for race/ethnicity differences, it's even more exaggerated than what I was just talking about before. So and so this is like this is where they are currently living in the time that they're surveyed. And then what we did is we looked over the past year within 250 meters, you know, how many shootings happen, and what we find is quite large differences. Basically, the rate of nearby shootings in the past year was 12 times as high for non Hispanic Black respondents versus white respondents and four times as high for Hispanic respondents versus non Hispanic whites. And it's startling to see. So we have some maps in the paper showing what a

representative neighborhood of the maximum quintile of exposure looks like for white, Hispanic, and non Hispanic Black and there's dots for every shooting that happened nearby these particular respondents. And for the white ones, it's one shooting for the Hispanic ones, it's two shootings and for the non Hispanic black respondents, I mean, that map has like 20 shootings visible on the map. It's just it's startling that the different sorts of places. This higher rate of shootings is a function of the really large differences in the most disadvantaged neighborhoods that people of different races/ethnicities live in. So tying back to we were talking about earlier with Shaw and McKay, sort of as Shaw and McKay described in the 40s. And Peterson and Crevo echoed in 2010, it's sort of impossible to reproduce in white communities the circumstances under which Black children live. There's nothing comparable, the most disadvantaged white respondents don't live in anything like the most disadvantaged Black or Hispanic respondents. And another thing is that our white respondents much more often moved out of Chicago entirely. So we follow them no matter where they went in the country. And the white respondents were much more likely to move out of Chicago and thus move to more safe areas, because the shootings are highly concentrated in sort of a dense parts of Chicago.

**J** Jose Sanchez 42:24

Right. And, you know, given everything that we've just run through, what are some of the implications of the study, you know, for research, but maybe also for policy and practice?

**C** Charles Lanfear 42:36

So the first thing I'll say is that, and this is I was just talking to a reporter about this yesterday. So media and often research, and sometimes research often focused on fatal shootings. But that's only one form of exposure. And also, there's a big focus in the media, especially on mass shootings, which constitute less than 2% of shooting fatalities and injuries. And they're very different from other shootings. Non fatal victimization and witnessing gun violence is pervasive, there is a lot of it going on. So it's important and worth researching the effects that these things have on people's health and wellbeing and also on like their future gun use, you know, do kids growing up with a lot of shootings nearby end more likely to carry guns and use guns later. Another thing on this is that, given the high exposure that women see, I think it's really important to emphasize doing work on effects on women, which is sometimes under study, because people generally say, Well, it's men doing the shooting and men getting shot, so we would expect to see lower things. But if you're seeing the populations where 40% of the women are seeing people get shot, you should probably be looking into what effect that's having.

**C** Charles Lanfear 43:43

Another big theme I think is coming out of here that applies to research and also generally thinking about crime and violence. It's really important, not just things about yourself, and like where you live and where you are, but when you were born and when you grew up. There's patterns over the life course that differ by historical period. And these patterns also differ by race and sex. There's sort of an interaction between historical period and demographic characteristics of people. Rob's really that's Rob Sampson has really been focusing on this lately. I think he's getting at this in a book that he's writing right now. Context matters for people and historical period is about the biggest context there is. Okay.



C

Charles Lanfear 44:22

There are also policy implications to the sort of life course thinking, right. So if you address early contexts, the benefits pay off over the entire life course of people, if you can prevent people from being exposed to violence when they're very young, then that carries forward for the rest of their life. The later you intervene, the less of you know a person's life you can impact so early intervention.

C

Charles Lanfear 44:44

Another sort of research implication, I think, from this paper is descriptive work is good. This paper is a purely descriptive, it's not a hypothesis testing in paper, what we're just trying to do is say how much violence that people have been exposed to over the last you know, 30 years you know, from childhood. What's it look like? So I was fortunate enough to be trained as a demographer when I was at the University of Washington, in my Ph. D program, which is something I would recommend, you know, early students do, looking at some like demographic training, it'll teach you to do careful descriptive work and to care about descriptive work more than often like criminologists, sociologists often sort of look down on descriptive. It's some of the most useful important stuff you can do. Another thing here for people, a lot of people out there and I teach fancy math, it's I teach causal inference and stuff, we did survival curves in here, this is the most basic simple like analysis methods, these things can be so useful by by just basic descriptive patterns, anybody can look at these things and interpret. You know, I can hand this I've had so many news interviews on this, because people look at the numbers and they can interpret them immediately. 46% 50% of people seeing someone shot, that's crazy. It draws a lot of attention to things, that simple stuff and descriptive stuff communicates and does important work. It might not be, you know, theory testing, but the impact is something potentially very important.

C

Charles Lanfear 46:00

Another thing I think that's important to know about and research should be doing is it's really important to know about the causes of exposure. So you know, it's, we know that these people are exposed this way. But what is it that's driving the differences in, you know, race/ethnic exposure? And one of the things I'm really interested in, I think people could chase is residential selection. Why do people live in these places where they end up being exposed? This is particularly for the gun violence in 2021, like I said, most of our white respondents moved out of Chicago and moved to safer places. Most of our non Hispanic Black and Hispanic respondents didn't move out of these places. Why is that happening? So this has to do with segregation and residential mobility. And I'm interested, you know, how do those things impact violence, but also, how does violence impact segregation and mobility, you know, if white folk have the ability to move out when a shooting happens in the neighborhood, and they can do it but other people can't, it increases segregation and that mobility is a way that actually concentrates the violence in particular populations. So this is something I think we have to think about and have to look into. And of course, broadly inspiring policy and practice. That is an awful lot of people seeing people get shot. That's an awful lot of people being shot. Interventions to things to deal with the violence, it's critical that these things be done quickly, and sort of triage these things. Because this is very high levels of exposure. And especially now

we're seeing this big surge in 2016 2020 2021, we might be seeing spillover effects of these sorts of things for many years to come as kids now growing up are being exposed. Thankfully, I think I've seen some early evidence that it's sort of dropped a little bit this last year, but we'll see what the summer brings. So...

**J** Jose Sanchez 47:34

That's super interesting. Yeah, I'd be interested to see, especially the mobility aspect, you know, as you were talking about, it just made me think of my parents. So my parents still live in my childhood home, like they haven't moved. And, you know, I grew up in it was formerly known as South Central now renamed South Los Angeles, because City Council thought that changing the name would somehow make all the associations with gang violence just disappear. It's not even geographically correct. But you know, anyway, so I grew up right in this little unincorporated area called Florence Graham. So not even technically in the city of Los Angeles, we are overseen by the County, Los Angeles. But my neighborhood is where this gang, Florencio Tressa, Florence 13, like they actually started, have started to gain some notoriety. And you can even find them out here in Denver, but my neighborhoods where they started, you know, we had shootings, they were, you know, there were turf battles with other surrounding gangs. You walked through my neighborhood, you won't find a single house that doesn't have window bars, and like, iron gates. And so you know, just to combat the mobility part of it just made me think of, like my parents who have been living there for 30 some years now. And, you know, like, why haven't you, like this neighborhood's not exactly, you know, it's not great. Why haven't you left? You know, I just kind of want to laugh, because they're like, because our rent hasn't gone up in over three decades.

**C** Charles Lanfear 49:05

Yeah!

**J** Jose Sanchez 49:06

I mean, it has, but you know, we live in Los Angeles, like we're in a two bedroom house, paying like, \$1,200, you know, like. But it kind of gets to the point, really, I think the underlying message was, this is what we can afford, right? Like, like, if we could move to a nicer area, we would, but, you know, we can't, you know, like, my mom doesn't work, my dad. So it's like a one income household. So, you know, it'd be nice, but we can't.

**C** Charles Lanfear 49:38

Yeah, and thinking about that. So that sort of, you know, what is the individual sort of, you know, process which is, you know, again, it's related to the context about, you know, it's your ability to move or your desire to stay and how you, you know, relate to your environment like that. I mean, it's yeah, it's complicated thing. And what does that mean for, you know, kids growing up in these environments and things like that. It's Yeah, and of course, the changing historical context of LA, you know, over the, you know, think about what you know, obviously

has happened to rent prices in LA in the last 25 plus years. You know, it's wild. So yeah, all these things play together in these really complicated ways. And it's, yeah, it's interesting to think about, it's hard to study. But it's interesting to think about.

**J** Jose Sanchez 50:18

Yeah, no, absolutely. All right, so we're gonna make another pivot. And we're gonna talk about something else that's of interest to you. And I think, I would say should be of interest to most of us. And that is reproducibility and open science practices in criminology. So, of course, as we prep for these episodes, we Google people before we talk to them, just to kind of do our homework a little bit, a little investigative work. And you know, you have a website. So it actually wasn't super hard to you know, find out a few things about you. But one of the things that we learned is that you actually pretty committed to reproducible research, you supply all of your course and workshop materials on your personal website. You have a GitHub profile and we noticed that you have coding for a lot of the work that you've done, available. And this reproducibility and open science, I think, has really started to gain a lot of steam over the last few years. And you know, I'm not super active, like, I'm on Twitter, not super active tweeting wise, but I do like to scroll at least a couple of times a day. And it's pretty common to see debates about open science come up. And, you know, I've seen people say things like, we don't want to become the next psychology. And you know, what they're referring to is psychology is going through a reproducibility crisis, people are starting to, or had started to reproduce some of like, the classic work that had been done and kind of started to find out like, Oh, these things that we've been citing for like decades, are actually not holding up or not being able to be reproduced. And so they entered a reproducibility crisis. So what are your thoughts on? You know, where's criminology? Are we headed towards a crisis? Are we like, actually, in the crisis? What are your thoughts of the state of the field?

**C** Charles Lanfear 52:14

Yeah. So I'd say we're not exactly in a crisis, despite some high profile events that have happened last few years, retracted papers and things like that. I don't think we're in a crisis. There's a lot of room to improve. But I think one of the things is, it's less of the field has sort of gotten itself into a crisis exactly as there's a growing understanding of the importance of doing these things and the complexity of projects has increased greatly over the last 30 plus years, to the point where it's getting more and more important to just sort of have a record of these things. I mean, the code base of a project has gotten enormous. I mean, I have papers that have, you know, 10,000 lines of code, and stuff like that. That's insane, you know, you have to put that stuff out, because mistakes matter. I think one thing criminology benefits from is that we're multidisciplinary discipline. So practices like reproducible research and a focus on replication, also, on the sort of causality revolutions that have happened in disciplines like economics and political science, these things all leak into criminology from every side, it's all these different interdisciplinary people come in. So criminology sort of gets absorbed, and it's getting in. We're behind some disciplines. But also, I think there's a lot of active interest in it and it's moving in the right direction. In fact, I'm a member of the European Society of Criminology as I'm at Cambridge, they just got an open science working group started, it's kind of like an ASC division. I'm going to be a part of that. And so it's growing over here. As a discipline, we're rather new to these open science practices. But that's fine. I think it's in large part a function of a lack of training in graduate programs and a lack of professional incentives

to learn these things. You know, people have limited time. And if you have to learn these things in an unstructured way on your own, and you don't get rewarded for doing them, it makes sense not to learn this stuff. I learned it because I'm a colossal tech nerd. And I was just like, I'm just gonna beat my face against it and also because I like programming, which is a wrong thing with me. But that's the way it is like, it's, I got into it early, but I think it's really important. And so I sort of try to spread it to other people.

**J** Jose Sanchez 54:09

Right. And then I think, you know, kind of the million dollar question, as we're talking about this. Why is this important? Why is reproducibility important?

**C** Charles Lanfear 54:18

Yeah. Well, I have strong opinions. But first thing we'll do, a slight clarification there is that for people listening is that there's replication and there's reproducibility. So replication is when you run a new study, say collect new data on the same topic. And if you get similar results, you say it replicated. Reproducibility is running the same study with the same data and the same method and getting the same results. In other words, reproducibility is what I call the lowest possible bar that research should pass that if you do the exact same thing in the exact same conditions, you should get the same thing. I'm speaking to quantitative work. It can be, there's not really reproducibility in the same fashion in qualitative work, you can't be in the same context. Time has passed. But for quantitative work, it's the lowest possible bar. It's a basic verification of results. In my opinion, this is something I yell at my students every single term that I teach research methods, or whatever, any study that isn't reproducible, can be trusted only on faith. So there's sort of a basic thing, if something doesn't have reproducible, reproducibility, you're just taking it trusting that the person who did the work or people do the work did what they did correctly. Now, I'll say this probably later. But science is a trust based enterprise. But still, unless you got a really good excuse not to, it makes a lot of sense to just put your stuff out there, so people can see what you did. On that front. The secondary benefit of it, if you put what you did out, and people can see every little thing you did, people can learn from every little thing you did. I very commonly go and look up code people have used to generate things in papers, and I go and I see oh, that's a really nice way of doing that. I can see how things are set up and makes it easier to do my own analysis sometimes like you can wholesale use people's code that they use to clean and process the data. That's beneficial. It's labor saving. Other things is you can use it to say change little things and see how well somebody's study, how sensitive it is to little changes. So I did some replication work a while back on paper published in Criminology and Public Policy, and I was like, How sensitive is this to changing certain assumptions built into it, you know, it's like a lot of it's still like, replicated fine, some things are more sensitive, you can't do any of that stuff, or know it in less people make reproducible materials available. In my opinion, you know, just making something your materials available, it conveys that you're being open and science, you know, is about, you know, the knowledge enterprise should be as transparent as possible. So I think it's just, to me, it's sort of it's obvious, you know, it's there are potential downsides. But the downsides are usually if you do something wrong, it's easier for people to catch it, which is good for science. It might be hard for the individual, but you know, it's good for science, if people can see what you've done.

J

Jose Sanchez 56:59

Yeah, absolutely. I'm glad you brought up the distinction between reproducible and replication. Yeah, and I think part of the reason why people might be a little wary of being so transparent is, you know, like you said, people can catch an error, but I feel like people get scared of, someone's not going to send me like, you know, a kind email saying, like, Hey, I noticed something went wrong, you know, maybe it's something you should look into, just that you should know. I think they're worried that someone's gonna, like, will link the thing on Twitter and say, like, look at this idiot, like, this is bad science, you should not listen to this person, everything this person has ever done, is absolutely worthless, like they're not to be trusted. Right. So I think people are just afraid of like this, burn it to the ground, pitchfork, and, you know, flame backlash that they might get if they do make a mistake, or if someone finds out that they made a mistake.

C

Charles Lanfear 57:55

I think that it's absolutely fair. And I don't want the discipline to turn into an econ economics seminar. But you know, it's, you know, people can get cooked in a place like that. But at the same time, you know, it's important for science, I think it requires a bit of a cultural shift of becoming somewhat less defensive about these things and just more open to acknowledging that, you know, when things get complex, it gets easier to make mistakes. And I mean, what can you do. If there was a problem with it, you should correct and you should be able to. I think one thing that should be done is, you know, if a paper is changed, by an honest mistake, I don't think it should be like, necessarily retracted or something. But you know, you might have to update the record on things, stuff like that, but people are scared of it. You know, I do totally understand that. But one thing I find is, when I started publishing all of my paper code up online, my code got a lot better because I was scared of those things. You know, I'm scared that I'm like, I'm gonna make mistakes. It made me document my code better, made me much more careful with it. So it's been good for my personal because of that actual sort of that fear of it. Do the best job you possibly can and if you've done the best you can, you still make a mistake, you know, it can happen, but it's better that someone know about it, then you make a mistake and it remaining totally hidden.

J

Jose Sanchez 59:03

Yeah, no, absolutely. You know, we have a paper under review right now with the idea that we want someone to be able to take this code, hit the run button, and just have it spit out what it's supposed to and, you know, we double, triple, quadruple, quintuple check the code, make sure everything that you know, someone could look at this, you know, we worked on Stata, so look at this do file and be able to follow along like okay, I see what you did here. I see what you did there. Okay, so I'm on board. I think that's a good thing. Okay. And so, in, one of the ways that people argue, like we know we've been talking about is that we should be open science, and that we should be very transparent. And one of the ways that I feel like people are starting to gravitate towards this is pre registering studies with the Open Science Framework or OSF. Something else that's also kind of started to creep up is journals making it a requirement. I feel like Some of them haven't gone all in with it quite yet. But some have where you're required to provide, like your coding for your paper. Do you think these are good approaches to reproducibility?

C

Charles Lanfear 1:00:12

In general yes, but with some caveats, some some complexity of that. So I think open practices should be motivated by a philosophy of science. So the basic idea is pre-registration makes sense to compensate for problems in the hypothetical deductive frameworks, hypothesis testing, deductive research like that, but it doesn't compensate for problems and exploratory research, because those same problems don't exist. I've still preregistered exploratory work, but really, it's very brief. It's just saying, I'm gonna look at some stuff. And that's basically it, right? So pre registration makes a lot of sense if you're going to be running, in my opinion, if you're gonna be running RCTs and evaluations, you need to do that stuff. So for that, it makes sense. But it's not like a thing to do with exploratory work or something. What I think in general should be done is something like OSF Open Science Framework is a great place for putting it but it also doesn't necessarily, it often is weird, if you're doing stuff with observational data, secondary data and stuff, OSF stuff has weird hoops to jump through, we still use OSF for the PHDCN. Anyway. What I think in general, though, is people just need to be more open and honest with what they're doing in papers. So there's no shame in doing exploratory descriptive work. And people who are doing exploratory and descriptive work shouldn't feel compelled to take something to discover in there and turn it into something that looks like deductive work. It should be okay and better, and it should be treated as healthy to say, I was exploring and I found some weird shit, let's go and look at and let's talk about it right, you know, and just be like and do it. And I have other papers, we're going to work with PHDCN and that are kind of like that. We don't know what we're going to find because it's new territory on this life course stuff. So we're just going to explore it. Later, we'll pre register papers that are going to do hypothesis testing that are looking at different things. But once we've seen that pattern, we can't then go in and register our hypothesis testing paper with it, like that's double dipping. There should also be no shame in updating pre registrations. This is one thing where people are often afraid that Oh, doing a pre registration locks me in and if I get the data and I look at it, it's impossible to do things. No, you can update your pre registration. But it just keeps a record that what I originally intended to do was this, but then I discovered the data are unsuitable, so I had to change my methods in this way. It just keeps your honest. You know, you can be flexible. So we pre registered, I've got a paper under review, one journal, we pre registered for that. We've got this the PHDCN stuff, we pre registered, and we just say if we had to change and deviate, we just say exactly how we deviated and provide a justification. It's more flexible. So it's not that rigid.

C

Charles Lanfear 1:02:35

With regard to sharing code. There is nearly no reason ever to not share code except the case where if your code in some way would identify participants or otherwise compromise, unethical thing, your code should be shareable. Typically, if I have code that has to act directly on a respondent, like, say, code that this respondent was killed, you know, it's really easy to identify somebody by death records. So you have to figure out ways to anonymize that. Maybe the fact that they died in the matching stuff is stored in a file that's not shared and not like you don't put their respondent ID directly in the code, you kind of have to figure out stuff like that. But still you make the code shareable. Data though, data can be murky. In criminology, especially, there's a lot of ethical, legal, and sometimes professional barriers to data sharing that I'm actually quite sympathetic to. I mean, you know, when you're talking about people self reporting their offending, if data are anyway back traceable, or something, you can put a

barrier on it, you can say people have to get permission from the study authors. That's what we do with the PHDCN. You know, you can request access to our replication data, just send, you push a button on Harvard data verse, it sends an automatic email and an admin person will be like, yes, and they will send you the data, but it's just one little barrier to prevent to make it so it's traceable.

**J** Jose Sanchez 1:03:48

Yeah, yeah, again, I agree. We preregistered RCT here in Denver. And yeah, we had to kind of work around some of the identifier stuff through our coding. And like I said, like I spearheaded the qualitative data stuff. And that's like a whole different kind of worms, when it comes with it. Because if you made it like publicly available, you just end up with this document. It looks like you got it from the CIA, just completely redacted. So, you know, it's challenging, but I think that's where we should be going. So I'm in complete agreement.

**J** Jose Sanchez 1:04:23

But okay, that's all the questions we have for you today. Thank you so much for, I'm so used to saying joining us, but unfortunately things didn't go like they normally would. So thank you for just joining me today. You know, it was a pleasure to talk to you. You've mentioned some work but is there anything you'd like to plug anything we should be on the lookout for coming out in the near future?

**C** Charles Lanfear 1:04:46

Theoretically but I can't really reveal things. I got some stuff under review. That's some fun stuff in communities and crime work that I'm hoping should be out in a little bit. Other than that, I would say I will plug that if folks are interested in reproducible research and an open materials and things like that, feel free to reach out to me, my materials are open access, I'm happy to give suggestions and advice on how people can implement those practices. And also like, you know, teach research methods, things like that, because I think these things should be core parts of social science PhD and like masters and MPhil programs, anything I can do to help facilitate that if you have questions or anything I'd love for people to reach out.

**J** Jose Sanchez 1:05:21

Perfect. And where can people find you. I mentioned you have your own website. Are you on social media at all like Twitter?

**C** Charles Lanfear 1:05:28

I'm a lurker kinda like you. Every once in a while I tweet or retweet something, but I typically I'm not super active. It's more website and email. Yeah. If you Googled Charles Lanfear, you can't miss it.



Jose Sanchez 1:05:37

Okay, perfect. Well, thank you again. I really appreciate you taking time out of your day to talk with us now.



Charles Lanfear 1:05:43

Thanks! It was a pleasure. Thanks for having me, Jose.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:05:47

Hey, thanks for listening!



Jose Sanchez 1:05:49

Don't forget to leave us a review on Apple podcasts or iTunes. Or let us know what you think of the episode by leaving us a comment on our website, [thecriminologyacademy.com](http://thecriminologyacademy.com).



Jenn Tostlebe 1:05:58

You can also follow us on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook @TheCrimAcademy.



Jose Sanchez 1:06:10

Or email us at [thecrimacademy@gmail.com](mailto:thecrimacademy@gmail.com).



Jenn Tostlebe 1:06:14

See you next time!