

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF PROGRESSIVE
PROSECUTION ON JUVENILE CRIME IN
BALTIMORE

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The prosecutor is a long-overlooked arm of government that can exert a large amount of influence over the criminal justice system. In fact, many scholars believe that prosecutors have the unique ability to fix a number of problems in the system that politicians, lobbyists, and law enforcement have been unable to fix for years. The office of the prosecutor has been reimaged through a new philosophy known as progressive prosecution, which seeks to right the wrongs of the past with tools like diversion, discretion, and decriminalization. Progressive prosecutors often focus specifically on juveniles because of how important adolescence and emerging adulthood are in the life course of crime. In my study, I propose to evaluate progressive prosecution through the lens of one prosecutor: State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby of Baltimore, Maryland. The proposed study will examine Baltimore data on juvenile crime, referrals to diversion programs, and recidivism of diverted youth, as well as similar statistics in other cities with progressive prosecutors. Comparing these data and trends from before Mrs. Mosby's administration and once she took office in 2015 will give insight into juvenile diversion programs and the effectiveness of diverting youth from the system. The results will have implications on diversion and other juvenile policies in Baltimore as well as on progressive prosecution as a whole.

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by

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