Predatory Crime:
Property, Enterprise, and White Collars

Definitions
› Definition
  • Taking of money/property w/o force/threat
› FBI (UCR) classifies four types in Part I
  • Burglary: unlawful entry > felony or theft
  • Larceny-theft: unlawful taking
    • With stealth but no force, threat, or deception
    • If force, then burglary – “How something is stolen determines what kind of crime is committed.” (p292)
• Motor-vehicle theft: 80% are cars
• Arson: Must be proved (not unknown or suspicious)
› Four more in Part II – deception:
  • Forgery & counterfeiting: (intent to) defraud
  • Fraud: money or property by false pretenses
  • Buying, receiving, possessing stolen property
  • Embezzlement – misappropriation/misapplication

Administrative Issues
› Draft/Outline due @ midnight
  • Length, grade, grading order
› Schedule
  • This Thurs: Provost Colloq, 4pm
  • Next week: Spring Break
› Grade book updates
  • PDF vs Database
› Unclaimed clicker IDs
  • Drop lowest 3, but some still have none

Index offenses
› Burglary
  • Unlawful entry (2/3 forced) for felony or theft
  • Only 14% cleared w/ arrest (< in large/urban areas)
› Larceny-theft
  • Simple theft (pocket, purse, from vehicles)
  • >1M arrests for $4B property (smaller not reported?)
› Motor Vehicle Theft
  • Auto larceny; FBI distinguishes from L-t
    • 1.4m (1/147!), but primarily big cities (only 13% prop crime)
› Arson (since 1979; data sporadic)
  • Unlawful burning of any structure (½ = buildings)

Lecture Outline
› Identification
  • Definition & Offenses
  • Extent & Consequences
› Organization
  • Offenders Characteristics & Categories
  • Societal Issues
  • Explanations
  • Reduction

Non-index offenses
› Data problems
  • Arrests in UCR–II, but not temporal rates
  • Relatively small takings,
  • but frequency largely unknown
› Forgery, Fraud, Embezzlement
  • ...& Gender
  • Feminization of property compels?
  • Efficiency in detection balances?
  • Credit card centrality
Counts
- 72% of US households burglarized over 20 years
- 11.8 million annually (4 index crimes only)

Change
- UCR shows sharp rise 1960 to 70s, peaking 1980; declining since early 1990s
- NCVS shows steady decline since 1973

Differences
- NCVS (individual victims) excludes commercial crime (30% of burglaries)
- UCR excludes employee theft, computer crime, credit card theft – and unreported crime (1/2 of burglaries)
- NCVS data suggests 1/3 reported (78% MVT, 12% L-t)

Frequency generates tolerance

Decreasing, like all crime
- but higher value goods

Direct costs
- $1B/year in arson alone
- Billions in MVT
- 100s of millions in other known property theft

Preventative costs
- security, lights, alarms, devices

Psychological costs
- Fear, depression, sleeplessness, job/productivity
- Fear @ night (though more during day)

Social costs
- shun/distance because fear/vulnerable

Career Criminals
- Sutherland – older, more skilled
- Snitches (amateurs) vs Boosters (10% of shoplifting; resell)
- MVT – joyriding vs. chop shops

Coordination
- Teaching/learning
- Support system: tipsters (ID targets) & fences (process goods)

Corporate Criminals
- White–Collar Criminals
- Criminal Organizations

Consequence of cultural values
- Materialism as path to self–worth
- Some stealing is “right”?

Consequences of cultural values
- Industries: home security, surveillance
- Ripple effect from drug law enforcement
- Long–term transformation of institutions

Offender Characteristics

Types of offenders
- Opportunistic theft – juvenile, shoplifting
- Career/professional – Skills, contacts, etc.

Almost exclusively by lower class
- Artifact of reporting/calculations?
- Easier to detect, value, etc.
- Threat more individuated
- "us vs. them" attitude

Other demographics
- Typically young (56% by those under 25)
- Typically white men (though MVT=40% black)
- But blacks get > prison, on weaker evidence
- Women = 35–45% of l-t (~15% of others)

Explanations

Four in text
- Neutralization – but who does it? When?
- Economic Deprivation – inconsistent findings
- Routine Activities & Social Process (peer, family, school)
- Thrill-seeking – based on seduction (cultural? Who?)

Others from previous lectures
- Learning & subculture
- Life course & Integrated
- Critical (?)
- Geometric – limited utility; excludes predatory
- Labeling
- Efficacy of the law
Prevention & Reduction

- CJS
  - Policing and sentencing
  - But underreported, and not calculated (vs. RCT)

- Target Hardening
  - Making more difficult
  - Works for vehicles, not as much for households?

- Community Prevention
  - Lighting, surveillance, space configurations
  - Mixed results, with one exception:
    - Neighborhood watch organizations don’t work
    - Wrong neighborhoods and houses
    - Initial interest wanes quickly
    - Displacement is not a solution