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SOME DATA ON CRIME AS IT RELATES TO POLICE STRATEGY AND TACTICS

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<p>SUMMARY</p> <p>The Syracuse Police Department's Crime Control Team experiment offers a unique opportunity to gather factual data about crime, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who detects crimes ? 2. Could the police have detected it ? 3. How are crimes cleared (solved) ? 4. How long does it require to commit a crime ? <p>During the first two years of operation the Team has examined some 2700 crimes. The pertinent information about these crimes is summarized in this paper.</p> <p>This type of data has a direct influence on the strategy and tactics used by the municipal police.</p>		
<p>KEY WORDS</p> <p>Crime, Police, Random patrol, Area search</p>		

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and Syracuse Police Department

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SOME DATA ON CRIME AS IT RELATES TO POLICE STRATEGY AND TACTICS*

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INTRODUCTION

As pointed out by the President's Crime Commission,⁽¹⁾ there exists little factual data about crime. This document is particularly pertinent when applied to the available information on such details of crime as to who detects crime, could the police have detected it, how crimes are cleared, how long does it require to commit a crime, and so on. This type of information is important as it could have a direct influence on the strategy and tactics used by the police.

The Crime Control Team (CCT) experiment in Syracuse offered a unique opportunity to gather such information in a controlled manner.

To date, some 2700 crimes have been examined and the information is summarized in this article. No attempt is made to interpret the data, nor with few exceptions, is the significance of the information highlighted.

METHOD OF COLLECTING DATA

The raw data is recorded on an Internal Crime Report (Figure 1). This form is completed by the CCT officer who is assigned the criminal incident. The Internal Crime Report (ICR) is designed to classify crimes as specific police problems, rather than using the legal or FBI Uniform Crime Report definition. Thus, for example, assaults resulting from a family dispute are separated from other assaults; thefts from an automobile are separated from those from a business or home; a purse snatch is classified as a purse snatch because it is a different type of crime than a stick-up or hold-up of a business.

* A portion of this work was supported by the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice. This support does not necessarily indicate the Institute's concurrence in the statements or conclusions contained in the paper.

(1) The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society, A Report on the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice, U.S. Gov. Print. Off., Wash. D.C., 1967; p. 13.

The data recorded on the ICR serve as the input to the data processing system used by the CCT. Certain of the entries having to do with the time and place of the crime are perhaps only of local interest and will not be discussed.

The terms on the ICR that are of interest here are defined below.

Weather - A value judgment of whether the weather is good or bad in the context of the season of the year.

Type of Crime - The crime is classified in several different ways. A specific classification describing the type of police problem is selected from the list on the right side of the ICR.

Detected by - Self explanatory. Burglar alarms are classified as being detected by a citizen.

Could Crime Have Been Detected by the Police - A crime is detectable by the police if, in the normal course of patrolling, the crime could have been observed by the police while it was in progress.

How Cleared - This refers to the basic action that permitted the police to clear the crime. If the police answered a complaint and apprehended the criminal at the scene of the crime, or if the victim identified the criminal by name, then the crime is cleared because of citizen action. If the police detected the crime and made an immediate apprehension at the scene, this is an interception. If the crime is cleared by fingerprints, physical description, informer information or by confession by a person in custody for another crime, it is termed cleared by investigation.

Victim-Perpetrator Association - Often no judgment can be made as to whether the victim and perpetrator had some sort of personal association before the crime was committed. This is particularly true for uncleared property crimes.

ACCURACY OF THE DATA

It is, of course impossible to assess the accuracy of the data collected, particularly for those items that involve judgments. Two points however should be noted.

The data is recorded immediately by the CCT officer who is directly involved in the incident. He makes judgments on specific points of fact, and the officer is aware of the importance of accuracy. This is contrasted to the usual method of collecting data of this type, where a person not involved in the incident makes judgments from reports that are not designed to record the specific information desired.

The ICR's are never used for performance evaluation of an individual officer. The officer completing a report forwards it directly to the project director of the CCT experiment, without the report being reviewed internally by anyone in the Syracuse Police Department. Thus, while certain information on the ICR could be interpreted as derogatory, regarding the performance of individual policemen, the ICR is not made available for such an interpretation.

DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION AREA

The data presented here is a compilation of information gathered from three separate territories in the city of Syracuse. While the three territories are contiguous, they differ considerably from each other. However, the data for each separate area differs only insignificantly from that compiled for the areas collectively.

Area 50 consists of about 50 blocks. The northern border is one of the main traffic arteries of the city. This street is lined with office-type buildings, several motels, and small businesses. The northeastern corner contains a number of rooming houses and deteriorating apartment houses. The population of this portion of the beat is principally lower-class White, American Indian, Puerto Ricans and Blacks. Along the southern edge, the population is mostly Black, and there are a number of small manufacturing firms. The northeast portion of the beat is completely residential and is populated by middle-class families, principally of Italian and Polish extraction.

Beat 62 is directly south of 50 and is almost completely populated by Blacks. The area is about half the size of area 50 and contains a number of small retail stores and small manufacturing facilities. Two of the main traffic arteries of the city pass through the territory.

Beat 63 is south of 62 and contains about 50 blocks. The Black population dominates along the northern edge but changes rapidly to students and hippies. The population of the beat is almost completely transient, having no long-time ties to the area. Syracuse University bounds the south edge of the beat. The area contains a number of temporary university buildings, permanent dormitories, many rooming houses, and the major Syracuse hospital complex.

DATA

The data is summarized in Table I, and is self-explanatory. In each judgment category, the number of individual datum used in calculating the percentage is noted.

SIGNIFICANCE OF DATA

Only two points will be commented upon.

The first is the rather surprising indication that only about 40% of the crimes occur at locations where they can be observed (hence detected) by the police patrol. It has been the observation of the authors that most policemen feel that between 50-60 percent of all crime occurs on the street or at places

where the police have a legitimate right to be. A study in Chicago of 9000 crimes showed that 61.5% occurred on the street or in other public premises. (2)

This study is in sharp disagreement with these previous estimates, indicating only 39% of Part I crimes and 42% of all crime occurs in such locations.

The second point to note is that a sufficient number of interceptions were made for several types of crimes. This data can be used, together with the theory of random patrol (3) to determine the time required to perpetrate different types of crime. This information is of value in the design and deployment of patrol forces. The results of examining the data for this purpose will be the subject of a forthcoming paper.

(2) ibid, p. 95.

(3) Elliott, J. F., Random Patrol, Police, 13, November - December, 1968

INTERNAL CRIME REPORT

I. Beat	1 2 3	
II. DR No.	4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
III. Date Occurred	11 12 13 14 15 16	
IV. Day of Week Occurred	17 18	Month Day Year
V. Weather	19 20	Side: A-1 E-5 B-2 F-6 C-3 G-7 D-4 H-8
VI. Location	21 22 23 24 25	
VII. Time Detected	26 27 28 29 30	
VIII. Time Occurred	31 32 33 34 35	
IX. Type of Crime Against	36 37 38 39	
Person	40	
Property	41	
Other	42 43 44	
X. Detected By	45 46	
Victim	47 48	
Citizen	49 50	
Police	51 52	
XI. Could Crime have been detected by Police	53	
Yes	54 55	
No		
XII. Crime Cleared		
No		
Yes		
Unfounded		
XIII. How Cleared		
Citizen Action		
Intercept by Police		
Investigation		
Other		
XIV. Was There An Association Between Victim & Perpetrator		
Yes		
No		
XV. Reporting Period		

PART I

Criminal Homicide:
Murder and non-negligent manslaughter - 01
Manslaughter by negligence - 02
Forcible Rape - 03

Robbery
Business - 04
Stick-up - 05
Strongarm/mugging - 39
Other - 06

Aggravated Assault
With gun - 07
With knife - 08
With blunt object - 09
Other - 10
Family dispute - 40

Burglary:
Residential - 11
Commercial - 12

Larceny: Theft - \$50 and more
From Business - 13
Home - 14
Auto - 15
Purse Snatch - 17
Bicycle - 18
Auto Theft - 19

PART II

Larceny: Theft - \$50 or less
From Business - 41
Home - 42
Auto - 43
Purse Snatch - 44
Bicycle - 45

Other Assaults - 20
Family Dispute - 46
Aggravated Harrassment - 47
Arson - 21
Forgery and Counterfeiting - 22
Fraud - 23
Embezzlement - 24
Stolen property; buying, receiving; possessing - 25
Vandalism - 26
Weapons; carrying, possessing, etc. - 27
Prostitution and Commercialized Vice - 28
Sex Offenses - 20
Narcotic Drug Laws - 30
Gambling - 31
Offenses Against The Family and Children - 32
Driving Under the Influence - 33
Liquor Laws - 34
Drunkenness - 35
Disorderly Conduct - 36
Vagrancy - 37
All Other Offenses - 38

Figure 1. Internal Crime Report Form Used for Recording Pertinent Crime Data

TABLE I: PERCENT OF EACH TYPE AND NO. OF SAMPLES IN EACH CATEGORY (Sheet 1)

FBI Crime Designation Part I		Committed		Detected By				Cleared		Cleared By				Victim		Detectable	
		in Good Weather		Victim, ↓	Citizen, ↓	Police ↓				Citizen Action ↓	Interception ↓	Investigation ↓		Perpetrator Associated		By Police	
No.	Description	Pct.	No.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.
<u>Homicide</u>																	
1	Murder and Non-Negligent Man-slaughter	100.0	2	33.3	33.3	33.3	3	66.7	3	50.0	0.	50.0	2	66.7	3	0.	3
2	Negligent Man-slaughter	0.	0	0.	0.	0.	0	0.	0	0.	0.	0.	0	0.	0	0.	0
3	Forcible Rape	100.0	29	93.7	3.1	3.1	32	31.2	32	20.0	10.0	70.0	10	31.2	16	31.2	32
<u>Robbery</u>																	
4	Business	100.0	4	100.0	0.	0.	4	25.0	4	100.0	0.	0.	1	0.	3	75.0	4
5	Stick Up	80.0	5	100.0	0.	0.	7	57.1	7	25.0	0.	50.0	4	0.	6	85.7	7
39	Strong Arm/Mugging	79.1	43	92.0	4.0	4.0	50	35.3	51	52.9	5.9	35.3	17	15.4	26	83.3	48
6	Other	90.0	10	80.0	20.0	0.	10	30.0	10	0.	0.	66.7	3	14.3	7	70.0	10
<u>Aggravated Assault</u>																	
7	With Gun	85.7	7	77.8	11.1	11.1	9	77.8	9	50.0	0.	37.5	8	75.0	8	66.7	9
8	With Knife	84.9	53	85.7	7.1	7.1	56	69.6	56	38.5	2.6	46.2	39	78.4	37	53.7	54
9	With Blunt Object	77.3	22	85.2	7.4	7.4	27	71.4	28	30.0	10.0	45.0	20	63.2	19	46.4	28
40	Family Dispute	86.7	15	90.9	4.5	4.5	22	90.9	22	68.4	0.	15.8	19	81.2	16	18.2	22
10	Other	80.6	62	80.7	14.5	4.8	83	54.9	82	37.0	4.3	54.3	46	47.4	57	51.9	81
<u>Burglary</u>																	
11	Residential	81.6	304	84.6	10.9	4.5	357	13.2	357	30.4	8.7	58.7	46	20.3	69	22.3	355
12	Commercial	79.2	168	53.3	31.9	14.8	182	20.9	182	44.7	5.3	47.4	38	10.0	40	74.2	182
<u>Larceny, Theft Over \$50</u>																	
13	From Business	79.3	150	87.3	11.3	1.5	204	11.8	204	60.0	0.	32.0	25	5.6	72	13.3	203
14	Home	88.6	105	92.0	8.0	0.	125	18.3	126	23.8	0.	52.4	21	42.5	40	10.3	126
15	Auto	84.7	235	94.4	4.7	0.9	322	4.3	322	53.3	6.7	6.7	15	0.9	107	53.1	320
17	Purse Snatch	80.0	20	92.6	7.4	0.	27	7.4	27	0.	0.	50.0	2	20.0	10	51.9	27
18	Bicycle Theft	78.3	23	94.3	5.7	0.	35	17.1	35	33.3	0.	33.3	6	17.6	17	22.9	35
19	Auto Theft	81.2	85	73.1	16.2	10.8	130	42.5	134	58.2	5.5	21.8	55	15.9	63	36.4	132
PART I. CRIMES TOTAL		82.6	1342	83.7	11.6	4.7	1685	22.5	1691	43.0	4.5	41.4	377	25.0	616	39.0	1678

TABLE I: PERCENT OF EACH TYPE AND NO. OF SAMPLES IN EACH CATEGORY (Sheet 2)

		Committed		Detected By				Cleared		Cleared By				Victim		Detectable	
FBI Crime Designation Part II		in Good Weather		Victim, ↓		Citizen, ↓		Police ↓		Citizen Action Interception ↓		Investigation ↓		Perpetrator Associated		By Police	
No.	Description	Pct.	No.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.
20	Other Assaults	84.4	141	90.0	4.7	5.3	150	67.8	152	40.8	2.9	44.7	103	73.6	87	60.7	150
46	Family Disputes	100.0	2	92.9	7.1	0.	14	73.3	15	18.2	9.1	0.	11	76.9	13	6.7	15
21	Arson	57.1	7	54.5	45.5	0.	11	18.2	11	0.	0.	50.0	2	20.0	5	45.5	11
22	Forgery and Counterfeiting	88.9	18	71.4	23.8	4.8	42	38.1	42	18.7	6.2	62.5	16	14.3	28	2.4	41
23	Fraud	100.0	5	85.7	14.3	0.	7	28.6	7	50.0	0.	50.0	2	40.0	5	0.	7
24	Embezzlement	0.	1	100.0	0.	0.	2	50.0	2	100.0	0.	0.	1	100.0	1	50.0	2
25	Stolen Property; Buying, Receiving, Possessing	20.0	5	16.7	33.3	50.0	6	50.0	6	66.7	33.3	0.	3	0.	4	50.0	6
26	Vandalism	78.4	273	72.0	18.1	9.9	353	15.1	357	38.9	7.4	18.5	54	10.4	115	68.6	353
27	Weapons; Carrying, Possessing, etc.	100.0	12	15.4	7.7	76.9	13	92.3	13	46.2	15.4	38.5	13	8.3	12	58.3	12
29	Sex Offenses	74.1	27	81.1	13.5	5.4	37	37.8	37	21.4	14.3	50.0	14	36.8	19	43.2	37
30	Narcotic Drug Laws	85.7	7	14.3	14.3	71.4	7	100.0	8	25.0	25.0	50.0	8	33.3	3	25.0	8
31	Gambling	0.	0	0.	0.	0.	0	0.	0	0.	0.	0.	0	0.	0	0.	0
32	Offenses Against the Family and Children	83.3	6	33.3	60.0	6.7	15	93.3	15	7.7	0.	46.2	13	53.8	13	0.	15
38	All Other Offenses	79.6	181	65.4	18.5	16.1	205	48.6	208	38.1	13.4	32.0	97	36.6	93	45.1	204
	Larceny, Theft Less than \$50																
41	From Business	85.0	120	87.4	11.3	1.3	151	21.6	153	57.6	6.1	21.2	33	2.1	48	13.8	152
42	Home	85.7	56	91.2	5.9	2.9	68	13.2	68	37.5	12.5	25.0	8	12.5	16	26.5	68
43	Auto	80.0	85	95.7	4.3	0.	115	1.7	115	0.	0.	50.0	2	2.9	34	47.4	114
44	Purse Snatch	69.2	13	100.0	0.	0.	17	5.6	18	100.0	0.	0.	1	20.0	5	11.1	18
45	Bicycle Theft	100.0	13	100.0	0.	0.	15	13.3	15	50.0	0.	50.0	2	0.	5	53.3	15
47	Aggravated Harassment	88.2	34	83.1	8.5	8.5	59	59.7	62	29.7	8.1	24.3	37	50.0	36	33.9	62
		100.0	4	83.3	16.7	0.	6	33.3	6	100.0	0.	0.	2	66.7	3	33.3	6
PART II CRIMES		81.5	1017	77.2	13.5	9.3	1311	33.3	1328	37.4	9.8	32.2	438	30.5	558	45.5	1314
ALL CRIMES TOTAL		82.1	2359	80.8	12.4	6.7	2996	27.3	3019	40.0	7.4	36.4	815	27.6	1174	41.8	2992

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