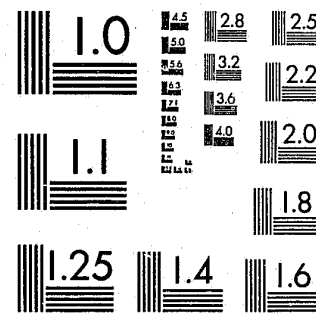


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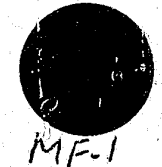
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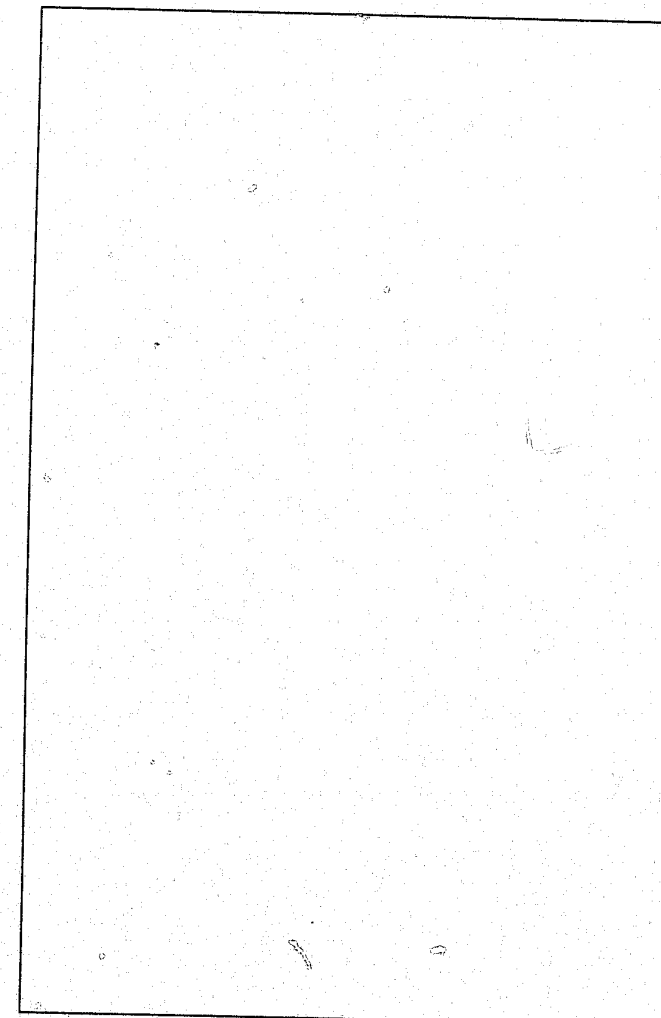
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Factors Related to Citizen Involvement in Personal, Household, and Neighborhood Anti-Crime Measures



An Executive Summary

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Factors Related to Citizen Involvement in Personal, Household, and Neighborhood Anti-Crime Measures

An Executive Summary

by

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A. Introduction

The critical role that the American Public qua *citizens* play in controlling the level of crime in our nation, and thereby directly and indirectly contributing to their own safety and security, has long been talked about. The Presidential Commission of 1967 explicitly noted the need for an active and involved citizenry, both in improving the performance of the Criminal Justice System, and in reducing the circumstances and situations in which crimes are most likely to be committed.

Yet from the perspective of the U.S. public laws that were subsequently written to address law enforcement and criminal justice needs*, it is not at all clear, *in specific terms*, what official policy exists on the proper role of the citizenry in crime prevention. What *is* clear is a continued, if ambiguous, reference to the importance of the involvement of "citizens and the community."

In the absence of an explicit declaration of what citizens should do and be encouraged to do to prevent crime it is useful to step back and review the scope of citizen anti-crime activities from the perspective of *the citizenry*. The American Public engages in a host of activities in an attempt to lessen the absolute magnitude and severity of crime, and to lessen the likelihood and impact of criminal victimization on their lives. Some citizens never venture outside the perceived protection of their homes to avoid personal victimizations. Others fortify their homes in an attempt to ward off home invaders. Still others escort children and the elderly along routes where danger is thought to loom. Some unite with fellow residents to patrol their neighborhood, while others volunteer time and resources to provide non-criminal activities for potentially delinquent youth.

While public funds support formal law enforcement agencies to control and prevent crime, it is in the above-mentioned capacities that the citizenry can be thought of as *co-producers* of our nation's safety and security (cf. Pennel, 1978; Percy, 1979; and Rosentraub and Harlow, 1980). In fact as Yin (1979) suggests, citizens may play *the* major role in the control and prevention of crime. It is therefore of clear importance to understand the anti-crime activities that citizens engage in, and the motivational factors associated with these "preventive responses."

B. Scope of Present Research

The past decade has seen much rhetoric and millions of dollars focused on involving the citizenry in crime prevention.

*The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-351); the Crime Control Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-83); the Crime Control Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-503); and the Justice System Improvement Act of 1979 (Public Law 96-157).

While a good deal of evaluation research has been conducted to investigate the efficacy of these approaches to crime prevention, very little systematic research has been performed to fully understand "what citizens do to be safe from crime," and as importantly, "why they do it"?* Without a full understanding of the extent to which citizens (on their own) engage in crime prevention, public policy to promote citizen crime prevention will be formulated in somewhat of a vacuum. Furthermore, without a clear understanding of the "natural" processes that lead some citizens to engage in certain anti-crime measures while other citizens do not, crime prevention programs may fail to mobilize citizens because of a misunderstanding of the underlying dynamics.

In an attempt to carry out a comprehensive, yet manageable investigation of citizen anti-crime measures, it behooves a researcher to sample a robust set of dependent measures from the universe of preventive responses. Not being able to investigate each and every anti-crime measure which the citizenry employs, while at the same time not wanting an arbitrary set of measures, we needed some empirically-based, systematic approach for choosing our dependent measures. To this end we performed secondary analyses on past criminal justice survey data sets which had assessed various citizen anti-crime measures. Based on these analyses and on our own *a priori* reasoning, it was concluded that the following set of anti-crime responses would provide a broad representation of the universe of preventive measures. They represent strategies that citizens appear to take to protect their own person, their household (family and property), and their neighborhood/community:

- imposing behavior restrictions to avoid exposure to criminal victimization;
- installing burglar alarms, window bars, and/or special locks at home;
- installing outdoor lights at home;
- owning a hand gun for protection;
- using an indoor timer;
- asking neighbors to watch an unoccupied home;
- engraving valuables;

*The research associated with the LEAA-funded Reactions to Crime Project (e.g., DuBow, McCabe, & Kaplan, 1979) at the Center for Urban Affairs, Northwestern University represented the first systematic and comprehensive, albeit exploratory, work on these issues, and served as the knowledge base upon which the current research program was built.

- purchasing theft/vandalism insurance;
- reporting suspicious/criminal activities to police;
- attending neighborhood crime prevention meetings;
- taking part in organized neighborhood patrol;
- participating in neighborhood escort program;
- participating in local blockwatch or similar type crime prevention program; and
- taking part in WhistleSTOP.

These constituted the set of dependent variables in the present research. In an admittedly exploratory sense it was our purpose to understand the extent to which citizens engaged in these anti-crime measures, and to investigate the processes that lead to differential levels of involvement among the citizenry. *We were specifically interested to determine whether different motives were associated with different anti-crime responses.*

Our first step was to develop a preliminary conceptual framework to guide our research, based on an extensive literature review and key person interviews. In this framework we hypothesized that there are two basic motives that lead citizens to engage in preventive responses to crime. First, it was reasoned that citizens "avoid risks" by engaging in prevention-oriented activities. This risk-avoidance disposition was thought to be clearly linked to "fear of crime" and victimization experiences. Second, we reasoned that citizens become involved in anti-crime activities, not because of any personal assessment of being at risk or any past experiences with victimization, but rather as part of their participation with formal voluntary organizations in their community. These two dispositions may lead citizens to employ the same anti-crime activities, while then again they may lead citizens to different preventive responses. *This was an empirical question that the present research program was planned to address.*

C. Research Methodology

A number of information gathering activities were conducted for our research program. These included (1) literature reviews of community crime prevention, citizen participation in voluntary action (specifically the neighborhood movement and the environmental movement), and citizen prevention behaviors related to traffic, health, and fire hazards; (2) secondary analyses of four criminal justice survey data sets collected in the 1970s; (3) two small telephone surveys of residents in Chicago (n=144) and Evanston (n=137) to help develop a metropolitan area telephone survey; (4) a random-digit-dial telephone survey of 1803 residents of the metropolitan Chicago area (both city and suburbs), which in turn was supplemented by contextual data (e.g., official crime

rates, population density, median per capita income, etc.) gathered for each respondent's community area; (5) inperson interviews with one representative (leader) of 153 community organizations in Philadelphia, Chicago, and San Francisco (approximately 50 in each city); and (6) a mail survey of 167 local law enforcement agencies.

We decided that data should be collected that would be representative of a broad cross-section of information sources and in a manner that would enhance the external validity (generalizability) of our findings. A telephone survey of 1,803 citizens (households) provided a broad picture of what, if anything, was being done by various types of citizens to enhance their own safety and security. These data included socio-demographic characteristics, personality traits, victimization experiences, attitudes and perceptions related to crime and non-crime hazards (traffic, health, fire), attitudes and experiences related to participation in voluntary organizations, and the extent to which a citizen did or did not engage in various preventive responses to crime and non-crime hazards. In-person interviews with 153 leaders of community organizations were conducted to learn about the role such groups play in the "opportunity structure." These leaders had expert knowledge about what facilitates and inhibits the initial involvement and maintained involvement of citizens in such organizations. In addition, these interviews provided information on a number of organizational variables including: original and current goals; history; issues addressed; funding; staffing; activities/programs; and recruitment strategies. Finally, officers from 167 law enforcement agencies responded to a mail survey that measured which citizen anti-crime measures were encouraged/discouraged by police. With these data we were able to compare what the citizenry is doing about crime vs. what the police would like them to do; and thereby form a clearer understanding of the current functioning of the police in the opportunity structure.

D. Summary of Findings

As mentioned earlier, we began our research with *a priori* reasoning that what citizens do to be safe from crime could be thought of as measures taken to protect (1) their own person, (2) their household (family and property), and (3) their neighborhood/community. For the most part, "avoidance" or behavioral restrictions appeared to be the most prevalent response of citizens to prevent personal victimization: this was reasoned to be employed by individual citizens to promote their own security (i.e., private-minded motivation). Regarding the employment of prevention measures at home, it appeared that measures taken to reduce unlawful entry, i.e., "access control," were most typical. While the intent of household-based prevention measures seemed clearly a private-minded one, it was not clear whether citizens employed these measures because they feared burglary, had been burglary victims, were encouraged by police and/or community crime prevention programs to do so, or for some other reasons. Finally, there appeared to be a distinct set of "territorial" anti-crime efforts that citizens engaged in *as a group*. But again it was not clear what brought

citizens together to engage in these "collective" responses, and whether these had "private-minded" and/or "public-minded" motivations. To capture and investigate these seemingly critical private/public, individual/collective distinctions, we hypothesized that private motivation appeared to center around individual/private efforts to "avoid risks," while public/collective motivation seemed linked to a propensity to take action on a broader public scale, i.e., "social participation."

Our analyses of perceptions of risk, seriousness, and efficacy of preventive responses related to crime, traffic, health and fire hazards supported the notion that these may reflect *generalized responses*. This inturn led us to a preliminary conclusion that an individual's responses to crime may reflect her/his own orientation to threat in general. Furthermore, we found a general pattern of individual difference factors related to reports of feeling at risk and regarding victimization as serious: females, younger (and sometimes older) adults, Blacks and Latinos, those in lower income brackets, renters, and central city residents are the ones most likely to report feeling at risk and perceiving the consequences of victimization as serious. Therefore, it is in these population subgroups that one most likely would expect to find "risk-avoidance" serving as the motivation for anti-crime measures.

We found that a majority of citizens (58.3%) reportedly hold membership in at least one formal voluntary organization. The pattern of individual difference factors related to membership supported, for the most part, past findings on correlates of voluntary action. Of special interest were the results that Blacks and homeowners were significantly more likely than Whites and renters to report being a member of a block club or neighborhood-based community group. Blacks were also found to be significantly more active than Whites in the groups they belonged to, as were males and single adults. Furthermore, problem-solving motives (instrumental) for joining groups were most strongly related to membership in a neighborhood group, while social affiliation motives (expressive) were more significantly related to the reported activity level of members. These findings were somewhat similar to what was learned from community organization leaders: A majority perceived citizens as being more likely to initially join their groups in order to solve problems, than for expressive reasons (e.g., social affiliation). On the other hand, most leaders (61%) felt it was a commitment to community that kept members active and involved. Fewer leaders saw success at solving local problems or the desire for social affiliation as a primary reason for members' maintained involvement. Thus it appears that leaders may underestimate the importance of social affiliation incentives in keeping members active and involved. In sum, by investigating citizens' dispositions for social participation and their involvement in voluntary groups (e.g., community organizations) we learned more about what has often been referred to as collective and/or public-minded motives.

While a citizen can be personally disposed toward prevention-oriented activities because of risk-avoidance and/or social participation motives, these dispositions may be affected by the "opportunity structure", of which the police and community organization were reasoned to be two key components. Our mail survey of police officers found that their departments reportedly hold varying opinions about the types of anti-crime measures the citizenry should employ: for the most part, the police seem to endorse indirect and passive citizen crime prevention (e.g., reporting suspicious/criminal circumstances, engraving valuables, locking doors and windows, etc.), and do not endorse more direct and aggressive means (e.g., defending oneself if assailed, owning a handgun for protection, citizen patrols, etc.). Community organizations were found to have a primarily problem-solving orientation, and thus can provide opportunities to a citizen who is concerned about some problem (e.g., local crime or delinquency), but feels impotent on his/her own. It was found that community organizations provide opportunities for citizens (members) to engage in crime prevention activities when crime and delinquency problems become part of their organizational agenda.

The first type of anti-crime measure that we investigated was self-imposed behavioral restrictions. Furstenberg (1972) described these measures as "avoidance" since they apparently are used to avoid exposure to circumstance perceived to be dangerous. We found that a sizeable proportion of the citizenry reports that they limit behaviors in their own neighborhood (>50%), especially urban residents. The tendency to place restrictions on oneself because of crime, was most directly related to feelings of safety, then to being female, Black or Latino, elderly, and having a low income. The overriding motive for restricting one's behavior seems clearly to be risk-avoidance; and as such is the *prototype* of the "individual/private-minded" crime prevention measure that citizens rely on.

As found here, and in earlier surveys of the urban populace, there is great variation among American households in the extent to which they employ home protection measures. Two consistent findings emerged across all our analyses: First, homeowners are much more likely than renters to take household-based protective measures. This follows no doubt from the greater control they can exercise over their property, and because of their greater investment (financial and psychological) in their home. It is not directly due to their greater income, because once home ownership is controlled for, household income does not relate significantly with most property protection measures. Second, there is a weak, but reliable disposition to employ protective measures at home; certain households are more likely to employ many or all measures, while others employ few or none. There was no evidence that any one type of protective measure "substitutes" for others; rather, these household anti-crime measures appear "complementary" or cumulative.

A number of other *significant* relationships were found between personal characteristics, experiences, and perceptions and the employment of certain home anti-crime measures:

- Alarms, window bars, and/or special locks have been installed by over a third of the metropolitan Chicago area households. Blacks, Latinos, and other non-Asian minorities are most likely to use these target hardening devices. On the other hand, the elderly, especially elderly renters, are least likely to target harden. Increased education is related with greater use of these devices.
- Nearly a third of the households have installed special outdoor lights to make it easier to see what is going on outside. It was determined that perceived brightness of street lights in front of one's home was not related to the installation of outdoor lights.
- Nearly one-sixth of all households report having a handgun, at least in part for protection. In the metropolitan Chicago area minority households were most likely to report owning handguns. Higher income households were also more likely than those with lower incomes to have guns. The main effects of race and income are cumulative, with higher income Blacks most likely to say they have handguns at home.
- Timers are used on indoor electrical devices (lights, radios) by 40 percent of households. The only significant difference in use of timers (other than homeowners) is associated with the elderly being most likely to employ this form of protection.
- Nearly 60 percent of all households ask neighbors to watch their home when it is unoccupied for a couple of days or more. Married couples are more likely than other types of households to access neighbors as a home protection strategy. This may reflect the greater extent to which marrieds are generally integrated into their neighborhood social environment.
- Closely paralleling population estimates from past surveys about one-third of households reportedly have engraved valuables to help in their recovery in case of burglary. Young adults and better educated citizens are most likely to engrave household property. This may reflect that these individuals are more aware of protective

measures (e.g. engraving) that have been popularly advocated by law enforcement agencies and other organizations throughout the 1970s. These individuals may also be more open to trying new and innovative protective measures compared to older and less educated citizens.

- While three-quarters of all households have theft/vandalism insurance, almost all homeowners carry such policies. Among renters, Whites and those better educated are most likely to have the protection that insurance provides. It is possible that some socio-cultural differences exist between Whites vs. minorities that may account for this finding. On the other hand, minorities may well face insurance rates that they perceive as too high to justify the expense of an insurance policy.
- One-person households, whether male or female, are consistently less likely than multiple-person households to employ home protective measures. Single adult women are more likely than single males to protect their homes, with the exception of owning a handgun.
- Direct and vicarious experience with burglary are related to use of home protection measures. Burglary victims are more likely than non-victims to install access control devices, purchase a hand gun, and engrave valuables. Knowing victims of burglary in the neighborhood (vicarious victimization) is also related to an increased usage of protective measures. Yet defining neighborhood burglary as a "big problem" is related only to increased use of alarms, window bars, and/or special locks.
- Neighborhood crime prevention meetings appear to play their intended function to encourage persons to increase protection of their home. Specifically, attendees of such meetings are especially more likely than nonattendees to engrave valuables, install access control devices, and ask neighbors help in watching their home. These findings closely parallel what would be expected given the nature of the recommendations law enforcement officers typically make at such meetings.

It seems reasonable to conclude that the primary incentives for employing household-based protective measures are individual/private-minded ones i.e., to protect one's property from loss and to protect the sanctity of one's home. Complementing this

is the facilitation provided by control over physical modifications of one's home, and the resources necessary to do so. Yet it appears very likely that residents *do not* base their decisions to protect their home solely on some "rational" assessment of danger in the environment. We found that crime-related experiences and perceptions are somewhat related to home protective actions, but they should by no means be viewed as the only determinants of household-based protective measures. It seems more probable that through the acculturation process certain individuals learn "what you do for household safety purposes." As such the "risk-avoidance" disposition (at least as we have conceptualized and measured it) does not account for a large amount of the variance in these behaviors.

In addition to the anti-crime measures that citizens employ for themselves, their families and households, we investigated several activities that involve *groups* of citizens working together to prevent neighborhood crime. We found that most adults have never participated in any form of group anti-crime effort; in fact less than 10 percent claim to have done so. In the past it was often assumed that citizen involvement in these group anti-crime efforts grew directly and solely from their fear of crime and experiences as crime victims. But because of its ultimate debilitating effect (as shown by its manifestation as behavioral restrictions) fear of crime most likely does not serve as a motivating factor for involvement in group anti-crime efforts. In contrast, the findings of the Reactions to Crime Project had indicated that participation in neighborhood-based group crime prevention efforts often follows directly from citizen participation (voluntary action) with community groups (e.g. Podolefsky & DuBow, 1980).

Our findings support those of the Reactions to Crime Project. There is considerable evidence here that territorial measures which involve groups of neighbors in some organized anti-crime activity are generally not originating from spontaneous and/or informal voluntary action. Rather the preponderance stem from the workings of on-going community organizations, many of which have crime prevention as a major purpose. Yet, we can surmise that most of these organizations were not initially formed for crime prevention reasons. Our inperson interviews with organizational leaders suggests that neighborhood/community revitalization, improvement, and/or stabilization are the general goals of these organizations. Anti-crime activities become part of an organization's agenda, depending on the perception of neighborhood crime/delinquency as a problem. We found that most citizens who participate in these neighborhood-based anti-crime efforts do so as part of their participation with these community organizations *and not due to fear of crime*.

In addition to these major conclusions we encountered a number of other *significant* findings of a more specific nature:

- group anti-crime efforts are more likely to occur in more densely populated, lower income areas, with a relatively greater proportion of nonwhite residents. This suggests that crime (victimization) provides the external (environmental) impetus for the development of community anti-crime efforts. Yet, it appears that crime is more a *necessary* rather than a sufficient condition for their origin.
- a differential pattern between city and suburban group anti-crime efforts was found. Residents of the city were more likely to report that local community crime prevention started because "crime had already become a problem" (i.e., reactive), while suburbanites were more likely to state that these efforts were "to keep crime from being a problem" (i.e., proactive).
- opportunity for citizen participation seems to be highest with anti-crime efforts that require relatively low involvement levels from citizens. This pattern carries over to actual participation levels; the more that participation requires of the individual, the lower the participation rates.
- the majority of citizens who are aware of group anti-crime efforts in their neighborhood *do not* get involved. Two-fifths of these citizens stated that "lack of time" precluded their involvement. About 20-25 percent of other potential participants reported they didn't get involved because of lack of interest. And a similar proportion indicated that they simply were not given an opportunity.
- Blacks were consistently over-represented as participants, compared to their percentage of the total population. While community anti-crime efforts are more likely to occur in relatively lower income areas, it appears that it is individuals from relatively higher income households, within a community, who are most likely to get involved.

These then were the major findings of our research. In sum, we conclude that citizen involvement in crime prevention is best viewed as three *qualitatively different* types of responses. First, citizens *qua* individuals attempt to prevent their own victimization through various personal protective measures, but most typically by restricting their own behaviors. Risk-avoidance, specifically fear, appears to be the motivating factor here. Second, citizens *qua* individuals attempt to prevent property losses to burglary (and possibly personal confrontations with a home invader) through a variety of measures

primarily those limiting unlawful access: these access control measures are meant to create both physical barriers (e.g., special locks) and psychological barriers (e.g., leaving indoor lights on when gone) to potential offenders. It appears that in many instances citizens employ these household-based measures due to their internalized norms about household safety, in other cases due to risk-avoidance, while in still other cases it seems that involvement in organized crime prevention meetings (as part of their social participation) led to increased levels of household anti-crime measures. Third, citizens *qua* community residents work together with neighbors to prevent crimes and incivilities (e.g., vandalism) in their community directly through patrolling, escorting, block-watching, etc., and indirectly through programs that address the presumed "root" causes of crime. These neighborhood-based group crime prevention measures take a decidedly "territorial" stance, i.e., it is groups of residents behaving with a semi-proprietary demeanor to ensure the safety and security of their *turf*. Social participation, and not personal risk-avoidance, seems to be the primary motivational factor for these collective efforts. And since the focal point of these efforts is larger than the individual citizen or his/her household, it can be argued that there is some degree of "public-mindedness" to these motivations.

We have found that these three "generic" approaches (personal, household, neighborhood) are quite different, and mostly independent anti-crime responses. That is not to say that there is no overlap in the extent to which citizens engage in each type: Yet for the most part, there is *more heterogeneity* among citizens in their crime prevention activities, than there is homogeneity. And as shown by our data these differences appear closely associated with a variety of resources available to the individual citizen. Where the approaches seem to link is the finding that involvement in group efforts is associated with increased levels of household-based anti-crime measures.

E. Revised Conceptual Framework

In lieu of our findings a revised conceptual framework can be proposed. A model of this framework is shown in Figure 1. This revised framework is based on the findings of our research and associated inferences, i.e., it represents those parts of our preliminary framework that were investigated. Its purpose is to integrate our findings in a systematic, comprehensive manner.

Behavioral restrictions to protect individual citizens from personal victimization seem linked to risk-avoidance motives. These motives, especially perceptions of risk, seriousness, and fear of crime, are related to assessments of danger in the local neighborhood environment including both crime and incivility (e.g., vandalism). The risk-avoidance motives and the perceptions of local danger are also related to personal characteristics

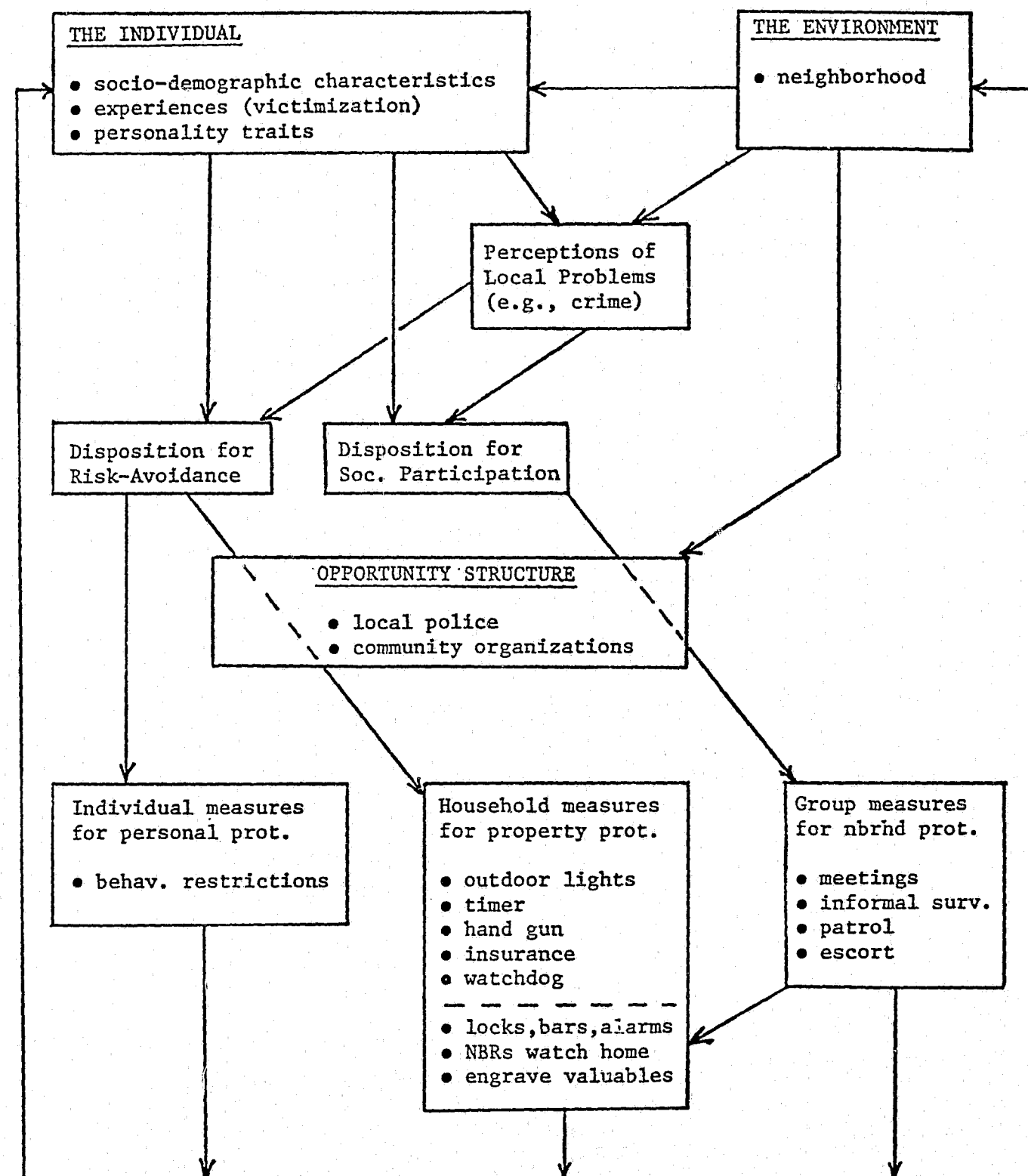


Figure 1. REVISED CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT IN CRIME PREVENTION

(primarily sex, age, race, and income) and to direct and vicarious exposure to victimization: Being female, young or old, Black, poor, a past victim, and knowing other local victims are, for the most part, associated with greater fear of crime, increased perceptions of risk and seriousness, and greater concern for local crime and incivility. The local neighborhood provides the context for these problems to develop and also is the setting within which the individual encounters crime-related experiences and develops crime-related perceptions.

Household-based anti-crime measures seem linked to both risk-avoidance and social participation. While we have no compelling findings to suggest that fear of crime, or perceptions of risk and seriousness are strong determinants of taking household prevention-oriented measures, past experience as a burglary victim, knowledge of local burglary victims, and concern for local crime do appear to lead some citizens to household crime prevention. In addition, individuals who appear to become involved in group anti-crime efforts following from social participation motives, show a greater tendency to employ certain of these household measures (special locks, etc.; engraving valuables; and asking neighbors to watch their home when unoccupied). This conclusion must be a qualified one though, because the actual chronological sequence of this process was not measured by our data.

Neighborhood/community-based group anti-crime efforts are linked primarily to social participation motives. Crime and incivility provide the contextual cues for the need of such measures: it appears that they have a direct impact on community organizations (and the police), who in turn provide "opportunities" for citizens to become involved in this form of crime prevention. It is probable that in some instances individual risk-avoidance motives lead citizens to get involved in group anti-crime efforts, but the overall pattern of results from the present research indicates that it is social participation motives that explain much more about what citizens do collectively to be safe from crime.

Finally, although we did not test the effects that these three types of anti-crime measures have on the individual and on the local environment (neighborhood) we can infer that there are some effects. This is shown by the feedback loops in Figure 1. Neighborhoods may become more cohesive, safer, and have less crime. Individuals may experience similar positive effects. But then again, none of this may happen. This is an issue that other current and future research must answer (e.g., Taub, et al. 1979; and Taylor & Gottfriedson, 1979).

F. Unanswered Issues for Future Research

Because our methodologies technically have not produced results with high degrees of *internal validity*, we can not draw firm conclusions about the causal structure underlying the question, "why citizens do/do not engage in crime prevention." We

have used our data to form logical (nonexperimental) inferences about the motivational dynamics associated with citizen participation in crime prevention. This is why we explicitly acknowledge that our research program does not constitute the definitive or final work on this topic.

The model laid out in our conceptual framework needs more comprehensive and intensive testing. We were not able to operationalize all of the constructs, nor were all the constructs we did operationalize done so in a robust manner. Most notably, more thorough investigation is needed on the relationships (direct and indirect) between beliefs in personal control, territorial attitudes, and anti-crime measures across the lifecycle. Not enough is known about the "origins" of these personality traits and thus we do not understand their role in the development of a "preventive demeanor." Furthermore, additional information is needed linking introversion/extraversion with participation in formal voluntary organizations, specifically ones with anti-crime efforts. Here again we need an understanding of the development in the early stages of the lifecycle of a "participatory demeanor" and its relationship to extraversion, and to personal control beliefs.

In the future three broad issues form the basis around which applied research in this topic area ultimately needs to be organized, for the formulation of sound crime prevention policy:

- what is reasonable and desirable to expect from the citizenry, especially community residents?
- what is reasonable and desirable to expect from the criminal justice system, especially the police?
- how can the interface between the citizenry and the policy best be facilitated, especially by the government?

In sum, we need more empirical knowledge on *the roles* of citizens, police, and government in preventing crime!

Findings from our research program and the Reactions to Crime Project provide a good start at understanding what the citizenry is already trying to do to prevent crime. Results from other LEAA projects (e.g., NEPs, CPTED) provide additional information on citizen participation in crime prevention. What now is needed is a brief and concise synthesis of evaluation and research findings on the efficacy of citizen anti-crime measures, so that some reasoned judgement can be formed about which of these measures appear to work, and thus which should be encouraged.

It is the "encouragement", or promotion of citizen involvement in crime prevention that the results of our present research address. We have not collected data to evaluate the success

(efficacy) of citizen anti-crime measures in actually preventing crime. Yet, that kind of information is critical to formulating sound public policy about the role of citizens in crime prevention *that merits endorsement*. Such evaluation research on the efficacy of citizen anti-crime measures, and the research we have begun, are inextricably linked from the perspective of policy formulation.

G. Issues/Implications for Crime Prevention Policy Makers and Practitioners

Here, we have used the individual/collective and private-minded/public-minded distinctions as ways of conceptualizing *motives* that lead citizens to engage in crime prevention. Our research supports the notion that there are individual/private-minded *motives* that lead some citizens to become involved in some crime prevention measures: we have identified these motives as risk-avoidance. And as shown by our results, risk-avoidance seems most strongly linked to behavioral restrictions, and in a weaker manner to some household preventive measures.

Our research also supports the notion that there are collective/public-minded *motives* that lead some citizens to become involved in some crime prevention measures: we have identified these motives as social participation. And as shown by our results, social participation seems most strongly linked to group (territorial) anti-crime measures, and in some instances to household preventive measures.

It can be surmised that if one wanted to increase the extent to which citizens engaged in behavioral restrictions, increasing their fear of crime would be most effective, especially with women and the elderly. In turn, if fear and concern for crime were increased one would expect an increase not only in behavioral restrictions but also in some household anti-crime measures. Furthermore, if one wanted to increase the extent to which citizens engaged in household anti-crime measures it appears that this could result not only from increasing fear and concern for crime, but rather by increasing incentives and opportunities for social participation neighborhood/community groups which see crime as a local problem to address. In turn, if incentives and opportunities for social participation in local groups were increased, one would expect increased citizen involvement in neighborhood/community based anti-crime measures, providing crime is perceived as a large enough local problem to address.

While the above reasoning is acknowledged to be speculative, it captures the jist of our findings. Yet until more definitive information is available, public policy on the citizenry's proper role in crime prevention must be formulated very carefully. We are not at the point where we can confidently state that *this* is what should be encouraged, while *that* should be discouraged. This lack of knowledge must be acknowledged, for only by being

aware of the uncertain state of knowledge can policy makers make careful judgements on crime prevention priorities.

It is in this light that the findings of our research can be discussed as they apply to the needs of crime prevention practioners. Here, we assume that the wide range of citizen anti-crime measures are importnat in the control and prevention of our nation's crime problems. The discussion that follows should be read with this in mind.

What is apparent in viewing our detailed pattern of re-search findings is that individuals who are *resource-poor* seem to face a life that is relatively insecure compared to those who are *resource-rich*. Their apparent lack of a positive "pre-ventive" demeanor toward crime and other hazards is merely one more thing missing in their lives. Unfortunately it is many of these same individuals who are most likely to become victims, possible because they do the least to guard against it.

We have found that the sum total of *resources* available to an individual related to his/her involvement in crime prevention includes material and nonmaterial personal resources, and a variety of social network and public service resources external to the individual citizen. A person's sex, age, race, marital status, education, income, type and place of residence all constitute personal attributes that relate to the type and extent of involvement in crime prevention. Furthermore, the quality of resources in a neighborhood, such as the police, community organizations, the schools, and social service agencies seem clearly related to participation in crime prevention. Broadly stated the resource-rich do more for the safety of themselves, their households, and their communities, than do the resource-poor: For the most part, the resource-rich are already co-producing their own safety and security in a *proactive* manner, while the resource-poor are more likely to be merely *reactive* to life's hazards, if they do anything at all. And what the resource-poor appear most likely to do is simply restrict their own behavior.

The special challenge to crime prevention practioners then is how to increase the safety and security of the resource-poor above some minimum level where their standard of living and fear of crime will no longer "interfere" with involvement in other anti-crime measures, especially those of a group nature. It must be recognized that this calls for long run solutions that will improve the quality of life of the resource-poor. It is in such neighborhoods where behavioral restrictions are deemed most prudent, that traditional community crime prevention solutions may be likened to treating cancer with a band-aid (and one that doesn't stick, for that matter). These are the extreme instances where Wilson (1973) and Conklin (1975) see crime and its attendant fear as totally undermining a community and its ability, through informal social control, to deal with its own crime problems. In these cases the government must acknowledge

the need for major allocations of resources (e.g. police, employment programs, improved schools, rehabilitated housing, etc.) to compensate for the citizenry's apparent inability to co-produce their own safety and security.

In areas where crime and fear are not of such magnitude that cooperative initiatives among residents are already undermined, then it seems that the police and local voluntary groups (e.g. block clubs and community organizations) can play an important role in improving the quantity and quality of citizen crime prevention. In the role of "expert authority figures" the police help define for many citizens what can be done to prevent crime. Their impact on citizens seems a large part a function of their contact. Where citizens are found to be exposed to the police, higher rates of household anti-crime measures are found. This contact seems to occur both when the police investigate a burglary, and when police attend community organization meetings.

While not conclusive, our results suggest that the police could increase the extent to which citizens engage in crime prevention measures/efforts if good use is made of these contact points for disseminating anti-crime information. When a burglary had been attempted or has occurred a citizen, for risk-avoidance motives, seems most readily disposed toward increasing household security. It is at that time that a security survey of the home by a police officer would probably have its greatest impact on the resident. This suggests that law enforcement agencies should consider instituting an immediate "follow-up" contact for the purposes of offering a security survey after a breakin (or attempt). Furthermore, making presentations to groups of citizens, especially those connected with some formal voluntary organization, seem to be an excellent way the police can influence citizen crime prevention. The police, in the role of *security advisors* to their community, could contact church, school, and community organizations to arrange a presentation to the membership. In doing so it is important that they be cognizant of the full range of citizen crime prevention measures, and be ready to make some reasoned statement on what they feel should/should not be done and why/why not.

Community organizations and other local voluntary groups in which residents can participate appear to have a great potential for involving citizens in crime prevention. Our findings suggest a number of recommendations of how to increase the positive role such groups can play:

- the organizations themselves, can request regular attendance of a local law enforcement officer to serve as a security advisor.
- organizations in "high" crime areas will be faced with different problems than those in "lower" crime areas. In high crime areas, organizations will not only have more serious problems to deal

with but are likely to have greater difficulties in getting citizens involved. This suggests that a great deal of person-time will have to be devoted to organization maintenance and membership recruitment for voluntary groups in high crime areas. It is possible that the person-time required cannot be met voluntarily, but only by a paid staff with the support of outside funding.

- as there is more movement of people to suburbs, and as the suburbs themselves age, crime and incivility problems would be expected to become more prevalent. The suburban populace seems more ready to take a proactive stance toward crime prevention, and community organizations should capitalize on this by addressing crime issues and mobilizing citizens before problems become serious.
- organizations must recognize life-cycle demands placed on their members and varying levels of attachment to the community among local residents and members. This would help to develop realistic expectations. Recruitment and involvement strategies should also recognize that homeowners have property interests, parents have child-related interests, young adults have recreation interests, etc., and it is these vested interests that should be built upon.
- organizational resources may better be invested in maintaining the involvement of the "active core" of members, rather than focusing disproportionately on recruitment of new members. Here it seems that providing social affiliation benefits and other expressive incentives may be especially important to keeping members active.
- from the standpoint of recruitment, it seems especially important that potential members perceive an opportunity to become involved in helping solve local problems; that is, initial involvement in community organizations seems predominantly related to instrumental motives. But regardless of what issues are used in recruitment, personal contact of potential members is felt to be most effective by organization leaders. Leaders, though, seem not to recognize the importance of providing specific opportunities for involvement to potential members.
- the personal saliency of crime to citizens seems not to be a factor that community organizations should play upon. Instead approaching residents

as members of the community recommends itself as the way that social participation motives can be invoked and manifested in group action.

- social service programs are needed that are targeted to the elderly to help improve their security. For example, the elderly may be willing to spend the funds necessary to purchase better locks, but can't install them. They may have heard of engraving their valuables, but can't get an engraving tool, or may not be physically able to use one. Certainly, community organizations and local service agencies could be encouraged to place the elderly's security needs on their agenda.

H. Conclusion

This then is a summary of the issues, methods, results, and implications of our research program. A recent issue of Police Magazine* contained a cover story entitled "Crime Prevention: The Unfulfilled Promise." We suggest that it is premature to ring the deathbell of an idea that has yet to be adequately conceptualized, implemented, and tested. We assume that the oncoming decade will see cutbacks of security and safety services provided by public agencies (e.g. New York Times, 1980). If this results, then the importance of citizen involvement in crime prevention will greatly increase. It is hoped that some reasoned public policy will be available to guide and help channel this voluntary action in ways that will increase the security and safety of the public as a whole.

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