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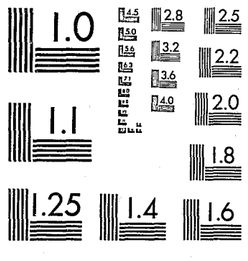

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THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION:
A RETROSPECTIVE EXAMINATION

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THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION: A RETROSPECTIVE EXAMINATION

by

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Abstract

The 1970's was a decade during which thousands of programs first called "crime prevention" and later "community crime prevention" were developed and implemented throughout the country. The vast majority of these programs were all derived from one model or approach to preventing crime -- reducing the opportunities for crime to occur through the involvement of individuals and groups of citizens in protective activities. In part, this paper is a retrospective examination of how and why opportunity reduction came to be the dominant crime prevention approach of the 1970's.

With time this approach came under careful scrutiny. Four of the salient criticisms which have been made against opportunity reduction crime prevention are presented: its conservative bias; the potential for making people more fearful; the fact that it may benefit middle-class individuals at the expense of poorer people; and finally, the charge that it cannot be effective in reducing crime, but merely displaces it.

Subsequent policy, research, and theoretical developments occurred during the late 1970's to challenge the primacy of the opportunity reduction approach to crime prevention. The Community Anti-Crime Program of 1976 and the results of a major research effort exploring crime and fear in urban communities have led to an alternative definition and a broader approach to community crime prevention, one which emphasizes community control over crime prevention efforts.

On the threshold of a new decade we are at a hiatus in community crime prevention. In large measure, the future of the field is at the mercy of economic forces which dictate severe cutbacks in government funding for programs like community crime prevention.

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION: A RETROSPECTIVE EXAMINATION

I. Introduction

It's called a "novel crime prevention program based on the belief that a nosy neighbor is the best weapon against crime" by the author of a recent article entitled "Project Auto Decal: Outsiders Beware." But the major objectives of this program are to get all community residents to put numbered identifying decals on their car windows and to report all unnumbered vehicles to the police, who have the power to detain and investigate "cars that don't belong there." Furthermore, the police in one of the three New Jersey communities with the Project Auto Decal program urged the city council to pass legislation making participation in the program mandatory.[1]

And here's another "new idea" in community crime prevention: a neighborhood association in one California community provided cameras to 150 homeowners...cameras that would automatically photograph everyone who came to their doors, including the newpaper boy, the Girl Scout selling cookies, and the Avon Lady.[2]

Shades of Orwellian society in 1984? Many people think so. And yet these are but two examples of the types of programs which have become popular during the 1970's. The field now referred to as "community crime prevention" has been dominated for the past ten years by a single model, from which thousands of very similar programs

[1]Mary Jo Patterson, "Project Auto Decal: Outsiders Beware," Police Magazine, November, 1979, p.17.

[2]Kevin Krajick, "Preventing Crime," Police Magazine, November, 1979, p. 10.

have been derived. This approach has been referred to by a variety of different names -- mechanical crime prevention, target-hardening, opportunity reduction, crime avoidance, improved security/surveillance, among others. But the underlying assumptions and the principal objective of the many programs called by these different names is the same: to directly or indirectly (by altering the environment) encourage individuals and groups to take the appropriate steps to make the targets of criminal offenders less vulnerable and more difficult to hit.

Despite the immense popularity of this approach to preventing crime, there are a growing number of critics of what I will henceforth refer to as "opportunity reduction crime prevention." The purpose of this paper is to examine where we've been and what we've learned during the past ten years in the field; to critically assess this predominant approach to crime prevention, presenting the salient criticisms that have been levelled against it; and, finally to make some predictions for the future based upon this assessment. The spirit in which this paper is written is that we cannot anticipate and guide the future without first understanding the past and learning from our previous mistakes.

In order to provide some historical perspective, a brief discussion of how and why reducing the opportunities for crime came to be the prevalent approach to crime prevention is necessary. To do that, we must return to the 1960's.

II. Crime Prevention in the 1960's

In a 1965 paper entitled "Recent Changes in the Concept of Prevention" criminologist Peter Lejins identified three classifications

of crime prevention: punitive, corrective, and mechanical. Punitive crime prevention, according to Lejins, was aimed at deterring crime through the threat of punishment and included such strategies as stricter laws, and swift and certain processing and sentencing of defendents.

Corrective prevention focuses on eliminating the causes of individual criminal behavior, such as drug addiction, lack of employment opportunities, poverty, psychological maladjustment to society, family problems, and so forth through rehabilitation programs and policies designed to eliminate the causes of crime.

The third category, mechanical crime prevention, involves making it more difficult for the criminal to commit crime by placing obstacles between him and his target. Typical mechanical strategies include physical barriers ("target-hardening"), such as better locks or alarm systems, and improved surveillance (either in the form of more police, security personnel, or the general citizenry). The objective is to reduce the opportunities for the criminal to act, and increase his risk of detection and apprehension.

The decade of the 1960's saw a growing dissatisfaction and condemnation of the policies and programs emanating from both the punitive and corrective models of crime prevention. At the time, the criminal law came to be viewed by many government policy makers and criminologists alike as an inefficient and ineffective way to enforce morals and control criminal behavior.[3] The 1967 President's Task Force on

[3]There are numerous books and articles presenting this position. See, for example, Sanford H. Kadish, "The Crisis of Overcriminilization," Annals, November, 1967 and The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, The Courts, Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967. These arguments were bolstered by those sociologists emphasizing the role of "labeling" in contributing to delinquency.

Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime concluded that because of the harmful effects of many official procedures for handling delinquents, and "in the absence of evidence on the beneficial effects of official contacts, every effort should be made to avoid the use of a formal sanctioning system."[4] Supported by liberal thinkers and the belief in the limited ability of the law to deter criminal behavior, the movement was underway to legalize many behaviors considered "criminal" according to the law.

Simultaneously, the corrective approach to crime prevention, from which were derived all of the then-popular criminal offender rehabilitation programs and the community action and poverty programs of President Johnson's Great Society, came to be severely criticized as simply not being effective in preventing crime. The poverty program was deemed not only to be ineffective in reducing poverty or crime, but because it became embroiled in local politics, many felt it may have done more harm than good.[5] Job training programs were found to have had no impact.[6] Educational programs, such as Project Headstart and others, were proclaimed to be failures.[7] The use of psychotheraphy to rehabilitate criminals was determined to have been

[4]The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967, p. 418.

[5]Peter Marris and Martin Rein, Dilemmas of Social Reform, New York: Atherton Press, 1967.

[6]See C. Ray Jeffery, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1971, pp. 152-156.

[7]Ibid, pp. 144-152.

unsuccessful.[8] And finally in a widely-distributed and influential study by Robert Martinson and his associates, wherein they reviewed the evaluation results of over 200 correctional treatment and rehabilitation programs, they made the definitive statement that "nothing works."[9]

This admittedly brief and simplified overview of the 1960's is meant to suggest one major point: the time was ripe in 1970 for a dramatic and major shift in our perspective on preventing and controlling crime. As a nation, we had directly and indirectly tackled the problem and its underlying causes, and the liberal approaches had failed. Worse yet, conservatives blamed some of these very efforts for the explosive racial conflicts of the late '60's. So if one were writing a similar piece ten years ago on "crime prevention in the 1970's", one quite naturally might have turned to Lejins' third category -- mechanical crime prevention -- as providing a new and fresh hope for the future.

III. Crime Prevention in the Early 1970's

The mechanical crime prevention approach offered many advantages. First, it shifted the emphasis away from the offender and toward the victim and potential victim. No longer would we need to be so concerned with why offenders committed crimes (either the societal causes or individual motivations). Rather, the mechanical approach permitted

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[8] Ibid, pp. 111-125.

[9] Douglas Lipton, Robert Martinson, and Judith Wilks, The Effectiveness of Correctional Treatment: A Survey of Treatment Evaluation Studies, New York: Praeger, 1975. See also Robert Martinson, "What Works -- Questions and Answers About Prison Reform," The Public Interest, Spring, 1974.

one to simply accept the reality that there will always be crime and individuals who commit it; and it is difficult, if not impossible, to dramatically alter either the criminal's desires and motivations or the societal conditions which spawn crime. The intellectual justification for the mood of many government policy makers was put forth persuasively by James Q. Wilson in his thoughtful, down-to-earth book, Thinking About Crime.[10] Wilson analyzed the deficiencies of the theories explaining criminality and persuasively argued that they weren't appropriate as the basis for designing public policies. He advocated a more realistic -- and narrower -- focus on government policies aimed at deterring crime rather than trying to prevent it by "changing the nature of man."

Furthermore, too much had been expected of the official criminal justice system -- the police, courts, and corrections -- in dealing with the problem of crime, Wilson argued. Here too, the mechanical crime prevention model offered an important political advantage. The types of programs derived from this form of crime prevention offered clear, simple, and direct roles for the general citizenry. The solitary onus for preventing crime could be shifted from the backs of criminal justice professionals and placed squarely where, according to many, it rightfully belonged:

> "Citizen involvement in crime prevention efforts is not merely desirable but necessary...
>
> "Police and other specialists alone cannot control crime; they 'need all the help the community can give them'...

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[10] James Q. Wilson, Thinking About Crime, New York: Basic Books, 1975.

> "Crime prevention is everybody's business, but too many fail to accept crime prevention as everybody's duty..."[11]

At a time when one study after another study was being published pointing out the ineffectiveness of the criminal justice system and its established policies, the appeal of shifting the burden of responsibility for crime prevention to the general citizenry was clear and compelling.

Furthermore, opportunity reduction-type programs didn't cost very much money; they were relatively inexpensive to set up and operate. While most other traditional criminal justice programs required large professional staffs and equipment, these programs were structured so that citizens do most of the actual work, both in terms of taking the necessary actions to protect themselves and their property, as well as in the role of unpaid volunteers encouraging others to do the same. Usually the only program costs involved were for hiring a small staff and paying for promotional and informational materials (e.g., brochures, pamphlets, movies). Even a statewide program designed to reach millions of people required a staff of only two or three people and cost less than $250,000. As these programs grew in popularity and program personnel borrowed ideas and especially mass media materials from other like programs around the country, the costs to run such a program dropped even more dramatically. When compared to alternative crime prevention approaches, opportunity reduction programs reached

[11] National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, A Call for Citizen Action: Crime Prevention and the Citizen, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974.

more people with a higher expected benefit at a much lower cost; in short, they appeared to be very cost-effective.[12]

Finally, this type of crime prevention program appealed to many state and local officeholders and bureaucrats for the political mileage that could be gained from them. It didn't take long for a mayor, police chief, sheriff, governor, or attorney general to realize the inherent political potential in becoming a spokesperson for the program. Under the pretext of providing a valuable public service, extolling the virtues of citizen responsibility and urging mass involvement in crime prevention, the wily officeholder got his name on brochures, his face on television and in the newspapers, and had a direct line of communication with the citizens, who coincidentally happened to be voters -- all at no personal cost.

I do not mean to suggest that all of the politicians and government officials who jumped on the crime prevention bandwagon used these programs to further their own personal political futures. Certainly most of them sincerely believed that citizen involvement in crime prevention was a desirable goal, and honestly felt they could encourage such participation through their own personal exhortations. Yet there are a number of cases where crime prevention was blatantly and unscrupulously used during election and re-election campaigns (usually to the detriment of the program). And it's hard to imagine that even the most upright and honest officeholder didn't recognize and take some advantage

[12] James Gregg, then Acting Administrator of LEAA, commented in 1977 about the total amount of federal funding the National Crime Prevention Institute had received: "We have, in effect, provided a countrywide crime prevention program for the costs of building a medium-sized jail." (LEAA News Release, December 19, 1977). Reported in National Crime Prevention Institute, Understanding Crime Prevention (Lexington, Kentucky: NCPI Press, 1978), p. 11-3.

of the political benefits to be derived from association with such a program.

With so many points in its favor and seemingly no negative features, it's easy to see why crime prevention programs based on the opportunity reduction model became so very popular. Since 1970, we have witnessed a tremendous growth in the number of such programs. They range in size from grass-roots groups of concerned neighbors getting together to solve a local problem to comprehensive, complex citywide or countywide projects financed by hundreds of thousands of federal dollars. Three-fourths of the 50 states have or are in the process of initiating statewide crime prevention programs. The culmination of the ever increasing scope of citizen involvement in crime prevention can be seen in the national crime prevention media campaign, "Take a Bite out of Crime," which is intended to bring the crime prevention message to every home in the country during 1980.* A few projects are initiated by citizens, and others are supported by local clubs, community organizations, or voluntary service associations. State and local government agencies are implementing similar programs. And an increasing number of national associations, such as Kiwanis, General Federation of Women's Clubs, AFL-CIO, Jaycees, National Retail Merchants Association, and numerous others, have gotten into the crime prevention business, encouraging their members to join the fight against crime.[13]

*The ultimate goal of the national program is to make the yet-to-be-named dog (the mascot of crime prevention) as popular as Smokey the Bear.

[13]See National Crime Prevention Institute, Understanding Crime Prevention (Lexington, Kentucky: NCPI Press, 1978), Chapters Two and Eleven for a current and complete description of federal, state, and local involvement in crime prevention.

But the real leader of the crime prevention movement of the 1970's has been the law enforcement community. The National Crime Prevention Institute (NCPI), created in 1971 under a Law Enforcement Assistance Administration grant, has trained thousands of police officers in the techniques of opportunity reduction crime prevention.* Most of these officers returned to their chief to persuade him to establish a crime prevention unit and a local police-sponsored crime prevention program. By the late '70's the police and sheriff's departments in almost every major American city offered at least some crime prevention services to residents, and many smaller departments were involved in similar efforts on a smaller scale.

Despite the increasing diversity in the types of organizations and agencies now sponsoring crime prevention programs, the role of law enforcement and the trained crime prevention officer has remained central in most programs. Almost all of the statewide programs are built on the same model: the state's role is to provide training, technical assistance, and resource materials to the local police/sheriff departments and crime prevention officers who are each responsible for conducting their own localized crime prevention program.

Even many of the community-based programs where there appears to be no direct law enforcement involvement in the day-to-day operations of the project have not escaped the pervasiveness of the police influence.

*Similar training institutes have been established in other parts of the country and many states now offer crime prevention training as part of the basic and refresher training provided to all police officers.

In a recent national survey of community crime prevention programs conducted by the Minnesota Crime Prevention Center, where police-sponsored programs were excluded from the survey by design, over half of the programs sponsored by other government agencies, community organizations, or grass-roots citizens groups were classified as relying primarily on the very same opportunity reduction strategies favored by police. Ask the director of a program to define "crime prevention" and most will respond with the familiar phrase which is learned by rote by every NCPI graduate: "Crime prevention is the anticipation, recognition and appraisal of a crime risk and the intiation of some action to remove or reduce it."

IV. The Critique of Opportunity Reduction Crime Prevention

Over the past couple of years, these very popular opportunity reduction-type approaches to community crime prevention have come under careful scrutiny. There have been a growing number of critics who have attacked them on a number of grounds. A review of the most salient critiques of opportunity reduction crime prevention hopefully will prove useful and instructive.

1. The Philosophical Critique

"Community crime prevention ala target-hardening and reducing criminal opportunities is a presage of 1984."

It didn't take long for those of us involved in crime prevention to realize that there was a menacing danger inherent in the advice we were proclaiming in brochures, newspapers, on television and radio urging citizens to "take responsibility for crime prevention" and buy good locks, lock their doors and windows, install alarm systems, etc. Early critics pointed out the philosophical conservatism of such

advice. Taken seriously and to its extreme, the approach can lead to a locked-up society and a fortress mentality. And the specter of "Big Brother" is nowhere more evident than in the proposed mandatory "Auto Decal" program and the hidden camera illustration provided in the introduction.

It is also more than coincidental that in the early 1970's, almost all of these programs were police-sponsored. As suggested above, law enforcement agencies continue to be strong supporters of this approach to crime prevention, particularly since the unstated purpose of most of them is to directly or indirectly aid and assist the police. As more and more programs have come to be sponsored by community-based and citizen groups, project directors quickly learn that police cooperation is usually dependent upon the project's choice of crime prevention strategies. As long as the role designed for citizens is one of aiding and assisting the police, e.g., increased citizen reporting of crime, improved citizen observation and surveillance, assistance to police in identifying and apprehending criminals, the police will more than likely be supportive. But, according to many community people, as soon as a program devises its <u>own</u> crime prevention solutions which don't directly assist the police, cooperation quickly evaporates and is likely to be replaced by indifference or even hostile opposition.

The conservatism of opportunity reduction crime prevention is further underscored by its focus on the upright, law-abiding citizen, while simultaneously assuming all criminal offenders to be anonymous, unknown, and evil. It's the overly simplistic, "we, the good guys" against "them, the bad guys" philosophy in a crime prevention context.

In point of fact, the closest analogy is to that of national defense, but at the community-level. The rhetoric is strikingly similar, and the same kinds of techniques are proposed to keep the invading criminals out of our homes and communities as have been used by nations to protect their national boundaires.* The terms "perimeter barriers," "access control," "surveillance," "territorial defense," "instrusion detection systems" (which indicate when the invader has entered one's territory), all came from principles of defense.

The critical difference, of course, is that in the case of crime prevention the "invading enemy" comes not from outside our national boundaries, but from within our own society. In the words of Walt Kelly's popular comic strip character Pogo, "we have met the enemy and he is us."

2. The "Fear" Critique

> "Opportunity-reduction programs, particularly those emphasizing the individual steps people can take to avoid becoming crime victims, make people unnecessarily fearful and isolated."

During the early years most crime prevention program practitioners were completely unconcerned about the "fear of crime" issue. In fact, if we were worried about anything, it was the opposite problem -- public apathy or an apparent lack of concern about crime. Typically, programs began with a characteristic burst of energy and an initial spurt of eager participants in whatever activities the program was

*This thought became clear to me as I listened to a renowned security expert lecturing on the topic of "the history of security" to a class of law enforcement officers in a basic crime prevention course. Without exception, all his illustrations and examples of the early developments of security devices came from what nations and countries did centuries ago to protect themselves from their enemies.

promoting. Within a year, rates of participation quickly leveled off and it became more and more difficult to motivate additional citizens to take crime preventive actions. It was initially assumed that simply telling people about the steps they could take to reduce their chances of criminal victimization would be sufficient. We quickly learned, however, that the matter was more complex. Logically people first had to be sufficiently worried about crime to want to do something about it. Therefore, a certain amount of concern about crime was assumed to be a necessary motivator to get people to participate. Many practitioners suggested that a program should arouse public concern if it didn't already exist, and some deliberately used fear-inducing promotional materials as a way of motivating people to take action.*

Meanwhile, researchers representing several academic disciplines have been studying fear of crime in earnest over the past decade.[14] Research interest has centered on explaining and understanding fear of crime; how fear is related to the actual incidence of crime; and the presumed interaction between the attitudes, perceptions, opinions, and emotions people have about crime and their subsequent behavioral responses. The concern raised by many researchers studying fear of

*I recall one tough program administrator who developed his own color slide show vividly illustrating the gory details of murder victims, which he routinely presented at public meetings as an introduction to his talk on how to avoid becoming a crime victim. He was convinced that scaring people was the only way to "get them off their duffs."

[14]For a discussion of alternative approaches to studying fear of crime, see Jeffrey Henig and Michael J. Maxfield, "Reducing Fear of Crime: Strategies for Intervention" Victimology, Vol. 3, Nos. 3/4 (1978), 297-313; and for a summary review of the literature, see Fred Du Bow, et al, op. cit., pp. 1-26.

crime was the opposite -- that certain crime prevention measures, particularly protective and avoidance behaviors, made people more fearful.[15] Of direct relevance to the discussion here is the question of whether "fear" (or some attitudinal variant akin to fear) is an antecedent or motivator of crime prevention behaviors/activities; whether it is a negative unintended consequence of some kinds of crime prevention efforts; or whether it is potentially both (i.e., the relationship varies with individuals).

Despite the increasing attention devoted by researchers to fear of crime, these questions cannot be answered definitively, since the empirical evidence is not conclusive. There are, however, some program evaluation results that support the contention that at least some crime prevention programs have had the unintended effect of increasing fear of crime.[16] These results suggest that the "fear critique" may have validity, and it cannot be dismissed without further empirical examination.

3. The "Middle-Class" Critique

"Opportunity reduction is a middle-class approach to crime prevention."

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[15]This possibility has been discussed by a number of different authors. See Leonard Bickman, et al, Citizen Crime Reporting Projects (Wasington, D.C.: National Institute of Justice, 1977); Young Ja Kim, "The Social Correlates of Perceptions of Neighborhood Crime Problems and Fear of Victimization," (working paper, Reactions to Crime Project), Evanston, ILL: Center for Urban Affairs, Northwestern University, 1976; and Ellen S. Cohn, et al, "Crime Prevention vs. Victimization Prevention: The Psychology of Two Different Reactions," Victimology, Vol. 3, Nos. 3/4 (1978), 285-296.

[16]In the evaluation of Portland, Oregon's Neighborhood Anti-burglary program, 50 percent of the survey respondents indicated that they felt that the public was more fearful because of the publicity and attention given to crime; the comparisons of pre- and post surveys conducted as part of an evaluation of a Crime and the Elderly project in New York City showed that the elderly were more fearful after the program (based on the opportunity-reduction model) had been in effect than before the program started.

"It's a program for the rich to protect themselves from the poor."

These statements reflect the concerns of many people, particularly leaders representing certain kinds of communities, who question the underlying value premises of opportunity reduction crime prevention. Do these kinds of programs provide equal benefits for all, or are the benefits to be derived spread unequally, with some people better off at the expense of others?

At first glance, these criticisms appear unfounded. After all, in programs run by a police department or by a city or state agency, crime prevention services, such as Operation Identification, premise security checks, block watch meetings, etc., are made available at no cost to all residents who request them. So long as program personnel do not discriminate, but provide the services on a first-come/first-served basis, and participation in the program is not mandatory, then it would seem that equal benefits are provided for all.

When we look at the empirical evidence, however, it appears there may be some truth in this criticism. The majority of opportunity reduction-type programs focus on the prevention of residential burglary, emphasizing the steps people can take to protect their home and neighborhood from burglars.[17] A number of studies conducted in different parts of the county have analyzed the demographic characteristics of participants in different kinds of protective

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[17]Largely, this is because residential burglary is the most prevalent crime (in terms of numbers) and it is most amenable to opportunity reduction strategies. However, as has been suggested, there are different types of opportunity reduction programs, and the kinds of behaviors and activities people are encouraged to engage in vary with crime type. Also, there is data and empirical evidence to suggest that different kinds of behaviors and activities are engaged in by different kinds of individuals. For a good discussion of these distinctions and the evidence on differential behavior patterns, see Fred Du Bow, et al., Reactions to Crime: A Critical Review of the Literature (Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, 1979).

behaviors. These studies point to the same general conclusion: higher socio-economic status people participate in programs such as Operation Identification and Community/Neighborhood Watch at higher rates; are more likely to have installed security devices (such as good locks, alarm systems, electric timers, etc.); and take more home protective steps on the average than do lower socio-economic status individuals.[18] For example, level of education, income, and home ownership have been found to be significantly correlated with participation in home protection programs and activities. In other words, the most prevalent types of opportunity reduction programs are most popular with middle and middle-upper class individuals.

Given that participation is a process of self-selection -- i.e., people decide on their own whether or not to engage in crime prevention activities -- why do these activities appeal more to middle and upper-middle class people? We don't know the answer with certainty, but there are several alternative hypotheses that can be

[18]Analyses of the people who joined Operation Identification in the statewide Minnesota Crime Watch program suggest that the highest rates of participation were among the well-educated, those with higher levels of family income, among the "middle" to "upper-middle" classes, and among those in single family dwellings (see Governor's Commission on Crime Prevention and Control, Minnesota Crime Watch Evaluation, St. Paul: GCCP & C, 1976, pp. 156-160.) Similar relationships were found in an analysis of participants in Operation Identification and Community Watch in four counties in North Carolina; furthermore higher socio-economic status people took more crime preventive steps than lower individuals. (Report prepared by the Minnesota Crime Prevention Center, Inc. for the North Carolina Division of Crime Control, 1980). Also, in Portland, Oregon homeowners and people with more education and higher incomes were more likely to have purchased and installed home security devices (such as good locks, alarm systems, electric timers) and to have joined Operation Identification. (L.A. Wilson, II and Ann L. Schneider, "Investigating the Efficacy and Equity of Public Initiatives in the Provision of Private Safety," Eugene, Oregon: Institute of Police Analysis, 1978).

postulated. One is that people with more to lose and greater resources at their disposal have a greater incentive to participate in these activities.[19] A second possible explanation is that people living in communities where there is a history of poor or antagonistic police/community relationships may not want to become involved in crime prevention programs or activities which are sponsored or dominated by law enforcement where the role for citizens is one of assisting or aiding the police.

Another possibility is even more fundamental -- a basic difference in value systems and perspectives on crime prevention. It's possible that people living in poorer areas (where there also tends to be more crime) may not "buy into" the underlying assumptions of the opportunity reduction approach. Crime may be viewed as more endemic to the community, and the criminal offender may not be considered an anonymous "invader." The preferred strategies for solving the crime problem, therefore, are those aimed at dealing with the immediate or underlying causes of why people commit crime. Providing job opportunities for the young peole in the community may be viewed as a more appropriate response to crime than putting Operation Identification stickers on doors or having meetings to learn about surveillance techniques.

[19]The term "resources" as used here not only includes money, which is an obvious requirement for some types of home security measures. Having enough free time to engage in crime prevention activities is another resource which is not evenly distributed throughout the population. In the words of the director of a community-based program: "Volunteerism is middle-class . . . people must have the time and energy left over from home and work duties before you can expect them to participate."

4. The "Displacement" Critique

"The approach doesn't prevent crime, it merely moves it around."

The argument that not everyone benefits equally from opportunity reduction crime prevention is given further credence by the charge that this approach does not and cannot actually reduce crime. Rather, the best it can do is displace or redistribute crime from participants to non-participants. This was one of the earliest concerns raised against opportunity reduction crime prevention. Displacement can occur either geographically -- from homes, neighborhoods, or individual persons taking security precautions to those which do not; temporally -- from one time to another; or finally, the criminal may simply switch to a different crime. Consequently, while the approach may reduce some types of crimes for some people in some areas, there will be a corresponding increase in crime elsewhere, so that overall there is no crime reduction benefits for the entire community. The underlying basis for this criticism, of course, is that the approach fails to adequately consider the motivations of the offender.

The displacement critique once again raises questions of equity and fairness, particularly since the overwhelming majority of programs are funded and sponsored by public/governmental agencies.[20] Given the empirical evidence that there is a bias toward middle to upper class participation, if the displacement critique has validity, it is additional substantiation of the charge that the rich are protected at the expense of the poor.

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[20]In the words of one author: "Reductions in vulnerability benefit only some people and may impose a greater crime burden on others. This displacement effect has ramifications . . . that an individual homeowner may justifiably ignore, but government cannot." (Arnold Sagalyn, et al., Residential Security, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1973, p. 83).

Given that the concern is justified logically, does displacement in fact occur? Here again, the empirical evidence is inconclusive, largely due to the methodological problems associated with accurately measuring the effects of displacement from participants to non-participants.* There is evidence, however, that participants in some security measures have considerably lower victimization rates than non-participants. For example, the National Burglar and Fire Alarm Association reports that premises protected by alarm systems are burglarized from 16 to 50 percent less often than homes without alarms.[21] Similarly, numerous studies of the effect of participation in Operation Identification report lower burglary rates for people who have joined than for those who have not joined. Furthermore in at least two programs (Denver and St. Louis), there was some evidence of displacement from areas targeted by the program to adjacent areas.[22] On the other hand, some studies that have looked for areal displacement effects caused by crime prevention program efforts find that they have not occurred. Evaluations of Seattle's Community Crime Prevention

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*The methodological problem is in controlling for all other factors that might be responsible for the difference in individual crime victimization rates.

[21]Reported in Michael de Courcy Hinds, "Keeping Burglars at Bay," Republic Scene, June, 1980, p. 13.

[22]Evaluation studies conducted in Minnesota, St. Louis, Denver, Phoenix, Portland, and Seattle indicate burglary reduction benefits for Operation Identification participants (see Nelson B. Heller, et al, Operation Identification Projects: Assessment of Effectiveness (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1975). The highest reported reduction -- 45 percent -- was reported in Portland.

Program and Hartford's Comprehensive Crime Prevention Program found burglary reductions and no crime displacement effects. We are still left, therefore, with the suspicion that crime displacement may occur, but with no conclusive proof.

V. Crime Prevention Becomes "Community Crime Prevention"

Many of us involved in administering opportunity reduction crime prevention programs recognized the potential validity of some of these criticisms. But it was thought that the primary problem was that programs focussed on individual crime preventive behaviors. In other words, people were encouraged to protect only themselves and their own property, thereby increasing the possibility of negative, unintended effects, such as fear, isolationism, and displacement.

As a result there occurred a discernible shift in emphasis away from individual target-hardening actions and toward the encouragement of cooperative types of activities, where the role for citizens is to get together with their neighbors to prevent crime. In the mid-to-late 70's programs called block watch, block clubs, neighborhood watch, community watch, etc. were heavily promoted and became more popular. The primary goal of these programs is to encourage residents to join with each other to promote neighborhood security, largely through techniques of mutual surveillance and improved reporting of suspicious and criminal activities. With the advent of collective, cooperative programs, crime prevention became known as "Community Crime Prevention."

At the same time, the theory and principles of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) was developed and tested in several experimental settings. The proponents of CPTED strategies

deliberately tried to disassociate their approach from the individualistic, mechanical and target-hardening strategies. The CPTED approach proposed to reduce crime and fear of crime through the application of physical design principles and social integration strategies aimed at fostering attitudes of "territoriality" or social control on the part of neighborhood residents.

I would argue, however, that both the cooperative citizen involvement strategies emphasizing collective actions and the CPTED strategies emphasizing the physical design of buildings, neighborhoods or communities are not substantially different from the more individualistic approaches. While the objective usually is unstated, it still is to reduce the opportunities for crime to occur. The main difference is that instead of trying to accomplish this through mechanical means, these latter approaches (collective/cooperative and CPTED) suggest that criminal opportunities will be reduced by maximizing the control law-abiding citizens exert over their surroundings, thereby minimizing the ease with which criminals can operate (criminal opportunities).

In other words, the underlying assumptions are essentially the same as in the earlier forms of opportunity reduction crime prevention. The offender is still viewed as an anonymous outsider against whom the neighborhood cooperatively (instead of individually) defends itself. Just as with the individual approaches, there is the inherent danger that cooperative forms of citizen activity can be taken to undesirable extremes. For example, in the case of citizen patrols, there's the

possibility that citizens patrolling their own neighborhoods could turn into vigilantism, unless there are adequate mechanisms for control and accountability.[23]

Even more troubling is the fact that collective/cooperative approaches encouraging communities or neighborhoods to "defend themselves" and "exert social control" turns on the critical issues of whose values should legitimately be defended and who in the community has the authority to decide. There would be no problem if everyone living in a community was alike and shared identical ideas and opinions about what constitutes unacceptable or criminal behavior. But this is not the case in a country like ours which has been built on economic, cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity. And, one need look no further than the Ku Klux Klan to realize the dangers of an organized community of interests acting to enforce its values on others.

VI. Community Crime Prevention Now

The Community Anti-Crime Program (CACP) created by Congress in 1976 marked an important transition in community crime prevention. For the first time federal monies were made available directly to community groups and organizations to initiate and conduct programs. In effect, community groups could become partners with the federal government in crime prevention without the intervening -- and politically sensitive -- state and local governments controlling the

[23]In his assessment of alternative forms of citizen patrols, Robert K. Yin concluded that "contemporary resident patrols are occasionally susceptible to vigilantism, with neighborhood patrols appearing to be more inclined to vigilantism than building patrols." Vigilantism was more likely to occur "when members were recruited selectively from within a friendship group . . . or when patrol and surveillance becomes dull . . ." See Robert K. Yin et al., Patrolling the Neighborhood Beat: Residents and Residential Security (Santa Monica, California: The Rand Corporation, 1976), p. 114.

direction of the projects. CACP gave another new meaning to the term "community": not only did it mean programs in and for the community; it also meant control of the program by the community.

The major consequences of CACP are two. First, the fact that money flowed directly to organizations in the community gave them the resources and the power to pursue crime prevention goals and strategies of their own choosing. There were, of course, federal program guidelines, but the nature of the program permitted and encouraged a wider variety of approaches to crime prevention. Many community-based groups eschewed the opportunity reduction strategies in favor of programs aimed at the perceived causes of crime, e.g., juvenile delinquency and drug abuse projects. Some community organizations still adopted opportunity reduction strategies, but community organizing became the central focus.

The second major consequence of CACP was a politicization of the projects. Obtaining resources to do crime prevention was a means to further other interests in the community. The structure of CACP permitted community leaders to find ways to utilize crime prevention funds to improve 1) their organization's capabilities, 2) its role in the community, and 3) their ability to pursue broader goals, such as neighborhood improvement and rehabilitiation. Citizens in many communities reinforced these initiatives by voicing many concerns and problems which were only tangentially related to crime, especially as it is legally-defined. Recent research also supports this view that citizens look at neighborhood crime problems differently than do official justice agencies. Actions such as petty vandalism, drug abuse, abandoned buildings, gangs of kids "hanging around" -- referred to as

nuisances or "incivilities" -- are of equal or greater concern to people than the legal categories of burglary, robbery, etc.[24]

Simultaneously, the intellectual justification for the programmatic and political departures stimulated by the Community Anti-Crime Program has been developed. In the empirical research accomplished through Northwestern University's Reactions to Crime Project and the subsequent theoretical writings of Dan Lewis and others working on the project, we see the beginnings of an alternative theoretical approach -- the social disorganization perspective -- to complete with the opportunity reduction model (or "victimization perspective" as Lewis calls it). Lewis draws upon a tradition in urban criminology with roots in the first third of the 20th century. In the social disorganization perspective, crime is viewed in broader terms; as perceived by local residents, crime is the "process of the decline of the local moral order." In this model, the potential criminal offender plays a key role in the social disorganization of communities. The appropriate responses to deal with crime defined in these broader terms must come from the community itself, since it is the context in which crime occurs.[25]

This alternative way to look at community crime prevention both in practice and in theory -- community organizations pursuing programs to meet the expressed concerns of residents to improve the neighborhood in a general way -- is not necessarily compatible with

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[24]Dan A Lewis and Michael G. Maxfield, Fear in the Neighborhoods (Evanston, ILL: Center for Urban Affairs, Northwestern University, 1978).

[25]Dan A. Lewis, et al., Crime and Community: Understanding Fear of Crime in Urban America (Evanston, ILL: Center for Urban Affairs, Northwestern University, 1979).

the earlier version of community crime prevention as defined by local official agencies, particularly the police. Further, the use of federal funds to organize the community is not always in the best interests of local politicians and administrators who may have to face a newly powerful community organization as an adversary in the political arena.

VII. Conclusion: Crime Prevention in the 1980's

The focus of this paper has been on explaining and understanding past developments in the field of community crime prevention. But what of the future? Persuasive as Lewis is, conditions make the future of community-controlled crime prevention precarious. The state of public finance is dismal, and conservative opposition to programs like CACP may be expected to increase. The police community probably remains opposed to any extension of the infringements of community groups on their traditional turf, especially if the funds necessary for community programs are perceived as reducing money available for more centralized, traditional policies.

Further, the existing state of crime prevention policy is unclear, with groups within the criminal justice community arguing with each other over the merits of mechanical opportunity reduction versus CPTED versus community organizing as the keys to crime prevention. It's common to see combinations of these strategies in practice.

Finally, there is the much-publicized trend in public opinion and in corrections policy toward a more retributive justice. Retribution does return a focus on the offender to the center of criminal justice policy, but as "crime prevention" it also implies a return to policies that respond to crimes as they occur and depends on police to capture and imprison criminals.

Recent cutbacks in funds to LEAA suggest a decrease in governmental support for collective crime prevention efforts. In the absence of federal and/or state funding, few community groups will be able to sustain crime prevention programs, especially where community organization capacity building is the key to the program. The remaining crime prevention programs that appeal largely to individual motivations will be subject to the critiques outlined above, and results of such programs will continue to be uncertain and difficult to establish. Crime prevention seems to be at an impasse, and future developments along a "more of the same" mold are probable but not promising.

New initiatives in policy are necessary. The resurgence of neighborhood groups and community consciousness in the last few years suggests there may be a basis for rescuing crime prevention from the doldrums. Some means of explicitly integrating crime prevention objectives into broader community development policies may be necessary to make crime prevention palatable to both community groups and other constituencies of Congressmen. Strategies to meet the needs of high crime inner city areas need to be developed, not necessarily to replace those opportunity reduction approaches appropriate to some communities, but in recognition of the different social and organizational needs of different communities. These differences in communities suggest there needs to be more, not less, decentralization. The current trends, unfortunately, are in the opposite direction.

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