

# Crime and Community: Continuities, Contradictions, and Complexities

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## Abstract

*This article explores the research on community crime prevention, fear of crime, and alternative crime control strategies that go beyond those of traditional criminal justice agencies. The discussion focuses on the competing paradigms for prevention and control that have been tried over the past 20 years and relates that debate to the larger questions of crime causation and public attitudes toward crime that fuel this competition. Alternative policy options are discussed and recommendations related to the most promising approaches are made.*

When we think about crime and community in the 1990s, we do not usually think about Al Capone, gangsters, and prohibition, yet our modern notions of community crime prevention grew out of the experience of Depression-era Chicago. The competing models of ways to prevent crime and improve communities were born in the slums and prisons of Chicago about 60 years ago. The Illinois Department of Corrections and the Joliet Penitentiary, in particular, provided the backdrop for the three theorists who would, in the years to follow, develop alternative visions of the best way to battle the effects of crime on communities. Clifford Shaw (Shaw et al., 1929), Joseph Lohman (1966), and Saul Alinsky (1946), working in the context of violence, drug abuse, and gangs, generated three alternative approaches to making communities more resilient and more resistant to criminal disorder. Their visions still dominate the debate about crime and community, and it is with these three approaches that I will begin the discussion of how the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) should examine its policies on crime and community disorganization.

Alinsky and Lohman began to work for Shaw at the Institute for Juvenile Research (IJR) in Chicago in the early 1930s. IJR did research on juvenile delinquency, based in large measure on Shaw's (1930) pioneering work on the life stories of young men who became criminals and Shaw and Ernest Burgess' ecological theories of urbanization. This biographical work took the researchers both to the neighborhoods where the youths grew up

and committed their first offenses and to the correctional facilities where they were incarcerated. Shaw developed a theory of crime causation and prevention that shaped the views of Alinsky and Lohman, who in turn transformed Shaw's views into competing theories of community improvement.

## Ecological Theory of Social Disorganization

Shaw believed that an ecological theory of social disorganization could explain the patterns of criminality that he discerned in Chicago. In this theory neighborhoods were differentiated by their ability to socialize young people to adopt conventional values. There was, he thought, a geography to morality that depended on the pressures the city placed on primary institutions, such as family, church, and social groups. These pressures undermined the capacity of institutions to instill proper values in the young. While urban society had come to rely on secondary institutions, such as schools and police, to replace the primary institutions in the socialization process, they were woefully inadequate for the task. Competing value systems—mostly deviant in nature—overwhelmed immigrant families still reeling from the transition to urban America. The children were drawn to lives of crime and delinquency, because the primary institutions were too weak to battle the lure of the city. It was the city itself that caused neighborhood disorganization, which in turn opened the door to criminality.

Shaw believed that local voluntary associations assisted by professional organizers could combat the effects of social disorganization. The Chicago Area Project (CAP), discussed below, was to rebuild primary institutions, thereby preventing crime and delinquency. Alinsky, who was still a graduate student in the mid-1930s, and Lohman, who was to become dean of the criminology school at the University of California at Berkeley years later, modified Shaw's framework. Alinsky politicized the framework, suggesting that "the slumminess could be taken out of the slum" through direct political confrontation with the secondary institutions. Taking his lead from the organizing tactics of John L. Lewis' United Mine Workers, Alinsky broadened the Shaw approach and in 1939 founded the Back of the Yards Council to improve the southside Back of the Yards community through the political mobilization of primary institutions.

Lohman took the paradigm in a different direction, suggesting that secondary institutions, particularly criminal justice agencies, could be used to improve communities; once urbanization and modernization had advanced to a certain point, secondary institutions had to replace primary institutions if order and conventional morality were to remain the norm. Police could play an important role in keeping communities safe if they expanded their activities and worked with the community to secure order.

To sum up, Shaw proposed a delinquency prevention program that built community organizations that would support the family and the church by reaching out to adolescents at risk. Alinsky developed an approach that built political coalitions of community organizations to challenge control of the community by local businesses and government agencies. Lohman argued for a policing function that went far beyond law enforcement to maintain order in the city. Although there are important differences among these models, they share one important characteristic. They all define crime as offender behavior: Changing the way the potential offender is motivated will prevent crime. That assumption began to be challenged in the 1960s.

## The Victimization Perspective

Interest in crime prevention from a research perspective developed in the late 1960s as a concomitant of the interest in assessing the “true” amount of crime in our society and the way crime creates fear. Funded by the National Commission on Crime and the Administration of Justice, these studies attempted to determine both the level of crime and the level of fear Americans were experiencing. Scholars were interested primarily in assessing “the dark figure” of crime (Skogan, 1977); that is, unreported and under-reported crimes whose magnitude was not reflected in the official crime statistics of police departments. From the outset, rape, murder, burglary, robbery, and assault were the crimes on which attention was focused. From this perspective, fear was of interest to the extent that it could be matched to the true amount of crime in an area. What emerged from this work was a series of findings that demonstrated the lack of concordance between the level of fear and the amount of crime in the study sites (Reiss, 1967; Biderman, 1967). As the official crime rate began to rise in the early 1960s, the Commission funded several scholars to take a closer look at the impact of the increase on urban residents. These early studies reported no simple, direct, linear relationship between victimization and fear; the victimization experiences of an individual did not predict his or her fear level.

Building on this work, the U.S. Census Bureau initiated what has come to be known as the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration Victimization Surveys. These national surveys measured both the personal and the commercial victimization levels in major U.S. cities. Fear of crime was measured as a secondary consideration, but the emphasis was on the distribution of fear among demographic groups. Analysis of these data was limited to making inter-city comparisons and to reporting on the variations in fear levels by demographic subpopulations within large national samples. Analysts of the victimization surveys discovered, just as their predecessors had, that fear of crime was often prevalent among the least victimized groups, such as the elderly (Skogan, 1976). Young African-American males consistently reported the highest number of victimizations and the least amount of fear, while fear was highest among older females (both African American and white), even though they reported the fewest victimizations of any demographic group. Scholars have attempted to explain this apparent paradox by employing more and more sophisticated analytic techniques to the questions of the amount of crime in the environment and the dimensions of fear reported by respondents. Through the refinement of measurement techniques and more sophisticated analytic procedures, some progress was made in explaining the apparent discrepancy between the amount of crime to which people were exposed and the level of fear they reported (Hindelang, et al., 1978).

The work of Albert Biderman, Albert Reiss, and Philip Ennis set the tone for scholarship on fear of crime in the 1970s. Most of the research on fear of crime that followed this early work found no consistent relationship between fear of crime and the victimization experiences of the respondent (McIntyre, 1967; Boggs, 1971; Conklin, 1971; Fowler and Mangione, 1974; and Hindelang, 1974). A few studies, however, did report a positive relationship between victimization and fear (Feyerherm and Hindelang, 1974; Kleinman and David, 1973). A review of the literature shows that the implicit hypothesis—victimization predicts fear—is not substantiated. Some scholars have begun to question whether this

perspective is the most appropriate framework for approaching the issue of fear of crime. James Garofalo and John Laub (1979), after reviewing the literature, make this point forcefully:

All of the factors discussed above—the ambiguous relationship between victimization and the fear of crime, the indications that crime is not generally perceived as an immediate threat, and the mixing of fear of crime with fear of strangers—point to the conclusion that what has been measured in research as the “fear of crime” is not simply fear of crime.

Biderman (1967) hinted at a potentially more useful perspective:

We have found that attitudes of citizens regarding crime are less affected by their past victimization than by their ideas about what is going on in their community—fears about a weakening of social controls on which they feel their safety and the broader fabric of social life is ultimately dependent.

## The Social Control Perspective

The conceptual link between social change and crime was the concept of social disorganization. Social change in the city affected local communities in a variety of ways, disrupting social control and introducing forms of deviance (including crime and delinquency) as a consequence of that disruption. Carey (1975) provides a good working definition of social disorganization:

A socially disorganized community is one unable to realize its values. The consequences of disorganization (delinquency, dependency, desertion, truancy, high rates of mental illness, etc.) are considered undesirable by most of the citizens who live in the disorganized community—they would do something about them if they could. The characteristic response to the question, “disorganized from whose viewpoint?” was “disorganized from the viewpoint of the people who live there.”

## City Influence on Local Communities

Social control—the ability of the local group to control its members—plays a pivotal role in the way the major social forces of city life affect the social organization of local communities. As James Carey (1975) points out in his discussion of the “social disorganization paradigm,” there are a variety of approaches to defining and measuring the concept, but they all hinge on analysis of the way city life disrupts the local social order. Contrasting city life to folk ways, Louis Wirth (1938), for example, argued that density, heterogeneity, increased mobility, insecurity, and instability lead to the establishment of formal controls that mitigate personal disorganization in the city.

With this general set of factors in place, the social and cultural institutions at the city or neighborhood level are not capable of performing their socialization and social control functions, and criminal activity follows. Family, church, friends, and neighbors cannot counter the dysfunctional influences of the city that lead to social disorganization and criminal activity. Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, and Roderick McKenzie (1925) make the following point concerning the impact of social disorganization on criminal activity:

It is probably the breaking down of local attachments and the weakening of restraints and inhibitions of the primary group, under the influence of the urban environment, which are largely responsible for the increase of vice and crime in great cities.

Primary face-to-face relationships, which had been the basis of social control in less-complicated societies, are inadequate control mechanisms in the context of the urbanization process (Smith, 1979). Second-generation immigrants (those born in the United States), for instance, feel less tied to the traditions of the old country (Wirth, 1933) and are pulled toward the deviant values of the metropolis.

Within this theoretical orientation, crime is the direct result of the pressures of city life. Rather than being an aberration due to individual character disorder, it is the anticipated consequence of the effects of disorganization on the local community (Kobrin, 1959). This theory of the city “explains” criminality: As city life disorganizes local communities, crime increases. The Chicago scholars are clear as to how to solve the crime problem, for the solution draws upon their general theory of urbanization, social control, and social disorganization:

The distinctive features of the urban mode of life are often seen sociologically as consisting of the substitution of secondary for primary contacts, the weakening of bonds of kinship and the declining social significance of the family, the disappearance of the neighborhood, and the undermining of the traditional basis of social solidarity (Wirth, 1938).

Against this setting, the individual is forced into voluntary associations to achieve his ends:

Being reduced to a stage of virtual impotence as an individual the urbanite is bound to exert himself by joining with others of similar interest into organized groups to obtain his ends. This results in the enormous multiplication of voluntary organizations directed toward as great a variety of objectives as there are human needs and interests (Wirth, 1938).

The Chicago scholars believed that crime could be reduced only if local communities could reassert the primacy of their values over the insidious influences of city life. The voluntary association is particularly well suited to the exercise of social control, for it allows the community to assert its values.

## The Chicago Area Project

Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay adapted the social control perspective to the particular problem of crime and community. CAP, which Shaw and McKay started in 1934, built on precisely the theoretical construct we have been describing; however, in this case, the scholars left the classroom and applied that construct in the neighborhoods of Chicago through a series of interventions. This practical application was informed by a series of books on delinquency published in the same period (for example, Shaw and McKay, 1942; Shaw et al., 1929). CAP “attempts to deal with crime as a natural phenomenon” and focuses on the local community as the place to take action:

The essential logic of the Area Project becomes, then, one of discovering the pertinent social processes and significant cultural organization of the community as expressed in the institutions of local residents themselves, and through these, introducing values consistent with the standards of conventional society (Burgess, Lohman, and Shaw, 1937).

The prevention of crime is a matter of working with residents and institutions to strengthen the community's capacity to enforce "values consistent with the standards of conventional society":

If juvenile delinquency in the deteriorated areas is a function of the social life characteristics of these situations, it seems that a feasible approach to the solution of the problem would be to effect constructive changes in the attitudes, sentiments, codes, and moral standards of the neighborhood as a whole (Burgess et al., 1937).

Through CAP the forces of urbanization could be mitigated. "Society has here an opportunity to discover and encourage forces which will make the local community, insofar as is possible, independently effective in dealing with its own problems." (Burgess et al., 1937.)

If crime and its consequences are to be alleviated, social control must be reinstated. CAP attempted to enlist indigenous leadership working through local institutions in the fight against crime. This emphasis on voluntary participation at the neighborhood level was central, given a definition of crime as the process of value erosion. Only by combatting social disorganization, as indicated by delinquency and crime rates, could local communities become better places to live.

The social control perspective has not been without its critics. Indeed, the emergence of the victimization perspective is directly tied to the general shift away from the social control perspective following World War II. In this article, I review that shift in criminological theory and relate it to the major social policy initiatives of the early 1960s. I then describe the emergence of the victimization perspective as part of the general shift in emphasis during a period when the national crime rate is rising rapidly.

## Critiques of the Social Control Perspective

By the 1950s the social control perspective had been generally discredited (Carey, 1975). Methodological difficulties, along with a critique of the perspective as inherently middle class and conservative (Mills, 1943), led to the general disenchantment.

## Learning Crime: Values and Opportunity

The critique of the perspective had begun by the early 1940s. In 1938 and 1939, two works appeared that offer alternative theoretical explanations for the emergence of crime and delinquency. In the third edition of *Principles of Criminology*, Edwin H. Sutherland (1939) outlines his theory of "differential association," which describes crime as a function of value conflicts between two groups. Sutherland depicts criminal activity as the result of a group's socialization to values that clash with the values of a more powerful group in the society: "The conflict of cultures is the fundamental principle in the explanation of crime." The values of one's intimates dictate the extent to which one respects the law. If one's primary group feels no bond to the statutes, neither will the individual. Rather than being a violation of commonly held values, crime is the adherence to a set of values, although not those upheld by law.

Robert Merton, building on the Durkheimian tradition,<sup>1</sup> published his "Social Structure and Anomie" in 1938. In that article Merton develops a general theory of crime and delinquency. He assumes a broad agreement on values among all members of the society and suggests that deviance follows from the differential distribution of legitimate means of achieving those values. For example, nearly all young people in our society agree that being rich is important, but the poor lack the means (education and employment

opportunities) of attaining that status. Consequently, illegitimate means—that is, criminal activity—are used to achieve the commonly agreed upon end.

Both Sutherland and Merton develop theories of socialization that are contradictory to the social control perspective. Where control theorists emphasize the way city life distorts and dilutes the values of the local community, Sutherland and Merton emphasize the learned nature of criminal activity. For Merton and Sutherland, crime is a consequence of learning all too well the lesson one's community is trying to teach, while Shaw and McKay, among others, see the community's inability to socialize its youth as the catalyst for crime. Ruth Kornhauser (1978) distinguishes Merton's "strain theory" from Sutherland's "cultural deviance" approach on a variety of dimensions. However, for our purposes the common reliance on personal motivation and socialization in their theorizing is most important.

Both Merton and Sutherland explain crime and delinquency in terms of the factors that motivate individuals to commit deviant acts, and both perceive the local subculture to be the transmitting agent for the particular form those motivations take. These approaches are explanations of personal behavior based on cultural influences. Both men are more concerned with the interactive process (Matza, 1969) in communities than with community differences in levels of social disorganization and social control.

Merton and Sutherland take the analysis of the relationship between crime and community in two very different directions. The latter draws the scholar's attention toward interaction among peers in the community, while the former focuses on the differential opportunities available to adolescents in the community. In neither case are the particularly urban dimensions of the early Chicago thinkers retained. Harold Finestone (1976) points out that "the fundamental concept for the analysis of the delinquency problem has become social status rather than social change." The changes brought about by city life, in particular, were no longer part of the analytic framework. Rather, scholars in the 1950s focused on the interplay of values and peer pressure to explain delinquent behavior (Cohen, 1955).

## Broadening the Definition of Social Organization

Another critique of the social control perspective began in 1943, when C. Wright Mills and William F. Whyte challenged the concept of social disorganization. Whyte (1943) suggests that concern about disorganization led sociologists to focus on too narrow a part of the lives of low-income people:

For too long sociologists have concentrated their attention upon individuals and families that have been unable to make a successful adjustment to the demands of their society. We now need studies of the way in which individuals and groups have merged to reorganize their social relations and adjust conflicts.

Building on his own work in *Street Corner Society*, Whyte (1943) emphasizes the newly created social bonds in immigrant communities. If social disorganization involves a "decrease of the influence of existing social rules," and if the rules referred to are those of the peasant society from which the immigrants came, then the slum is certainly disorganized. However, that is only a part of the picture. To study the area simply in terms of the breakdown of old groupings and old standards is fruitless; new groupings and new standards have arisen. Rather than focusing on the destructive forces in the community, Whyte emphasized the institutions and habits that forged the moral order.

Reacting to the explicit bias in the social disorganization perspective toward emphasizing the deviant and pathological, Herbert Gans (1962) and Morris Janowitz (1978), among others, focused on the regulation of daily life by conventional—although non-middle class—standards and rules. Mills (1943) challenged the criteria social scientists were using in assessing these communities as disorganized. In his review of social problem textbooks, he observed a bias that stemmed from the white, rural, Protestant, and nativist backgrounds of many of the scholars and colored their understanding of urban immigrant life. Social disorganization was nothing more than deviation from norms these men held to be correct, although their judgment had been couched in scientific terminology. Both Whyte and Mills demonstrated that what the social control perspective described as deficiencies in community life were nothing more than differences in social organization.

## Emphasis on the Victim

The victimization perspective shifted the emphasis in crime and delinquency studies from the offender to the victim. With official crime rates soaring by the late 1960s and ghetto riots turning policymakers and the public against the infusion of Federal funds into the African-American community, “innovative” concepts about preventing and controlling crime were receiving serious attention. James Wilson (1975) captured and articulated the spirit of this conservative shift in interest:

Predatory crime does not merely victimize individuals, it impedes and, in the extreme case, even prevents the formation and maintenance of community. By disrupting the delicate nexus of ties, formal and informal, by which we are linked with our neighbors, crime atomizes society and makes of its members more individual calculators estimating their own advantage, especially their own chances for survival amidst their fellows.

The cost of crime issue (Miller, 1973) was seen less in terms of what offenders might lose and more in terms of the impact crime was having on victims. Crime was destroying community. “What these concerns have in common, and thus what constitutes the ‘urban problem’ for a large percentage (perhaps a majority) of urban citizens, is *a sense of the failure of community* [author’s emphasis].”

## Victimization and Fear

The victimization perspective, as we shall call that contemporary approach, postulates crime as an event experienced by the individual, as either a direct or indirect victim. Fear, from this perspective, is a consequence of having had some sort of contact with crime events. If direct victimization fails to account for particularly high levels of fear, then indirect contact, usually through the medium of personal communication, is postulated as the mechanism through which the experience of crime affects the individual. Fear then becomes an indicator of the effect of victimization on the individual and is seen as a direct consequence of crime exposure. There is a direct linearity to this scenario that is assumed but rarely tested.

The victimization perspective shares several features with the strain and subcultural theories of crime and delinquency that displaced the social control perspective. One is that the victimization perspective is an implicit theory of motivation. Fear is explained in terms of stimuli (victimizations) that trigger fear in the individual. Just as Sutherland and Merton (and those who followed in their footsteps) sought to explain the motivations of offenders



in terms of the values of the groups to which they belong, so the victimization scholars seek to explain fear of crime in terms of the way victimization experiences generate fear in individuals. Victimization leads to fear as naturally as social organization leads to delinquency.

Ennis, Biderman, and Reiss, while focusing on very different issues, each found that fear was not related in a direct, straightforward way to the level of victimization experienced by the individual or anticipated in the surrounding area. Although the amount of crime in an area generally predicted the amount of fear among its residents, the finding contained enough inconsistencies to raise questions about factors in addition to the level of victimization that might affect the level of fear among respondents.

In dealing with these anomalies, some scholars postulated the existence of various social-psychological mechanisms to rationalize their findings. For example, Stinchcombe (1978) introduces the concept of vulnerability to help explain fear among women and the elderly. The most commonly relied upon mechanism is the idea of fear of strangers. Faced with the disjunction between levels of fear and levels of victimization, several scholars introduce the stranger as that which explains the fear. As stated by Ennis (1967), "It is not the seriousness of the crime, but rather the unpredictability and the sense of invasion by unknown strangers that engenders mistrust and hostility."

Jennie McIntyre (1967) echoes the same thinking in her analysis of avoidance behaviors. "The precautions which people take to protect themselves indicate that underlying fear of crime is a profound fear of strangers." Biderman (1967) sees the relationship as being even more direct: "Fear of crime is the fear of strangers." Wesley Skogan (1976) interprets the relationship between robbery victimization and fear as a consequence of the fear of strangers. But the fear of strangers is introduced only after the fact to interpret results and explain findings. Although Skogan may be correct in attributing the relationship between robbery and fear to an intervening fear of strangers, that suggestion is pure conjecture. The fear of strangers explanation posits the existence of an intervening type of fear that has not been measured. Consequently, this attribution process is not open to empirical testing and has no better standing than victimization itself as an explanatory factor (Blake and Davis, 1964).

Some progress has been made within the victimization perspective by refining measurement techniques and analysis procedures. Frank Furstenburg (1971), Floyd Fowler and Thomas Mangione (1974), Wesley Skogan (1976), and Michael Hindelang, James Garofalo, and Michael Gottfriedson (1978) have refined the conceptualization of fear in the victimization framework. Distinctions among fear, concern, worry, and risk have helped distinguish the various attitudinal dimensions captured in the idea of fear, and these clarifications have improved the explanatory power of other studies in this area.

Moreover, refining the various types of victimization (personal/property, single/multiple, direct/indirect) used as the independent variable has led to improved research results. In this vein, some scholars have attempted to develop more refined measures of the amount of crime to which respondents are exposed. Steven Balkin (1979), for example, argued that "fear of crime is a rational response to the actual incidence of crime, and that where discrepancies appear it is because of faulty objective measures of crime incorrectly calibrating the real risk of crime."

Skogan (1977), Garofalo (1977), and Hindelang et al. (1978) have all made valuable contributions to our understanding of fear of crime from the victimization perspective. Indeed, there has been much progress since the early formulations of Biderman (1967), Reiss (1967), and Ennis (1967). Many of the difficulties of the early work may be overcome by this second generation of scholars, who have expanded the perspective rather than rejecting it.

### Need for a Collective Response

One of the most persuasive discussions of fear of crime and community from the victimization perspective is presented in John Conklin's *The Impact of Crime* (1975). Conklin argues that fear of crime is destroying the sense of community by robbing citizens of their capacity to trust, isolating them in their own communities. Conklin applies Durkheim's concept of the functionality of deviance to the victimization perspective on fear of crime. He argues that crime does not bring people together, as the Durkheimian approach would postulate, and that fear of crime disintegrates rather than integrates communities. Conklin (1975) treats crime implicitly as the number of victimizations in a community. These victimizations and the fear they foster, diminish community solidarity. Crime—and by extension, the fear it generates—leads to the decline of the community:

Little of the material we have examined . . . suggests that Durkheim was correct in arguing that crime brings people together and strengthens social bonds. Instead, crime produces insecurity, distrust, and a negative view of the community. Although we lack conclusive evidence, crime also seems to reduce social interaction as fear and suspicion drive people apart. This produces a disorganized community that is unable to exercise informal social control over deviant behavior.

Conklin's scenario is predicated on the notion that people react to crime in individualized ways. Rather than collectively sanctioning criminal behavior as Durkheim would anticipate, citizens who are motivated by fear attempt to protect themselves individually (for example, by buying guns and locks and by not going out), thus breaking down community cohesion. Conklin's discussion of community hinges on the distinction he makes between *individual* and *collective* responses to crime. These responses, in turn, gather their importance from his use of the victimization perspective, for the logic of responding individually hinges on the prominence of the victimization experience. Individual responses are assumed to be the normal response to the experience or fear of victimization. Because this relationship is assumed, the conclusion that individual responses have negative consequences follows from the primacy of the victimization experience. Interestingly, this line of reasoning makes the response to victimization, rather than the victimization itself, the central phenomenon. If a community can respond collectively, crime integrates community ties, but if the responses are individualized, the ties disintegrate (Lewis, 1979).

The victimization perspective defines crime as an event that is experienced individually by a citizen. In his application of Durkheim's work on deviance, Conklin implicitly uses this definition to argue that crime (victimization experience) does not usually bring together the residents of a community. On the other hand, collective responses—that is, responses that unite people in an attempt to do something about crime—are by definition community-building activities. Given reliance on victimization as the motivating factor for initiating responses, we have no sense of the process that would make collective responses an appropriate reaction. The victimization perspective draws us toward the characteristics of particular victimizations, such as crime waves or dramatic incidents, to explain when and where collective responses occur. But if crime destroys an individual's

sense of community by undermining his or her imputed sense of trust and cohesiveness, how are collective responses possible in a crime-ridden community? Although Conklin (1975) does not address this issue of process, he does describe the types of collective responses that emerge:

Crime weakens the fabric of social life by increasing fear, suspicion, and distrust. It also reduces public support for the law, in terms of unwillingness to report crime and criticism of the police. However, under certain conditions people will engage in collective action to fight crime. They may work for a political candidate who promises to restore law and order. They may call meetings of community residents to plan an attack on crime. Sometimes they may even band together in a civilian police patrol to carry out the functions that the police are not effectively performing for them. Since people who perceive high crime rates often hold the police responsible for crime prevention, we would expect such patrols to emerge where people feel very threatened by crime, believe that the police cannot protect them, and think from past experience with community groups that the people themselves can solve the problem.

The collective response, in the victimization perspective, is an attempt to exert social control, although the emergence of collectivity and the shape it may assume under varying circumstances are left unspecified. Because crime and fear atomize communities, the circumstances in which collectivity develops and the reasons it emerges in some contexts and not in others are not at all clear. Equally troubling is the issue of sponsorship. Neither Conklin nor any of the other scholars working in this area (Washnis, 1976; Schneider and Schneider, 1977) discusses in any detail the groups or individuals who are likely to organize collective responses. Although we know something about the types of people who will participate in these activities once they are operational, very little has been suggested about which groups or individuals will emerge, either successfully or unsuccessfully, to *lead* collective responses.

As noted earlier, if the community's capacity to regulate itself is undermined by social disorganization, crime and the fear of crime increase. The key problem, as Janowitz (1978) points out, is "whether the processes of social control are able to maintain the social order while transformation and social change take place." Thus the collective response is less of a mystery in the context of the social control perspective. All urban communities exert social control through local institutions. The need to regulate behavior by socializing residents to local values and controlling those who violate those values is an integral part of community life:

The problem in realistic terms is one of achieving a new organization of life in these local deteriorated communities. As an objective, society can aim toward the development of a new and local spirit of collective welfare, expressed in an interest in child welfare, and social and physical improvement of the district (Burgess, Lohman, and Shaw, 1937).

The "new and local spirit of collective welfare" must be instilled in those institutions that can directly affect the values of local residents.

Since for most group purposes it is impossible in the city to appeal individually to the large number of discrete and differentiated individuals, and since it is only through the organizations to which men belong that their interests and resources can be enlisted for a collective cause, it may be inferred that social control in the city should typically proceed through formally organized groups (Wirth, 1938).

Fear can be reduced if this new spirit can be infused into “formally organized groups.” Finally, the leadership of these groups should logically come from the local citizenry.

In recognizing the existent cultural organization one can identify intelligence and ingenuity in the local population which can be enlisted for this purpose. This natural leadership which is the product of a distinctive social life can be strategically utilized in giving direction of a constructive kind to the cultural and recreational life of the community. Young men and women from the local community are in a position to express more exactly the needs and moods of the people (Burgess et al., 1937).

Social control, if it is not to become simple coercion, must be exerted through locally led community-based organizations, for the secondary institutions of the state are not equipped to prevent either crime or fear. The prevention of crime was conceived as a task that could only be achieved *outside* the formal agencies that had been established to pursue that task. The placement of the prevention mechanism within community institutions led to reformist politics premised on the inability of the criminal justice system to achieve its ends. If consensus about conventional values is the key to reducing crime, bureaucracies are by definition incapable of inculcating those values, which are best transmitted by individuals with whom one has primary relationships.

What we do observe—is that control that was formerly based on mores was replaced by control based on positive law. This change runs parallel to the movement by which secondary relationships have taken the place of primary relationships in the association of individuals in the city environment (Burgess et al., 1937).

## Community Crime Prevention

Communities that exert social control have fewer problems with crime and fear than communities that do not. Some evidence (Maccoby et al., 1958; Clinard and Abbott, 1976) indicates, too, that communities with the capacity to exert *informal* social control have fewer crime problems than areas without that capacity. However, the relationship between informal social control and collective responses is based more on theoretical considerations than empirical findings. The collective response is an intentional intervention to construct “formally” informal social controls. More recent research suggests this approach can have a modest positive effect in neighborhoods that do not have high crime levels.

Much of the recent research on community crime prevention focuses on a community’s ability to assert informal social controls. Because social organization influences this capacity within a community, careful examination of social disorganization theory helps to explain some of the themes underlying research on community crime prevention. John Senese (1989) perceives crime as an indicator of the level of social disorganization within a community, while Robert Sampson and Byron Groves (1989) test the Shaw and McKay (1942) hypothesis that “low economic status, ethnic heterogeneity, residential mobility, and family disruption lead to community social disorganization, which, in turn, increases crime and delinquency rates.” Their study closely examines the role of social disorganization as they test “the variables that intervene between community structure and delinquency” by measuring the impact of each of the components of Shaw and McKay’s theory as exogenous variables. They learn that community members in poor and minority neighborhoods characteristically find it difficult to exercise social control.

Susan Bennett and Paul Lavrakas examine two components of crime prevention programs in their analysis of the effectiveness of the Eisenhower Foundation’s Neighborhood Program at 10 inner-city sites, all of which are characterized by low socioeconomic status

and high crime rates. The authors (1989) find that “in general, programs with an opportunity reduction focus had the most positive outcomes and those with an even emphasis on opportunity reduction and causes of crime had more positive outcomes than those with only a causes of crime focus.” They attribute these results to the fact that their causes of crime programs focused primarily on youth programs and that positive impacts would need a longer period of time to develop.

Although both the Bennett and Lavrakas (1989) and James Garofalo/Maureen McLeod (1989) studies conclude by stressing the need for realistic expectations in assessing the value of community, most research, including theirs, suggests that community crime prevention programs have enjoyed only limited success in preventing crime or reducing fear of it. In fact both Harold Pepinsky (1989) and Fran Norris and Krzysztof Kaniasty (1992) assert that crime prevention programs actually tend to exacerbate fear of crime. Pepinsky (1989) notes that the implementation of such programs inevitably results in either citizen observation of police action suspected of suppressing the reported crime rate or an increase in the number of crimes reported as the result of coordinated efforts between the police and neighborhood watch groups.

Norris and Kaniasty (1992) also highlight flaws in crime prevention strategies. Their results indicate that community crime prevention activities, like individual protective strategies, increase fear of crime by making community residents more conscious of crime. They suggest that crime prevention strategies should be perceived as serving a fear-buffering function or as a coping mechanism rather than an instrument for reducing crime, because prevention strategies can reduce “more generalized states of distress.” They conclude that “the promotion of citizen initiated precautionary measures is woefully inadequate as a policy response to the problems of crime and fear.” Although well intentioned, this approach implicitly blames victims by suggesting they are responsible for victimization. The researchers assert that “if fear increases risk more than precaution decreases risk, many prevention programs could have the opposite of intended effects.”

## Citizen Participation in Crime Prevention Programs

Citizen participation in crime prevention programs is seen as an end in itself. Although most programs do not restrict their activity to the “observe and report” function of community surveillance, additional activities almost exclusively consist of one-time measures such as home-security surveys or child fingerprinting. It is very difficult to maintain participation following the initial startup period. “At least half of the Neighborhood Watch programs can be described as dormant.” (Garofalo and McLeod, 1989.) Organizers, in order to encourage citizen involvement, stress the nondemanding nature of these activities. This approach may gain the involvement of citizens who do not have a great amount of time to contribute, but it does little to stimulate the effort necessary to solve community problems (Garofalo and McLeod, 1989). However, Bennett and Lavrakas (1989) suggest “that implementation success is related to positive outcomes . . . [they] are unable to draw more definite conclusions.” They characterize the relationship of citizen participation and program success as “less clear-cut.”

Participation in collective activities is largely defined by the “opportunity structure” of a given neighborhood. As Skogan (1989) asserts, “the ability of individuals to act in defense of their community is shaped in important ways by the opportunities for action that are available to them.” In their examination of community responses to drugs, Skogan and Arthur Lurigio (1992) also note that multivariate analyses indicate that a third factor—the

organizational capacity of the community—also stimulates “confrontational activism.” Skogan (1989) finds that “organized activity was stimulated by serious crime,” and he clarifies whether crime stimulates collective action, noting:

. . . the link between the two measures was strong and positive, controlling for the effects of area affluence, cohesion, and police service. This relationship was partly disguised by the lower rate of crime in better-off areas, where residents also enjoyed wider opportunities to participate.

Thus features that encourage the opportunity to organize collectively are significant. Communities that lack the economic and social resources needed to deal with community problems are at a distinct disadvantage.

Although Skogan and Lurigio (1992) and Skogan (1989) suggest that crime is a more salient issue in poor and minority neighborhoods, where crime is more common, the social disorganization theory, and the erosion of informal control it emphasizes, make both implementation and enduring success particularly challenging. Collective action is most effective in preventing crime when residents have developed a sense of trust in one another. Because densely populated, economically depressed areas experience high turnover rates, residents find it difficult to distinguish between their neighbors, with whom they can identify a mutual interest to “observe and report,” and strangers who present a threat to personal security. In their 1989 study, Garofalo and McLeod describe the difficulties organizers had in holding a meeting when residents expressed fear that being absent from their homes for a predictable period of time would offer their neighbors a chance to “case” their homes.

Resistance to community crime prevention programs is strongly influenced by the quality of residents’ relationships with police. As Dennis Rosenbaum (1991) notes, the targeting of poor, minority neighborhoods has “heightened concerns about racial discrimination.” Resistance to community organization presents an interesting dilemma, because those communities that do not share values and experience long-term social attachments are the areas most likely to need help (Bennett and Lavrakas, 1989).

Garofalo and McLeod, in their analysis of Neighborhood Watch, note that “crime does not provide a very good basis for organizing a neighborhood, strengthening its sense of identity, and getting residents involved on a regular basis.” They recognize that organizations are most successful in attracting participation “where multipurpose city organizations exist.” However, as Bennett (1989) suggests:

[I]t is possible that fear of crime might prompt collective actions among those residents who already have a social commitment and feel that such actions might be efficacious . . . it may be necessary for them to feel enough at risk to make the effort of participation worthwhile and at the same time for them to have sufficient confidence in their community to warrant participation in self-help activities.

Researchers disagree as to whether fear of crime inhibits or stimulates collective action. While the former view suggests that high levels of fear result in despair, distrust, and a negative view of the community, the latter view, often advanced as *Durkheimian*, asserts that deviance motivates the strengthening of community bonds and the clarifying of definitions of appropriate and inappropriate behavior (Skogan and Lurigio, 1992; Bennett, 1989). Some research seems to lend more credence to the Durkheimian view. Bennett notes that “fear of crime was shown to be significantly related to participation after controlling for other variables.” However, he is not ready to reject “the hypothesis that fear of crime inhibits rather than stimulates crime preventive actions on the part of residents.”

Skogan and Lurigio (1992), in their analysis of drug-related crimes in poor and minority neighborhoods, also conclude that their study “supports the Durkheimian view that drug problems stimulate rather than suppress neighborhood activism, the view which at the outset seemed much less strongly supported by research on crime prevention.”

Robert Taylor and Sally Shumaker (1990), in a conceptual article on local crime as a natural disaster, assert that crime prevention efforts such as Neighborhood Watch are effective in middle-class areas where crime is rare. For low-income areas with high crime rates, Taylor and Shumaker believe that such programs are ineffective, if not counterproductive. For these areas, a social problem approach is more appropriate. In these high-crime areas, collective community responses to crime are not widespread, and Taylor and Shumaker assert that fear levels and local crime rates are loosely coupled. A desensitization to crime occurs in these areas. To make programs such as Neighborhood Watch more effective, policymakers must try harder to implement the programs and consider their appropriateness for the area. Neighborhood Watch programs cannot be easily implemented in every type of neighborhood.

Norris and Kaniasty’s empirical study (1992) of 538 adults over three 6-month intervals also supports the theory that community prevention and precaution programs are counterproductive or ineffective. They believe that an emphasis on crime prevention resensitizes people to crime, increasing their levels of fear. Neither vigilance nor alertness prevents fear of crime; instead they tend to increase levels of fear. Precautions also showed no fear-reducing function. Locks did not reduce fear, but they did seem to protect against distress that may result from fear. General community improvement efforts gave the most promising results. Although this approach proved unrelated to reported levels of fear, it buffered the effects of fear on more generalized states of distress. Through efforts such as neighborhood beautification, traffic reduction, and tenants’ rights, communities became more cohesive, thus increasing informal social control. Jeffrey Henig and Michael Maxfield (1978) also suggest physical rebuilding as a means of reducing fear.

Most of the research on community crime prevention programs finds only limited success in crime reduction (Bennett and Lavrakas, 1989; Garofalo and McLeod, 1989). In fact, efforts directed at reducing the opportunities for victimization often lead to increases in fear of crime (Pepinsky, 1989; Norris and Kaniasty, 1992). However, collective efforts do perform a vital role in helping individuals cope with fear of crime (Norris and Kaniasty, 1992). Additionally, “opportunity-reduction strategies” foster more participation than “causes of crime strategies” that involve youth and generate few community-level activities (Bennett and Lavrakas, 1989). Participation in crime is facilitated by opportunity strategies, suggesting that opportunity-reduction strategies are needed, particularly because participation within organized frameworks may help to simulate the informal social mechanisms necessary for a community to control deviance.

## Community Policing

Nevertheless, strategies focused primarily on the reduction of victimization seem to reflect what Rosenbaum (1991) describes as the problem of the war mentality in battling drugs and violent crime, a “perspective [which] tend[s] to divert our attention away from the social problems that contribute to drug abuse, violent crime, and the debilitating fear of crime, and furthermore, keep us from examining alternative strategies of intervention.” Moreover, because “crime does not provide a very good basis for organizing a neighborhood, strengthening its sense of identity, and getting residents involved on a continuing basis,” crime prevention programs should be approached as an “integrated component of a multipurpose local association.” (Garofalo and McLeod, 1989.) There is little evidence to

support the effectiveness of “causes of crime” strategies. However, as Rosenbaum (1991) notes, “we have spent very few resources in the U.S. exploring ways to strengthen community institutions (e.g., community organizations, churches, schools, youth organizations, etc.) with the long-term goal in mind of building community competence.” Rosenbaum also places this discussion in the context of the politics of the early 1990s:

Because we have already committed most of our resources for public safety to the police, we must hold the police disproportionately responsible for creating new alternatives in inner city neighborhoods. The alternatives are to commit a substantial amount of additional resources for non-police programs, or to divert a significant portion of the current police budgets for these purposes. Neither of these alternatives have much appeal to the police or the community.

The integration of the police into the community would appear to be a promising intervention, especially “because of the absence of skills, resources, and hope” in poor and minority neighborhoods (Rosenbaum, 1991).

Herman Goldstein (1987) has developed the theory of community policing and postulated that the results reduce fear and deter crime. Police officers are to be visible, easily accessible, and willing to establish relationships with citizens. Henig and Maxfield (1978) support this idea and recommend that police officers be assigned to communities and focus on solving problems. Like George Kelling (1987), Goldstein argues that knowing police by name, gaining familiarity with them, and establishing citizen-police organizations are ways in which citizens can voice their concerns, press their interests, and make the police more responsive. By increasing citizen-police contact through team policing (assigning specific patrol officers to specific beats), increasing foot patrols, and establishing familiarity between police and citizens, fear of crime can be reduced.

Henig and Maxfield (1978) attribute the fear of crime in communities to poor social networks, problems in the physical environment, and general disorder. Fear increases in areas with an abundance of unfamiliar people, incivility, weak social networks, little or no concern about others’ safety, poor lighting, blind spots, and deserted areas. Their suggestion is to make police presence known by increasing the number of uniformed officers in buses, trains, and neighborhoods; using one-person patrol cars; increasing the number of officers on foot patrol; and employing “unlikely” persons, such as middle-aged or retired people, as security guards. If measures such as these are put in place, people will begin to adjust their levels of fear to fit the environment. Mark Warr’s study (1990) finds that physical blind spots (such as darkened alleyways) and unfamiliar areas cause an increase in fear, while Jeanette Covington and Robert Taylor’s survey (1991) of 1,622 Baltimore residents supports the theory of incivilities as a contributor to fear.

In an analysis of data from eight public housing developments, Raymond Burby and William Rohe (1989) concluded that higher social attachment lessens fear and that incivilities were associated with greater fear. They found that none of the physical or social characteristics listed in the housing development studies—unemployment rate, number of units, or density—had a significant association with fear. They suggested programs to reduce incivilities and increase social attachments and recommended that patrols on the grounds of the development be increased. Better maintenance of facilities, as well as fairer and more prompt treatment by building management, are also advised.



Fear of crime seems to be reduced by the increased presence of police. Kelling (1987) believes, however, that despite the increase in the number of police, much work still needs to be done, especially in high-crime areas. Both Rosenbaum and Skogan admit that a “healthy anxiety” will lead to greater citizen awareness and that a complete lack of the fear of crime would not be beneficial. Skogan also believes that people who are socially isolated and have fewer resources to cope with the consequences of crime are more fearful.

Three program evaluations focus on reduction of fear in urban areas. Hubert Williams and Anthony Pate (1987) examine the reduction-of-crime program in Newark, New Jersey, and pinpoint three sources of fear: lack of information about local crime and crime prevention, presence of social disorder and physical deterioration, and limited quality and quantity of contacts between police and public. They also describe three responses: a police-community newsletter, a program to reduce the signs of crime, and a coordinated program that uses the newsletter, the signs-of-incivility approach, and several other components to improve police-citizen contact. The results show that the coordinated program was somewhat successful. Elements of the program included a newsletter, foot patrols, radar checks, bus checks, enforcement of disorderly conduct laws, road checks, neighborhood cleanups, and, most importantly, a storefront police officer outpost. This office provided walk-in crime reporting, telephone reports of less serious crimes, crime prevention information, referral to other agencies, coordination of door-to-door activities, and police office space. Police visited residents in the program area to elicit information about their fears, provide followup assistance, encourage block watch activities, distribute crime prevention material, and alert citizens about the new police center. The program’s effectiveness was measured by cross-sectional and panel designs. The latter shows that the coordinated program reduced perceived area social disorder, fear of personal victimization, worry about property crime, and perceived area property crime, while improving evaluation of police and increasing satisfaction with the neighborhood. Neither the newsletter nor the signs-of-disorder program was successful by itself. The authors attribute the possible failure of the disorder program to few physical improvements and random enforcement efforts conducted without extensive contact with citizens.

The focus of a similar study in Houston, Texas, was somewhat different. Lee Brown and Mary Ann Wycoff (1987) report that the Houston task force believed that fear of crime was caused by something other than visible signs of crime. Rather, the problem was due to a sense of anomie characterized by a sense of neighbors as strangers; physical, social, and psychological distance from the police; feelings of powerlessness caused by the size of the city and relative distance from community and government resources; and a lack of adequate information about neighborhood crime. The programs to reduce fear varied slightly from the Newark program. Victim recontact was initiated: Houston police contacted victims of crime to ask whether they were in need of assistance. Newsletters were published and delivered to residents. Citizen contact patrols were formed, with police contacting residents about participation. A storefront community police station was opened where officers developed community activities and completed paperwork. Community organization efforts were also undertaken. Block meetings were established in some areas and various social support programs within the community were implemented as well.

The evaluation panel’s results were mixed: Victim recontact and the newsletter had none of the desired effects on fear; however, citizen contact patrols and the police community station lowered levels of fear of personal victimization, reduced perceptions of disorder,

and increased satisfaction with police. African Americans and renters did not experience the same benefits as whites and homeowners. Community organizing was also found to reduce perceptions of social disorder, personal crime, and property crime, and to improve community evaluations of the police. Again, the positive effects were not experienced by African Americans. The authors suggest that one of the most important lessons from the Houston program was the lack of awareness in some areas and the variability of benefits. Some of the benefits included citizen willingness to work on behalf of the community and the improvement that can result when citizens and police work together.

Trevor Bennett's (1991) intention was to replicate the Newark and Houston projects in Britain. In the citizen contact patrols experiment, officers went door to door and asked residents about their concerns regarding crime and quality of life. The primary aims of this program were fear reduction and improved community-police relations. Evidence showed that the program did improve some aspects of the quality of life in the project areas. There were improvements in the amount of involvement with neighbors in home protection, in satisfaction with police, and in contact with police. There were also significant improvements in satisfaction with the area, sense of community, and control of crime in at least one of the areas. The author attributes these changes to the contact patrol program.

It appears that police-community relations can be an important aspect of reducing fear; social cohesion may develop out of a sense of security fashioned by police presence. The storefront police office serves as a headquarters not only for the community police officers but for community activity as well—a safe haven of sorts. These storefronts provide necessary interaction between citizens and police while occupying formerly empty buildings in high-crime areas.

## Conclusions

While important lessons can be learned from the research that has been discussed, there are serious limitations to this body of work. Crime prevention literature does not present a very profound understanding of race, particularly of the African-American experience. To most of the early researchers, being African American was no different from being Irish or Polish. The history of race relations in our cities over the past 30 years suggests that the African-American experience is very different from that of other immigrant groups and that conventional notions of assimilation are not very useful when trying to understand African-American communities and crime.

The use of “fear of crime” as a code phrase for “fear of African Americans” in national politics over the past 20 years also increases the importance of finding new ways to think about reducing crime in African-American communities and talking about the crime problem and its relationship to race. Shaw, Alinsky, and Lohman did not take race very seriously in their community-based prevention strategies. Behavior was thought to be environmentally determined, and race was not supposed to matter. More recent studies simply ignore the racial dimension, except as a predictor of certain attitudes.

Another important limitation to the body of work is the inadequacy of the measures of larger changes in city life that have transformed most urban areas over the past decade. Although some of these trends began in previous decades, it was during the 1980s that the trends became obvious and their effects could be seen. Changes in family structure, income distribution, and labor markets transformed our cities. The poor became poorer; jobs at the lower end of the labor market that paid reasonably well disappeared, while

single-parent families—and the poverty that often accompanies this status—grew tremendously. At the same time, the get-tough policy on crime became a reality in most States. Longer sentences, more incarcerations, more prisons, and less discretion in the courts became facts of life. The number of persons on probation or parole, or incarcerated in the United States ballooned in the 1980s, while crime rates, especially rates of violent juvenile crimes, went up modestly.

Many recent mayoral and gubernatorial races have been filled with get-tough rhetoric that paid off at the polls. As cities become more polarized, there is a demand that something be done about crime, and the usual results are more police and tougher punishments. Ironically, support for many of these measures is just as strong among the affluent as among the poor. The point is that the larger political and economic context has shifted considerably from the 1970s, when many of the community crime prevention strategies were introduced. Concentration of poverty, changes in family structure, and the transformation of urban labor markets make assumptions about the conventional base of authority and standards suspect in exactly the communities where the crime problem is worst. The weakness of the national economy and the Federal deficit have contributed to the belief in limited policy intervention that accompanied conservative rhetoric about crime. There is enough money for prison construction and more police, as the 1994 Crime Act attests, but there is neither the will nor the interest in rebuilding schools, families, and income levels in the most distressed cities. While national crime rates have leveled off during the past decade, the concern about drugs and violence remains high.

Research on crime prevention strategies and citizen perception of crime has paid little attention to these trends during the past 20 years. Beginning with the Carter administration and continuing throughout the 1980s, scholars analyzed a variety of interventions aimed at reducing crime and the reactions to crime that were undermining community life in our society. Particular attention was paid to fear of crime and the isolation of individuals that was hypothesized to follow from that fear. This movement was guided by what I have called the *victimization perspective* (Lewis and Salem, 1981), an approach to crime causation and prevention that redefines a crime not as the act of an offender but rather as an event in which offenders and victims participate. That redefinition focused attention much more on the potential victim and what could be done to prevent the victimization from taking place. Larger political, economic, and racial issues were ignored.

Another important limitation of research in this arena is the reliance on the neighborhood mean to predict the outcome on important measures (for example, fear, concern, victimization, and so forth). Most of the authors discussed here assume that this mean has a linear effect on the outcome. Christopher Jencks and Susan Mayer (1990) give a detailed discussion of some of these limitations in the research as they impact on understanding of the effects of community on individuals. The level of the individual is almost completely missing from the research analysis discussed here. We do not learn from the research how community-level variables affect individual offenses or victimization. The impact of exogenous variables, such as family and peer influences, is unknown in much of this work. The literature gives no measure of the significance of a particular neighborhood in relation to the likelihood of victimization or the likelihood of being an offender.

## Policy Recommendations

The first policy recommendation is to begin a categorical grants program that would fund efforts to prevent crime and build community through local organizations. One of the reassuring findings from a variety of evaluations is that although results have been

modest—perhaps because the efforts have been modest—scholars and activists agree that a continuing commitment to build community capacity for crime prevention is important and worthwhile. Let us be clear: That effort, by itself, will not reduce serious crime significantly in the poorest communities. But it will provide some of the building blocks for more secure and empowered communities and will dovetail with efforts by police departments and State criminal justice agencies to use community programming. A categorical program will also build political capacity for neighborhood development and could well parallel other community building efforts in human services and general empowerment. The program should be flexible enough to allow for many different activities that tackle important problems and can be reproduced. Much can be learned on this front from the Community Anti-Crime Program, a Carter administration effort that proved quite successful (Lewis, 1979).

Funding of program evaluations also should be encouraged. One result of the past 20 years of work is that we know how to study community crime prevention efforts and feed that information back into the policymaking process, especially when there is a policymaking process to feed. Evaluation efforts should be selected carefully and should not be confused with monitoring by the funding agency or promotional activities by the grantees. While both are important, they do not constitute evaluation.

The incivility/disorder approach is a natural orientation for HUD. Its emphasis on the physical environment and the importance of cleaning up the community fits the HUD mandate, especially as a link to crime prevention. The natural division of labor with police departments also dovetails nicely with the community policing movement. Police and community groups can divide the problems a neighborhood faces and develop a measure of reciprocity by working together to improve the situation, an approach that complements ecological theories of delinquency. There are, of course, dangers here. The incivility/disorder approach does not directly attack the serious crime problem of any major city. Over the past decade, crime has become more violent and more drug related than it was in the late 1970s when the incivility approach was rediscovered. Taking the “slumminess out of the slum” makes sense if more profound problems of life and death do not overtake the effort, as they appear to have done in the past decade. While victimization data do not support the notion that violent crime is increasing dramatically, today’s concern about crime, fueled by the conservative get-tough approach of the past 15 years, makes the community approach more difficult to sell in many communities. A national consensus exists: More police and tougher sentences are the way to attack the crime problem. Although there is room for an alternative approach, we must acknowledge that community efforts are only part of the answer. However, it is a part that should be played by HUD.

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## Note

1. According to Durkheim's (1950, 1953) theory of anomie, or normlessness, "with the growth of a division of labor and a weakening of group solidarity, men escape the tyranny of traditional controls but now find themselves subject to the tyranny of their own inexhaustible desires." (Giddens, 1971, p. 494.)

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