

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS: CONTEXTS AND MECHANISMS – THE ESSENCE OF EFFECTIVE PREVENTION

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ABSTRACT

Targeting repeat victimization comprises a way of achieving effectiveness, efficiency and equity in crime prevention. Research has found that victimization leads to increased risk of further victimization, especially in the short term; that 'hot spots' have a disproportionate number of repeat victims; and that repeat offences tend to be committed by prolific offenders. The development of successful crime reduction tactics and strategies also requires detailed attention to the mechanisms through which patterns are generated and may be disrupted, and the contexts relevant to differing mechanisms. Inattention to these is liable to lead to the implementation of ineffective measures or measures with counterproductive unintended consequences. Four generic approaches appear to have particular promise in devising effective crime reduction initiatives, including those targeting repeat victimization: situational analysis and problem-solving; cumulative protective intervention; synthesis of prevention, detection and disruption; and near neighbour mobilization.

The aim of crime prevention is clearly to reduce the number of crimes that would otherwise happen. It is preferable to avoid displacing prevented crimes to other targets. If there is some displacement, that from the less to the more victimized or from the less to the more harmful offences is least desirable. Moreover, other things being equal the lower the cost per prevented crime the better. Effectiveness, equity and efficiency in crime prevention are achieved, thus, where crimes are prevented, where the distribution of crimes becomes fairer, where harms are reduced, and where, *ceteris paribus*, unit costs are kept as low as possible. This paper assumes that crime prevention strategies that are effective, equitable and economical in these ways should be pursued. How do we achieve such strategies, and does it make sense to include a focus on repeat victimization?

There are two keys to strong crime prevention strategies. The first has to do with choice of target and the second to do with choice of intervention measures. The targets need to comprise concentrated preventable crime problems, and the intervention measures need to be those that optimally deliver their intended effects. We turn first to target choice and second to selection of intervention measure.

TARGET CHOICE

A substantial body of research has shown how crime problems are concentrated on particular people, places and products (see Tilley and Laycock, 2002).

People

Though a certain level of offending is almost universal (Gabor, 1994), some types of person are more likely to become significantly involved in criminal behaviour than are others. There is a substantial literature on the so-called risk-factors that are associated with criminality. These include 'impulsivity, attention problems, low school attainment, poor parental supervision, parental conflict, an antisocial parent, a young mother, large family size, low family income, and coming from a broken family ... (though) [l]ess well-established are the causal mechanisms linking risk factors and offending' (Farrington, 2002). Risk factors are also generally stronger at highlighting classes of those at risk than at identifying specific individuals who are likely to become heavily involved in crime. They may suggest development of policies and practices that encompass groups amongst whom relatively more could otherwise be expected to offend at a relatively high rate.

There is evidence that a high proportion of crimes is committed by a relatively small number of prolific offenders. In the UK, the 7% of males born in 1953 with four or more court appearances were responsible for 59% of court appearances by males by the time they were aged 40 (Home Office, 1999). Identifying prolific offenders opens the way to finding measures that can inhibit their offending with substantial preventive pay-offs.

Just as most of us will offend, most of us will be victims of crime at some point in our lives. However, some types of person have been found to be much more at risk than others. Crime surveys show crime to be very unevenly distributed. In Britain, for example, the first results of the 2001 sweep of the British Crime Survey found men aged 16–24 to experience almost five times the national prevalence rate of violent crime. Those living in areas of high physical disorder suffered over twice the prevalence rate for domestic burglary. Those vehicle owners living in flats and maisonettes suffered more than twice the national prevalence rate for theft of vehicles. Youth (age 16–24) seems to be associated with substantially increased vulnerability to crime across the board – for vehicle crime, burglary and violent crime (Kershaw *et al.*, 2001). Mirroring the potential for policies and practices encompassing those at high risk of offending, there may also be scope for policies and practices focused on categories of person amongst whom rates of victimization are relatively high.

The literature on repeat victimization shows that those who have been victimized are at heightened risk of revictimization (Farrell and Pease, 1993; Pease, 1998). Moreover, the heightened risk has been found to be greatest in the period

immediately following an incident, after which it normally fades quite rapidly. Moreover, these patterns have been found across many crime types in many places (see Farrell and Pease, 2001). They have been found for personal and property crimes, for crimes against strangers and against acquaintances, for crimes in Europe, North America and Australasia, for crimes in rural and urban areas, and for volume crimes and low frequency crimes. Indeed, they have been found in just about all circumstances where systematic research has been conducted. They are revealed both in victimization surveys and in secondary analysis of cleaned recorded crime data. Moreover, they are found not just for crimes but also for other issues of disorder to which the police are called (see Read *et al.*, 1999). The phenomenon of repeat victimization has turned up some remarkably regular regularities in crime event patterns. Just as there is a relatively small number of prolific offenders responsible for a substantial proportion of all crime, so too there is a relatively small number of repeatedly targeted victims who suffer a substantial proportion of all crime. Reducing victim vulnerability to revictimization clearly makes sense.

Places

Crime is unevenly distributed by place. There is a substantial literature on crime hot spots, the best known of which is probably that by Sherman in Minneapolis, where half the calls for service to the police in 1985–6, to which cars were sent, related to just 3.3% of all addresses and intersections (Sherman *et al.*, 1989). Concerns about high crime areas go back as far as does policing. Moreover, there are hot spots not only for crime but also for disorder. There are by now a variety of mapping techniques and a variety of ways of identifying hot spots (Groff and La Vigne, 2002). Finding those that are relatively long term avoids the risks of chasing short-term spatial blips (Townsend and Pease, 2002). Focusing preventive efforts on cooling hot spots that can otherwise reasonably be expected to remain hot clearly makes sense.

There are not just places comprising hot spots for criminal behaviour. There are also places where large numbers of active criminals reside. These criminals may or may not offend in their immediate surroundings. The typical relatively short travel-to-crime distances mean that high criminality and high crime areas often do coincide, but not invariably (Wiles and Costello, 2000). An inclination not to offend so close to home that there is a high chance of being recognised, but close enough for the area to be familiar tends to lead to offending at a short distance from home (Brantingham and Brantingham, 1981). But offenders also get to know areas further afield and to offend there too, for example in places close to school, work, entertainment or shopping. The concentration of offenders in local areas provides them with certain benefits. It can furnish markets for stolen goods, opportunities for co-offending, for sharing of information about good techniques and targets for crime, and for sharing tools for crime, and for

convenient alibis. It also provides preventive opportunities where networks of offenders can be disrupted, through police action or disinformation.

Products

Goods available in principle for theft are not all taken at the same rate. Though a truly astonishing array of goods is stolen from time to time, thieves tend to select a particular subset of those available to take. There are attributes of products that make them especially attractive targets of theft. Those that are lightweight, high value and anonymous, and quite widely used are especially appealing to the thief – mobile 'phones and small electrical goods are archetypal examples. They can be concealed, carried and, if not wanted for consumption by the thief, can readily be exchanged for drugs, consumer goods or cash. Clarke uses the acronym CRAVED (Concealable, Removable, Available, Valuable, Enjoyable, Disposable) to capture the attributes of products that are characteristically attractive to thieves (Clarke, 1999). Felson refers to VIVA (Value of target to likely offender, Inertia of target to likely offender, Visibility of target to likely offender, Access to offender, with a chance to exit easily) to try to do much the same (Felson, 1998). To direct preventive efforts at manipulating the attributes of the otherwise attractive-to-steal is to target another form of crime concentration.

Products are not only the objects of theft. They can also be implicated in the commission of crime. In other words, certain products comprise resources for crime. Cars, crowbars, guns, battery-powered screwdrivers, poisons, passports, uniforms, knives, explosives, and high-quality printers all comprise examples. Offenders' access to some tools for crime might be controlled in the interests of crime prevention (Ekblom and Tilley, 2000). The use of them might also be made more risky. It should be remembered that one of the classic studies in the development of crime prevention related to the removal of a resource. The rate of suicide in Britain fell with the change from toxic town gas to less toxic natural gas (Clarke and Mayhew, 1988). This is explained by the removal of a convenient, painless, non self-defacing suicidal resource.

Repeat Victimization and the Coalescence of Concentration

Farrell and Sousa (2001) highlight the overlap between repeat victimization, hot spots and repeat offending. Concentrations of repeat victims are found in hot spots. There appears to be an association between repeat victimization and offending by prolific offenders (Everson and Pease, 2001). Hot spots are often places where prolific offenders live or to which they are attracted. Targeting repeat victimization thus makes sense not only because those specifically at greatest risk of victimization are thereby the focus of preventive attention. It also

makes sense as a means of producing attention to hot spots and to prolific offenders. Moreover, it directs attention in a non-stigmatising way. Given limited public resources for crime prevention, allocations to those who have already suffered crime might be taken generally to be fair, especially if they are at heightened risk. That this leads to attention to high crime hot spots is then essentially a by-product. Because it is a by-product, however, it should not contribute to a negative image of the areas where repeat victims are concentrated. The involvement of prolific offenders in repeat victimization combined with the tendency of repeats to be concentrated in periods immediately after crime events should help police services concerned with prevention to focus their efforts at detection on suitable offenders. By trying to detect repeat crimes, by concentrating evidence-collection on repeat victims, by proactive measures to maximise the prospects of hard evidence where there is increased likelihood of return offenders, the police will increase their chances of detecting and dealing with high-rate offenders.

Looking at Local Patterns

Because patterns of repeat victimization are not always found (see for example Hamilton-Smith, 1999), local research is needed to establish if they are actually present in a particular setting. The focus on repeat victimization has, however, proven to be remarkably productive. The exceptions to the patterns identified have been rare where research has been competent. Moreover, the linkages to other patterns of crime concentration suggest that it should be a central focus for any crime prevention strategy. At the very least, any analysis that is supposed to inform a crime prevention strategy that aims for effectiveness, equity and economy that fails to analyse repeat patterns will be inadequate.

In this author's experience, looking over the past few years at crime in rural areas, shootings, and bicycle theft, there have always been repeat patterns. Here are the results of analyses conducted to try to inform strategies and/or evaluations of prevention initiatives. First, there was a wish to conduct a crime prevention initiative in the Fenlands, a rural area in Britain (Tilley and Smith, 2000, see also Jones, 2003). In general rural areas suffer lower crime rates than urban ones. The proposed crime prevention initiative needed to find some form of concentration that would warrant extra preventive investment. The only data available for the specific area came from the police. We looked at repeat patterns, and found for domestic burglary that victims suffered over three times the rate for non-victims (60 per 1,000 as against 17 per 1,000 per annum). Victims suffered more than twice the national burglary rate whilst non-victims suffered just over half the national rate. For offences against the person, the pattern is even more marked. Victims here had recorded more than ten times the rate of non-victims (81 per 1,000 compared to 8 per 1,000 per annum). Second, a project has been run trying to reduce gang-related shootings in one of Britain's major

cities. Initial analysis revealed that whilst the risk of being shot amongst the total city population was only 0.01 per 1,000 over four years, once shot the risk rises to 80 per 1,000. Amongst those shot twice the risk of being shot a third time rises to as much as 180 per 1,000 (Bullock and Tilley, 2002). Third, a survey of 367 bike users was conducted in a university city, where there was an initiative to reduce theft of and from bicycles. The survey found that 15% of cycle users had suffered one or more thefts of their bicycle in the previous year and 16% had suffered one or more thefts from their cycle. Amongst the victims of cycle theft 11% suffered a third of the incidents. Amongst the victims of theft from their cycles, 18% suffered a third of all incidents (hitherto unpublished data – a brief account of the project can be found in Bullock and Tilley, 2003).

It is one thing to identify suitable targets for preventive attention; it is another to work out what measures to put in place to deal with them. The second element in a strategy needs to describe what will be done in relation to the defined, target problem.

TACTICS

Tactics describe the measures taken in targeting a defined problem. Once having decided, say, to try to reduce domestic burglary by focusing on victims because of their increased susceptibility to repeat incidents, what should be done in practice? Having found that repeat offences tend to be committed by prolific offenders, what do we do about it to maximise preventive impact? Knowing that our hot spots are disproportionately populated by repeat victims, what should be our response?

Measures Applied

The following, culled from a range of data bases and internet sites, comprises a sample of measures that have been advocated and applied:

- advice
- after schools clubs
- alarms
- CCTV
- crackdowns
- crime-focused puppetry and theatre
- drugs treatment
- gating of alleyways
- gating of communities
- high profile policing
- incarceration

- installation of safes
- lighting
- mediation
- neighbourhood watch
- offender targeting
- offender treatment
- prayer
- prepayment meter removal
- private security patrols
- property marking
- publicity
- restorative justice/family group conferencing
- schools policing and education programmes
- security upgrades
- stolen goods market disruption
- tagging
- targeted policing
- yodic flying
- youth services
- zero-tolerance

The tactics question revolves around which, if any, of these to use, what to add, what dosage to apply, how to allocate the measures and, if more than one measure is to be used, what sequence to put them in and how to time their implementation.

Mechanism, Contexts and the Choice of Measures

The term 'mechanism' is used to describe the means by which measures have their effects. The term 'context' is used to describe the circumstances for a measure to activate its change-inducing mechanism. The same measure may activate differing mechanisms depending on the context. In deciding tactics, measures have to be married to context to activate crime-inhibiting mechanisms (Pawson and Tilley, 1997).

In some cases the mechanisms by which measures can have their crime-inhibiting effects are direct and obvious. For example, incarceration incapacitates the offender whilst he or she is in custody, at least so far as direct participation in crimes outside prison goes. The installation of safes so secure that they cannot be penetrated or transported makes theft from them impossible. But interventions such as these – working through mechanisms that render prospective offenders unable to commit offences – are exceptional. In other cases, if the measures introduced do work, it is in some way through changing the aspirations, reasoning, perceptions, feelings, morals, capacities, or choices of those

who might otherwise commit the targeted crimes. If the measures bring about their intended effects, they do so, therefore, not directly but via some more or less oblique mechanism.

Take property marking. It does not make theft impossible. It does not even make it more difficult. How might it work? It could have its effects by deterring thieves because they will find it hard to dispose of stolen goods, as receivers will not accept them. Alternatively, it could increase perceived risk to thieves by persuading them that they risk being found with goods that can be shown to have been stolen because of the property marking. It could increase the chances of police convicting thieves found in possession of stolen goods, who are then incapacitated by imprisonment. It could likewise lead the police to identify offenders who are deterred from subsequent crime because they do not want to face future possibly increased punishment. Or, it could lead to the apprehension and subsequent referral of offenders somehow to deal with their decisions to resort to crime, perhaps because of drug-taking or lack of attachment to significant other non-criminal members of the community. A classic British study found that a project introducing property-marking brought about crime-falls in none of these ways. Rather, accompanied by persuasive publicity, it led local offenders to perceive that burglary in their area was being taken seriously and that as such their risks were being increased. It would therefore be prudent to suspend offending (Laycock, 1985; 1992). Moreover, because alternative targets were not readily available, given the general concern elicited about increased risk, offenders avoided theft of non-markable as well as markable property. The perceptions of the prospective offenders were changed. They recalculated estimates of risk and reward. On the basis of this they changed their behaviour. Their recalculated risk occurred in the particular context of the scheme. There was a very high participation rate in the property marking, the scheme was heavily publicised, and the villages in which the scheme was located were relatively isolated and most domestic burglars were believed to be local.

Take lighting upgrades as another example. Enhanced ambient lighting again certainly does not make crime impossible. Indeed, it conceivably could make it easier for the person trying to commit a crime to see what they are doing (see Pease, 1999). What is it about lighting that might produce a fall in crime? By what mechanisms could it work? It could be better surveillance capabilities at night leading to increased offender-perceived risk of apprehension and punishment deterring them from crime commission. It could be greater rates of arrest of night-time offenders caught in the act, prosecuted, convicted and given a custodial sentence, incapacitating them for a while. It could be night-time offenders caught and deterred from future offending by the experience of punishment. It turns out that none of these necessarily happens. Crime falls have been found in some situations to occur with increased street lighting in high crime areas, in daylight as well as at night (Painter and Farrington, 1999). The hypothesis is that increased illumination can increase community confidence

and community controls, and that it can be this that generates reduced crime rates rather than the lighting improvements *per se* (Painter, 1995).

In a recent paper Smith *et al.* (2002) review publications where time course data are given showing patterns of crime before and after the implementation of preventive measures. They find a substantial number where the crime rate fell too early, before anything had been put in place to produce the fall. Instead of concluding that this was simply a regression to the mean artefact, they highlight a range of other possibilities. These include the disruptive effects that the prospects of crime prevention measures can have for potential offenders, who decide to suspend their offending behaviour in the light of expected increased difficulty or risk.

Only rarely is a measure by which crime-reduction measures have their effects direct, immediate and inexorable. Beyond these exceptional cases crime reduction is always achieved in more indirect ways that need to be teased out. Even in the case of incarceration, mechanisms other than incapacitation may be at work. Within prison processes of criminal acculturation, neutralisation of responsibility, and technique and target learning may promote criminal activity. Education, maturation, and deterrence may reduce it. The potential for incarceration to impact on crime is not limited to the incapacitation effects operating whilst inmates are inside. Moreover the potential, as with lighting upgrades, is for generating crime increase as well as decrease.

Mixed findings on the impacts of particular measures suggest that the same result is not always achieved by the same measure. What determines what way a measure will work – to increase crime, decrease it, or simultaneously to do both? The same measure works in the same way only in saliently similar conditions. Relatively isolated communities with local offenders, high publicity, and high dosage activity represent very particular conditions for property marking. Property marking schemes should not be expected always to produce the same effects and, indeed, they do not do so (Heller *et al.*, 1975; Knutsson, 1984).

Recent publications from the US COPS office at the Department of Justice highlight the variations in conditions for problems and the research evidence on the fits between differing tactics and those conditions (e.g. Scott, 2001, though there are many more, at www.cops.usdoj.gov). ‘Working’ refers to activating relevant change mechanisms in the context of the presenting problem.

Let us look at this issue specifically in relation to efforts to reduce repeat victimization. Repeat domestic violence is one of the best-known and longest-recognised forms of repeat victimization and several schemes have addressed it. It is also an example of a crime where the same offender is ordinarily responsible. One tactic has been to arrest the offenders even where there would be discretion not to do so.

A study in Minneapolis, the results of which were published in 1984, randomly allocated cases to three treatments: arrest, advice or sending away. The repeat rate over the coming six months was 10% for arrests, 19% for advice and 24% for sending away (Sherman and Berk, 1984). Following publication the arrest

policy was widely adopted in the United States. Further studies were undertaken. Some found the arrest policies increased the rate of repeat offending and some that it reduced it (Sherman, 1992). *Post hoc* it is conjectured that arrest sometimes provokes anger and sometimes shame. Where anger is provoked repeat incidents are triggered. Where shame is provoked repeat incidents are inhibited. Which response is produced depends on the circumstances. For those who are employed and living in stable communities shame is more likely. For those who are unemployed and living in marginal communities anger is more likely. Whilst the problem of repeat domestic violence may be found in many communities, the same response may not always be appropriate. Measures work through the way they are received by those affected, and this varies by circumstances. Moreover, those affected may extend beyond those who offend. In the case of arrest for domestic violence, alterations in the behaviour of partners may be effected again in ways contingent on conditions. Some women, it might be conjectured, will become more willing to report incidents and others less willing. The question is who and again this is liable to vary by context (see Tilley, 2000).

In other cases too where repeat victimization has formed the starting point for preventive interventions, even where overall success has been attained, it has not been quite clear how. The Small Business and Crime Initiative began with a crime survey of all businesses in the project target areas (Wood *et al.*, 1997). As in other research, it found abnormally high rates of repeat victimization. Strategies were put in place to try to reduce the vulnerability of those that were victimized. A second, post-initiative crime survey, alongside recorded crime data, found that a fall in crime rate had followed with the initiative. Oddly, though, this was accompanied by an increase in crime concentration (incidents per victim), which would not be expected given the focus on repeats (Tilley and Hopkins, 1998). The fall in crime was instead accounted for by falls in prevalence (numbers of premises victimized). A clue to what may have happened is found in the Smith *et al.* (2002) paper already mentioned, which highlights the frequency with which crime rates fall in advance of initiative implementation, perhaps due, for example, to changes in perceived opportunities amongst prospective offenders. As the authors point out, the falls in the SBCI areas began prior to implementation. The point here is that the means by which the falls were achieved was not obvious at the time and were not those planned.

This section has argued that the phenomena of repeat victimization do not directly lead to a set of tactics. Tactics, therefore, need to be chosen. They need to be chosen on the basis of informed expectations about how they will produce their effects in the contexts in which they are being introduced. The same repeat victimization problem might, thus, not always call for the same response. How, then, are strategies to be developed?

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Four promising repeat-victimization focused elements of a sustainable crime prevention strategy have emerged. They can be operated on their own or in conjunction with one another, and comprise:

1. Situational analysis and problem-solving
2. Cumulative protective intervention
3. Synthesis with efforts at detection and disruption
4. Near neighbour mobilisation

Situational analysis and problem-solving refers to that detailed analysis of crime situations that has been advocated both in problem-oriented policing (Goldstein, 1979; 1990; Eck and Spelman, 1987) and in situational crime prevention (Clarke, 1997; Ekblo, 1988). There are several moments (sequenced, though overlapping and reiterating stages) in it. The first refers to the identification of specific patterns of crime, the second to understanding the situation producing that specific pattern, the third to working out how that situation may be manipulated to disrupt the crime patterns produced without producing adverse side-effects, and the fourth to providing for the implementation of those means of disruption. Ideally a fifth moment involves tracking the effects of the measures implemented to improve future decision making. Repeat victimization patterns describe a starting point for this generic preventive process. It captures the approach, for example, taken in the highly successful Kirkholt burglary reduction project (Forrester *et al.*, 1988; 1990).

Cumulative protection refers to increased levels of preventive effort in relation to successive crimes against the same target. The increasing predictive strength of incidents of repeat victimization for successor crimes reveals the continuing vulnerability of the target and/or determination of the offenders. Whilst the costs of initial diversion or deterrence may be relatively small, achieved by quite minor changes to the presenting situation, the failure of such measures will suggest the need for more major interventions. Though broad spectrum situational interventions, which increase apparent risk and effort and reduce prospective reward, may be adequate to put off the casual opportunistic offender, more specific measures requiring more detailed analysis may be needed for the repeatedly revictimized, where low-cost, standard situational measures have not proven sufficient. This broadly describes the strategy adopted in Huddersfield for volume crimes (Anderson *et al.*, 1995; Chenery *et al.*, 1997) and in Killingbeck for domestic violence (Hanmer *et al.*, 1999).

Synthesis with efforts at detection and disruption follows on from the previous strategic element. It draws on the relationship found between repeat victimization and prolific offenders (Everson and Pease, 2001). Whilst oppor-

tunity reduction may be sufficient to suppress the criminal behaviour of the more casual offender, those who are prolific may require separate attention. A prerequisite to attending to the activities of prolific offenders is that they be identified. It may also be necessary to apply leverage to them to alter their offending behaviour. Aligning efforts at detection with repeat victims offers a promising route to prolific-offender focused interventions. Special attention to physical evidence left at scenes of repeat crimes, the installation of evidence-collecting equipment in premises where repeat crimes are expected, the tasking of informants in relation to repeats, the treatment of offence series as bases for prioritising the work of detectives, and the comparison of *modus operandi* across series of repeats might all lead to improvements in rates of identifying prolific offenders. Care is needed, of course, not to employ tactics that are in tension with one another. Situational tactics aimed at diverting the repeat offender, if successful, will undermine efforts to apprehend them at scenes to which they choose to return.

Near-neighbour mobilisation is rooted in findings from the repeat victimization research: the association of high rates of repeats with hot spots, and the specific finding that near neighbours are at heightened risk as well as victims themselves (Curtin *et al.*, 2001). Mobilising neighbours is a means of sensitising them to risk and directing them to providing overt guardianship or covert observation if the main aspiration is catch the repeat offender. That efforts are liable to fade over time, as observed with Neighbourhood Watch (Laycock and Tilley, 1995), does not really matter very much, as the heightened risk is also time-limited. Including a focus on near neighbours trades on heightened sensitivity to risk as well as actual risk. One of the components of the Kirkholt burglary reduction project comprised the establishment of cocoons made up of near neighbours following burglary. This may not just have improved the security of the victim but also altered behaviour amongst the mobilised neighbours, producing reduced risk notably during the heightened risk period. The notion of near neighbour mobilisation is most clearly applicable to domestic burglary. It remains to be seen if there are other crime types where a penumbra of heightened risk surrounds those victimized as well as victims themselves, whose vulnerability could be reduced in ways akin to those used in domestic burglary.

In identifying these four elements of a crime reduction strategy informed by repeat victimization research, I have clearly not provided a catalogue of interventions. These will need to be selected on the basis of local circumstances and the particular problems addressed. This should be clear from the earlier discussion, especially that concerning mandatory arrest for domestic violence. Specific measures rarely 'work' unconditionally. They need to be selected as part of a strategy and tailored to the details of local conditions.

Repeat events may be generated in any of a variety of ways. The research literature has identified examples of most of the following possibilities (see Pease, 1998; Farrell and Pease, 2001):

Same offenders:

- return to steal goods left
- return to steal replaced goods
- make speculative returns because of target familiarity/lack of imagination
- have a personal grudge
- have an ideological/racial grudge
- participate in a vendetta
- have an argument
- are rewarded by the victim response (for example domestic violence)

Offender associate/s:

- receive tip-offs about suitable targets (for example burglary)

Unconnected offenders:

- hit the same target because they find it convenient, attractive, and suitable, (for example naïve victims of fraud)

Same, associated or unconnected offenders:

- choose a target that has become more vulnerable because of previous crime (for example where a lock or window is broken)

Same and unconnected offenders:

- commit crimes against accessible, soft victims (for example supermarkets and shop theft).

Some 'broad spectrum' tactics are likely to be promising across repeat victimization generators, and may thus warrant fairly routine application. Rapid repairs and improvements in security, for example, may help avert repeat incidents by same offenders, tipped-off associates and independent offenders. The potential of other forms of response will be contingent on the ways in which the repeats are produced. Where determined repeat offenders are involved, for example, arrest and custody tactics may have a bigger part to play, since incapacitation could have a significant impact. Where networks of related offenders are significant, tactics of disruption and disinformation may make sense. Where arguments lie behind repeat incidents it is possible that mediation or movement of one party would comprise a more suitable tactic.

CONCLUSION

Attention to repeat victimization appears to be a key route to achieving effectiveness, efficiency and equity in crime prevention. Research on repeat victimization over the past few years has turned up a remarkably consistent pattern – victimization tends to beget victimization, especially in the short term. The research has also shown an association between repeat victimization patterns and other crime patterns too – the tendency of ‘hot spots’ to have disproportional numbers of repeat victims, and the tendency of repeat offences to be committed by prolific offenders. Recent crime reduction practice has begun to show how the research findings can inform preventive strategies. The recommendation that all crime reduction efforts include attention to repeat victimization can now be made with some confidence, though the development of suitable tactics and strategies will often require detailed attention to the specific ways in which the patterns are generated. Inattention to salient differences risks the adoption of inappropriate measures with counterproductive consequences. Decisions about tactics need thus to attend to contexts and the fit with activated mechanisms to generate the intended outcome patterns.

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