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Opportunities for Victimization

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Opportunities for Victimization

Part 1

Routine Activities Theory (RAT) is a widely held opinion among criminologists exploring what makes an unlawful event happen. According to Cohen & Felson (1979), the theory must fulfill three criminal activity criteria. Crimes occur when an inspired perpetrator, a proper target, and the absence of a worthy protector collide in space and time. The words "suitable target" were intentionally used instead of "victim" to include assets as a target of criminal activity in comparison to people (Savard, 2018). Because indirect protectors, like members of the general public, also can offer guardianship, the phrase "capable guardian" was picked over security forces. As a result, since they are noticeable when the crime is being committed, onlookers who happen to be nearby can be more valuable guardians than the security forces.

I live in Mill Basin, Brooklyn and regularly take the train to and from home. Though I live in a relatively peaceful neighborhood, whenever I take the train, I expose myself to the opportunities of victimization in the train station, in the streets, and in alleys. For instance, I strongly rely on the train, a public transport used by thousands of individuals each day. In this regard, criminal elements like pickpockets and muggers are hunting for people like me, who embrace public transport, especially during rush hours when there is a surge in individuals using the train services. Based on the Routines Activity Theory, the train station brings together the delinquent, an appropriate target (the passengers), and the absence of a protector, exposing individuals like me to victimization. In addition to that, I take minutes to walk from my home to the train station. I pass through several alleys, corners, and streets before I get to the station. The route is the same when going back home. I am exposed to victimization in these streets and

alleys because there is no guardian to assist me when I encounter trouble. In addition to that, these streets are unsafe because police officers do not patrol them, and sometimes suspicious people are occupying them without any meaningful activity taking place.

Presently, walking around outside is safer than it was before the covid-19 pandemic. The public is becoming increasingly aware of their surroundings and what is happening. In simple terms, society is conscious of who is around them and is keen to maintain social distance to ensure their safety. The extra level of protection has not only helped deal with the Covid-19 pandemic. Still, it has increased public awareness of security and safety matters since people can no longer ignore who is around them. Also, the Mill Basin society is connected like never before, offering those in need guardianship as they walk outside. More importantly, the Covid-19 pandemic has forced millions to work from home, though most try to work out and remain physically active. The increased number of people on the streets has made the outside environment safer because people can be the guardians, especially in environments where there is a suitable target and a motivated offender lurking.

Part 2

Question 1

Even though it began in New York, the concept of Broken Windows started from across the river in Newark, during the study done by criminologist George Kelling. He discovered that incorporating patrol officers in the metropolis enhanced the association between police and black residents while decreasing their crime and violence. As a result, he co-wrote an impactful 1982 editorial in *The Atlantic* with coworker James Wilson. The duo adopted the allegory that a broken window left untouched would indicate no one cared, eventually leading to extended disorder and even criminal activity in society (Harcourt & Ludwig, 2005). However, existing

research has raised questions regarding the broken window system of policing. Therefore, it is possible to develop a different form of the Broken Windows approach that does not encourage racial profiling.

For years, the law enforcement officers in Newark handed citations to the citizens for minor offenses. The goal of these summonses was to curb petty crimes in major towns rife with criminal activities. In addition to that, police officers who issued high tallies enjoyed rewards with overtime remuneration and better duties. In this perspective, the employer incentivized the officers to give a significant number of summons. Ultimately, this conduct damaged the working relationship with the society and the police and led to federal interventions with time.

The Broken Windows approach is flawed because the public does not understand what qualifies as a petty crime warranting the implementation of the broken window. Also, the crowd was not consulted when the police departments adopted this strategy of policing in different cities. In this regard, the police ought to use their discretion, just like in traffic stops or in skating parks, to talk to people because summons and arrests are only increasing the problem of racial profiling. In addition to that, experts argue that the broken windows theory concentrates on the disorder, leading to racial profiling cases targeting African-Americans (Bergh, 2018). Therefore, citizens should define their primary priorities to ascertain how to police a neighborhood. Then, law enforcement officers should patrol appropriately (presuming those concerns are valid) because a disorder does not appear the same to everybody.

Question 2

Felony policing, which includes checkpoints and low-level crackdowns, is a painful exercise that harms economic growth, family relationships, wellbeing, academic performance, and citizenship status. In addition, police target African American and Hispanic people at

disproportionately high rates than their population percentage. Consequently, research on the effectiveness of low-level crime prevention and stop-and-frisk techniques finds that all these activities of direct authority do not deter criminals. The minor cases of crime decrease that outcome are dwarfed by the adverse costs of police brutality social trauma.

An increased police presence in my Mill basin neighborhood has limited significance on the community. The community in Mill Basin is dynamic, including African-Americans, Hispanics, Latino, and others who live in perfect harmony. That explains why Mill Basin is relatively crime-free and peaceful. However, an increased police presence will lead to a new crop of citizens emerging. For example, a group that feels they have the right to control the community, like in the case of the "Permit Patty," reported an eight-year-old African-American girl who was selling water to raise money to visit Disneyland (Jean, 2020). In addition to that, heightened police presence in an area like Mill Basin, where society is dynamic, will increase confrontations with law enforcement officers.

According to research, in New York City that is heavily policed, the residents are four-time likely to be harassed and intimidated by the police as they carry out their daily routines. These police interactions are also more likely to leave minority groups and African Americans feeling vulnerable because increased police presence in minority neighborhoods raises the possibility of racial profiling and foreseeably dire consequences. On the same note, since the Mill Basin community is not getting increased police presence, the quality of life will continue improving since neighbors regularly look out for each other. On the contrary, high police presence will increase confrontations, interactions with the police, and mistrust among neighbors who will start reporting each other on minor suspicions. There are numerous cases of police brutality being witnessed every day in different parts of the country. My neighborhood is lucky

to have a limited number of police officers patrolling the streets, limiting interactions with the residents and reducing confrontations with the authorities.

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