

Key Ideas

Measurement, Extent and Distribution

The Impact of Crime (1): Victimisation

- Objective dimension (financial cost, personal effect - "nuisance value")
- Subjective dimension (psychological impact - trauma, fear, stress)

British Crime Surveys:

- Most victims suffer little effect.
- Most serious effects = personal crimes (wounding, robbery, burglary etc. - the effect of "invasion of privacy")
- Most serious crime for men = mugging.
- Most serious crime for women = domestic violence.

Indirect effects of victimisation:

- On family / relatives (e.g. murder)
- Witnessing crimes (shock, fear)
- Quality of life (effects of prostitution, drug abuse, racial harassment)
- Fraud, shoplifting - indirect economic costs to general public
- Racism
- Environmental crimes (pollution etc.)
- Repeat victimisation - most likely = burglary, sexual abuse, domestic violence, racial harassment / violence.

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The Impact of Crime (2): The Fear of Crime.

- National Surveys: e.g. British Crime Survey (BCS) - since 1982 - Bi-annual.
- Local Surveys: e.g. Islington Crime Survey (Lea and Young)
- Victim Surveys:
- Most worried = Inner City dwellers (Mawby and Walklate '94); the Elderly (statistically least at risk)
- Least worried = young males (most at risk of personal assault)

British Crime Survey:

- 33% feared burglary (Burglary = 6% of all crime)
- 15% feared mugging (Mugging = 1% of all crime)
- Crime most feared by all = burglary
- Women most fearful of crime (especially rape)
- Islington Crime Survey (Left Realism): fear realistically related to high crime areas
- Social Class: Poor fear crime the most (Kinsey and Anderson '92)
- Impact of crime greater on poor, elderly because of their status:
- Poor = uninsured

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The Fear of Crime (continued)

- Zedner '97: Fear is related to general social concerns (moral decline, insecurity, etc.)
- Are fears justified / irrational? Or is "fear" precautionary?
- Fear related to Risk Avoidance (especially women, elderly): May explain why, statistically, such groups experience "less victimisation".
- Is "fear" right way to view this situation?
- Lack of reliable and valid empirical data about "fear of crime" and relationship between risk avoidance and victimisation
- Risk avoidance behaviour is related to many things (e.g. lack of money, lack of mobility), not just "fear"
- People respond to crime in many different ways (shock, anger, etc.), not just in terms of "fear"

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