

Chapter 2

Why Is Fear of Crime a Serious Social Problem?

Individual Reactions

There is a general consensus in the literature that the most significant effect of fear of crime is the reduced quality of life it imposes on those affected by it (Bannister and Fyfe, 2001; Box et al., 1988; Brown and Polk, 1996; Fisher and Nasar, 1992; Grabosky, 1995; Green et al., 2002; Fishman and Mesch, 1996; Mirrlees-Black and Allen, 1998; Nasar et al., 1993; Wilson-Doenges, 2000; Oc and Tiesdell, 1997; Tiesdell and Oc, 1998). The impact of fear of crime ranges from detrimental physiological changes to psychological reactions and behavioural adaptations.

In terms of physiological changes, fear of crime is associated with increased heart rate, rapid breathing, decreased salivation and increased galvanic skin response (Warr, 2000). Endocrinic changes, such as the release of adrenaline into the bloodstream, may also occur to prepare us for a 'fight or flight' response (Skogan and Maxfield, 1981). Additionally, according to Kovecses (1990), fear is more generally associated with physical agitation; increased heart rate; lapses in heart beat; blood leaving face; shrinking of skin; straightening of hair; drop in body temperature; inability to move, breathe or speak; involuntary releases of bowels or bladder; sweating; nervousness; and dryness in the mouth. From a psychological perspective, fear of crime can produce negative feelings of anger, outrage, frustration, violation and helplessness (Ferraro and LaGrange, 2000; Warr, 2000). These feelings can extend to those of anxiety, distrust of others, alienation and dissatisfaction with life (Miceli et al., 2004; Morrall et al., 2010). Fear of crime is also strongly correlated with mental health and sometimes triggers mental illness (Green et al., 2002; Miceli et al., 2004), which in more acute or chronic cases can lead to advanced states of depression and long-term trauma (Ferraro and LaGrange, 2000; Spelman, 2004).

Alongside these wide-ranging physiological and psychological effects, fear of crime can prompt people to change their behaviour. At the level of the individual, people generally respond to the fear of crime by adopting protective or avoidance behaviours (Box et al., 1988; Keane, 1998; Liska et al., 1988; Reid et al., 1998; Riger et al., 1982; Warr, 1985). The structural constraints and role obligations dictated by lifestyles and routine daily activities may circumscribe people's ability to use precautionary tactics such as avoidance behaviours (Riger et al., 1982). Under

these conditions, it appears that people are more likely to adopt protective measures, such as carrying a weapon, learning self-defence techniques, installing anti-burglary equipment or acquiring watch dogs (Cubbage and Smith, 2009; Krahn and Kennedy, 1985; Liska et al., 1988). Nasar et al. (1993) and Nasar and Jones (1997) conducted a series of investigations into the fear of crime at the Ohio State University campus which had a focus on protective and avoidance behaviours. The studies revealed that the campus was characterized by a climate of fear (Nasar and Jones, 1997), as 50% of survey respondents expressed safety concerns about routes they used on campus, while 73% indicated that they avoided areas they deemed unsafe (Nasar et al., 1993). When asked if they would carry some form of protection if they had to walk a particular route at night, 91% of the sample said they would (Nasar and Jones, 1997). On a broader scale, Teske and Arnold (1991) discuss results from a comparative victimization study in the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany which further indicate that people in a climate of fear are more likely to adopt protective measures. The authors found that survey respondents from Texas were 12 times more likely to have a gun in their houses for security purposes and were generally more likely to have installed security devices than respondents from Baden-Württemberg. The authors emphasize that Texas respondents were much more likely to have been the victims of a burglary, to know victims of a burglary and to feel that they may be victims of a burglary in the next year.

In contrast to protective measures, avoidance behaviour primarily aims to reduce the risk of individuals being exposed to victimization, rather than reduce the risk of being victimized when exposed to threat (Skogan and Maxfield, 1981). Avoidance strategies often cause people to restrict their behaviour to places or times perceived to be safe or avoid certain activities they may perceive as dangerous, such as travelling by public transport, walking on certain streets or attending social activities (Box et al., 1988; Liska et al., 1988; Pantazis, 2000). Such behaviour, despite being a rational human reaction (Oc and Tiesdell, 1997), leads people to remove themselves from social activities and increases levels of distrust for others (Smith, 1987; Ross and Mirowsky, 2000; Wilson-Doenges, 2000). Keane (1998) investigated the influence of fear of crime as an environmental mobility restrictor on women's routine movements. He found that a significant number of women were worried about walking alone in their area after dark and walking alone to their cars in a parking area. Of these women, a considerable number reported that they would change their behaviour and walk alone in their neighbourhoods and use parking areas more often if they felt safer. Keane (1998) concluded that increasing feelings of safety would increase women's lifestyle choices and freedom of movement. Similar evidence for avoidance behaviours having a negative impact on the quality of people's lives has been found by Liska et al. (1988). The authors found that constrained or avoidance behaviour increased, rather than decreased, fear. They suggest that avoidance behaviours may serve to decrease emotion-based fear in a dangerous situation, but may accentuate risk-based fear associated with anticipating a dangerous situation.

Pantazis (2000) has likened the patterns associated with avoidance behaviours to current debates on poverty and social exclusion, which focus on people's ability

to participate in activities that others take for granted. A further parallel between social exclusion and the fear of crime relates to the unequal impact these problems have upon different elements of society. In general, levels of crime and poverty are higher among groups in society that experience a greater degree of social exclusion (Brennan et al., 2000; Hirschfield and Bowers, 1997). In a similar vein, the fear of crime has been consistently found to be higher in the poorest and most deprived neighbourhoods (Smith, 1987) and among women, the elderly and those with less education (e.g. Ferraro, 1995; Garofalo, 1979; Smith and Hill, 1991; Thomas and Bromley, 2000; Warr, 1984). Indeed, there is a common assertion that older people are prone to becoming “prisoners of fear” (Joseph, 1997; Pain, 2000; Stephens, 1999). Thus, the avoidance behaviours that individuals adopt in relation to their fear of crime have the potential to exert a substantial effect on the autonomy of many social groups and are a worthy area for ongoing research. However, the influence of such responses is not contained to the level of the individual, as fear of crime and the behavioural adaptations it prompts can have wide-ranging impact at the community level.

Hypothesized Links Between the Fear of Crime, Disorder and Crime

In their widely quoted¹ paper titled ‘Broken Windows’, Wilson and Kelling (1982) put forth a theory outlining a negative feedback loop whereby unchecked incivilities and disorder not only lead to fear of crime, but also crime itself. Using the broken window as a symbol for all types of disorder, their account of this causal relationship between disorder, fear and crime is now commonly referred to as the broken windows hypothesis or thesis (e.g. Harcourt, 1998; Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999; Loukaitou-Sideris, 1999). Broken windows hypothesis has proven highly influential in subsequent research and policy developments (e.g. Bratton, 1995, 1996; Skogan, 1990; Taylor and Covington, 1993; Tiesdell and Oc, 1998; Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999).

The underlying tenet of the broken windows hypothesis is based on the assumption that if a window is broken and left unrepaired (or disorder is left unchecked) then more windows will be broken (more disorder will occur) (Wilson and Kelling, 1982). The authors of the thesis draw on the incivilities/disorder hypothesis to suggest that an unrepaired broken window (untended disorderly behaviour) becomes a signal that no one cares and leads to a breakdown in community controls. This lack of response creates conditions under which social and physical disorder can flourish. Responding prudently and fearfully, both residents and passers-by perceive these areas as uncontrolled and unsafe. They accordingly change their activities to stay

¹ For additional information and interpretations see Doran and Lees, 2005; Gibbons, 2004; Greene, 1999; Harcourt, 1998; Millie and Herrington, 2005.

off the streets and avoid areas perceived as unsafe. By doing so, the general public relinquish their roles of mutual support with fellow citizens and weaken forms of informal social control such as natural surveillance. Where the social fabric of a neighbourhood is undermined in this way, criminals, both opportunistic and professional, believe they have reduced chances of being caught or identified and will consequently operate more actively or invade the area (Wilson and Kelling, 1982). This leads to an influx of criminals, increased social and physical disorder and eventually the onset of serious crime. Various studies have supported the notion that social and physical incivilities and the presence of serious crime may act to increase the fear of crime (e.g. Borooah and Carcach, 1997; Covington and Taylor, 1991; Perkins and Taylor, 1996; Rountree and Land, 1996; Taylor and Covington, 1993). Thus, the fear of crime can be seen as one of the first steps in a positive feedback loop, because it results in residents adopting protective and avoidance behaviours which contribute to the breakdown of informal social control, more fear of crime and crime itself. This feedback cycle is illustrated in Fig. 2.1 below.

There has been considerable debate over the validity of the broken windows hypothesis. Many researchers and practitioners readily accept the theory and it has therefore had considerable influence on research, policy and practice (see Doran and Lees, 2005; Harcourt, 1998; Stephens, 1999; Xu et al., 2005). The elements of broken windows hypothesis have also been used as a basis for the disorder and decline hypothesis (Skogan, 1986, 1990) which is described in more detail below. However, numerous critics also discount the fundamental assumptions of the broken windows

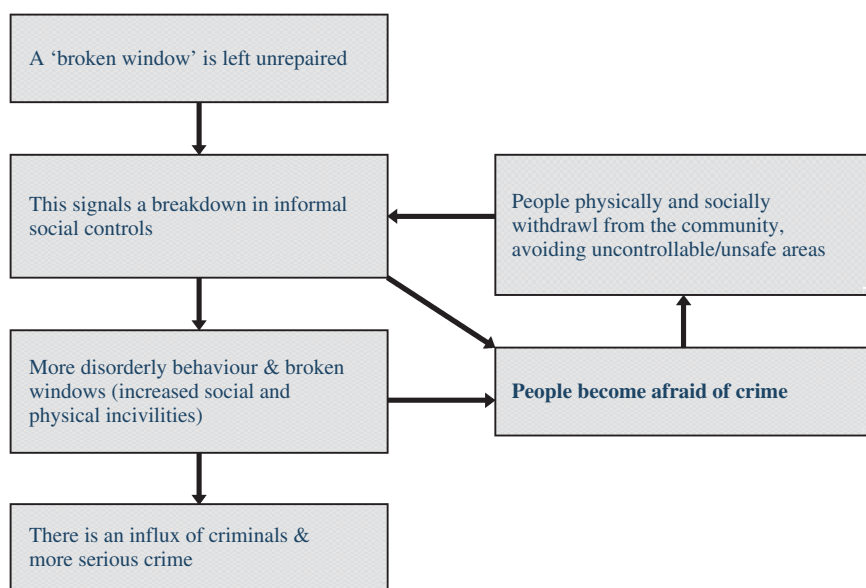


Fig. 2.1 Flow chart illustrating the cycle of the broken windows hypothesis, highlighting the role of fear of crime

hypothesis (e.g. Bowling, 1999; Greene, 1999; Harcourt, 1998; Taylor, 2001). Innes (2004) contends that there is a serious lack of empirical evidence supporting the thesis. Harcourt (1998) criticizes broken windows hypothesis and policing strategies based on it, highlighting the fact that they neglect numerous other complex factors that also contribute to crime. The proposition that people respond equally to both 'broken windows' and 'broken people' has also been challenged (Innes, 2004). One avenue that has not yet been explored thoroughly comprises the spatial and temporal components of the hypothesis – many of the links outlined in the cycle relate to the areas where social and physical disorder become concentrated, or the general public adopt behaviours which, over time, create conditions under which crime can flourish. The spatial and temporal scales at which these processes are likely to be operating are likely to vary considerably from short term (hours or days) to much longer term (years).

Disorder and Decline Hypothesis

Skogan's (1986, 1990) disorder and decline hypothesis expands upon the broken windows hypothesis (see Fig. 2.2 below). Like the broken windows hypothesis, the disorder and decline hypothesis begins with the justification that people gather information about the level of crime and safety in their neighbourhood through environmental cues (Skogan and Maxfield, 1981). Skogan (1990) maintains that signs of disorder are associated with high levels of risk and imply that neighbourhood systems of social control have broken down.² When people encounter signs of disorder they physically withdraw from those areas, confining their activities to those times and routes perceived as the safest. This reduces the amount of informal social surveillance that occurs naturally with pedestrian activity (Skogan, 1986; Skogan and Maxfield, 1981). However unlike Wilson and Kelling, Skogan elaborates on the added psychological withdrawal of residents from the streets (Skogan, 1986). Skogan and Maxfield (1981) assert that crime and disorder, through fear of crime, generate suspicion and distrust. This, in turn, has an atomising effect upon individuals and households (Skogan and Maxfield, 1981).³ Skogan then argues that disorder restricts the neighbourhood potential for organizational life and mobilization (Skogan, 1986).

In addition Skogan (1986) emphasizes spatial considerations and proposes that perceptions of disorder could cause a decrease in the geographic area that people feel responsible for. This further serves to weaken community mechanisms of

² Skogan (1990) specifically defines disorder as 'direct, behavioral evidence of disorganization'.

³ Crime and disorder undermine people's trust that their neighbours share common goals and norms (Skogan and Maxfield, 1981). This can lead to hostility and antipathy (Skogan, 1990). Disorder reduces resident confidence that their individual and collective actions can overcome disorder, (Skogan, 1990; Skogan and Maxfield, 1981).

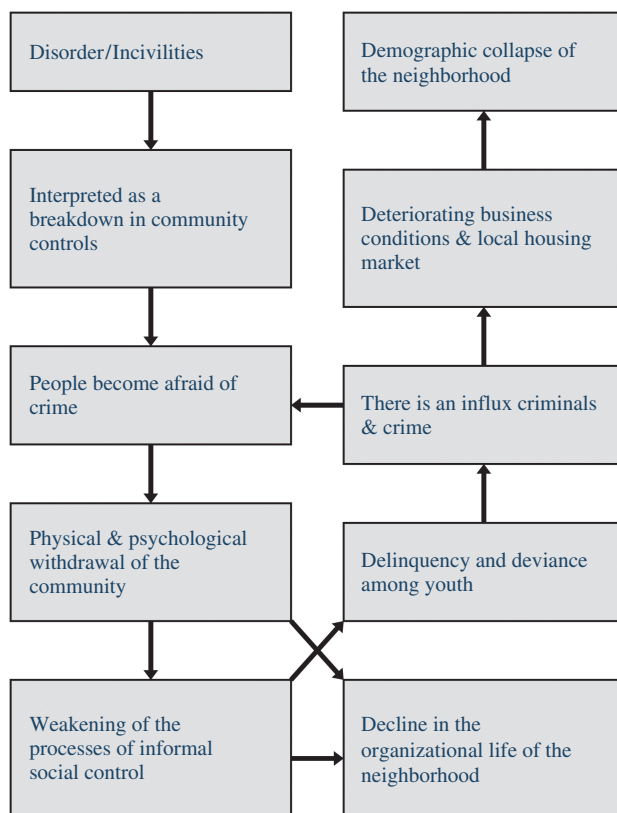


Fig. 2.2 Flow chart illustrating the disorder and decline hypothesis

informal social control and surveillance.⁴ With a decrease in social control and community-level capacity to combat disorder, Skogan mirrors Wilson and Kelling's argument in stating the neighbourhood will invite 'outside troublemakers' who bring additional crime and disorder (Skogan, 1986). Skogan also elaborates on the economic impact of disorder on affected neighbourhoods. The first point he makes is in relation to a deterioration of local business conditions (Skogan, 1986). With fewer people on the streets, there will be fewer business customers resulting in shops being forced to close down. These empty shops are likely to remain abandoned

⁴ Skogan explains this using the concept of 'territoriality', which is a 'set of attitudes and behaviours regarding the regulation of the boundary that surrounds people's personal household space' (Skogan, 1986). He claims that with healthy levels of territoriality residents will conduct surveillance over a wide area (Skogan, 1986). Surveillance is facilitated by personal recognition of one's neighbours and a belief that local standards of appropriate public behaviour are widely shared (Skogan, 1990). These factors diminish, thereby negating the underlying necessities for social surveillance and the psychological defence of public space.

or be converted to non-retail establishments. Economic forces favour those traditionally 'unsavoury' businesses, such as bars, transient hotels, x-rated outlets and massage parlours. The author argues that these businesses, and the 'unsavoury' people they attract, will further decrease the desirability of the area for people with a low tolerance for disorder (Skogan, 1986).

Skogan's second assumption is that, with an increasingly bad reputation, the local housing market becomes unstable (Skogan, 1990). Residents who are able to move relocate to other areas, and fewer people want to move into or invest in the area. Skogan states that this leads to a downward turn in the real estate market of affected areas and causes further deterioration and abandonment of buildings (Skogan, 1990).⁵ At this point, the disorder and decline hypothesis implies that disorder and these consequent social and economic problems continue to 'feed on themselves, spiralling neighbourhoods deeper into decline' (Skogan, 1986). Feedback processes ensure fear of crime increases until it is 'incapacitating' (Skogan, 1986; Skogan and Maxfield, 1981). The end of this cycle is characterized by a demographic collapse of the neighbourhood, when crime and disorder continue but there are few residents left to define it as a problem (Skogan, 1986). Schuerman and Kobrin (1986) argue that those areas characterized by at least three decades of high crime are 'lost territory to the rest of society' (in Skogan, 1986).

Skogan (1990) cemented his theory on the links between disorder and serious crime with empirical research. Disorder was linked more strongly with higher crime levels than were other neighbourhood characteristics, such as poverty, instability in the housing market, and predominantly minority racial composition among residents. Further, the investigation found that disorder, both directly and as a precursor to crime, played an important role in neighbourhood decline.

A number of researchers have supported Skogan's (1990) findings. For example Borooah and Carcach (1997) investigated fear of personal and housing crime in relation to a common set of explanatory variables. The authors concluded that lack of neighbourhood cohesion, neighbourhood incivility and perception of relatively high neighbourhood crime levels contributed significantly to the probability of being afraid and to the risk of victimization. Similarly, in their own study, Ross and Mirowsky (2000) declare disorder and decay are highly correlated with crime and share many indicators. Kelling and Coles (1997) also stated that Skogan's research supports the broken windows hypothesis. Thus some researchers have also concluded that fear of crime creates an environment where crime is more likely (Millie and Herrington, 2005). Others have also gone so far as to say that fear of crime is now a larger problem than crime itself (Bennett, 1991; Farrall et al., 2000; Warr, 1984; Hale, 1996).

In contrast, Markowitz et al. (2001) point out that studies supporting the broken windows and disorder and decline theories are largely based on cross-sectional data. As the theory is longitudinal in nature more evidence is necessary to confirm

⁵ Nevertheless, Skogan does recognize that other factors play an important role in determining demand for property (Skogan, 1986).

the causal effect of disorder. However, Markowitz et al. (2001) do acknowledge that disorder may increase crime indirectly through its effect in increasing fear of crime and decreasing social involvement and collective efficacy. Harcourt (1998) also found that Skogan's data did not support the claim that crime is related to disorder. While Harcourt confirmed that certain crimes like physical assault and robbery are at first significantly related to disorder, he argues that this relationship disappears when the variables of neighbourhood poverty, stability and race are held constant.

Similarly, Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) did not find convincing evidence to support the strong versions of the broken windows or disorder and declines theories. Disorder was only a moderate correlate of predatory crime, and varied consistently with antecedent neighbourhood characteristics. Despite the lack of evidence for a direct association between disorder and crime, the authors suggest that if disorder operates in a cascading fashion by undermining residential stability and discouraging efforts of building collective responses, it would indirectly have an effect on crime. While emphasizing that it is not the disorder that causes the crime, but rather poor social control that causes both, this scenario is essentially the same as that outlined by Skogan (1990), where fear of crime plays an important role in determining the actions of residents within a community.

Economic Impact of Behavioural Responses to Fear of Crime

The potential for the fear of crime to have a negative economic impact upon society has been recognized by a number of authors other than Skogan in his disorder and decline hypothesis (e.g. Brown and Polk, 1996; Grabosky, 1995; Hamermesh, 1999b; Liska et al., 1988; Oc and Tiesdell, 1997). Individuals who respond to the fear of crime by adopting avoidance behaviours incur a cost to both themselves and society (Oc and Tiesdell, 1997), as they keep away from the restaurants, shops, jobs and residences located in areas they perceive as dangerous (Liska et al., 1988). The opportunity costs associated with such behaviour, while difficult to quantify, are likely to be substantial (Oc and Tiesdell, 1997; Ayers and Levitt, 1998). Jackson and Gray (2010) note that there can be 'hidden costs' associated with such actions, through spending time or money on protective measures.

A number of researchers have paralleled Skogan's assertion that fear of crime has a negative impact on the housing market as a result of discouraging homebuyers and causing out migration (Katzman, 1980 in Smith, 1987; Gibbons, 2004; Oc and Tiesdell, 1997). Retail businesses suffer a shortage of customers as the most affluent people leave the neighbourhood and people generally avoid the streets (Conklin, 1971; Oc and Tiesdell, 1997). In turn businesses close down, relocate and new investment is suppressed, further reducing the activity and attraction of the area (Garofalo, 1981; Spelman, 2004; Oc and Tiesdell, 1997). The negative economic impact associated with the avoidance of retail areas has been linked to the attraction of youths to such environments. For example, Brown and Polk (1996) discuss what they term the 'mall problem' in Australia. By providing a day and night gathering and entertainment venue, shopping malls often prove an attractive environment for

unemployed and disengaged youths. This frequently results in malls becoming associated with problems, such as drinking, abusive language, fighting and drug use. The authors argue that such behaviours serve to work against the intended commercial function of malls by frightening away potential customers. A number of authors have identified similar trends in Britain (e.g. Oc and Tiesdell, 1997; Thomas and Bromley, 2000; Tiesdell and Oc, 1998). Thomas and Bromley (2000) observe that, despite the fact that many British cities have a thriving night-time economy, entertainment is largely centred around the 'pub-and-club' youth culture. The authors argue that the association of youth with threatening behaviour, such as heavy drinking, drugs and violent incidents has reduced the attraction of many city centres for a broader spectrum of the population. Oc and Tiesdell (1997) suggest that this denies large numbers of men and even greater numbers of women the use of city centres at night and has a significant economic and employment cost. On a broader scale, Warr and Ellison (2000) state that fear of crime and the consequent avoidance of dangerous places is so common and recognized in urban areas that it affects the ecology and economies of US cities.

Avoidance behaviours resulting from safety concerns may lead to mass cancellations and financial problems in tourist destinations (Ferraro, 1995; Mawby et al., 2000). Brunt et al. (2000: 422) found in a survey of British holidaymakers that 42% of respondents said they had ruled out at least one country because of crime-related problems. Cothran and Cothran (1998) term this dependence of tourism demand upon perceptions of safety the 'safety elasticity of demand'. The authors argue that tourism is a discretionary activity and, no matter how attractive a destination is, tourists will stay away if they feel their safety cannot be guaranteed. In the case of Mexico, they suggest that if American tourists began to act upon increasing levels of fear of crime by visiting alternative destinations the results for the Mexican tourist industry would be disastrous.

Hamermesh (1999a) investigated the timing of work in the United States and found that work in the evenings and at night had declined sharply between the 1970s and 1990s. Using the assumption that fear of crime is most likely to have an effect during the evening and at night, Hamermesh (1999b) investigated the effect of crime and the fear of crime on the timing of work. The author found that higher homicide rates significantly deterred working in the evening and at night and argued that criminal activity imposes a negative externality on the labour market because crime, or the fear of crime, generates departures from optimal patterns of work timing. The author describes this behaviour in terms of a trade-off where higher crime rates reduce the incentive to labour to the point where it becomes insufficient for some of the workers to overcome their fear of crime. This impacts upon workers as they implicitly forego some earnings, and affects society because production shifts away from times when the marginal worker will be more productive. The author estimates that the impact of homicide rates on work timing costs the USA between \$4 and \$10 billion a year.

Protective behaviours can also have direct economic impact on individuals and communities. Target hardening through the use of various security measures in fortifying their homes and places of work, such as outside lighting systems, watch dogs,

extra locks and weapons (Liska et al., 1988; Skogan and Maxfield, 1981; Teske and Arnold, 1991) incur a direct cost to the individual. Helsley and Strange (1999) suggest that fear of crime in the United States has led to increased spending on private security. Ayers and Levitt (1998) emphasize the fact that private expenditure on self-protection potentially dwarfs the \$100 billion spent on criminal justice each year in the United States.

Not only does fear of crime affect the economies of the local neighbourhood and individuals, but also that of the wider government. Schemes designed by governments to reduce the fear of crime also involve significant cost. For example, investment in CCTV surveillance systems by central and local British government between 1994 and 1997 has been estimated to be in excess of £100 million (Norris and Armstrong, 1998 in Ditton 2000). There are significant time and monetary costs associated with increased public policing in affected communities (Murray et al., 2001). State or local council resources are also used in the upkeep of affected areas and the management of disorder. The firms providing security measures could be seen as deriving economic benefit from the fear of crime. Indeed Davis (1990) goes so far as to suggest that the market provision of security generates its own paranoid demand. Others express less extreme views but nonetheless attribute part of the rapid growth in the security industry to the fear of crime (e.g. Lymes, 1997; Helsley and Strange, 1999).

The avoidance and protective behaviours that people adopt to cope with the fear of crime have the potential to generate negative, and in some cases, positive externalities. People who perceive that their neighbourhood is deteriorating often act on their fear of crime and choose to leave the city (Kelling and Coles, 1997). Where this takes place, the people and firms that reallocate their activities burden society with an indirect monetary cost (Hamermesh, 1999b). People remaining in areas where more prosperous citizens have left potentially lack the resources to protect themselves against crime. For example, Dililio (1996) argues that the relative lack of financial and political resources experienced by law-abiding people in inner-city black communities in the United States limits their ability to target-harden their homes, stores, parks and schools and may be partly responsible for the high rates of criminal victimization in these communities. Other studies have established strong links between the concentration of economic disadvantage and crime (Krivo and Peterson, 1996; Weatherburn et al., 1999). Freeman et al. (1996) suggest that the spatial concentration of crime in poor neighbourhoods is based on a positive externality that criminals create for each other. The externality exists because, if police resources are held constant, criminals stand a smaller chance of being caught if there are more of them in an area.

Protective measures have also been linked to the redistribution of crime between communities. For example, Helsley and Strange (1999) argue that protective actions such as the building of gated communities or the adoption of target-hardening procedures have the sole objective of diverting or deterring criminals *ex ante* and have the potential to impose negative externalities which impact upon other sections of society. The authors investigate a number of aspects of gating on the level and spatial distribution of crime with the key result being that gating, by diverting crime to the business district, can reduce legitimate employment opportunities and increase

the number of active criminals and the aggregate level of crime. Ayers and Levitt (1998) investigated the effect of Lojack, a small, unobservable radio transmitter hidden within vehicles, and found that its use yields positive externalities through general deterrence. However, the authors note that as most forms of personal protective measures are highly visible they are more likely to redistribute, rather than reduce, the occurrence of crime. Hence protective measures that generate positive externalities are likely to be in the minority.

Chapter Review: Potential Problems Not to Be Ignored and a Need for Spatially Explicit Research

It is commonly accepted that fear of crime is a major social problem (Liska et al., 1988). Studies have confirmed that fear of crime disrupts neighbourhood cohesion (Nasar et al., 1993); fractures the sense of community and neighbourhood (Box et al., 1988; Ross and Mirowsky, 2000); creates interpersonal distrust (Garofalo, 1981); breaks down social relations and attachment (Spelman, 2004); leads to social isolation (Doeksen, 1997; Ross and Mirowsky, 2000); adds to an erosion of social control and social order (Ross and Mirowsky, 2000); damages the public image of a community and causes avoidance behaviour in potential visitors (Doeksen, 1997; Nasar et al., 1993; Skogan, 1990; Warr, 2000); and causes a removal of 'eyes on the street' and informal natural surveillance (Jacobs, 1961; Painter, 1996; Samuels and Judd, 2002). A common thread running through these varied and serious impacts are the protective and avoidance behaviours that people adopt in relation to their fear of crime. The well-known broken windows hypothesis (Wilson and Kelling, 1982) and Skogan's (1986, 1990) disorder and decline hypothesis have provided theoretical frameworks which outline potential interactions over space and time between crime, disorder and fear. Despite rigorous debate about the efficacy of such hypotheses, there is a consensus among much extant research that fear of crime and the associated protective and avoidance behaviours evident at the individual level have the potential to have a collective and detrimental impact at the community level. Given the heavy emphasis of temporal factors and potential impact in specific areas or neighbourhoods, it is also clear that there are avenues for explicitly spatial research into the hypothesized links between crime, disorder and fear.

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