

## Introduction to:

St. Jean, P. K. B. (2007). Pockets of Crime: Broken Windows, Collective Efficacy, and the Criminal Point of View. Chicago, University of Chicago Press. [YOU CAN SKIP CHAPTER 7 ABOUT BATTERY]

### Disclaimer

This book is one about which I am ambivalent. I have assigned it, nevertheless, for the following reasons:

1. The author, St. Jean, spent a lot of time talking to offenders and key locals. We get to hear the narrative offenders generate when asked about offending locations.
2. It is a multi-method study. St. Jean puts together crime, census, observation, and qualitative interview data.
3. It talks about some theories that are currently receiving a lot of attention, more specifically, collective efficacy and incivilities.
4. It addresses one of the most neglected issues in current theories about where offending takes place: variations in land use.
5. It illustrates why you want to pay attention to the aggregation problem.
6. It illustrates why you want to read outside of your field.

I will save addressing the last two points until we are finishing with the volume.

POC is based on St. Jean's dissertation. He completed that work under the supervision of Rob Sampson, currently in Sociology at Harvard University.<sup>1</sup> Rob is a fellow of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Society of Criminology, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is one of the best known criminologists in the world for his work in two areas: neighborhood effects and life course research. St. Jean is Dominican, and currently an assistant professor of Sociology at the University of Buffalo.

POC is pursuing two theoretical threads: Incivilities, what he calls disorder, and collective efficacy theories. Both of these require some background.

### Collective Efficacy: Precursors and related ideas

One of Rob's most cited early works completed an ecological analysis of the British Crime Survey showing that three mediating social processes, including perceptions of troublesome teens, involvement in local organizations, and local friendship networks, jointly influenced outcomes like victimization rates and offending rates. Community demographic characteristics like SES, race, and stability affected these outcomes in large part through their impacts on these mediating social and organizational processes.<sup>2</sup> See the figure below.

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<sup>1</sup> You can find more about Rob and get copies of publications at:  
<http://www.wjh.harvard.edu/soc/faculty/sampson/>

<sup>2</sup> Sampson, R. J. and W. B. Grove (1989). "Community structure and crime: Testing social disorganization theory." American Journal of Sociology 94(January): 774-802.

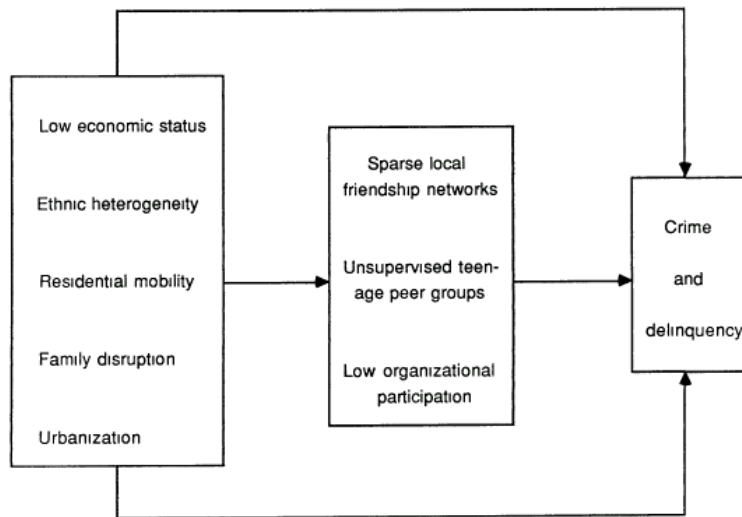


FIG. 1.—Causal model of extended version of Shaw and McKay's theory of community systemic structure and rates of crime and delinquency.

(From Sampson & Grove)

So as you can see this is in part a mediating model.

The mediating social processes here were intended to capture social disorganization (SD).

This is an extremely complex concept that was initially applied to delinquency in the 1920s, and has been later applied to crime and reaction to crime outcomes.<sup>3</sup> If social disorganization is high residents are unwilling to act collectively to promote collective neighborhood interests. *It is hypothesized to be a property of communities not streetblocks or individuals.* If SD is high, residents might be reluctant to intervene if they see a problem or children messing about. Willingness to intervene might be low.

Subsequent studies have asked whether all the effects of community structure operate through these mediating processes. It turns out that structure can sometimes have direct effects on these outcomes.<sup>4</sup> For example low community SES, separate from its impacts via the mediators in the model, might directly affect those same outcomes.

<sup>3</sup> For background on this complex concept see: Bursik, R. (1988). "Social Disorganization and Theories of Crime and Delinquency: Problems and Prospects." *Criminology* 26(4): 519-551; Taylor, R. B. (2000). *Crime and human ecology. Explaining criminals and crime.* R. Paternoster and R. Bachman. Los Angeles, Roxbury.

<sup>4</sup> Veysey, B. M. and S. E. Messner (1999). "Further testing of social disorganization theory: An Elaboration of Sampson and Groves's 'community structure and crime'." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 36: 156-174.

Subsequent to this work, Rob shifted gears in two ways. First, he concentrated on the opposite end of the mediating process in question, calling it collective efficacy (CE) rather than SD.<sup>5</sup> CE is another complex concept.

In an enormously influential 1997 article in *Science*, Sampson and colleagues found that CE *at the neighborhood level* influenced victimization and offending and crime rates.<sup>6</sup> Again, the idea was that the social processes mediated the impacts of the structural features of the community on the outcomes (see Table 4 in the *Science* article).

CE was intended to be a melding of “informal social control” and “social cohesion and trust.” The actual survey items used to operationalize CE appear below; this is from the 1997 *Science* article.

“Informal social control” was represented by a five-item Likert-type scale. Residents were asked about the likelihood (“Would you say it is very likely, likely, neither likely nor unlikely, unlikely, or very unlikely?”) that their neighbors could be counted on to intervene in various ways if (i) children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner, (ii) children were spray-painting graffiti on a local building, (iii) children were showing disrespect to an adult, (iv) a

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<sup>5</sup> CE in some ways appears to represent an ecologizing of a psychological construct, self-efficacy. See: Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The Exercise of Control*. New York: W.H.Freeman.

<sup>6</sup> Sampson, R. J., S. W. Raudenbush, et al. (1997). "Neighborhoods and violent crime: A Multi-level study of collective efficacy." *Science* **277**: 918-924.

fight broke out in front of their house, and (v) the fire station closest to their home was threatened with budget cuts. "Social cohesion and trust" were also represented by five conceptually related items. Respondents were asked how strongly they agreed (on a five-point scale) that "people around here are willing to help their neighbors," "this is a close-knit neighborhood," "people in this neighborhood can be trusted," "people in this neighborhood generally don't get along with each other," and "people in this neighborhood do not share the same values" (the last two statements were reverse coded).

Responses to the five-point Likert scales were aggregated to the neighborhood level as initial measures. Social cohesion and informal social control were closely associated across neighborhoods ( $r = 0.80$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ), which suggests that the two measures were tapping aspects of the same latent construct. Because we also expected that the willingness and intention to intervene on behalf of the neighborhood would be enhanced under conditions of mutual trust and cohesion, we combined the two scales into a summary measure labeled collective efficacy (21).

All of this is not new.

Locality-based social dynamics, and their sources and their impacts, have been of interest for a very long time. In just the past three decades a range of different terms have been used in different disciplines from sociology to anthropology to community psychology to political science to social psychology to environmental psychology.<sup>7</sup>

There are three different social components to be clear about.

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<sup>7</sup> Taylor, R. B. (2002). "Fear of crime, social ties and collective efficacy: Maybe masquerading measurement, maybe déjà vu all over again." *Justice Quarterly* **19**(4): 773-791.

First, there are the local social ties or the local networks themselves: who knows whom, and how well, and/or in what capacity? <sup>8</sup> Ties need not be extremely strong to be helpful and effective. <sup>9</sup> The ties may just be called “neighboring.” <sup>10</sup>

The ties may be through local organizations, not just neighbor-to-neighbor. Therefore indicators of local organizational participation also capture these networks. <sup>11</sup>

The ties themselves – the actual social networks – can under some circumstances create social capital – social resources that an individual or group can draw on. <sup>12</sup>

The degree of social capital available is reflected in a second concept, referred to by various names depending on the discipline in question: cohesiveness, trust, <sup>13</sup> social integration, <sup>14</sup> sense of community, <sup>15</sup> attachment to place, <sup>16</sup> local attachment, <sup>17</sup> or latent neighborliness. <sup>18</sup> Emile Durkheim would just say solidarity. Organizational capacity may also be part of this. <sup>19</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Mitchell, J. C. (1974). "Social networks." *Annual Review of Anthropology* **3**: 279-299; Warren, R. L. (1963). *The community in America*. New York, Rand McNally.

<sup>9</sup> Granovetter, M. (1973). "The strength of weak ties." *American Journal of Sociology* **78**: 1360-1380

<sup>10</sup> Unger, D. G. and A. Wandersman (1983). "Neighboring and its role in block organizations." *American Journal of Community Psychology* **11**: 291-300.

<sup>11</sup> Prestby, J. E. and A. Wandersman (1985). "An empirical exploration of a framework of organizational viability: Maintaining block organizations." *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* **21**(3): 287-305; Unger, D. G. and A. Wandersman (1985). "The importance of neighbors: The social, cognitive, and affective components of neighboring." *American Journal of Community Psychology* **13**(2): 139-169; Wandersman, A., P. Florin, et al. (1985). "Getting together and getting things done." *Psychology Today*: 65-71; Wandersman, A., P. Florin, et al. (1987). "Who participates, who does not, and why? An analysis of voluntary neighborhood organizations in the United States and Israel." *Sociological Forum* **2**: 534-555; Wandersman, A. and G. Giamartino (1980). "Community and individual difference characteristics as influences on initial participation." *American Journal of Community Psychology* **8**(2): 217-228; Wandersman, A., J. F. Jakubs, et al. (1981). "Participation in block organizations." *Community Action*: 40-47.

<sup>12</sup> Coleman, J. S. (1988). "Social capital in the creation of human capital." *American Journal of Sociology* **94**: 95-120; Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone*. New York, Simon and Schuster.

<sup>13</sup> Garcia, R. M., R. B. Taylor, et al. (2007). "Impacts of violent crime and neighborhood structure on trusting your neighbors." *Justice Quarterly* **24**(4): 679-704.

<sup>14</sup> Gibson, C. L., J. Zhao, et al. (2002). "Social integration, individual perceptions of collective efficacy, and fear of crime in three cities." *Justice Quarterly* **19**: 537-564.

<sup>15</sup> McMillan, D. W. and D. M. Chavis (1986). "Sense of community: A definition and a theory." *American Journal of Community Psychology* **14**: 6-23.

<sup>16</sup> Shumaker, S. A. and R. B. Taylor (1983). Toward a clarification of people-place relationships: A model of attachment to place. *Environmental psychology: Directions and perspectives*. N. R. Feimer and E. S. Geller. New York, Praeger: 219-256.

<sup>17</sup> Kasarda, J. D. and M. Janowitz (1974). "Community attachment in mass society." *American Sociological Review* **39**: 328-339; Sampson, R. J. (1988). "Local Friendship Ties and Community Attachment in Mass Society - a Multilevel Systemic Model." *American Sociological Review* **53**(5): 766-779.

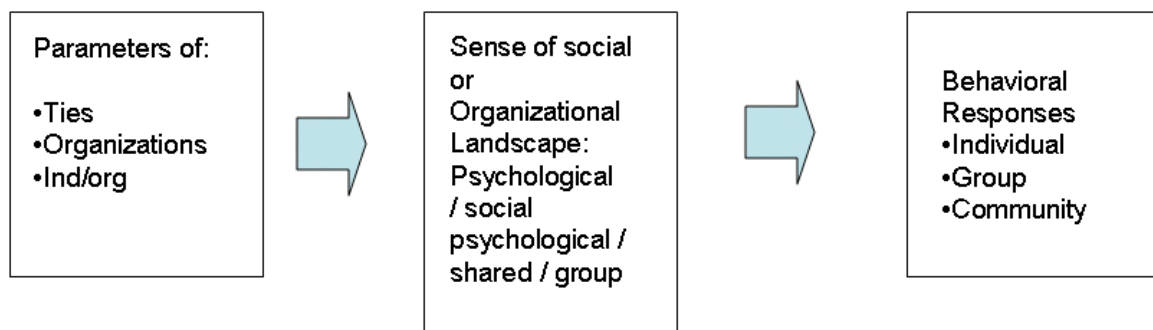
<sup>18</sup> Mann, P. H. (1954). "The concept of neighborliness." *American Journal of Sociology* **60**: 163-168.

<sup>19</sup> Perkins, D. D., P. Florin, et al. (1990). "Participation and the social and physical environment of residential blocks: Crime and community context." *American Journal of Community Psychology* **18**: 83-115.

These shared sentiments are expected to lead in many circumstances to behaviors where someone in the setting does something about deviant or troubling or criminal incidents.

Again, depending on the discipline the term used is different. In sociology researchers talk about informal social control<sup>20</sup> and willingness to intervene.<sup>21</sup> In the psychological literature terms such as bystander intervention,<sup>22</sup> territorial behaviors,<sup>23</sup> and deviation-countering mechanisms<sup>24</sup> are used. In the community psychology or political science literature there may just be reference to organizational initiatives.<sup>25</sup>

The social/behavioral dynamics are something like this:



**POC is going to ask: does a streetblock with high CE avoid crime? Does a streetblock with low CE get afflicted with a lot of crime?**

The streetblock is the two sides of the street between two cross streets.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Maccoby, E. E., J. P. Johnson, et al. (1958). "Community integration and the social control of juvenile delinquency." *Journal of Social Issues* **14**: 38-51; Greenberg, S. and W. Rohe (1986). Informal social control and crime prevention in modern urban neighborhoods. *Urban Neighborhoods: Research and Policy*. R. B. Taylor. New York, Praeger: 79-121.

<sup>21</sup> Hackler, J. C., K. Ho, et al. (1974). "The willingness to intervene: Differing community characteristics." *Social Problems* **21**: 328-344.

<sup>22</sup> Shotland, R. L. (1976). Spontaneous vigilantism: A bystander response to criminal behavior. *Vigilante politics*. H. J. Rosebaum and P. C. Sederberg. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press: 30-44. Shotland, R. L. and L. I. Goodstein (1984). "The role of bystanders in crime control." *Journal of Social Issues* **40**(1): 9-26.

<sup>23</sup> Taylor, R. B. (1988). *Human territorial functioning*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>24</sup> Barker, R. G. (1968). *Ecological psychology*. Stanford, Stanford University Press.

<sup>25</sup> Crenson, M. (1983). *Neighborhood politics*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press.

<sup>26</sup> Bechtel, R. B. (1977). *Enclosing behavior*. Stroudsburg: Dowden, Hutchinson and Ross.

## Incivilities

POC is also going to look at the effects of physical and social incivilities, what he calls disorder. I prefer the term incivilities because these indicators are intended to reflect the underlying concept, which is disorder.

Incivilities can be physical or social. Physical ones include things like abandoned houses or cars, vacant trash filled lots, houses in bad repair or structurally unsound. Social ones most prototypically include groups of unsupervised and rowdy teens, public drunkenness or panhandling, and related phenomena.

There is not one incivilities theory. There are several, and they have evolved over time, as you will learn about next week.<sup>27</sup> POC goes after one aspect of one particular version of this theory, called broken windows theory, made famous by James Q. Wilson and George Kelling in a 1982 *Atlantic Monthly* article.<sup>28</sup>

The specific idea in this version of the incivilities thesis POC examines is whether locations with more extensive incivilities will draw in offenders.

**You want to be clear that POC is not testing all pieces of the broken windows version of the incivilities thesis, nor is he testing other versions of the thesis. He is just testing one key idea.**

Whereas CE and SD theory have been framed specifically at the community level, different versions of the incivilities thesis have addressed either psychological, small group or streetblock, or neighborhood dynamics.

## Land use

POC pays a lot of attention to what offenders say about land use, more specifically, the number and types of non residential land uses in this primarily residential part of the city of Chicago.

There has been earlier work on land use mix, especially if combined with high traffic streets. Again, this work is spread over several disciplines. We know the following:

1. in high volume streets with non residential land uses residents withdraw from using outdoor spaces, find it harder to recognize who belongs, are less likely to intervene, and are more concerned for personal safety.<sup>29</sup> In short, resident-based

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<sup>27</sup> Taylor, R. B. (1999). The Incivilities thesis: Theory, measurement and policy. Measuring What Matters. R. L. Langworthy. Washington, DC, National Institute of Justice / Office of Community Oriented Policing Services: 65-88.

<sup>28</sup> Wilson, J. Q., & Kelling, G. (1982). Broken windows. *Atlantic Monthly*, 211(March), 29-38.

<sup>29</sup> Appleyard, D. (1981). Livable streets. Berkeley, University of California Press; Baum, A., A. G. Davis, et al. (1978). "Crowding and neighborhood mediation of urban density." *Journal of Population* 1: 266-279; McPherson, M. and G. Silloway (1986). The Role of the small commercial center in the urban

- surveillance will generally be weaker, and deterioration will be more extensive. Non-residential land uses create holes in resident-based patterns of informal control and surveillance.<sup>30</sup>
2. Non-residential land uses can draw potential offenders or potential victims. If the place just generates a lot of people, who could be either victims or offenders or neither, it is called a crime generator. If potential offenders intent on crime represent a significant volume of the people drawn into the location, it is called a crime attractor. These ideas were developed in behavioral geography and environmental criminology in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>31</sup>
  3. Presence of places with high numbers of crime generators or attractors, especially if combined with high volume arteries, are associated with more crime.<sup>32</sup>
  4. There are some very small scale places where a lot of crime takes place.<sup>33</sup> These are called crime hot spots. (Pay close attention to how POC defines hot spots of crime.) Very very often these hot spots are associated with crime generating or crime attracting non residential land uses.

**Why POC?** represents a significant attempt to understand how offenders perceive the opportunities and liabilities associated with different land use mixes. It seeks to learn how the offenders interpret what they see, and why they go to different places. Next time we will put this more squarely in the context of spatial or environmental criminology and behavioral geography, and the work on drug market location.

neighborhood. Urban neighborhoods: Research and policy. R. B. Taylor. New York, Praeger: 144-180; Kurtz, E., M., B. Koons, A., et al. (1998). "Land use, physical deterioration, resident-based control, and calls for service on urban streetblocks." Justice Quarterly **15**(1): 121-149; Taylor, R. B. (1997). "Social order and disorder of streetblocks and neighborhoods: Ecology, microecology and the systemic model of social disorganization." Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency **33**: 113-155; Taylor, R. B., B. Koons, A., et al. (1995). "Street blocks with more nonresidential land use have more physical deterioration: Evidence from Baltimore and Philadelphia." Urban Affairs Review **31**(1): 120-136; Taylor, R. B., S. A. Shumaker, et al. (1985). "Neighborhood-level links between physical features and local sentiments: Deterioration, fear of crime, and confidence." Journal of Architectural Planning and Research **2**: 261-275.

<sup>30</sup> Taylor (1988): 185-188.

<sup>31</sup> Brantingham, P. (1981). Notes on the geometry of crime. In P. Brantingham (Ed.), *Environmental Criminology*. Beverly Hills: Sage; Brantingham, P., Brantingham, P., & Wong, P. (1991). How Public Transit Feeds Private Crime: Notes on the Vancouver "Skytrain" Experience. *Security J.*, **2**, 91-95.

<sup>32</sup> For an example see: Greenberg, S. W., J. R. Williams, et al. (1982). "Safety in urban neighborhoods: A Comparison of physical characteristics and informal territorial control in high and low crime neighborhoods." Population and Environment **5**: 141-16; for a review see: McCord, E. S., J. H. Ratcliffe, et al. (2007). "Nonresidential crime attractors and generators elevate perceived neighborhood crime and incivilities." Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency **44**(3): 295-320; or Taylor, R. B. (1998). Crime in small scale places: What we know, what we can do about it. Research and Evaluation Conference 1997. Washington, DC, National Institute of Justice: 1-20.

<sup>33</sup> Sherman, L. W., Gartin, P. R., & Buerger, M. E. (1989). Hot spots of predatory crime: Routine activities and the criminology of place. *Criminology*, **27**, 27-56; Weisburd, D. (1997). Reorienting crime prevention research and policy: From the causes of criminality to the context of crime. *Research Report. National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, D.C.*

## Post-Mortem on: *Pockets of Crime* REVISED 11/10/08

At the front end of the memo I suggested I would defer discussion of three points about POC:

- It illustrates why you want to pay attention to the aggregation problem.
- It illustrates why you want to read outside of your field.

I return to those now. In addition, this section of the memo places POC in the context of a variety of theories known as **opportunity** theories.

### Aggregation

The aggregation problem refers to a range of conceptual, analytic, and measurement issues.<sup>34</sup> There are three related problems.

1. Conceptualizing and operationalizing constructs
2. Conceptualizing processes
3. Measurement, associations, and convergent and discriminant validation

1. Conceptualizing constructs. Say you have a variable: whether a male pre-teen or teen self reports having engaged in one or more delinquent acts in the past 12 months.<sup>35</sup>

At the individual level, this variable represents his propensity to be involved in delinquent acts. It is a property of persons.

Say you have done household surveys of teens and pre-teens in a residential neighborhood. Now you decide to aggregate the indicator up to the level of the streetblock. In this neighborhood there are lots of children, and long streetblocks, so there are at least five children per streetblock.

If you look at the variable at this level – the prevalence rate for self reported delinquents at the streetblock level – scores are no longer properties of individuals, but rather of these small groups.

Now suppose you have done these household surveys in a random sample of neighborhoods across a city. You have multiple streetblocks sampled in each neighborhood. Your sampling plan was such that you focused on neighborhoods and streetblocks where there were sufficient numbers of preteens and teens.

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<sup>34</sup> Hannan, M. T. (1971). Aggregation and disaggregation in sociology. Lexington Books, Lexington, MA.  
Hannan, M. T. (1971). Problems of aggregation. Causal models in the social sciences. H. M. Blalock. Chicago, Aldine: 473-508.

<sup>35</sup> Hindelang, M. J., T. Hirschi, et al. (1981). Measuring delinquency. Beverly Hills, Sage.

Now your conceptual focus is on the neighborhood prevalence rates: what fraction of the eligible preteen and teen males in each neighborhood self reported engaging in one or more delinquent acts in the past 12 months.

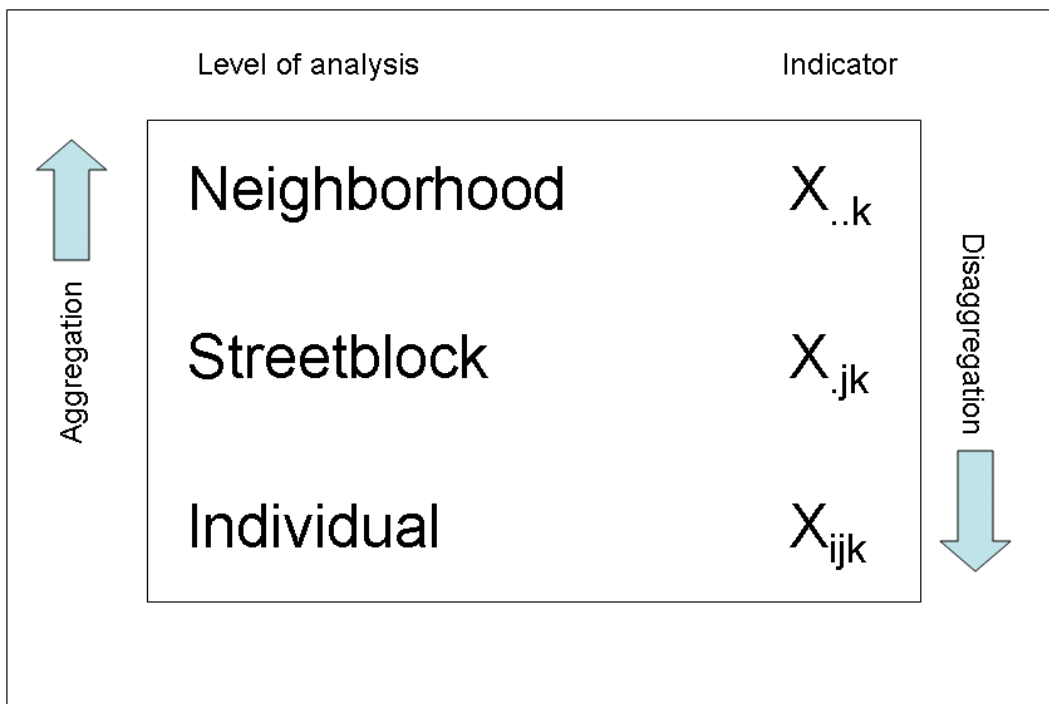
You have the same variable, but as you aggregate it up *it becomes a property of different units, and therefore represents different concepts.*

Scores on individual delinquent involvement [  $X_{ijk}$  ] operationalize a construct or concept that is different from the construct or concept operationalized by street block prevalence rates [  $X_{.jk}$  ] ; each of these in turn are different from the construct or concept operationalized by neighborhood delinquency prevalence rates [  $X_{..k}$  ] .

Even though you might be working with the same variable!

**As you aggregate – or disaggregate! – you are changing the meaning of the variable. It becomes a different construct.**

$$X_{ijk} \neq X_{.jk} \neq X_{..k}$$



2. Conceptualizing processes. Now on to processes. Suppose you think that involvement in delinquent acts is likely to lead to using alcohol. (It could work and does work the other way too, but let's keep this simple for the moment. <sup>36</sup>)

You have an indicator for drinking (Y): scores on an index capturing whether the individual has had one or more drinks of different types in the last 30 days.

Your model is:  $X \rightarrow Y$

If we are concerned about processes (  $\rightarrow$  ) then we are concerned about the dynamics – behaviors, attitudes, cognitions, sentiments – that create this linkage.

At the individual level the processes are going to involve **psychological** dynamics: as a result of doing delinquent acts (and not being caught?), I find risky and taboo activities more enjoyable and thus seek out alcohol.

At the streetblock level the processes are going to involve **small group** dynamics: if there is a higher prevalence rate on the block, then the preteen and teen male group norm shifts, becoming more strongly in favor of breaking other age-graded laws, and thus more in favor of finding and drinking alcohol.

At the neighborhood level the processes are going to involve **community or ecological dynamics**: in neighborhoods with higher prevalence rates, adult residents and store owners become more afraid of youth. Store owners don't care if under age kids purchase, or if adults buy alcohol for teens or preteens; residents as a group are less likely to report under age drinking if they see it. They are more tolerant of the deviance.<sup>37</sup>

**The processes are different at different levels of analyses, so the hypotheses and rationales should be different as well.**

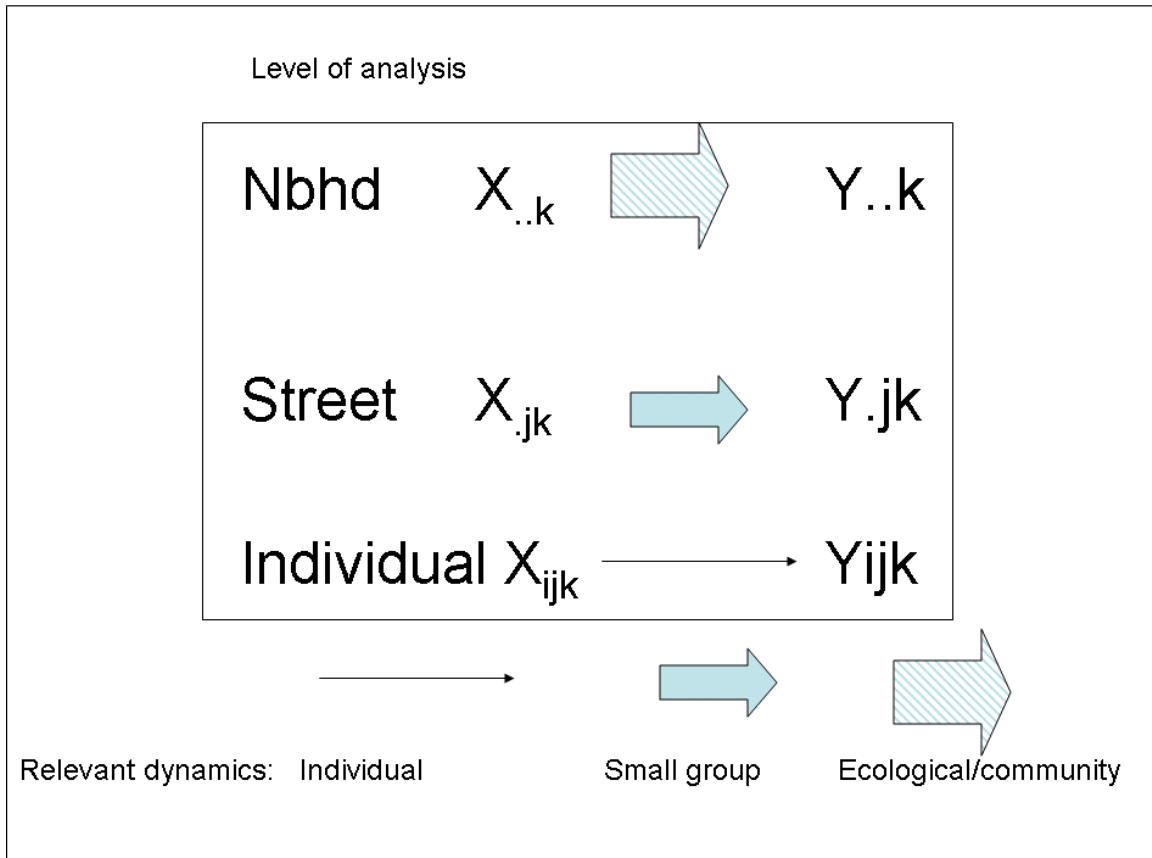
$$\rightarrow_{ijk} \neq \rightarrow_{.jk} \neq \rightarrow_{..k}$$

Again, this is true even if you have the same predictor and outcome variables aggregated to different levels of analysis.

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<sup>36</sup> Greenfeld, L. (1998). Alcohol and Crime. Washington, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

<sup>37</sup> See for example: Sampson, R. and D. J. Bartusch (1998). "Legal cynicism and (subcultural?) Tolerance of deviance: the neighborhood context of racial differences." Law and Society Review **32**: 777-804.



This is why if you find a relationship at a specific level of aggregation, it does not apply to another level of aggregation. Because the processes are different at different levels of aggregation.

If you infer that an ecological relationship also exists at a lower level of aggregation, you are committing the **ecological fallacy**.<sup>38</sup>

Because official delinquency rates are higher in neighborhoods with higher poverty rates, and assume I know this is a causal relationship, I infer that individual boys are more likely to become delinquent if they come from a household where income is below the poverty line. I am committing the fallacy because this may or may not be true.

If you infer that an individual level relationship also exists at a higher level of aggregation, you are committing the **individual fallacy**.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Thorndike, E. L. (1939). "On the fallacy of imputing the correlations found for groups to the individuals in smaller groups composing them." *American Journal of Psychology* **52**: 122-124.

Robinson, W. S. (1950). "Ecological correlations and the behavior of individuals." *American Sociological Review* **15**: 351-357.

<sup>39</sup> Alker, H. R. (1969). A typology of ecological fallacies. *Quantitative ecological analysis in the social sciences*. M. Dogan and S. Rokkan. Cambridge, MIT Press: 69-86.

Because I find that individual boys are less likely to become delinquent if they attend school more regularly, I conclude that neighborhoods where high school attendance rates are higher will as a result have lower delinquency rates. Making this inference is committing the individual fallacy because this may or may not be true.

In *Pockets of Crime* St. Jean suggests he is testing collective efficacy (CE) theory (Sampson et al. 1997). CE has been proposed as relevant to community level differences. Until this book, no one (to my knowledge) has proposed that **the same processes** are responsible for streetblock level differences.

Streetblocks are small, face-to-face groups. Social psychological,<sup>40</sup> and micro-ecological processes are relevant for understanding differences and changes.<sup>41</sup> Communities like neighborhoods or police districts or census tracts are ecological, and ecological processes<sup>42</sup> as well as sociological and political ones are relevant for understanding these differences. These community-level processes might be based on small groups (focus on neighborhood leaders), large groups (average sentiment across all residents), organizational (focus on organizational power), political (focus on neighborhood position in local political economy), or cultural (differences in race and ethnicities across neighborhoods).

See the first memo handed out at the beginning of the semester.<sup>43</sup> Note the discussion (p. 3, section 3.a.) about inferences across levels of analysis and also the point about focus of convenience for a theory (section 1.b. p. 1).

In other words, a case can be made that what *Pockets of Crime* does, attempting to apply CE theory to streetblocks does not really represent a fair test of CE theory.

CE is a version of a social capital theory that primarily focuses on between community differences. To see if it applies to explaining streetblock differences takes it away from its “focus of convenience.” It is an attempt to extend rather than test the theory.

3. Measurement and associations. It is axiomatic that correlations between variables change their strength as you aggregate or disaggregate. Usually that which is related becomes more strongly related as you aggregate, and less weakly related as you

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<sup>40</sup> Homans, G. (1950). *The Human group*. New York, Harcourt, Brace; Newcomb, T. M. (1961). *The Acquaintance Process*. New York, Holt, Rhinehart and Winston.

<sup>41</sup> Taylor, R. B. (1997). "Social order and disorder of streetblocks and neighborhoods: Ecology, microecology and the systemic model of social disorganization." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* **33**: 113-155.

<sup>42</sup> Hawley, A. (1950). *Human Ecology*. New York, Roland; Hawley, A. H. (1981). "Human ecology." *American Behavioral Scientist* **24**: 423-444; Hawley, A. H. (1984). *Sociological human ecology. Sociological human ecology*. M. Micklin and H. M. Choldin. Boulder, Westview Press: 1-17.

<sup>43</sup> [http://www.rbtaylor.net/406\\_fa08\\_hand\\_20060908.pdf](http://www.rbtaylor.net/406_fa08_hand_20060908.pdf)

disaggregate.<sup>44</sup> Sometimes when you get to high levels of aggregation, like states, everything relates to everything else, and theory testing becomes extremely difficult.<sup>45</sup>

Recall that the construct validity – the meaning – of a variable or an index depends on how closely it ties to other indicators of the same underlying construct (convergent validity), and how independent it is of indicators from non-related constructs (discriminant validity).<sup>46</sup>

Let's say I have three indicators of self-reported delinquent involvement: getting into fights (D1), committing planned property crimes (D2), and defying parents or caretakers (D3). Say I also have three indicators of social status: education level of parent or caretaker (S1), whether parent or caretaker is employed (S2), and standardized prestige of parent's or caretaker's most recent job. (All the status indicators are reversed so a higher score indicates *lower* status.)

Say the correlations look like this:

*Individual level correlations (status indicators reversed; hypothetical data)*

	D1	D2	D3	S1	S2	S3
D1	1					
D2	0.6	1				
D3	0.7	0.5	1			
S1	0.2	0.15	0.25	1		
S2	0.13	0.22	0.11	0.8	1	
S3	0.18	0.38	-0.03	0.6	0.75	1

You can see that the two sets of indicators are relatively distinct. The between-construct correlations, inside the box, you expect to be low, and generally they are. The within-construct correlations you expect to be high or at least higher, and they are. If you submitted this matrix to a principal components analysis you would get two relatively clean factors, suggesting two independent underlying constructs.

But suppose at the neighborhood level the correlations look like this:

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<sup>44</sup> Hannan (1971).

<sup>45</sup> For a great discussion of this problem see: Gottfredson, G. D. (1979). "Models and muddles: An ecological examination of high school crime rates." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* **16**: 307-331.

<sup>46</sup> Campbell, D. and D. Fiske (1959). "Convergent and discriminant validation by the multitrait-multimethod matrix." *Psychological Bulletin* **56**(2): 81-105.

*Community level correlations (status indicators reversed; hypothetical data)*

	D1	D2	D3	S1	S2	S3
D1	1					
D2	0.7	1				
D3	0.75	0.58	1			
S1	0.45	0.39	0.35	1		
S2	0.4	0.44	0.25	0.85	1	
S3	0.32	0.65	0.09	0.65	0.62	1

The pattern about what belongs to what appears a lot fuzzier. The inter-correlations *across* the two indicators (inside box) are much stronger.

It is not clear that the three status indicators are really that distinct from the delinquency indicators *at this level of analysis*.

In this situation it is much harder to make a case that the three delinquency indicators form an identifiable “construct” that is independent of the three status indicators.

This becomes relevant when we are thinking about either CE or incivilities.

At the streetblock or neighborhood level, will our tests of discriminant validity allow us to separate these two from one another? To separate each from status of the streetblock or neighborhood?

*Pockets of Crime* does not give us any tests of how inter-related land use, incivilities, or CE are at the streetblock level.

It is not clear, therefore, that at this level, these are distinct constructs.

#### *Reading outside your field*

John Eck in one of his presentations last month (10/08) indicated that all of his reading is outside of his field, because that is where the interesting information is. Others in other fields have counseled similarly.<sup>47</sup>

As you can see, starting at footnote 29, there is lots that St. Jean missed.

Let’s take his idea that crime is not evenly distributed even in a high crime neighborhood.

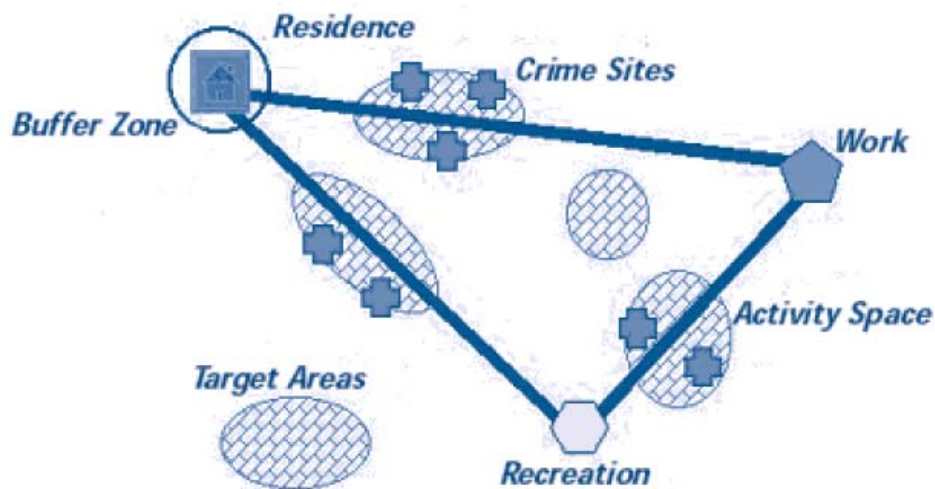
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<sup>47</sup> McGuire, W. J. (1973). The Yin and Yang of progress in social psychology: Seven koan. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 26(3), 446-456.

Environmental psychologists first brought this to our attention in the 1970s.<sup>48</sup> Brantingham et al. (1976) suggested that at every level of resolution crime differences emerged. They demonstrated crime differences starting with the nation, and ended up showing differences across census blocks within a single census block group in Tallahassee. Comparable insights emerge in the natural world in the studies of fractals.

St. Jean missed the criminological work on crime hot spots, which suggested crime hot spots were often associated with specific land uses.<sup>49</sup>

He missed the earlier work environmental criminology work grounded in behavioral geography focusing specifically on land use and how it structures where offenders go as part of their routine activities (activity space), and how that structures where they look for targets (search space). See the figure below.<sup>50</sup> Residence, work, and recreation are nodes, with the latter two determined by specific nonresidential land uses. Routes connect them and create an activity space. Around the routes (not shown) is an awareness space. Spaces where offenders search for good targets will be anchored by these activity and awareness spaces.



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<sup>48</sup> Brantingham, P. J., D. A. Dyreson, et al. (1976). "Crime seen through a cone of resolution." *American Behavioral Scientist* **20**: 261-274.

<sup>49</sup> Sherman et al. (1989).

<sup>50</sup> This is an adaptation from: Brantingham, P. J., & Brantingham, P. L. (1991). Notes on the geometry of crime. In P. J. Brantingham & P. L. Brantingham (Eds.), *Environmental criminology* (pp. 27-54). Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

Environmental criminology argues that these distributions of non-residential places constitute a “backcloth” which shapes offending spatial behavior. *Pockets of crime* can be viewed as a confirmation of this idea, based largely on offenders’s views or offenders’ templates.

*Opportunity Theory and Closing Thoughts*

*Pockets of crime* is a book that brings us a lot of insights. It is the only example in this course of an **opportunity theory**. These theories concentrate on features outside the offender, making crime more or less likely.

Most widely known is **routine activity theory**.<sup>51</sup> It argues that a conjunction in space and time of available targets, a lack of capable guardians of those targets, and proximity of motivated offenders, make crime more likely. POC has more recently been elaborated to include elements of bonding theory (with its term intimate handlers of potential offenders) and human territorial functioning (with its term place managers).<sup>52</sup>

**POC can be interpreted as an extended conversation about routine activity theory from the perspective of offenders.** It is valuable because it tells how offenders conceptualize opportunities and targets. As you can see it is a complex process.

Other works have provided similar in depth information about specific types of offenders such as armed robbers<sup>53</sup> and burglars.<sup>54</sup>

Paul & Patricia Brantingham’s **crime pattern theory** is like opportunity theory in some ways, in that it concentrates on land use features that make targets or victims more available, or make it more likely that potential offenders and potential targets will come into contact. It is different in that the dynamics are embedded in offender-based behavioral geography, noted above.<sup>55</sup>

Of key interest for crime pattern theory are land uses which are crime generators or crime attractors. These were mentioned above in the discussion on land use.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Eck, J. (1995). REVIEW ESSAY: Examining routine activity theory. *Justice Quarterly*, 12, 783-797.

<sup>52</sup> Felson, M. (1995). Those who discourage crime. In J. E. Eck & D. Weisburd (Eds.), *Crime and Place* (pp. 53-66). Monsey, NY: Criminal Justice Press.

<sup>53</sup> Wright, R. T., & Decker, S. (1997). *Armed Robbers in Action: Stick-up and Street Culture*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

<sup>54</sup> Wright, R. T., & Decker, S. H. (1994). *Burglars on the job: Streetlife and residential breakins*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

<sup>55</sup> Brantingham & Brantingham (1991)

<sup>56</sup> From McCord et al. (2007: 299):

Crime generators are businesses, institutions, and facilities that bring large numbers of different kinds of people into a locale. Among those brought to the locale are some potential offenders and some potential victims. In this study, the three types of land uses classified as generators are high schools (Roncek and Faggiani 1985; Roncek and Lobosco 1983), subway stops (Block and Block 2000), and expressway off ramps (Eck and Weisburd 1995). The large volume using or passing through these locations generates not only many opportunities for crime but also physical and social incivilities. The former reflects the deterioration associated with the higher use pattern, and the latter may emerge from both the users

*POC* helps us understand why and how experienced offenders pay attention to these types of land uses. As you can see, **the land use features intersect in complicated ways with the volume and types of foot traffic** in and around these locations.

Although *POC* does not address “motivated offenders” it can be assumed, since this is a high crime neighborhood, that there are many offenders nearby. Therefore it seems safe to guess that the high crime locations in the neighborhood were well known to them.

A framework more grounded in behavioral geography would have sought additional information on the journeys to crime, and the journeys away from crime, so that crime locations could be better integrated into a broader understanding of offender spatial behavior patterns.

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themselves and the weakened resident-based informal surveillance linked to such “holes” in the residential fabric (Baum, Davis, and Aiello 1978; Taylor et al. 1995). Given the incivilities appearing, residents nearby should perceive more disorder. Given the increased crime and victimization opportunities, residents nearby should perceive more crime problems. Crime attractors, like generators, draw in outside users. But given the purposes of these land uses and the composition of those drawn there for these purposes, a higher fraction of potential offenders or victims is likely with attractors. Pawn brokers, check-cashing stores, drug-treatment centers, halfway houses, homeless shelters, beer establishments, and liquor clubs were grouped together as crime attractors here and were expected to generate localized crime and incivilities, which would then be perceived by residents.