DON'T GO THERE…

Hot Spots, Dens of Iniquity and

Risky Facilities,

or

Why Do So Many Bad Things Happen at a Few Places

John E. Eck, PhD

Division of Criminal Justice

University of Cincinnati

WHAT IS COMMON ABOUT THISE PLACES?

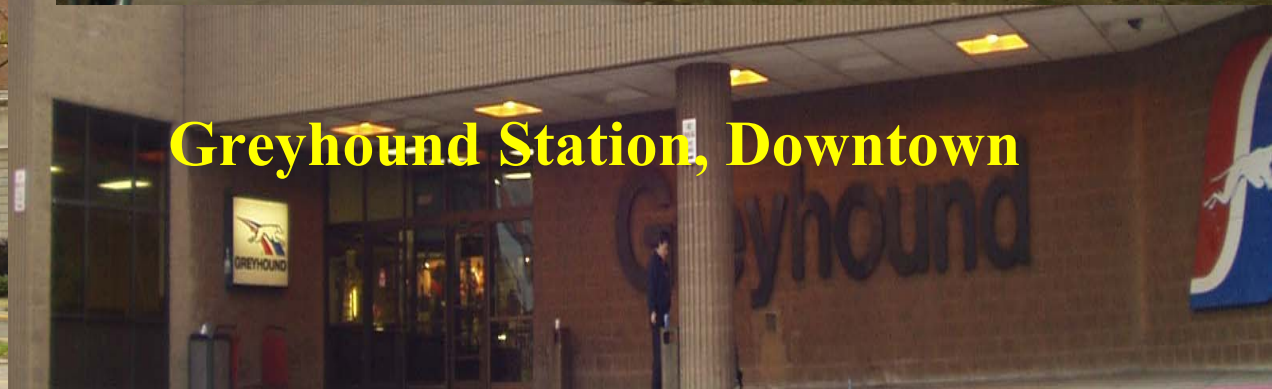
Gas Station, E. Liberty

University Hospital

Drop-In Center

Corryville Shopping Cntr

Alms Apartment



Greyhound Station, Downtown

They are among the
Top 10 Call Locations
for Cincinnati, 2003

1. University Hospital – 824 calls
2. Corry St. Shopping Ctr – 734 calls
3. Drop-In Center – 532 calls
4. W. Liberty Gas Station – 429 calls
5. Alms Apartments – 419 calls
6. Westwood Apt Complex – 347 calls
7. Westwood Apt Complex – 296 calls
8. Greyhound Bus Station – 288 calls
9. Kenard Ave. Grocery Store – 268 calls
10. Childrens Hospital – 250 calls

Thanks to Cincinnati PD for data

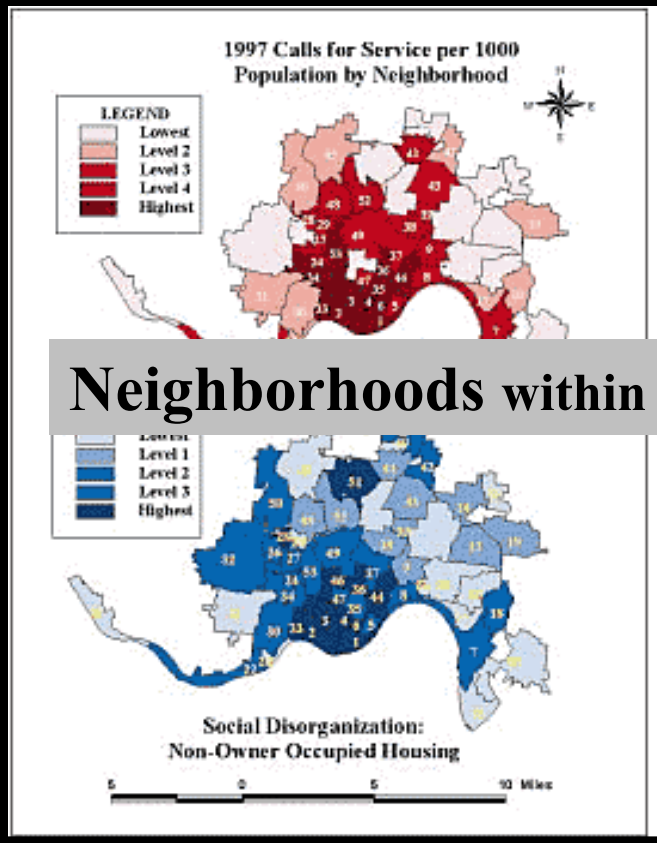
OVERVIEW

- Problem
- 80-20 rule
- Theories
- Responding

PROBLEM

- **Crime & Disorder are concentrated**
- **Concentration at places**
- **Why would some places be worse than others?**
- **Concept confusion (Is this just another hot spot lecture?)**

"HOT SPOT" COVERS A MULTITUDE OF SINS IN MANY SCALES



Neighborhoods within cities

Figure 5.16

(Top) A map showing calls for service in 1997 per 1,000 people by neighborhood in

which can be used as an index of p social disorga

Sources: Sha and analysis A. Ball, COPS Regional Inst and M. Neun Cincinnati, O Police Depart Adapted by p

Areas within Neighborhoods

Figure 4.16

ap showing hot ot changes over e: Detroit, 1994 and 1997.

Source: Martin, rnes, and Britt, 1998, figure 3. Reproduced by permission.

Places within areas

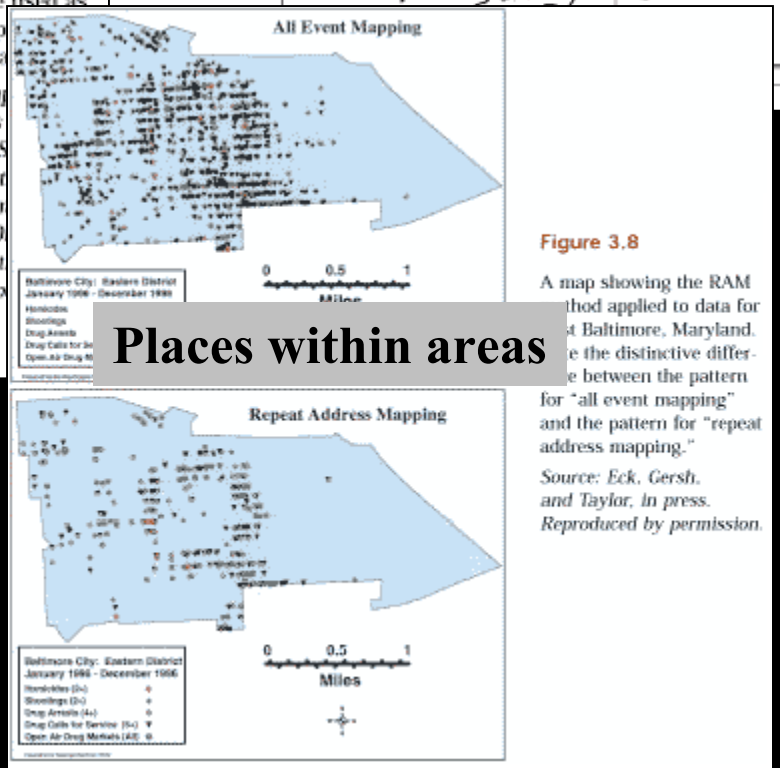


Figure 3.8

A map showing the RAM thod applied to data for t Baltimore, Maryland. e the distinctive differ- e between the pattern for "all event mapping" and the pattern for "repeat address mapping."

Source: Eck, Gersh, and Taylor, in press. Reproduced by permission.

Illustrations from
K. Harries *Mapping Crime: Principle and Practice*
http://www.ncjrs.org/html/nij/mapping/index.html

DENS ARE HOT PLACES

Watch on pubs, clubs to find crime hot spots

By Chee Chee Leung,
Xavier La Canna
January 5, 2004

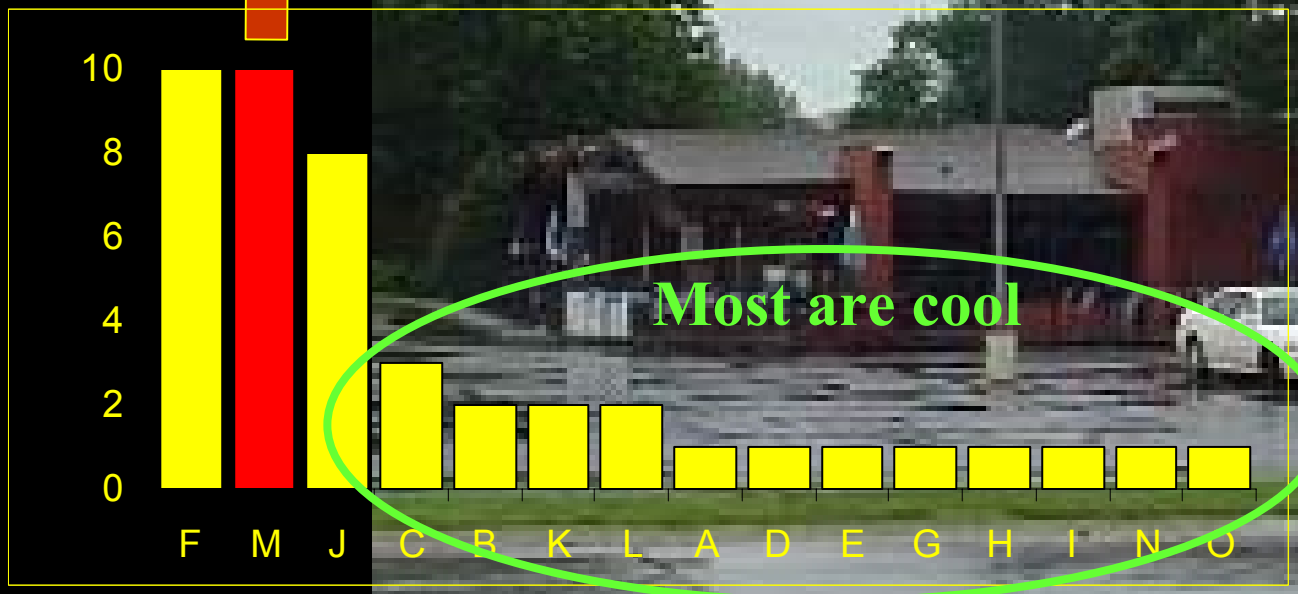
FairfaxDigital http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2004/01/04/1073151212371.html

Alcohol-related crime in Melbourne's inner suburbs could be traced to specific venues, with a pilot program to identify problem areas and operators.
While the $110,000, one-year pilot program operates, hospitals will be encouraged to electronically transfer information to police when a patient is admitted after an incident in a nightclub precinct, to be investigated when police identify a pattern emerging from particular hotels or nightclubs.

RISKY FACILITY ANALYSIS FOCUS ON A SINGLE TYPE OF PLACE

BARS IN SHAWNEE (KS)
VARY IN THE TROUBLE THEY PRODUCE

A few are hot



Most are cool

Thanks to Susan Wernicke, Shawnee PD

80/20 RULE

- Applies to ANY Facility
- Seldom Exactly 80-20
- Most Facilities Are Cold - A Few Are Hot
- Most Bad Things Happen In A Few Facilities – Regardless Type
- This Is A Law of Thumb

Worst 20% (3) of the bars account for 62% of reports

SHOPLIFTING REPORTS, DANVERS (CT) STORES
(October 1, 03 to Sept. 30, 04)
hightest 17 of 78 stores shown

Highest 20.3% produce 84.9% of reports

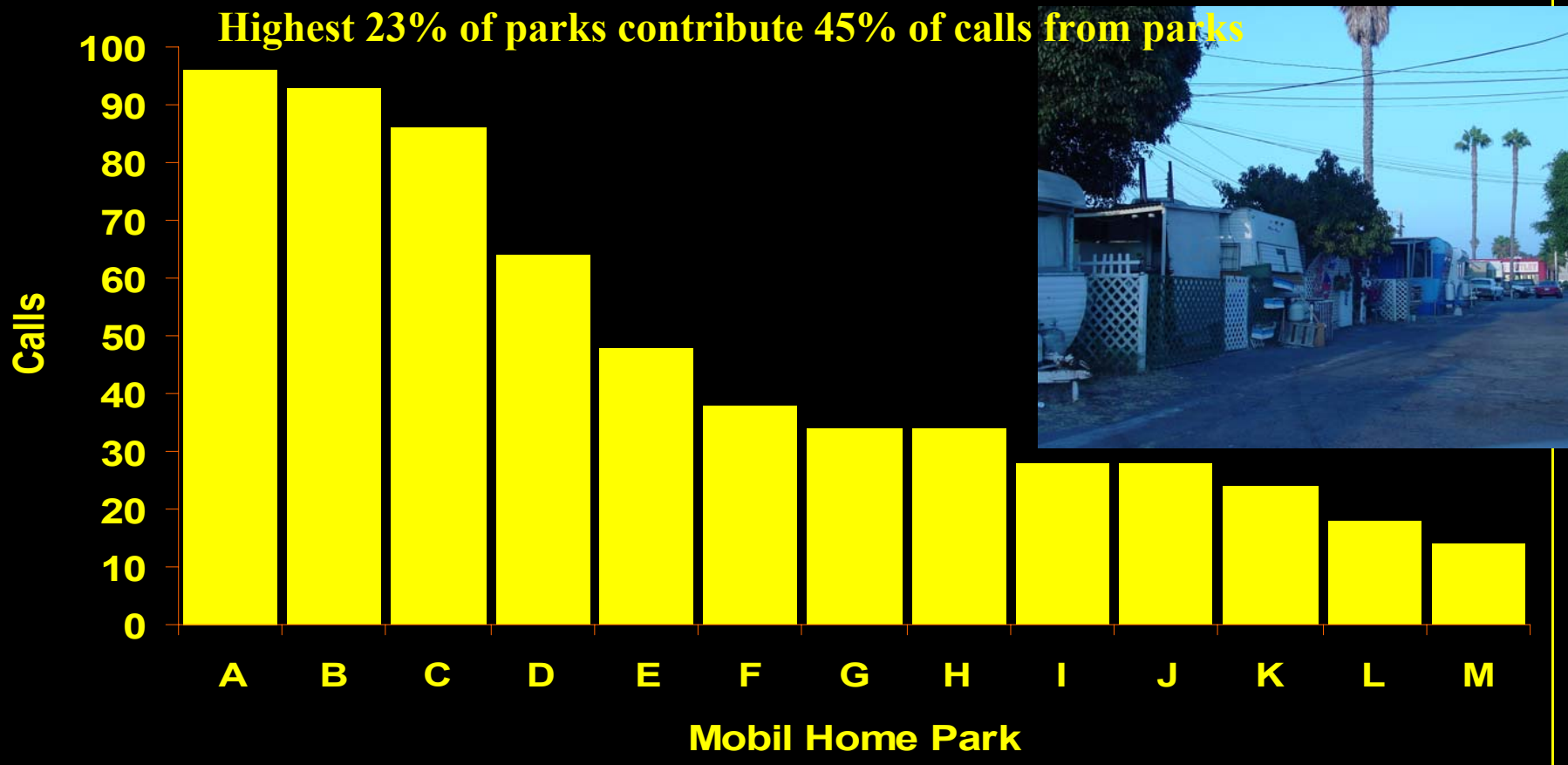
Thanks to Christopher Bruce, Danvers PD

Violent Crimes in Apartment Complexes with over 50 Units Jacksonville FL

Most violent 20% account for 48% of incidents

Thanks to Stacy Belledin, Jacksonville-Duval SD

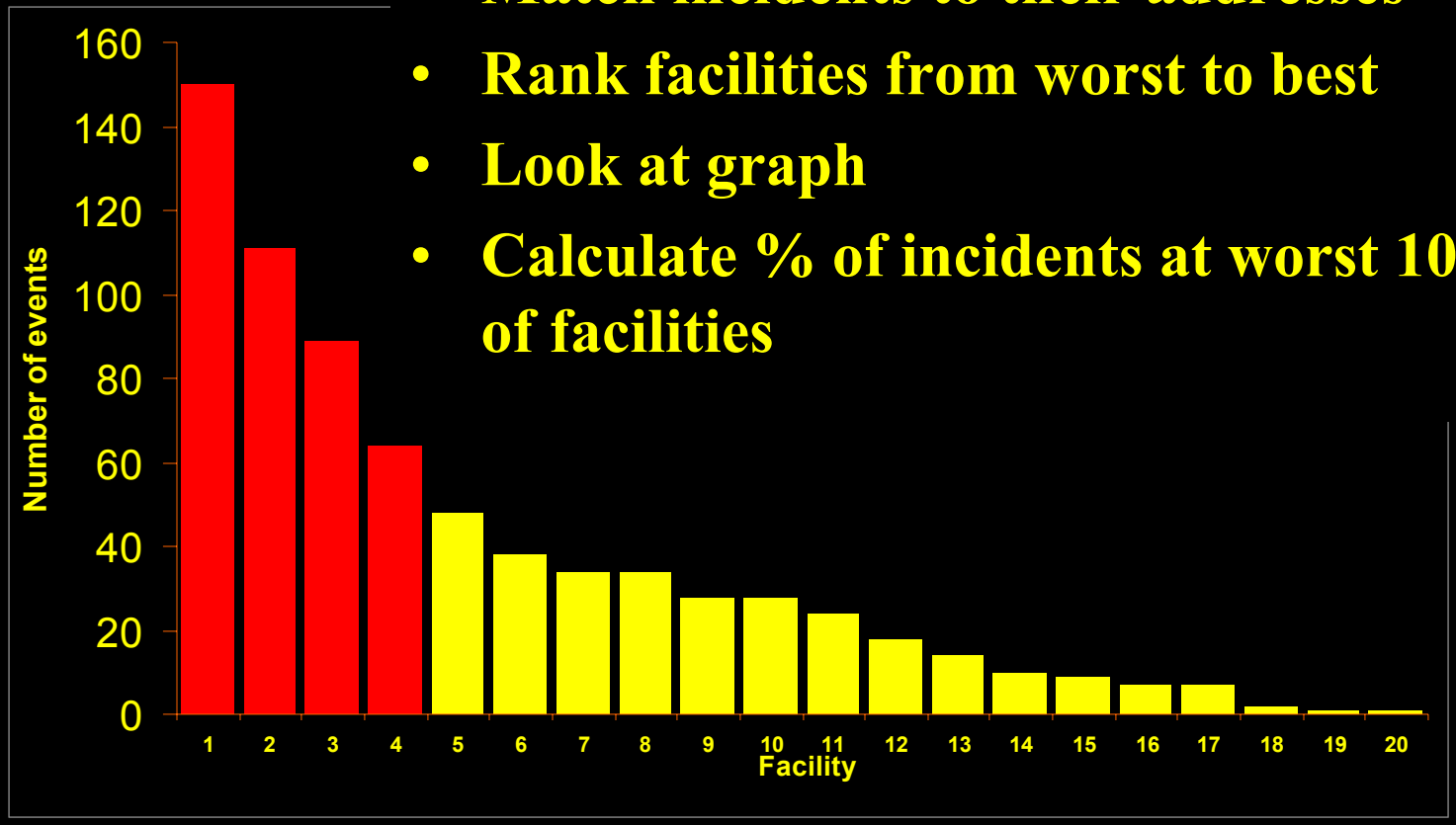
CALLS FROM MOBILE HOME PARKS IN CHULA VISTA CA
July 30, 2003 through July 29, 2004



Thanks to Karin Schmerler and Aaron Anderson, Chula Vista PD

SCANNING FOR RISKY FACILITIES

- Select a facility type important to your agency
- Get a list of everyone of them, with their addresses
- Match incidents to their addresses
- Rank facilities from worst to best
- Look at graph
- Calculate % of incidents at worst 10% or 20% of facilities



THEORIES OF CAUSES

- **RANDOM VARIATION**
- **REPORTING**

- **MANY TARGETS/USERS**
  - **Crime generators***
- **LOTS OF OFFENDERS**
  - **Crime attractors***
- **POOR MANAGEMENT**
  - **Crime enablers****

*** Brantingham & Brantingham (1995) "Criminality of Place…"**
**** Clarke & Eck (2003) *Becoming a Problem Solving Crime Analyst…***

RANDOM VARIATION

- **Possible to get concentration in a few places by some fluke of randomness**
- **Most likely when**
  - Few locations
  - Number of events is low
  - Time period examined is short
  - Concentration is low
- **Unlikely in most cases**
  - Statistical tests available
  - If persistently hot over time, probably not random

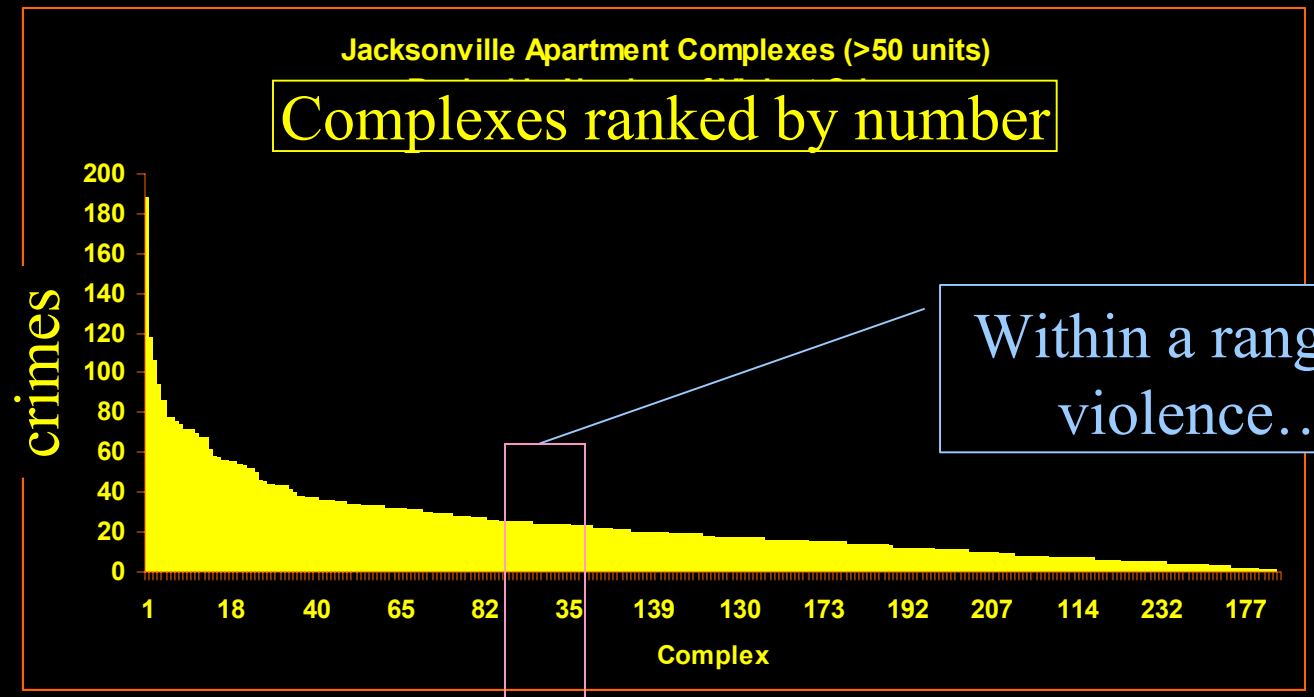
REPORTING

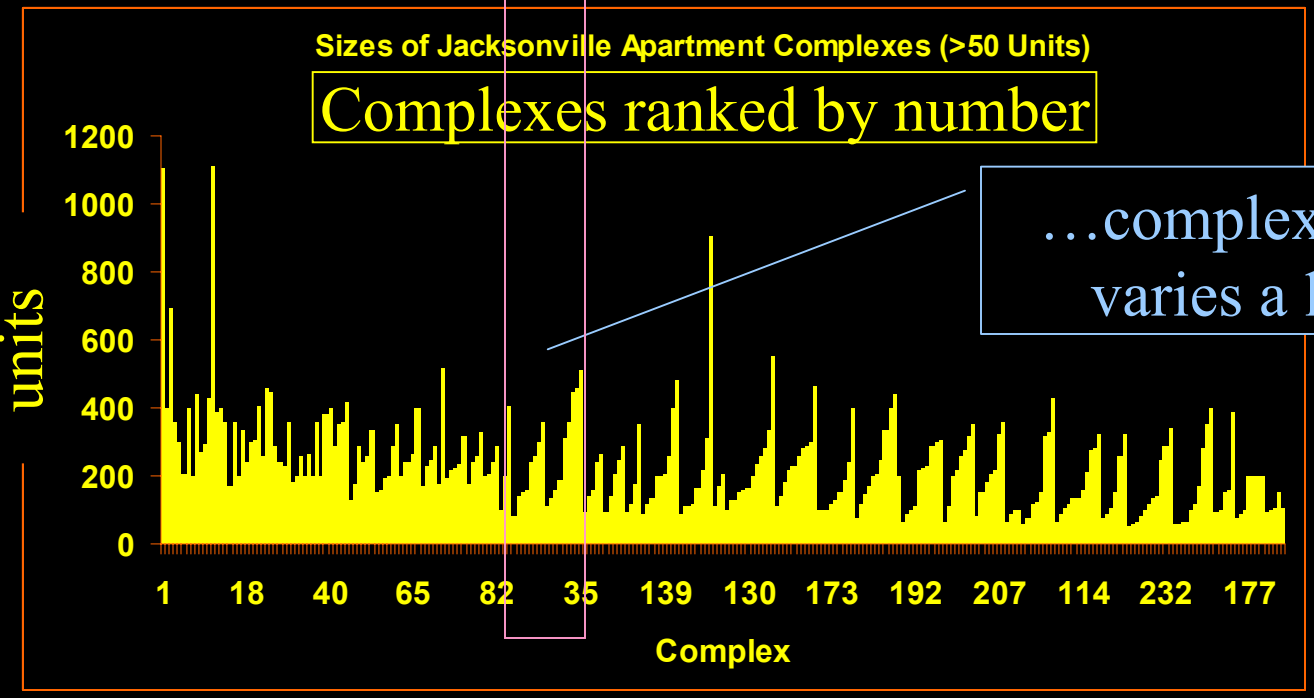
- **Facilities are hot because of organizational reporting behavior, not crimes per se**
- **Organization controls reporting**
  - Shoplifting
  - Thefts from hospital patients
  - Minor assaults in homeless shelters
  - Police arrest statistics
  - etc.
- **Less likely when victims can report directly**

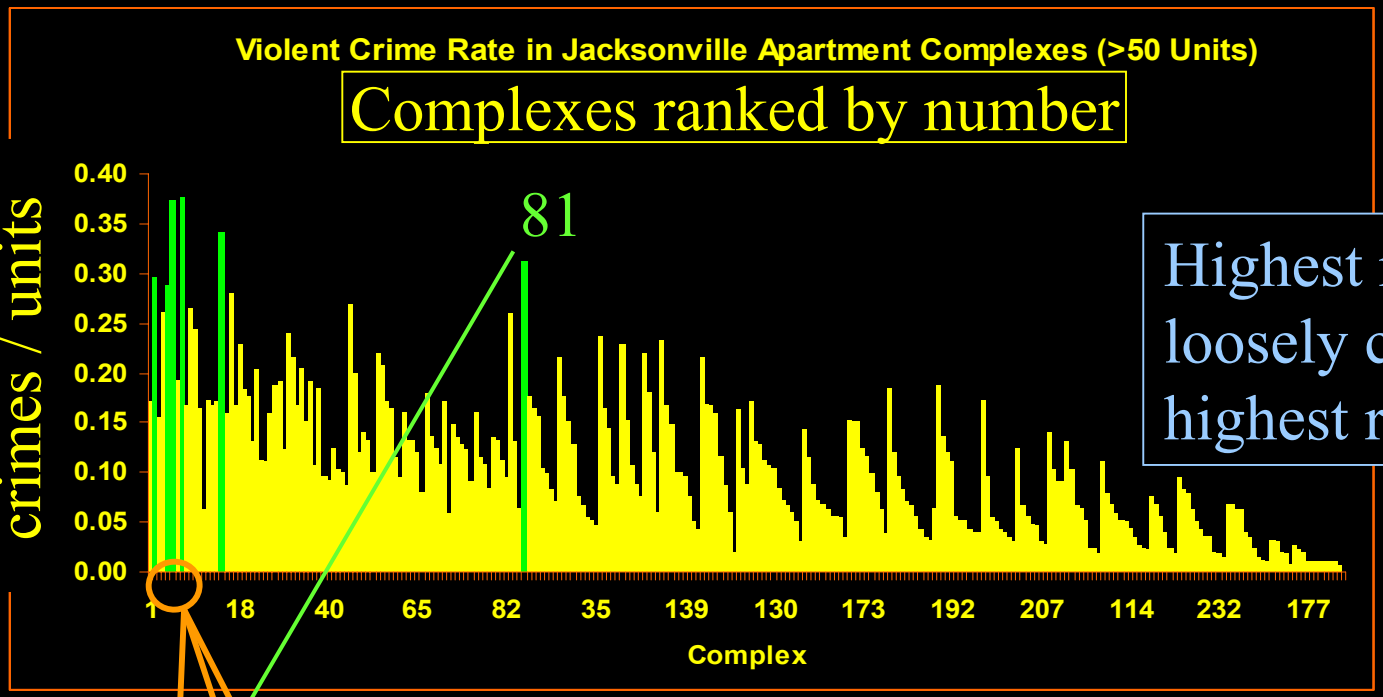
MANY TARGETS*
(crime generators)

- **Bigger facilities have more targets**
- **More targets mean more crime**
- **Testable by examining risk – events/size**
- **Watch for two things**
  - Change in shape of graph
  - Change in position of facilities on graph

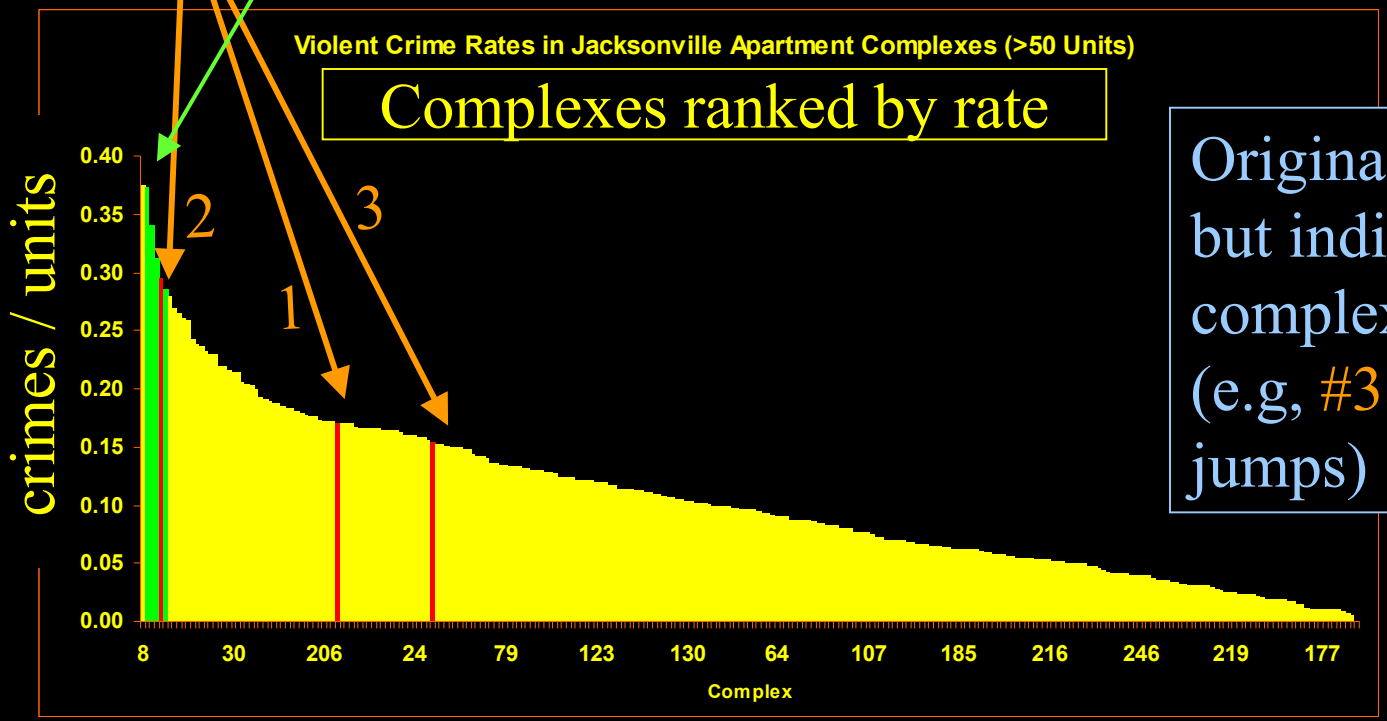
*** AKA the "Size Matters Thesis"**


Jacksonville Apartment Complexes (>50 units)
Complexes ranked by number
crimes
200
180
160
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
1
18
40
65
82
35
139
130
173
192
207
114
232
177
Complex
Within a range of violence…


Sizes of Jacksonville Apartment Complexes (>50 Units)
Complexes ranked by number
units
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
0
1
18
40
65
82
35
139
130
173
192
207
114
232
177
Complex
…complex size varies a lot.



Highest rates only loosely correspond to highest ranks



Original shape similar, but individual complexes shift rank (e.g, #3 declines, #81 jumps)

NOTE THE FAMILIAR SHAPE

Size is measured by number of rooms.
But there may be other measures you could use.

Thanks to Karin Schmerler, Chula Vista PD

DOES SIZE MATTER?

- **Hard to tell - often difficult to get size data!**
  - **Consistent records often unavailable**
  - **Measures are often less than ideal**

- **Size is often over rated – seldom entire story**
  - **Compare graphs of numbers and rates**

- **Which to target – high numbers or rates?**
  - to reduce incidents and workload, number
  - to reduce risk, rate

LOTS OF OFFENDERS*
(crime attractors)

- Common explanation
- Hard to verify
  - Many offenders, or
  - Few very active offenders
- Probably part of all risky facility problems
- Why do offenders come to these places?

*AKA "The Psycho hypothesis."

POOR MANAGEMENT
(crime enablers)

- **Owners & employees fail to regulate behavior**
- **Reduces protection to targets**
- **Enables offenders**
- **Common examples include**
  - Persistent drug dealing places
  - Violent drinking places
  - Student rental housing
  - Abandoned buildings

WHAT IS POOR MANAGEMENT?
The role of enablers.

- Make offending less risky through lax guardianship
- Do little to reduce rewards for offending
- Reduce effort for offending
- Allow excuses for misbehavior
- Provide provocations for misbehavior

RESPONDING

- **Randomness – ignore it** (it will go away by itself)
- **Reporting –** create consistent reporting across facilities (to get better picture)
- **Size – work on biggest** contributors to workload
- **Offenders – work on attractive features**
- **Management – address ownership of problem**