Situational Crime Prevention in Correctional Facilities

Richard Wortley

School of Criminology and Criminal Justice

Griffith University

Brisbane

Australia

Overview

- What is situational prevention?

- Situational analysis of prison disorder

- What works? Examining the literature

- A general model of situational prevention in prison

- Case Study: HM Prison Glen Parva

- Conclusions

What is situational prevention?

- All behaviour is a result of person *and* situation

- The potential to commit crime is widely distributed in the community

- A great deal of crime is opportunistic

- Even planned crime is governed by situational factors

- Crime is not a random event

- We can't change offenders but we can change situations

- We can use an understanding of crime patterns to *detect* and *prevent* crime

Situational Analysis of Prison Disorder

- Traditional focus on:
  - Dangerous prisoners – person-centred
  - Dangerous institutions – macro approach
  - Tightening-up – target hardening
  - Responding to crises – reactive

- Situational focus on:
  - Disorder events – behaviour-specific
  - Specific dynamics – micro-analysis
  - Causes – not just target hardening
  - Problem-solving approach – what, where, when, why?

- **What?**
  - breaking down 'disorder'
    - assaults
    - rape
    - self harm
    - escapes
    - drug use
    - collective disorder
    - vandalism
    - theft
  - further breakdowns
    - assaults against prisoners vs against staff
    - assaults with weapons vs without weapons

- **Where?**
  - Areas of poor surveillance
    - shared cells (assaults)
    - single cells (self-harm)
    - showers (sexual assault)
  - Areas where prisoners congregate/unstructured activity
    - recreation areas (assaults)
    - dining rooms (assaults, riots)
    - queues (assaults)
  - <u>Not</u> in areas of supervised activity
    - classrooms
    - workshops

- **When?**
  - time of day
    - change of shift (assaults)
    - prisoner movements (staff assaults, riots)
    - night (self-harm)
  - day of week
    - weekends (drug use, self-harm)
  - time of year
    - summer (assaults)
    - winter (escapes)

- **Why?**
  - escapes
    - bad news from home
    - fear
  - assaults
    - boredom
    - disputes over resources (eg television)
    - theft (eg phone cards)
  - vandalism
    - lack of environmental control
  - rioting
    - grievances

What Works?
Examining the Literature

- Few specific situational studies

- Many 'quasi-situational'

- Prisoner-prisoner assaults
  - single cells
  - partitioned dormitories
  - lockable cupboards
  - unit management
  - air conditioning
  - reduced crowding
  - reduced turnover
  - age-heterogeneity
  - educational/work programs
  - ratio non-custodial
  - parole provisions

- **Prisoner-staff assaults**
  - unit management
  - reduce crowding
  - age heterogeneity
  - staff experience
  - staff training
  - female staff
  - security crackdowns
  - supporting staff authority
  - matching staff/inmate racial composition
  - education/work programs

- **Sexual assaults**
  - single cells
  - unit management
  - racial balance
  - gender mixed
  - conjugal visits/leave
  - institutional protocols
  - mandatory reporting/prosecution
  - policing consensual sexual activity
  - teaching avoidance strategies
  - segregating vulnerable prisoners

- **Self-harm**
  - double bunking
  - eliminating hanging points, dangerous fittings etc
  - removing dangerous possessions
  - improving view into cells
  - surveillance protocols
  - de-institutionalising cells
  - unit management
  - reduce crowding
  - age heterogeneity
  - reduce prisoner turnover
  - education/work programs

- **Drug use**
  - perimeter security
  - rapid prisoner turnover
  - drug testing prisoners
  - searching/testing staff
  - tightening visits (no gifts, greater surveillance, ID checks, searching, restrict physical contact etc)
  - drug detection technology
  - drug dogs
  - monitoring prisoner accounts
  - substance free zones

- **Escapes**
  - improved perimeter security
  - reduce crowding
  - graduated security
  - structured regime
  - publicise risks/punishments
  - respond to protection requests
  - education/work programs
  - pastoral care
  - compassionate visits

- **Riots**
  - unit management
  - new/well-maintained facilities
  - security firebreaks
  - small prisons
  - reduced crowding
  - racial balance
  - staff experience
  - staff-prisoner relations
  - security protocols
  - humane prison conditions
  - grievance mechanisms

A General Model of Situational Prevention in Prison

- 'Precipitators' versus 'opportunities'

- Tightening-up versus Loosening-off
  - 'Hard' and 'soft' control
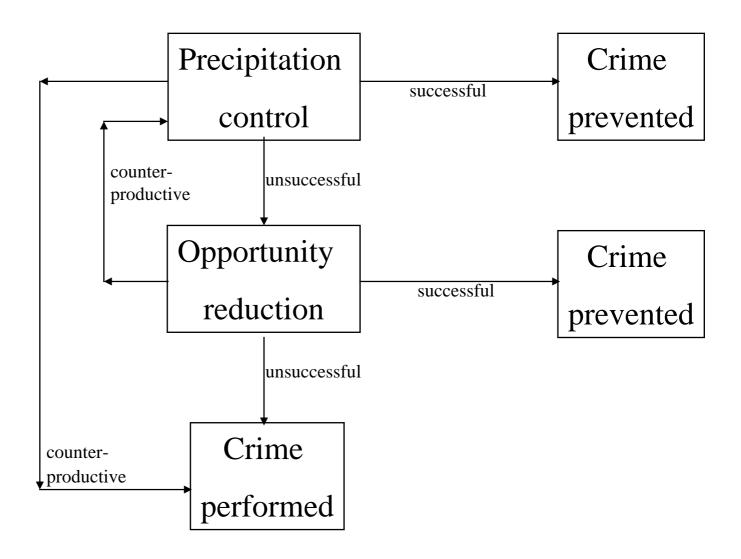
Precipitation Control

Controlling Prompts	Controlling Pressures	Reducing Permissibility	Reducing Provocations
Controlling triggers • Weapons effect	Reducing inappropriate conformity • Dispersing gangs	Rule setting • Unit inductions	Reducing frustration • Personal controls
Providing reminders • Warning signs	Reducing inappropriate obedience • Support whistle-blowers	Clarifying responsibility • Ownership of living areas	Reducing crowding • Use of colour etc
Reducing inappropriate imitation • Guards as exemplars	Encouraging compliance • Participation in rule making	Clarifying consequences • Sense of community	Respecting territory • Privacy rooms
Setting positive expectations • Domestic prison furniture	Reducing anonymity • Smaller prisons	Personalising victims • Humane prisons	Controlling environmental irritants • Air conditioning

Opportunity Reduction

Increasing perceived effort	Increasing perceived risks	Reducing anticipated rewards	Increasing anticipated punishments
Target hardening • Vandal-proof furnishings	Exit-entry screening • Screening visitors	Target removal • Restrict personal property	Increasing costs • Non-replacement of vandalised property
Access control • Control gates	Formal surveillance • CCTV	Identifying property • Property marking	Removing privileges • Denial of parole
Deflecting offenders • Staggered release	Surveillance by employees • Civilian staff	Reducing temptation • Single cells	Increasing social condemnation • Unit meetings
Controlling facilitators • Plastic cutlery	Natural surveillance • Double-bunking	Denying benefits • Phone PINs	Making an example • Publicising punishments

- Counterproductive control
  - 'Hard' and 'soft' approaches often contradictory
  - getting balance right - 'fair but firm'

- A thought experiment
  - Design a prison cell that would remove all opportunities for a prisoner to self harm

  - Now design a prison cell that would guarantee that a prisoner would want to self harm

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                    ┌──────────────┐              ┌──────────┐
           ┌────────│ Precipitation│──successful─▶│  Crime   │
           │        │   control    │              │ prevented│
           │   ┌───▶│              │              │          │
           │   │    └──────┬───────┘              └──────────┘
           │   │           │
           │ counter-      │ unsuccessful
           │ productive    │
           │   │           ▼
           │   │    ┌──────────────┐              ┌──────────┐
           │   └────│ Opportunity  │──successful─▶│  Crime   │
           │        │  reduction   │              │ prevented│
           │        │              │              │          │
           │        └──────┬───────┘              └──────────┘
           │               │
           │               │ unsuccessful
           │               │
           │               ▼
           │  counter-  ┌──────────────┐
           └─ productive│    Crime     │
              ─────────▶│  performed   │
                        │              │
                        └──────────────┘
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Precipitation control → successful → Crime prevented

Precipitation control → unsuccessful → Opportunity reduction

Precipitation control → counter-productive → (loops back)

Opportunity reduction → successful → Crime prevented

Opportunity reduction → unsuccessful → Crime performed

Opportunity reduction → counter-productive → Precipitation control

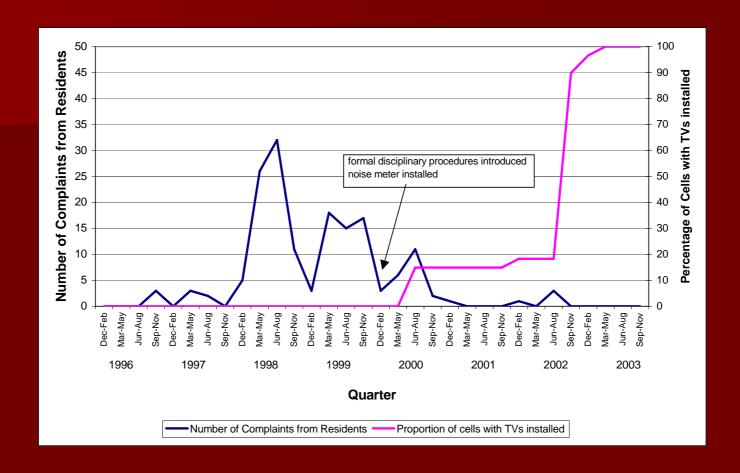counter-productive → Crime performed

- Examples of tensions:
  - Vandal-proof versus domestic furnishing
  - Direct versus indirect supervision
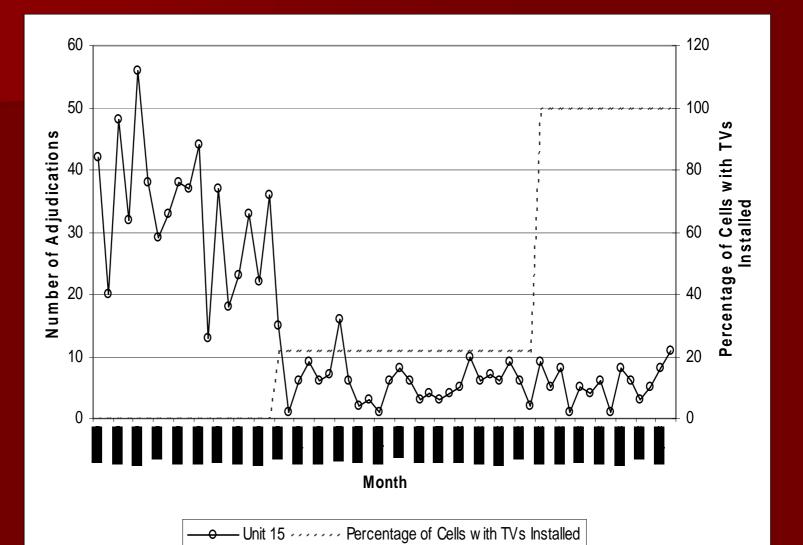 - Female versus male officers
  - Consensus versus authority

Case Study:
HM Prison Glen Parva

- Young Offenders' Institution, Leicester UK
- 13 units, 780 prisoners
- 1997 unannounced visit by Inspector of Prisons
  - High levels of bullying, self harm, etc
  - High levels of use of force by staff
  - 'So dissatisfied' inspections increased
- Problem solving approach by management
  - 3 cases studies

1. Noise pollution

- Problem:
  - Prisoners in units near boundary shouting from windows, complaints/fines
- Intervention:
  - Noise monitors on fence line
  - In-cell televisions
- Results:
  - Complaints stopped
  - Reduction in adjudications in target units
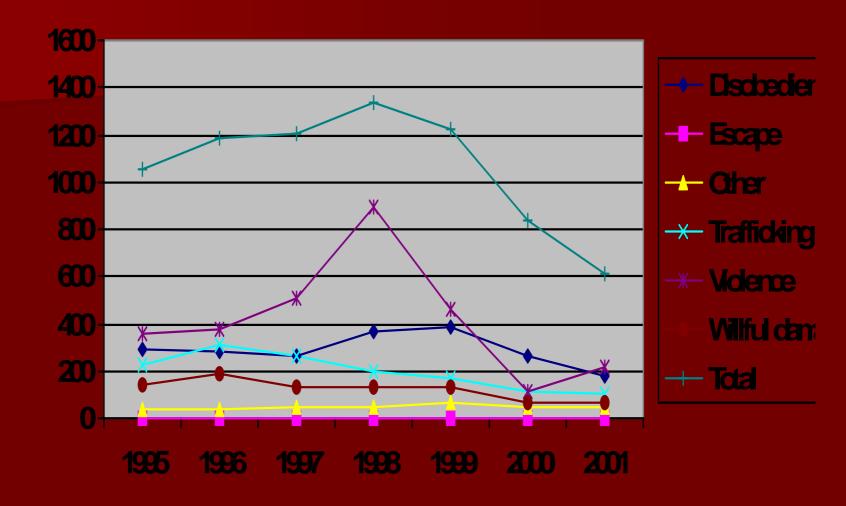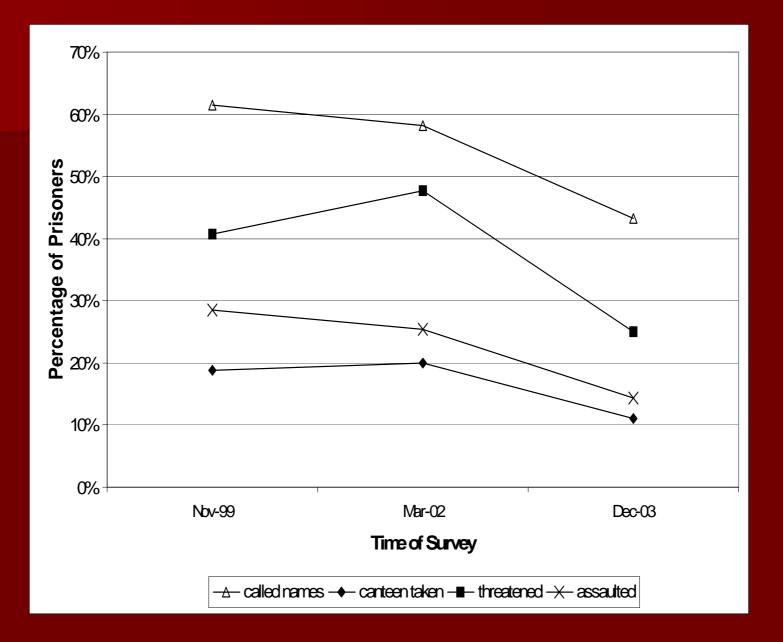
2. Bullying

- Problem: hight levels of bullying, especially of new arrivals

- Interventions:
  - Anti-bullying strategy
  - 'First night' packs
  - TV remote controls
  - Phone PINs

- Results:
  - Drop in bullying and fear

3. Staff scalding

- Problem:
  - Prisoners given can of hot water before going to cells, throw over officer
- Intervention:
  - Plastic thermoses
- Results:
  - No further incidents

Conclusions

- Potential for quick, cheap and effective interventions

- Intuitive – do not need complicated theory

- Not a 'cook book' – an approach rather than ready-made solutions

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