



Less Crime on the Tube: The London Underground Hotspots Experiment

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Institute of Criminology Public Seminar Series

Thursday 18th October 2012, 5.30pm

Seminar Room B3, Institute of Criminology,
Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge, CB3 9DA

A drinks reception in the basement foyer will follow this seminar for attendees

This seminar replaces the seminar scheduled to be given by Professor Barry Godfrey, which has had to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.

Can police patrol prevent crime in crowded indoor spaces? The Jerry Lee Centre for Experimental Criminology at Cambridge provides the first answer to that question in collaboration with Transport for London and the British Transport Police in a 6 months experiment with police patrols on the London-Underground platforms. The test was done at places never before patrolled by police, where crime is less frequent and less violent compared to street-crime hotspots. Eligible hotspots (n=116), some with as little as 2 recorded hard crimes per year, were randomly assigned to three experimental arms in three blocks (varying on crime levels): one-officer, two-officer patrols, and a control-group with no police patrols. Each patrolling unit visited its assigned platforms (4-5 hotspots per unit, depending on travel distance between platforms) four times for 15 minutes during each shift (3PM-10PM, Wednesdays-Saturdays), for six months. Treatment dosage ± 5 -minutes of the assigned pattern were achieved in more than 90% of the visits. Findings show significant 21% overall reduction in crime and calls-for-service in the experimental platforms compared to control platforms; the largest effect was found in high-crime level crime hotspots, followed by mid-level and low-level crime hotspots. No statistically-significant differences in crime reductions were found between the one-officer versus two-officer patrols, thus providing important lessons not only for deterrence-theory and hotspot-policing, but also on cost-effective initiatives.

This seminar is free, and is open to all interested in attending, with no ticket required.

If you wish to be added to the seminar mailing list, please contact: Joanne Garner, on: jf225@cam.ac.uk

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