

## MODULE 1 - WHERE ARE WE?

### LECTURE 5- This lecture describes a CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

#### DEVELOP A FRAMEWORK ----

**Now get this.** Crime occurs in a continuum of at least five phases over time – **PLAN, ACTION, ESCAPE, FUGITIVE and DISPOSAL.**<sup>10</sup> Now don't get lost here, because it's pretty easy and we're gonna talk about this a lot. Besides, it's a **slick** way to look at crime.

- The first phase of the crime continuum is the **PLAN**. The offender plans a crime.

- The next is the **ACTION** phase, where the offender commits a crime.

- Then comes the **ESCAPE** phase. Yep, you guessed it, the offender absconds - leaves the crime scene.

- The fourth phase is the **FUGITIVE** phase. The offender remains a fugitive until caught, or until the statute of limitations regarding the crime expires.

- And finally, **DISPOSAL** is the fifth phase. In some crimes, the offender disposes of the fruits of the crime (sells stolen property, uses drugs, spends the money, etc.).

So once again, the **crime continuum** consists of **5 phases - PLAN, ACTION, ESCAPE, FUGITIVE and DISPOSAL.**

And importantly, each phase of the crime continuum occurs in a specific location, or **SPACE** (such as a home, neighborhood, workplace, bar, etc.), and for a specific duration of **TIME** (seconds, minutes, hours, days, years, etc.). So we've got SPACE and TIME stuff we can think about with regard to each of the five crime phases of the crime continuum.

Now let's put all this "**stuff**" into something called a "**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**" to see what it can tell us.<sup>11</sup>

So think of a table with a half dozen columns and a bunch of rows.

Across the top row we put the crime continuum words PLAN, ACTION, ESCAPE, FUGITIVE, and DISPOSAL in separate cells.

Then down the first column on the left side, we put the words CRIME, SPACE, TIME, and SOURCES of INFO in separate cells.

Yes, CONFUSED TRAVELER, this would be much easier to understand if we had a visual image, or a video, of it. But in this AUDIO rendition of the course, we don't have that, do we. So just **get over it** and struggle through this tortured explanation. We will face this problem several more times as we wend our way through the lectures. Ultimately we will eliminate this issue with the video presentation of the course. In the meantime, **grin and bear it.**

So in the table cell where **PLAN and CRIME** intersect, we write "**burglary.**" That indicates that we are interested in looking at an offender's activities in the PLAN phase of a burglary CRIME.

Then where **PLAN and SPACE** intersect, we project where, or in what type of location, or space, an offender might be in when planning a burglary. We could even interview a bunch of burglars to get their input if we wanted to. But for the sake of this example, let's just say they planned the burglary while in their residence, and write in the word "home."

Next, we'll try to fill in all the cells regarding what we know, or can conjecture, about the space, time and sources for each of the crime continuum phases.

So by now you should get an idea of how to use this framework. Looks to be a lot of **guestimates** and variances, but at this point we don't have much info to work with, except maybe past experience. And we all know how much that's worth! By that I mean, it's worth a lot, but it's not infallible, and sometimes it may not even be relevant. Unfortunately, in this world, that sometimes seems to be the case. But as we work on the framework and get better data, we may be able to pinpoint, or at least narrow down, more stuff. Like, maybe we can make it better over time.

### **IN ORDER TO DO THE FOLLOWING:**

The idea here is as follows:

- 1 - Develop a **framework** to estimate different types of offender criminal activities (spaces, times, sources) for a certain type of crime based on the best info we have. Then we can figure out **how can we gain**

**access to and use them?** As we get more and more info and incorporate it into the framework, it should become more useful in helping us to decide what to do.

2 – See how the **various models** of investigation that I mentioned before (the Government Spy, etc.) investigated crime in the various phases, and what problems they ran into.

3 - Look into the future at how **different detective models, forensics and technology** might affect what investigators may be able to do in the different continuum phases.

So we have big plans ahead for the CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK and the crime continuum phases.

So first we **identify** a problem (a crime), and then we use the CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK (a table) to help us **describe** it using stuff we know (or can find out) about offenders and crime. Then, based on our data (the stuff we put into the table, or the CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK), we get a better **understanding** of the problem, and we may be able to figure out a better way of dealing with, or **manipulating**, the problem to solve it. This, you will be pleased to learn, is affectionately referred to as **IDUM**, I-D-U-M, which is short for **Identify, Describe, Understand and Manipulate**. You'll hear more about IDUM later, but I thought I'd introduce you to the concept now while we're in the **la-la-land** of theoretical perspectives and CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS.

**Spiffy!**

So what? So **what's the big deal**, you say? Patience, ANXIOUS TRAVELER – we had to get this stuff into your head first, before you could use it. So let's just move ahead for the moment, shall we?

By incorporating **crime, space, time** and information **sources** in the **five phases of the crime continuum**, we can estimate, for example, **where** (in what space) an offender may **plan** a crime (first phase); **how long** it takes (the amount of time it takes to plan); and the kinds/amounts of **sources** of info about the crime that may be available in the PLAN phase (probably not very many for this crime). And we can do this for **each phase**.

Take the Visible UCR crime of **BURGLARY** that we used in the above example:

- In the **PLAN** phase, an offender might normally take **minutes to days** (time) to find and check out a location (space) to burgle. The existing research and past experience tell us that, for most burglars, this will typically be somewhere in his/her local community within a couple of miles at most of his/her home, as opposed to some other city, continent or planet. <sup>125, 126,127</sup>

- The **ACTION and ESCAPE** phases, wherein the offender enters the targeted location/crime scene (the space), takes property, and leaves, probably takes **minutes to hours** (the time). Not very long.

- The offender typically remains at their residence (the **space**), often with the stolen property, for most of the **time** in the **FUGITIVE** phase until the statute of limitations expires (the **time**), or until they are caught. As only about half of all household burglaries are reported, according to the NCVS, and as only about 13% of the reported burglaries are solved according to what the police report in the UCR, it doesn't take a mathematician to figure out that **most burglars are not caught**. And if they're not caught, that means that they remain in the **FUGITIVE** crime phase until the statute of limitations for that crime expires, which is like seven years or something for burglary in most states, I think.

- During the **DISPOSAL** phase, the offender typically proceeds to sell the property he/she stole, and this may take **minutes to months (time)** at various locations (spaces), depending on the property, etc.

OK, PERSEVERING TRAVELER, so here's where we start to see some payoff for all this CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK stuff.

One of the things we learn from this approach is that for most **Visible UCR crimes**, the **ACTION** and **ESCAPE** phases are typically **short** (minutes, hours).

Also, the **sources** of information available at the crime scenes of these phases are usually **limited** (typically because of a limited opportunity for people to see a crime), and they're **transitory** (which is the normal movement of sources away from the crime scene. Short-term transitory movements, kind of like that **thingie** when I walked away from that body I allegedly killed before anyone saw me, and longer-term transitory movements like the disappearance of the body before anyone saw it – besides the **body snatchers**, I mean, and they **ain't tellin'**).

Another thing we see is that the **FUGITIVE phase** is typically the **longest** (months, years).

The **home/neighborhood (space)** is where the offender typically spends the **longest** period of **time**. As a result, any incriminating behaviors of the offender (i.e., words, actions, possession of stolen property) are more likely to occur here.

The potential human **sources** of information are typically available in the **FUGITIVE space** for the **longest** periods of time also, generally because they live in the surrounding areas, and they may be able to see and remember the offender's incriminating behaviors.

And similarly, any crime-related **things**, or criminal artifacts, as we more sophisticated types like to call them (things like tools, property, papers, etc.) are more likely to exist here.

Now if, perchance, the offender is a **serial offender** and commits multiple burglaries, or different crimes, over time, it follows that the **sources** of information and **artifacts** regarding those crimes will also usually be **most available** for the **longest period** of time in the offender's **neighborhood** during this **FUGITIVE** phase.

And this holds true for crimes that are both **reported to the police** and those that **are not reported** to the police. **Wow**, this is great!

So now, just to harp on this a little for the sake of clarity, we know that the **ACTION** and **ESCAPE** phases are usually pretty short, time-wise, and that the spaces they occur in usually contain dwindling amounts of info over time. The **FUGITIVE** phase is usually the longest and has an excellent chance of being a pretty good location of **sources** of information (both people and things) about the offender's criminal activities. But of course, we may not know where the offender's location (space) is exactly, especially if we don't know who the offender is. Or we may not have ready access to the offender's space or the sources of info therein. **Plusses and minuses**, eh?

But in actuality, the histories of crimes committed in most cities, and the locations of most offenders, can usually pretty easily **identify high-crime areas** within the cities. And the research shows that for crimes like robbery, burglary, and rape, the average distance between the offender's home and the crime scene in many instances often ranges between only **one to three miles**.<sup>125, 126, 127</sup> So what if we were to focus really hard on developing sources of information over time in these high crime areas? Think we might eventually get more crime info? You know, I'll bet that some **enterprising detectives** have actually been doing that already! I've also heard that some police agencies are even using **computer programs to predict** where future crimes will happen!<sup>132</sup>

Whoa, sound a little **spacey**, does it? Well, what if you track where offenders live in a city, where crime hot-spots are, what car license plates and cell phones are tracked in those areas, plot reported crime locations and

gunshot sites, etc., etc., and even more stuff that the police routinely process info on. And you dump all that info into a computer that processes it into likely future crime areas? **Think that'll work?** Some people have already politely informed the **Luddites** amongst us that it already is working! And there's stuff we may be able to do to even improve on that – but I'm jumping ahead there.

So if we're interested in obtaining information about offenders and crime, obviously we want to look at the **ACTION** and **ESCAPE** phases to determine whether a crime was committed and what info about it remains there. But the **FUGITIVE** phase is a lucrative area also, because it's likely to harbor the **most info**, for the **longest period** of time, and for **other crimes** the offender may have committed, whether they were **reported** to the police or not. And also because it may be that the offender spent the **PLAN** and **DISPOSAL** phases in the same general space as he occupied in the **FUGITIVE** phase, and any info from those phases may also be present (like maps used to plan the crime, receipts from sale of the stolen property, etc.).

This **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK** can be used to look at the other types of **Visible** crimes in addition to burglary, and at Victimless, Occupational, Organized and Political crimes – the other four major crime categories.

And it can be used effectively with **specific crime incidents and cases** also.

It can show us where the most potentially lucrative spaces and times are for **sources** of crime information regarding an offender's criminal activities, not just for one specific crime incident, or case, but for other crime incidents as well.

And that allows us to think about developing and refining the **various types of investigative tools and techniques that would be helpful in targeting and gaining access** to that information over time.

The **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK** also provides a means by which we can look at the **various models** of police investigations, to see how they addressed each of the five separate phases of the crime continuum. In fact, we'll start doing that in the very next lecture.

And it also can provide a **structure and a process** that we can use to peek into the **future** in an organized way. And we'll do that, too, in later lectures.

**Got all that? I ran through it at least twice.** But again, don't sweat it if it's not 100% crystal clear, because we'll be looking at it in a more practical way next, and it'll all start falling in place pretty soon. And keep in mind, this theoretical perspective may not be the only way to look at the investigations process – but it is **the way that we're using** in this course.

### **NOW JUST FOR KICKS -**

Now for kicks, let's just say we could figure out some way so that the police could be **present** during the **PLAN** or **ACTION** phase of a crime, and then catch the offender before he could carry through with the crime. Wouldn't that be great? Just think of all the trillion dollars' worth of human blood and treasure that we'd be able to save – **every year!** And with all that money maybe we could even wipe out poverty or cure diseases and save millions of human lives! I mean, a **trillion** bucks a year! What a great thing that would be, eh?

So what would it take to do that? Well, just think a minute on it. Like, for example, maybe the police would need **cameras and listening** devices everywhere, or maybe they'd need some sort of **mind-reading** gizmos or whatever, so they could anticipate an offender's activities. Yeah, something like that. Shouldn't be too hard to rig something up, or at least to start working toward than end. Cameras and listening devices - we've got some of them already. Man, just think of the **payoff!!** I mean, wouldn't it be worth it if we could save close to a trillion bucks a year? Or prevent men, women and children of all ages from being murdered, raped, assaulted, robbed, etc.? **Ever** go to a **rape or druggie support meeting**, or an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting? These are places that people go to in an effort to seek relief from the pain and anguish of crime and its consequences. Ever seen or read the research about when children are molested, beaten, or otherwise mistreated, how it affects their later lives? Ever watched your family members go to bed the night after your house had just been burgled and ransacked? How did you feel that time a while ago when you were awakened in bed in the middle of the night, and you saw a stranger with a knife and a flashlight in your bedroom? There's lots of **fear and bad memories there**. **Gosh**, if we could prevent that stuff, we may be on to something here. And you've just barely started into this course!!

Ha, like **NEVER**, you say! Cameras, mind-readers? Phooey! You would never allow the police to do that! That would mean giving up massive amounts of our freedoms and liberties! Massive intrusions into our privacy, right? Never gonna happen, not while I can draw breath and fight! Nosiree, no police **copper commie jingo jack-booted thug** is ever gonna do anything like that to me or anyone in my family! See, you just can't trust those guys – every day in the media you hear about a cop discriminating against us and abusing their power and hurting innocent people – **just like the criminals** do to us every day! Just think if you gave the police more

power, what do you think they'd do then? The criminals do that stuff to us already, and it costs us a trillion bucks a year to let them continue to do it. But we sure don't want any **dirty** coppers doing it, do we? And just look at our history – I mentioned all those empires, see what they did? The more power you give the **politicians** and the government, the more they abuse it at the citizen's expense. Yesiree, just like the criminals who've been doing that since I guess time began. And now it seems as though even if we get to elect the politicians, they're all the same – the “last refuge of **scoundrels.**”<sup>60</sup>

Ah, so you're saying you'd rather have your freedom and privacy than have security from someone killing or hurting you or someone in your family? Or eradicating poverty and disease and saving millions of lives in the world? Really? What? Oh, oh, you want both, is that it? Well, how would you do that? Better yet, let's go to the next lecture and take a look at what the **jack-boo—er**, I mean police, may be doing to-er, I mean for, us already!