

Abstract

According to the routine activity theory, violent crime may be deterred by a capable guardian. Cohen and Felson's routine activity theory asserts three conditions need to be met for a crime to take place: a likely offender; a suitable target; and the absence of a capable guardian (Cohen and Felson 1979). A hot spot analysis of violent crimes for Washington, DC shows a divided city. In northwest DC, the census block groups correlate with low violent crime rates. To understand why northwest DC has low crime rates, a quantitative spatial analysis uses housing characteristics as proxies for capable guardianship to test whether a correlation exists between capable guardianship and the deterrence of violent crime. The rationale behind using housing and homeowner characteristics in a model relies upon fusing capability with perception of success. Accordingly, if the criminal perceives a capable guardian to be present, then the criminal will not commit the crime. Following this logic, neighborhoods displaying capable guardianship through housing characteristics ought to have lower violent crime rates. Using exploratory regression, Ordinary Least Squares, and Geographically Weighted Regression the construction of a guardianship model with significant explanatory variables suggests a relationship between capable guardianship and areas with lower violent crime rates do exist. Furthermore, quantitative spatial analysis suggests a strong relationship between low violent crime rates and obtaining higher levels of education exists.