



Addressing Crime or Disorder in Housing

A Smart Policing Initiative Webinar

Developed by John E. Eck



An UGLEE Way

- Understand your objectives
- Get the right framework
- Learn about your problem
- Explore alternative solutions
- Evaluate your intervention

*Any time, please jump in
with questions, comments and suggestions*

Understand your objectives

□ What are you trying to accomplish?

- At the end of the day, who will own this problem?

□ Strategic v Tactical

- Tactical: addressing one or a very few independent housing related problems –
 - 3895 W. Elm is a chronic nuisance;
 - 14 Overlook is a center of drug dealing.
- Strategic: addressing a class of individual problems
 - problem landlords;
 - disproportionate calls from a few places;
 - drug houses

Are you being strategic or tactical?

□ Crime, Disorder or other behaviors

- What is it that you want to drive down?

What behaviors are the problem for you?

- How will you measure success?

- What is annoying the public (you, or your bosses)?

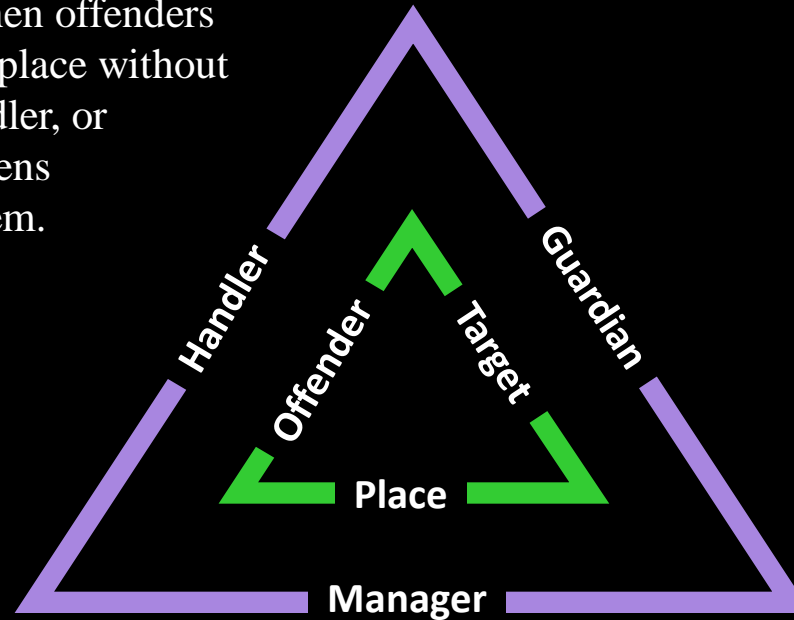


Get the right framework

- ❑ Start with the problem triangle
- ❑ Focus on the place side, first
- ❑ Strategic: Use the 80/20 rule and risky facility analysis
- ❑ Ask, why this place(s) rather than similarly situated places?
- ❑ Deal with the basics: ownership, finance, management.

Problem Triangle

Crime or disorder occur when offenders and targets are in the same place without a controller (guardian, handler, or manager). When this happens repeatedly, there is a problem.



When dealing with property, the place and the manager are the most obvious starting point. What makes the problem places different from other places? Who owns them? How can we get them to change the place?

The same principle applies to abandoned and foreclosed places. The difference is that it's more difficult. There is someone or some group that has ownership rights to a place. The question is who and what incentives one can use to get them to do the right thing.

Places & Place Management

Place

Owner

Person
Limited partnership
Business
Other

Default

Bank
Government
Other

Abandoned

Government
Disputed
Other

- Change existing management practices
- Improve physical settings
- Change tenants
- Find a new owner or manager

- Resolve disputes in ownership
- Pressure organization in charge
- Find a new owner

What are your places most like?

80-20 Rule

This is a strategic analysis.

Its a rule of thumb: Assume true until contrary evidence.

How to test it:

1. Enumerate every residential address of the type of concern: single family homes, apartment complexes, foreclosed homes, etc.
2. Use GIS and other software to assign crimes or calls to each address from your data bases.
3. Create a table of graph showing the number of residences with 0, 1, 2, and so on crimes.
4. The graph will look like the following...

80-20 continued 2

Places with this number of crimes

Not problem places

Your chart will look something like this. With hundreds, if not thousands of places, the bars will be so thin and packed together that it may look more like a downward sweeping curve (dashed line).

Your eye will go to the left, where the residences have few or no crimes. If you calculate the percent of the places here and the percent of the crimes at these places, you will find that this is where the overwhelming majority of your places are, and they have a small proportion of your crime.

On the right, is where you want to concentrate your attention. These relatively few places have most of your crimes (or calls). Treat them first!

In between are some ambiguously problematic places. Treat them second. There is no clear dividing line between these three groups (that is why I have made the brackets overlap).

Modest problem places

Major Problem Places

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Number of crimes

Can you do this sort of analysis?
Have you?

There are alternative ways to show the 80-20 rule, so do not get hung up in the procedures, but understand what the message is. This type of approach is called "Risky Facility Analysis". You can read more on how to do this by looking at the POP Guide #6 available at http://www.popcenter.org/tools/risky_facilities/.



80-20 continued 3

❑ **Compare!**

- ❑ What is alike about the major problem places?
- ❑ What is different between the major problem places and the other places?
- ❑ Focus on the systematic differences – common among the problem places AND different from the non-problem places.

❑ **Some things to look for**

- ❑ **Neighborhood:** important if problem places are clustered and there are few or no non-problem places near by (otherwise, neighborhood probably not a major driver).
- ❑ **Owners:** a few owners have a significant proportion of the problem places.
- ❑ **Bank:** a large proportion of the problem places are in the hands of a small portion of the banks (or other financial institutions).



Learning about your problem

□ **Strategic:**

- Conduct a risky facility analysis of housing type of interest
- Look for owners of multiple problem properties
- Map problem and non-problem locations
- Conduct time series analysis

□ **Tactical**

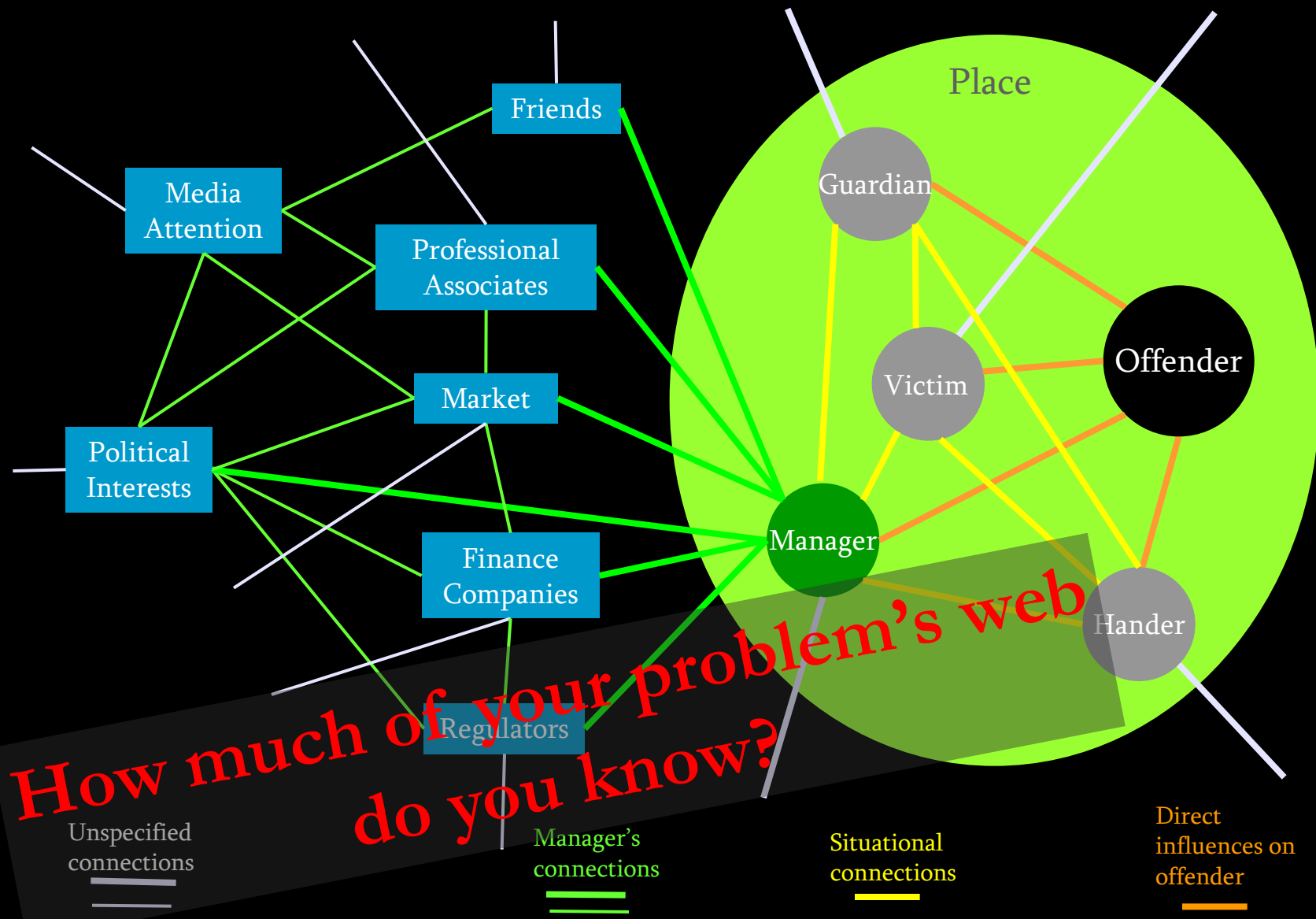
- Compare problem site to nearby similar non-problem sites
- Find and interview owners
- Walk through locations
- Create a dossier

□ **Look for webs of influence**

- Know why participants behave the way they do (don't just speculate)
- Who can influence owners
- Who will aid owners resistance



Webs of Influence



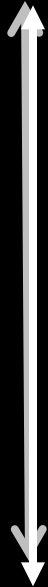


Exploring alternative solutions

- ❑ Bring in players discovered during analysis
- ❑ Brainstorm with team
- ❑ Compare ideas with facts from analysis
- ❑ Collect new information if necessary
- ❑ Consider Super Controllers
- ❑ Create a management team
- ❑ Develop a clear and practical plan
- ❑ Have measurable goals and objectives

Goldstein's Hierarchy

Least cooperative/
Most difficult



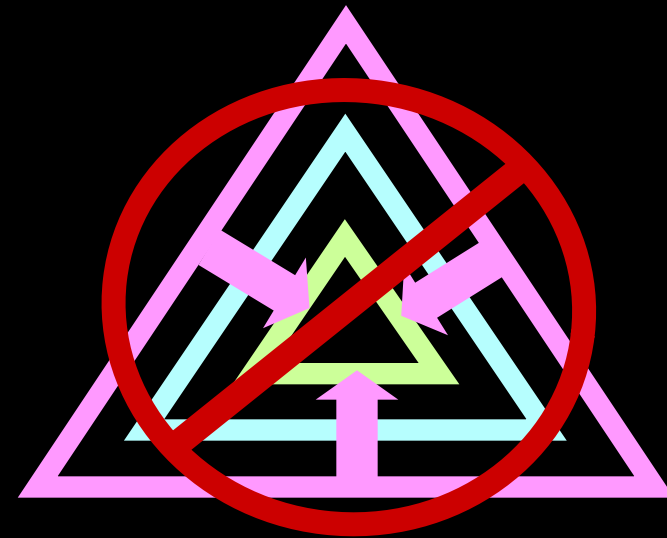
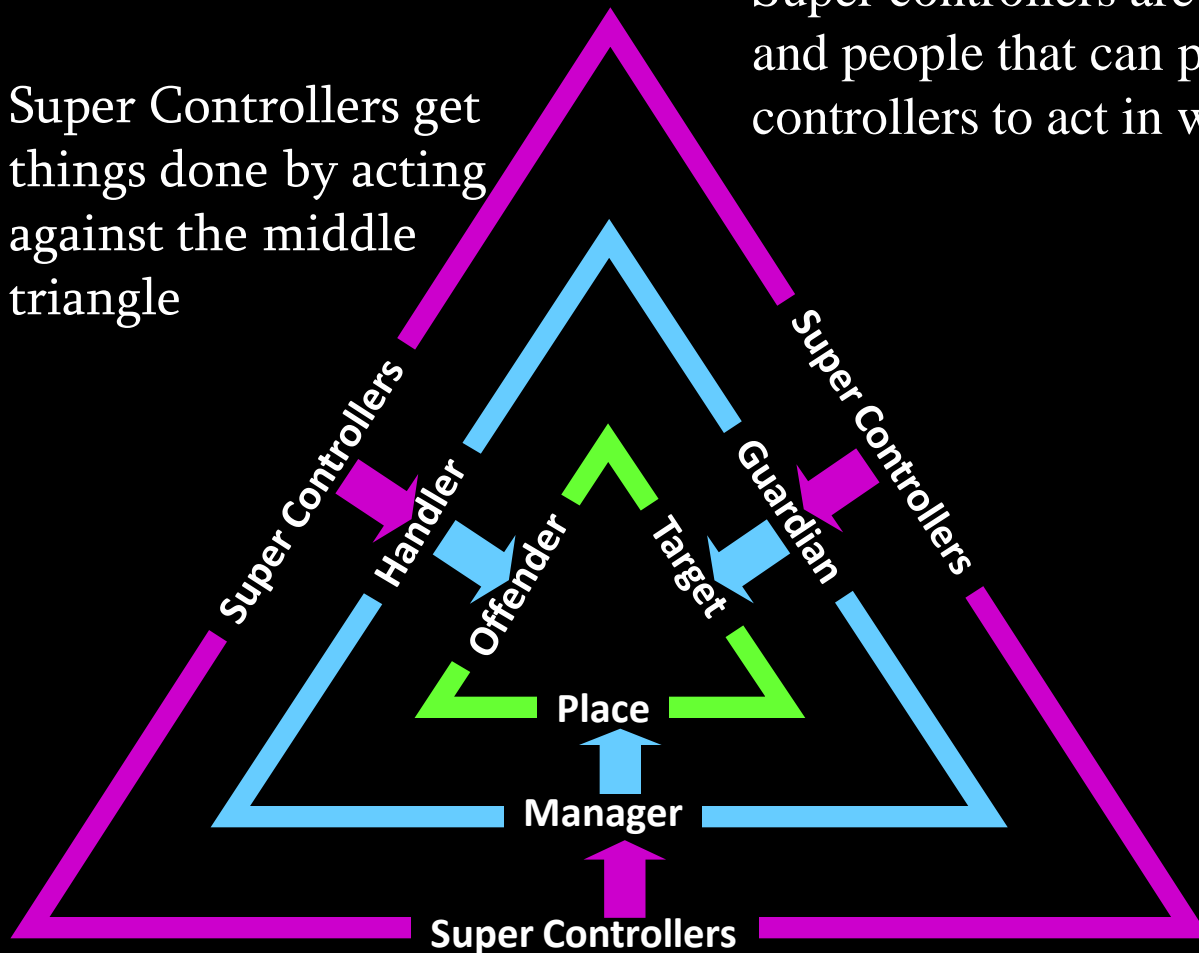
- Bring a civil action
- Legislation mandating prevention
- Charging a fee for police service
- Withdrawing police service
- Public shaming
- Creation of a new organization to assume ownership
- Engaging an existing organization
- Targeted confrontational requests
- Straightforward informal requests
- Educational programs

Most cooperative/
Least difficult

Super Controllers

Super Controllers get things done by acting against the middle triangle

Super controllers are institutions, organizations, and people that can provide incentives to controllers to act in ways that prevent crime.



They *never* directly influence the innermost triangle

10 Types of Super Controllers

Formal

- Organizational
- Contractual
- Financial
- Regulatory
- Courts

Have legal authority that is enforceable.

Diffuse

- Political
- Markets
- Media

Authority works by making bad decisions more costly in terms of bad publicity, greater government scrutiny, or loss of market share.

Personal

- Groups
- Family

Authority is informal through personal ties and emotional connections. Intimacy is critical.

Which of these may apply to your problem?

Command v Performance

□ **Command interventions** (means focused):

- Tell owners what to do and hold them accountable for implementing these things.
- Install lighting, attend training, replace locks, implement tenant screening, include specifics in leases, etc.

**Have you tried either?
What was your experience?**

□ **Performance interventions** (ends focused):

- Tell owners what the outcome is to be, and hold them accountable for achieving the level.
- No more than X calls per unit per year, or else...



Evaluating your intervention

- ❑ Measure for many periods (weeks, months, or years) before and after intervention.
- ❑ Compare to similar sites or groups not getting the intervention
- ❑ Watch for adaptation
- ❑ Interview participants

Discussion?

Resources

Addressing Foreclosed and Abandoned Properties --
http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/pdf/CCI_Abandoned_Property.pdf

Analyzing Crime Displacement and Diffusion. POP Tool Guide, # 10 ---
<http://www.popcenter.org/tools/displacement/>

Assessing Responses to Problems POP Tools Guide, #1 –
http://www.popcenter.org/tools/assessing_responses/

A Full Response to an Empty House: Public Safety Strategies For Addressing Mortgage Fraud And The Foreclosure Crisis -- http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/pdf/CCI_Foreclosure_Crisis.pdf

Rana Sampson, John E. Eck, and Jessica Dunham. 2010. “Super Controllers and Crime Prevention: A Routine Activity Explanation of Crime Prevention Success and Failure.” **Security Journal**. 23 (1): 37–51.

Understanding Risky Facilities. POP Tools Guide, #6 --- http://www.popcenter.org/tools/risky_facilities/

Richard Wortley and Lorraine Mazerolle. 2008. **Environmental Criminology and Crime Analysis.** Willan Publishers.

Contact information

John E. Eck

School of Criminal Justice

University of Cincinnati

john.eck@uc.edu