

Comment from Spencer: not perfect but was well structured and contained many of the points I was looking for, including a good interpretation of the crime series. There were three of four similar to this one, any of which I could have used as an example.

1. What do you think the measures of central tendency tell us about the offender's spatial behaviour?

The spatial mean is the mean of the eight co-ordinates where the offences took place and the centre of gravity. Its geographic distribution has changed over the course of the 8 incidents and is centred near all the bars that the targets visited. This could indicate a range where the offender had a vantage point to hunt for his targets.

Weighted spatial mean adjusted by the recency of incidents shows the last known movements of the offender and could show the new area where he is more comfortable.

Spatial standard deviational ellipse shows the dispersal and direction of the 8 incidents. It is more circular in shape than linear showing that the offences were more evenly distributed around the spatial mean.

2. How do you think the theoretical principles of routine activities, rational choice, crime pattern theory and least effort (including the journey to crime) might explain the distribution of the offences and aspects of the offender's spatial behaviour?

a. Routine activities theory

The crimes took place because there was a motivated offender (balaclava signifying intent), a suitable target and an absent guardian (no CCTV and target unaccompanied). The routine activities of the targets visiting bars and then walking home alone provided the intersection of time and space between the offender and the target.

b. Rational choice theory

The offender committed the crimes voluntarily and weighed up the rewards (achieving dominance) against the risk of getting caught. The risk of getting caught was low with no surveillance and no place management in the area. The offender used geography to remove risk from the offences by following the targets to quieter areas. The offender made a

rational choice of the effort required ie. the location was easy to get to and the targets were easy to find.

c. Crime pattern theory

The offender chose the location due to familiarity built from routine activities of a non-criminal nature. The offender anchor points were nodes such as their home, place of work or bars frequented. This provided a cognitive map which he knew well and felt comfortable in. He would have been driven by the opportunity space of targeting females alone on the streets late at night. This availability would not be present in many routine activity locations.

d. Least effort theory (including journey to crime)

The offender committed crimes requiring the minimum of effort, in areas that he knew well, and required a short journey time to the crime site. A crime free buffer zone around the offender's home would be likely due to the risk of being recognised. The offender will have natural limits to their space awareness and distance decay would occur further away from an anchor point. This suggests that the offender was local to the area, however as a nightlife hub for surrounding areas the journey to crime may have been longer to access the targets.

3. Are there any other details in the case information that you have been provided that you think are useful in helping to hypothesise about the offender's spatial behaviour?

The attacks occurred at weekends in the early hours indicating that the offender was aware of the night dynamics of the area and the target opportunity.

Incidents 3, 5 & 8 were clustered and the offender may have had a strong awareness of the lack of guardianship in that area.