

The “New” Crimes of Pandemics:

Observations and insights from Latin America

Postprint version, cite as:

Fondevila, G., Sandberg, S. The “new” crimes of pandemics: observations and insights from Latin America. *Security Journal* (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41284-023-00379-0>

Abstract: The coronavirus pandemic changed the legal landscape in Latin America, as it did throughout the world. Based on data from online news articles, we explore a particular feature of these changes, namely a number of “new” crimes that appeared during the pandemic. These include: 1) hate or fear crimes against health workers and hospitals; 2) illegal denials of public mobility out of fear of infection; 3) looting and other traditional crimes justified by the pandemic; and 4) violations of pandemic regulations. Studies of crime during the pandemic have focused on more traditional crimes and have been based on routine activity theory. We argue that to understand the impact of the pandemic on criminal behavior, this perspective must be accompanied by other theoretical frameworks. Broadening the theoretical scope will make it easier to understand the role of the State in pandemics, for example, the relationship between a lack of societal trust and violations of pandemic restrictions. Our study explores the complex relationship between criminal behavior and policy responses in pandemics.

Keywords: Pandemic, covid-19, crime, looting, hate crime, Latin-America

1. Introduction

At the end of January 2020, the WHO declared the Covid-19 pandemic a global health emergency. Due to the ease, speed, and manner of infection, eliminating or restricting social proximity became the main governmental strategy to contain the spread of the virus and mitigate against its dangers. These lockdown policies provided a natural laboratory in which to investigate changes in criminal behavior. Understanding the impact of social distancing measures on crime is crucial for pandemic public policy and can also provide insight into crime in general.

Most of the emerging studies of Covid-19 and crime are framed within routine activity theory (Cohen and Felson, 1979; Clarke and Felson, 1993; Eck and Madense, 2015). This framework allows for an easy understanding of the relationship between daily activities and the behavior of crime and can be simply applied: If streets are empty, there are no suitable targets for street robbery, and the same is true for public transport, businesses, cars in the street, and so on. The law-breaking that has been studied so far during the coronavirus crisis is “a set of urban crimes, namely battery (simple assault), vehicle theft, burglary, intimate partner assault, assault with deadly weapon, robbery, shoplifting, homicide and theft” (Campedelli et al. 2020). Mohler et al. also include vandalism and traffic stops, a type of officer-initiated call, (Campedelli et al. 2020). Studies tend to use similar sources of information, usually official police data, which include either calls-for-service (or reported crimes or incident reports (Campedelli et al; 2020; Ashby, 2020; Shayegh and Malpede, 2020).

All the above studies come to the same conclusions and show a drop in crime as a result of lockdown policies. An important exception is domestic violence, where confinement meant extended periods of contact between potential offenders and victims (usually women and children). This resulted in a substantive increase in domestic violence (Boserup et al. 2020; Campbell, 2020; Nigam, 2020). There have also been studies showing that the pandemic had only a minor effect on homicide rates (see Vilalta, 2020) and that early falls in crime were balanced out by the subsequent rapid rise of many, though not all, crime types (Eisner and Nivette, 2020).

Although these early studies offer important insights, we believe that it is necessary to include other criminological theories apart from routine activity theory, to fully understand the impacts of pandemics on crime. We do not aim to propose one alternative major theory (e.g. strain theory or anomie) to explain changes in crime in pandemics, but rather, to show the advantages of drawing on a wider set of criminological theories to understand breaches and crimes in pandemics. Moreover, the emerging literature focuses on traditional crimes (which can be measured), but neglects another crucial aspect of the coronavirus pandemic: “new” forms of law violations and types of criminal behavior (related to Covid-19) that might emerge in pandemics. Van Rooij et al. (2020) have studied the efficacy of social isolation measures and the lack of compliance with these (Kushner et al. 2020; Lunn et al. 2020). However, as far as we know, no studies have looked at the appearance of “new” breaches and crimes within the context of pandemics, nor attempted to discuss how they can be theorized.

We start the paper with a short review of crime studies during pandemics, natural disasters and in post-conflict societies, before providing a brief overview of the development of traditional crimes during the coronavirus pandemic in Latin America. We then focus on the main objective of this

paper, to study the “new” crimes and breaches of the pandemic, by responding to three research questions: What forms of unlawful behavior were stimulated by the coronavirus pandemic in Latin America? How can we theorize these “new” crimes and breaches within traditional criminological theories (e.g. routine activities theory, strain theory, self-defense theory, narrative theory)? How can they be linked (at least preliminarily) to State stability and public policy?

Our findings indicate that within the context of weak states, the coronavirus pandemic in Latin America led to the emergence of several new forms of hate or fear crimes, denial of mobility, and looting, and other, more "traditional" crimes were both justified and caused by the pandemic. Violation of new pandemic regulations also gave rise to completely new legal breaches and crimes. We argue that this new legal landscape necessitates alternative theoretical approaches beyond the routine activity framework.

1.1. Crimes in pandemics, natural disasters and post-conflict societies

Pandemics (e.g., Spanish Flu in 1918, Asian Flu in 1957, H3N2 in 1968, SARS-CoV in 2002, SARS in 2003, H1N1 in 2009) have been studied extensively in the social sciences, such as economics (Brainerd and Siegler, 2003; Keogh-Brown and Smith, 2008; Page et al. 2012), psychology (Pellecchia et al. 2015; Rubin and Wessely, 2020) and political science (Fairchild and Oppenheimer, 1998; Lieberman, 2007). In criminology however, pandemics and similar societal crises have not garnered much attention, although some studies have linked social breakdown to domestic violence. As argued by Camey et al. (2020), Bermudez (2019) and First et al. (2017), natural disasters or conflicts can result in a breakdown of or rupture in health, transport, food and security structures, which generally lead to an increased exposure to insecurity, sexual violence and harassment.

There are no pre-coronavirus studies that look specifically at the effect of pandemics on crime, nor on public policies for security and crime prevention, although some researchers have studied changes in crime following natural events, such as hurricanes (Elmes et al. 2014). These types of disasters alter the routine activities of the population through evacuations, confinement and the disruption of working hours. Frailing and Harper (2017) found that hurricanes (in the USA), were followed by an increase in burglaries, probably due to the absence of homeowners (Leitner and Helbich, 2011). Similarly, Prelog (2016) associates property crime with the frequency of natural disasters and Frailing and Harper also found an increase in homicides in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. These findings were confirmed by Roman et al. (2007), who noted an increase in violence in this city. Varano (2010) however, found crime rates to be stable in cities that received and accommodated Katrina evacuees.

The literature on post-conflict societies also offers useful insights for a criminology of pandemics. In this tradition, most of the studies focus on the difficulties of controlling crime, illegal markets, and human rights violations in the post-conflict state building process (Wolff, 2013). Briscoe (2014) for example, analyzes the coexistence of illicit businesses and armed groups in the face of the vulnerabilities of a new state and Rodgers (2002) studied the challenges facing “new” police. Similarly, Hills (2013) studied the role of police in societies undergoing post conflict reconstruction. Other studies explore the management of public security (Mobek, 2005) and conflict resolution (Björkdahl et al. 2016) in post conflict societies, or the administration of such societies as a process of governance rebuilding (Brinkerhoff, 2007). These studies of post-conflict societies address a theme that is of great relevance for studies of crime during the coronavirus pandemic in Latin America: on one hand, distrust of the authorities and lack of government

legitimacy in administering effective response, and on the other hand, authorities overwhelmed by the situation and law enforcement that has temporarily ceased to function effectively.

Finally, police legitimacy has received increased attention in criminology in the last twenty years (Tyler, 2003). It is viewed as central to people's willingness to comply with the law, to accept police decisions, and to help them fight crime (Reisig et al. 2011; Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; Tyler and Fagan, 2008). Perceptions of police legitimacy are based primarily on concerns around the fairness of the processes followed by police in exercising their authority (process-based model of policing). This line of research is also highly relevant for our case. In Latin America, police generally have low levels of legitimacy and trust which often makes their responses ineffective: in Mexico, for example, the police are distrusted by 94% of the population¹. Importantly, police legitimacy is affected by social unrest and outbursts (e.g., in Chile and Colombia in 2019 and 2020) leading to problems such as human rights violations and a loss of trust in police institutions (Vilalta, Fondevila & Dammert, 2023). In summary, while there is some criminological and related literature that looks at developments in traditional crime and criminal policy during times of great societal change (pandemics, natural disasters, post-conflict etc.), to our knowledge, there are no studies of the emergence of “new” crimes and breaches during such times nor of how governments and state institutions respond to these.

1.2. The Latin American political context

Latin America has taken major steps since the military dictatorships of the seventies and eighties, but most countries in the region still score high on indexes of corruption and clientelism, and often

¹ Encuesta Nacional de Victimización y Percepción sobre Seguridad Pública -ENVIPE- (2020).

have highly inefficient law enforcement and justice systems. Many countries in this region are described as weak or failing states. State failure covers a wide range of issues related not only to security, but also to redistribution of income, economic development or political representation (Aguirre, 2006). In this sense, it can be claimed that States “fail because they cannot continue supplying positive public services to their people. Governments lost legitimacy, in the eyes and hearts of a growing plurality of citizens” (Rotberg, 2002). In Latin America, bureaucracies with little autonomy face the growing power of drug trafficking organizations and gang activity, and many Latin America States are incapable of providing functioning public services and are forced to compete with such armed groups for control of parts of their national territory. Institutional weaknesses (for example, lack of trust, impunity and corruption) are particularly problematic in societal crises, such as natural disasters or pandemics, because States are not able to enforce the law or facilitate the necessary social cooperation for institutions and public policies to function properly. Despite important regional differences, for example between weak or failing States such as Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, and stronger States like Chile or Uruguay (Urteaga Quispe, 2017), overall, in Latin America, State capacity, stability and legitimacy are limited.

Arguably, pandemics can be used as a litmus test of State strength, because the population must believe in the State’s capacity to solve complex problems and trust the intentions of pandemic policies, for these to be effective. Lack of trust in the State might lead to violations of pandemic regulations or attempts by citizens to take the law into their own hands to counter an infectious disease.

1.3. Crime in Latin America during the pandemic

The pandemic affected all areas of the State, including the functioning of the police, prosecutors, judges and the penitentiary system. For example, prison system authorities in the region all took practically the same measures to alleviate the situation inside prisons: prison releases, limiting new prison admissions, and prevention and mitigation actions inside prisons (Marmolejo et al., 2020). Unfortunately, these measures could not contain a large number of Covid-19 cases reported in South American prisons. One possible explanation for this is the "overcrowded, unsanitary, and under-resourced conditions" which meant that "inmates in several South American countries have engaged in collective violence and/or attempted to escape" (Rapisarda et al., 2020: 1014). In Mexico for example, the suspension of family visits -to prevent contagion- provoked riots (Agoff, Sandberg & Fondevila, 2021).

In terms of criminal activity, crime generally decreased in Latin America, coinciding with the restrictions on movement. The overall crime index, for example, decreased between 13.8% in Chile and 58% in Buenos Aires. The only country that registered a significant decrease in domestic violence was Chile, with a decrease of 18%, although this may be related to the difficulty faced by victims in reporting this crime. At the same time, Chile also registered an increase in car theft (17.6%).

[Table 1 near here]

In Argentina, the Attorney General of the Buenos Aires province reported an overall reduction of 58% in the incidence of crime. Brazil also registered a reduction in crime. According to the Institute for Public Security in Rio de Janeiro, street robbery decreased by 52% (from 11,892 in March, 2019 to 5,699 in 2020), car theft dropped 36% and transport theft by 46%. Crime tendencies in São Paulo were similar: according to the Ministry of Public Security, there was a 65% decrease in theft,

40% in burglaries, 41.5% in auto theft and 31% in transport theft. Homicide rates in Rio de Janeiro remained stable, but increased by 10% in São Paulo, as did domestic violence (10%). In Rio de Janeiro, the rise in domestic violence was even greater, with 50% (Judiciary Branch).

In Chile, according to the Public Prosecutor, crime reports decreased 13.8% from the start of the restrictions, in comparison with the same period the previous year (117,316 reports in 2019 and 103,421 in 2020). The crimes that decreased the most were credit card fraud, by 45% (7,632 cases in March, 2019 to 4,457 for the same period this year); theft, by 35% (2,872 cases in March, 2019 and 1,864 in March, 2020); and burglaries by 22% (4,158 cases in March, 2019 to 3,213 in March of this year). Despite the decrease in the majority of crimes, some registered increases, for example, public disorder increased by 1,349% (124 cases in March, 2019 vs 1,797 in March 2020). Armed robbery increased by 20% and auto theft by 17.6%. Offences against public health grew 973% (from 11 in March, 2019 to 118 in March, 2020) and 73 cases were registered of infractions against the measures adopted to contain the Covid-19 pandemic.

In Colombia, according to National Police data, homicides decreased 53.3%, together with a sharp fall in almost all crime indicators: personal injury decreased 22% (3,346 cases in 2019 to 23,652 in 2020); personal theft fell by 12% (71,208 cases in 2019 to 62,657 in 2020); extortion decreased 38%, and car theft by 22.9%. Sexual assaults also decreased (28%), as did phone theft (10%) and bicycle theft (11%). Police statistics show that homicide fell by 10% (3,171 cases in the period in 2019 to 2,849 in 2020), while burglaries declined by 29 % (from 11,820 registered cases last year to 8,418 this year), theft in or at businesses dropped 45 % (15,822 cases in 2019 to 8,641 in 2020); and car theft decreased by 22% (2,587 cases in 2019 to 2,029 in 2020). During the isolation period, there were 25% fewer motorcycle thefts (8,179 cases in 2019 compared with 6,496 in 2020).

Extortion also decreased by 38% (1,428 cases this year, compared with 2,286 reported in 2019) as did kidnappings by 34% (29 cases in 2019 and 19 this year).

In Mexico City, street robberies dropped by 35.62% (6,141 compared with 9,540 for the same period last year), and the number of complaints related to car theft also decreased by 14.7% (from 3,481 cases in 2019 to 2,969 in 2020). Burglaries fell by 20.4% and thefts of businesses by 22.2%. Homicides were barely impacted, with a reduction of just 1.9% (Mexico City Attorney General). Covid-19 measures fundamentally impacted crime dynamics: closed businesses were less vulnerable, fewer delivery personnel and fewer cars on the road meant fewer targets for robbery. This was also true for house robberies: probability of occurrence increases when occupants are at work, but a substantial part of the population were confined to their homes (Vilalta, 2020²). Homicides in Mexico City, however, did not decrease. The city has continued to register an average of 154 cases a month since January 2019, and no significant differences have been observed from before and after the declaration of the health emergency. Arguably, as this crime is often “associated with the organized crime operation, it mainly entails executions and thus goes beyond the logic of opportunities to commit crime” (Vilalta, 2020).

Generally then, crime decreased during the coronavirus pandemic in Latin America, but some crimes increased, “new” types of crimes and breaches appeared, and some criminal behaviors were reignited (with new motivations). While it may be too early to draw firm conclusions, our data can shed light on the latter. In this study, we rely on media reports from across Latin America to explore and understand the crimes that may emerge in times of epidemics. With this we aim to contribute

² <https://www.eluniversal.com.mx/opinion/carlos-vilalta/covid-19-y-el-crimen-en-la-ciudad-de-mexico>

to a theoretical and conceptual discussion of crimes that can (re)emerge during pandemics and inform a broader discussion of the link between crime, law, pandemics, and public policy.

2. Data and Method

We address a broad range of crimes in this study: breaches of Covid-19 regulations, new variants of hate crimes, and crimes that acquired new motivations or justifications from the coronavirus pandemic. They stand out from “traditional” crimes (robbery, burglary, etc.) because they are primarily motivated or driven by the pandemic. We describe them as “new” as they were not evident in their current form, or with similar justifications, before the pandemic. Importantly, the forms of crime we study do often reflect earlier, pre-pandemic forms that were reignited during the pandemic. For simplicity, we describe both crimes and breaches as “crimes”, and both also fall under the national criminal code or new regulations associated with Covid-19 restrictions.³

Our data come from news articles reporting new forms of law breaking that emerged during the coronavirus pandemic in Latin America, or more specifically in: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela. We selected news that reported unusual/disruptive/innovative crimes, breaches of regulations, and law violations regarding Covid-19, compared to traditional common crimes, and that were reported in more than one country. The news articles were then ordered into different overall conceptual forms and coded according to these. We present these four main categories in

³ Many of the pandemic-related regulations are not strictly “crimes” and countries have struggled to clarify the legal grounds with which to process and punish violators of Covid-19 regulations. In fact, some “violations of pandemic regulations” are probably not violations of criminal law at all, while other “crimes”, like looting, are considered law violations and fall under the national penal law in the countries studied. In making this list of four categories of “new” crimes, we attempted to avoid the “nest effect”, i.e. breaches or crimes that were heavily dependent on the specific and local legal regulations and that are different from other countries in the region (in fact, in the four categories, the regulations in all the countries studied are similar).

the analysis. Subsequently, the cases were analyzed according to: a) number of participants - a simple distinction between several people or individuals, b) reaction of the authorities, c) intentionality of the law violation/crime.

2.1.Procedure

Using web scraping (in R), we selected 50 official news sites for analysis, with articles that contained a combination of specific words. By “official”, we refer to State-accredited news media in each country, as well as to government published official information and publicity in those media. In each selected case, we verified the information by checking for the news stories in two additional media sources (eliminating any type of interpretation): dates, report of what happened, protagonists and repercussions. This was done as, historically, the media in Latin America have a biased editorial line (Dickson, 1994) that may be more oriented to information activism than to the objective reporting of facts (Kitzberger, 2010). In times of crisis (especially political), the relationship between journalists and official sources becomes even more problematic. The extent to which bias might be operating in each country can possibly be estimated (quantitatively) based on the demographics of a news source's audience - gender, age, income, etc. (Ribeiro et al., 2018). In this text however, we have limited ourselves to collecting news records (in different social sectors) and seeking confirmations in alternative media (to the official one).

The process of extracting online information was initiated with a Google search for specific words found on a single website. This search was filtered by time periods and language in such a way that the search results for Latin America (as a unit), for example, differed according to the period under analysis as well as the specific language. Latin America was chosen as unit of analysis to compare the news between different countries, regional trends, joint political statements, or problems arising

due to closure of borders in the region (for example, Nicaragua-Costa Rica). Latin America is clearly a large, heterogeneous and complex region, but it is possible to make certain generalizations about common problems (weakness of the State, corruption, citizen mistrust, lack of social development, etc.). Countries in the region also share similar languages, identity, colonial past and historical development. Although starting the study from a regional point of view implied losing some local specificity, it is also true that the explanatory scope was greater. The regional perspective served initially as a general framework, with later searches made at the national level. This was done in order to find local indications of a pattern we believed was regional.

The next step was to extract the information from the web and order it with the rvest package -html (Grolemund and Wickha, 2017). All sites were searched in Spanish or Portuguese for the combination of the words “breaches of restriction regulation” “crime”, “law violations”, “Covid-19” and “Latin America” dating from the beginning of 2020 until August of the same year. We used official news sites, because these are assumed to have certain procedures for filtering and checking the news they report. Once the results of the extraction were filtered, the search was expanded to include the specific countries in this study. Latin America was thus no longer a single unit, but rather, each specific country became a subcategory. To extract news articles from these particular countries, the same procedure was followed: the combination of words for the analysis were “country”, “covid”, “crime”, “law violations” and “breaches of restriction regulation/legislation”. The term “country” referred to the country of interest.

[Table 2 near here]

Following a saturation criterion (Thompson, 2010), it was finally decided to use only 40 articles per country (10 for each crime) that fulfilled all requirements: time, language and originating from a news organization. Local, national, and international media reports in either Spanish or

Portuguese were considered, as international media sometimes publish information about a country that the national and local media do not record or broadcast. In all cases, we sought to include the widest possible scope of countries in order to have regional representation.

2.2.Limitations

Official statistics do not include information or relevant categories on the “crimes” or “breaches of restriction regulation/legislation” we research in this study, and news media were the only available data sources for our research questions. Such data does not allow studying the distribution or frequency of law violations. Moreover, using news media as data to reveal crime trends can be problematic because it depends upon the media corporations’ criteria of newsworthiness for inclusion (Bednarek and Caple, 2017). Unusual and dramatic events may be over-represented in general news coverage, and those that fit with a general, high-agenda story (for example, the coronavirus crisis) may be prioritized. Regular events or crimes that occur more frequently have less news value. News will also be framed in order to fit criteria of newsworthiness, for example novelty is exaggerated and events dramatized to increase readership. This study does not address the process of news production, that is, how news is selected, how it is presented, or what is considered to be of general newsworthiness. For the purpose of this study, we regard the narrated events in the news as “facts” (and not media events, as suggested by Mouillaud and Tétu, 1989), and the news articles are used to identify and explore crimes encouraged by the pandemic. We maintain that this is sufficient for the purpose of identifying crimes that may emerge during a pandemic, and to theorize and systematize these crimes (Sangero, 2019).

Below we present a content analysis of the selected news articles (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Neuendor, 2016) identifying crimes that emerged during, and were encouraged by, the coronavirus

pandemic. Content analysis has a long history and can mean different things (Krippendorff 2004), but here we stick to a relatively straightforward version emphasizing that it is an “*empirically grounded method*, exploratory in process, and predictive or inferential in intent” (Krippendorff 2004: xvii). In practice, we have inductively searched for types or forms in the empirical data and summarized these under some more general categories of forms or types of crimes. The categories were then systematically applied to the data in a second coding. When presenting the results we provide a few selected examples to give readers a sense of the phenomena in question and the intricacy of individual cases. The overall categories/codes are the product of our theorizing and considerably reduce complexity. At the same time they make it possible to see overall patterns which is helpful for a more general and theoretical discussion of these tendencies.

3. Results

Our analysis identifies four “new” types of crime that arose during the coronavirus pandemic: hate or fear crimes against health workers and hospitals; illegal denial of public mobility out of fear of infection; looting and other traditional crimes justified by the pandemic; and violation of new pandemic regulations.

3.1. *New forms of hate or fear crime*

Stigmatized as sources of infection, healthcare workers were attacked, abused and marginalized during the coronavirus pandemic in Latin America. Some hospitals were also threatened (for example, for attending to Covid-19 patients) or directly attacked by family members of patients who haddied.

Attacks on healthcare workers mainly occurred on public transport or at their homes. When identified, healthcare workers were ejected from public transport, had bleach or alcohol thrown on

them, and they or their families were threatened in their homes and pressured to leave. For example, on April 22, a threat was issued against a health professional, by neighbors in his housing complex in Bogota. One of the neighbors intimidated him directly: “Doctor, if you don’t go, we will kill your wife and children”⁴ (Colombia). Most of the attacks seem to have been caused by fear and ignorance: In the La Rioja province, a doctor was woken at dawn when the family car was set alight, and an anonymous note was left that warned, “‘infected rats, go away’,”⁵ (Argentina) while in Cochabamba (Bolivia), a doctor denounced her neighbors who prevented her from entering or leaving her building, for fear of being infected by Covid-19.⁶

Such attacks occurred throughout the pandemic and across the region, despite the immediate social outrage they provoked. In São Paulo (Brazil), "there is a group of people who are verbally and physically attacking [healthcare workers]. Pushing, not letting [them] on the subway car".⁷ In Mexico, “some colleagues have not been allowed onto buses or have been told to get off, and in fact, one even had water with bleach thrown over her”.⁸ An assault on a nurse in Mexico provoked an immediate response from the police, who detained and processed the attackers, jailing them for the injuries they had caused. A similar police response was evident in other countries in the region, for example, in Peru where “The National Police are looking for the man accused of spitting on a nurse in a Los Olivos clinic this Friday, May 8”.⁹

⁴ <https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/de-las-amenazas-a-los-hechos-atacan-vivienda-de-medico-en-bogota/666525>

⁵ <https://www.infobae.com/coronavirus/2020/04/21/coronavirus-en-argentina-le-incendiaron-el-auto-a-una-medica-con-covid-19-en-la-rioja/>

⁶ <https://www.paginasiete.bo/sociedad/2020/4/7/vecinos-impiden-el-ingreso-de-una-medica-su-casa-por-temor-al-coronavirus-251998.html>

⁷ <https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/geral-51983987>

⁸ <https://abcnoticias.mx/agreden-a-enfermera-con-cloro-en-jalisco/165455>

⁹ <https://larepublica.pe/sociedad/2020/05/08/coronavirus-en-peru-los-olivios-padre-de-hombre-que-escupio-a-enfermera-mi-hijo-no-es-ningun-delincuente-video/>

The rationale behind such attacks is generally understood to have been an attempt to keep people with a perceived high risk of infection away from certain areas in order to maintain these areas free of the virus. A strong emotional component is evident, although the logic followed by perpetrators is questionable: not only does the likelihood of becoming infected increase through contact or engagement with doctors and nurses, but these professionals also perform critical health functions, including for those who instigate these types of attacks.

Attacks on and threats to hospitals are another form of the new hate or fear crimes that emerged during the coronavirus pandemic. The General Hospital of Axochiapan (Mexico), for example, was reconditioned to respond to the pandemic, and 34 beds were allocated to patients with respiratory diseases. However, when this was announced, inhabitants threatened to burn down the hospital because they feared that the Covid-19 patients would infect them¹⁰.

Tensions also rose as a result of the prohibition on visits to hospitalized family members. In Mexico, a doctor was beaten by relatives of a person who had died from Covid-19, after they had been refused access to the isolation area¹¹. Similar events occurred in Nicaragua when “on the orders of the doctors, they needed to isolate the area where a positive patient was allegedly detected. The decision generated friction between family members and medical and security personnel at the center”.¹² Law enforcement did not repress collective protests nor did it act against threats to hospitals (there were no arrests) and simply limited itself to protecting locations.

¹⁰<https://politica.expansion.mx/estados/2020/04/01/pobladores-de-morelos-amenazan-con-quemar-hospital-si-recibe-casos-de-covid-19>

¹¹ <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-52319044>

¹² <https://www.laprensa.com.ni/2020/04/29/departamentales/2668302-autoridades-del-hospital-de-chinandega-extremen-medidas-y-aislan-a-pacientes-familiares-estan-inconformes>

Attacks on hospitals and staff were fueled by a variety of feelings. Like the attacks on doctors and nurses in public places, threats against hospitals that accepted Covid-19 patients may have been an attempt to keep the virus from “entering” specific places, including local hospitals, while attacks on hospital staff by family members may have been driven by frustration and anger over new rules and measures for the treatment of patients during the pandemic.

3.2. Denial of mobility

One of the most striking “criminal” phenomena caused by the pandemic was the blocking of roads and highways, closures of entrances to towns and cities, and the isolation of entire communities due to fear of contagion. In some cases, communities took matters into their own hands and closed off access to outsiders, including access to highways, as was the case in Baja California Sur, Mexico, where residents prevented access to local, national and foreign tourists.¹³ In a variation of this, and as a result of misinformation, in Tenjo (Bogota), townspeople prevented entrance to the town as they believed that patients infected with Covid-19 were going to be brought in to be quarantined.¹⁴ In Nicaragua, the Transporters Association (ATN) blocked the Pan-American highway to protest against the sanitary measures that had paralyzed cargo transportation,¹⁵ while, in the most extreme example, some communities completely shut themselves off and blocked all

¹³ <https://www.elsudcaliforniano.com.mx/local/municipios/cierran-carreteras-por-temor-a-contagio-de-covid-19-en-todos-santos-y-pescadero-bcscovi19-loscaboscoVID19-coronavirusbcs-5081475.html>

¹⁴ <https://www.elcomercio.com/actualidad/bloquean-entrada-pueblo-colombia-rumor.html>

¹⁵ https://es.noticias.yahoo.com/transportistas-nicaragua-anuncian-bloqueo-frontera-215606430.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAANK_qJTAoiTuEbYmevJfbCZwisrcvKvJvHhpzvGYuScBDc7B05A5yJ44gLYHhwfEmWn3Fm9FA0ODIxPa8nyxVIGaOqJVUlrxXc6qvhwZ9pt0FNhJfTZHpi0VuvKIwrPOZBqIFzS_zOuR7xFJmtNRGff7RLlzUNbyKfDI39uviNc

access. The Quiché settlers in Guatemala, for example, closed the roads that connect them with all six neighboring departments.¹⁶

In general, the police did not attempt to forcibly re-open roads. Rather, they engaged in negotiations to open at least one of the access roads or to let visitors out of the region (in coastal areas). In some situations, authorities simply withdrew or remained at a distance as a deterrent, but without undertaking arrests or dispersing conflicts. In the case of the closure of towns, these were generally rural populations with a long tradition of mistrust of the State and strangers. They are closed communities (mostly comprising indigenous populations) where strangers and State representatives are often viewed with suspicion. In Zítacuaro (Michoacán-Mexico), there were cases where, for example, residents blocked the roads stating that “there are soldiers and elements of the National Guard injecting the population with the Covid-19 virus, and that sanitation measures contaminate the water wells. Residents blame nurses, soldiers, sailors and elements of the National Guard for carrying out these operations”.¹⁷ In these cases, fear of Covid-19 combined with a long tradition of mistrust in the State and science, was sometimes seen in skepticism towards police, medical personnel etc.

The denial of mobility through illegal roadblocks, the isolation of villages and other similar acts were generally motivated by fear of contagion that would result from the movement of people, and this similar rationale and moral authority (for the greater good) may help explain the restrained response of law enforcement and the State. Roadblocks and similar illegal pandemic measures highlight the inability of the State to enforce legality or to cooperate with these communities

¹⁶ <https://www.prensalibre.com/ciudades/quiche/coronavirus-en-guatemala-pobladores-de-quiche-cierran-carreteras-por-temor-a-contagios-de-covid-19/>

¹⁷ <http://viceversanoticias.com/2020/05/12/se-levantan-pueblos-del-edomex-contra-sanitizacion/>

through a constant positive presence (through schools, civil registration, services, public policies, etc.) which could develop trust. Covid-19 thus served as a catalyst for a relationship of mistrust and mutual stigmatization where the State's abandonment was reciprocated by the rejection of State authority by the population.

3.3. Looting and other "traditional" crimes justified or caused by pandemics

With the implementation of social distancing measures, looting broke out almost immediately in Latin America. All countries under study registered some degree of looting, from minor incidents (2 or 3 people robbing a grocery store) to crowds (30 to 40 people looting a large store). In Mexico, various retail and department stores reported 53 episodes of looting¹⁸. To date, 95 people have been detained for looting in Mexico City and another 43 in the State of Mexico. Not only did these lootings appear to have been collectively organized via social media (Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.), but such organized lootings and assaults on department stores and the targeting of high value products, such as electronics rather than food, also occurred in other countries in the region. In Peru, for example, the Computer Crimes Division of the police "detained two suspects accused of inciting the population, through social media, to commit acts of looting",¹⁹ while in Venezuela, "In Isla Margarita, a series of photographs published on social media show a group looting furniture from the Hotel Portofino (...)"²⁰.

There appear to be important differences in the nature and level of organization of the looting: some were "spontaneous", originating in protests over quarantine measures and the loss of

¹⁸ <https://politica.expansion.mx/cdmx/2020/03/28/saqueos-siguen-en-el-edomex-y-la-cdmx-van-69-casos-y-138-detenidos>

¹⁹ <https://publimetro.pe/actualidad/coronavirus-peru-detienen-a-sujetos-acusados-de-incitar-a-saqueos-a-traves-de-las-redes-sociales-cuarentena-estado-de-emergencia-covid-19-nndc-noticia/>

²⁰ <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-52446193>

livelihoods, while others were “opportunistic”, and highly organized. The latter tended to be coordinated through Facebook or collective WhatsApp groups, which provided precise and studied descriptions of the location of both stores and goods, together with different escape routes and police modules. The motivation behind the looting also differed. In the case of opportunistic looting, no reference was made to the pandemic, while in spontaneous looting, there was a call to protest against the quarantine. The nature of looted property was another distinction: In spontaneous looting, goods were looted from stores where the original protest was held, while opportunistic looting was directed at specific stores and goods. Police responses also varied: in spontaneous looting, police attention was focused on the protest and there was rarely repression of the looting as such. In the case of organized looting, however, the police response was immediate (mobilizing to the looting site, entering stores, arresting people, and recovering assets).

Looting is closely related to weak or failing States. In Argentina, for example, looting originated in the same marginalized neighborhoods in which soup kitchens had been organized. “Subsistence looting” was subsequently organized in such neighborhoods to distribute food (Neufeld and Cravino, 2001). In certain situations, this coordination continued and assumed the functions of a complex neighborhood organization, initiating processes against the State for the formalization of land ownership and the installation of electricity, water, and sanitary services, etc. It has also produced leaders who organize the participation of political parties in these neighborhoods.

Looting and other “traditional” crimes justified by the pandemic may have been based on an immediate need (such as hunger) or on the anticipation of a future need caused by the crisis. Alternatively, the pandemic may have been used to legitimize behavior that people would engage in anyway. In certain cases, motivations may have been interconnected and difficult to distinguish.

But in some cases, these were “crimes” strongly associated with social disorder or that occur within the context of State weakness in terms of its failure to halt opportunistic looting and its inability to prevent popular discontent in deprived neighborhoods with social and care services that meet basic needs in crisis contexts. For this reason, lootings often take place when there is a sudden increase in the cost of living (for example, due to increased prices of fuel or other necessities) or other events that aggravate living conditions in certain areas.

3.4. Violation of new pandemic regulations

One of the first measures adopted to contain the spread of the pandemic was restrictions on mobility, prohibiting people from gathering in groups, and mandating them to remain at home and apply for permission to travel (with varying degrees of intensity in each country). One of the most important roles played by the police in enforcing social distancing measures, was therefore controlling the movement of people. While few official records of lockdown violations exist, available published information related to the pandemic shows high levels of violation in some countries, especially those in which a strict quarantine was implemented. For example, in Argentina, 75 days after the beginning of the containment decreed by the National Government, 93,177 offenders had been arrested, 10,113,236 people had been notified (fined or warned), and 7,297,054 vehicles had been checked, of which 4,632 were retained (Federal Police, National Gendarmerie, Naval Prefecture and Airport Security Police)²¹. Ecuador recorded more than 74,000

²¹ <https://www.infobae.com/sociedad/policiales/2020/06/03/violacion-de-la-cuarentena-ya-hay-mas-de-10-millones-de-detenido-y-notificados-por-las-fuerzas-federales/>

people sanctioned for non-compliance with the lockdown (arrests and fines)²². In El Salvador, 1,200 people were detained in "containment centers" for violating curfew orders²³.

The violation of mobility restrictions was probably the most frequently violated law during the pandemic. News from all countries contained stories of people detained or “delayed” and subsequently fined. For example, Argentina reported “one hundred detainees and almost twenty cases of quarantine violations”.²⁴ In most cases, application of the law was left to police discretion, who tended to implement a double strategy: setting up road blocks in key locations, and making high profile, individual arrests. Cases were used to showcase police action in responding to the lack of public responsibility and failure to abide by emergency measures. In the case of Argentina, a man transporting two surfboards on his truck was arrested in his own home and investigated by a federal judge. In typical fashion, police interventions often involved the media to show that the police were serious about enforcing the quarantine.

Another law violation that arose was the failure to close businesses to avoid economic losses. In Mexico, “Tepito merchants refused to close businesses due to coronavirus”.²⁵ These were generally small and medium-sized service companies (such as, car repair workshops, hairdressers, warehouses, street vendors, etc.). The closure was determined by an administrative authority (and not the police). In some countries, closures were significant, such as in the Dominican Republic, where "Some 1,569 businesses have been shut down for violation of social distancing provisions

²² <https://www.infobae.com/america/agencias/2020/05/26/mas-de-74000-personas-sancionadas-por-incumplir-el-toque-de-queda-en-ecuador/>

²³ <https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2020/04/08/alerta-envian-a-mas-de-1-200-personas-a-centros-de-contencion-por-presuntamente-violar-cuarentena-domiciliar-en-el-salvador/>

²⁴ <https://www.nortecorrientes.com/article/156994/cien-detenido-y-casi-una-veintena-de-causas-por-violacion-de-la-cuarentena>

²⁵ <https://www.infobae.com/america/mexico/2020/04/07/de-que-vamos-a-vivir-comerciantes-de-tepito-se-rehusan-a-cerrar-negocios-por-coronavirus/>

and 292 for violation of the curfew”²⁶. In Ecuador, the authorities “implemented an operative to verify that businesses that do not provide essential services, were closed (...) Stores were shut down and disciplinary procedures were initiated.”²⁷

The quarantine also sparked protests and demonstrations against the closure of businesses and mobility controls, which seemed to take one of two forms: there were demonstrations by low-income sectors demanding government aid. For example, in Bolivia, “families living off small street vending businesses or from work in other people’s homes have been left without sources of income, giving rise to various protests”.²⁸ In other countries, demonstrations had a strong ideological component. This was particularly evident in Brazil, where groups of middle / upper class sectors held political demonstrations against the closure of economic activities.²⁹ There were also cases in the region where measures implemented by governments were aggressively applied by the police, leading to a series of human rights violations. “The Human Rights Ombudsman of El Salvador registered 343 complaints for alleged violations of fundamental rights”.³⁰ Indeed, in El Salvador, the government appears to have taken advantage of the pandemic to further its agenda of abandoning dialogue in favor of controlling and policing organized criminal groups, and monitoring mobility thus expanded police functions to neighborhoods where the police had not generally operated. Criminal groups reacted by establishing their own mobility controls and strictly implementing quarantine to avoid police presence.

²⁶ <https://listindiario.com/economia/2020/04/21/614219/gobierno-cierra-1569-negocios-por-violar-el-distanciamiento-social-y-292-por-irrespetar-toque-de-queda>

²⁷ <http://www.quitoinforma.gob.ec/2020/04/03/clausuras-y-multas-de-hasta-usd-6-mil-por-ejercer-labores-comerciales-restringidas/>

²⁸ <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-52372170>

²⁹ <https://g1.globo.com/sp/sao-paulo/noticia/2020/05/01/carreata-circula-por-sao-paulo-em-protesto-contra-a-quarentena.ghtml>

³⁰ <https://www.dw.com/es/el-salvador-denuncian-violaciones-a-dd-hh-cometidas-por-agentes-durante-cuarentena/a-53112631>

As in the case of the other law violations or crimes discussed, in order to understand their role in Latin America, violations of pandemic regulations must be seen within a context of weak or failing States. In such contexts, people were more likely to question the underlying motivation for pandemic measures, which may have led to more violations of these measures. There are also examples of States that used the pandemic for their own political purposes (the best example is El Salvador, but this also occurred in Guatemala, Honduras and Colombia). The general lack of trust in the State and States using the pandemic opportunistically could potentially have triggered demonstrations and violations of pandemic laws. If policies were felt to be “unnecessarily” strict or undemocratic, disobeying them may have been perceived as a form of revolt against undemocratic or illegitimate governments, rather than as breaches of life-saving policies. The absence of a functioning State also opened the possibility of criminal organizations taking on the role of the State, for example by handing out aid or by enforcing lockdowns.

4. Discussion

One of the central concerns of southern criminology (e.g. Carrington et al. 2018) is that problems of the Global South cannot be explained by a single framework elaborated in the Global North (Travers, 2019). As demonstrated above, routine activity theory alone, for example, falls short in explaining many of the “new” crimes that emerged during the coronavirus pandemic in Latin America. Routine activities fails to adequately account for the cases described as hate or fear crimes, where the motivated offender is driven by some form of irrational fear, and the suitable target does not provide any immediate benefit for the offender. The absence or failure of a guardian is also of little relevance, as few would even imagine health workers needing such protection. To understand these attacks, in Latin America and beyond, it is therefore necessary to go beyond

rational choice theories of crime and explore alternative criminological theories that are more sensitive to societal and cultural contexts.

Attacks on healthcare workers and hospitals share many of the characteristics of hate crimes, with the added dimensions of fear of disease, and the fact that victims were often part of the ethnic majority, and were located in privileged and high-status occupations. Hate crimes can be described as based on prejudice and “an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalization” (Allport, 1954). Walters (2011) describes how such crimes have been understood and explained by pointing to the background of the offenders, using strain theory (Merton, 1968), or as doing difference (Perry, 2002), based upon, and strengthening, already existing divides in society. Walters argues that “socio-cultural and socio-economic conditions combine to create environments of hate that act to trigger the hate motivated behavior of individuals with low self-control” (Walters, 2011).

In the pandemic, strain is an arguably better explanation than doing difference, since the victims were not structurally disadvantaged in society. Importantly these crimes were mostly “propelled by the emotion of *fear* inevitably creating a culture of prejudice—sustained by various communication networks—through which hate crime then emerges” (Walters, 2011). Additionally, Walters (2011) points to factors such as low self-control (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990), thrill seeking and attempts to “defend the turf” (Levin and McDevitt, 2013), as important elements in hate crimes. These mechanisms, known from studies of hate crime (perhaps better described as fear crimes in this context), can be useful to understand attacks on health workers and hospitals during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In cases of denial of mobility, offenders once again violated the law out of fear and with little benefit from that violation except their own (perceived or actual) protection. Guards appear to have

had no role, nor fulfilled any specific function as there were few police interventions. Here it is crucial to understand that crimes within a context of weak and failing States have a different dynamic (for example, where no one believes that guardians are really capable of exercising their function). The State may, for example, limit itself to “individual” arrests and not intervene in collective cases (for example, a group of residents threatening a hospital or roadblocks).

Routine activity theory thus seems insufficient to understand these crimes. Roadblocks and similar actions may be better explained by self-defense theory (if the person who causes harm is the potential victim) and possibly under the category of excessive self-defense (Sangero, 2019): “It might be considered a way of shifting an inevitable harm, if one is in the path of a threat, simply to duck or dodge the threat so that it then harms someone else” (McMahan, 1994; Boorse and Sorensen, 1988). According to Uniacke's theory of self-defense (Uniacke, 1994), in such cases, there is a mix between necessity and self-defense. In both, ‘the aggressor’s guilt is used as the basis for a certain devaluation of his interest’ (Sangero, 2019). In the attacks described above, the aggressors were those wanting to access the community and their “transgression” was possibly being infected with Covid-19. The blockade therefore had a “deterrent function and thus minimizes the occurrence of violent attacks in society” (Leverick, 2007), that is, the infection of the community. In the case of a pandemic, however, determining whether the right to exercise self-defense ends once an attack has occurred, or whether it remains operative until the threat (pandemic) has been neutralized (Gill, 2006) is far more complicated. Self-defense is not an absolute right, on the contrary, it must also be governed by the principles of necessity, proportionality, and immediacy.

In contrast to the above, routine activity theory is more applicable to looting and violations of new pandemic regulations. The fact that looting often takes place during crises can be explained by changes in the opportunity structure for committing these crimes and breaches of government regulations is “rational” in several ways. Nevertheless, we still believe that important insights can be gained by exploring other criminological traditions to understand these violations of the law.

Societal crises do not only change the opportunity structure for law breaches or crimes, but also the possible justifications or legitimizations for committing breaches or crimes. Neutralization theory, for example, emphasizes the various justifications offered by offenders, including: denial of responsibility/of injury/of victim, condemnation of the condemners, and the appeal to higher loyalties (Sykes and Matza, 1957). In the case of looting, the appeal to higher loyalties (“I did it to feed my children”) and denial of responsibility (“I had to do it”) are particularly salient, but an element of condemnation of people in power (“they are responsible for the current crisis”) and denial of injury (“they can take the losses”) are also at play (see also Scott and Lyman, 1968).

Narrative criminology (Fleetwood et al. 2019) has combined these early criminological insights with narrative theory, to argue that the stories behind crimes and harm are crucial to their understanding. Within this perspective, stories are seen as “instigating, sustaining, or effecting desistance from harmful action” (Presser and Sandberg, 2015). Not only do offenders need an opportunity to violate the law, but also a good story to justify it, they argue. Societal crises, such as pandemics, offer such powerful stories. Perspectives emphasizing neutralizations, accounts or offenders’ storytelling can thus help explain the increase in looting and other crimes in times of societal crises.

Violations of new regulations concerning behavior in public spaces and business closures, is probably the new crime that best fits the routine activities theory. It is rational in many ways to break the new regulations, in a 'law of the common' (best if everyone else follows, and not you) rational choice logic. The theory of community social disorganization (Shaw and McKay, 1969) also goes some way in explaining some of these behaviors, although in this case, the pandemic replaces the structural factors (low economic status, ethnic heterogeneity, residential mobility, and family disruption) that lead a community to social disorganization and eventually, to violations of the law (Sampson and Groves, 1989). A societal and political context of weak and failing States adds an important dimension to this dynamic, as it does in all the "new" crimes we have presented.

Returning to southern criminology, generally, countries associated with the so-called Global South (Latin America, Asia and Africa) combine an "informal settlement context, which is known for disproportionately high levels of crime" (Benson, 2020: 426) with policing characterized by a lack of citizen trust and high levels of police corruption (Blair et al, 2021; Jardine, 2020). All of the breaches/crimes we have presented point to a weak State, lacking in legitimacy and trust. When health workers and hospitals were attacked, or roadblocks built to prevent outsiders from entering, this was because the population did not trust the governments' measures to limit the spread of the disease. Similarly, when government pandemic measures were broken this may have been because the population questioned the motives behind them. The long history in Latin America of corruption, and weak and polarized States, probably best explains why many of the crimes described here manifested more often in this region than elsewhere. To some extent, this scenario is similar to those of post-conflict societies (Mobekk, 2005). In an environment where there is widespread skepticism towards law enforcement and the police are seldom seen to represent a

legitimate authority, people become used to taking care of their problems without the help of State agencies and police.

Social cooperation is key for pandemic measures to be effective, and the deep mistrust of the police in many Latin American countries is therefore problematic. Without trust and legitimacy, there is no public support for policing activities and often little willingness to abide by the law or accept police decisions (Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; Reisig et al. 2011; Tyler and Fagan, 2008). The pandemic has highlighted how policing based on deterrence and risk calculation does not generate obedience when fear is one of the main motives for breaking the law. In these “southern” cases, general trust in state agencies and the police plays an even more important role in controlling the fear and criminal opportunities aroused by the pandemic (see also Cavalcanti, 2020).

Signaling weak and failing states, and corruption and lack of trust in the police as the main reasons for pandemic policy failures, makes it difficult to identify any simple public policies to address the problem. Lack of trust in the State in Latin America is due to opacity, corruption, clientelism and the poor quality of public services (Brinks et al. 2014). Any policies that can respond to these challenges would increase trust in the State, State agencies and their representatives, and thus also facilitate cooperation between the state and the population in times of pandemics and other crises. A stronger belief in the State’s ability and good intentions would probably also reduce opportunistic, hate and fear crimes, as well as other forms of unlawful interventions during pandemics.

5. Conclusion

The “new” crimes discussed in this study, and pandemic policy failures in Latin America in general, are the result of weak or failing states with little legitimacy and trust. Most States in this

region lack the capacity to solve complex problems in an inclusive way and to foster the necessary cooperation between State agencies and the public. For this reason, one major policy implication of our study is that trust in and legitimacy of the State (especially the police) needs to be rebuilt if it is to be able to operate effectively in times of pandemics or other societal crises. In this sense, this study has revealed the importance of moving beyond simplistic and individualistic criminological theories and including the larger societal context to understand violations of the law during times of crises.

We have demonstrated the benefits of drawing on a wide spectrum of criminological theories to understand the “new” crimes that arise during pandemics. The study reveals the importance of routine activity theory, as well as other criminological theories such as theories of hate crime, self-defense, justifications, and narratives for understanding violations of the law that emerge during pandemics. We believe that drawing on a wide set of criminological theories is crucial, both to understand these breaches and crimes, as well as to develop prevention policies.

The results of this study are preliminary and implications and interpretations are only suggestive and limited to the pandemic under study. Nonetheless, we hope that our list of “new crimes” can be a starting point for a conceptual and theoretical discussion of offender behavior during the coronavirus pandemic as well as in future pandemics, both in Latin America and elsewhere. It is a first step in understanding breaches and crimes encouraged or driven by pandemics, their effects, and the need for appropriate public policies to contain them.

Bibliography

Agoff, C., Sandberg, S.; & Fondevila, G.; 2021. Doing marginalized motherhood: Identities and practices among incarcerated women in Mexico. *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 10(1), 15-29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15564886.2020.1828210>

Aguirre, M; 2006. Failed states or weak democracies? The state in Latin America. *Open Democracy net*. 17, 1-24.

Allport, G. W; 1954. *The nature of prejudice*. Addison-Wesley, MA.

Ashby, M.P.J; 2020. Initial evidence on the relationship between the coronavirus pandemic and crime in the United States. *Crime Science*. 9, 6. <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/ep87s>.

Bauer, M; Gaskell, G; 2000. *Qualitative researching with text, image and sound: A practical handbook for social research*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, Ca.

Bednarek, M; Caple, H; 2017. *The discourse of news values*. Oxford University Press, New York.

Benson, B. (2021). The use of the routine activities theory on policing informal settlements in the Global South. *South African Geographical Journal*, 103(4), 425-442.

Berelson, B; 1952. *Content analysis in communication research*. Free Press, Glencoe, Ill.

Bermudez, L.G; Stark, L; Bennounan, C; Jensen, C; Potts, A; Kaloga, I.F; Tilus, R; 2019. Converging drivers of interpersonal violence: Findings from a qualitative study in post-hurricane Haiti. *Child Abuse & Neglect*. 89, 178-191. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2019.01.003>.

Björkdahl, A., Höglund, K; Millar, G; Van der Lijn, J; Verkoren, W. 2016. *Peacebuilding and friction: Global and local encounters in post conflict-societies*. Routledge, New York.

Blair, G., Weinstein, J. M., Christia, F., Arias, E., Badran, E., Blair, R. A., ... & Wilke, A. M. (2021). Community policing does not build citizen trust in police or reduce crime in the Global South. *Science*, 374(6571), eabd3446.

Boserup, B., McKenney, M; Elkbuli, A; 2020. Alarming trends in US domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. *The American Journal of Emergency Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajem.2020.04.077>.

Boorse, C; and Sorensen, R.A; 1988. Ducking harm. *The Journal of philosophy*. 85,3, 115-134. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2027067>.

Brainerd, E; Siegler, M; 2003. The Economic Effects of the 1918 Influenza Epidemic. *Social Science Research Network*. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=394606>.

Brinkerhoff, D.W; 2007. Introduction—governance challenges in fragile states: Re-establishing security, rebuilding effectiveness, and reconstituting legitimacy. Routledge.

Brinks, D.M; Levitsky, S; Murillo, M.V; 2019. Understanding institutional weakness: power and design in Latin American institutions. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Briscoe, I; 2014. Crime after Jihad: armed groups, the state and illicit business in post-conflict Mali. Conflict Research Unit, Clingendael Institute, The Netherlands.

Camey, I.C; Sabater, L; Owren, C; Boyer, A.E; Wen, J; 2020. Gender-based violence and environment linkages, in: Wen, J. (Ed.), United States Agency for International Development.

Campbell, A. M; 2020. An increasing risk of family violence during the Covid-19 pandemic: Strengthening community collaborations to save lives. *Forensic Science International: Reports*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fsir.2020.100089>.

Campedelli, G; Aziani, A; Favarin, S; 2020. Exploring the Effect of 2019-nCoV Containment Policies on Crime: The Case of Los Angeles. <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/gcpq8>.

Carrington, K., Hogg, R., Scott, J., Sozzo, M., & Walters, R. (2018). *Southern criminology*. Routledge.

Cavalcanti, R. P. (2020). *A Southern Criminology of Violence, Youth and Policing: Governing Insecurity in Urban Brazil*. London: Routledge.

Clarke, R.V.G; Felson, M; 1993. Routine activity and rational choice. Transaction publishers, New York.

Cohen, L.E; Felson, M; 1979. Social change and crime rate trends: A routine activity approach. *American sociological review*. 588-608. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2094589>.

Dickson, S. H. (1994). Understanding media bias: The press and the US invasion of Panama. *Journalism Quarterly*, 71(4), 809-819.

Duhalt, A; 2017. Looting Fuel Pipelines in Mexico. Rice University's Baker Institute, Houston, Texas.

Eck, J. E; Madensen, T. D; Meaningfully and artfully reinterpreting crime for useful science: An essay on the value of building with simple theory, in: Andresen M.A; Farrell, G. (Eds.), *The criminal act: The role and influence of routine activity theory*. Palgrave Macmillan; Basingstoke, Hampshire, 5–18.

Eisner, M., Nivette, A; 2020. *Violence and the Pandemic: Urgent Questions for Research*. Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, New York.

Elmes, G.A; Roedl, G; Conley J; 2014. Forensic GIS: The role of geospatial technologies for investigating crime and providing evidence. Springer. 1–310. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-8757-4>.

Fagan, J; 2002. This will hurt me more than it hurts you: Social and legal consequences of criminalizing delinquency. *Notre Dame JL Ethics & Pub. Pol'y.* 16, 1, 1-41. <https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/ndlep16&div=6&id=&page=>

Fairchild, A; Oppenheimer, G; 1998. Public health nihilism vs pragmatism: history, politics, and the control of tuberculosis. *American Journal of Public Health.* 88, 1105–1117. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.88.7.1105>.

First, J. M; First, N.L; Houston, J.B; 2017. Intimate Partner Violence and Disasters: A Framework for Empowering Women Experiencing Violence in Disaster Settings. *Affilia.* 32, 3, 390–403. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109917706338>.

Fleetwood, J; Presser, L; Sandberg, S; Ugelvik, T; 2019. *The Emerald Handbook of Narrative Criminology.* Emerald Group Publishing, Bingley.

Frailing, K; Harper, D.W; 2017. *Toward a criminology of disaster: What we know and what we need to find out.* Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Friedrichs, D; 1998. *State crime: defining, delineating and explaining state crime.* Ashgate, Aldershot.

Garland, D; 1992. Knowledge in criminal justice and its relation to power. *British Journal of Criminology.* 32, 4, 403–422.

Garland, D; 1997. Of crimes and criminals: the development of criminology in Britain, in: Maguire, M; Morgan, R; Reiner, R. (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of criminology*. Clarendon; Oxford, 11-56.

Gill, T.D; 2006. The temporal dimension of self-defence: anticipation, pre-emption, prevention and immediacy. *Journal of Conflict and Security Law*. 11, 3, 361-369. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcsl/kr1018>.

Gottfredson, M. R; Hirschi, T; 1990. *A general theory of crime*. Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Grolemund, G., Wickham. H; 2017. *R for data science*. O'Reilly Media, Inc.

Henry, S., Milovanovic, D; 2000. Constitutive criminology: Origins, core concepts, and evaluation. *Social Justice*. 27, 2-80, 268-290.

Hills, A; 2013. Policing, good-enough governance and development: the evidence from Mogadishu. *Conflict, Security & Development*. 13, 3, 317-337. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2013.811051>.

Hillyard, P; Tombs, S; 2007. From 'crime' to social harm? *Crime Law Soc Change*. 48, 9–25. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10611-007-9079-z>.

Holland, A.C; 2013. Right on Crime? Conservative Party Politics and "Mano Dura": Policies in El Salvador. *Latin American Research Review*. 44-67. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41811587>

Hsieh, H.F; Shannon, S.E; 2005. Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative health research*, 15, 9. 1277-1288. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687>.

Inegi, 2010. Encuesta Nacional de Victimización y Percepción sobre Seguridad Pública (ENVIPE). <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/envipe/2020/> (accessed 13 March 2021).

Jardine, M. (2020). A Southern policing perspective and appreciative inquiry: An ethnography of policing in Vietnam. *Policing and society*, 30(2), 186-205.

Keogh-Brown, M; Smith, R; 2008. The economic impact of SARS: How does the reality match the predictions? *Health Policy*. 88, 110-120. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthpol.2008.03.003>.

Kitzberger, Ph. (2010) The Media Activism of Latin America's Leftist Governments: Does Ideology Matter?. GIGA Working Paper No. 151. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1713184>

Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. Sage publications.

Kushner, G; Wallace, G; Pepinsky, T; 2020. Partisanship, health behavior, and policy attitudes in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3562796>.

Layard, R; 2006. *Happiness. Lessons from a new science*. Penguin, London.

Leitner, M; Helbich, M; 2011. The impact of hurricanes on crime: A spatio-temporal analysis in the city of Houston, Texas. *Cartography and Geographic Information Science*. 38, 2, 213–221. <https://doi.org/10.1559/15230406382213>.

Leverick, F; 2007. Defending self-defence. *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*. 27, 3, 563-579. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ojls/gqm012>.

Levin, J; MacDevitt, J; 2013. *Hate crimes: The rising tide of bigotry and bloodshed*. Springer, New York.

Lieberman, E.S; 2007. Ethnic Politics, Risk, and Policy-Making: A Cross-National Statistical Analysis of Government Responses to HIV/AIDS. *Comparative Political Studies*, 40, 1407–1432. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414007306862>.

Lunn, P.D; Timmons, S; Belton C. A; Barjaková, M; Julienne, H; Lavin, C; 2020. Motivating social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic: An online experiment. *PsyArXiv*. 3. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/x4agb>.

Marmolejo, L., Barberi, D., Bergman, M., Espinoza, O., & Fondevila, G.; 2020. Responding to COVID-19 in Latin American prisons: the cases of Argentina, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico. *Victims & Offenders*, 15(7-8), 1062-1085. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15564886.2020.1827110>

Martínez-Reyes, A; Navarro-Pérez, J.J; 2019. From “Mano Dura” to “Enfrentamiento Directo”: swings of public policies in El Salvador. *Revista de Sociología e Política*. 27, 71. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1678-987319277102>.

McMahan, J; 1994. Self-Defense and the Problem of the Innocent Attacker. *Ethics*. 104, 2, 252-290. <https://doi.org/10.1086/293600>.

Merton, R. K; 1968. *Social theory and social structure*. Free Press, New York.

Mobekk, E; 2005. After Intervention: Public Security Management in Post-Conflict Societies—from Intervention to Sustainable Local Ownership, in: Ebnother, A.H; Flur, P. (Eds.), *Transitional Justice in Post-Conflict Societies—Approaches to Reconciliation*. Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Bureau for Security Policy at the Austrian Ministry of Defence; Vienna, pp. 261-293.

Mohler, G; Bertozzi, A.L; Carter, J; Short, M.B; Sledge, D; Tita, G.E; Uchida, C; Brantingham, P.J; 2020. Impact of social distancing during COVID-19 pandemic on crime in Los Angeles and Indianapolis. *Journal of Criminal Justice*. 68, 101692. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2020.101692>.

Mouillaud, M; Tétu J.F; 1989. *Le journal quotidien*. Presses Universitaires de Lyon, Lyon.

Murillo, M. J; 2015. Evaluating the role of online data availability: The case of economic and institutional transparency in sixteen Latin American nations. *International Political Science Review*. 36, 1, 42-59. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512114541163>.

Neuendorf, K. A; 2016. *The content analysis guidebook*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Neufeld, M. R; Cravino. M.C; 2001. Los saqueos y las ollas populares de 1989 en el Gran Buenos Aires. Pasado y presente de una experiencia formativa. *Revista de antropología*. 44, 2, 147-172. <https://doi.org/doi.org/10.1590/S0034-77012001000200005>.

Nigam, S; 2020. COVID-19, Lockdown and Violence against Women in Homes. *Lockdown and Violence against Women in Homes*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3587399>.

Page, S; Song, H; Wu, C; 2012. Assessing the Impacts of the Global Economic Crisis and Swine Flu on Inbound Tourism Demand in the United Kingdom. *Journal of Travel Research*. 51, 142–153. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287511400754>.

Pellecchia, U; Crestani, R; Decroo, T; Van, Y; Den-Bergh, Al-Kourdi; 2015. Social Consequences of Ebola Containment Measures in Liberia. *PLOS ONE*. 10. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0143036>.

Perry, B; 2002. Defending the color line: Racially and ethnically motivated hate crime. *American Behavioral Scientist*. 46, 1, 72-92. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764202046001006>.

Prelog, A.J; 2016. Modeling the relationship between natural disasters and crime in the United States. *Natural Hazards Review*. 17, 1. [https://doi.org/10.1061/\(ASCE\)NH.1527-6996.0000190](https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)NH.1527-6996.0000190).

Presser, L; Sveinung, S; 2015. *Narrative Criminology. Understanding stories of crime*. New York University Press, New York.

Rapisarda, S. S., Byrne, J. M., & Marmolejo, L.; 2020. An examination of COVID-19 outbreaks in South American prisons and jails. *Victims & Offenders*, 15(7-8), 1009-1018. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15564886.2020.1832028>

Reisig, M.D; Lloyd, C; 2009. Procedural justice, police legitimacy, and helping the police fight crime: Results from a survey of Jamaican adolescents. *Police quarterly*, 12, 1, 42-62. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098611108327311>.

Reisig, M.D; Wolfe, S.E; Holtfreter, K; 2011. Legal cynicism, legitimacy, and criminal offending: The nonconfounding effect of low self-control. *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 38, 12, 1265-1279. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854811424707>.

Ribeiro, F., Henrique, L., Benevenuto, F., Chakraborty, A., Kulshrestha, J., Babaei, M., & Gummadi, K. (2018, June). Media bias monitor: Quantifying biases of social media news outlets at large-scale. In *Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media* (Vol. 12, No. 1).

Roman, C.G; Irazola, S; Osborne, J.W; 2007. *After Katrina: Washed Away. Justice in New Orleans*. Urban Institute, Washington, DC.

Rotberg, R.I; 2002. The new nature of nation-state failure. *Washington quarterly*, 25, 3, 83-96.
<https://doi.org/10.1162/01636600260046253>.

Rubin, G; Wessely, S; 2020. The psychological effects of quarantining a city. *BMJ* 368.
<https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.m313>.

Rodgers, D; 2002. We live in a state of siege': violence, crime, and gangs in post-conflict urban Nicaragua. Development Studies Institute, London School of Economics.

Scott, M.B., Lyman, S.M; 1968. Accounts. *American sociological review*. 46-62.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/2092239>.

Sangero, B; 2006. A New Defense for Self-Defense. *Buffalo Criminal Law Review*. 9, 2, 475-559.
<https://doi.org/10.1525/nclr.2006.9.2.475>

Sampson, R.J; Groves, W.B; 1989. Community structure and crime: Testing social-disorganization theory. *American journal of sociology*. 94,4, 774-802. <https://doi.org/10.1086/229068>.

Seligson, M.A; 2002. The impact of corruption on regime legitimacy: A comparative study of four Latin American countries. *The Journal of Politics*. 64, 2, 408-433. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2508.00132>.

Shaw, C.L; McKay, H; 1969. *Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Shayegh, S; Malpede, M; 2020. Staying Home Saves Lives, Really! *Social Science Research Network*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3567394>.

Schneider, J; Schneider, P; 2008. The anthropology of crime and criminalization. *Annual review of anthropology*. 37, 351-373. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.36.081406.094316>.

Stephen, L; 1997. Redefined nationalism in building a movement for indigenous autonomy in Southern Mexico. *Journal of Latin American Anthropology*. 3, 1, 72-101. <https://doi.org/10.1525/jlca.1997.3.1.72>.

Sunshine, J; Tyler, T. R. 2003. The role of procedural justice and legitimacy in shaping public support for policing. *Law & society review*. 37, 3, 513-548. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-5893.3703002>.

Sykes, G. M; Matza, D; 1957. Techniques of neutralization: A theory of delinquency. *American Sociological Review*. 22, 6, 664-670. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2089195>.

Thomson, S. B.; 2010. Grounded Theory - Sample Size. *Journal of Administration and Governance*, 5(1), 45-52. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3037218>

Torigian, M; 2020. Police Leadership During a Pandemic. *Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being*. 5, 1, 26-27. <https://doi.org/10.35502/jcswb.126>.

Travers, M. (2019). The idea of a Southern Criminology. *International journal of comparative and applied criminal justice*, 43(1), 1-12.

Tyler, T. R; 2003. Procedural justice, legitimacy, and the effective rule of law. *Crime and justice*. 30, 283-357. <https://doi.org/10.1086/652233>.

Tyler, T. R; Fagan, J; 2008. Legitimacy and cooperation: Why do people help the police fight crime in their communities? *Ohio St. J. Crim. L.* 6, 231. <https://doi.org/10.18574/9780814777480-007>.

Uniacke, S; 1994. *Permissible Killing: The Self-Defence Justification of Homicide*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Urteaga-Quispe, M; 2017. La desigual capacidad del Estado en América Latina: Análisis de sus fundamentos históricos. *Política y gobierno*. 24, 2, 435-457.

Van der Borgh, C; Savenije, W; 2015. De-securitising and re-securitising gang policies: The Funes government and gangs in El Salvador. *Journal of Latin American Studies*. 47, 1, 149-176. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24544250>.

Van Rooij, B; De Bruijn, A.L; Reinders, F.C; Kooistra, E; Kuiper, M. E; Brownlee, M; Olthuis, E; Fine, A; 2020. Compliance with COVID-19 Mitigation Measures in the United States. Amsterdam Law School Research Paper, 2020-21. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3582626>.

Varano, S.P; Schafer, J.A; Cancino, J.M; Decker, S.H; Greene, J.R; 2010. A tale of three cities: Crime and displacement after Hurricane Katrina. *Journal of Criminal Justice*. 38, 1, 42–50. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2009.11.006>.

Vilalta, C; 2020. Covid-19 y el crimen en la ciudad de México. *Geocrimen*. <http://www.geocrimen.com/covid19crimen/> (accessed 3 June 2021).

Walters, G.D; 2011. *Crime in a psychological context: From career criminals to criminal careers*. Sage, London.

Wolff, S; 2013. Conflict management in divided societies: The many uses of territorial self-governance. *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*, 20, 1, 27-50. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15718115-02001003>.

Wortham, E.C; 2004. Between the state and indigenous autonomy: unpacking video indigena in Mexico. *American Anthropologist*. 106, 2, 363-368. <https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.2004.106.2.363>.

