

Super Controllers: **Can I be your Superman?**

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POP Conference 2009

What if...

- Apartment complex owner says she's done all she can do to stop the dealing (but she really hasn't).
- Manager of prostitution-ridden motel says he can't raise room rates or request I.D. because corporate won't let him.
- Security guard ignores rowdy youth hassling shoppers
- Mom doesn't protect her young daughter from the clutches of her sexually abusive boyfriend.
- College football coach ignores hazing of freshmen players.
- Parents allow under age son and his underage friends to have drinking party at house after junior prom.
- There are ads by prostitutes on Craigslist

A crime happens when what 3 things come together?

1 _____

#2 _____

3 _____

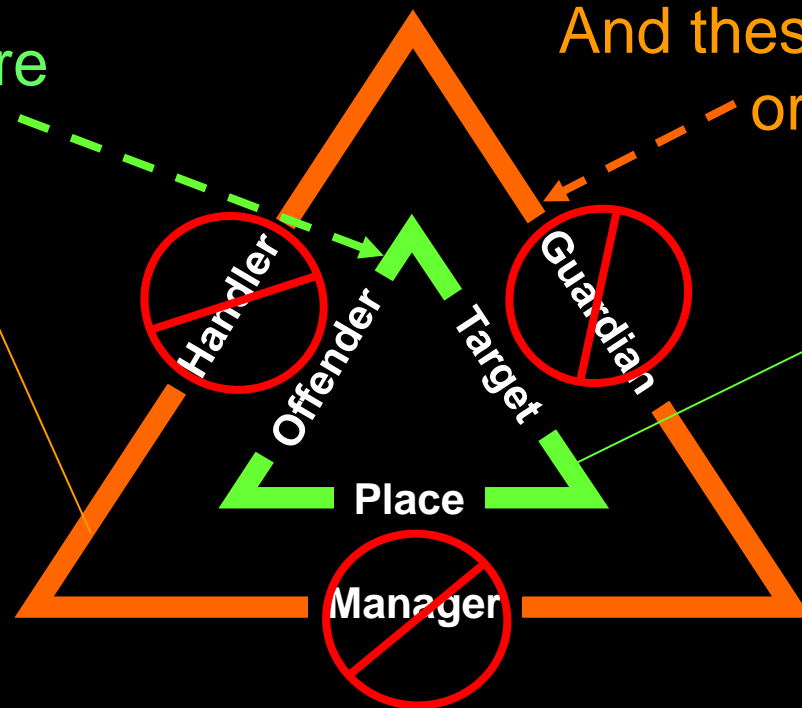
Why Do We Have Crime?

Crime Is Highly Likely When...

All of these are present

And these are absent or weak

The elements on this orange triangle are called "Controllers." Each controls an element on the inner triangle. The presence of any one effective controller is sufficient to prevent crime, or at least, lower the chances of crime.



These inner elements are the necessary conditions for crime. If any one of them is missing, there can be no crime.

When this happens repeatedly in the same circumstances, we call it a PROBLEM

Apartment complex owner says she's done all she can do to stop the dealing (but she really hasn't)

Motel manager where prostitution occurs says he can't raise room rates or request a D. because corporate won't let him

Manager Failure

Security guard ignores rowdy youth harassing shoppers

Mom doesn't protect her young daughter from the clutches of her sexually abusive boyfriend

Guardian Failure

College football coach ignores hazing of freshmen players

Parents allow underage son and his underage friends to have drinking party at house after junior prom

Handler Failure

Controllers Have Lots Of Tools But Sometimes Fail to Use Them

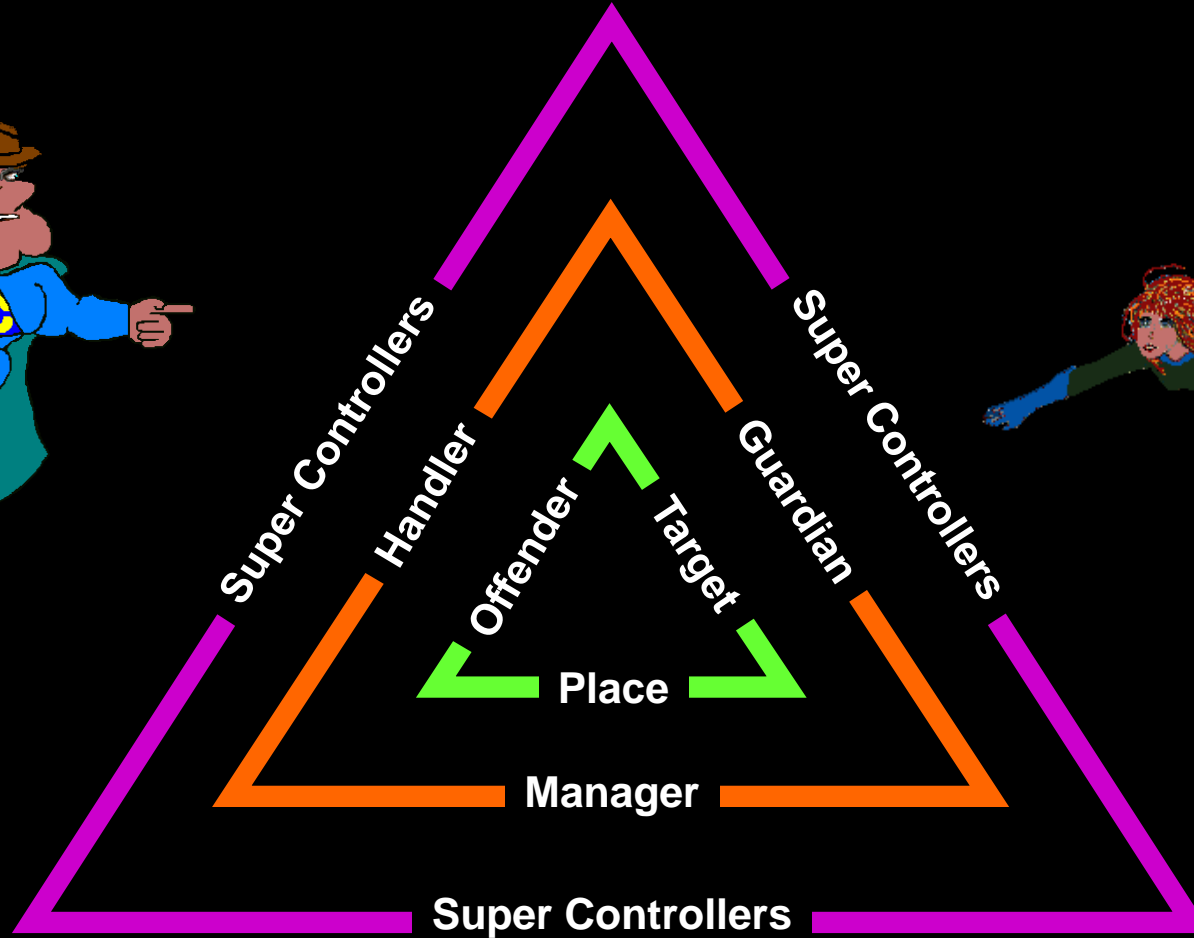
- Apartment complex owner tools →

Sometimes it's the police who tell controllers they have lots of tools

What if controllers don't use them?

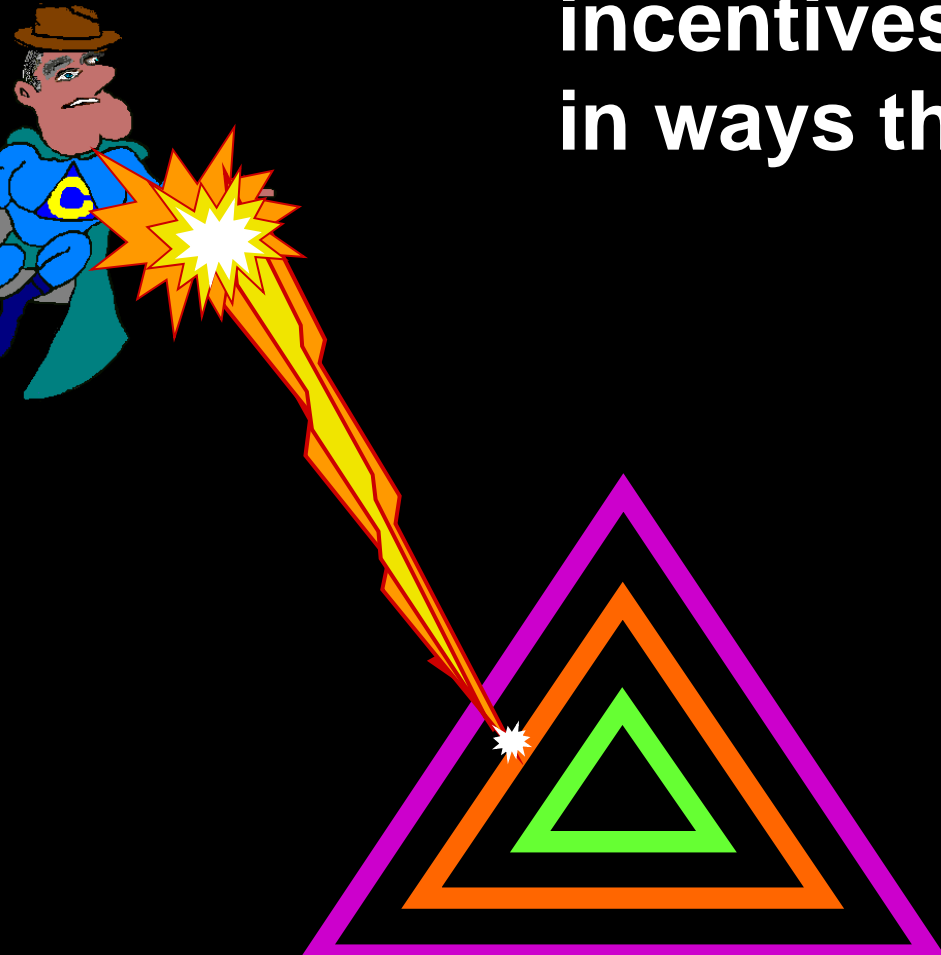
- Landlord tenant laws
- Lease provisions
- Eviction
- Apartment inspection
- Refuse to accept cash
- Reference checks of prospective tenants
- Criminal background check
- Limit buyer's access
- Landlord training

Who Ya Gonna Call Then? Super Controllers



Who are Super Controllers?

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



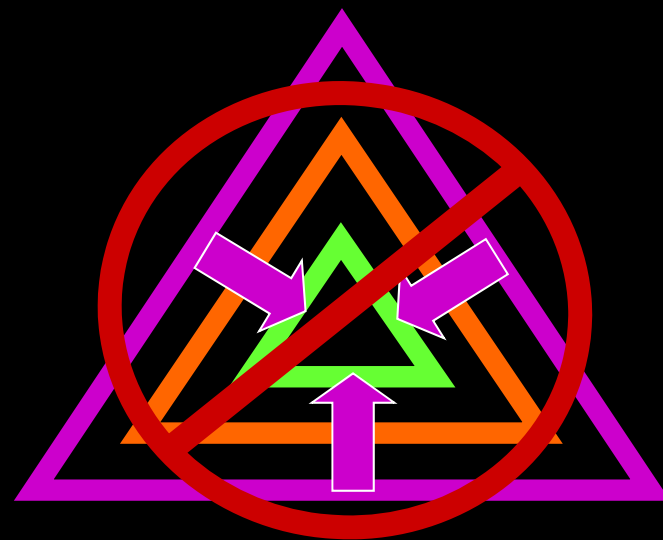
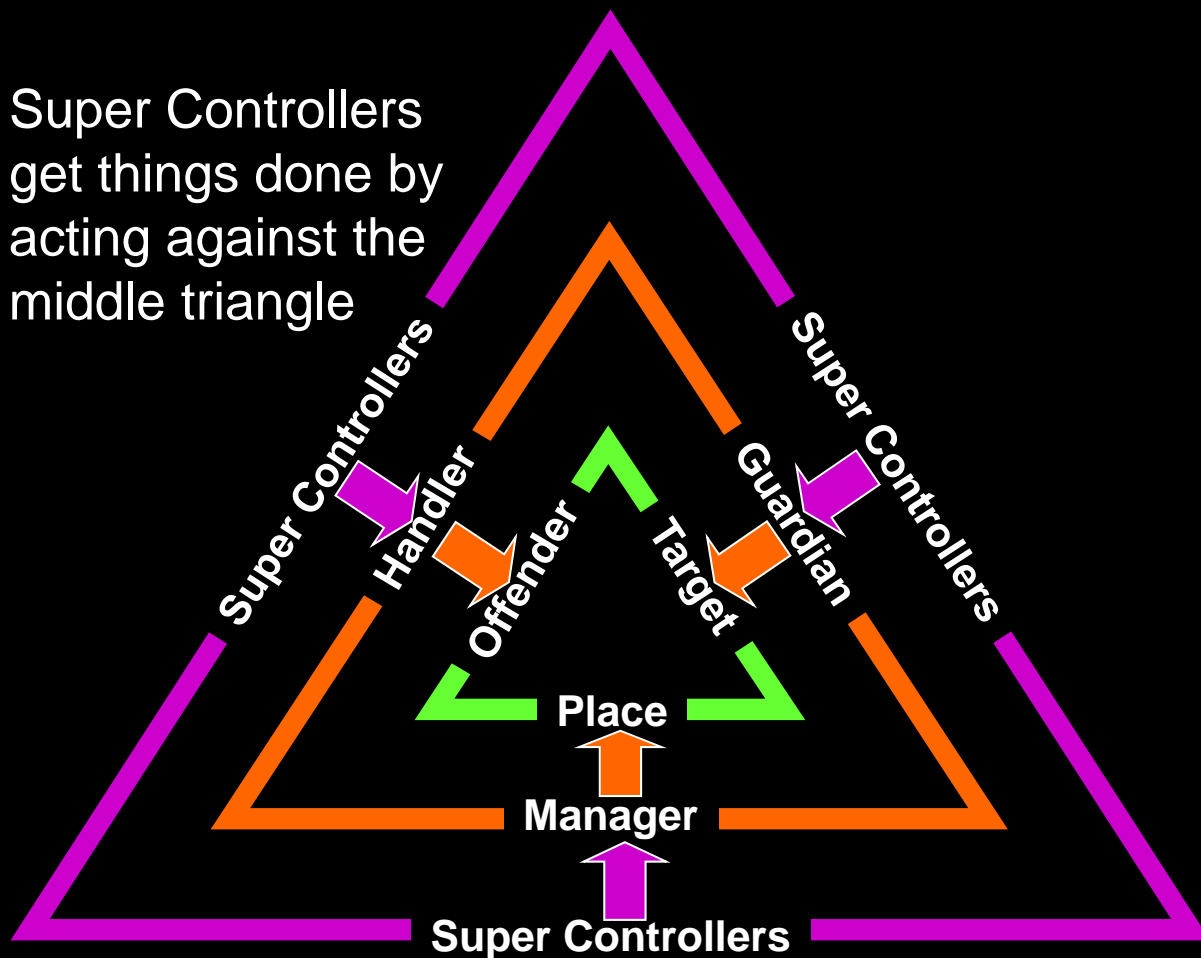
*Incentives on
controllers can be
positive or negative*

SC Examples

- Here are two examples, one involving a negative incentive, the other a positive incentive:
 - 1) Insurance company threatens to raise landlord's insurance because there is drug dealing on the landlord's property, and
 - 2) a city gives 'good neighbor' award to construction companies that build more crime resistant homes.
- The first is a negative incentive and the second is a positive incentive. Note that in each case the super controller is acting on the middle triangle. This is important.

Super Controllers Exert *Indirect* Influence on Problem

Super Controllers get things done by acting against the middle triangle



They *never* directly influence the innermost triangle

Working the Triangles

- Motel w/drug dealing & prostitution



- Who are the controllers (2nd triangle layer)?
 - Tools they have?

- Who Can Be Super Controllers?
 - Tools they have?

Who Can Be Super Controllers?

- Bar serves drunk patrons?
- Mom not protecting daughter from Mom's sexually abusive boyfriend?
- Homeless shelter personnel don't do enough to keep 'clients' from assaulting & robbing one another?
- Store allows chronic inebriates to buy alcohol?

Don't think of just traditional super controllers, such as regulatory agencies

Cops Can Alert Super Controller to Try to Get Them to Act

- Police contacts **bank** that holds mortgage on a drug dealing property to get the landlord to act
- Other examples?

Cops Can Push a Super Controller to Act

- Oakland (CA) officer files lawsuit against Motel 6 Corporate International Office to get them to change their policies and get their Motel 6 manager in Oakland to stop drug dealing and prostitution on their property.

Super Controllers – no cops involved

- Florida's top bankers group recommended adoption of a security dress code - "hats off" for banking customers.
- State Attorneys Generals get Facebook.com to agree to put in better safeguards to protect young users from predators and cyber bullying

Super Controllers - Lots of Powers

- Influence
- Warnings
- Threats
- Ex-communication
- Conditional use permits
- Business license reviews
- Design improvements
- Civil and criminal lawsuits
- Incentives
- The list goes on and on...
- Others

Though no single super controller has all the powers

Super Controllers Can Take Any One of ~~10~~ Forms

(lots of costumes)



Institutions

1. Financial
2. Market
3. Political
4. Courts
5. Media

Organizations & People

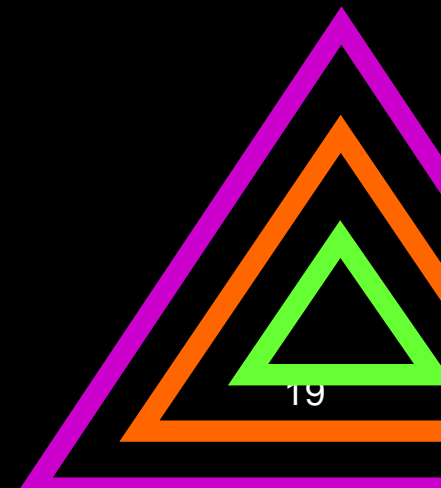
6. Group
7. Organizational
8. Regulatory
9. Contractual
10. Family

Financial

- A financial institution puts pressure on a controller to reduce crime or risk a costly change in a financial relationship.
- **Example:** Insurance company pressures a rental car company to reduce thefts of its rental vehicles or will raise its insurance rates

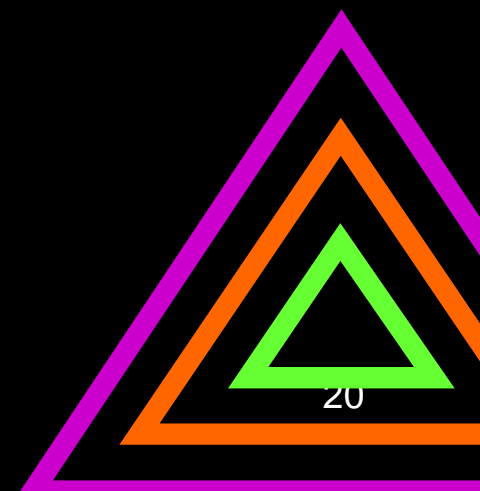
Market

- Competition in the controllers business area induces compliance.
- **Example:** Publicity over varying risks of crime induce businesses to compete to be safer shopping locations.



Political

- Elected or appointed officials make legislative or other changes in other government practices.
- **Example:** State legislature passes a law requiring stores to restrict pseudoephedrine sales



Courts

- Court orders controller to act in a manner that reduces crime (often as a result of a civil suit)
- **Example:** Court finds premises liability against landlord for rapes on his less-than-safe property

Media

- Media attention (or the possibility of it) embarrasses a controller to act.
- **Example:** A news investigation of the management of a local homeless shelter funded by the city reveals that their practices contribute to victimization of homeless men at the shelter. The attention forces them to address their operating procedures and staffing.

Group Influence

- Group influences place manager to act differently
- **Example:** Members of Downtown Cincinnati Inc. apply pressure on merchant (manager) to stop selling large container malt liquor in order to curb drunkenness and other disorder in area.

Organizational

- Members of organization enforce compliance within organization to curb crime
- **Example:** Nightclub chain has its nightclubs switch to polycarbonate bottles/glasses to reduce assaults in/around club.

Regulatory

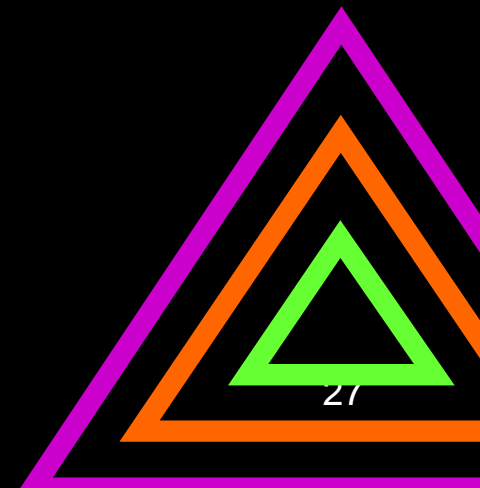
- An agency with authority to demand compliance to rules with the threat of sanctions for non-compliance.
- **Example:** State Alcohol Beverage Control inspects night club for underage drinking and cites the club if an ABC inspector observes it.

Contractual

- The super controller has a contract with the controller to provide goods or services.
- **Example:** HUD threatens to revoke the Section 8 property status of a crime ridden apartment complex after landlord fails to make management practice changes that would reduce crime at property.

Family

- One family member exerts pressure on a second member to control a third member.
- Probably involves a handling failure
- **Example:** Grandmother steps in to keep grandchild safe.



Sometimes the Police Must Call in a Super Controller...

- Lots of people can activate super controllers
- Ideally super controllers act without police
(and maybe this happens more often than not)
- But sometimes it is really left to the police
- Because, police confront the problem directly.

Once you've identified super controllers, how do you get them to do the right thing?

Or, stated another way ...

Once you've identified super controllers, how do you get them to exercise their influence over controllers?

How to Get Super Controllers to Act

Start with less coercive; it is really important to do your analysis, is action justified?

- Personal rapport
- Persuasion- documentation, compelling data and analysis
- Relentlessness
- Community activism
- Partnership
- Show how the crime doesn't have to happen, it's not preordained in that place
- Show how it benefits the super controller
- Enlist others to persuade the super controller first
- Tag team
- Shaming
- Media, etc.

These are not mutually exclusive and are not in any particular order

Approaches may differ

If the super controller is part of the problem

If the super controller is **not** part of the problem

Examples

- **Motel corporate offices know their policies cause problems**
- **Property owner doesn't care about drug dealing on their property (or worse, gets a monetary cut from the activity)**

- **Corporate offices do not realize their policy is causing harm**
- **Chamber of Commerce**
- **State's Attorney General's Office**

Sometimes not clear

Craigslist Needed a SC

November 7, 2008

Craigslist Agrees to Curb Sex Ads

By [BRAD STONE](#)

SAN FRANCISCO — The online classifieds company [Craigslist](#) said Thursday that it had reached an agreement with 40 state attorneys general and agreed to tame its notoriously unruly “erotic services” listings. Prostitutes and sex-oriented businesses have long used that section of Craigslist to advertise their services.

Super Controller

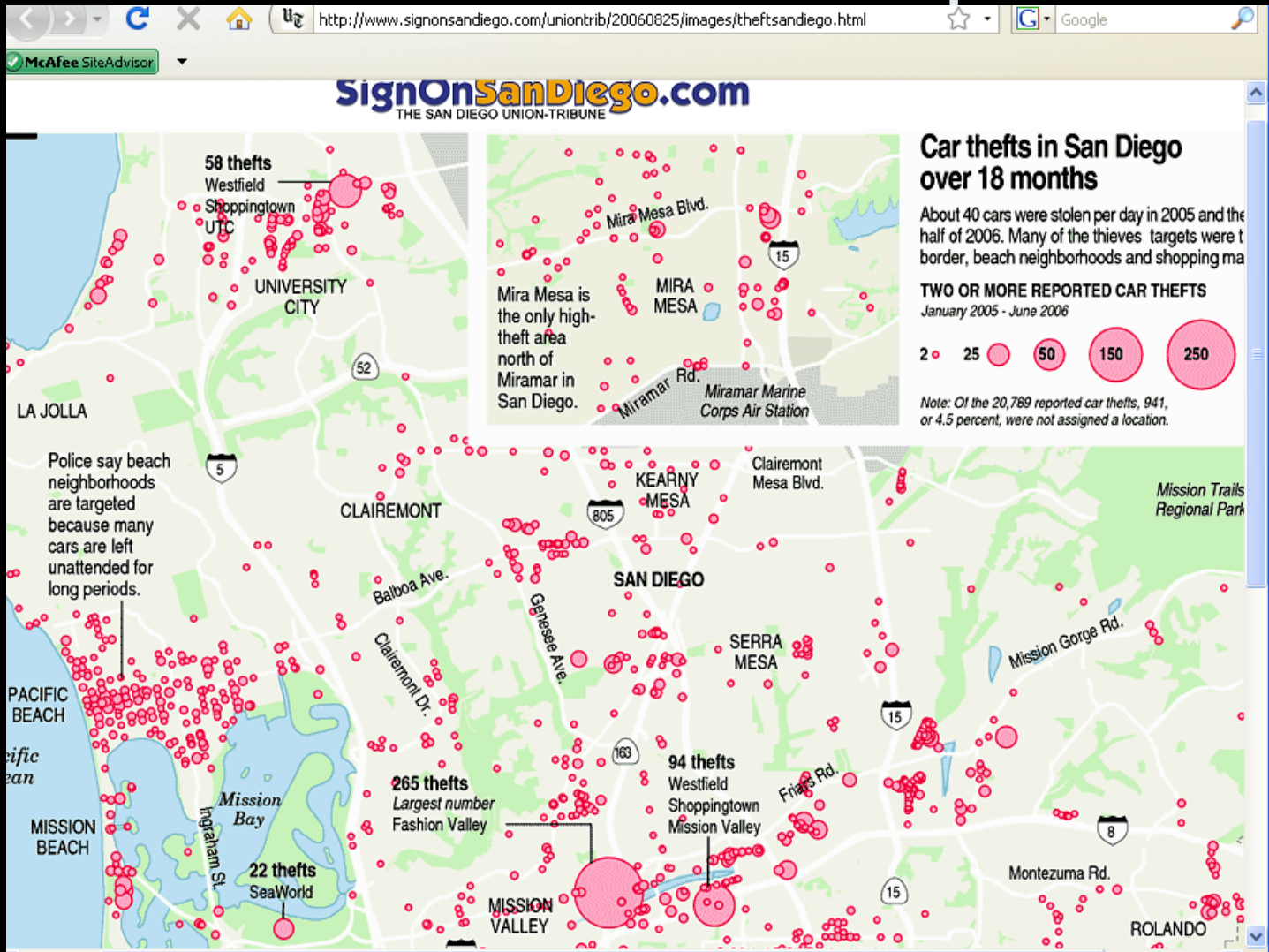
- September 2009, latimes.com

Council extends anti-graffiti measure

Like commercial buildings and apartments, new homes will have to be covered to a height of 9 feet with material that resists spray paint unless owners agree to remove tagging in seven days.

Media Can Be a SC

Vehicle thefts 18 month patterns



Wal-Mart Needed a SC

- **Stores need to better plan for crowds, police say**
- BY MATTHEW CHAYES | November 30, 2008
- **As police brass dissect what happened when a stampede of shoppers outside a Valley Stream [Wal-Mart](#) left a seasonal worker dead, they may lean on the stores themselves to better plan for events like [Black Friday](#), a Nassau police spokesman said yesterday.**

Nassau police say the stampede outside the discount chain store was foreseeable given the huge crowds that gather for post-Thanksgiving sales.

"I can't stress enough how the onus is on them," said Det. Lt. Kevin Smith, the county police's chief spokesman.

A Problem in Need of a SC

Gadget Makers Can Find Thief, But Don't Ask

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/07/technology/07kindle.html>

By David Segal

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE September 6 2009

- For decades, when an item was lost or stolen, a consumer went through three stages of grief: anger, mourning and acceptance. You would be miffed, then sad and then you would move on, in large part because moving on was the only option.
- Then came the Digital Age and with it, gadgets that manufacturers can keep tabs on — and even profit from — when they wind up in the hands of someone who has found or poached them. Which, in turn, has led to a fourth stage of gadget-related grief: rage.
- Specifically, rage at the gadget makers, which often know exactly who has a missing or stolen device, because in many instances it has been registered to a new user.
- But many tech companies will not disclose information about the new owners of missing devices unless a police officer calls with a search warrant. Even a request to simply shut down service — which would deter thieves by rendering their pilfered gadget useless — is typically refused.

Crime Reduction Implications of Super Controllers

- Multiple ways to reduce crime & other public safety problems
- Gets Controllers to do the right thing
- Potential for larger reductions
- Can create more sustainable gains
- Apportions responsibility more fairly
- Lots of the best POP projects involve super controllers
- Examples at POP Conference



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Rana and John have worked together for over 18 years...

Rana is an international crime consultant. She is a former NYC cop and a former university public safety director. Rana is a founding member of the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing, author of multiple POP guides on different crime problems, and a judge for the Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Solving. Rana loves working on crime problems.

John is a professor at the University of Cincinnati, in the Division of Criminal Justice. He has been involved with POP since 1984 and has written many practical and academic articles on the topic, including several problem specific guides. He is also a judge for the British Home Office's Tilley Award, the British equivalent to the Goldstein Award.