

Are Hotels and Boardwalks Crime Generators In New Jersey's Resort Communities?

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Overview

- **The original idea**
- **The New Jersey Uniform Crime Report**
- **Microsoft MapPoint**
- **What is a crime generator?**
- **The link between hotels and crime**
- **Are boardwalks criminogenic?**
- **Conclusions**

The Original Idea

The New Jersey UCR is probably the only one in America that corrects crime rates for beach towns. But it shows little effect. The reason is that tourists don't stay long enough. But while there, visitors generate disproportionate crime. Can you map town crime rates by whether they are tourists towns or not?

--Marcus Felson

The New Jersey UCR

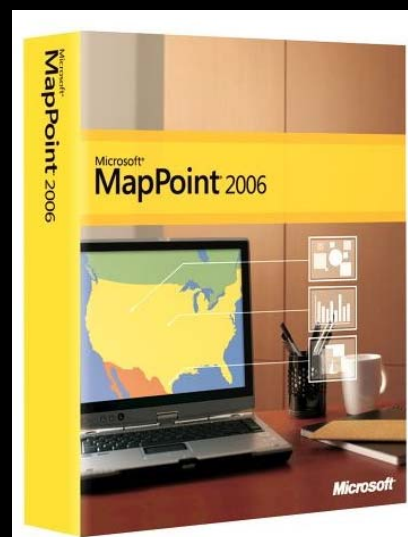
- Section 8 calculates crime rates for the Annual Mean Population (AMP) of 48 municipalities
- The AMP accounts for “those living in rental housing units or in vacant year round housing”
- It does not include “the many day visitors and persons who occupy campgrounds, hotels, motels or bed and breakfast establishments or who stay with friends or relatives.”

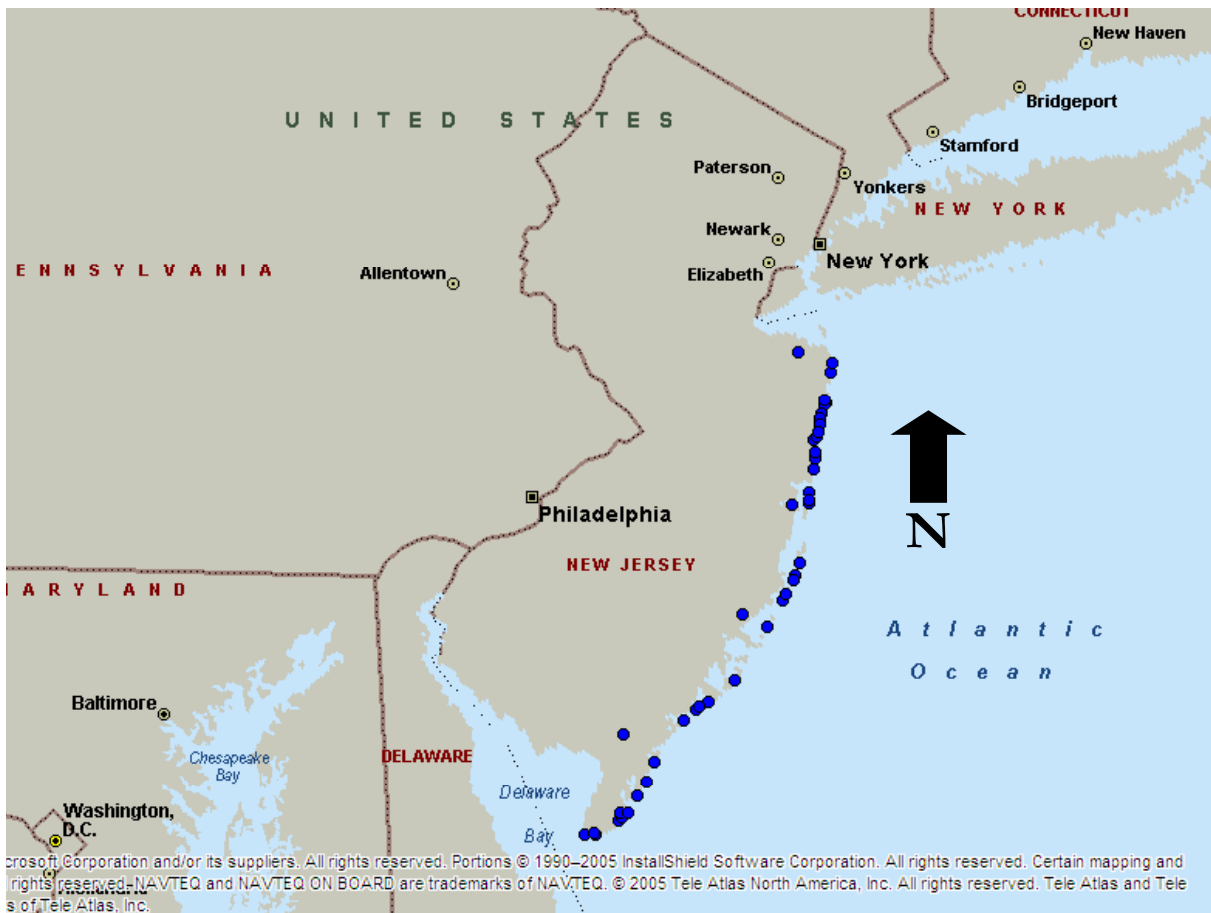
How big are NJ's seasonal populations?

- The seasonal population can be determined by subtracting the Census population from the AMP estimate
- The 48 municipalities of interest have non-resident populations that range from 9 people to more than 11,000 people
- Remember these estimates neglect a great deal of visitors who may become involved with crime during their holiday

Microsoft MapPoint

- Simple mapping program designed for the business world
- Highly user friendly
- Upload data directly from Excel spreadsheets





What is a crime generator?

- Clarke and Eck believe crime generating hotspots are the result of many unprotected targets in an area
- Tourists and visitors can easily be described as unprotected targets

What makes visitors vulnerable to crime?

- **As victims...**
 - They may not know which areas of a city to avoid
 - They often carry large sums of cash or other highly disposable products (i.e. cameras and iPods)
 - They do not have a local residence and therefore must place their security and the security of their belongings in the hands of someone else

What about offending?

- **Visitors may become offenders because...**
 - They consume more alcohol while on holiday
 - They are less likely to be recognized by locals and other visitors
 - Some places visitors frequent provide numerous criminal opportunities

Hypotheses

- **More visitors, more crime**
 - This assumes visitors are at least as criminogenic as their resident counterpart
- **Boardwalks and hotels attract visitors**
- **Therefore...**
 - More hotels, more crime
 - Presence of a boardwalk, more crime

The Dependent Variables

- **Number of crimes committed in each city (violent and non-violent)**
 - Data from 2000-2006 was used to calculate the average number of crimes committed each year
 - CV was less than 0.5 for most cities
 - $CV = \text{Standard Deviation} / \text{Mean}$
 - Values less than 0.5 indicate the mean is a valid measure

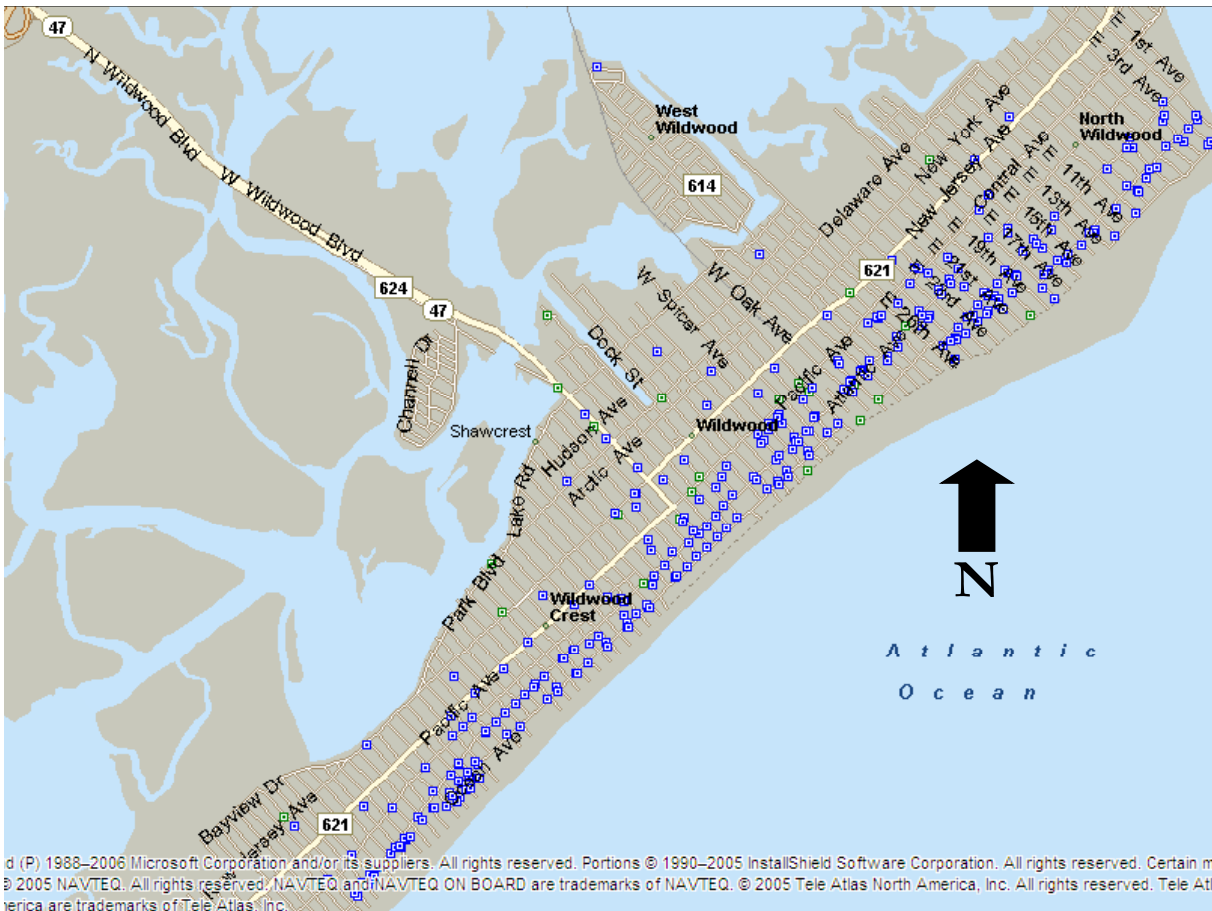
The Dependent Variables (cont.)

- **Crime rates adjusted for the AMP**
 - The average violent and non-violent crime rates were determined (2000-2006)
 - Non-violent crime rates are consistent and meet the CV cutoff
 - Violent crime rates show higher CV values
 - Very little violence in most communities combined with small populations causes great fluctuations in the crime rate

The Independent Variables

- **Number of Hotels**
- **Hotel Density (hotels per km²)**
- **Boardwalk? (yes=1 no=0)**
- **Interaction Effects**
 - Hotel..Bwalk
 - Hotel..Alch
 - Hotel..Bwalk..Alch

Why hotels?



The Link Between Hotels and Crime

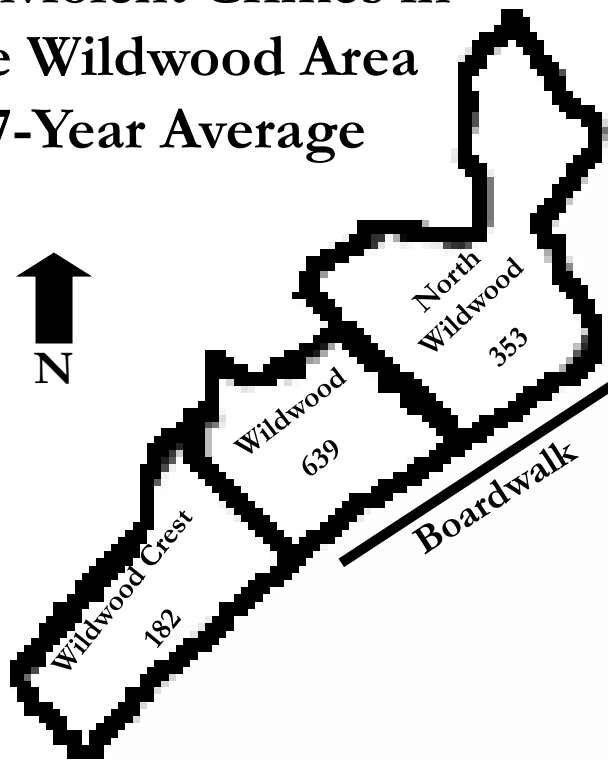
- Hotels can be seen as buildings that increase victim concentration in a local area
- Unlike the AMP, hotel guests may have fewer financial and social attachments to the community
- When improperly managed, hotels can become “risky facilities”

Hotel Data Collection

- MapPoint data is outdated
- hotels.com and other booking websites rarely include EVERY hotel in the area
 - Also, it is hard to obtain municipal level data
- So what do you do?
 - GET A PHONEBOOK!
 - Online telephone directories are a great source

What about boardwalks?

Nonviolent Crimes in the Wildwood Area 7-Year Average



The hotel density for all of these cities is greater than 10 hotels per square kilometer.

What Do Boardwalks Do?

- They provide many forms of entertainment for day and night visitors
 - Amusement parks, carnival games, bars, etc.
- They concentrate potential victims and offenders
- How do you find them?
 - Online searches of New Jersey's tourism websites

Interaction Effects

- Hotel..Bwalk
 - Hotels are neglected in cities that do not have a boardwalk
- Hotel..Alchol
 - No alcohol, no hotels
- Hotel..Alch..Bwalk
 - Hotels are only included when a boardwalk is present and the municipality is not dry

The Results

Correlations with the Average Number of Offenses Reported (2000-2006)

	NVCs (7-yr Avg)	VCs (7-yr Avg)
# of Hotels	.590**	.678**
Hotel Density	.381**	.742**
Boardwalk?	.390**	.350*
Hotel..Bwalk	.438**	.874**
Hotel..Alch	.393**	.858**
Hotel..Alch..Bwalk	.404**	.866**

* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01

Correlations with the Average Crime Rate (2000-2006)

	Avg NVCR	Avg VCR
# of Hotels	.625**	.510**
Hotel Density	.658**	.710**
Boardwalk?	.408**	.266
Hotel..Bwalk	.739**	.727**
Hotel..Alch	.738**	.834**
Hotel..Alch..Bwalk	.733**	.835**

* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01

Conclusions

- Hotels and boardwalks are correlated to crime in New Jersey's shore communities
 - They are crime generators
- The correlations are even stronger when a community harbors both of these crime generators

Questions?

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