4-1-4

Good day, ladies and gentlemen. I have been asked **today** to talk to you about the **urban landscape**. There are two major areas that I will focus on in my talk: how vegetation can have a significant effect on urban climate, and how we can better plan our cities using trees to provide a more comfortable environment for us to live in.



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Trees can have a significant impact on our cities. They can make a city as a whole, a bit less windy or a bit more windy, if that's what you want. They can make it a bit cooler if it's a hot summer day in an Australian city, or they can make it a bit more humid if it's a dry inland city. On the local scale – that is in particular areas within the city – trees can make the local area more shady, cooler, more humid and much less windy. In fact trees and planting of various kinds can be used to make city streets actually less dangerous in particular areas. How do trees do all that, you ask?



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Well the main difference between a tree and a building is a tree has got an internal mechanism to keep the temperature regulated. It evaporates water through its leaves and that means that the temperature of the leaves is never very far from our own body temperature. The temperature of a building surface on a hot sunny day can easily be twenty degrees more than our temperature. Trees, on the other hand, remain cooler than buildings because they sweat. This means that they can humidify the air and cool it – a property which can be exploited to improve the local climate.



Trees can also help break the force of winds. The reason that high buildings make it windier at ground level is that, as the wind goes higher and higher, it goes faster and faster. When the wind hits the building, it has to go somewhere, some of it goes over the top and some goes around the sides of the building, forcing those high level winds down to ground level. That doesn't happen when you have trees. Threes filter the wind and considerably reduce it, preventing those very large strong gusts that you so often find around tall building.



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Another problem in built-up areas is that traffic noise is intensified by tall buildings. By planting a belt of trees at the side of the road, you can make things a little quieter, but much of the vehicle noise still goes through the trees. Trees can also help reduce the amount of noise in the surroundings, although the effect is not as large as people like to think. Low-frequency noise, in particular, just goes through the trees as though they aren't there.





Although trees can significantly improve the local climate, they do however take up a lot of space. There are root systems to consider and branches blocking windows and so on. It may therefore be difficult to fit trees into the local landscape. There is not a great deal you can do if you have what we call a street canyon – a whole set of high-rises enclosed in a narrow street. Trees need water to grow. They also need some sunlight to grow and you need room to put them. If you have the chance of knocking buildings down and replacing them, then suddenly you can start looking at different ways to design the streets and to introduce...



example

e.g. root, branches: block windows, etc.

result

difficult to plant in the city

Intro of the background

what happens in reality: high buildings, but need water and sunlight

So far, in these lectures, we've been looking at crimes like robbery and murder – both from a historical viewpoint and also in contemporary society – and we've seen that the preoccupation in Western society with crime and with lawlessness is part of a long and continuous tradition, rather than something which is new and unique to modern society.

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But over the past seventy years or so, there has been a massive increase in one type of crime, which is what's known as "corporate crime". Corporate crime is crime which, as the name suggests, is connected with companies, with business organisations. It includes illegal acts of either individuals or a group within the company, but what is important is that these acts are normally in accordance with the goals of the company – they're for the good of the company rather than the individual. It's been defined as, quote, "crime which is committed for the corporate organisation" – the company – "not against it", unquote.

definition of corporate crime

definition

broad sense: connected with companies

classification

committed by people or group within the company

committed for the good of the company

conclusion

accurate definition

So crimes like theft by employees - things like embezzlement or fraud against one's actual employer are excluded according to this definition. The employees may be involved but they're acting in the first place for the company – they may not even realise they're committing a crime or they may realise but they feel it's excusable because it's policy, or because otherwise they may lose their jobs. So here, really, we're talking about the links between power and crime.



Now this is one area that much less is generally known about than conventional or traditional crime. It has been relatively ignored by the mass media – for example, it tends to be under-reported in comparison with conventional crime in news broadcasts, and in crime serials and films and so on – they very rarely deal with corporate crime. And it also tends to be ignored in academic circles -there's been far more research on conventional crime and far more data is available.



There are several reasons for this lack of interest in corporate crime, compared with other types of crime. It's often very complex, whereas with conventional crime it's usually possible to follow what's going on without specialized knowledge. As well as this, whereas conventional crime usually has a lot of human interest, corporate crime often has much less. The third reason, and possibly the most significant one, is that very often the victims are unaware – they think their misfortune is an accident or that it's the fault of no-one in particular. They're unaware that they've been victims of a crime.



Let's look at the economic costs first. For example, if a company is producing fruit juice and it dilutes its product so that it's just a little below the concentration it should be, many millions of people may be paying a small amount extra for their carton of orange juice. Now small amounts like this may seem insignificant for individual customers – too small to worry about – but for the company this deception might result in massive illegal profit. However, all studies of corporate crime agree that the individuals are in fact deprived of far more money by such crime than they are by conventional crime like robbery and theft.



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In addition to this, we have to consider the social costs of corporate crime and these are again very difficult to assess, but they are considerable. They're important because they can undermine the faith of the public in the business world and also, more importantly, because the main group of people they affect are, in fact, not the richer sections of society but the poorer – so here companies are robbing the poor to benefit the rich.

reasons why need to consider social cost of corporate crime

classification

undermine faith of the public in business

protect the poor people

There are two more points to do with corporate crime that I'd like to illustrate with reference to a specific event which occurred several years ago. This was an explosion of a large oil tanker which caused the loss of more than fifty lives of the crew. It was an explosion which never should have happened and a subsequent inquiry laid the blame not on anyone who had actually been on the tanker at the time, but on the owners of the tanker. They had deliberately not to carry out necessary repair work on the tanker as it was due to be sold, and it was this lack of repair work which was directly responsible for the explosion.

telling a true story that happened years ago



Now this illustrates two points to do with corporate crime. First of all, that it does not have to be intentional. The owners of the tanker certainly did not intend it to explode. But very serious consequences can result from people or organisations not considering the possible results of their actions seriously enough. The main crime here was indifference to the human results rather than actual intention to harm anyone, but the at didn't make the results any less tragic.





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And this leads me to my second point – that corporate crime can have very severe consequences. It's not just a matter of companies making bigger profits than they should do, but of events which may affect the lives of innocent people, and yet very often companies, because they say they didn't' intend to harm anyone, can avoid taking responsibility for the results of their actions. And that has been a very dangerous loophole in the law.

point 2: serious consequence

classification

the effects on innocent people

big dangerous loophole in the law

