

Macro Roundup Article

Headline: [The Collapse of Broken-Windows Policing in New York City, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC, 2013–22](#)

Article Link: <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/The-Collapse-of-Broken-Windows-2013-22-FINAL.pdf?x91208>

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Tweet: [@charlesmurray](#) argues that urban disorder has increased since 2013, when cities abandoned broken-windows policing.

Summary: I created a “broken-windows arrest rate” analogous to the violent and property crime rates by summing arrests in the eight categories, dividing them by the size of the city’s population, and expressing the result as the number of arrests per 100,000 population. To ensure that all these qualified as minor crimes, I included only arrests that were charged as misdemeanors, violations, or infractions, excluding arrests charged as felonies. The graph below shows the proportional change in those arrest rates using 2013 as the baseline. In New York and Los Angeles, the fall in arrests for broken-windows offenses was steep and steady from 2013 to 2020. Washington is different, with a sudden rise in broken-windows arrests in Washington in 2019. The anomaly was created entirely by a one-year spike in arrests for prostitution and solicitation, the result of a policy decision to clear the streets of prostitutes near hotels. If arrests for prostitution and solicitation are deleted from the Washington data, the trendline of broken-windows offenses shows the same unbroken decline as the trendlines for New York and Los Angeles. As of 2022, arrests for broken-windows offenses since 2013 had fallen by 74% in New York, 77% in Washington, and 81% in Los Angeles. There was no apparent “Floyd effect” in New York or Los Angeles. A case for a small effect can be made for Washington. Related: Pandemic Murder Wave Has Crested. Here’s the Postmortem

Primary Topic: Poverty/Crime

Topics: Academic paper, Database, Poverty/Crime

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