

1063-91-133

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Tolerating crime to reduce crime. Preliminary report.

Citizens that actively engage in civic life usually give rise to low crime communities. Law enforcement officials are trusted, are crimes are reported and punished. In certain areas however, the presence of organized drug trafficking, mafia associations or war insurgencies, citizen involvement may not be the norm. Fears of retaliation or of ostracism may stop individuals from collaborating with the law enforcement system. We use an evolutionary game model to study a society where players display different attitudes towards committing and reporting crimes, and study the conditions under which greater collaboration with law enforcement may be promoted. We find that encouraging informant figures, that while committing crimes are also exchanging information with authorities, may be key in transforming societal attitudes towards crimes. (Received August 13, 2010)