

## Organized Crime

### **What is organized Crime?**

- Group crime of any kind
- Subtypes
  - Driven by political and social motivations (terrorist groups)
  - Seek psychological gratification (motorcycle gangs)
  - Seek profits and power (street gangs)
  - Seek profits and power in exchange for illicit services, through use of force threats and coercion (syndicate crime)

### **Classic Pattern**

- Strategic and tactical crimes
  - Assure discipline
  - Ex- assault, coercion, extortion, murder, etc.
- Illegal businesses and activities
  - Provide services in response to public demand
  - Ex - gambling, loan sharking, labor racketeering, drug trafficking, prostitution, porn, stolen property, etc.
- Legitimate business
  - Provide a "cover" for money gained from illegal operations
  - Fronts for operations and meeting places.

### **Models of Organized Crime**

- Organized crime as a nationwide conspiracy

### **Mafia? What Mafia?**

- Joseph Valachi was the 1<sup>st</sup> to publically acknowledge its existence.

### **La Costa Nostra**

- Gained momentum because of prohibition
- Allegiance of 24 "families"
- Members of Sicilian or Italian descent
- Formal structure

### **Criminal Careers**

- Organized criminals tend to:
- Maintain their livelihood through crime
- Identify with crime and criminal activity
- Possess strong organizational identity
- Belong to structured groups
- Come from low income areas
- Subscribe to a code of secrecy

### **Wiseguy/Goodfellas**

- Nonfiction book by crime reporter Nicholas Pileggi/ adapted screenplay with Martin Scorsese
- Depicts one mans role in the rise and fall of the Lucchese crime family from 1955 to 1980

### **The Mafia of the 1960's-90's**

- Informants gave FBI power
- Disputes between families
- Many leaders were aging

### **Models of Organized Crime**

- Organized crime as a nationwide conspiracy
- Organized crime as local, ethnic groups
- Organized crime as enterprse

### **Ethnic Succession Theory**

- Organized crime provides a means of upward mobility for groups who are stuck in the bottom rungs of the social ladder.

### **Shift to organized Crime**

- Criminal activities take place in more than 1 country
- Ex- money laundering, terrorist activities, arms trafficking, drug trafficking, human trafficking.

### **Enterprise theory**

- "Spectrum of legitimacy"
- Organized crime fills the demand for particular goods/services that the legitimate market cannot supply.

### **Policy Responses**

- Supply-focused
- Legalization
- Interdiction
- Target organized criminals
- Organized Crime Control Act (1970)

### **Policy Responses**

- Demand -focused
- Education
- Rehabilitation

### **Theory Application**