



## The Lib/Con Crime Debate: Image, Reality — and Evil

“Our cities are violent urban wastelands,” say conservatives. “Just look at the brutal stabbing murder of Ukrainian immigrant Iryna Zarutka on that Charlotte train.”

“But crime is down from pre-pandemic highs,” retort the liberals. “You’re politicizing the issue.”

But then there’s another point. To wit:

“Crime is not a data thing,” an anonymous Trump advisor [said](#) recently — “it’s a feeling thing.”

Relating this to liberal outlet Axios, the official elaborated. “Politicians don’t understand that it’s about how you feel when you walk on the subway platform,” he explained. “It’s not about whether you’re a victim. It’s about whether you feel you’re a victim or not.”

His point was that the Democrats are making a strategic blunder by dismissing voters’ crime concerns with statistics. But, astute observers may note, this sure is a switch. The liberals are citing data; they’re appealing to the intellect. Meanwhile, some conservatives are appealing to emotion — successfully.

Or, that’s one interpretation, anyway. The reality is that there are a few truths here, ranging from somewhat to mostly hidden. One relates to a falsehood, another to a fallacy.

### Data Aren’t Reality

Interestingly, one man casting doubt on data, to a degree anyway, is someone who has made his name via technology. As the Daily Caller [reported](#) Monday:

Similar to the [Trump] adviser’s point, Jeff Bezos has argued that anecdotes are usually more telling than any collection of data. “When the data and the anecdotes disagree, the anecdotes are usually right. It’s usually not that the data is being miscollected. It’s usually that you’re not measuring the right thing,” he said in a[n] interview.

This is true — in a measure. There is some nuance, however.

An astute, objective person can observe, as a matter of course, thousands of individuals over a 50-year period and draw sage conclusions from their behavior, and they may be dismissed as “anecdotal.” Yet data derived from a “scientific” study focusing on just 400 individuals over a year’s time may be taken seriously. Note here, too, that, [as I’ve reported](#), an alarming percentage of research [is actually fraudulent](#).

This said, not every observer is objective and astute. The conclusions aren’t always sage. And not all



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Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on September 10, 2025

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anecdotes observed, and shaping conclusions, are numerous enough to mirror a scientific sample. Often it's just a couple or few unrepresentative instances. It's also true that a good scientific study can be enlightening. So, the answer?

Without discernment, without a nose for and love of Truth, a person is lost. He will never reliably separate fact from fiction.

## Crime Realities

So what's the truth on crime? Is it really down? And if so, by how much?

First know that recent times have seen crime-statistic manipulation. Some big, crime-ridden cities [weren't delivering their crime data](#) to the FBI during certain recent years. (Reporting is supposedly more comprehensive at the moment.) Second, there has also been [recategorization of crime](#), such as reclassifying certain felonies as misdemeanors. The goal is to hide serious crime's magnitude.

Third, as crime's rampancy increases, citizens' reporting of it decreases proportionately. For they become inured to it, lose hope, and realize the police won't do much in many cases, anyway. (Having grown up in the Bronx, I've experienced this personally.)

Put simply, as crime worsens, both officials' and citizens' desire to report it diminishes.

## Facts and Feelings

Moreover, and harking back to the Trump official's real-vs.-feel remark, the Daily Caller [wrote](#) Monday:

Statistics do not capture the feeling you get when you are sitting next to a strung-out schizophrenic on the subway. Statistics do not capture the feeling you get when having to walk around a homeless person defecating on the sidewalk. Nor do they capture the feeling of making sure not to step on the vagrant sleeping on your stoop as [you] unlock the door to your third floor walkup.

Safety in cities is as much about the visceral feeling of unease and constant, looming threats as it is about the random, horrific acts of violence that dominate news cycles almost weekly. No matter how many stats and data points get cited, the numbers will never fully capture the everyday reality for so many Americans living in urban areas.

In fairness, part of this "feeling" may be attributable to the new media and social-media landscape. Virtually *everything* is captured on video today, and it can be disseminated worldwide at a button's touch. Additionally, with the "alternative" media now mainstream, and the ex-mainstream media waning, the latter can no longer bury "un-woke" crimes. The result: More than ever, people see violent incidents in living color. And seeing is believing — and fearing.

Be that as it may, the Daily Caller gets at a reality. Today's rampant vagrancy and the aforementioned associated ills may not always be a "crime." Nonetheless, they induce stress and fear in the populace. They also reflect criminal *potentiality*. With approximately 85 percent of vagrants being mentally ill or alcohol- or drug-addicted, it's clear that many are ticking time bombs. One of them went off on August 22, too.

His name is Decarlos Brown Jr. — Iryna Zarutka's murderer.



## The Deeper Truth

Yet amid the debates over whether “crime is down,” a point is missed.

Down from *what*? A 2020, post-George Floyd-madness high or some other recent mark?

A story: I live in a beautiful, wealthy suburb of New York City. It’s the kind of place where, unlike in Big Apple hoods, store display windows aren’t gated at night. But guess what?

When my mother arrived in the U.S. in 1951, display windows in the Bronx also weren’t gated at night.

The *Bronx*.

But this had changed by the ’70s.

In this vein, Professor Thomas Sowell reported that while growing up in Harlem, NYC, in the ’30s and ’40s, he *never heard a gunshot*. This is unimaginable today. What’s different?

Demographics and the people’s moral foundation are.

The point is, does it make sense dismissing crime concerns because criminality isn’t as bad as recent history’s worst period? Our standards should be higher. Oh, maybe we won’t be Mayberry anytime soon, but we don’t have to be *Mad Max* land, either.

## The Remedy

On Tuesday, Congresswoman Alma Adams (D-N.C.), who “represents” (the rumor holds) Charlotte, reacted to Zarutskia’s killing and a consequent call by President Donald Trump for increased detention for chronic violent offenders.

“You can’t solve everything by putting people in jail,” she [insisted](#).

But we don’t have to solve “everything” — just what the situation at issue reflects. And consider:

Murderer Decarlos Brown had on his rap sheet 14 arrests, some for violent offenses, dating back to 2011. He’d also been diagnosed with schizophrenia and was frighteningly disturbed. Why was he still on the streets?

Alma Adams is the reason — she and so many people like her.

It is factual that [the vast majority](#) of violent crimes are committed by a very small percentage of repeat offenders. (In Sweden, research found that one percent of the population [commits 63 percent](#) of all violent crime.) And half of all U.S. homicides occur in just two percent of our counties.

So, no, we don’t have to solve “everything.” Nor do we have jail *everyone*. We just have to get the predators who’ve already served notice on society off the streets.

Can we agree on this simple proposition? Or do some of us, bent on running interference for evil, want yet more innocent blood on our hands?



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