

New research reveals burglars have changed their 'shopping list'

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Globalisation, and particularly cheaper electronic goods from China and the Far East, has altered behaviour among Britain's burglars according to research in progress at the University of Leicester.

James Treadwell, a lecturer in Criminology from the University of Leicester's Department of Criminology suggests that the incredible rise of the new superpower has made burglars 'redundant' due to the decline in cost of household goods traditionally targeted by thieves.

Treadwell is currently researching how [crime](#) has changed over time. He commented:

"The last decade has been a remarkable one where crime is concerned, with massive changes and shifts. If we look back to the 1980s and 1990s, the type of staple crimes would be, for example, very often burglary and car crime and those crimes worked because they followed a business model and it was possible to break into a house and steal a [video recorder](#) and sell that at a profit.

"Cheap labour in China has had an impact on the type of crime that's committed in the UK and the type of goods that are stolen today. Gradually, the prices of such goods has fallen so low as to they almost have no resale value. If you can buy a DVD player for £19.99, it's simply not worth stealing."

Treadwell will be presenting his findings of the changes in criminal

trends at the British Society of Criminology conference that will be held at the University of Leicester in July. The theme of the conference is 'Human Rights, Human Wrongs: Dilemmas and Diversity in Criminology' and Treadwell will be discussing the changes in criminal practices over the last decade.

He comments:

"While we might have seen a decline in some types of crime, we have seen a rise in other forms of criminal activity, particularly young people who seem to be mugging one another.

"While DVD players for example, got cheaper, certain consumer items became smaller and were very, very expensive and sought after and so the latest mobile phone, or the latest ipod, which people carry about them, have become targets for robbers."

It is these expensive, personal items, which are the most attractive to thieves today as they still retain value and can therefore be sold on, igniting a career change for criminals from the more traditional household burglaries to personal muggings.

Provided by University of Leicester

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