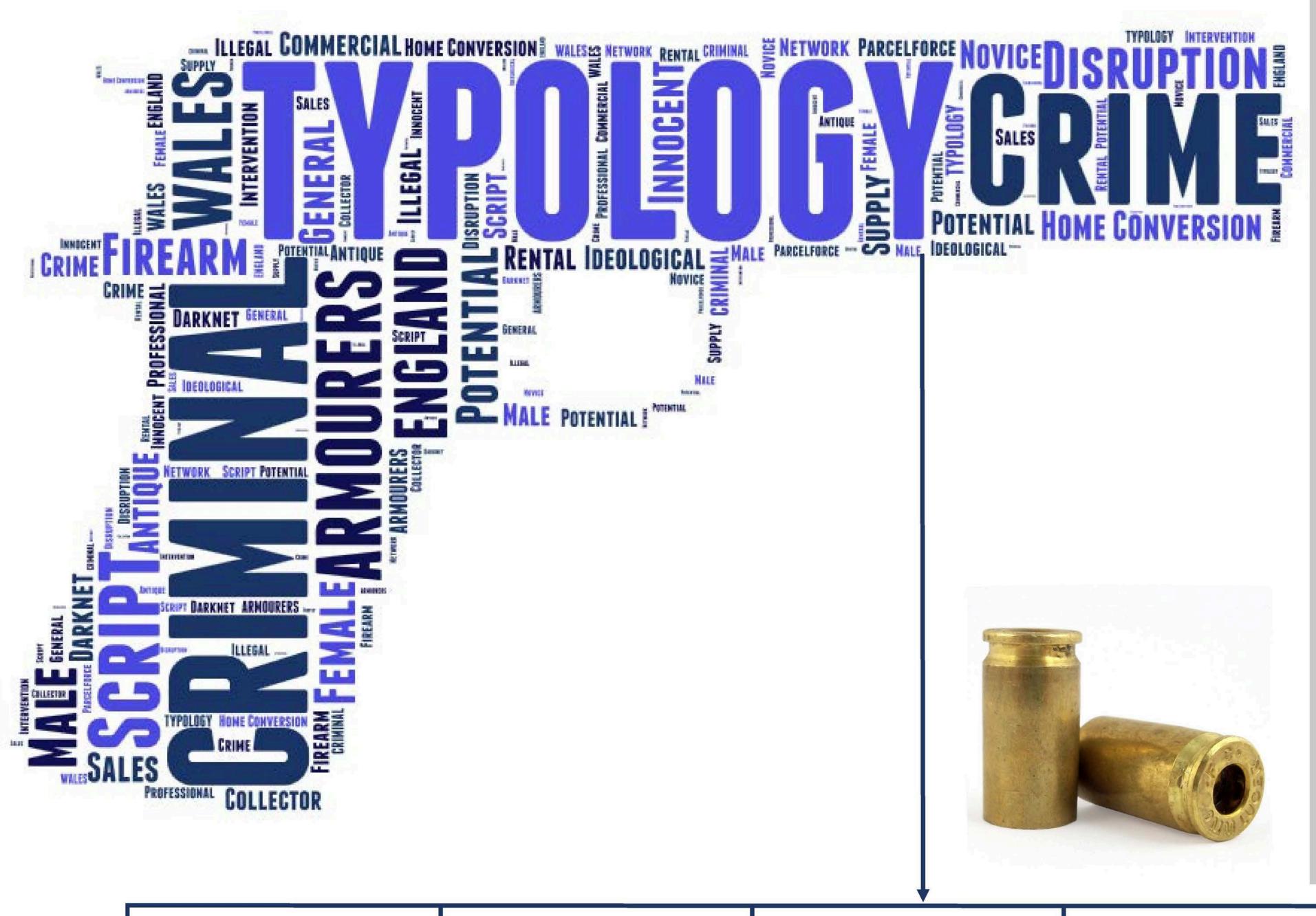
Disrupting Illegal Firearm Supply Through Crime Script Analysis



Research Overview

Media sources have revealed the existence of a number of criminal armourers, often involved in elaborate arrangements to access supplies of (deactivated or convertible) firearms, employing their knowledge, skills and contact to adapt these weapons and sell them on. Open-source data provides some details of such individuals however it tells us relatively little about their backgrounds, criminal histories, motivations, attitudes and working practices. This research aims to address this gap in knowledge.

Initial Typology of Criminal Armourers

Interrogation of open-source data enabled information to be collated (when available) in relation to employment, education, service history, lifestyle choices, contacts, working practices, social and criminological background of individuals previously involved in arming criminals in England and Wales. Leading to the identification of alternative scripts a criminal armourer may adopt during illegal firearm supply, and the development of **7 potential categories** of criminal armourer.

Future work aims to further develop this typology by exploring the role of each criminal armourer in more detail. Collaboration with the National Ballistic Intelligence Service has provided access to data currently not openly available. Interviews are now sought with police officers involved in successful operations in relation to firearm supply and post-conviction <u>criminal armourers</u> in order to establish a greater understanding of the activities, motivations and modus operandi of illegal armourers in making firearms available to criminals.

PROFESSIONAL*

Background: Police, military or governmental. **Skills:** Substantial knowledge/experience of firearms.

Character: May be brought into question. Possible connections to unorthodox firearm groups.

Criminality: Generally no past convictions.

IDEOLOGICAL*

Beliefs: Alternative political or cultural beliefs. Skewed view of their actions. Right-wing point of view. **Background:** Potential links to the military. **Character:** Defiance to authority. Survivalist mentality. May show

hostility to other

Practice: Lone operator.

cultures.

HOME **CONVERSION***

Interest: Personal interest in shooting and firearms (gun club member). Visits antiques/firearms fairs. Skills: Craftsman (engineer, electrician, jewellery etc.), owner of tools. **Practice:** Establishes home workshop. **Contacts:** Structured network to sell on firearms.

NOVICE*

Education: Limited or uncomplete. Skills: Self-taught (internet). **Character:** Co-operative upon apprehension. **Criminality:** Drift into delinquency, progressing to a developed criminal career. Connection to drugs, use/dealing. **Practice:** Criminal connections used to sell on firearms.

COMMERCIAL*

Interest: Firearms enthusiast. Registered firearm or antique dealer. Interprets firearm legislation to their benefit/belief. **Skills:** Substantial knowledge of firearms. Character: Lack of moral responsibility. **Practice:** Uses existing business as a front to

sell illegal firearms.

POTENTIAL

Interest: Passion for firearms (enthusiastic collector or military expert). **Practice:** Collecting militaria or weapons (common collecting material for men). May exploit loopholes to extend collection. Criminality: None. Potential for collection to be targeted by criminals. Sub-divisions: General or Antique collectors.

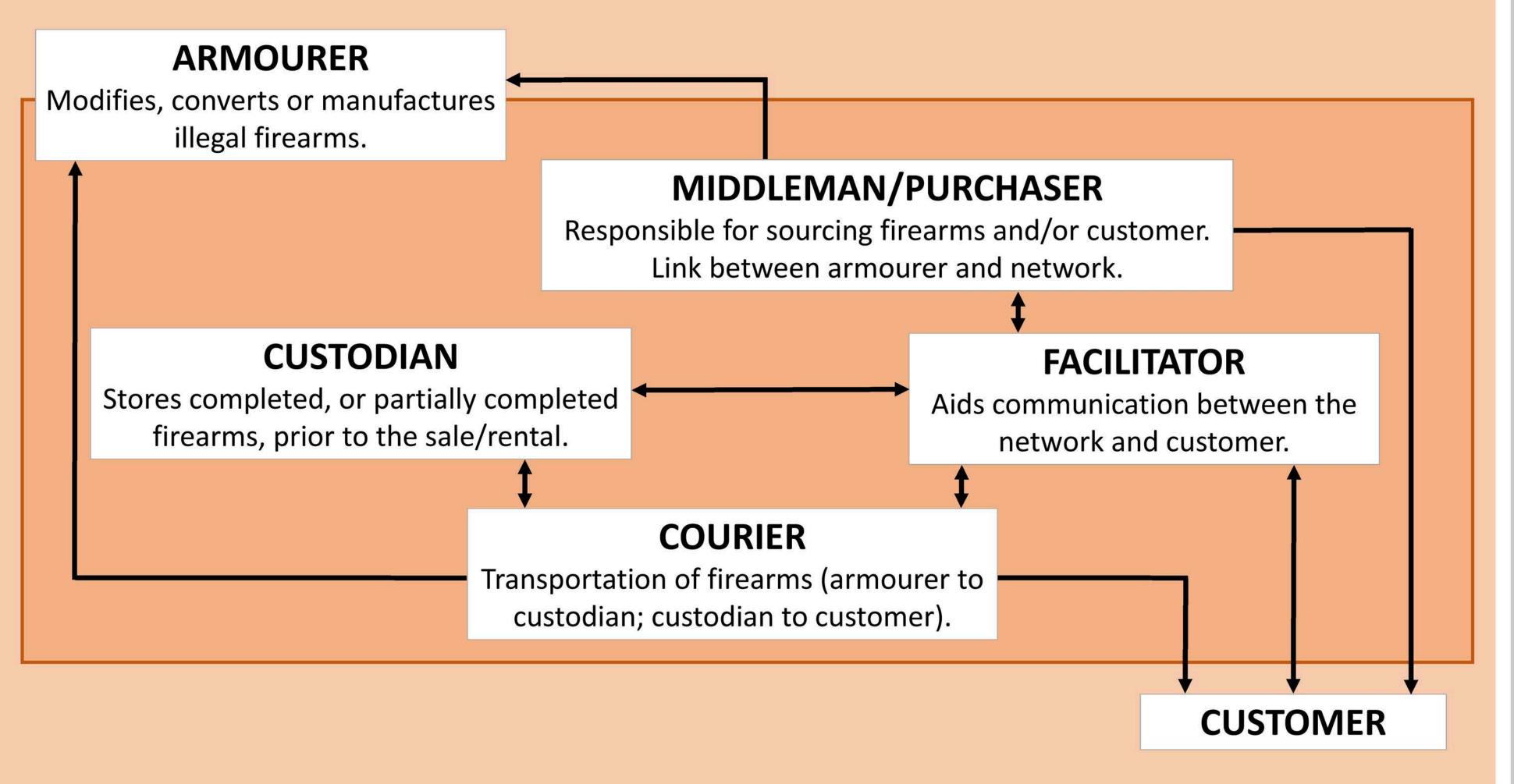
'INNOCENT'

Practice: Weapon custodian. Distinctly gendered groups. Male: Young or vulnerable (drug debt, living on own, disability i.e. Autism), exploited by known criminals. Coerced through threats to safety. Female: Young, naïve and impressionable with previous good character. Either enamoured by gang and associated gun culture, gaining a 'buzz' from looking after a firearm, or lacking confidence and coerced into looking after weapon.

* potential involvement in sales/rental network

The 'Sales/Rental' Network

Interrogation of open-source data highlighted a number of positions within small sales and/or rental networks responsible for the onward distribution of illegal firearms. Five categories of criminal armourers have been identified as supplying firearms to these small sales/rental networks either by direct involvement with the network or indirect involvement via contact with a 'middleman/purchaser'.



Further considerations

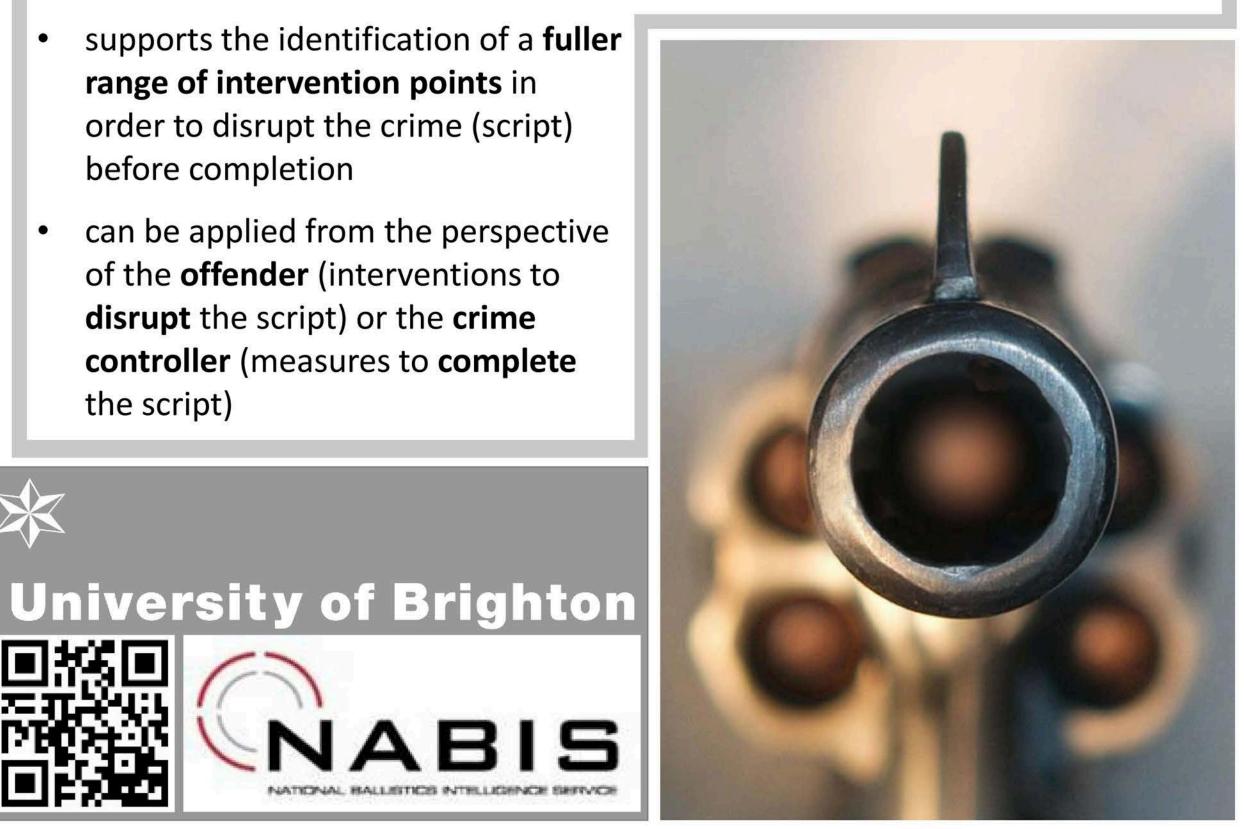
In addition to criminal armourers a number of other avenues are exploited in order for sales/rental networks to supply illegal firearms such as weapons converted or modified outside of the UK being smuggled into the country either by trade trafficking or abuse of the postal service and the use of the DARKNET as a means of bypassing legislation, some of which arrive in the UK via courier services.

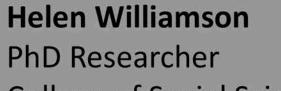
Disruption Through Crime Script Analysis

Working on the initial assumption that criminal armourers act as rational decision makers, exploiting a unique market opportunity, this research will adopt the theoretical framework of crime script analysis to identify potential **intervention points** in the crime commission process of illegal firearm supply.

A crime script:

- describes a **sequence of events** in a particular context, underpinned by the processes of rational choice
- provides a useful analytical tool for looking at behavioural routines in the service of purposive, goal-orientated action
- generates, organises and systematizes knowledge about the procedural aspects and requirements of a particular crime
- is generated from multiple sources of information (material routinely collected by police, interviews with offenders, investigative notes and information inferred by someone closely connected with the case)
- is **evolving and dynamic**, can be created from partial or incomplete data which can later be added to or amended
- enables the identification of stages, decisions and actions essential for the crime (script) to be completed
- supports the identification of a **fuller** range of intervention points in order to disrupt the crime (script) before completion
- can be applied from the perspective of the **offender** (interventions to disrupt the script) or the crime controller (measures to complete the script)





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