



Community, Security and Distributive Justice

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May 21, 2010
Seminar Security Matters!

The issue of crime and distributive justice

- Crime is a distributive harm
- Security from crime is a distributive good
- Have recent changes in crime and security led to an improvement or deterioration in distributive justice?

Background

- There is little evidence to support a ‘hydraulic’ theory of crime: that reduction in a specific crime through situational measures necessarily leads to a corresponding displacement because there is a fixed volume of crime.
- Across many areas of welfare (health, education, income) general improvements have often not been accompanied by reductions in inequality in market societies. Indeed relativities have often worsened.

The hypothesis

Security as a means of controlling crime is inequitable in that those who have more resources are more able to afford security measures than their poorer counterparts, which means that the richer are better protected against crime than the poorer. Even if the protection obtained by the better off does not necessarily lead to displacement to the worse off, their access to more resources to reduce risks through the application of security measures means that income related victimisation differentials are liable to increase, reducing levels of distributive justice.

Crime risk trend preference order for distributive justice

Preference rank	Crime Risk			
	For all	For lower risk group	For higher risk group	Risk difference
1	Decreases	Decreases	Decreases	Decreases
2	Decreases	Decreases	Decreases	Increases
3	Decreases	Increases	Decreases	Decreases
4	Decreases	Decreases	Increases	Increases
5	Increases	Increases	Decreases	Decreases
6	Increases	Decreases	Increases	Increases
7	Increases	Increases	Increases	Decreases
8	Increases	Increases	Increases	Increases

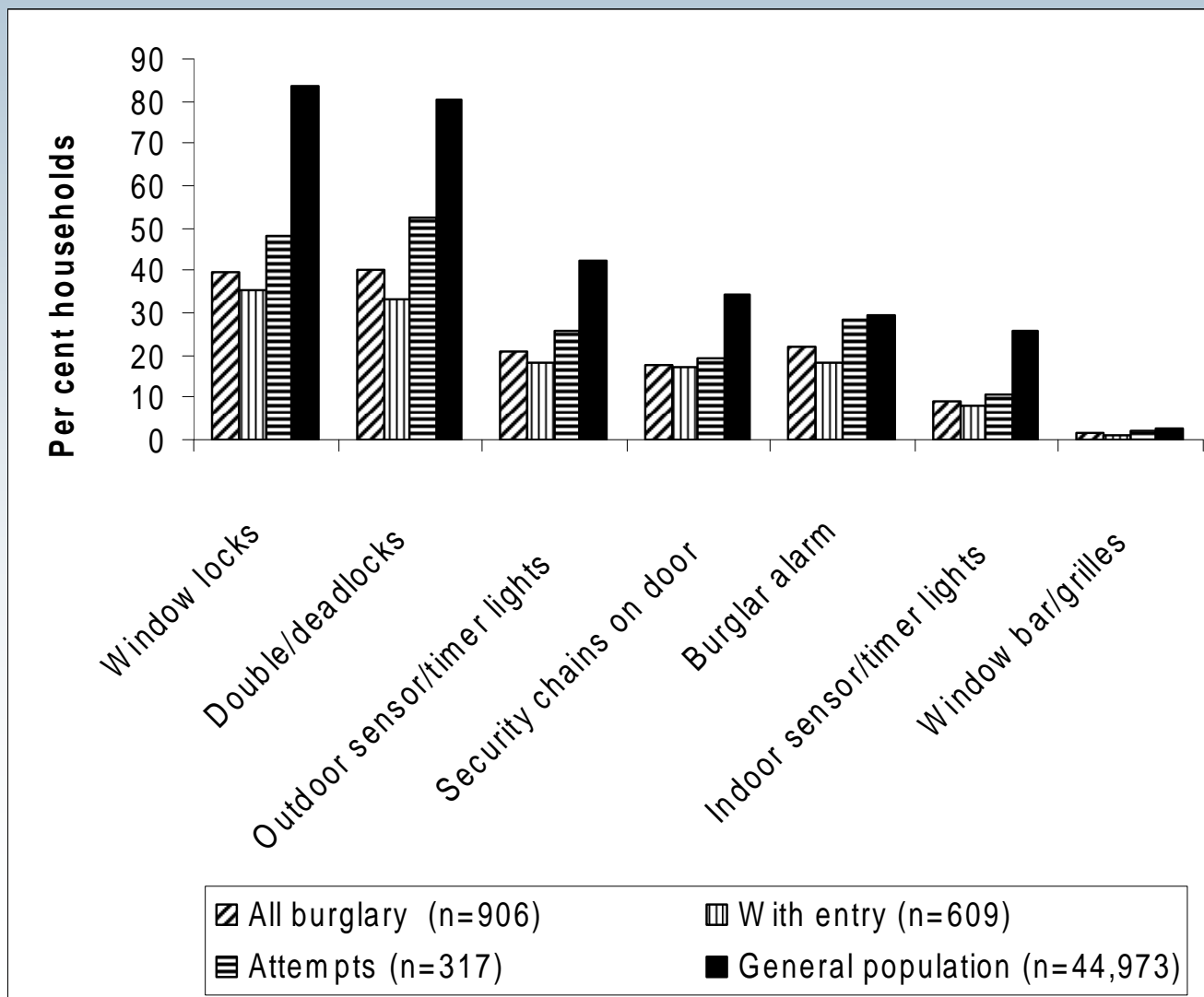
The evidence

- British Crime Survey Reports
 - Background household conditions
 - Neighbourhood attributes
 - Security devices
 - Crime experiences
 - Sample now very large (45,000)
- Sweeps: 1981-2008/9
 - Many questions identical
 - Some variations in follow up questions, in booster samples and in sub-sample questions
 - Change in income categories from 2006-7
- Focus on burglary
 - Volume crime
 - All are potentially victims
 - It is a relatively high-harm crime
 - Security is relevant

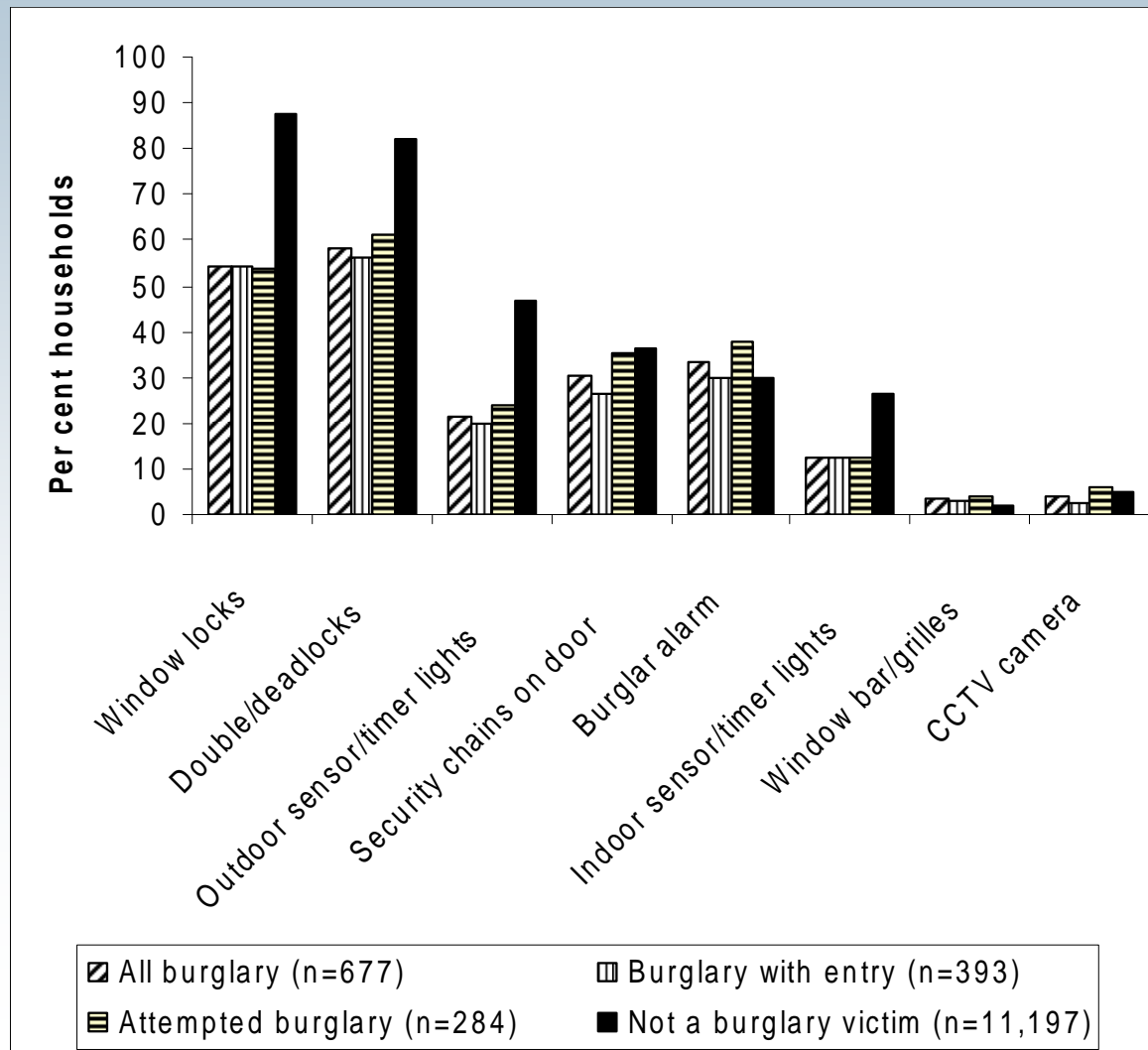
Security devices and income (BCS 2007-8)

	<i>Basic security plus</i>	<i>Basic security only</i>	<i>Less than basic security</i>	<i>No security</i>	<i>Unweighted base</i>
Household income					
Less than £10,000	54	12	30	4	896
£10,000 less than £20,000	57	14	26	3	979
£20,000 less than £30,000	62	12	24	1	816
£30,000 less than £40,000	61	13	24	1	623
£40,000 less than £50,000	70	12	17	1	423
£50,000 or more	72	7	19	1	715

Security devices and burglary 2004-5



Security devices and burglary 2008/09



Household income and per cent burglary prevalence 2008-9

	<i>Burglary</i>	<i>Burglary with entry</i>	<i>Attempted burglary</i>	Unweighted base
Less than £10,000	3.5	2.3	1.3	6,917
£10,000 less than £20,000	2.3	1.4	0.9	8,241
£20,000 less than £30,000	2.4	1.1	1.3	6,274
£30,000 less than £40,000	1.8	1.0	0.8	4,886
£40,000 less than £50,000	2.2	1.3	1.0	3,675
£50,000 or more	2.7	1.7	1.0	5,889

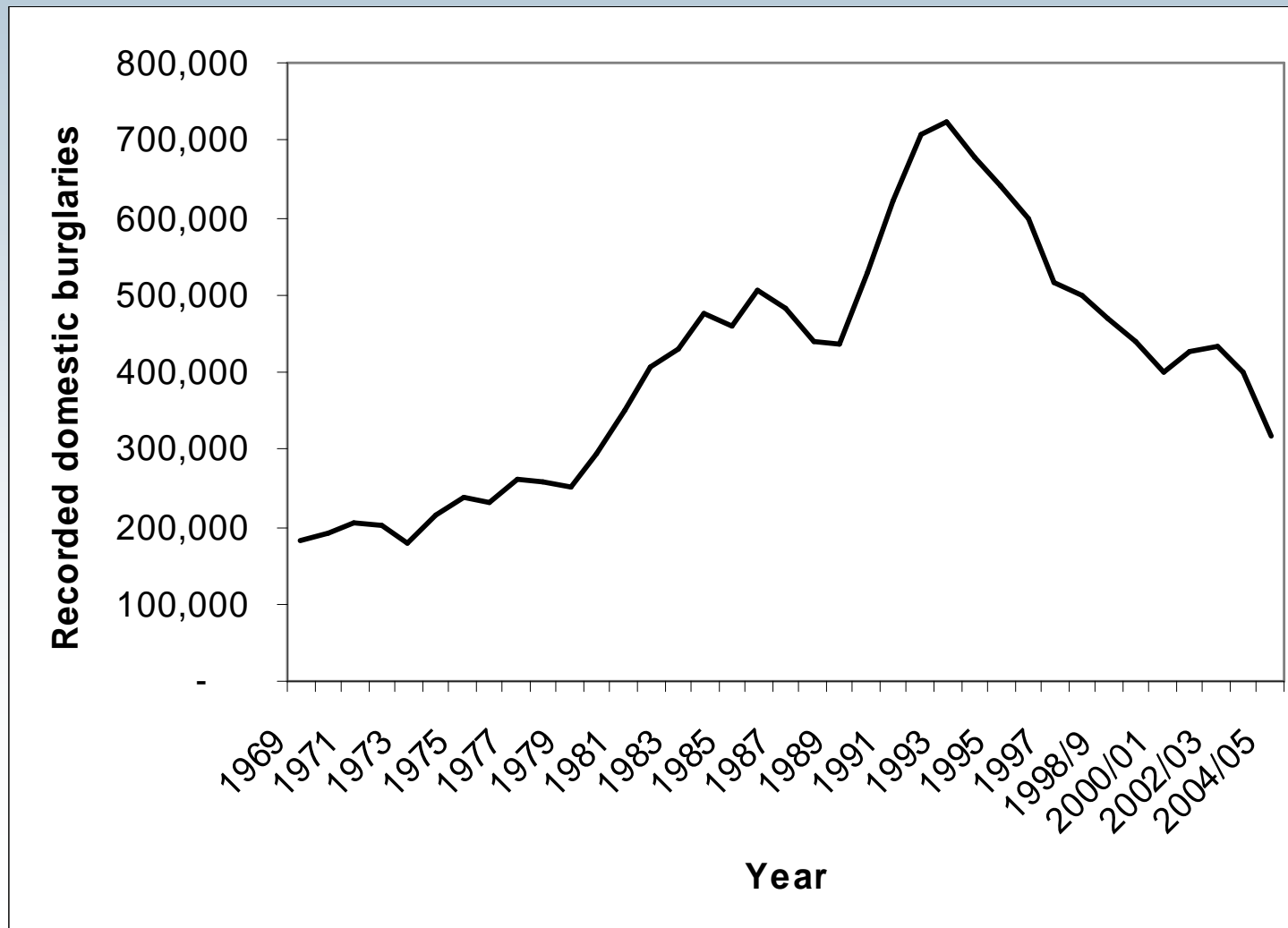
Household reference person's employment status and burglary 2008-9

	<i>Burglary</i>	<i>Burglary with entry</i>	<i>Attempted burglary</i>	Unweighted base
In employment	2.5	1.5	1.1	27,972
Unemployed	5.7	4.3	1.7	799
Economically inactive	2.2	1.5	0.8	17,362
<i>Student</i>	6.3	4.7	1.7	421
<i>Looking after family/home</i>	5.8	3.5	2.4	1,540
<i>Long-term/temporarily sick/ill</i>	4.6	2.8	1.8	2,003
<i>Retired</i>	1.2	0.8	0.4	12,981
<i>Other inactive</i>	3.6	3.1	1.4	417

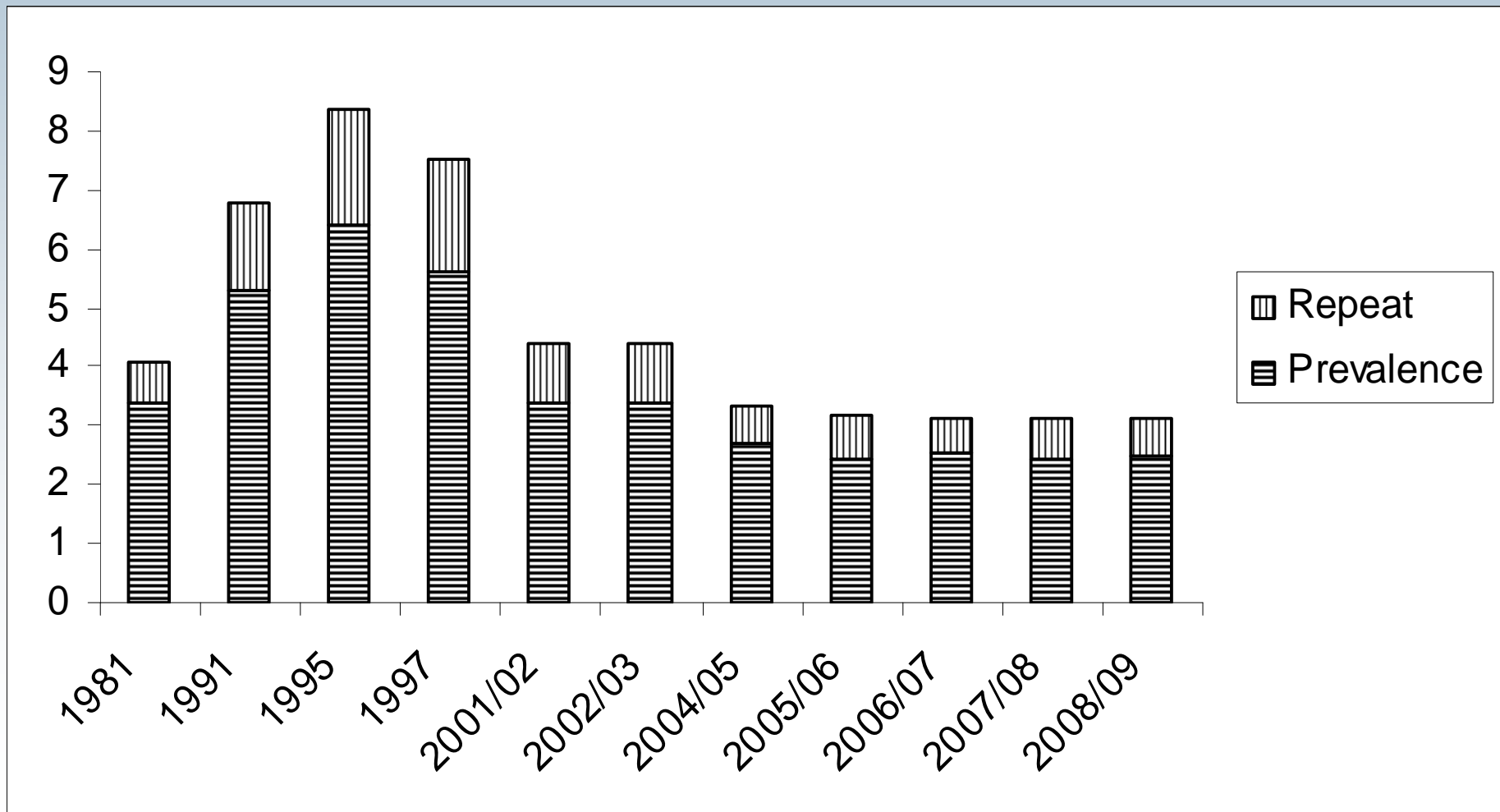
Insurance against burglary loss and household income 2007/8

	<i>Households with insurance coverage %</i>	Unweighted base
Less than £10,000	62	7,370
£10,000 less than £20,000	79	8,205
£20,000 less than £30,000	87	6,422
£30,000 less than £40,000	91	4,958
£40,000 less than £50,000	94	3,487
£50,000 or more	95	5,601

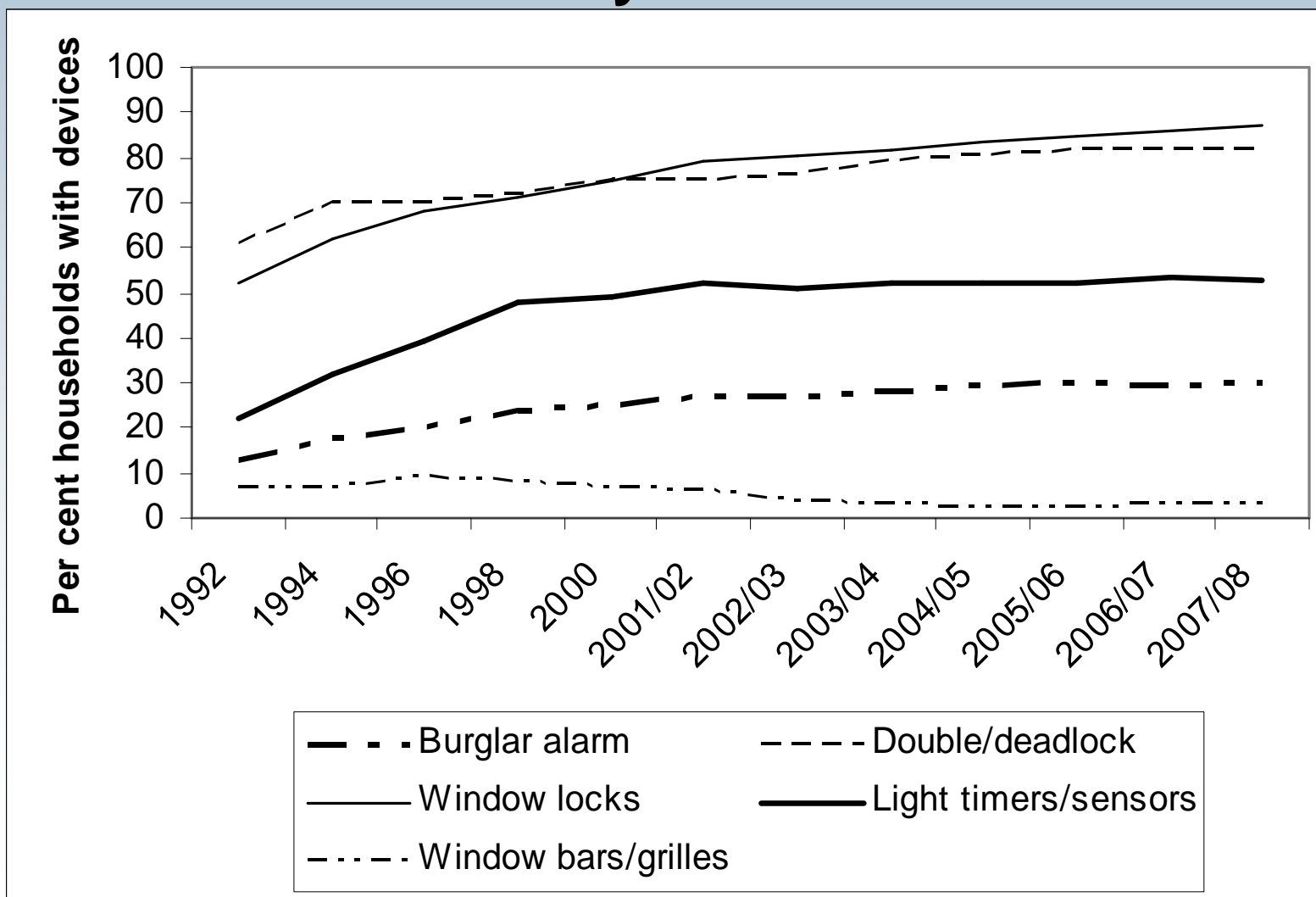
Recorded domestic burglary trends England and Wales 1969-2004/5



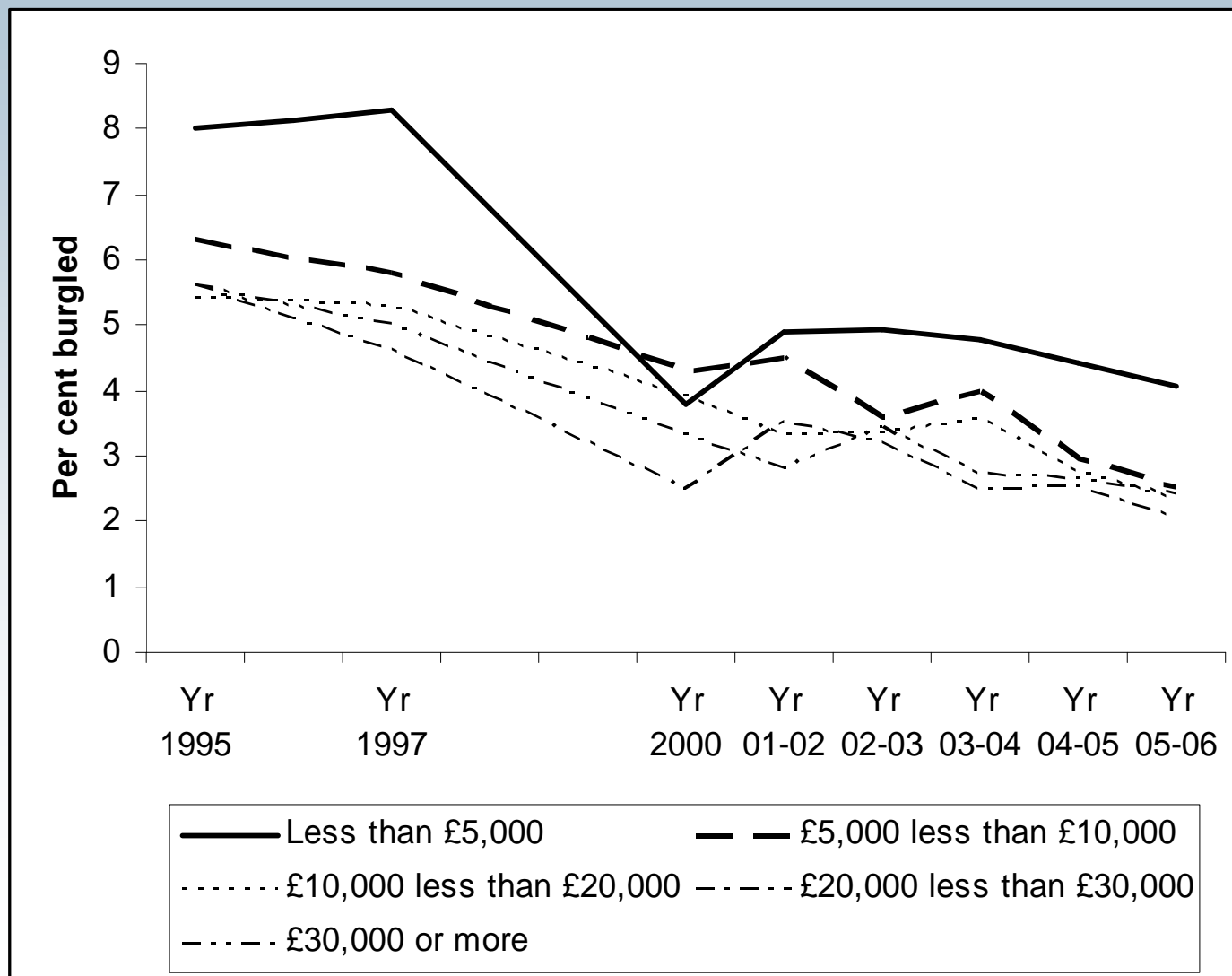
British Crime Survey estimates in trends in domestic burglary rate per 100 households, 1981-2008/9



Household security trends since 1992, according to the British Crime Survey estimates

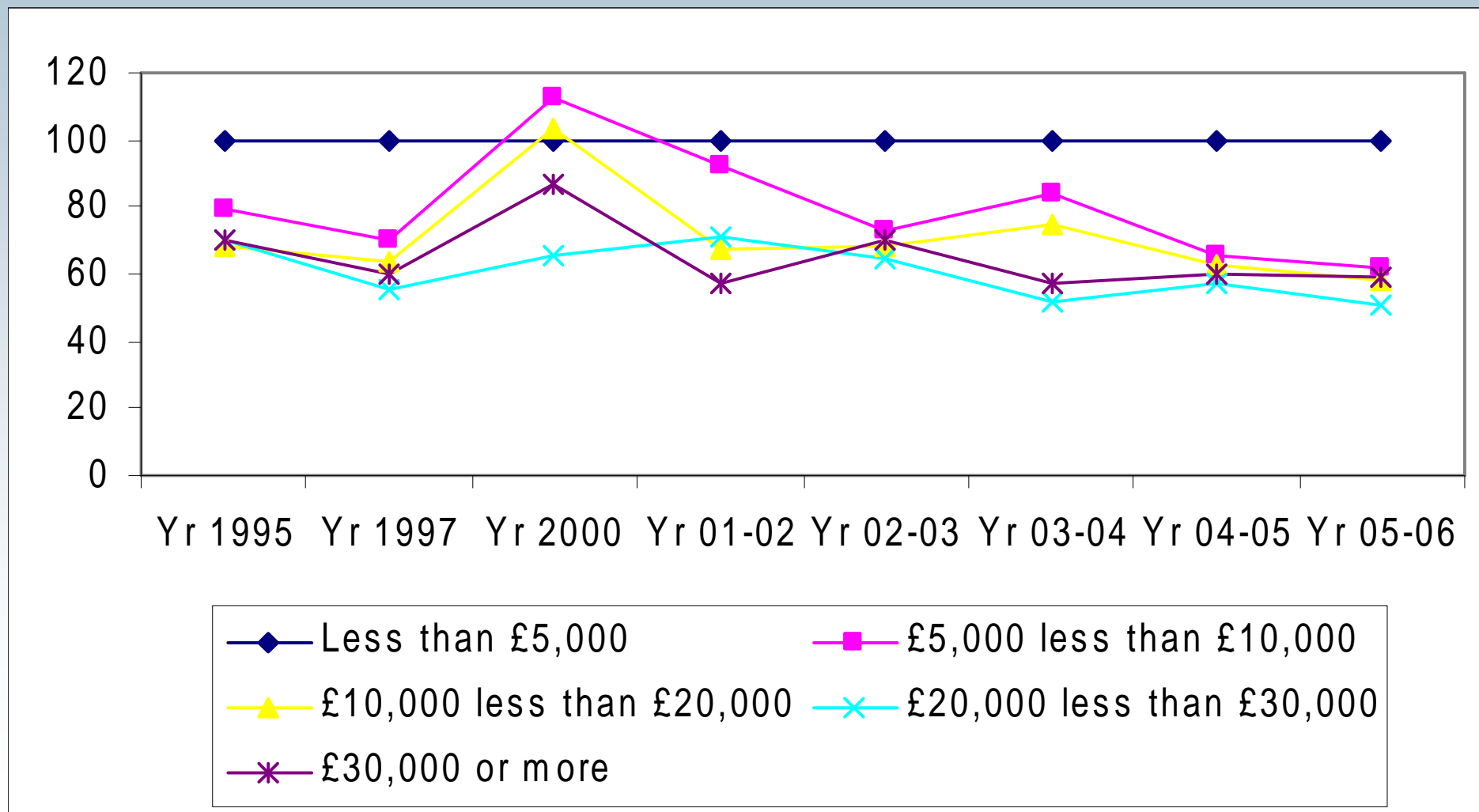


Domestic burglary trends by household income 1995-2005/6 (BCS)



Note: later sweeps not included because of change in income categories

Burglary rates indexed to lowest income group for each sweep from 1995 to 2005/6 (BCS)



Note: later sweeps not included because of change in income categories

Summary

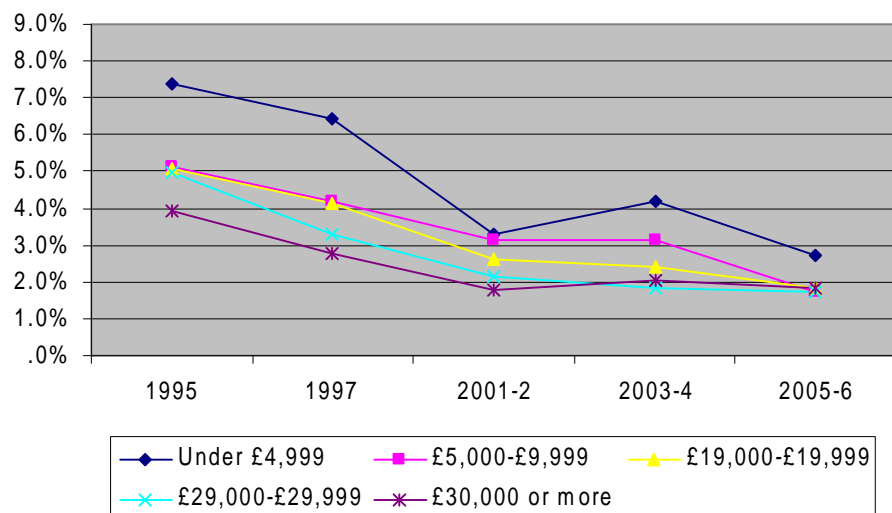
- Burglary fell in Britain from the mid 1990s
 - (As did other volume crime types)
 - (As it in most other industrial societies also)
- Burglary in Britain fell for all income groups
- Income-related burglary rate differentials remain, notwithstanding many initiatives aimed at the poorer sections of the community
- Distributive injustices do not appear to have shrunk significantly. The very poor have, if anything, become worse of relative to the rest.
- Levels of security have improved overall
- Levels of security vary by income group
- Crime risk varies by security level

Conclusion: possible explanations for observed patterns

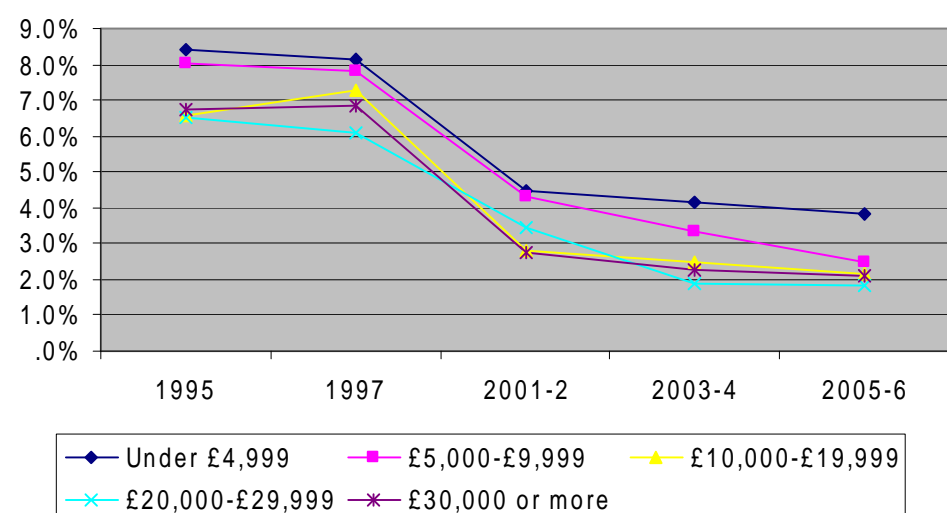
- The better off can afford more and better security devices that repel burglars, and/or
- The better off are at lower risk because they live beyond the routine activities and awareness spaces of offenders who tend to live in poorer neighbourhoods, and/or
- The better off have more social capital: they can better access public services such as those from the police and crime reduction partnerships; they are also better able to operate self-help schemes such as neighbourhood watch

Visible security and all burglaries

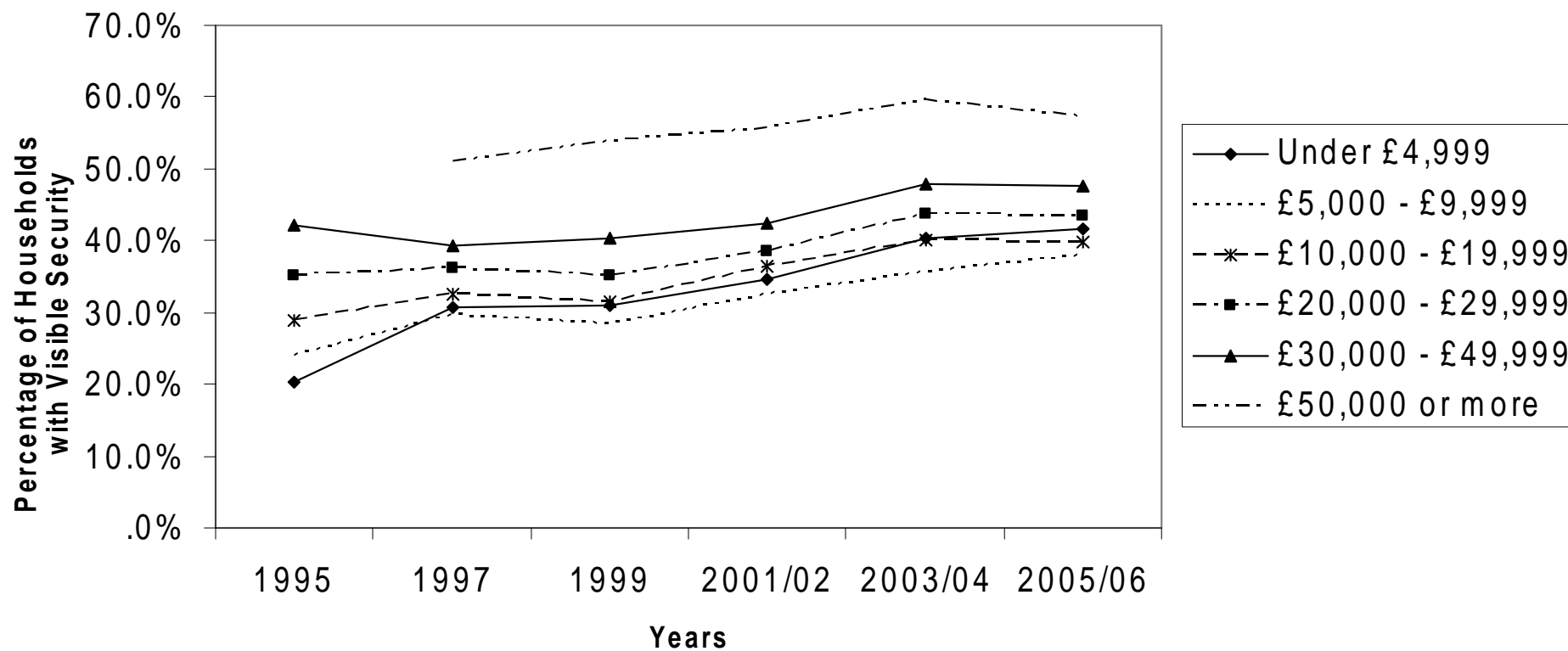
Without visible security



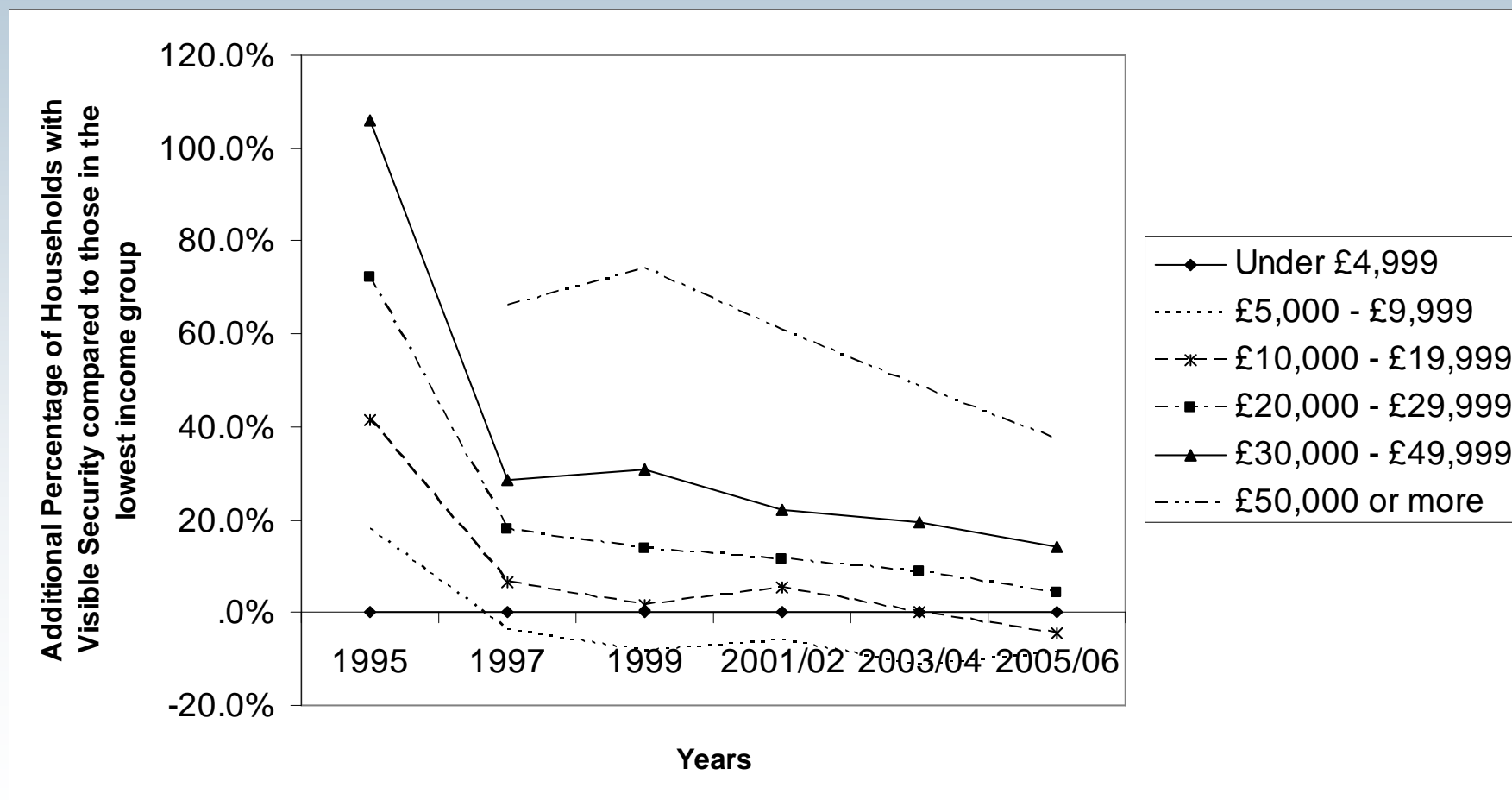
With visible security



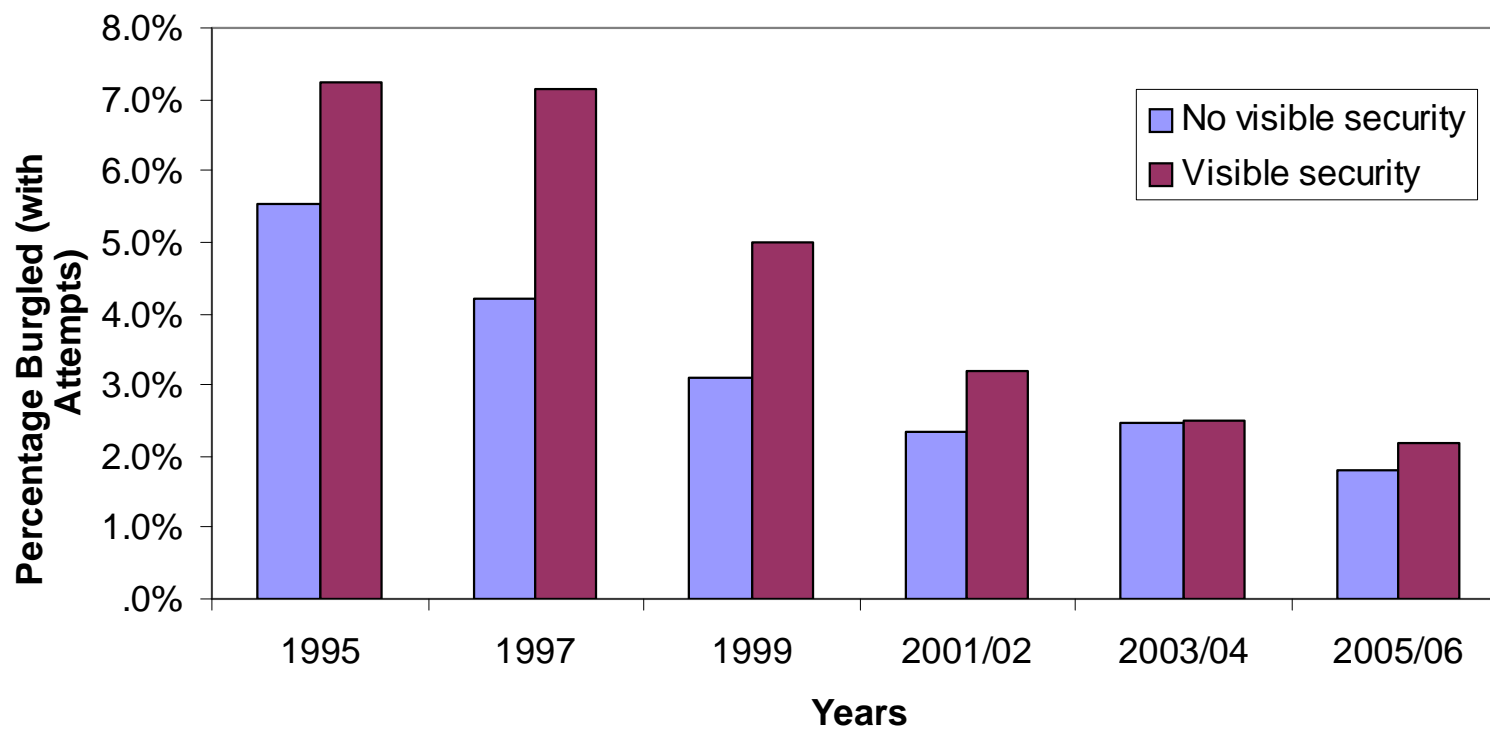
Visible Security across Income Groups over Time



Visible Security indexed at income under £4,999 across income groups over time



Risk of All Burglaries across Visible Security over Time



Odds of Burgled Households with against without Visible Security over Time

