

# Red Collar Crime from the Blue Zones?

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Red collar crime typically occurs when white collar criminals use violence to ensure they do not get prosecuted or lose their illegal gains.

There has been a widely-held belief (and some wishful thinking) that some communities in the world hold the secrets to longevity. In the 1930s, the culture of the people from the Hunza valley close to the Chinese-Pakistan border was held up as Shangri-La with its people appearing to have the secrets to perfect long-lasting life.

More recently, in 2005, author [Dan Buettner](#) identified multiple 'Blue Zones' he claimed researchers had identified as having unusually-high proportions of people over 100 years old. This resulted in an extensive literature about how to live longer based on life styles of people of 'blue zones' such as Okinawa and Sardinia

These 'blue zone' beliefs now appear to be an error of wishful thinking based on faulty data.

More careful research has revealed the data about the elderly of the blue zones is faulty. Often the data was even then obviously at odds with observations. For example In Okinawa's case it appears Okinawans have lower than average life expectancy.

The overall picture that has emerged is most claims of longevity are incorrect. The reasons are dominated by poor institutional record keeping and errors of both analysis and data. Sometimes researchers were misled, for example, by the discovery that one long-lived centenarian was her daughter.

Some of the problem data, however, appear to be cases of identity theft to enable pension fraud. One scenario is where an older person with pension dies and the death is hidden or not recorded in order to continue to obtain pension or other benefits.

It may be an alternative approach to living comfortably to an old age is identity theft of someone with a decent pension. Such a scenario opens the potential for red collar crime, which is currently neither well acknowledge or researched. The above aspect of 'blue zone' behaviours suggests the basis for a potentially-overlooked new category of 'red collar' crime.

Some relevant papers:

- <https://www.biorxiv.org/content/10.1101/704080v1.full.pdf>
- <https://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/article?id=10.1371/journal.pbio.2006776>
- <https://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/article?id=10.1371/journal.pbio.3000048>
- <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2024.09.06.24313170v1>
- <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/news/2024/sep/ucl-demographers-work-debunking-blue-zone-regions-exceptional-lifespans-wins-ig-nobel-prize>
- <https://theconversation.com/the-data-on-extreme-human-ageing-is-rotten-from-the-inside-out-ig-nobel-winner-saul-justin-newman-239023>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/9/26/the-secret-of-blue-zones-where-people-reach-100-fake-data-says-academic>
- <https://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi/tandi421>
- <https://www.cdpp.gov.au/news/pension-cheat-gaoled>
- <https://apnews.com/article/sweden-norway-freezer-5eb798744778e7a4e2ec3d721311f135>
- <https://www.standard.co.uk/comment/ig-nobel-awards-ucl-dr-saul-justin-newman-blue-zones-b1183218.html>

- <https://www.bluewin.ch/en/news/italian-hides-dead-mother-in-freezer-for-years-2343010.html>
- <https://www.justice.gov/usao-edpa/pr/local-man-posed-dead-father-steal-social-security-and-pension-benefits>

## Background

**Dr Terence Love is CEO** of the **Design Out Crime and CPTED Centre**, which provides the following services in Australia and internationally:

- Certified Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) training to professionals in Police, Planning, Architecture, Security, Community Safety and related fields.
- CPTED reviews of development applications (over \$13billion of projects to date)
- Advising and writing on national and international CPTED standards and guidebooks
- Providing crime prevention advice to Police, governments, infrastructure developers and planners, architects and related professionals
- Undertaking and publishing cutting-edge research for more than 25 years
- Developing improved crime prevention theories and strategies

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