Local Design Against Crime

Everybody has been to places that feel hospitable and others that feel oppressive. Often the more welcome designs lead to less crime. Generally speaking, more oppressive designs make for more crime. An office built like a fortress, although difficult to break into, is also difficult to look out of. That is why fortress construction often backfires, making the larger area more prone to crime. Fortunately, we know much more than the barbed wire solution. It is possible to make buildings and homes warm and hospitable, while giving people cues and setting limits against crime (Felson, 1995a, 1995b). This chapter reviews some of what we know.

The major insights go back to Jane Jacobs’s (1961) book, which is still fresh today. She saw the coming tragedy of urban renewal before anyone else realized what was happening. She explained why old urban neighborhoods, even if low in income, provided places for pedestrians, had vibrant lives, maintained local control of space, and protected people against crime. These neighborhoods were bulldozed to erect unnatural high-rise public housing complexes that became sterile environments and had crime problems built into their design. Jacobs remains a hero to students of crime prevention because she showed how designing for less crime is as easy as designing for more. Her concept went beyond buildings themselves, including the entire urban environment and taking into consideration the people using that environment.

Had people listened to Jacobs, U.S. housing policy would have made less of a mess than it did, but the errors go beyond housing policy. Overall, crime prevention strategies generally have been foolish and ineffective. Leadership fell into the hands of naïve ideologists, first liberal and then conservative. The first proposed to reduce crime by being good to people, thinking they would be good in return. The pendulum then moved toward an equally naïve position: Be bad to people to get them to be good. Had either or both camps listened to Jacobs, they would have realized that the issue is not how good or bad the government is to people but whether public places are designed and organized to allow people to control their own environments informally (see Poyner, 1998). Even though we cannot turn the clock back, we can sometimes learn principles from the past and apply them today.

Important Ideas for Designing Out Crime

Several decades after Jacobs’s insights, another opportunity arose for crime policy to incorporate common sense. In 1972, an architect named Oscar Newman wrote a classic book, Defensible Space. His problem was how to design safer public housing. His solution was not more locks or guards but rather a better design for how people use space. Just before that, C. Ray Jeffery coined the phrase “crime prevention through environmental design,” which he used as the title of a book (1971). The phrase was quickly shortened to CPTED (pronounced SEP-ted). Newman, Jeffery, and their followers generated important knowledge about the principles of lowering the risk of crime in local places and demonstrating these principles in real life. They helped clarify how to design new places more carefully so they did not foster crime, as well as to fix old places to reduce their crime problems. Although the term CPTED is largely out of fashion, we continue to learn how to build in safety and to design out crime.

Newman explained that local space can be divided into four categories: private, semiprivate, semipublic, and public. Newman’s prescription was to move as much space as possible to the private end of the scale to increase security and prevent crime. He believed that people would look after their own private and perhaps semiprivate space, whereas people on the street would provide “natural surveillance” of semipublic areas. In pure public areas, surveillance of any type was difficult and crime risk would be greatest. Newman favored low-rise buildings over high-rise buildings. He also made something of symbolic divisions of space, such as low fences that were not true physical barriers but that clearly defined what was private. Newman supplemented his theoretical work and drawings with demonstration projects in the real world, showing major improvements in security.

Newman’s suggestions were not always perfect. Paul and Patricia Brantingham (personal communication) point out that high-rise buildings for elderly populations and others having no children tend to be more safe and secure than low-rise buildings. Pat Mayhew and her associates (Mayhew, Clarke, Burrows, Hough, & Winchester, 1979) learned that natural surveillance by strangers is not really as effective as Newman had expected. That means that it is often necessary to assign someone clear and distinct responsibilities to look after public or semipublic space (a point made in the place managers discussion in Chapter 2). Symbolic marking of private and semiprivate
areas does not necessarily work as well as more severe forms of access control. In short, we find that Newman teaches us a lot that is worthwhile, but we have learned more since his initial contributions.

Jeffrey's CPTED provided additional information about which environmental designs are more secure. In addition, Jeffrey trained, encouraged, or influenced several people who later made major contributions to the field of crime prevention. These excellent former students have done countless good in helping localities reduce crime and training others to do the same. They and others have helped to modernize CPTED.

Environmental Criminology: A Larger Field

Do not mistake environmental criminology for the study of toxic dumping. It is the study of how crime occurs in everyday life and how to prevent it. With this term, Paul and Patricia Brantingham (1984, 1998, 1999) have incorporated CPTED defensible space and similar practical concepts into a single perspective. Important concepts in this field are nodes, paths, and edges, as well as insiders and outsiders (refer to Chapter 2 for detailed discussion of these concepts, and to Chapter 3 for more on insiders and outsiders.)

Space Patterns

The Brantinghams incorporated into environmental criminology the "geography of crime," which studies how crime is distributed over space. The trip taken by offenders to crime sites is just one of its topics. How far does the offender go? What route does he or she take? Where are people victimized? What do offenders know about the areas they travel in? Such ideas have been reviewed and extended in the work of Rengert (1996) and Harries (1999), and have influenced many parts of this book. Many police departments are deeply involved in mapping crimes throughout the locality. By learning more about how crime maps into the physical world, criminologists have done better in suggesting how to design more secure environments.

Time and Space, Together

Environmental criminology considers space and time together. How do potential participants in crime move about through space and time in the course of a single day? Which hours of the day produce more of the routine activities leading to crime? Such questions come right out of the theory of time geography by Swedish luminary Torsten Hägerstrand (as chronicled by Pred, 1981). Hägerstrand showed how to trace each person's activity in the course of a single day. Psychologist Albert Bandura (1985) wrote about the significance of chance encounters, but Hägerstrand helped us to understand why such encounters are not as random as they seem. Tracing both your day and my day, we can see how we met somewhere or failed to do so. If we are on the same campus, have a class in the same building at the same time, and come from the same direction, we might see each other. What seems like a chance encounter in fact has a structure. The organization of time and space is central. It also helps explain how crime occurs and what to do about it.

Unfortunately, it is cumbersome to study time and space together. There is too much happening. To make sense of it all, we need theories to cut down on details and organize the ones we have. The routine activity approach does that by finding three minimal elements of predatory crime: offender, target, and guardian. It joins environmental criminology in seeking to organize what we know about crime and everyday activities hour by hour, place by place. The routine activity approach also considers how hourly changes shift by days of the week, how daily patterns shift by month, how monthly patterns shift over the years, and so on (see Cohen & Felson, 1979; Felson, 1987; Felson & Cohen, 1980). It finds dramatic shifts in everyday life, helping to explain crime rate trends. This is very much in agreement with the landmark research by Hindelang, Gottfredson, and Garafolo (1978), which emphasized how lifestyles contributed to crime rates. These early lifestyle and routine activity studies, however, did not develop ideas for preventing crime.

Putting Knowledge Into Practice

Rather than doing science separately from practice, environmental criminology went onward to try preventing crime. The Brantinghams developed their thinking and applied their work in Vancouver, a large city in the western Canadian province of British Columbia. This city has the size, climate, and "feel" of Seattle, Washington. Forming relationships with local architects, planning boards, and police, the Brantinghams helped other people apply environmental criminology. The results include

- A public housing complex with very moderate crime rates, looking clean and neat
- A new town with a recreation center that avoids fights, despite a large influx of male strangers
Crime and Everyday Life

- A winter sports village with fewer problems from drunken revelry once activities were somewhat reoriented
- Local business areas with less lunchtime shoplifting, the result of school lunches provided by local churches

One of the former students of the Brantinghams is Mary Beth Rondeau, a former Canadian Olympic swimmer, trained architect, and staff associate of the planning department for the City of Vancouver, British Columbia (see Vancouver Planning Department, 1999, for excellent photographs and drawings of these accomplishments). Rondeau has helped assure that a good deal of the new construction in Vancouver minimizes crime opportunities. New townhouses and many other buildings in Vancouver look right at the street and send a clear cue: Don't even try it. Step by step, that city is slicing away at its crime environments. Similar progress is showing up in Newark, New Jersey, where new housing displays common sense, informed by preventive thinking.

One of the most important applications of environmental criminology in western Canada was carried out by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, which began to train its officers in crime prevention. These Mounties are trained to read blueprints; they routinely sit on planning boards, examining detailed plans for new construction and making suggestions to help reduce the risk of crime. As a result, many new housing complexes, businesses, and schools in British Columbia apply principles of environmental criminology from the outset. Similar training of law enforcement personnel is also found in Britain and the Netherlands, where reducing the opportunity for crime is a significant part of government policy.

Criminologists occasionally have influence on the planning process in the United States. Diane Zahm at Virginia Polytechnic University has considerable experience in using the planning process to reduce crime in Florida, and some of her colleagues are doing so in Virginia. Tim Crowe (1990, 1991), a private consultant, has trained public officials and businesspeople in the United States and other nations to apply CPTED principles. The results of these planning efforts are incremental: one building here, one plaza there, an improvement to a part of the college campus, a safer transit system, and so on.

A number of urban scholars and metropolitan planners have employed terms such as "livable communities" or "livable cities" to describe an approach to design that encourages pedestrians, "feels" better, and also is more secure from crime. To quote Tim Crowe (1991), "Good design is safe design." This means that we seldom have to make unpleasant trade-offs to achieve less crime. Most people have a kind of sixth sense about a place, telling them whether it is safe and comfortable. They are not always right, but environmental criminology confirms common sense more often than not. It also helps refine the scientific principles by making sure that they fit reality.

Local Design Against Crime

The Police Role

Those trained in environmental criminology cannot always prevent crime. Sometimes, though, environmental criminology can help police to detect and thwart offenders who already have gotten started. An excellent illustration is the effort to stop serial rapists and serial murderers. Kim Rossmo is a leader in mapping out these criminal acts and deducing a good deal about these offenders. By studying exact times and locations of each serial offense, Rossmo (1995, 2000) puts environmental criminology and theory to work to figure out where the offender probably lives, works, and has his recreation. This information aids in figuring out the identity of the offender and making an arrest.

Many police have applied similar thinking to interfere with ongoing crime problems. Increasingly, problem-oriented policing is finding common ground with environmental criminology. For example, the location of fast-food restaurants that cater to teenagers has a lot of impact on local crime problems. Solving these problems may tell us to look closely at the location decisions for such restaurants. The Brantinghams (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1984) have shown that proximity to a McDonald's restaurant is an excellent predictor of some crimes. Ongoing research by Mangai Natarajan examines transcripts from police wiretaps of conversations among those dealing large amounts of drugs. These offenders apparently like to meet in fast-food restaurants to make their deals. Cooperation with business to prevent the use of their premises for criminal behavior is an important theme of Felson and Clarke (1997a) and of problem-oriented policing. Design features can be important. I know of at least one McDonald's restaurant in Manhattan that found out retail drug dealers had been cutting the cushions to insert packets; as a result, they installed a new type of chair without cushions to make their environment less favorable to crime.

Basic Principles

In recent years, experts in crime prevention have become more eclectic, drawing ideas from "defensible space," CPTED, and principles of good management. In an excellent essay about how to design out crime in local areas, Tim Crowe and Diane Zahm (1994) state three design approaches to reducing crime:
1. Control natural access.
2. Provide natural surveillance.
3. Foster territorial behavior.

Controlling natural access does not require huge locks or walls. It includes hedges and shrubs, gates, doors, and plans for walkways—anything else that encourages people to go where they will do no harm or receive no harm. I recall a hospital with hundreds of people visiting patients each day, many of them entering the wrong door. The true visitors kept getting in the way of surgery, and some people entered there to steal things. The hospital simply locked that door and removed its handle, attaching a sign to enter through the visitors’ door, with an arrow in that direction. The problem was solved simply, without requiring arrests or punishment. Providing natural surveillance often is achieved simply by trimming hedges. Fostering territorial behavior often is accomplished by putting in small fences or porches, or landscaping to show where one apartment ends and the other begins. The three design approaches above apply the three strategies below:

1. **Natural strategies**: Security results from the design and layout of space. Both human and capital costs are low.
2. **Organized strategies**: Security guards or police play the central role (George & Button, 2000). These strategies are labor intensive and expensive.
3. **Mechanical strategies**: Alarms, cameras, and other hardware are employed to control access and provide surveillance. This may require additional employees to watch monitors or respond to alarms. The equipment may be expensive.

Clearly, natural strategies are superior in economic terms, and they also avoid confrontation by preventing crime from happening in the first place.

From Newman, Jeffery, and subsequent experience, we learn that natural strategies work best. It is indeed mysterious that so many people think otherwise. Widespread ignorance leads too many commentators to say, “Oh, you mean locks, alarms, and guards.” In fact, the main idea of designing out crime, rightly understood, is to achieve safe environments in far more intelligent and less costly ways. That means designing a neighborhood with the human scale foremost, fostering communication among people, and encouraging their sense of ownership and responsibility. This contrasts with the stark methods of developing no-man's-lands, walls, and thick barriers. Modern crime prevention uses a broader repertoire rather than always playing the same tune. That does not rule out the use of fences in the right places, but it includes much more, as we shall see.

Crowe and Zahm sum up much of what we know about designing out crime with two words: marking transitions. I should know when I am entering your space, and you should know when you are entering mine. Marking transitions provides reminders. Someone trained to design out crime will provide clear markings for and separation of:

- Controlled and uncontrolled space
- Public, semipublic, semiprivate, and private space
- Conflicting activities

The interesting point here is that completely legal activities can produce illegal outcomes. A good thought experiment is to find and discuss what activities conflict in a way that invites trouble. Consider:

- Teenagers with radios versus elderly people who want quiet
- Defecating dogs versus park visitors sitting on the grass
- A hangout for older kids versus a playground for toddlers
- The high school versus the shopping mall (see Chapter 6)
- A bikers’ bar next to a gay bar

Designers can find creative ways to use hedges or walkways to separate conflicting activities. Businesspeople, too, can pay more attention to location decisions.

We often think of CPTED in spatial terms, forgetting its substantial temporal aspect. Scheduling and coordination of activities in time and space play an important role in assembling likely participants in crime. Some schedules produce stragglers who are easy to attack. To prevent that from happening, it makes good sense to:

- Schedule activities carefully in time and space for more effective and intense use, and hence less chance for stragglers to be attacked or for groups of likely offenders and suitable targets to assemble
- Design pedestrian paths that intensify usage for greater safety

We have to admit that some places, as well as some human activities, are implicitly risky from a crime viewpoint. So what should be done? If we put the unsafe activities in unsafe places, a lot of trouble probably will emerge. Crowe and Zahm (1994) have made this remarkable and insightful recommendation for everyday design:

**THE CROWE-ZAHM MIXING PRINCIPLE**: place safe activities in unsafe locations and unsafe activities in safe locations.
The logic of this principle is to use safe locations to calm, contain, or help supervise activities that would otherwise be dangerous and to use safe activities to provide natural surveillance of potentially dangerous places. Our team of graduate students studying the subway stations in Newark, New Jersey, recommended putting a small business beside each of the riskier subway stations to provide more eyes on the street (Felson et al., 1990). We cannot make all of life safe, but we can minimize the dangers and risks by following the Crowe-Zahn advice. Why give offenders their best shot at crime?

Physical Aspects of Crime Prevention

Crime can be prevented by at least four physical methods: target hardening, construction, strength in numbers, and noise. For example, universities harden targets when they bolt down computers, typewriters, television sets, projection equipment, and the like. As for construction, universities sometimes put up extra walls, fences, or other physical barriers to reduce unauthorized entry to university buildings, or simply to channel flows of people coming and going, which makes mild supervision possible. The University of Southern California, for example, put a fence around the premises in preparation for the 1984 Olympic Games. The campus was still open at many gates, but offenders could no longer enter anywhere, attack anything or anyone, and exit anywhere afterward.

Strength in numbers is important for helping people to protect themselves and their property. One designer of a high-rise building for the elderly put the recreation room on the first floor with good lines of sight to the door. Together, the residents were able to keep people from wandering in without permission.

Noise also is important for crime. On the negative side, offenders use noise to determine whether you are present or absent, even banging on your door to make sure you are gone. On the positive side, noise can protect you. A good lock on your door is important not so much for preventing illegal entry as for making sure the offender makes enough noise to draw the attention of others. Alarm systems operate on the same principle. Noisy dogs can serve both to alert others and to scare off offenders directly. Noise also can be directed at offenders, as when subway station personnel with loudspeakers direct someone to cease an undesirable behavior. In either direction, noise reminds us that crime is a physical act and that our five senses are essential for both committing it and preventing it.

Local Design Against Crime

Lines and Routes

Those who work on designing out crime pay a good deal of attention to sight lines, that is, the visual lines from a potential crime target or entry point to potential guardians. Good sight lines generally thwart criminal activity if someone is around to discourage it. But sight is not the only issue. Paths for entry and exit also influence how potential offenders and victims calculate their chances. The Brantinghams (1984, 1998, 1999) pay a great deal of attention to paths people take in daily life and the risks incurred or crime chances provided. Fisher and Nasar (1995) consider how routes and their enclosure influence the offender’s ability to get to a victim, or the victim’s ability to evade an offender. The challenge is to design clear sight without much danger of illicit entry and exit. Nowhere is this more relevant than in housing.

Residential Crime Prevention

One of the best applications for designing out crime is housing, including private housing for the poor, public housing for the poor, and housing for the middle class. Rengert and Wasko (1985) found that designs favorable to burglary in middle- and upper-class areas are the same as in low-income areas. The same principles also apply in very different nations and over many locations within a single nation (Edmunds, Hough, & Urquia, 1996).

Designing Housing for Less Crime

To learn how to design out crime, it is best to get specific. Barry Poyner brought general principles into more specific and precise applications. His important 1991 book with Barry Webb, Crime Free Housing, elaborates the vulnerabilities of housing for different types of crime and offenders. Those offenders who are on foot operate differently from those in cars and therefore require different prevention measures. Poyner and Webb note that very different prevention measures apply to theft, criminal damage, and violence within housing. They also distinguish theft prevention inside homes and out, of and from vehicles, and residential areas versus elsewhere. Their diagrams and pictures offer assistance for designing out various types of residential crime.

Poyner and Webb offer seven recommendations for designing the house and property itself.
Exhibit 9.1 Houses That Face Others Make the Burglar's Task More Difficult

1. Use proper design so houses only need moderate locks.
2. Make front windows face those across the street.
3. Fence the back and side yards.
4. Position front service and delivery areas carefully.
5. Leave a garden area in front of the front fence.
6. If there is an open car park area, put it in front of the house.
7. If there is a garage, put it at the side, near the front entrance.

The front windows that face across the street allow neighbors to supervise the front area and to notice anybody breaking in or stealing something from the front. Exhibit 9.1 shows how much easier it is to see what is going on when the street is designed that way. Secure back and side yards make it more difficult to break in there. Fenced and gated fronts also can thwart theft and break-ins, especially if they can be seen from inside the house, if the gates are bolted from the inside, and if the service and delivery areas are easy to see from everywhere.

How high should the fence be in back and on the side? In Britain, houses are often smaller than in America, so a tall fence or wall may do the job, but large American yards make it all too easy to break in without being heard. I would shy away from thick or tall fences or walls in that case and make sure the fences do not block the sight of neighbors or vice versa. The garden space of about 10 feet in the front, if not too bushy, keeps people away from the fence, guiding them through the gate for legitimate business. Exhibit 9.2 describes a small house that is fairly secure, with some fencing in the back, on the side, and in front of the house, and a small front garden to set the fence away from the street. Finally, if parking is outside, you should be able to look out the front and see that your car is still there. An inside private garage can be on the side, but its entry should not be far from the front door, so any thefts would be easy to notice.

Poyner and Webb offer four additional suggestions for design of an entire locality:
1. Minimize through traffic on residential streets.
2. Put dead ends in distinct pedestrian paths.
3. Orient fronts of houses toward points of entry.
4. Keep any park areas outside the housing areas.

Separate pedestrian paths are common in Britain and American public housing projects. These paths are often used by offenders to find their targets and then to exit with the loot. When pedestrian paths are constructed without a through route, meeting a dead end within the residential area, they no
longer encourage household crime. A pedestrian will not be able to walk by your place, take what he wants, and continue in the same direction. In general, the best design probably is to keep pedestrians walking on sidewalks in the front of houses and beside streets, with each household opening onto the street. Public housing complexes that have followed this rule have had relatively few crime problems. Public housing with internal through paths and apartments opening onto a central area have far more difficulty with crime. Even worse, some public housing suffered greatly from putting in overhead walkways linking buildings, making it easy to commit crime and escape to the next building. When these walkways were closed off, the crime problems went down right away (Poyner, 1997).

Parks inside housing areas look very good in architects' models before a place is built. After the housing is constructed, however, parks can easily become a mess, welcoming the toughest and rowdiest youths and even being taken over by gangs. Green spaces provided just outside a residential area rather than within it produce less crime. The challenge to those who love parks is clear: Find a way to design and locate park areas so they do not become easy routes for illegal entry or ideal for illicit takeover.

The human race has never found a better urban orientation than square or rectangular houses lined up on a street and opening to the front (Exhibit 9.1). If I want to go to your house, I should go out my front door, walk down the sidewalk, up to your front door, and knock. Yet planning has to be flexible. In a quiet cul-de-sac, it is possible to orient houses in the direction of the busy street so residents can notice who is entering. Exhibit 9.3 depicts this arrangement and draws the sight lines. To figure out whether and when this will succeed, think about what direction the traffic is moving and from where an offender is likely to arrive.

**Street Closures and Alternatives**

In general, through streets with lots of traffic generate a good deal of crime risk, but many existing environments already have through streets. Sometimes streets can be closed off to reduce crime. The idea of privatizing streets was noticed in St. Louis by Oscar Newman, who then popularized the idea. Gardiner's (1978) book *Design for Safe Neighborhoods* showed how he redesigning Asylum Hill in Hartford, Connecticut, closing off some streets to cars without interfering with pedestrian access. Crime went down immediately. It is difficult to argue that these crime reductions were purely coincidental.

More recently, Los Angeles has experimented with creating some cul-de-sacs in a very dangerous local area with lots of drive-by shootings. When streets were blocked off without much thought, they achieved relatively lit-

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**Exhibit 9.3 Orient So Those Entering From the Larger Street Are Noticed**


tle. When some streets were closed to cars on a strategic basis—calming traffic but still allowing a natural flow—drive-by shootings declined (Lasley, 1998). This points to a general lesson of designing out crime: Be attuned to local facts and realities.

Critics of closing streets often say this is a method for excluding people, but to reduce crime, street redesign does not have to exclude people at all. Exhibit 9.4 displays some simple ways to slow down traffic and reduce residential crime risk without closing off streets. Traffic engineers call these techniques “traffic calming.” I have discussed traffic calming with my students and find a vast difference of opinion. My younger students who have no children are on the go and usually do not want to slow down. My older students who have young children like the idea, especially because the slower traffic is less likely to run over or scare their children. While writing this third edition, 20 urban planning students from the University of Tubingen in Germany visited us at Rutgers University to discuss designs against crime. Some of them noted that serious problems can result from traffic calming techniques as you see discussed in the next paragraph. This alerts us to the complexity of crime prevention in practice and the many choices we must make. It also reveals the
Exhibit 9.4 You Do Not Have to Close Off a Street to Reduce Crime—Just Calm the Traffic

Narrow the street

Put in traffic island or flowerpots

Shift traffic flow

Add traffic bumps

SOURCE: Adapted from ideas borrowed from Patricia and Paul Brantingham, personal conversations.

importance of many alternatives, just in case one solution leads to another problem that’s worse.

Whatever your opinion, traffic calming is a way to reduce some types of crime at very little monetary cost. The methods include “traffic bumps” on the street—what the British call a “sleeping policeman”—which force drivers to slow down, but these “policemen” do not need to ticket or arrest anyone. Exhibit 9.4 shows three more subtle methods: narrowing the street, putting in a traffic island or large flowerpots, or inserting a partial barrier to shift the traffic flow without blocking access entirely. However much you may dislike being slowed down, it is a lot better than having crime take over in the area and better than getting a speeding ticket. Hilly cities and suburbs offer an addi-

tional tool for designing out crime. Construction has to adjust to the topography, using inclines and curves in doing so. Hills and curves can help in creating more local control, calming down traffic, and discouraging people from entering with no purpose at all or no purpose other than committing crime. My mother, Virginia Felson, lived for several years in an apartment building on a street that could only be entered by going up a hill.

Significance of Management

Despite its very bad image, public housing varies greatly in crime risk (Holzman, 1996). Eck’s (1995) pathbreaking work on how drug sales find their niche within public housing or private low-income housing shows that poorly managed housing often loses some benefits of good design features, whereas good management can offset bad design. An active place manager, such as an apartment supervisor, is essential. Eck found that drug sales were made within those apartment buildings lacking a manager, or by a manager who was corrupted by the drug dealers (Eck, 1995). Management goes beyond a single place manager. Put yourself in this person’s position: If the larger organization gives you no rewards, no security, and no backing, or even punishes you for taking the initiative, why should you stick your neck out to fight crime? Good management has to work at many levels, but it can make things better than they were. A doorman, concierge, or janitor can make a great difference in protecting any building.

Severin L. Sorensen, president of Sparta Consulting Corporation in Maryland, puts the principle of good management into daily practice. He helps local public housing authorities in the United States to drive out drug dealers and reduce various crime problems through management. His training of these authorities includes both physical and managerial aspects.

Other Methods for Designing Out Crime

In their book Design for Inherent Security (1995), Barry Poyner and W. H. Fawcett suggest ways to design out crime in nonresidential buildings. They show how to design low crime risk into shops and stores, malls, offices, industrial parks, hotels, sports buildings, bars and restaurants, transportation hubs and stations, public parking garages, service stations, hospitals, schools, and more. We do not have the space to cover all these applications, but we can examine some.
Convenience Stores and Small Groceries

Small stores with late hours are very vulnerable to robbery, especially when located near freeways. In some cases, employees or customers have been injured or murdered in the process.

One large convenience store chain, 7-Eleven, suffered staggering increases in the number of robberies during the 1970s. The chain's owner, the Southland Corporation, hired the Western Behavioral Sciences Institute and several convicted robbers, including Ray Johnson, to help redesign the corporation's retail stores with the intention of reducing the number of holdups. Sixty stores initiated the team's recommendations, and a control group of the same size did not. The control group experienced no change in robbery risk, whereas the experimental group had a 30% decline in the number of robberies. These stores also reported major declines in nearby crime and in people loitering and harassing customers. These are some of the innovations carried out (see Duffala, 1976; see also Mayhew, 2000):

- Do not let display advertising cover the windows and protect robbers from being seen from the street.
- Move cash registers to the front of the store, where they are visible from the street.
- Put cash registers and clerks on a raised platform, taking the cash drawer out of the offender's line of vision and making the clerk more imposing.
- Install timed-access drop safes beneath each register, releasing no more than $10 change every 2 minutes. This removes the target of the crime.
- Redesign store properties to eliminate all alley exits, channeling everyone through the front.
- Encourage taxis to use the premises as a nighttime station, giving drivers free coffee and restroom privileges.
- Train employees to make eye contact with each customer on entry.

Most of these methods produce more natural social control. Although some of these policies go beyond CPTED and defensible space, they show that it is possible to make stores safer without using armed guards or making them less comfortable environments. At the urging of Professor C. Ray Jeffery, the city of Gainesville, Florida, placed similar stipulations into a city ordinance and also required the presence of at least two clerks on duty late at night. The result was a decline in convenience store robberies (see Hunter & Jeffery, 1997).

In general, a well-designed and safer store not only reduces crime but also draws more customers, who in turn enjoy shopping there. No better illustration of this principle can be found than in the next example.

Design by Disney

Clifford Shearing and Phillip Stenning (1997) have reported how Disney World organizes visits in great detail. From parking lot to train to Monorail to park and back, activities are planned to minimize risk of accident or crime. Disney World follows this rule: Embed control in other structures so that it is barely noticed. For example, entry into most exhibits occurs only within a vehicle controlled by Disney personnel. Even lines with people waiting are wrapped back and forth by rails, to encourage informal conversations, mixing of adults and children, thus reducing impatience and discouraging rowdiness. (In more recent years, Disney has done away with many lines, allowing people to register their places electronically and thus not have to wait until their turn comes up.)

The most important lesson of Disney planning is that almost all visitors to Disney World are quite contented with the way their visit is managed and comply voluntarily. Of course, people are not spending the rest of their lives in Disney World. We learn that crime prevention can be most effective when it is incidental and that a well-planned and well-managed environment serves many human purposes along with security.

A Huge Bus Terminal Turns the Corner

Elsewhere I have described the substantial crime and disorder in New York City's sprawling Port Authority Bus Terminal (Felson et al., 1996). It was impossible to reconstruct the building to incorporate what we now know about designing out crime. It already had evolved into a messy place to control. There already were more than 100 police officers assigned to the building, and they could not hope to control the place. Management hired various consultants, including a group called the Project for Public Spaces, which specializes in making public areas livable and usable.

In the early 1990s, major changes were made to regain this building for its intended purposes. To accomplish the task, it was necessary to gain control of the transients who stayed in the bus terminal day and night. Courts had recently ruled that people did not have a constitutional right to panhandle or linger in the terminal if they were not using it for transportation. Transportation agencies gained additional standing in law and public relations by
offering programs designed for these transients. The Port Authority created Operation Alternative, which offered transient people a good variety of social services. The other alternatives were to leave the building or go to jail. This is one of those cases in which the kinder and gender methods were assisted by the tougher and meaner ones.

Without knowing it, the Port Authority also applied the Crowe-Zahn Mixing Principle. It put safe activities in unsafe locations, moving pushcarts selling flowers into abandoned corners. It put unsafe activities into safe locations, concentrating ticket purchases in a central but not cluttered area, so people taking their wallets out would not have them snatched.

The bus terminal made many small but noteworthy physical modifications:

- It designed entrances and escalators to flow better and to move crowds of passengers through more quickly. This made it harder for illicit activities to keep control. Open entries replaced the dreary and dangerous ones.

The Port Authority

- Removed niches and corners. It filled or closed off empty spaces so no one could hang out there getting drunk or high. It narrowed or connected columns to deny illicit activities a place to hide or linger.
- Improved bus gates. That prevented people from living within or above them.
- Controlled emergency staircases and fire doors. This denied places for sleeping, injecting heroin, or other violations.
- Reduced the seating. With fewer places to hang out and less comfortable seats, long-term lounging was not easy in a facility supposed to take care of quick transit.
- Cleaned and shined the floors. This, plus ongoing maintenance and better lighting, kept the place bright and less fearsome.
- Removed the seedy stores. These were replaced with upscale chain stores that commuters would like.
- Designed away sex pickups. A new control room between the balcony and first floor blocked the view of those in search of partners for quick sex, ending the “meat rack.”

Restrooms were a particular problem in the bus terminal. They were sites for homosexual liaisons, thefts of luggage and wallets, and drug taking. Homeless people removed ceiling tiles and moved into the ceiling area, or just hung out, taking full baths in the large sinks and monopolizing facilities. There was no room for legitimate relief. To solve the problem, the Port

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**Exhibit 9.5 Making Washrooms That Discourage Crime, Port Authority Bus Terminal, New York City**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Washroom (Toilet) Characteristics</th>
<th>Before Changes</th>
<th>After Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ceiling panels</td>
<td>Removable</td>
<td>Secure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Stall doors</td>
<td>Tall, low to ground</td>
<td>Less so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Stall walls</td>
<td>Easy to write on</td>
<td>Resistant to writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ventilation</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Corner mirrors</td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sink size</td>
<td>Six users each</td>
<td>One user each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Fixture controls</td>
<td>By hand</td>
<td>Automatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Lighting</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Good, secure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Tile</td>
<td>Small squares, dark</td>
<td>Big, bright tiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Walls</td>
<td>Angled</td>
<td>Straight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Nooks</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Stores</td>
<td>Far from entry</td>
<td>Near entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Size</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Attendants</td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>Present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


NOTE: Changes were made in the early 1990s.

Authority renovated the washrooms (toilets) dramatically, as summed up in Exhibit 9.5. They removed ceiling panels and obstructions, designed stall doors so the number of legs could be counted, and designed in cleanliness and light. The rooms were enlarged and placed in areas with merchants near and natural surveillance.

Attendants were provided, the only change that required higher labor costs in the long run. Most important, the Port Authority provided much better management of its facilities, reinforcing the improved design, offering better services for the homeless, and generally keeping the flow of legitimate activities going.

These changes were accompanied by important reductions in the pornography business in the Times Square area. Although the bus terminal changes moved along somewhat faster, they reinforced each other. Robbery
and assault rates went down dramatically inside the bus terminal as well as in nearby police precincts. Even New York City saw improvements in its crime rates (see Kelling & Coles, 1996). The bus terminal did better. For example, with 1991 indexed at 100, robbery rates went down to 66 in 1992, 43 in 1993, and 30 in 1994. That is a 70% decline. The police data reveal serious declines in major and minor complaints.

The Port Authority showed a lot of ingenuity in doing public surveys to see whether customers noticed its efforts. Research staff rode random buses, passing out questionnaires to customers. Seated with nothing much else to do, most people filled out the form. Over the years, these forms showed major public recognition of greater cleanliness, fewer hassles with panhandlers and drunk, and a feeling of safety.

In the bus terminal, the Port Authority also has maintained nightly checks of the number of homeless people hanging out. In 1991, researchers counted an average of 151 homeless people per night. In 1992, this was down to 124. In 1993, it declined to 60, and in 1994, it was down to 30. Meanwhile, the numbers involved in the homeless programs sponsored by the Port Authority rose significantly.

**Designing a Low-Crime Subway System**

Nancy LaVigne (1996, 1997) offers a remarkable account of the design of the Washington, D.C., subway system. That system is almost the opposite of the old systems in America. Its stations are voluminous and have excellent “sight lines.” In other words, it is difficult for an offender to act or escape unseen. Entrances are visible, and pedestrians are funneled into spaces where they can provide mutual informal protection. The net effect is a remarkably low crime rate, even though the subway is located within a high-crime city. The main crime problems are in the parking lots outside the suburban stations, where cars are targets of crime.

**Designing Safer College and University Campuses**

Many American college and university campuses have a lot of crime. Cars, their contents, or accessories are stolen. Wallets are removed from offices, libraries, and dorms. Electronic equipment is taken. Sometimes personal attacks occur. Important research on college campus victimization by Bonnie Fisher and her colleagues at the University of Cincinnati (Fisher, 1999; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Fisher & Nasar, 1995; Fisher & Sloan, 1995; Fisher, Sloan, Cullen, & Lu, 1997) helps confirm the routine activity aspects of student and staff victimization and brings to mind the possibilities for designing out crime (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1994, 1998, 1999; O’Kane, Fisher, & Green, 1994; Zahm & Perrin, 1992).

Campus parking areas are especially subject to risk of property and even violent victimization. Here are some ways campus parking areas can be made more secure:

- Arrange for nighttime students and workers to have parking near building doors, but not so close that they block the view of the parking area from the building.
- At low-use times, close off unneeded parking areas or sections of large parking areas to concentrate cars and people for supervision.
- Require students and staff to sign up by name and have a sticker, even for nighttime or free areas.
- Get visitors in cars to sign in and give them time limits.
- Fence parking areas.
- Eliminate nooks and corners in parking structures.
- Build parking structures as slopes so people on foot will have clear sight lines.
- Make parking structure stairwells easy to see into.
- Orient buildings to face parking areas.
- Trim hedges and the lower limbs of trees around parking areas, and avoid thick foliage.
- Post signs and organize the flow of traffic so neither cars nor pedestrians will get lost.

The list includes cheaper and simpler items, such as trimming hedges, closing off unused parts of the parking areas, and focusing students and staff into a more limited area. It also includes ideas that would apply only to new construction, such as orienting buildings so people can see parking lots and sloping the parking structures for natural surveillance inside.

At the three universities where I have worked, students received lower parking priority than faculty and staff. That meant they often had to park in remote locations. For evening classes in urban universities, many of the staff have gone home anyway. Why can’t we let the evening students have safer locations? Similarly, why can’t we have more bicycle stands of the more effective variety and located in more secure places? For more secure parking of cars and bikes, it may be necessary to institute some rules for students and get them to comply. Perhaps they would do so if more security were part of the deal.
Conclusion

Many people have developed solid principles for designing places to deter crime. Such principles lead to specific advice that is useful to people in every walk of life. With these principles, crime can be reduced at any point. And there with a good deal of net success. In a book of professional evaluations for various types of crime prevention, these methods fared far better than others (Eck, 1997).

Society does not have to wait for trouble and pick up the pieces later. Designing out crime offers a kind of natural crime prevention, including (a) unplanned and informal crime prevention as it occurs naturally in everyday life and (b) planned crime prevention that imitates the former by skillfully designing human settings or activities so that crime opportunities are reduced unobtrusively and nonviolently. A central theme of crime prevention in this chapter and throughout this book is that crime prevention works more naturally when human activities are divided into smaller and more manageable chunks. These chunks can help provide social control and thus crime control. Responsibility to stop burglary can be linked to those in the immediate area. A school can be situated for more local visibility, and public housing can be designed or sized for better control. High-rise buildings can be arranged so that elderly people can protect their piece of the world. A shopping area, too, can be localized for more control. Activities also can be channeled for more informal and natural social control. Thus, chunking and channeling are the main tools of designing lower crime rates into everyday life.

Criminology in the past has swung between utopianism and hopelessness. I am arguing for something different: a nonutopian optimism. We can reduce crime here and there but not forever. We can make major achievements but have to keep striving. Designing and managing places to reduce crime is an important part of the formula; crime prevention goes beyond that, however, as the next chapter shows.

Main Points

1. Designing buildings and environments to prevent crime need not create a fortress. Try to control natural access, provide natural surveillance, foster territorial behavior, or some combination of these ideas. In general, make the space hospitable for legal activities and crime usually will go down significantly.

2. Place safe activities in unsafe locations and unsafe activities in safe locations. As places feel better for people, they also become more secure.

3. Crime prevention goes beyond physical design. A poorly managed place lets crime creep in, but good management lowers crime risk.

Projects and Challenges

Interview project. Talk to an architect or planner about whether crime enters into decisions and designs, or not.

Media project. Are the mass media at all aware of the possibilities for controlling crime with better design?

Map project. Map a park where some people seem to have driven out or scared off others. Who hangs out where and when? Examine how the park relates to the area surrounding it. How are the bushes and trees located and trimmed? What suggestions would you make for redesigning the park for wider and safer use?

Photo project. Take six pairs of photos of residential buildings to compare how they invite burglaries.

Web project. Find a design for a future project (e.g., residential area, high school, city building, commercial complex, etc.). Do you think this project will generate more crime or less? Do not be taken in by the pretty picture.
Situational Crime Prevention

Great Britain's Home Office is roughly equivalent to the U.S. Department of Justice. Within this agency was the small research unit, located during the 1970s at Romney House on Marsham Street, a 5-minute walk from Scotland Yard. There, in 1973, a 31-year-old research officer named Ron Clarke had just completed a study of why youths abscond from borstals (American translation: why juvenile delinquents run away from reform school).

The usual social science variables did not successfully explain why some boys ran away whereas others stayed put. But Clarke learned that most boys ran away on weekends, when staffing and supervision were light. Because these were not prisons and staff members were not guards, their influence was largely informal. Merely by their presence, adults could prevent a certain amount of trouble, including absconding. With these results, Clarke began to think of crime in general as the result of human situations and opportunities.

In 1976, with Pat Mayhew, A. Sturman, and J. M. Hough, Clarke published Crime as Opportunity, which explained many inexpensive ways to reduce crime by removing the opportunity to carry it out. Over time, this has become known as situational crime prevention. Clarke later headed the Research and Planning Unit of the Home Office. Under his leadership, several British researchers inside and outside the government created or discovered real-life crime prevention experiments that helped provide a major alternative theory of crime and practical guidelines for its prevention.

Clarke has encouraged or assisted others to study situational prevention examples with systematic data and to write up these studies. As it has evolved, situational crime prevention today includes at least 16 categories of prevention (Clarke, 1997c, 1999) and perhaps more than 100 case studies. Situational crime prevention seeks inexpensive means to reduce crime in three general ways:

1. Design safe settings. That includes the many methods presented in the previous chapter.
2. Organize effective procedures. That includes planning and carrying out the best management principles.
3. Develop secure products. That means making cars, radios, and other products more difficult to steal or abuse.

Indeed, the crime prevention repertoire is growing so greatly that it offers alternatives should one measure be politically or ethically problematic (see Pelson & Clarke, 1997b; von Hirsch, Garland, & Wakefield, 2000). Settings, procedures, and products cover a wide range of crime prevention ideas, which no one person could learn in an entire lifetime. With Clarke's multitude of examples, it is no longer possible to dismiss situational prevention as simply installing a better lock. Certainly, this field has produced many subtleties and surprises, dozens of books and monographs, and hundreds of articles. It is harder for intellectuals to dismiss a field after several of them have written books about it (e.g., Sullivan, 2000; von Hirsch, Garland, & Wakefield, 2000). British Home Office researchers have contributed much of the systematic crime prevention measures now available. Their work has been supplemented by studies in the Netherlands, Sweden, and Canada, often in dialogue with the British. Sadly, the American representation has been sparse, yet Clarke moved to the United States to become a professor. It is increasingly evident that situational crime prevention offers society the best chance for a quick and inexpensive way to reduce crime slice by slice. Thus Clarke not only provides specific examples but also principles for inventing your own crime prevention measures.

Situational Prevention and Crime Science

Clarke and his associates adopted the following policy:

- Do not worry about academic theories. Just go out and gather facts about crime from nature herself (i.e., by observing, interviewing offenders, etc.). (This is not to say you should throw all your education to the wolves. It merely tells you that science has to gather facts and learn from them.)
- Focus on very specific slices of crime, such as vandalism against telephones or soccer violence. Even the crime of "vandalism" would be far too broad!
- Do not try to improve human character. You are certain to fail.
- Try to block crime in a practical, natural, and simple way, at low social and economic cost.
- Do small-scale experiments, especially looking for natural environments (see Chapter 11) to study each slice of the crime prevention puzzle.
Use very simple statistics and charts that let you see each comparison quite directly.

Perhaps we could sum up his approach in three words: "Don’t get fancy.”

Clarke sometimes claims that he really has no interest in theory, that his only goal is to find practical ways to prevent crime. This surprises many conventional criminologists, but being practical poses a very good discipline on us all. Make it work! If it does not work, it probably is not very good science in the first place. If it does work, science will improve, too.

Another reason that I consider situational prevention a contribution to crime science is that it helps us understand offenders, targets, guardians, and their convergences. Clarke seeks to accomplish prevention by making each criminal act appear

- Difficult
- Risky
- Unrewarding
- Inexcusable

That breaks down crime into components that can then be explored—exactly what science is all about. The last of the four is closely linked to “neutralization theory,” which considers how offenders excuse their own actions. (Removing these rationalizations or excuses helps prevent crimes. Supermarkets often train their employees in the different types of theft in order to remove the idea that “minor pilfering” is not stealing.)

Preventing Property Crime

A good deal of this chapter presents specific examples of successful situational prevention. I have selected these to tell a story. I include crime prevention methods that were discovered accidentally, those involving criminologists, and others involving people who never heard of situational crime prevention but did it anyway. Whether planned or not, people have acquired a variety of crime prevention experience well worth sharing.

 Trouble on Double-Deck Buses

Our illustration of situational prevention begins with the problem of vandalism against Britain’s traditional red double-deck buses. The Home Office researchers (Clarke, 1978) learned that most of the vandalism was on the upper deck, usually in the back row, where supervision was least likely to occur.

Exhibit 10.1 Phone-Related Crime and Situational Solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phone Crime Problem</th>
<th>Technical Solution</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obscene phone calls</td>
<td>Caller ID</td>
<td>Clarke, 1997a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug transactions</td>
<td>Only call out</td>
<td>Natarajan, Clarke, &amp; Johnson, 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraudulent long-distance from pay phones</td>
<td>Programmed to exclude common frauds</td>
<td>Bichler &amp; Clarke, 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stolen or cloned cell phones</td>
<td>Designed to fail when stolen</td>
<td>Clarke, Kemper, &amp; Wyckoff, 2001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They also learned that the traditional British bus conductor had a major role in preventing vandalism. A bus conductor would ascend the stairs to the upper deck to collect fares and thus serve as a guardian against the crime of vandalism.

Because some companies had removed the conductor to save money, whereas other companies had not, this was a natural experiment. Those buses with conductors had less vandalism, but they also had more assaults on conductors. This is an instance of how crime prevention can sometimes backfire, solving one crime but leading to another. This example also establishes that situational crime prevention is far from obvious, sometimes producing unexpected results.

Correcting the Criminal Use of Telephones

Ronald Clarke and associates are developing a growing literature on the criminal side of telephones and what to do about it (Exhibit 10.1). They have shown that obscene phone calls can be thwarted by caller identification services; drug transactions are impaired by pay phones that only call out; fraudulent international calls from pay phones are impossible when phones exclude common paths for the fraud; and stolen or cloned cell phones can be designed to fail for anybody but the owner. Clarke, Kemper, and Wyckoff (2001) documented more than $1.3 billion in cell phone fraud losses during 1995 to 1996. Six technical changes were designed to cut off fraud quickly:

1. Computer profiling to detect strange call patterns
2. Personal identification numbers (PINs)
3. Precall validation by computers
4. Operator checks
5. Radio wave checks
6. Encrypted checks of each phone

These adjustments resulted in a 97% cut in cell phone fraud.

Telephones are important facilitators in drug transactions. Mangal Natarajan, Ronald Clarke, and Mathieu Belanger, in ongoing work, are paying close attention to the use of telephones for doing illegal work. Some localities have thwarted outdoor retail drug dealing by having pay phones
- Moved inside of businesses for extra supervision
- Programmed to call out but not receive calls
- Removed entirely

**Car Theft Is Preventable**

The interesting case of steering wheel locks preventing car theft already was offered in the Chapter 8 discussion on displacement. Additional information about thwarting motor vehicle theft is found in several studies (Brown, 1995; Brown & Billing, 1996; Southall & Ekblom, 1985). Clarke and Harris (1992) listed numerous technical changes that the auto industry can contribute to help reduce auto theft. Several of these are already common in cars today. Many cars have better security locks for steering columns, doors, and the hood. Door buttons today are more difficult to pull up with a clothes hanger. Window glass is often harder to break. Many models make it difficult to leave your keys in the ignition. Smart keys, elimination of external keyholes, and electronic immobilization after break-ins are no longer confined to the most expensive models. Manufacturers have improved some of those models listed as most stolen by the Highway Loss Data Institute (see Exhibit 2.3). Tremendous strides in car tape player security have combined with lower fence values, thereby interfering with their theft. The time it takes to steal a car has increased, and the pure amateur has more problems than ever. Brown and Billing (1996) show that more secure cars lead to less theft in Britain, and the American auto industry experience shows that cars with disastrous theft problems can be redesigned for crime prevention and their good names restored. By the time you read this, a new design will have been developed, probably for a model that got into the national media as thieves’ favorite.

On the other hand, many new cars have expensive airbags, which are quickly pried out and sold for about $1,000 for installation in cars at repair shops, and computers that provide new targets. This illustrates what Ekblom refers to as an “arms race” between offenders and forces of crime control. Crime is never permanently prevented, but neither do we get anywhere against crime when we do not try.

**Beyond the automobile industry, inexpensive technology already exists to put a personal identification number into every new and valuable electronic item, such as a television set or videocassette recorder. The product would not work outside your home unless you entered the right number. It would lose its value to a thief. It also should be possible to program something within your electrical system so an appliance removed from your home would not work elsewhere without punching in the code. Industry could make a major contribution to society by designing and selling more products that go kaput when stolen (see Felson, 1997).**

**A Serendipitous Finding About Motorcycle Theft**

American motorcyclists keep complaining about having to put on their helmets and campaigning to stop helmet laws. If they only knew. Wherever helmet safety laws were enacted and enforced, thefts of motorcycles went down greatly.

To understand why, note that many motorcycle thefts are for joyriding and occur on the spur of the moment. The likely offender usually does not have a big motorcycle helmet with him at the time he sees a shiny motorcycle. When Germany enacted and enforced its motorcycle helmet law, thefts went down and stayed down, with no indication of displacement to other vehicle theft (Mayhew, Clarke, & Elliot, 1989).

We see that significant crime prevention can occur completely without planning. Even a very simple change in the law can have a great impact. Because wearing a helmet is highly visible behavior, it provides tangible evidence that the law is being followed and that the motorcycle probably is not stolen.

**Saving Billions on Retail Theft**

Not all prevention occurs with across-the-board laws enacted centrally. Some crime prevention requires more “personal service.” For example, a retail store has to take into account its particular doors, layout, pedestrian flow, and hours of operation in planning for prevention. Good management and crime prevention go hand in hand within retail stores. A well-managed and well-organized retail store will not only have less shoplifting and employee theft but will usually enjoy more sales and better morale among employees.

Retail stores use many prevention methods. More frequent inventories and audits help to discourage employee theft. Requiring that all merchandise be bagged and then stapled shut makes it harder for a customer to slip some-
thing unpaid for into his or her bag. Designing exit routes carefully encourages people to pay for their merchandise as they walk out. Tags that beep when not deactivated discourage shoplifters. Electronic systems for detecting merchandise are increasingly available at low prices, paying for themselves in loss reduction within a year or two. Robert DiLunardo’s (1997) evaluation shows that tags can be tremendously successful in reducing thefts from stores. Barry Masuda (1993, 1997) shows that employee theft also can be reduced.

Retailers can easily lose thousands of dollars in merchandise out the door. In a few seconds, thieves can grab stacks of expensive garments and run to a waiting car. The well-managed store combines comprehensive planning with situational prevention to prevent such losses. For the back door, it is essential to schedule deliveries carefully so people do not take away more than they deliver. For the front door, a clever merchant learned to alternate the directions of hangers on the rack so they lock when grabbed. This small but ingenious idea is clearly superior to letting people steal and then waiting for the criminal justice system to find and punish them.

Our knowledge about retail crime has increased greatly in recent years (see Beck & Willis, 1995, 1999; Clarke, 1996; Gill, 1994; Hayes, 1997a, 1997b). A broader field of business crime analysis is offered in two new collections of essays (Felson & Clarke, 1997a; Felson & Peier, 1998). As you read these sources, you will realize that crime prevention should not simply be left to the public sector, although public officials can do an excellent job of preventing crime when they put their minds to it.

Refusing to Accept Subway Graffiti

For many years, the subway trains of New York City were covered inside and out with graffiti and surely were among the ugliest anywhere. Moreover, the transit system was in chaos, ridership was dropping, and employee morale was low. Many efforts and policies had failed to correct the problems.

Then David Gunn became president of the New York City Transit Authority and announced the Clean Car Program. The aim of the program was to clean off graffiti immediately. Graffiti painters thus would get no satisfaction from their work traveling all over town. New York City’s subway cars never returned to the graffiti levels before the program (see Sloan-Howitt & Kelling, 1997). One lesson of the program: Find out exactly what potential offenders want from crime and take it away from them.

Another subway system far distant from New York City prevented graffiti in fixed locations using a very different plan. The Swedish government calls the Stockholm Metro the world’s longest art gallery. More than half of its stations have artwork, including mosaics, paintings, engravings, and bas-reliefs.

They may not win aesthetic fame, but the artists knew how to beat the graffiti painters with textures and colors. Each of these techniques was used: multicolors, surfaces that are either unusually rough or highly polished, and walls that were either sharply uneven or blocked with metal grills.

Art Theft Appreciation

Art theft is surprisingly common in New York City art galleries. Truc-Nhu Ho (1998) studied 229 such thefts from 45 art dealers. Although the statistics are limited, they show that art thefts fit patterns (see also Conklin, 1994, on routine activities and art theft). Art thieves

- Detest abstract art
- Avoid galleries with security checks
- Hate galleries near active nightlife
- Turn up their noses at large objects d’art
- Appreciate realistic paintings and scupltures
- Prefer galleries on the ground floor on quiet streets
- Resonate with art that has price tags affixed

The discerning art dealer should study art through the eyes of thieves.

Putting Lighting Into Focus

It is not so simple to say “Turn on the lights.”

In the 1970s, it was very common for cities to fight crime by scattering streetlights without plan. Consider the logic for why this failed (Pease, 1999):

- Criminal activity is concentrated at or near specific places or blocks (Eck & Weisburd, 1998).
- Streetlight campaigns have often led to scattering placement without plan.

Totally unplanned lighting had little effect on crime. As a result, some analysts went to an extreme position, claiming that lighting cannot reduce crime. Ken Pease (1999) refers to these people as the “disciples of darkness.”

Yet Painter and Farrington (1997) produced a rigorous study, with victim surveys showing a 41% reduction in crime in the lighting-enhanced area, compared to a 15% reduction in the control area. We have to conclude that lighting has a major possible contribution to reducing crime.
At the same time, lighting can *increase* crime in some cases. Lights can help a burglar see what he is doing. Lights can draw students back to school for after-hours vandalism. Lights can glare in the eyes of victims or guardians. Lights can make a better hangout for getting drunk and becoming disorderly. So do not place lights without thinking. Lighting can be highly effective in reducing crime when it is *clearly focused on the problem at hand* (Painter & Farrington, 1997; Painter & Tilley, 1999; Pease, 1999).

In an excellent intellectual and factual review of the topic, Pease (1999) noted that a number of cities with strategic improvement of lighting clearly showed decreased crime rates. He also worked out how to think about lighting and to disaggregate the mechanisms whereby it might affect crime. Exhibit 10.2 shows his 17 different ways in which lighting can affect crime. The exhibit explains why lighting can either lead to more crime or less. It also shows that lighting can, surprisingly, affect crime in the daytime. For example, lights can give cues, even in daytime, that the area is not good for crime. It can keep people from moving out of the area, with fewer “for sale” signs to assist burglars in finding empty places to break into. After reading Exhibit 10.2, I defy anyone to defend the position that the relationship between street lighting and crime is not a sophisticated enough topic for those of us in higher education to study.

**Music and Control**

People are not only influenced by what they see but also by what they hear. Young people generally do not like classical music and will go away when it is played. That’s far better than nightsticks and imprisonment. Music is also suitable for calming people down, as wise disc jockeys well know. When the music stops, crowds in bars are rowdiest. The type of dancing also has a major influence on their behavior, with wilder dancing making people bump and, sometimes, fight. Yet the topic of music and crime has been little studied. Psychology students with expertise in perception and human factors are especially likely to break new ground in explaining how music provides cues that affect criminal behavior.

**Situational Degeneration**

Not only can crime situations be improved, but they can also be exacerbated. Thus, a store manager can remove crime control measures and cause shoplifting to rise. A homeowner can let well-trimmed bushes grow up, to the benefit of local burglars. A car manufacturer can cut costs by putting in cheaper steering wheel locks. One of the challenges of crime science is to put situational prevention and *situational degeneration* within the same intellectual framework. There is no better place to start than the study of violence.

**Exhibit 10.2 Lighting Affects Crime in Many Ways**

A. How More Lights Might Reduce Crimes After Dark

1. Get people to spend late time in the yard or garden, serving as guardians.
2. Encourage people to walk more after dark, serving as guardians.
3. Make offenders more visible to guardians.
4. Make police on patrol more visible to offenders.

B. How More Lights Might Increase Crimes After Dark

1. Draw people away from home, assisting burglars.
2. Give offenders a better look at potential targets of crime.
3. Assist offenders in checking for potential guardians against crime.
4. Get nearby areas to seem darker, helping offenders to escape into them.

C. How More Lights Might Reduce Crimes in Daytime

1. Put new guardians on the street, those installing and maintaining lights.
2. Show official commitment; local citizens then cooperate in crime prevention.
3. Give cues—even in daytime—that the area is not good for crime.
4. Provide a talking point for citizens, who then get to know one another.
5. Keep people from moving out, with fewer “for sale” signs to assist burglars.
6. Apprehend more offenders after dark, with fewer left for daytime offending.

D. How More Lights Might Increase Crimes in Daytime

1. Make it easy to pretend to be an electrical or maintenance employee.
2. Provide more nighttime fun that carries over to daytime drunkenness.
3. Set up new nighttime hangouts that might spill over as daytime trouble spots.


**Preventing Violent Crime**

It is quite a mistake to think that situational prevention applies only to property crime. Understanding situational features of violence has grown considerably
in recent years. The greatest source of progress stems from recognizing that violence is goal oriented and responds to cues from physical settings. As Chapter 3 explained, a book by James Tedeschi and my brother, Richard Felson (1994), shows us that all violence is goal oriented. A person might use violence (a) to get others to comply with wishes, (b) to restore justice as he perceives it, or (c) to assert and protect his self-image or identity. (As we shall see, these goals often make violence highly amenable to situational prevention as well.) A simple robbery starts out with the robber demanding your money and using or threatening force to get it. The robber is simply getting you to comply with his wishes—receiving your money without an argument. But if you challenge the robber in front of his co-offender, he may harm you to assert and protect his own identity (the third reason for violence). That is why it is best not to have a big mouth when someone is pointing a gun at you (see situational degeneration, above). It’s also best not to go around giving people grievances against you; they may decide to restore justice. Fights between drunken young males usually occur as attempts to assert and protect identity. Road rage is often an effort to meet the second goal, restoring justice. Domestic violence can meet all three purposes (see R. Felson, in press).

Even with predatory violence, although generally oriented toward the first purpose—gaining compliance—offenders will sometimes seek to protect identity or restore justice. For example, youths angry at the store owner who yelled at them may rob him not only for loot but also to retaliate and punish. Remember, all these evaluations are based on the offender’s viewpoint. To understand violent or nonviolent crime, we cannot be distracted by our own moral outrage, or by the legal code, or by objective facts about what a person ought to think of others. If the guy in the bar hit you because he thinks you insulted him, the fact that he heard you wrong is entirely beside the point.

You might readily guess that alcohol plays a major role in violence. It gives people big mouths and big ears. Big mouths help people make aggressive statements that provoke counterattacks and restoration of justice. Big mouths also help people to provoke others into fights. Alcohol makes bigger cars by getting people to hear things that were not said. Managing alcohol is part of preventing violence.

**Sports Events and Revelry**

Speaking of alcohol, British football (soccer) has an unfortunate pattern of serious—and sometimes fatal—violence. Many fans arrive hours before a game, get drunk, and then commit acts of violence, many against fans of the visiting team. Because most of those involved in the violence do not own cars and therefore take buses to the games, the government arranged for these buses to arrive at the game later than in the past, allowing only a few minutes to buy a ticket and no time to get drunk. The effect was a reduction in football violence (Clarke, 1983).

Sweden also has a problem with alcohol-related violence, especially on one day each year. Midsummer’s Eve (usually June 21) is the longest day of the year. In much of Sweden, this day has 24 hours of light. It is the most important holiday of the year. Swedes are usually reserved people, but they make an exception on Midsummer’s Eve. A common behavior pattern is to get drunk and run wild. People also start bonfires, which sometimes get out of hand and burn more than intended. Moreover, many assaults occur on Midsummer’s Eve. The crowds are far larger and wilder than anything police can handle, so deterrence loses its credibility. A more sensible policy was planned by Swedish authorities: They provided bonfires in designated and advertised locations and sought to channel the holiday spirit into these settings. Their efforts paid off by reducing assaults and other illegal behavior (see Björk, Knutsson, & Kuhlborn, 1992).

Compared with events like football games in Britain, American sports venues usually are not bad. The probable reason is that American teams try to sell a lot of tickets to families and business groups. This results in people of mixed ages and both sexes. Even in hockey, with its violence on the ice, there is reasonable peace in the stands. We all know of exceptions, but the rule remains.

American sports venues try to prevent people from bringing in their own bottles. This probably is so that they can sell more drinks, but they also use security justifications. They generally sell soft drinks and beer to the larger crowd, with hard drinks sold only within the corporate boxes. Beer sales are cut off later in the game, when some fans are a bit too drunk. Security people with binoculars keep an eye on the crowd to see if there are fights or if fans are getting dangerous. They then cut off the beer sales in that section or even start watering down the beer. Because beer is highly profitable to management, cutting off beer sales reduces proceeds, but it clearly enhances safety. Watering the beer gets the heavy drinkers to complain, but management is glad to give them their money back and have the drinking dwindle.

To prevent conflicts and fights when people are going out of a stadium, the strategy is to keep people moving, whether in cars or on foot, so they have little time to linger or to get mad. A well-managed stadium looks for bottle-necks where crowds cannot move, relieving the traffic problem quickly as a service to customers and as a way to prevent trouble.
Cruising

In many European and Hispanic nations, young people walk around the center of town on weekend evenings. The United States version of this activity is cruising in cars. Cruising creates traffic jams and interferes with business. The automobile spreads adolescent activity over more space and makes it harder to prevent trouble; thus, vandalism and assaults become more serious (see Felson, Berends, Richardson, & Veno, 1997; Wikstrom, 1995). Many U.S. cities have enacted special cruising ordinances or enforce traffic and parking ordinances more heavily in trying to control cruising.

As explained by authors John Bell and Barbara Burke (1992), the city of Arlington, Texas, found that cruising by more than 1,000 cars was creating a major traffic jam on its main street for hours at a time. Ambulances could not get to hospitals, and little else in the way of normal city business could happen. Conventional traffic control methods were doing little good.

City Councilman Ken Groves learned that teenagers wanted two things: an unstructured and unsupervised environment in which to mingle, and restrooms. He speculated that if these were provided, most teenagers would act reasonably. A "cruising committee" was formed to link local agencies, businesses, the University of Texas at Arlington, and teenage representatives.

The committee devised a plan for the city to lease a large parking lot from the university and open it to cruisers on weekend nights while providing unobtrusive police protection, portable restrooms, and cleanup the next morning. Within two weekends, the new cruising area was in use by 1,000 parked or circling cars. The program channeled cruising into a smaller and safer area and pleased both teenagers and adults, while providing the gentle controls of a few police officers on the side.

The lesson of the program is that a crime problem may be related to another problem; solve the other problem, and the crime problem takes care of itself. In this case, the problem was to provide youths with an outlet for a social need in the context of the local situation. When this was done, the related crime problems dissipated.

Foul Play in College Water Polo

Many situational prevention measures emerge entirely by accident. An interesting example has to do not with a "crime" as such but with rule violations in the game of water polo. One of my former students was a water polo coach at the collegiate level and explained to me quite frankly how to cheat. When a member of the other team is about to get the ball or move toward the goal, simply put your hand inside his bathing suit, and he cannot proceed. This common form of foul play happens entirely under water, where the referees often fail to see it. The incentives to foul are strong and the controls are weak.

Water polo play got quite a bit cleaner some years ago. This did not happen because of more punishment or because players underwent moral regeneration; rather, new chemicals made the pool water less murky, so rule violations were easier to detect. As pools got cleaner, water polo play got cleaner.

Barhopping and Bar Problems

On any given weekend night, more than 6,000 people from the surrounding towns and suburbs would go into Geelong, Australia, to socialize and drink alcohol. Some groups, drunk on the streets, would commit thefts or get into fights with one another. A typical pattern was this:

1. Drive to a packaged liquor outlet to purchase beer.
2. Drink beer in the car for an initial effect.
3. Go to the nearest bar for special prices.
4. Move to the next bar for its specials.
5. Go back to the car and drink more.

At this point, some people would use empty bottles as missiles to throw at people or property. The bars not only involved males in these efforts but also gave free drinks to young females to attract males. As the situation got worse, there were attacks on pub personnel. Bars worried about the money they lost by offering so many specials.

The police decided to do something and got the bar owners or managers together with the liquor board. They formulated "The Accord," a set of policies to discourage barhopping and other alcohol-related problems. It had more than a dozen provisions, but the most important were these:

- Cover charges to enter bars after 11:00 P.M.
- Denial of free reentry after someone exits
- No free drinks or promotions
- No extended happy hours
- A narrower drink price range
- Enforcement against open containers on the street

The Accord was a success in removing most of the street drinking and pub hopping, while reducing the violence and other crime problems in the central city. I evaluated The Accord with three Australian colleagues (see Felson,
Berends, Richardson, & Veno, 1997). We were very impressed by what it accomplished.

Other important insights are provided by Ross Homel, Marg Hauritz, Gillian McIwain, Richard Wortley, and Russell Carvalho (1997) in their study of drunkenness and violence around nightclubs in Surfer’s Paradise, an Australian tourist resort. Tourists generate a lot of crime victimization and offending alike (see Pizam & Mansfield, 1996; Stangeland, 1995). The problems and policies that Homel’s group discusses, however, can apply to any entertainment district. Among the alcohol policy features considered were

- Reduction of binge drinking incentives, such as happy hours
- Low- and nonalcohol drinks and lower prices for them
- Staff policies to avoid admitting intoxicated persons
- Food and snacks available more of the time
- Varied clientele, not just hard drinkers
- Smaller glasses or drinks not as strong
- Strategies for dealing with problem customers
- Security training

The result was a substantial reduction in drunkenness and violence around the nightclubs.

Perhaps it is not surprising that a surgeon would be most aware of the ugly injuries from bar glasses. Jonathan Shepherd and his colleagues (see Shepherd, Brickley, Gallagher, & Walker, 1994) have written about the injuries reported by bar staff, classified by different types of glass. A straight-sided 1-pint glass produced 52 of 78 incidents. Only one of these injuries came from a splinted plastic glass. Tankards led to fewer injuries than straight-sided glasses. Half-pint glasses led to fewer injuries, but those drinking half a pint probably were not getting as drunk. Shepherd and colleagues (Shepherd, Hugget, & Kidner, 1993) also carried out an interesting experiment. By collecting samples of different glass types and smashing them, they learned how nasty a weapon each produces. They found clearly that tankards are more difficult to smash and that tempered beer glasses break into a pile of relatively harmless chunks.

Making sure that bars use safer glasses is an example of what Clarke (1997b) calls “controlling crime facilitators.” By paying close attention to what tools or weapons facilitate crime, we acquire more tools for preventing crime.

The general potential for regulating drinking environments to reduce crime has been discussed in an essay by Tim Stockwell (1997). In addition, Stuart Macintyre and Ross Homel (1997) offer a remarkable study titled “Danger on the Dance Floor.” In examining behavior and accidents within discos and other nightclubs, they observed brushing, bumping, knocking, spilling drinks, pushing, shoving, hitting, and fighting. They found that the density of activities within nightclubs and the indoor design—including the location of tables and stools, pillars, walls, and bars, as well as the presence of disk jockeys—was very important. This is a good example of how situational prevention and crime prevention through environmental design intersect.

### Preventing Drunk Driving

Liquor policies influence not only intentional violence but also drunk driving and any accidental damage to property or people. H. Laurence Ross offers a brilliant analysis (1992) of how liquor policies and abuses are linked to drunk driving and subsequent deaths in his book *Confronting Drunk Driving*. Ross offers many surprising facts:

- Most drunk drivers involved in accidents or fatalities have never been arrested before for drunk driving. That means that “getting tough” on drunk drivers has its limits for preventing deaths.
- Upping the punishment levels has not accomplished anything in the past and probably will not accomplish anything in the future.
- Modern American society is organized so that it is natural to drive to the bar and back, and hence to drive with a blood alcohol level over the legal limit.

We can prevent drunk driving deaths and injuries only with more focused policies. These include making roads and cars safer to prevent accidents or reduce the injury from them, or to use the regulatory system to get bars to stop serving people who are already drunk.

Australian and Scandinavian efforts to reduce drunk driving have been quite successful in many cases. These include random breath tests on highways (see Homel, 1993). In New South Wales, they have learned to give dramatic publicity to their breath testing, not only with media coverage but also by placing at the side of the road a large testing vehicle with a big sign reading “Booze Bus.” Even the license plates have these words, helping to get people talking and reminding one another not to mix drinking and driving. The public responds quite well to these efforts and tends to reduce its drunk driving, without many arrests and with no draconian punishment.

American efforts to raise drinking ages and make them consistent among states also have produced a major decline in drunk driving and related injuries and deaths. American society has long had in place rules or laws against drink-
ing in the streets and serving alcohol to those already drunk, and limiting the size and conditions of bars. Of course, they are not always enforced.

Preventing Fraud

We are increasingly recognizing that situational prevention can help reduce fraud. Here are some important illustrations:

- **Bad checks.** Knutsson and Kuhlhorn (1997) found that easy check cashing makes for easy check fraud. When rules were tightened, that crime declined significantly (just as Tremblay, 1986, found in Canada). When banks refused to guarantee bad checks, the merchants stood to lose money and started to be careful before they would hand out cash.

- **Misleading information.** Kuhlhorn (1997) studied how people cheat the government by filling in conflicting information on different forms. Computer comparisons were made to reveal fraud, and the public was told about this development. As a result, people cheated much less often.

- **Illicit refunds.** Many people defraud retail stores by stealing goods, convincing the store they were bought there, then getting a cash refund. Challinger (1997) showed that new rules for refunds made this type of fraud more difficult to accomplish.

- **Employee falsification.** Most organizations that reimburse employees require original receipts to discourage fraudulent medical claims or expense reimbursements.

- **Embezzling employees.** Well-designed auditing and accounting systems make it harder for one person to steal money from an organization. For example, when more than one person signs each large check and when independent auditors go over the books, less fraud occurs. Some people still conspire to commit fraud, but the whole idea of designing out fraud is to require conspirators for crime to be committed and hope one of them will lose his or her nerve.

- **Construction corruption.** Racketeering in the New York City construction industry combines fraud with extortion, bribery, theft, sabotage, and bid rigging. The Organized Crime Task Force, directed by Ron Goldstock, involved James Jacobs of New York University and several others to analyze organized crime’s involvement in construction. Their recommendations were to change the structure and industry characteristics generating the motivation, ability, and opportunity to act corruptly. They invented the ugly term “racketeering susceptibility,” but more important, they realized that the very structure of the industry was creating racketeering opportunities. By altering that structure, organized crime could be made less likely to succeed (Organized Crime Task Force [OCTF], 1988).

Even though the term “situational prevention” might not be used, business and government organizations are well aware that fraud and embezzlement are widespread and that it is possible to design management and procedures to prevent them.

Preventing Repeat Victimization

Queen Elizabeth bestowed the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.) on criminologist Ken Pease for his contributions to crime prevention. Pease (1992; see also Farrell, 1995) had demonstrated that a very large share of crime victimizations were “repeats.” People victimized once are especially likely to be victimized again.

Pease figured out how to focus prevention on those already victimized. When someone’s home was burglarized a first time, a prevention team would zero in on that particular unit to prevent a repetition. The team enlisted the residents of the five or six homes nearest the burglarized unit to keep an eye on it, a “cocoon” neighborhood watch. The unit also helped improve locks and doors, and otherwise reduce the risk. Those housing units in the experimental group saw declining risk of burglary. The unit’s success was far greater than for the usual methods, such as the unfocused and ineffective neighborhood watch. Pease’s focus on reducing repeat victimization is increasingly applied to other offenses (Anderson & Pease, 1997; Farrell, 1995). Its advantages include:

- Efficiently reducing crime at low cost
- Avoiding the usual political controversies
- Assisting the worst victims
- Helping everyone think more clearly about crime

Students of crime should take note of major American efforts by the National Institute of Justice to prevent repeat victimization on this side of the Atlantic. By the time this book is out, results of these studies might be available.

Preventing the Sale of Stolen Goods

As explained in Chapter 5, markets for stolen goods are extremely important. Mike Sutton (1998) elaborated the “market reduction” approach to prevent theft and burglary. Detectives have long known to watch pawnshops, jewelry
hardliners and softheads. Its idealism is not utopian because it has found practical ways to do the right thing. Most often it applies to a narrow slice of crime, but sometimes it can be mass-produced effectively. Exhibit 10.3 shows how the process of control proceeds in six steps. First, we try to build human character. Then, we design secure environments, as Chapter 9 explained. Next, we use other means to remove crime situations, as this chapter considered. Then, we make arrests and process suspects, try and convict offenders, and punish and rehabilitate. I have made it quite clear that our most realistic chance for reducing crime occurs during steps B and C—designing secure environments and removing crime situations. In other words, situational prevention (broadly speaking) offers us our best chance to minimize crime, without interfering substantially or negatively with people’s lives. As the repertory of prevention methods continues to grow, we have a means for slicing away at crime.

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Main Points

1. Situational crime prevention is highly focused on preventing crime here and now. It is practical, not utopian. It reduces the inducements to commit crime by making crime targets less rewarding while increasing the risks, efforts, and guilt associated with crime.

2. Situational prevention generally does not displace crime elsewhere. Indeed, crime prevention often leads to a “diffusion of benefits,” reducing crime even beyond the immediate setting.

Projects and Challenges

Interview project. (a) Talk to a security person in the retail field. Ask specific questions about each type of situational prevention. What does he or she prefer, use, or ignore? (b) During off-duty or slack hours, interview a bartender or barmaid about specific methods used to prevent conflict from developing and escalating. Ask about shutting off those drinking too much, how to refuse those who are underage, and how to calm people down. What does he or she do when someone spills a drink?

Media project. (a) Check out the magazines in the security field. What products are advertised there, and what situational prevention methods are left...
(b) Find out whether any car manufacturer has made major efforts to reduce a certain model's vulnerability to theft. Then use the Highway Loss Data Institute pamphlets to see whether its theft rates really declined relative to other models.

Map project. Map out a shopping mall or mini-mall. Where are its weak spots and strong spots from a situational crime prevention viewpoint?

Photo project. Devise a low-cost situational crime prevention method to make a college dormitory more secure from crime. Cover as many types of situational prevention as you can, using photos to strengthen your argument.

Web project. Find the websites of several security companies. What do they sell? What is hard to find or neglected? Are they overselling their capabilities, in light of what you know about crime prevention? Is there a cheaper or simpler way to reduce the crime in question?

Note
1. Some people make moral and political attacks on situational prevention, but any techniques raising ethical controversies are greatly outnumbered by the ones that are innocuous but effective.

11

Crime Science and Everyday Life

The ten previous chapters explained how crime fits and follows everyday life. I explored elements of a criminal act, convergences among these elements, and offender decisions about whether to commit a crime or not. I examined youth activities leading toward crime, how stolen goods relate to a larger economy, “white-collar” crime, crime prevention through environmental design, and situational prevention. These parts fit into a coherent whole. The job of this chapter is to explain that whole and how you as a student can take it into the future.

A Tangible Theory of Crime

I have been working toward a single theory of crime, based on three principles:
1. The offender seeks to gain quick pleasure and avoid imminent pain.
2. The routine activities of everyday life set the stage for these illegal choices.
3. Inventions, by altering daily routines, force crime to change.

These principles draw from diverse scholars, including urban planners, anthropologists, geographers, political scientists, economists, psychologists, sociologists, and business specialists. Despite various points of departure, all roads lead to a single place: Crime is a tangible activity depending on other activities in everyday life. The experience of practitioners in public and private sectors leads to exactly the same spot.

Crime Fits a Larger System of Knowledge

At almost every turn, we find our studies of crime linked to larger scientific efforts. Tedeschi and Felson (1994) explain violent encounters from general principles of social psychology. Cornish and Clarke (1986) apply to offenders a limited rationality relating to most human endeavors. Crowe and Zahn (1994) show us that sound urban design makes settings safer, too. Rengert