Crime Prevention and Security Management

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Retail Crime

International Evidence and Prevention

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This book is dedicated to all those working to reduce crime in retail environments.

Preface

The idea for this book was born at the 2016 autumn seminar on 'Retail crime: international evidence and prevention', that took place at the School of Architecture and the Built Environment, KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, Sweden. Almost all authors of this book were present in that meeting that was funded by The Swedish Retail and Wholesale Council and British Society of Criminology; a gathering that brought together scholars and practitioners to discuss issues of retail crime and its prevention. There is no doubt that the seminar was fundamental to stress the need for more research in this field in Scandinavia but also to make the current experiences from elsewhere available to a wider audience. Speakers and participants of the seminar all shared the same interest, namely the nature of crimes that happen in retail environments and developing innovative and multi-disciplinary methods of preventing those crimes.

Several contributors to this book point out how dynamic the modern retail sector has become. They illustrate how changes in society create new opportunities for crime as well as new challenges to combat them. The most evident change seen is the amount of time people spend shopping and enjoying retail environments. This development has demanded not only more stores with safe and pleasant environments (in particular street segments or shopping malls) but has also imposed transformations in the fabric of the cities. These include new parking lots, roads and

additional services, particularly public transportation. Whilst these environments serve a variety of social functions, the majority of them share common vulnerabilities as crime attractors and/or generators, with effects that often go beyond those particular environments.

Equally important are the more recent changes in retail triggered by technology. New crime opportunities are generated by this digital retail landscape composed of, for instance, self-scan checkouts, mobile scanning and the buy-online-pick-up-in-store-system. In order to combat these threats, novel technological remedies (electronic surveillance, tagging of all sorts) are sold in the market as commodities, often at a similar pace to the products and systems that they intended to protect.

Finally, as several chapters of this book show, the formation of criminal organizations devoted to retail and cargo crime are also taking place. Some of these criminal organizations act beyond national borders and even continents. These illegal activities take a variety of forms including thefts from stores, armed robbery, fraud, cargo thefts, cybercrime and corruption—in other words, a plethora of organized criminal activities that may be intertwined with legal ones and therefore difficult to combat at a local level.

By incorporating these previously mentioned complexities, this book offers a new take on retail crime by illustrating the interplay between individuals, products and more importantly, the characteristics of crime settings—whatever the scale concerned. By appraising diverse aspects of retail crime from different perspectives, the authors of this book provide much to think about, as they also reflect upon ways to better plan retail environments. Undoubtedly, planning for a safe retail environment is an essential part of creating an enjoyable shopping experience.

Stockholm, Sweden — Vania Ceccato
Huddersfield, UK — Rachel Armitage

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First, this book would not have been possible without the 2016s autumn seminar on 'Retail crime: international evidence and prevention', that took place in Stockholm, Sweden, at the School of Architecture and the Built Environment, KTH Royal Institute of Technology. This international seminar was organized by *Safeplaces* network and funded entirely by Swedish Retail and Wholesale Council and British Society of Criminology. Almost all presentations in that seminar were turned into chapters of this book. Big thanks go to all involved in this event: speakers, discussants and all participants who directly and indirectly contributed to the chapters that are an integral part of this book.

We are particularly grateful for the time and trouble many researchers took to read the chapters and provide us comments to the chapters published in this book. They are listed here in alphabetical order: Adrian Beck, André Zanetic, Chris Herrman, Daniel Ekwal, Friedrich Schneider, Guerino Ardizzi, Kajalo Sami, Leanne Monchuk, Lucia Summers, Marcelo Justus, Matt Ashby, Matt Hopkins, Nick Tilley, Paul Ekblom, Per Geijer, Peter Vankoppen, Robert DiLonardo, Robyn Lincoln, Tim Hart, Silas Melo, Tim Lukas, Wim Bernasco. We would also like to thank colleagues at our respective universities for supporting our work during the process of editing this book, in particular Lisandra Vazquez and Anna Yates for their support with article formatting. Thanks to Jana Sochor who contributed to this edited volume by proofreading three

chapters of this book. Remaining shortcomings are, of course, entirely these editors' responsibility. We would also like to thank the publisher, Palgrave, for their support. We particularly wish to acknowledge Stephanie Carey for her stewardship of this project. Finally, thanks for all the love and support we received from our families when putting together this edited volume.

Vania Ceccato and Rachel Armitage

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Series Editor's Introduction

Vania Ceccato and Rachel Armitage have brought together a range of papers that concern crime in one specific environment, retailing. Their own academic specialism has driven the overarching framework: namely approaches grounded in environmental criminology and situational crime prevention. As is noted, the use of theory to develop good crime prevention practice is wanting, a point made in a chapter by Sidebottom and Tilley who offer guidance for future researchers. But the book draws on a broader focus than just criminology, it incorporates inputs from such varied disciplines as architecture, geography, engineering, sociology, economics and political science.

Retail crime is notoriously difficult to define—although the editors provide a helpful discussion—and the chapters cover a wide territory from cargo theft in Brazil; theft of medicines in hospital settings; and a range of offences including thefts and violence in small retailers, large retailers and shopping centres. Some key themes emerge.

For example, the weight of evidence suggests much retail crime is concentrated, ably illustrated for example in chapters by Ceccato et al. and Weisburd et al. Indeed, the latter finds that shopping crime concentration is higher than is the case with crime generally. This provides good crime prevention opportunities by focussing on 'hotspots'. That said the

information base on which retailers make decisions is often limited in coverage and depth, as Armitage et al. show for example most shop theft is never detected.

Moreover, while the authors show support for a range of approaches, including the effective design of the environment (see, Cozens for example), and the effective deployment of people (see, Taylor for example), there are notes of caution. Smith and Clarke for example suggest a rethink of the value and purposes of different models, they focus on the approach taken to identify goods at risk of theft. It is part of at least two broader points that emanate from the studies contained in this book. The first is that there is need to ensure that the response is flexible and adaptable and moves in tune with the threat (see, for example Hunter et al.), and the second is that in store measures need to be supported by appropriate loss management structures and approaches. Moreover, there is much that happens outside retail which impacts on what happens inside retail (see, Ceccato and Tcacencu for example) requiring a broader focus for prevention (see, Savona et al. for example).

This reflects the changing dynamic in how loss is perceived and the role of those charged with managing it. As Bamfield alludes to, security management in corporations generally, and loss prevention departments within retailers specifically, has often focussed on the rather narrow area of making arrests. In recent years there has been a transition to see its more important role in contributing to broader business aims not least in reducing risks, threats and a range of different losses (not just crime losses, but other types too such as those relating to damage, wastage, error for example) and working through other parts of the organisation.

The chapters in the book contribute new insights and empirical evidence on the nature of risks and the potential for mitigating them more effectively. There is relatively little work on crime prevention in the business environment, and given that the security of both workers and the public is in the hands of the commercial sector in a retailing a book such as this is both timely and important.

December 2017 Martin Gill

Notes on Editors and Contributors

Editors

Rachel Armitage is a Professor of Criminology and Director of the multi-disciplinary Secure Societies Institute at the University of Huddersfield. She specializes in crime prevention, in particular, the innovative use of design and technology to prevent and reduce the impact of crime. Professor Armitage's research has focused predominantly upon the subject of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). More recently, she has conducted several projects exploring counterterrorism at critical infrastructure sites, in particular, multi-modal passenger terminals, and exploring the role of design and layout in facilitating and inhibiting terrorist threats. She has published extensively on the subject of designing out crime, including a sole authored book: *Crime Prevention through Housing Design (2013) published by Palgrave Macmillan.* As Director of the Secure Societies Institute, she co-ordinates the development of multi-disciplinary, innovative solutions to global crime and security challenges.

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the space-time dynamics of crime and people's routine activity. Main research areas are transit safety, housing and community safety, rural crime, gendered safety. She has published in international journals, mostly in Criminology, Geography and Urban Planning and is the author of *Rural crime and community safety* (2016), *Moving Safely: Crime and perceived safety in Stockholm's subways stations* (2013). Since 2016, Ceccato is a British Society of Criminology International Ambassador.

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