U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services

COPS
COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Problem-Oriented Guides for Police
Problem-Specific Guides Series
No. 11

Shoplifting

by
Ronald V. Clarke

www.PopCenter.org

Center for Problem-Oriented Policing

Got a Problem? We've got answers!

Log onto the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing website at www.popcenter.org for a wealth of information to help you deal more effectively with crime and disorder in your community, including:

- Web-enhanced versions of all currently available Guides
- Interactive training exercises
- Online access to research and police practices
- Online problem analysis module.

Designed for police and those who work with them to address community problems, www.popcenter.org is a great resource in problem-oriented policing.

Supported by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice.

Problem-Oriented Guides for Police
Problem-Specific Guides Series
Guide No. 11

Shoplifting

Ronald V. Clarke

This project was supported by cooperative agreement #99-CK-WX-K004 by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions contained herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of the U.S. Department of Justice.

www.cops.usdoj.gov

September 2003

ISBN: 1-932582-10-X

About the Problem-Specific Guides Series

The *Problem-Specific Guides* summarize knowledge about how police can reduce the harm caused by specific crime and disorder problems. They are guides to prevention and to improving the overall response to incidents, not to investigating offenses or handling specific incidents. Neither do they cover all of the technical details about how to implement specific responses. The guides are written for police—of whatever rank or assignment—who must address the specific problem the guides cover. The guides will be most useful to officers who:

- **Understand basic problem-oriented policing principles and methods.** The guides are not primers in problem-oriented policing. They deal only briefly with the initial decision to focus on a particular problem, methods to analyze the problem, and means to assess the results of a problem-oriented policing project. They are designed to help police decide how best to analyze and address a problem they have already identified. (A companion series of *Problem-Solving Tools* guides has been produced to aid in various aspects of problem analysis and assessment.)

- **Can look at a problem in depth.** Depending on the complexity of the problem, you should be prepared to spend perhaps weeks, or even months, analyzing and responding to it. Carefully studying a problem before responding helps you design the right strategy, one that is most likely to work in your community. You should not blindly adopt the responses others have used; you must decide whether they are appropriate to your local situation. What is true in one place may not be true elsewhere; what works in one place may not work everywhere.

- **Are willing to consider new ways of doing police business.** The guides describe responses that other police departments have used or that researchers have tested. While not all of these responses will be appropriate to your particular problem, they should help give a broader view of the kinds of things you could do. You may think you cannot implement some of these responses in your jurisdiction, but perhaps you can. In many places, when police have discovered a more effective response, they have succeeded in having laws and policies changed, improving the response to the problem. (A companion series of *Response Guides* has been produced to help you understand how commonly-used police responses work on a variety of problems.)

- **Understand the value and the limits of research knowledge.** For some types of problems, a lot of useful research is available to the police; for other problems, little is available. Accordingly, some guides in this series summarize existing research whereas other guides illustrate the need for more research on that particular problem. Regardless, research has not provided definitive answers to all the questions you might have about the problem. The research may help get you started in designing your own responses, but it cannot tell you exactly what to do. This will depend greatly on the particular nature of your local problem. In the interest of keeping the guides readable, not every piece of relevant research has been cited, nor has every point been attributed to its sources. To have done so would have overwhelmed and distracted the reader. The references listed at the end of each guide are those drawn on most heavily; they are not a complete bibliography of research on the subject.

- **Are willing to work with others to find effective solutions to the problem.** The police alone cannot implement many of the responses discussed in the guides. They must frequently implement them in partnership with other responsible private and public bodies including other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, private businesses, public utilities, community groups, and individual citizens. An effective problem-solver must know how to forge genuine partnerships with others and be prepared to invest considerable effort in making these partnerships work. Each guide identifies particular individuals or groups in the community with whom police might work to improve the overall response to that problem. Thorough analysis of problems often reveals that individuals and groups other than the police are in a stronger position to address problems and that police ought to shift some greater responsibility to them to do so. Response Guide No. 3, *Shifting and Sharing Responsibility for Public Safety Problems*, provides further discussion of this topic.

The COPS Office defines community policing as "a policing philosophy that promotes and supports organizational strategies to address the causes and reduce the fear of crime and social disorder through *problem-solving* tactics and *police-community partnerships*." These guides emphasize problem-solving and police-community partnerships in the context of addressing specific public safety problems. For the most part, the organizational strategies that can facilitate problem-solving and police-community partnerships vary considerably and discussion of them is beyond the scope of these guides.

These guides have drawn on research findings and police practices in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, and Scandinavia. Even though laws, customs and police practices vary from country to country, it is apparent that the police everywhere experience common problems. In a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected, it is important that police be aware of research and successful practices beyond the borders of their own countries.

Each guide is informed by a thorough review of the research literature and reported police practice and is anonymously peer-reviewed by line police officers, police executives and researchers prior to publication.

The COPS Office and the authors encourage you to provide feedback on this guide and to report on your own agency's experiences dealing with a similar problem. Your agency may have effectively addressed a problem using responses not considered in these guides and your experiences and knowledge could benefit others. This information will be used to update the guides. If you wish to provide feedback and share your experiences it should be sent via e-mail to cops_pubs@usdoj.gov.

For more information about problem-oriented policing, visit the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing online at www.popcenter.org. This website offers free online access to:

- the *Problem-Specific Guides* series
- the companion *Response Guides* and *Problem-Solving Tools* series
- instructional information about problem-oriented policing and related topics
- an interactive problem-oriented policing training exercise
- an interactive *Problem Analysis Module*
- a manual for crime analysts
- online access to important police research and practices
- information about problem-oriented policing conferences and award programs.

Acknowledgments

The *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police* are produced by the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing, whose officers are Michael S. Scott (Director), Ronald V. Clarke (Associate Director) and Graeme R. Newman (Associate Director). While each guide has a primary author, other project team members, COPS Office staff and anonymous peer reviewers contributed to each guide by proposing text, recommending research and offering suggestions on matters of format and style.

The project team that developed the guide series comprised Herman Goldstein (University of Wisconsin Law School), Ronald V. Clarke (Rutgers University), John E. Eck (University of Cincinnati), Michael S. Scott (University of Wisconsin Law School), Rana Sampson (Police Consultant), and Deborah Lamm Weisel (North Carolina State University.)

Members of the San Diego; National City, California; and Savannah, Georgia police departments provided feedback on the guides' format and style in the early stages of the project.

Karin Schmerler, Rita Varano, and Nancy Leach oversaw the project for the COPS Office and research for the guides was conducted at the Criminal Justice Library at Rutgers University by Phyllis Schultze. Suzanne Fregly edited this guide.

Contents

About the Problem-Specific Guides Series i

Acknowledgments. vii

The Problem of Shoplifting 1
- Related Problems 4
- Factors Contributing to Shoplifting 4
  - Goods Sold 5
  - Customers 7
  - Seasonal and Temporal Patterns 8
  - Location 8
  - Retail Policies, Staffing and Stock Control 8
  - Store Layout and Displays 10

Understanding Your Local Problem. 11
- Asking the Right Questions 12
  - Incidents 13
  - Offenders 13
  - Locations/Times 13
  - Conditions Facilitating Shoplifting 14
  - Current Responses 14
- Measuring Your Effectiveness 15

Responses to the Problem of Shoplifting. 17
- General Considerations for an Effective Response Strategy 18
- Specific Responses to Reduce Shoplifting 20
  - Retailing Practice 20
  - Staffing 23
  - Shoplifting Policies 25
  - Technology 27

Appendix: Summary of Responses to Shoplifting 31

Endnotes 37

References 39

About the Author 43

Recommended Readings 45

Other Problem-Oriented Guides for Police 49

The Problem of Shoplifting[§]

This guide discusses measures to reduce shoplifting (theft of store merchandise during business hours). It focuses mainly on the usual shoplifting method of concealing items in clothing or bags. It does not cover unusual forms of theft involving trickery, as occasionally practiced in jewelers' shops. In many cases, the preventive techniques discussed will also apply to "price switching" (switching price tags from less expensive to more expensive items) and refund fraud (returning stolen or fraudulently acquired items for cash refunds). Due to the lack of available research, the guide makes few distinctions between (1) casual, opportunistic shoplifting and (2) shoplifting committed by "professionals," or gangs of thieves who sometimes descend on a particular mall or shopping center to take advantage of lax security or unsuspecting shop owners.

[§] Sometimes known as retail theft.

The guide begins by reviewing factors that increase the risks of shoplifting. It then lists a series of questions that might help you analyze your local shoplifting problem. Finally, it reviews responses to the problem, and what is known about them from evaluative research. It will be apparent that there are many gaps in knowledge, and that particularly lacking is information about the market for goods stolen by shoplifters.

Police data seriously under-represent the extent of shoplifting, which is one of the most common but least detected and reported crimes. This is shown by studies in which researchers have (1) asked people to report whether they have shoplifted, (2) followed people into shops to see if they steal anything, and (3) compared counts of marked items with sales of those items. All three methods have revealed very high rates of undetected and unreported thefts. For example, one careful review of the evidence suggested that only about one in 150 shoplifting incidents leads to the offender's apprehension and subsequent police action.[1]

It is perhaps not surprising that shoplifting is so widespread. Shops contain new goods, temptingly displayed. Self-service sales methods, now so common, provide ample opportunity for shoppers to handle goods (many of which are prepackaged) and conceal them in clothing or bags. People seem to have fewer inhibitions about stealing from shops than from private individuals. They know they have little chance of getting caught, and, if caught, they can often produce plausible excuses such as forgetting to pay.

The stock control in shops is so deficient that few retailers know how many goods they lose to shoplifters, or even to their own staff. So long as theft and damage of goods, known in the retail industry as *shrinkage*, does not rise above 2 to 3 percent of goods sold, retailers may pay little attention to shoplifting. Indeed, they have certain incentives to do so: Stolen goods may be taken as tax write-offs; detection and prosecution of shoplifters takes time and energy; mistaken apprehensions can result in lawsuits; and the store could acquire a reputation for crime if it continually reports shoplifting.[§] This means retailers may be unwilling to take official action against shoplifters, especially those who claim it is their first offense, show fear or remorse, and/or agree to pay for the items stolen.

[§] In some cases, especially for small shops in transitional neighborhoods, fear of retaliation by the thief might also prevent retailers from reporting offenses to the police.

In addition, some retailers believe that the police can do little about the problem and may be unwilling to get involved.[2] Others see the role of the police as simply to take charge of thieves whom store detectives or security staff have caught, and to decide on their subsequent handling. When particularly blatant shoplifting occurs, or when "professional" shoplifters are thought to be operating, merchants may call upon the police to take some kind of preventive action, usually in the form of increased presence or patrols. This may be of little deterrent value, since shoplifting takes place inside the store, away from police view. Consequently, this guide focuses on

other preventive actions police might take. In many cases, their most important task is to persuade store owners and managers to improve their security. This is difficult, because many retailers believe that the police should protect them from dishonest people, people who should be caught and punished.[§] As mentioned, others are content to ignore the problem until it seriously affects profits.[3] Whatever the reasons, the police may have an uphill task convincing retailers that their sales practices and lack of security may be contributing to the problem.

Faced with these attitudes, it is tempting for police to wash their hands of shoplifting and let the shops bear the consequences. But there are many reasons why this may be shortsighted, including the following:

- Shoplifting is often regarded as an entry crime, from which juveniles graduate to more serious offenses.
- Shoplifting can be said to fuel the drug trade, because it provides the income some addicts need to buy drugs.
- For stores in deprived neighborhoods, shoplifting can seriously erode profits and result in store closures. This can depress employment prospects and further erode the amenities in such neighborhoods.
- Shoplifting can consume a large proportion of police resources in processing offenders whom store security staff have detained. Indeed, the main police role in regard to this offense is to channel shoplifters caught by private security into the criminal justice system. In this regard, the police are at the mercy of merchants who may avoid changing their business practices in favor of simply relying on security staff and police to handle shoplifters. Unfortunately, there is little hard evidence that this results in reduced shoplifting by those arrested or by others who learn about the arrests.[§§]

[§] British retailers, in particular, have sought to avoid the term "shoplifting" on grounds that it suggests a less serious form of theft. They prefer "shop theft." However, "shoplifting" has been in use since the 17th century (Walsh 1978).

[§§] Studies of criminal sanctioning have consistently failed to show any clear deterrent effects. In regard to shoplifting, the chances of getting caught are so low, and the risks of severe punishment so small, that most researchers believe offenders pay little attention to the possible costs (Bamfield 1997; Burrows 1988).

For all these reasons, police cannot ignore shoplifting. The challenge facing them is to conduct a thorough analysis of the local problem, guided by the information presented here, to put together a combination of preventive responses.

§ See Problem-Specific Guide No. 15 *Burglary of Retail Establishments*.

Related Problems

Shoplifting is only one of the crimes that occur in the retail environment. Other problems requiring their own analyses and responses include:

- employee thefts (usually thought to account for more shrinkage than shoplifting)
- credit card and check frauds
- burglaries[§]
- smash-and-grabs
- thefts from open-air or covered market stalls
- thefts and frauds by delivery personnel
- vendor frauds, shortchanging and other offenses
- harassment of immigrant shopkeepers.

Factors Contributing to Shoplifting

Understanding the factors that contribute to your problem will help you frame your own local analysis questions, determine good measures of effectiveness, recognize key points of intervention, and select an appropriate set of responses. Many of the factors contributing to a heightened risk of shoplifting are under management control, while others, such as seasonal and temporal patterns, are not; even in the latter case, however, knowledge of those patterns can assist in framing a preventive response.

Goods Sold

Perhaps the principal factor determining a store's shoplifting rate is the type of goods sold.[4] For obvious reasons, furniture stores have much lower shoplifting rates than, say, convenience or drug stores. The following table shows the most common items stolen in the United States. These include tobacco products (particularly cigarettes), health and beauty products (such as over-the-counter analgesics, decongestants, popular remedies, and birth control products),[§] recorded music and videos, and apparel ranging from athletic shoes to children's clothing, with an emphasis on designer labels.[§§]

Ronald Clarke

Self-checkout systems such as the one shown on the left are a new alternative to the standard clerk checkout seen on the right and might reduce theft of products that some shoppers find embarrassing to buy.

[§] Clarke (1999) has noted that certain analgesics contain ingredients that can be used in making other drugs, and that decongestants help to produce a high when taken together with some illegal drugs. He has also noted that some frequently stolen products, such as hemorrhoid remedies and condoms, can be embarrassing to buy, and has suggested that stores find embarrassment-reducing ways to sell these products. The self-checkout system recently introduced by some supermarkets might provide a solution. It allows customers to scan and bag their own goods. A conspicuous camera is mounted to monitor the transactions, and a software system detects irregularities.

[§§] These are national data and are subject to local variations. Some jurisdictions may experience local fads for stealing particular items.

High-Risk Merchandise, by Store Type

(based on items recovered from shoplifters)

Store Type	Merchandise
Auto parts	Small accessories: dash covers, compact disc players, driving gloves
Book	Cassette tapes, magazines
Consumer electronics/ Computer	CDs
Department	Clothing: shirts, particularly Hilfiger and Polo
Discount	Clothing, undergarments, CDs
Drug/pharmacy	Cigarettes, batteries, over-the-counter remedies
General merchandise	Earrings
Grocery/supermarket	Over-the-counter remedies, health and beauty aids, cigarettes[§]
Home center/hardware	Hand tools
Music	CDs
Shoe	Sneakers
Specialty	Bed sheets
Specialty apparel	Assorted clothes with designer labels
Sporting goods	Nike shoes
Theme park	Key chains, jewelry
Toy	Action figures
Video	Video games
Warehouse	Pens, movie videos

Source: Adapted from Hayes (1997), pp. 236, 242-245.

[§] These items seem to have displaced meat, which many police still believe is the most common item stolen from grocery stores and supermarkets.

The acronym CRAVED captures the essential attributes of these "hot products": they are concealable, removable, available, valuable, enjoyable, and disposable. The last of these attributes, disposability, may be the most important in determining the volume of goods shoplifted. Those shoplifting for a living or to support a drug habit–who account for a disproportionate share of items stolen–must be able to sell or barter what they steal. Unfortunately, little is known about the market for shoplifted goods.[5]

Store sections carrying hot products are the most vulnerable to shoplifting. One study of shoplifting in a large London music store found that the highest theft rates were in the sections carrying rock and pop recordings (nowadays, it would probably be rap or hip-hop). Equally expensive recordings in the classical music department were rarely stolen.[6]

Customers

Much shoplifting is opportunistic, which means that shoplifters are often little different from a store's regular customers. Stores that attract younger people in general, and males in particular, are more likely to experience shoplifting: research has consistently shown these groups are more often involved in theft. It is beyond the scope of this guide to discuss all the social and psychological reasons for theft,[§] though it should be noted that some thieves believe shoplifting harms no one except an anonymous business that can take the losses as a tax write-off.

Apart from these factors, researchers have identified some personal characteristics related to shoplifting, and they have also developed typologies of shoplifters.[7] Most of this work has little relevance for policing strategies, beyond the fact that in many communities, the groups most involved appear to be juveniles and substance abusers.[8]

[§] See Klemke (1993) for a comprehensive review.

Seasonal and Temporal Patterns

Most shoplifting occurs when stores are busiest, with the majority of incidents occurring late in the week, between Wednesday and Saturday.[9] Seasonal shoplifting corresponds with the demand for goods, which means that much shoplifting occurs during pre-Easter, pre-summer and pre-Christmas periods. As mentioned, juveniles commit much shoplifting, and consequently, high-risk times include non-school days, late mornings and afternoons into the evening.[10]

Location

Research does not provide a clear indication of the risk factors related to a store's location, but shoplifting rates tend to be higher for stores located:

- in city centers and other busy places, with a large number of casual customers
- near schools, with many juvenile customers
- in deprived areas, with large concentrations of impoverished or addicted residents.

Research also provides evidence that stores that "front onto the open-street appear more likely to attract shoplifting than those in enclosed malls due to greater 'opportunity' to escape from the former."[11]

Retail Policies, Staffing and Stock Control

To some degree, retail policies, staffing and stock control are management's responsibility, but they are heavily influenced by the broader retail environment: competitive, profit-driven and technology-dependent. For example, stock control has been deficient in the past because the time and effort required to keep proper track of stock have barely been justified by any resulting improvements in profit due to reduced theft.

However, increased competition is continually eroding retail profit margins, and thus the incentive to reduce shrinkage is increasing. The more widespread use of merchandise bar coding and point-of-sales technology at checkout is resulting in big improvements in stock control. These improvements can be expected to increase with further technological developments.[12]

Similarly, sales policies and staffing are partly determined by the broader retail environment. It would be impossibly expensive for most stores to abandon self-service and rely instead on armies of helpful, attentive sales clerks, even though this would substantially reduce shoplifting. The savings in reduced theft would be greatly outweighed by increased staff wages and, possibly, by sales lost as a result of shoppers' being unable to inspect goods at their leisure.

Marketing considerations might also limit the scope for tightening up return policies, which, if too liberal, can encourage theft of goods to be returned for cash refunds. For example, some clothing stores do not have changing rooms because the staff costs of monitoring them to prevent shoplifting may be too great, or because there is no room for them. Such stores must allow the return of clothes that do not fit or are otherwise unsuitable.

Store Layout and Displays

Research provides little guidance, but common sense suggests certain store layout and display features contribute to shoplifting.[13] Most of these relate to the staff's ability to supervise shoppers, and stores at greater risk include those with:

- many exits, particularly where they are accessible without passing through the checkout
- passageways, blind corners and hidden alcoves
- restrooms or changing rooms
- high displays that conceal shoppers (and shoplifters) from view
- crowded areas around displays of high-risk items
- aisles that staff cannot easily survey from one end.

Store areas at greater risk of shoplifting include, as mentioned, those with the most desirable goods. In addition, goods on the ground floor and near entrances are at greater risk of theft, because the shoplifter is in the store for less time and is thus at less risk of getting caught.

Understanding Your Local Problem

The information provided above is only a generalized description of shoplifting. You must combine the basic facts with a more specific understanding of your local problem if you are to develop an effective response. In most cases, your problem is likely to involve a group of stores, such as those in a town center, mall or shopping precinct. If it involves a single store (unless the store is very large), it is more appropriate to offer routine crime prevention advice than to undertake a full-scale problem-oriented policing project. Accordingly, your analysis is likely to focus on differential risks of shoplifting among the stores in your group, and the reasons for those differences. In any case, the measures appropriate to deal with the problem will vary with the nature of the stores at risk.

Knowing who is committing the offenses, and why, will help you decide how difficult they will be to stop. You will also need to understand how the offenses are committed. This will require a careful study of shop security practices. Comparisons between shops can greatly assist in understanding the conditions that facilitate theft.

Analysis of shoplifting is made difficult by low rates of reporting, and by the fact that police records rarely permit shoplifting offenses to be readily identified among reported thefts. There are other ways to gather information about your local problem, but these, too, have their difficulties:

- Store apprehensions may provide some useful information, but the data tend to say more about surveillance and apprehension practices than about the "typical" offender, or even the most targeted goods.

- Observational studies–in which randomly selected shoppers are followed around the store–can produce some useful results, but they are labor-intensive and ethically problematic. If followed by police or security, those observed stealing would have to be apprehended; if followed by researchers, the police or the store might be criticized for permitting this approach.[14]
- Identifying "hot" items among paying customers may also reveal those likely to be targeted by thieves. However, such items may already be well protected by the store's security, and theft might be concentrated on less popular but still desirable goods.
- The most accurate way to assess retail theft is repeated systematic counting of items on display, but this, again, is labor-intensive.[§] It is also difficult to determine whether losses are due to theft by customers or by staff, or whether they are the result of innocent clerical error.

[§] McNees et al. (1976) pioneered an effective method of conducting routine shrinkage assessments that can be used on a large scale to evaluate the success of measures designed to reduce shoplifting (Buckle et al. 1992). Small tags, color-coded by type of item, were attached to the price tag of each high-risk item in a store. An inventory of all items was taken before opening the store for business. When items were sold, the clerks removed the tags, and they were counted at the end of the day. The store manager then added the number of tagged items sold to the number of items left on the floor. If the total did not match the initial inventory, then the residual number of items were presumed stolen. See also Farrington et al. (1993) and Farrington (1999) for a description of this process.

In some cases, store stock-control records or staff may be able to provide information about items particularly vulnerable to theft. However, whenever possible, you should check such information by gathering additional data, as discussed above. The effort required to obtain accurate information about problems is almost always justified by the improved responses that result.

Asking the Right Questions

The following are some critical questions you should ask in analyzing your particular problem of shoplifting, even if the answers are not always readily available. Your answers to these and other questions will help you choose the most appropriate set of responses later on.

Incidents

- How many incidents are detected?
- How much is typically lost (dollar value of goods, lost profit)?
- What proportion of shrinkage does shoplifting account for? Compared with employee theft or delivery fraud?
- How do targeted stores' shrinkage rates compare with those of similar-size stores of the same type?
- Which items do shoplifters target most frequently?
- Do the goods stolen fit the CRAVED model? (See the "Factors Contributing to Shoplifting/Goods Sold" section above.)
- Are they sold or kept for personal use?
- If sold, how so?

Offenders

- What is known about offenders? Do they tend to belong to any particular demographic group? What proportion are juveniles?
- What proportions of offenders are casual/opportunistic, professionals or addicts? Are organized rings involved?
- Do some types of offenders use particular shoplifting methods or target particular goods?
- Are there repeat offenders?

Locations/Times

- What is the nature of the surrounding neighborhood?
- When do thefts mainly occur (time of day, day of week, month, season)? Are certain items more commonly stolen during certain seasons (e.g., batteries for toys at Christmas time)?
- Is the problem concentrated at particular stores, or does it affect a cluster of stores? If concentrated at particular stores, what do they have in common?

Conditions Facilitating Shoplifting

- How large is the store? What type of store is it? What market segment does it target?
- What are the store's hours? Is it open at night? Are nearby businesses open at night and on weekends?
- Does the store have a security department or set of policies on apprehending shoplifters?
- Does it treat shoplifting as a business cost? Or does it invest resources in prevention?
- Does it report shoplifting incidents to the police?
- How adequate is stock control?
- Where are targeted goods located in the store?
- Is lack of natural surveillance a contributory factor? Can thieves conceal goods without being seen?
- After stealing, can thieves evade store employees?
- Is there more than one escape route?
- What security hardware does the store have? Mirrors? Electronic tagging? Closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras?
- What other prevention measures are in place?

Current Responses

- How do police currently handle shoplifting incidents?
- Do police train or regulate private security forces?
- How do prosecutors handle shoplifting charges?
- What sentences do courts typically hand down for convicted offenders? Do offenders comply with the sentences?

Measuring Your Effectiveness

You should take measures of your problem *before* you implement responses, to determine how serious the problem is, and *after* you implement them, to determine whether they have been effective. Measurement allows you to determine to what degree your efforts have succeeded, and suggests how you might modify your responses if they are not producing the intended results. For more detailed guidance on measuring effectiveness, see the companion guide to this series, *Assessing Responses to Problems: An Introductory Guide for Police Problem-Solvers.*

Potential indicators of an effective response to shoplifting include:

- fewer repeat offenders
- decreased shrinkage
- increased sales
- increased profits.

If you suspect that shoplifting is currently underreported to police, increased reporting might be a positive indicator of your efforts, at least temporarily. If you suspect too few shoplifters are getting caught, a temporary increase in apprehensions might also be a positive indicator. Ultimately, though, the number of reported thefts and apprehensions should decline as the number of actual shoplifting incidents declines.

Responses to the Problem of Shoplifting

Your analysis of your local problem should give you a better understanding of the factors contributing to it. Once you have analyzed your local problem and established a baseline for measuring effectiveness, you should consider possible responses to address the problem.

The following response strategies provide a foundation of ideas for addressing your particular problem. These strategies are drawn from a variety of research studies and police reports. Several of them may apply to your community's problem. It is critical that you tailor responses to local circumstances, and that you can justify each response based on reliable analysis. In most cases, an effective strategy will involve implementing several different responses. Law enforcement responses alone are seldom effective in reducing or solving the problem. Do not limit yourself to considering what police can do: give careful consideration to who else in your community shares responsibility for the problem and can help police better respond to it.

This section reviews what is known about the effectiveness of various practices in dealing with shoplifting. Unfortunately, the information is severely limited because few of the common preventive practices have been evaluated. Retailers have been reluctant to undertake the necessary studies, and to share the results of any studies they do complete. Government has funded little research in this field, generally regarding it as the private sector's domain.

In the absence of research, you cannot assume that retailers have learned through long experience what does and does not work. For example, hiring store detectives is a staple response

to shoplifting, but as will be seen below, their effectiveness is questionable. Hiring them usually seems to be an economic choice dictated by the need to do something about shoplifting.

General Considerations for an Effective Response Strategy

Police can do little on their own to prevent shoplifting, and you will have to persuade the retailers themselves to act. You may have to explain why police can achieve little through more patrols, and why heavier court sentences are of limited value. You may want to explain how the store's goods and sales practices may be contributing to the problem. You may have to convince retailers that they cannot ignore the problem, due to the costs to the community and, in the long run, the stores themselves. Finally, you will have to offer them guidance on preventive measures they can take to reduce the problem.

It is important that shoplifting responses be selective and based on a thorough understanding of the risks. For example, the highest-risk goods should be given the greatest protection.[15] Trying to provide equal protection to all goods is inefficient and could lead to a loss of focus. In addition, it might be better to concentrate on preventing shoplifting by young or casual shoplifters, who are easier to deter and who may account for many thefts, than to focus on the much smaller number of "professionals," who are harder to defeat.

As explained, in framing advice, you must think carefully about the nature of the risk, which varies greatly with the kind of store and the goods offered. These factors also determine the nature of the remedies. The security approach required for a self-service supermarket is quite different from

that required for a jewelry store. Department stores with huge turnovers of expensive goods can afford to spend much more on security than small retailers can. In all cases, you must appreciate stores' need to make a profit. This determines selling practices and how much money is available for preventing shoplifting.

[§] See Response Guide No. 4, *Video Surveillance of Public Places*.

Even when shops can afford more for security, they are likely to resist this expenditure. In making your case, you may need to:

- calculate the likely cost of measures such as installing CCTV[§] or hiring security guards
- convince owners that they can recoup the cost of increased security through reduced losses associated with shoplifting–item replacement, profit and lawsuit losses
- enlist the support of the chamber of commerce or other business organizations in persuading owners to improve security
- brief the local media on the problem and the proposed solutions.

Effective prevention often depends on well-rounded strategies encompassing good retailing practices, appropriate staffing, carefully articulated shoplifting policies, and selective technology use.[16] These components are reviewed below and are summarized in the appendix. Many depend on retailers' actions, but police may also have to collaborate with others in the community, including loss prevention specialists, business associations, and court officials.

Specific Responses To Reduce Shoplifting

Retailing Practice

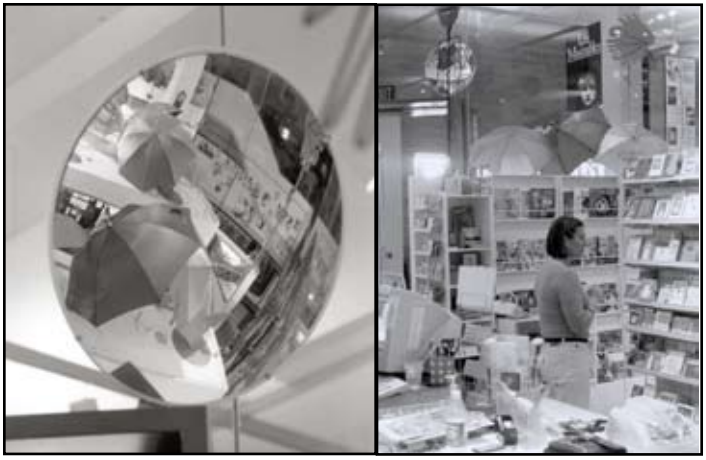
Good management is the first line of defense against shoplifting. Managers must ensure that stores are properly laid out, have adequate inventory controls and follow standard security practices.

1. Improving store layout and displays. Store layout and displays must make it easier for staff to exercise effective surveillance. This includes:

- reducing the number of exits, blind corners and recesses
- carefully placing mirrors
- providing good, even lighting
- eliminating clutter and obstructions
- placing goods away from entrances and exits
- creating clear sight lines in aisles and reducing the height of displays
- reducing crowding near displays of high-risk items
- moving hot products into higher-security zones with more staff surveillance
- speeding up checkout to reduce congestion and waiting, which provide the opportunity for concealment.

2. Tightening stock controls. Inventory control procedures must permit shoplifting trends to be detected, and shoplifting to be distinguished from employee theft.

Kip Kellogg



Properly placed mirrors like this "fish-eye" mirror, allow staff to keep watch over customers and goods that might otherwise be hidden from view.

3. Upgrading retail security. Standard security must make shoplifting more difficult. This may include:

- restricting the number of unaccompanied children allowed in small neighborhood stores
- establishing clear rules for use of changing rooms in clothing stores
- displaying only the cassette, CD, and video cases in music and video stores (and only one shoe per pair in shoe shops)
- keeping high-value items in locked displays, or securing them through cable locks and security hangers
- encouraging shoppers to use supermarket-type baskets for purchases (which removes the excuse for putting things in their own bags or pockets)
- sealing bags of legitimate purchases to reduce impulse stealing
- checking receipts against goods on exit
- requiring proof of purchase for refunds.

Kip Kellogg

Cluttered merchandise displays make it harder for staff to monitor shoplifting.

4. Posting warning notices on high-risk merchandise. Many stores display signs reminding customers that shoplifting is a crime, and warning that shoplifters will be prosecuted. Some stores display these signs alongside a life-size cardboard cutout of a police officer. Nothing is known about the effectiveness of these generalized warnings, and since most shoplifters know they might get caught and punished, it is doubtful that such warnings have more than a marginal deterrent effect on a few susceptible people. However, one well-known study showed that when specific merchandise was prominently marked with large red stars as being frequently taken by shoplifters, shoplifting was virtually eliminated. The researchers explained that publicly identifying specific items made the threat of detection and apprehension tangible.[17]

ATTENTION:
SHOPPERS AND SHOPLIFTERS

The items marked with a red star
are frequently stolen by shoplifters.

Staffing

5. Hiring more and better-trained sales staff. Stores should hire sufficient numbers of staff to properly oversee goods and customers, especially at high-risk periods for shoplifting. Stores must train staff to be attentive to customers and alert for thieves. They also need to train staff in procedures for dealing with shoplifting incidents.[§]

[§] Walsh (1978) quotes Fiber's (1972:250-251) essential advice: "To sustain a legal action against a customer for shoplifting, it is usually necessary to prove that the goods were taken away, that no payment was offered and that there was intent to avoid payment. It is therefore always advisable to wait until the suspect has left the shop before making the accusation; otherwise, they may claim they intended to pay before leaving."

6. Hiring store detectives. Though certain kinds of stores widely employ store detectives, research suggests detectives may have only a limited impact on shoplifting. When researchers have followed random samples of people entering stores, few of those they have observed shoplifting have also been seen by the store detectives.[18] A study in a large London music store, with four store detectives on duty at any one time, suggested that the store would need to hire 17 times this number to be able to catch all the shoplifters likely to enter the store–clearly not an economic proposition.[19] Most stores do not advertise store detectives' presence, but some do. Advertising their presence may provide a greater deterrent, but it may also mean that shoplifters exercise greater caution. No research has evaluated these possibilities.

While it must be assumed that store detectives have some deterrent value, it is possible that they lower other staff's vigilance. It is also important that store detectives spend as much time as possible on the shop floor, and not have their time consumed in court attendance or police liaison work.

7. Hiring security guards. Little is known from research about the effectiveness of uniformed security guards in any environment–and retail is no exception. Only one small study has been published, and it suggested that security guards had less value than electronic article surveillance (EAS) or store redesign in decreasing the risk of theft. However, only two stores with guards were studied, and "[o]ne [guard] had never been a guard before and asked the staff what he should do, while the other was aged over 60 and relatively small, so it was thought that he was unlikely to deter shoplifters."[20]

In general, guards who continually move around, creating an active, visible presence, are likely to be more effective. To maximize guards' surveillance, it may be necessary to pay attention to layout and design, including mirror placement.

Kip Kellogg

Security guards who move around, creating an active, visible presence, are likely to be more effective at preventing shoplifting.

Shoplifting Policies

It is important that stores develop clear shoplifting policies, and that staff understand those policies. Most stores routinely refer apprehended shoplifters to the police. For persistent and blatant offenders, this is clearly necessary. In the case of more opportunistic shoplifters, many of whom show shock at getting caught, it is doubtful that police arrest has any additional deterrent value.[§] It is also possible that an inflexible policy of referring shoplifters to the police could result in reduced staff enthusiasm for apprehending them.[21] Stores are probably best served by a flexible shoplifting policy that includes formal and informal avenues and, perhaps, civil recovery.

As mentioned earlier, there is little evidence that prosecuting ordinary shoplifters is an effective preventive measure. Even so, belief in the efficacy (and desirability) of prosecution is so strong among storekeepers and the general public alike that there is little chance the police will be relieved of this burden.[§§] Consequently, there is considerable value in making the arrest process more efficient. Ways of doing so fall outside the scope of this guide, but some police forces have developed systems whereby private security officers are authorized and trained to write criminal summonses themselves (after first checking with the police by phone for outstanding warrants and arrest histories). This obviates the need for patrol officers to process arrests, but gets the cases into the formal criminal process, nonetheless.

8. Using civil recovery. In nearly every state, retailers can use civil law to collect restitution from shoplifters, and many retailers take advantage of this.[22] Civil recovery is designed to operate quickly, with little recourse to the courts. The typical sums sought are $250 for adult shoplifters and $120 for juveniles, and in nearly half the cases, these sums are paid.

[§] Sherman and Gartin (1986), in a randomized experiment, found that recidivism rates did not differ for two large groups of apprehended shoplifters: those released and those arrested.

[§§] Not only is shoplifter prosecution of doubtful preventive value, but also, practice in this area is fraught with difficulties: merchants may see the police as being at their beck and call; private security staff may expect the police to take cases that are not "good," or that reflect a lack of discretion (e.g., a 12-year-old stealing a candy bar) off their hands; and there are issues regarding obtaining proper evidence, identifying alleged offenders, using force, targeting minorities, imposing burdens on the criminal justice system, using statutes or ordinances/summonses or physical arrests, etc.

Civil recovery is not meant to be a substitute for criminal proceedings. Rather, it is meant to provide an additional shoplifting deterrent (though of unknown effectiveness). Civil recovery also allows retailers to defray some of the costs of loss prevention.

In some states, such as Florida, statutes permit police to help retailers obtain civil recovery on the spot. With proper procedural safeguards and reports, the offender can pay the set civil recovery amount–around $200–directly to the retailer in the presence of the police, and thereby be spared arrest. This might cost offenders considerably more than the item stolen is worth, but it spares them an arrest record.

9. Using informal police sanctions. In many jurisdictions, large proportions of shoplifters referred to police are dealt with informally and not brought before the courts. In the United States, this often entails "first offender" programs. Upon arrest, first offenders are given the option, as an alternative to prosecution, of participating in programs in which they are instructed about the harms of shoplifting. If the offender completes the program, which usually translates into attending the required meetings, the initial charge is dismissed and, sometimes, upon petition, can be erased from the records, so that the person does not have a "criminal" record.[§] In Britain, similar police programs are called "cautioning." A recent program introduced by the Thames Valley Police combines counseling modules and a formal caution, and claims to have substantially reduced re-offending among juvenile shoplifters. The counseling modules are selected according to the offender's specific circumstances. Modules include meetings with store managers, informational sessions with youth workers about available leisure activities, and group work to learn about resisting peer pressure to offend.[23]

[§] As an alternative to prosecution, police sometimes also refer first offenders to structured programs like the Stop Shoplifting Education Program, operated by the Better Business Bureau of WNY Inc., or the program offered by Shoplifters Alternative, a nonprofit organization based in New York. The Stop Shoplifting Education Program claims to reduce recidivism (Better Business Bureau of WNY Inc. 1993). In addition, stores themselves sometimes run first-offender warning programs, without extensive police involvement. Stores might check with police to determine whether the offender has been charged before and, if not, issue their own warning, without having an arrest made.

10. Establishing early warning systems. Merchants in some areas have found it useful to establish a same-day early warning system whereby they notify one another about the presence of mobile gangs of shoplifters, but there have been no formal evaluations of this practice.[24]

11. Banning known shoplifters. A related but more controversial practice entails banning offenders from, and posting their pictures in, stores. Little is known about the effectiveness of this practice, but if it publicizes shoplifters' identity, it might have some limited value. Where courts have not convicted those identified, both the merchants and the police engaged in the practice are vulnerable to criticism and legal challenge.

12. Launching public information campaigns. Some communities have launched media campaigns to inform the public about the harms of shoplifting, encourage people to report it, and increase knowledge about the consequences of apprehension. Posters, pamphlets, classes, and public service announcements have all been used to get the message across.[25] Evaluations of these programs have produced little evidence that they reduce shoplifting.[26, §]

Technology

13. Installing and monitoring CCTV.[§§] Improvements in quality and reductions in cost have resulted in the widespread use of CCTV to prevent shoplifting. Few evaluations have been published, though one careful study of 15 clothing stores in England found that the value of CCTV was directly related to the sophistication of the system used. Effectiveness was quite marked in the first few months after installation, but declined rapidly thereafter, which the researchers explained by arguing that "would-be offenders became progressively inured or desensitized to CCTV's deterrent potential."[27]

[§] See Response Guide No. 6, *Crime Prevention Publicity Campaigns*.

[§§] See Response Guide No. 4, *Video Surveillance of Public Places*.

Little is known about the value of CCTV in other kinds of stores, and there is "a raft of unanswered questions about its impact. These questions relate to:

- the detection of offenders
- the deterrence of would-be offenders, and possible displacement of criminal activities elsewhere
- the relative value of video recordings and real-time images
- the ability of operators to monitor and make sense of multiple images
- the impact on customers (who may be reassured, even when there are no measurable benefits)
- the effect on shop staff (who may become less vigilant about crime following its installation)."[28]

Kip Kellogg

Surveillance cameras and CCTV are increasingly used to prevent shoplifting, but more study is needed to determine their effects.

14. Using electronic article surveillance. Electronic article surveillance (EAS) is often known as electronic tagging. A tag is either pinned onto a garment or fixed with adhesive to an item's packaging. Exit gates detect tags that have not been removed or deactivated, and sound an alarm. The tags have been made progressively smaller and more versatile, and the detectors have become more reliable.[§] These systems are in widespread use, but only recently have any evaluations been published.[29] The most comprehensive of these evaluations used comparisons between stores with and without EAS systems, and before-and-after studies, in a variety of retail settings. The authors concluded that EAS could reduce shoplifting and total inventory shortage from 35 to 75 percent.[30] The considerable costs of buying and running EAS systems must be set against these benefits. Moreover, knowledgeable offenders can sometimes defeat EAS systems (see Box).

[§] Increasingly, tags are now being included in the packaging of goods at manufacture (Hobson 2001). This "source tagging" helps to reduce the costs of using this method.

Ways of Trying To Beat EAS Systems

- Removing and discarding product packaging in the store, thereby removing the tag and giving the appearance that the item is "used." Thieves then may wear the item in plain view, or conceal it.
- Peeling off the tag, which can sometimes be done despite strong adhesives–large stores afford offenders plenty of cover for this.
- Holding the item–and the tag–tightly against the body.
- Walking out in a group, or closely behind someone.
- Holding items outside the reach of the electronic surveillance, i.e., lower than a foot above ground (with shoes, for example), or above shoulder height.
- Using products to deactivate tags.
- Running through the electronic gates and trying to escape before staff can respond.
- Putting items in insulated bags; the insulation can prevent the tag from being activated.

15. Attaching ink tags to merchandise. Retailers may attach ink tags to clothing; such tags are quite different from electronic tags. Rather than sounding an alarm when removed from the store, and thus increasing the offender's risk of getting caught, ink tags remove the rewards of theft by ruining the garments to which they are affixed when the thief tries to detach them. To date, only one rigorous evaluation has been reported; it concluded that ink tags might be more effective than EAS when used in the same retail environments.[31] Devices are now available that combine the advantages of both electronic and ink tags, but with the inevitable disadvantage of increased costs. Other devices not containing ink are also available, such as small clamps that cannot be removed from items such as jewelry or eyeglasses.

Kip Kellogg

Electronic tags affixed to goods activate alarms when passed through exit gates. Electronic tagging has demonstrated effectiveness in preventing shoplifting, although knowledgeable offenders can sometimes defeat the systems.

Appendix: Summary of Responses to Shoplifting

The table below summarizes the responses to shoplifting, the mechanisms by which they are intended to work, the conditions under which they ought to work best, and some factors you should consider before implementing a particular response. It is critical that you tailor responses to local circumstances, and that you can justify each response based on reliable analysis. In most cases, an effective strategy will involve implementing several different responses. Law enforcement responses alone are seldom effective in reducing or solving the problem.

Response No.	Page No.	Response	How It Works	Works Best If…	Considerations
Retailing Practice					
1.	20	Improving store layout and displays	Makes it easier for staff to exercise effective surveillance	…staff are trained and motivated to detect shoplifting	May be a relatively inexpensive option, but some stores' basic design makes it hard to eliminate all opportunities for shoplifters to conceal their activity
2.	21	Tightening stock controls	Helps managers to detect changes in amounts or patterns of shoplifting	…managers have incentives to reduce shoplifting	Increases in source tagging and electronic point-of-sales systems will gradually lead to improvements in stock control

Response No.	Page No.	Response	How It Works	Works Best If…	Considerations
3.	21	Upgrading retail security	Makes it harder for shoplifters to operate	…staff and managers have incentives to reduce shoplifting	Some security practices may be unpopular with staff and customers alike, and consequently have the effect of reducing sales; sometimes carries costs in terms of staff time
4.	22	Posting warning notices on high-risk merchandise	Alerts potential thieves that the identified merchandise may be subject to special surveillance	…notices identify the most frequently targeted items	A low-cost measure; might alarm some innocent shoppers
Staffing					
5.	23	Hiring more and better-trained sales staff	Makes it harder for shoplifters to operate	…staffing levels are increased at high-risk periods	Can be a relatively expensive way to reduce shoplifting
6.	23	Hiring store detectives	Provides a deterrent, especially to casual shoplifters	…stores are large, so that the detectives' identity does not become known, and the detectives spend considerable time on the shop floor	May not be an effective deterrent to "professional" shoplifters who can spot store detectives
7.	24	Hiring security guards	Provides a deterrent to shoplifters who might otherwise believe they could escape if apprehended by sales staff	…guards are properly trained, are physically imposing and have an active, visible presence	Guard characteristics and behavior are extremely important; poor guards have no effect on shoplifting

Response No.	Page No.	Response	How It Works	Works Best If…	Considerations
Shoplifting Policies					
8.	25	Using civil recovery	May not deter shoplifting, but provides retailers with a practical means of recovering some of the costs of it	…administrative procedures are clear and uncomplicated, and shoplifters are able to pay restitution	May not be an option for small retailers who lack the time and resources to pursue it
9.	26	Using informal police sanctions	Saves time for retailers, police and the criminal justice system, though its deterrent value is unknown	…combined with efforts to change offenders' attitudes about shoplifting	Usually used only with first-time offenders; often limited to juveniles
10.	27	Establishing early warning systems	Eliminates the element of surprise shoplifting gangs often rely on	…the systems are operated by stores whose merchandise is targeted by gangs of shoplifters	A low-cost, sensible precaution for stores vulnerable to shoplifting gangs
11.	27	Banning known shoplifters	Alerts staff to the presence of known shoplifters, whom they may then ask to leave the premises; deters known shoplifters from entering the store; deters shoplifting by others	… the identities of those who have been convicted of shoplifting are publicized	May have some limited value in deterring shoplifting, but where those identified have not been convicted by a court, both the merchants and the police engaged in the practice are vulnerable to legal challenge

Response No.	Page No.	Response	How It Works	Works Best If…	Considerations
12.	27	Launching public information campaigns	Informs the public about the harms of shoplifting; encourages people to report shoplifting; increases knowledge about the consequences of apprehension	…used to advertise new anti-shoplifting measures	Little evidence exists that these campaigns reduce shoplifting, but they might change community attitudes
Technology					
13.	27	Installing and monitoring CCTV	Increases surveillance of vulnerable merchandise and locations; can also be used to identify offenders after the act and/or provide evidence for charges	…CCTV cameras are located close to key areas (but retailers should guard against offenders' sneaking off to conceal goods elsewhere, such as around blind corners, in elevators and in	Employees must be properly trained to use the equipment; the equipment must be of good enough quality to enable close watch to be kept on suspicious individuals; those who watch the monitors quickly become fatigued

Response No.	Page No.	Response	How It Works	Works Best If…	Considerations
14.	29	Using electronic article surveillance	Detects shoplifters trying to leave the store with concealed goods	…tags are difficult to remove without damaging goods	Staff may become complacent about other antitheft policies and procedures; equipment may be compromised, so staff must maintain vigilance; not all merchandise can be easily tagged; an expensive option, though costs are being reduced–source tagging will reduce costs even more
15.	30	Attaching ink tags to merchandise	Removes the rewards of shoplifting by rendering stolen goods unusable	…combined with EAS	Not all merchandise can be easily tagged; it is important that the security of ink tags not be compromised by the theft of tag-removal equipment

Endnotes

1 Farrington (1999).
2 Nelson and Perrone (2000), citing Ocqueteau and Pottier (1996) and Williams et al. (1987).
3 Walsh (1978).
4 Nelson, Bromley, and Thomas (1996); Hayes (1997); Clarke (1999).
5 Clarke (1999).
6 Ekblom (1986).
7 Krasnovsky and Lane (1998).
8 Klemke (1992).
9 Nelson, Bromley, and Thomas (1996); Hayes (1997).
10 Nelson, Bromley, and Thomas (1996); Hayes (1997); Lo (1994).
11 Nelson, Bromley, and Thomas (1996).
12 Hope (1991).
13 Ekblom (1986).
14 Farrington (1999).
15 Ekblom (1986).
16 Hayes (1993).
17 McNees et al. (1976).
18 Burrows (1988).
19 Ekblom (1986).
20 Farrington (1999).
21 Bamfield (1998).
22 Bamfield (1998); Budden (1999).
23 McCulloch (1996).
24 Walsh (1978).
25 Klemke (1992).
26 Sacco (1985).
27 Beck and Willis (1999).
28 Beck and Willis (1999).
29 Farrington et al. (1993); Handford (1994); DiLonardo (1996).
30 DiLonardo (1996).
31 DiLonardo and Clarke (1996).

References

Bamfield, J. (1998). "Retail Civil Recovery: Filling a Deficit in the Criminal Justice System?" *International Journal of Risk, Security and Crime Prevention* 2:257–267.

——— (1997). *Making Shoplifters Pay*. London: The Social Market Foundation.

Beck, A., and A. Willis (1999). "Context-Specific Measures of CCTV Effectiveness in the Retail Sector." In K. Painter and N. Tilley (eds.), *Surveillance of Public Space: CCTV, Street Lighting and Crime Prevention, Crime Prevention Studies*, Vol. 10. Monsey (New York): Criminal Justice Press.

Better Business Bureau of WNY Inc. (1993). "Stop Shoplifting Education Program." Annual report. Buffalo (New York): Better Business Bureau of WNY Inc.

Buckle, A., D. Farrington, J. Burrows, M. Speed, and T. Burns-Howell (1992). "Measuring Shoplifting by Repeated Systematic Counting." *Security Journal* 3(3):137–146.

Budden, M. (1999). *Preventing Shoplifting Without Being Sued: Practical Advice for Retail Executives*. Westport (Connecticut): Quorum Books.

Burrows, J. (1988). *Retail Crime: Prevention Through Crime Analysis*. Crime Prevention Unit, Paper 11. London: Home Office Crime Prevention Unit.

Clarke, R. (1999). *Hot Products: Understanding, Anticipating and Reducing the Demand for Stolen Goods*. Police Research Series, Paper 112. London: Home Office.

DiLonardo, R. (1996). "Defining and Measuring the Economic Benefit of Electronic Article Surveillance." *Security Journal* 7(1):3–9.

DiLonardo, R., and R. Clarke (1996). "Reducing the Rewards of Shoplifting: An Evaluation of Ink Tags." *Security Journal* 7(1):11–14.

Ekblom, P. (1986). *The Prevention of Shop Theft: An Approach Through Crime Analysis.* Crime Prevention Unit, Paper 5. London: Home Office Crime Prevention Unit.

Farrington, D. (1999). "Measuring, Explaining and Preventing Shoplifting: A Review of British Research." *Security Journal* 12(1):9–27.

Farrington, D., S. Bowen, A. Buckle, T. Burns-Howell, J. Burrows and M. Speed (1993). "An Experiment on the Prevention of Shoplifting." *Crime Prevention Studies,* Vol. 1. Monsey (New York): Criminal Justice Press.

Handford, M. (1994). "Electronic Tagging in Action: A Case Study in Retailing." In M. Gill (ed.), *Crime at Work: Studies in Security and Crime Prevention*, Vol. 1. Leicester (England): Perpetuity Press.

Hayes, R. (1999). "Shop Theft: An Analysis of Shoplifter Perceptions and Situational Factors." *Security Journal* 12(2):7–118.

——— (1997). "Retail Theft: An Analysis of Apprehended Shoplifters." *Security Journal* 8(3):233–246.

——— (1993). *Retail Security and Loss Prevention.* Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Hobson, K. (2001). "Hey, Security Tag Makers: You're It." *U.S. News & World Report*, May 14, p. 34.

Hope, T. (1991). "Crime Information in Retailing: Prevention Through Analysis." *Security Journal* 2(4):240–245.

Klemke, L. (1992). *The Sociology of Shoplifting: Boosters and Snitches Today*. Westport (Connecticut): Praeger Publishers.

Krasnovsky, T., and R. Lane (1998). "Shoplifting: A Review of the Literature." *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 3(3):219–235.

Lo, L. (1994). "Exploring Teenage Shoplifting Behavior: A Choice-and-Constraint Approach." *Environment and Behavior* 26(5):613–639.

McCulloch, H. (1996). *Shop Theft: Improving the Police Response*. Crime Detection and Prevention Series, Paper 76. London: Home Office.

McNees, M., D. Egli, R. Marshall, J. Schnelle, and T. Risley (1976). "Shoplifting Prevention: Providing Information Through Signs." *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis* 9(4):399–405.

Nelson, A., R. Bromley and C. Thomas (1996). "The Geography of Shoplifting in a British City: Evidence From Cardiff." *Geoforum* 27(3):409–423.

Nelson, D., and S. Perrone (2000). "Understanding and Controlling Retail Theft." *Trends and Issues in Criminal Justice*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.

Sacco, V. (1985). "Shoplifting Prevention: The Role of Communication-Based Intervention Strategies." *Canadian Journal of Criminology* 27(1):15–29.

Sherman, L., and P. Gartin (1986). *Differential Recidivism: A Field Experiment on the Specific Sanction Effects of Arrest for Shoplifting*. Washington, D.C.: Crime Control Institute.

Walsh, D. (1978). *Shoplifting: Controlling a Major Crime*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd.

About the Author

Ronald V. Clarke

Ronald V. Clarke is a University Professor at the School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers University. He previously headed the British government's criminological research department, where he had a significant role in developing situational crime prevention and the British Crime Survey. Clarke is the founding editor of Crime Prevention Studies, and his publications include *Designing Out Crime* (HMSO 1980, with Pat Mayhew), *The Reasoning Criminal* (Springer-Verlag 1986, with Derek Cornish), *Situational Crime Prevention: Successful Case Studies* (Criminal Justice Press, 1997), *Superhighway Robbery* (Willan Publishing, 2003, with Graeme Newman) *Crime Analysis for Problem Solvers* (United States Department of Justice, 2005, with John Eck) and *Outsmarting the Terrorists* (Praeger 2006, with Graeme Newman). Since 1998, he has chaired the selection committee for the annual Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing. Clarke holds a doctorate in psychology from the University of London.

Recommended Readings

- **A Police Guide to Surveying Citizens and Their Environments**, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 1993. This guide offers a practical introduction for police practitioners to two types of surveys that police find useful: surveying public opinion and surveying the physical environment. It provides guidance on whether and how to conduct cost-effective surveys.

- **Assessing Responses to Problems: An Introductory Guide for Police Problem-Solvers**, by John E. Eck (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2001). This guide is a companion to the *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police* series. It provides basic guidance to measuring and assessing problem-oriented policing efforts.

- **Conducting Community Surveys,** by Deborah Weisel (Bureau of Justice Statistics and Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 1999). This guide, along with accompanying computer software, provides practical, basic pointers for police in conducting community surveys. The document is also available at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs.

- **Crime Prevention Studies,** edited by Ronald V. Clarke (Criminal Justice Press, 1993, et seq.). This is a series of volumes of applied and theoretical research on reducing opportunities for crime. Many chapters are evaluations of initiatives to reduce specific crime and disorder problems.

- **Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing: The 1999 Herman Goldstein Award Winners.** This document produced by the National Institute of Justice in collaboration with the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services and the Police Executive Research Forum provides detailed reports of the best submissions to the annual award program that recognizes exemplary problem-oriented responses to various community problems. A similar publication is available for the award winners from subsequent years. The documents are also available at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij.

- **Not Rocket Science? Problem-Solving and Crime Reduction**, by Tim Read and Nick Tilley (Home Office Crime Reduction Research Series, 2000). Identifies and describes the factors that make problem-solving effective or ineffective as it is being practiced in police forces in England and Wales.

- **Opportunity Makes the Thief: Practical Theory for Crime Prevention**, by Marcus Felson and Ronald V. Clarke (Home Office Police Research Series, Paper No. 98, 1998). Explains how crime theories such as routine activity theory, rational choice theory and crime pattern theory have practical implications for the police in their efforts to prevent crime.

- **Problem Analysis in Policing**, by Rachel Boba (Police Foundation, 2003). Introduces and defines problem analysis and provides guidance on how problem analysis can be integrated and institutionalized into modern policing practices.

- **Problem-Oriented Policing**, by Herman Goldstein (McGraw-Hill, 1990, and Temple University Press, 1990). Explains the principles and methods of problem-oriented policing, provides examples of it in practice, and discusses how a police agency can implement the concept.

- **Problem-Oriented Policing and Crime Prevention**, by Anthony A. Braga (Criminal Justice Press, 2003). Provides a thorough review of significant policing research about problem places, high-activity offenders, and repeat victims, with a focus on the applicability of those findings to problem-oriented policing. Explains how police departments can facilitate problem-oriented policing by improving crime analysis, measuring performance, and securing productive partnerships.

- **Problem-Oriented Policing: Reflections on the First 20 Years**, by Michael S. Scott (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2000). Describes how the most critical elements of Herman Goldstein's problem-oriented policing model have developed in practice over its 20-year history, and proposes future directions for problem-oriented policing. The report is also available at www.cops.usdoj.gov.

- **Problem-Solving: Problem-Oriented Policing in Newport News,** by John E. Eck and William Spelman (Police Executive Research Forum, 1987). Explains the rationale behind problem-oriented policing and the problem-solving process, and provides examples of effective problem-solving in one agency.

- **Problem-Solving Tips: A Guide to Reducing Crime and Disorder Through Problem-Solving Partnerships** by Karin Schmerler, Matt Perkins, Scott Phillips, Tammy Rinehart and Meg Townsend. (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 1998) (also available at www.cops.usdoj.gov). Provides a brief introduction to problem-solving, basic information on the SARA model and detailed suggestions about the problem-solving process.

- **Situational Crime Prevention: Successful Case Studies**, Second Edition, edited by Ronald V. Clarke (Harrow and Heston, 1997). Explains the principles and methods of situational crime prevention, and presents over 20 case studies of effective crime prevention initiatives.

- **Tackling Crime and Other Public-Safety Problems: Case Studies in Problem-Solving**, by Rana Sampson and Michael S. Scott (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2000) (also available at www.cops.usdoj.gov). Presents case studies of effective police problem-solving on 18 types of crime and disorder problems.

- **Using Analysis for Problem-Solving: A Guidebook for Law Enforcement**, by Timothy S. Bynum (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2001). Provides an introduction for police to analyzing problems within the context of problem-oriented policing.

- **Using Research: A Primer for Law Enforcement Managers**, Second Edition, by John E. Eck and Nancy G. LaVigne (Police Executive Research Forum, 1994). Explains many of the basics of research as it applies to police management and problem-solving.

Other Problem-Oriented Guides for Police

Problem-Specific Guides series:

1. **Assaults in and Around Bars.** Michael S. Scott. 2001. ISBN: 1-932582-00-2
2. **Street Prostitution.** Michael S. Scott. 2001. ISBN: 1-932582-01-0
3. **Speeding in Residential Areas.** Michael S. Scott. 2001. ISBN: 1-932582-02-9
4. **Drug Dealing in Privately Owned Apartment Complexes**. Rana Sampson. 2001. ISBN: 1-932582-03-7
5. **False Burglar Alarms.** Rana Sampson. 2001. ISBN: 1-932582-04-5
6. **Disorderly Youth in Public Places.** Michael S. Scott. 2001. ISBN: 1-932582-05-3
7. **Loud Car Stereos.** Michael S. Scott. 2001. ISBN: 1-932582-06-1
8. **Robbery at Automated Teller Machines.** Michael S. Scott. 2001. ISBN: 1-932582-07-X
9. **Graffiti.** Deborah Lamm Weisel. 2002. ISBN: 1-932582-08-8
10. **Thefts of and From Cars in Parking Facilities.** Ronald V. Clarke. 2002. ISBN: 1-932582-09-6
11. **Shoplifting.** Ronald V. Clarke. 2002. ISBN: 1-932582-10-X
12. **Bullying in Schools.** Rana Sampson. 2002. ISBN: 1-932582-11-8
13. **Panhandling.** Michael S. Scott. 2002. ISBN: 1-932582-12-6
14. **Rave Parties.** Michael S. Scott. 2002. ISBN: 1-932582-13-4
15. **Burglary of Retail Establishments.** Ronald V. Clarke. 2002. ISBN: 1-932582-14-2
16. **Clandestine Drug Labs.** Michael S. Scott. 2002. ISBN: 1-932582-15-0
17. **Acquaintance Rape of College Students.** Rana Sampson. 2002. ISBN: 1-932582-16-9
18. **Burglary of Single-Family Houses.** Deborah Lamm Weisel. 2002. ISBN: 1-932582-17-7
19. **Misuse and Abuse of 911.** Rana Sampson. 2002. ISBN: 1-932582-18-5
20. **Financial Crimes Against the Elderly.** Kelly Dedel Johnson. 2003. ISBN: 1-932582-22-3

21. **Check and Card Fraud.** Graeme R. Newman. 2003. ISBN: 1-932582-27-4
22. **Stalking.** The National Center for Victims of Crime. 2004. ISBN: 1-932582-30-4
23. **Gun Violence Among Serious Young Offenders.** Anthony A. Braga. 2004. ISBN: 1-932582-31-2
24. **Prescription Fraud.** Julie Wartell and Nancy G. La Vigne. 2004. ISBN: 1-932582-33-9
25. **Identity Theft**. Graeme R. Newman. 2004. ISBN: 1-932582-35-3
26. **Crimes Against Tourists.** Ronald W. Glesnor and Kenneth J. Peak. 2004. ISBN: 1-932582-36-3
27. **Underage Drinking.** Kelly Dedel Johnson. 2004. ISBN: 1-932582-39-8
28. **Street Racing.** Kenneth J. Peak and Ronald W. Glensor. 2004. ISBN: 1-932582-42-8
29. **Cruising.** Kenneth J. Peak and Ronald W. Glensor. 2004. ISBN: 1-932582-43-6
30. **Disorder at Budget Motels**. Karin Schmerler. 2005. ISBN: 1-932582-41-X
31. **Drug Dealing in Open-Air Markets.** Alex Harocopos and Mike Hough. 2005. ISBN: 1-932582-45-2
32. **Bomb Threats in Schools.** Graeme R. Newman. 2005. ISBN: 1-932582-46-0
33. **Illicit Sexual Activity in Public Places.** Kelly Dedel Johnson. 2005. ISBN: 1-932582-47-9
34. **Robbery of Taxi Drivers.** Martha J. Smith. 2005. ISBN: 1-932582-50-9
35. **School Vandalism and Break-Ins.** Kelly Dedel Johnson. 2005. ISBN: 1-9325802-51-7
36. **Drunk Driving.** Michael S. Scott, Nina J. Emerson, Louis B. Antonacci, and Joel B. Plant. 2006. ISBN: 1-932582-57-6
37. **Juvenile Runaways.** Kelly Dedel. 2006. ISBN: 1932582-56-8
38. **The Exploitation of Trafficked Women.** Graeme R. Newman. 2006. ISBN: 1-932582-59-2
39. **Student Party Riots.** Tamara D. Madensen and John E. Eck. 2006. ISBN: 1-932582-60-6

40. **People with Mental Illness.** Gary Cordner. 2006. ISBN: 1-932582-63-0
41. **Child Pornography on the Internet.** Richard Wortley and Stephen Smallbone. 2006. ISBN: 1-932582-65-7
42. **Witness Intimidation.** Kelly Dedel. 2006. ISBN: 1-932582-67-3
43. **Burglary at Single-Family House Construction Sites.** Rachel Boba and Roberto Santos. 2006. ISBN: 1-932582-00-2
44. **Disorder at Day Laborer Sites.** Rob Guerette. 2007. ISBN: 1-932582-72-X
45. **Domestic Violence.** Rana Sampson. 2007. ISBN: 1-932582-74-6
46. **Thefts of and from Cars on Residential Streets and Driveways.** Todd Keister. 2007. ISBN: 1-932582-76-2
47. **Drive-By Shootings.** Kelly Dedel. 2007. ISBN: 1-932582-77-0
48. **Bank Robbery.** Deborah Lamm Weisel. 2007. ISBN: 1-932582-78-9
49. **Robbery of Convenience Stores.** Alicia Altizio and Diana York. 2007. ISBN: 1-932582-79-7

Response Guides series:

- **The Benefits and Consequences of Police Crackdowns.** Michael S. Scott. 2003. ISBN: 1-932582-24-X
- **Closing Streets and Alleys to Reduce Crime: Should You Go Down This Road?** Ronald V. Clarke. 2004. ISBN: 1-932582-41-X
- **Crime Prevention Publicity Campaigns.** Emmanuel Barthe. 2006 ISBN: 1-932582-66-5
- **Shifting and Sharing Responsibility for Public Safety Problems.** Michael S. Scott and Herman Goldstein. 2005. ISBN: 1-932582-55-X
- **Video Surveillance of Public Places.** Jerry Ratcliffe. 2006 ISBN: 1-932582-58-4

Problem-Solving Tools series:

- **Assessing Responses to Problems: An Introductory Guide for Police Problem-Solvers.** John E. Eck. 2002. ISBN: 1-932582-19-3
- **Researching a Problem.** Ronald V. Clarke and Phyllis A. Schultz. 2005. ISBN: 1-932582-48-7
- **Using Offender Interviews to Inform Police Problem Solving.** Scott H. Decker. 2005. ISBN: 1-932582-49-5
- **Analyzing Repeat Victimization.** Deborah Lamm Weisel. 2005. ISBN: 1-932582-54-1
- **Understanding Risky Facilities.** Ronald V. Clarke and John E. Eck. 2007. ISBN: 1-932582-75-4

Upcoming Problem-Oriented Guides for Police

Problem-Specific Guides
Abandoned Vehicles
Bicycle Theft
Crowd Control at Stadiums and Other Entertainment Venues
Child Abuse
Crime and Disorder in Parks
Traffic Congestion Around Schools
Transient Encampments

Problem-Solving Tools
Designing a Problem Analysis System
Displacement
Implementing Responses to Problems
Using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design in Problem Solving

Response Guides
Enhancing Lighting
Sting Operations

For more information about the *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police* series and other COPS Office publications, please call the COPS Office Response Center at 800.421.6770 or visit COPS Online at www.cops.usdoj.gov.

For More Information:

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
1100 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20530

To obtain details on COPS programs, call the COPS Office Response Center at 800.421.6770

Visit COPS Online at the address listed below.

e11062041
ISBN: 1-932582-10-X

Updated: June 2007

www.cops.usdoj.gov