


I'm not robot  reCAPTCHA

**I'm not robot!**

# Crime prevention theory

**Situational crime prevention theory. Crime prevention theory and practice. Crime prevention theory and practice stephen s. Crime prevention theory pdf. Crime prevention theory and practice stephen s. pdf. Crime prevention theory and practice pdf. Situational crime prevention theory and practice.**



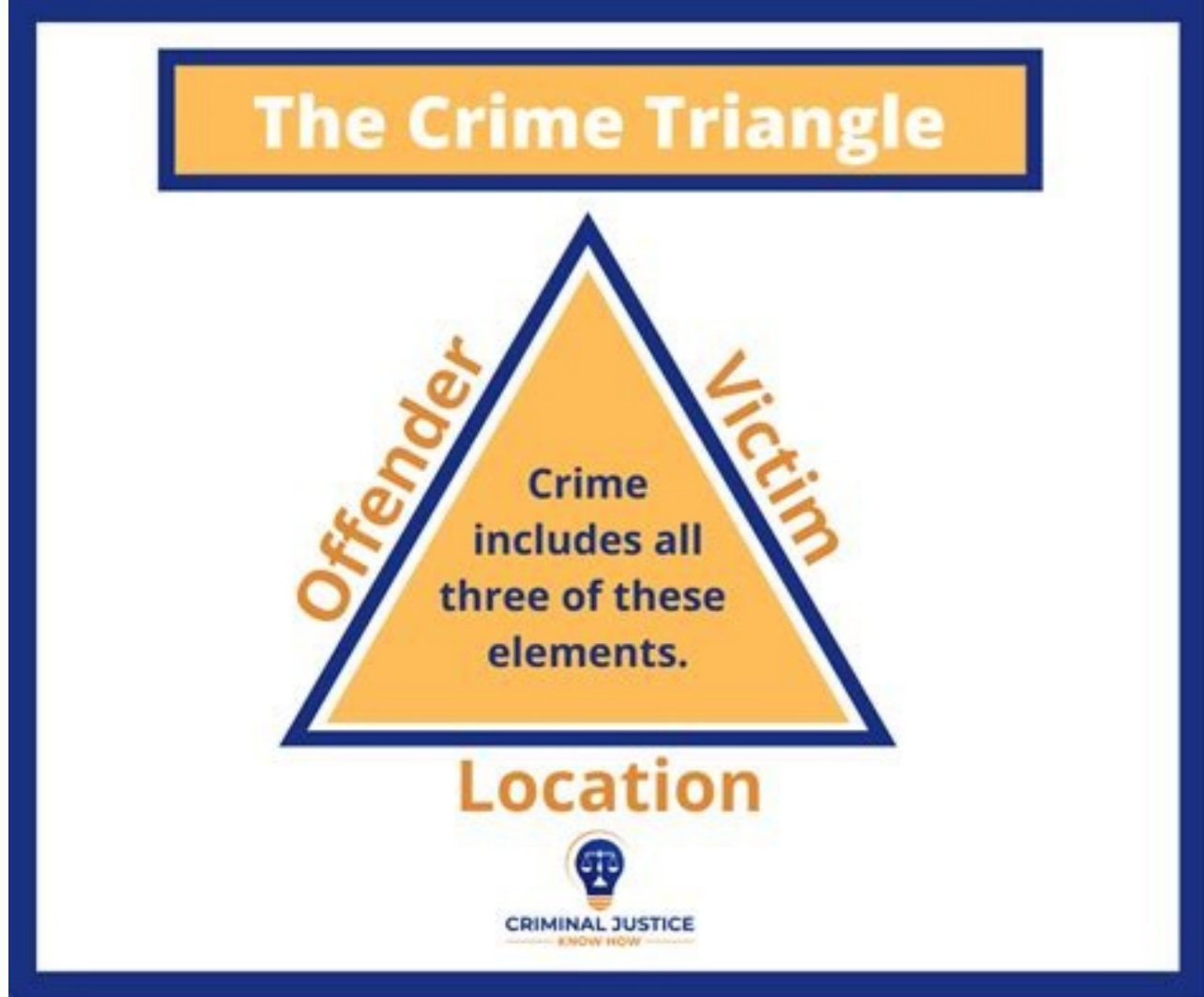
**Social and community crime prevention theory. Crime prevention theory criminology. Social crime prevention theory. Community crime prevention theory. Situational crime prevention theory pdf. Environmental crime prevention theory. Crime prevention theory and practice stephen schneider pdf. Situational crime prevention theory examples.**

The originating concept of situational crime prevention (SCP) is "opportunity reduction" (Clarke, 1980). It eschews esoteric matters or grand initiatives to transform society (Freilich & Newman, 2016; Newman, 1997; Tilley, 2004).

## Situational crime prevention (SCP)

1. Art and science of reducing opportunities for crime
2. Based on new crime theories:
  - Rational choice
  - Routine activity
  - Crime pattern

Instead, SCP is uniquely concerned with the practical question of how offenders successfully commit their crimes. Understanding how the offender carries out the crime is used to craft interventions that remove crime opportunities and thereby prevent offending. In contrast, orthodox criminology is focused on why perpetrators offend, what Clarke (2004) and others refer to as the dispositional bias. Freilich and Natarajan (2009) explain that Ron Clarke, the founder of SCP, became interested in situational factors, opportunity, and crime prevention when he was studying for his doctorate. At that time, Clarke also worked as the research officer at the Kingswood Training School, a residential school for delinquent boys.



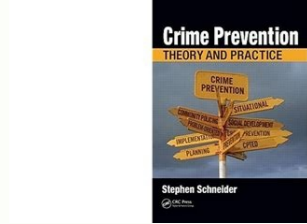
His doctoral thesis examined why some boys ran away ("absconded") from the school. At that time, most frameworks assumed that deep-seated psychological factors could explain absconding. But Clarke's (1967) analysis of absconding records found that situational factors, such as daylight hours and sunshine, influenced the opportunity structure (longer periods of darkness provided youths more opportunities to escape unseen from school) and were related to absconding.

Increase the effort	Increase the risks	Reduce the rewards	Reduce provocations	Remove excuses
1. Target harden	6. Extend guardianship	11. Conceal targets	16. Reduce frustrations and stress	21. Set rules
2. Control access to facilities	7. Assist natural surveillance	12. Remove targets	17. Avoid emotions	22. Post instructions
3. Screen exits	8. Reduce anonymity	13. Identify property	18. Reduce emotional appeal	23. Alert conscience
4. Deter offenders	9. Utilize place managers	14. Disrupt markets	19. Neutralize peer pressure	24. Assist compliance
5. Control tools/ weapons	10. Strengthen formal surveillance	15. Deny benefits	20. Discourage imitation	25. Control drugs and alcohol

SCP primarily seeks to solve and reduce crime problems in an action setting. Newman and Clarke (2003, p. 7) explain that SCP's approach is similar to that of "operations research" (Wilkins, 1997), in which the researcher works closely with the persons who are actually on the job. Indeed, SCP's focus on crime reduction has led to partnerships between academics, police, and practitioners, where SCP principles have been used to guide practice (see, for example, Braga & Kennedy, 2012; Scott & Goldstein, 2012). SCP is associated with problem-oriented policing, currently a leading policing strategy (Eck & Madensen, 2012). Problem-oriented policing calls for focusing on specific problems to devise proactive strategies to eliminate them (Clarke & Goldstein, 2002, 2003; see also the extensive collection of Problem-Specific Guides for Police published by the Center for Problem-oriented Policing, many of which are heavily indebted to SCP). SCP proponents have also worked with private industry to design products based upon the principles of design against crime (DAC) that are resistant to theft and other crimes (Ekblom, 2008, 2012a, 2012b). These efforts all pinpoint the problem or problems, and then data are collected (sometimes in reverse order if it is difficult to identify the specific problem without first having collected the data).

Factors (Cornish & Clarke, 1986, p. 3). Whatever the model, it is clear that rational choice can also be "irrational" (Tilley, 1997, pp. 95–107), which therefore makes rational choice theory quite applicable to some crimes that are popularly thought of as irrational, such as rape, murder, and terrorism (see Freilich & Newman, 2009). The irrationality of the needs of computer programs to systematically develop and implement routine actions, feedback loops, and the like. However, in SCP, the modern version of operations research is called the "script" approach (Cornish, 1994), in which the detailed lines of action of offender behavior that are required to carry out a specific crime are described and analyzed. Cornish and Clarke (2002, p. 47) explain that "crime [scripts]... involve such chains of decisions and actions, separable into interdependent stages, involving the attainment of sub-goals that serve the overall goals of the crime." SCP's specificity focus is discussed further in the section on "Specificity". SCP's script method has also encouraged SCP scholars to focus on the location of crime. Brantingham and Brantingham (1981) introduced the geography of crime to criminology via crime pattern theory. They argued that crime was never random and demonstrated that criminal events and criminal behaviors were patterned according to specific times and places. The places varied from street corners to neighborhoods and other special places that attracted criminal behavior. As the technology of mapping developed, the concept of hot spots developed, and much policing today is driven by various conceptions of hot spots of crime (Eck & Weisburd, 1995; Weisburd et al., 2012). Adopting the SCP scripting method, a further elaboration of this idea was to follow the offender's journey to crime and identify the favorite places, routes, and times where offenders would either congregate or carry out their criminal activity. A detailed knowledge of this information then provides insights as to where, in the chains of events situated in time and place, police or crime prevention specialists may intervene. Importantly, SCP's basic ideas are not new: there are many examples going back thousands of years that rely upon similar arguments and assumptions to reduce crime. Killias (2006) notes, for example, that Aristotle discussed the relationship between opportunity and theft. Marongiu and Newman (1997) point out that the ancient Romans relied upon SCP-like interventions, such as the use of walls and building designs to safeguard installations, houses, and other structures. There is thus a collective body of earlier knowledge on which SCP proponents can draw to reduce crime. SCP has also been linked to Beccaria's (1764) *On Crimes and Punishments*, the seminal Classical School text that helped create the academic discipline of criminology and criminal justice (Beirne, 1991; Newman, 1997). Beccaria (1764) assumed that individuals were naturally inclined to place their own interests first and to seek out what pleases them, while avoiding unpleasant situations. Since most crime is committed to further an individual's interests, there is no need to explain where the motivation to commit crime originates (Freilich, 2015; Newman & Marongiu, 1990).

Thus, Beccaria was a proponent of deterrence and argued that the criminal justice system should use punishment to reduce crime in the future. In this respect, Beccaria's forward-looking approach, though more general than that of SCP, anticipates SCP's mission of preventing specific crimes (Newman & Marongiu, 1990, 1997). Bentham (1789), whose utilitarian approach anticipated operations research in post World War II Britain, similarly viewed human behavior as being motivated by the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. In addition, people are said to have "agency," the ability to control their behaviors and to make rational choices. To Bentham, a rational choice was to choose the course of behavior that avoided pain and consummated pleasure (Newman & Marongiu, 1997, pp. 137–162). It was a "lightning calculus," a mechanical assessment that individuals continuously made, rather like robots—which suggests that individuals may make decisions "without thinking," setting the basis for what SCP would later call "limited rationality." It followed that interventions to prevent crime were simply a matter of controlling such calculated behavior by reducing opportunities. The narrow rational choice model forms the basis of the economic theory of rational decision making (Becker, 1968). It may or may not be "conscious," but it is rational according to the external evaluation of the observer (the economist) (Opp, 1997, p. 47).



This model of decision making obviously poses a problem for modern rational choice theorists, since the common sense meaning of the word "rational" is taken to mean the conscious making of a decision. To address this problem of "unconscious" decisions, rational choice theorists have introduced the idea of "readiness" (Newman, 1997, p. 21). There are basically three versions of readiness:1.

Situations may make individuals ready to commit crimes almost without their being aware of it. These include environmental cues that may provoke or prompt individuals to action (Wortley, 1997, p. 66).2. Background causal factors ("distal factors") place individuals in different states of readiness (Wortley, 2011), which make them more sensitive to opportunities in the environment and thus account for individual and group differences in propensity to commit crime (Tilley, 1997, pp. 95–107).3. Individuals arrive at a conscious state of readiness as a result of evaluating alternative means of meeting a perceived need, and this conscious state is influenced by a host of background and situational factors (Cornish & Clarke, 1986, p. 3). Whatever the model, it is clear that rational choice can also be "irrational" (Tilley, 1997, pp. 95–107), which therefore makes rational choice theory quite applicable to some crimes that are popularly thought of as irrational, such as rape, murder, and terrorism (see Freilich & Newman, 2009). The irrationality of rationality has led rational choice theorists to advance it as a "limited" or "bounded" model of rationality. Hsu and Newman (2011) note in relation to the third type of readiness described above, that Cornish and Clarke (1986) have advanced the idea that offenders behave in situations (physical and social environmental settings) according to the ways in which they perceive them. They perceive their own needs (they want money for a drug habit), and they perceive environments (near and far) as offering them opportunities to carry out their course of action, whether it be burglary, bank robbery, or a terrorist attack. Why offenders choose to commit crime as a means to get money rather than get a job is the question unanswered by rational choice theory. Or at least is seen as less relevant than the question why the offender chooses burglary instead of bank robbery, or why the terrorist chooses to bomb a building instead of hijack an airplane.

It is offenders' perceptions of both opportunities and constraints that condition their course of action. To the outsider or observer of their behavior, the courses of action taken by offenders may or may not appear rational. To the offender, the behavior is perceived as a rational way of achieving an end. SCP calls for removing opportunities to prevent crime (Clarke, 2012; Mayhew, Clarke, Hough, & Sturman, 1976). Cornish and Clarke (1986) have repeatedly stated that SCP focuses on interventions to reduce very specific crimes (e.g., reduction of car theft in parking lots, not reduction of crime or even car crime). They note: "... a crime-specific focus was adopted ... because the situational context of decision making and the information being handled will vary greatly among offenses" (p. 2). In other words, SCP is at odds with "grand" or "general" theories about crime, such as Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) theory that argued a single factor (low self-control) could account for all types of offending, from street crime to white collar crime, although control theory does provide the context within which choices are made, consistent with the SCP approach (Felson, 2014). Situations in which crimes occur are thus the focus of study as they demand specificity: they provide concrete clues to both the behavior of the criminals and how the environment (both social and physical)—as seen through the prism of the situation—may be changed to affect criminal behavior. This focus on the specificity of the crime was important to later research that evaluated the success of situational interventions, as seen in the many case studies in Clarke (1997) and in the SCP case studies database. Focusing on specific crime types (or problems) will lead to the identification of the situational characteristics—the opportunities—that allow the perpetrator to successfully complete the crime. (This is discussed more fully in the next subsection.) The identification of opportunities highlights possible intervention points to remove them. Once the opportunities and possible intervention points are identified, the next step is to devise strategies to prevent the crime. SCP relies upon its famous 25 techniques of prevention to devise interventions to reduce crime in specific situations. Examining the specific situations in which crimes occur leads us to look for the opportunities that situations provide for the offender or intending offender to commit crimes of specific kinds. This approach is commonly referred to as analyzing the opportunity structure of crimes (Clarke, 1997). Analysts begin with the situation or situations in which the crime occurs, and they almost always find that general settings can be broken down into increasingly small component parts. The ways in which this is accomplished may depend on the facilities or access to information available. It may require the collection of information from participants in the situations in which the crime occurs, such as offenders, victims, and law enforcement personnel. Information collected, however, is always focused on how the crime was committed, what facilitates its commission, what barriers are avoided or overcome by the offender, and so on. This focus leads to a mapping of the opportunity structure of the crime, and hopefully the point at which the course of action taken by the offender can be thwarted. Again, the conceptual approach is on "how" not "why"—although the answers to the "little whys" may be sought along the way, such as why did the burglar choose this house to enter rather than another. But the big sociological why, the why of "the causes of crime," is not addressed (Clarke, 2012; Freilich & Newman, 2016). In sum, the opportunity structure focuses on a specific crime and application of the script method (all discussed above) to uncover possible preventative interventions. This has led to a range of techniques that researchers and policymakers draw on to develop strategies of crime reduction. The SCP framework currently includes five general strategies encompassing 25 techniques to reduce crime (Cornish & Clarke, 2003). They include both "hard" and "soft" interventions. Hard interventions include either deterring offenders from committing the offense, or making it impossible for the offender to commit the crime regardless of his/her intent or level of motivation. Many of these strategies, though not all, are consistent with Beccaria's and Bentham's ideas discussed above (Freilich, 2015). Soft interventions reduce situational prompts/cues that increase a person's motivation to commit a crime during specific types of events (Cornish & Clarke, 2003; Freilich & Chermak, 2009; Wortley, 2008). As described by Newman and Freilich (2012), Freilich and Newman (2014), SCP is dynamic and encourages innovation, which is why the types of interventions have evolved and increased over the years. SCP was first set forth in a Home Office paper (Mayhew, Clarke, Hough, & Sturman, 1976) that highlighted the concept of opportunity by emphasizing (a) the immediate physical environment that made particular crimes possible and (b) the situational conditions that were "stimulus conditions, including opportunities for action presented by the immediate environment, ... to provide—in a variety of ways—the inducements for criminality" (Mayhew et al., 1976, p. 2). The paper described other studies that demonstrated this aspect of opportunity in a variety of settings: steering locks that prevented car theft; changes in the physical environment that reduced boys' absconding from school; reductions in the toxicity of coal gas that resulted in the decline of suicide by inhaling coal gas, a common method of suicide at the time; carelessness of victims that made stealing cars and burglary easier; the poor design of housing estates that reduced surveillance by neighbors; thus increasing opportunities for crime and vandalism; damage on buses resulting from poor supervision. Thus, opportunity explained a variety of crimes, even suicide, which has traditionally been studied by psychiatrists because of its "obvious" deep psychological motivation. The general applicability of "opportunity" and the situational environment are built into the origins of SCP. The same 1976 paper outlined the essential components of opportunity:1. Offender-based opportunities, such as lifestyle, experience, age, and sex2. Patterns of daily activity (clearly a precursor to routine activity theory)3. The abundance of products that are available for theft (e.g., cars or items displayed in retail stores) or that may cause injury (e.g., guns)4. Environments where there is reduced security, such as dark streets and public places that lack surveillance or supervision, such as buses, housing estates, or retail stores. The four types of opportunity were connected to eight opportunity-reducing techniques (Clarke & Mayhew, 1980) classified into three types: target hardening, target removal, and various forms of surveillance. Subsequent research on routine activity theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979), inducements to crime, and issues of access control and defensible space (Poyner & Webb, 1991) resulted in 12 techniques, organized under three headings: Increasing the effort, increasing the risks, and reducing the rewards of offending (Clarke, 1992, p. 11). Clarke and Homel (1997) added a column of "removing excuses" for crime to incorporate "folk crimes" that provide the excuse "everybody does it" (e.g., traffic offenses), unlike the predatory crimes of "hardened criminals" (Clarke, 1997, p. 16). Finally, in response to criticism by Wortley (2001), who argued that situational aspects of the social and physical environments may precipitate criminal acts, Cornish and Clarke (2003) added another column, "reducing provocations," for a total of 25 techniques (see Table 1; a more complete and interactive version is available at . To decide which of the 25 techniques to rely upon in each specific situation, SCP calls for reviewing the empirical literature to identify successful interventions that were used to combat similar problems (Clarke & Eck, 2005) and the innovative crafting of new strategies (Eck, 2002a, 2002b; Ekblom, 2012a). Invariably, a series of potential crime-reduction strategies are identified. What works will depend on many factors, including the cost and practicality of implementation.

There are so many techniques available that it is hard to imagine any problem to which one or more of them would not apply. The techniques chosen will depend on which interventions local communities are most comfortable with after balancing public safety, individual rights, community concerns, and other factors (Felson & Clarke, 1997). As SCP's popularity and its use have increased, a growing number of strategies have been identified and implemented that have in fact reduced crime (Clarke, 1997; Gueretie & Bowers, 2009; Weisburd et al., 2006). SCP is based upon a well-developed model (Freilich, 2015; Newman, 1997). It is not atheoretical as its detractors claim (Haywood, 2007) when they observe that SCP's primary focus is crime reduction, achieved by an eclectic array of 25 techniques. Many critics mistake SCP's interdisciplinary approach to crime causation for lack of theory. SCP uses a variety of causal models to achieve its crime-reduction goal but it also adds to, and qualifies, some of the major theoretical approaches of other disciplines. This section first describes the causal models SCP uses to reduce crime.

Next it shows how SCP adds to the standard ideas of social structure and culture, two key sociological concepts, followed by a brief overview of the economics of SCP. Many of SCP's "hard" techniques are based upon the classical school and deterrence theory arguments that assume offender agency, hedonism, and rationality. As already noted, Beccaria assumed that because individuals want to avoid negative outcomes, they will choose to conform to avoid the costs of punishment.

Similarly, some SCP hard techniques (e.g., the use of CCTV cameras, the public deployment of police officers, and environmental design initiatives to increase surveillance) are consistent with Beccaria's certainty claims, because they warn individuals that if they offend they are likely to be immediately apprehended (Cozens, 2008; Jeffrey & Zahn, 1993).

Other SCP strategies converge with Beccaria's severity arguments that called for increasing the magnitude of punishment. SCP proponents eschew the use of formal punishment and instead rely upon situational interventions. They claim that laws and punishment are too distant a threat to influence most offenders' decision making during the crime event (Braga & Kennedy, 2012; Cornish & Clarke, 1986, 2008; Cusson, 1993; Felson, 2008; Tilley, 2004). Some of the interventions (such as building a fence around a parking lot so that offenders must scale it to gain entry) make it more difficult for the crime to be committed. These interventions assume that persons will choose to conform because the increased costs no longer make it "worthwhile" to commit the crime.

SCP strategies also mimic Beccaria's celerity arguments that for punishment to deter, it should immediately follow the crime. SCP recognizes that interventions and offender decisions must converge. Interventions that are temporally distant from crime scenes are usually ineffective. In this sense, SCP is faithful to Beccaria's call for crime and apprehension. Publicity can also be used to influence offenders' perceptions of the difficulty/risks of committing a crime and their likelihood of being caught. Significantly, not all hard SCP techniques are based upon the assumption of offender rationality or agency. Certain hard SCP strategies, the traditional version of SCP set forth in the 1970s, seek to thwart the offender by making it impossible for the crime to be committed no matter what the motivation, mindset, or emotions of the offender (Cornish & Clarke, 2008, p. 41). Rational choice theory, in other words, is not needed to support this aspect of SCP. Newman and Freilich (2012, p. 216) explain that "originally interventions were applied to the situational environment without regard to offender motivation or behavior. For example, the construction of physical barriers has nothing to do with the internal psychology of offenders. If it works, 'it works' and we know from many studies, that such hardening techniques work." An effective hardening of the target would just as easily thwart a (legally insane) offender acting under an irresistible impulse (who did not possess agency), as it would a hedonistic offender who did possess agency and chose to try to commit the offense. This approach reflects the "black box" behaviorist theories of the 1950s: organisms respond to a given stimulus in predictable ways (responses), regardless of what is going on inside their heads. SCP's recently developed "soft" approaches also do not rely upon offender rationality or agency to reduce crime. Soft SCP approaches are instead based upon a complex social psychological theory of human behavior. The techniques seek to remove environmental cues or prompts that create, or increase, an individual's motivation to commit crime. Wortley (1997, 2008) identified empirical findings that, for instance, found that publicly displayed weapons (for example, by a police officer or private security guard) could cause some individuals to become violent. Wortley argued that characteristics of the environment provoked internal dispositions in the offender and that, without such stimuli, offenders would not be motivated to commit the crime. Wortley discovered the controlling conditions that invoke these behaviors and implied that certain conditions were embedded within the psychology of individuals and may remain dormant unless the external (situational) conditions of provocation or invocation were activated. Soft SCP endorses interventions that eliminate these cues and prompts. In terms of the weapon example, a soft SCP policy would ensure that in certain circumstances a police officer's weapon would not be publicly displayed. The conclusion from this illustration is that offender agency, in the sense of conscious decision making, is not assumed by soft SCP (Freilich, 2015; Newman & Freilich, 2012), though it is possible that what Bentham meant by a "lightning calculus"—his view of rationality—was operative. Finally, it is important to note that even if certain SCP techniques are based upon assumptions that take motivated offenders for granted, they still may differ in the degree in which they do so. Cornish and Clarke's (2003) response to Wortley's (2008) critique discussed three types of offenders, mundane, provoked, and antisocial predator. Interestingly, SCP proponents have not really elaborated upon the issue of offender types and varying motivation levels. It could be that SCP scholars are worried that engaging this issue will detract from their crime-reduction mission and situational focus by instead highlighting potential distractions like how the offender types emerge and other distal concerns (Freilich, 2015). SCP has a very different take than does mainstream sociology on the key constructs of social structure and culture. Unlike most sociological works that focuses on the large-scale and abstract concept of the social structure, SCP demands specificity. In other words, SCP's concern is the opportunity structure, not the social structure. It treats situations as concrete settings (this does not of course mean that they are physical settings).

Thus, questions of the relationship between social class and crime—a perennial topic of study in the sociological approach to crime—are seen as too abstract. Further, they do not lead easily to prevention. It is the highly abstract nature of the concept of social class, for example, that makes it almost impossible to discern from the literature whether or not there is a correlation between social class and crime. This is also exacerbated by the vagueness of the word "crime," which SCP also insists on breaking down to the most specific category of action possible. Take the example of the classic "broken windows" paper by Wilson and Kelling (1982). They noted that neighborhoods (usually specific areas of the city) that were neglected and allowed to deteriorate, where vandalism and other minor crimes were tolerated, led offenders to perceive that social control was weak and that they could safely commit more serious crimes. Many inferences for changes to reduce or prevent crime in that and similar neighborhoods were made from these seemingly simple, perhaps even common-sense, observations (Garland, 2000). Had Wilson and Kelling applied the traditional sociological approach, they would have taken the run-down neighborhoods as symptoms of lower social class, which would have led to completely different policies, such as those advocated by Cloward and Ohlin (1960). Further, the inference is suspect that run-down neighborhoods are symptoms of low social class, since there are many well-kept streets and houses in poorer areas. Jumping to the abstraction of social class therefore introduces not only an element of vagueness, but also of bias. Worse, it leads to policies that cannot, without massive and perhaps even

Useful social upheaval, ever been achieved (Freilich & Newman, 2016; Knepper, 2007; Tilley, 2004). Thus, the contrast between opportunity structure and social structure is great. Opportunity structure is grounded in concrete analysis of the opportunities that situations give to would-be criminals. It makes specific criminal activities possible. Social structure is grounded in generalities and inferences, such as income, employment, “class consciousness,” and so on, with a highly tenuous link between those abstractions and the equally abstract notion of “crime.” It might be argued that focusing so closely on the opportunity structure of crimes in such narrowly defined situations ignores other significant and important aspects. Certain types of organized crime, in which criminals adhere to a particular set of values and ways of doing business, may be a particularly good example. Here, offenders bring a level of commitment to a situation, and it is this commitment that has to be recognized as part of the situation to be assessed. Similarly, certain Internet crimes are commonly believed to be the result of the “hacker’s ethic,” which, it is often claimed, derives from a “culture” or “subculture” to which computer buffs adhere (Newman & Clarke, 2003). This raises the interesting question of the relationship between situations and culture. For is not culture a highly abstract term of the same kind, bringing with it the same problems as “social class”? It is perhaps typical of the abstract nature of much of sociology that there has been a long and difficult controversy surrounding the concepts of culture and class. The work of Kornhauser (1978), for example, epitomizes this controversy, where it is argued that culture does not exist, or at least that it is subsumed within social class. Criminology textbooks compare and contrast cultural versus class explanations of crime. SCP does not need to address this issue, since it is concerned with applying techniques of prevention to specific situations. Whether or not a particular value is class-based or culturally based is largely irrelevant. All that is needed is that a particular value or set of values be identifiable empirically, and that these can be exploited to modify decision making in a specific situation. The work of Cavallo and Drummond (1994) in Australia applied a number of situational techniques to reduce the level of drunk driving, not the least of which were random breath tests. One of the techniques used an intensive advertising campaign that targeted the beer-drinking culture. “Good mates don’t let mates drink and drive” was the slogan. This approach acknowledges the existence of (in this case) a strong subcultural attitude that valued heavy drinking in any setting and refused to acknowledge that individuals who drove

while drunk were either impaired or responsible for the accidents they may have caused. It also targeted a positive aspect of Australian subculture, the strong value of “mateship.” This was an example of targeting an advertising campaign at a specific situation—one in which a mate is urged to stop another mate from making an “idiot” of himself.

Similarly, Freilich and Chermak (2009) highlight extremist ideology not to address distal factors but to use situationally crafted responses to prevent offending. This is a situational view of culture (and ideology), recognizing that a situation that is bound up with deep and broad cultural values can be modified using known techniques that intervene in an individual’s decision making at just the right time. Heavy assumptions of psychology are embedded in this approach (guilt, shame, and peer pressure) (Clarke & Homel, 1997; Wortley, 1996). But the techniques of advertising, which are essentially designed to affect directly an individual’s decisions and choices at a specific moment—usually to buy a particular product brand—are well established. In traditional economic theory, the concept of rational choice simply means that if economic conditions change, individuals will change their behavior in response. The principle of supply and demand provides the prime example. If a particular drug (e.g., heroin) is scarce (because it is illegal) then the price will be high because demand exceeds supply. If a dealer floods the market, then prices will drop and more people will buy the product. Markets therefore behave rationally because people do. Of course, psychologists rightly observe that taking heroin is not a rational choice—that is, it is bad for the user’s health (in most cases). Hsu and Newman (2011) note that the first decision to take heroin may have been rational from the user’s point of view (under pressure from peers, suffering excruciating pain, facing emotional stress, etc.) but choosing to continue its use is not a rational decision. In fact it may not be a decision at all because the user becomes addicted (i.e., habituated). Yet even in the case of a drug addict, carrying out a burglary to acquire heroin requires rational decision making—whether to find a dealer for the right price, to rob a convenience store to get the money, or to break into a pharmacy to steal the drug. These behavior sequences require some planning and some knowledge of the targets to be reached. It will be noted that these examples appear to be more complex than the overly simple model of rational choice assumed in basic economic theory (Opp, 1997). However, the more sophisticated version of rational choice put forward by Simon (1955), with his idea of “satisficing” (satisfactory and sufficient), a decision-making strategy that accepts a “good enough” outcome, rather than the best choice of alternatives as posed by Bentham originally and throughout economic theory, was adopted by SCP in its infancy (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). Most crimes are committed by groups of two or more, which means that the decision-making process becomes considerably more complicated. SCP recognized early on that combinations of offenders create networks of varying complexity and thus offer opportunities for intervention and disruption (Clarke & Newman, 2006, pp. 75–83). SCP has embraced the concept of markets in two respects: (1) the analysis and disruption of criminal markets (Natarajan & Hough, 2000) and (2) the use of markets to motivate businesses to reduce the negative externalities of their activities, such as designing crime-prevention techniques into their products and systems (Newman, 2012, pp. 87–106). There are a number of methodological challenges in measuring the effect of particular interventions designed to reduce or prevent specific crimes. Two major methodologies have emerged. The first is the script approach reviewed above. The script method analyzes the sequence of behaviors and events that are the result or cause of offender decision making and are used to identify the interventions (by first highlighting the opportunities and intervention points). The second is a special methodology developed to assess the specific effects of a particular intervention. The second approach builds on the first to assess the level of, and/or change in type of, crime before and after the intervention. Some studies have used time series analyses to investigate the impact of specific interventions and found support for SCP’s claims (see, for example, Hsu & Apel, 2015). A number of studies, termed “cliff edge” studies (Perry et al., 2016) have found that there can be a dramatic drop in crime after an effective intervention. Traditional experimental designs are often not appropriate or needed, especially because these experiments occur in an action setting, so that political and ethical problems may be involved in allocating groups to experimental or control groups. Nagin and Weisburd (2013) and Perry et al. (2016) have shown that convincing and valid results can be drawn using quasi- experimental designs that focus on careful examination of time-series frequency tables. SCP’s focus on situations that are essentially external to the offender led Clarke (1999) to identify the characteristics of situations that attracted offenders or facilitated their behaviors. This resulted in the idea of “hot products,” which led inevitably to examination of the ways in which products could be designed so as to make them less desirable to thieves (Eklom, 2005, 2012a, 2012b). This meant that the point of intervention was, incredibly, not at the site where the crime might occur, such as, for example the arrangement of goods in a retail store, but at the earliest possible point, the design of the product that might be stolen. The characteristics of hot products were identified according to the acronym CRAVED (Clarke, 1999): • Concealable. Objects that can be hidden in pockets or bags are more easily stolen by shoplifters and other sneak thieves. • Removable. The fact that cars and bikes are mobile helps explain why they are so often stolen.

Nor is it surprising that laptop computers are often stolen, since they are desirable and easy to carry. • Available. Theft waves can result from the availability of an attractive new product, such as an iPhone, which quickly establishes its own illegal market. Desirable objects that are widely available and easy to find are at higher risk. • Valuable. Thieves will generally choose more expensive goods, particularly when they are stealing to sell. • Enjoyable. Hot products may be enjoyable things to consume, such as liquor, tobacco, and songs or videos. • Disposable. Thieves prefer products that are easy to sell. The idea of hot products has led to the insight that crime prevention can be built into the design of products and services in the same way that safety is designed into automobiles (Clarke & Newman, 2005a, 2005b; Eklom, 2005, 2012a, 2012b). Packaging of products and their placement in stores may significantly reduce theft, or even murder, as in the case of the Tylenol poisonings. In 1982, seven people died in the Chicago as a result of swallowing cyanide-tainted Tylenol. In 1988, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) received 488 tampering complaints, most of which concerned food and beverage products. Nor were these incidents confined to the United States. In 1989 in the United Kingdom, Heinz suffered an incident of tampering with its baby food products, which cost it at least £2 million in advertising to re-launch the product after it was protected with tamper-resistant packaging (Clarke & Newman, 2005, pp. 55–57).

Tamper-proof and tamper-evident packaging is now a basic feature of all consumable products. As SCP’s popularity has increased, a growing number of strategies have been identified and implemented in an effort to impact specific crime problems. It is necessary to understand, though, that any intervention is not a zero-sum game (Clarke & Newman, 2006) and could result in a variety of outcomes. SCP’s ultimate and pristine approach is to create interventions that eliminate all opportunity to commit that crime.

This rarely occurs, though, and SCP’s fallback position is to at least reduce the amount of the specific crime. Importantly, other SCP interventions do not seek to reduce or eliminate the specific crime’s occurrence but rather to reduce the harm it causes. For example, redundant computer systems are designed so that if a hacker destroys one system, the other will kick in, or redundant electricity grids are created to minimize harm caused by terrorist attacks. Studies have shown that SCP interventions almost always influence offenders (Freilich & Newman, 2014). In fact, SCP interventions have consistently been found to reduce crime (Clarke, 1997; Hesselning, 1994). Thus, the common criticism that SCP’s interventions will simply displace the problem and not reduce or eliminate it has not been supported. The most common types of crime displacement is the shifting of crime from one place to another (spatial displacement) as a result of an intervention of some kind. Displacement may also occur in respect to time, target selection, one type of offense to another, or a change of tactics (Reppetto, 1976). Diffusion of benefits refers to cases where an SCP intervention is implemented in a location, and crime reduction also occurs in nearby areas or similar targets that have not received the intervention. Anticipatory benefits refer to crime reduction that occurs in an area while a proposed intervention is discussed but before it is implemented. In both cases, publicity is the mechanism that results in crime reduction. It is thought that offenders hear about the proposed intervention and mistakenly (but consistent with limited/bounded rationality) conclude that it has already been implemented in their area. The offenders thus decide to conform (Barr & Pease, 1990; Bowers & Johnson, 2005; Clarke & Weisburd, 1994; Smith, Clarke, & Pease, 2002). Guerette and Bowers (2009) examined the effectiveness of SCP interventions in changing likely offender behavior. They found that many SCP interventions do not result in displacement (see also Bowers, Johnson, Guerette, Summers, & Poynton, 2011; Weisburd, Wycoff, Ready, Eck, & Hinkle, 2006). Guerette and Bowers looked at 102 evaluations of SCP projects that included 574 observations. They found that displacement occurred in 26% of observations, while the opposite of displacement, diffusion of benefits, occurred in 27% of the observations. Further, Guerette and Bowers, in their examination of 13 studies, which took into account spatial displacement and diffusion effects, found that when spatial displacement did occur, it was usually less than the treatment effect. The end result is that, even after factoring in displacement effects, the interventions usually resulted in an overall crime reduction. Further, SCP interventions often have positive spillover effects through the diffusion of benefits and anticipatory benefits that leads to crime reductions in locations beyond the target area (Guerette & Bowers, 2009; Freilich & Newman, 2014; Weisburd et al., 2006). SCP effectively reduces crime, and it is based upon a complex, well-developed interdisciplinary model.

In considering SCP’s future directions, consideration is given to two non-criminal-justice-system avenues that SCP advocates have recently increasingly used to reduce crime: civil government regulation and the shifting and sharing of responsibility for crime to those most competent to reduce it. Civil and other government regulations have been used to good effect by SCP to regulate establishments, product design, and individual behavior to reduce crime. This approach is in contrast to the traditional justice system model that seeks to arrest offenders one by one (Mazerolle & Roehl, 1998). Clarke and Newman (2005a, 2005b) have discussed six important points relating to government regulation of crime. First, the role taken by government in any specific case depends on the options available, which vary with the crime, with the state of current technology, and with a host of other circumstances, as shown by the Tylenol case described above. Second, the willingness of governments to intervene in the private sector depends on their political complexion.

Thus, conservative governments have generally been reluctant to intervene in business practices or to expand the role of government in regard to business and industry. Which varieties of governments have been in power, and for how long, can therefore have a marked impact on a country’s use of regulatory power. Third, levels of concern about crime, which can vary considerably across countries, or in the same country over time, can strongly influence a government’s willingness to intervene and regulate business practices. For example, concern about car theft prompted the conservative government in the United Kingdom in 1992 to publish “league tables” of the most stolen cars in an effort to get manufacturers to improve their security (Pease, 2001). Fourth, whether the private sector or government offers particular services is also subject to policy (Freilich & Newman, 2016). Thus, many services previously offered by government—rail services, subsidized housing, telecommunications—are now offered through private enterprise. Fifth, the government role depends on the system of government in place in the country concerned, its constitutional powers, and its relationship with the legal system. The multiple jurisdictions in the United States sometimes result in legal confusion, as when the banks challenged the right of the New York City Council to impose regulations on ATM machines on the grounds that banks were subject to federal controls (Guerette & Clarke, 2003). Sixth, the laws and legal traditions in different countries can greatly affect the scope for government intervention. In the United States, for example, there is a strong tradition, almost unknown in the United Kingdom, for example, of entrepreneurial lawyers filing class action liability suits on behalf of groups of citizens harmed by the products or practices of business and industry. While many civil and regulatory initiatives are effective in reducing crime, they are a marked departure from most other criminology theories that highlight the importance of the police and the criminal law for crime reduction. Intriguingly, though, this evolution and increased reliance on civil law provides an opening for SCP advocates and legal scholars to collaborate and harness the increased use of regulations for crime prevention. However, the proponents of this tactic to reduce crime should keep in mind that civil actions are not predicated upon the determination of offender guilt or innocence, one of the central questions engaged by the criminal justice system.

An unconventional approach recently explored by SCP proponents has suggested that crime be conceived as something like pollution and regulated accordingly. This approach endorses using the cap-and-trade market approach that is now used to control carbon emissions (Newman, 2012). The prime advantage of the market approach to crime reduction is that it rests on the classical school’s reasoning that businesses (and people for that matter) will take advantage where they see an opportunity to do so, and will not give it up until it costs more than it is worth (Beccaria, 1764). Crime-reduction trading assigns a monetary cost to accountability for a specific crime that is not directly imposed by a third party, such as a government imposing fines, but is imposed by the offending business or entity primarily responsible for the criminal opportunity on itself as it engages in the marketplace. The cap-and-trade approach to control opportunities for crime created by businesses (as negative externalities of their doing business) requires those most competent to reduce the opportunity for crime to take on the primary responsibility for its reduction, since they are also the most competent to do so. The relationship between competency and responsibility in preventing crime is complex (Hardie & Hobbs, 2005). For example, are individuals who do not shred their credit card bills more responsible for their victimization than the corporations that fail to require PIN numbers for credit card use, or due to poor internal security allow card details to be hacked or stolen from their databases? These problems are accentuated by viewing the reduction of credit card fraud from a market perspective. All crime, including crimes like robbery, assault, or even murder, can be assessed from this point of view: which entity or person is most competent to prevent or reduce the specific crime? Very often, perhaps most often, such entities are not necessarily the police, or even government, for that matter. This way of thinking about crime reduction also shifts the focus away from the traditional dispositional bias in policy making in criminology, which focuses on single cases, whether the deviance of individuals or corporations, and largely depends on the criminal justice system or heavy government regulation for its solutions. In the complex and rapidly changing world of crime, this is an inadequate policy approach since it assumes that police and others in the criminal justice system have the competency to solve crime problems, the immediate causes of which lie well beyond their resources or traditionally defined roles. The approach advocated here is to realign responsibility for responding to crime with the competency to do it. This means drawing on a wide range of institutions and organizations, including corporations large and small, trade associations, unions, NGOs, and interest groups, as well as government organizations, to solve specific problems of crime. Does punishment prevent crime? If so, how, and to what extent? Deterrence — the crime prevention effects of the threat of punishment — is a theory of choice in which individuals balance the benefits and costs of crime. In his 2013 essay, “Deterrence in the Twenty-First Century,” Daniel S. Nagin succinctly summarized the current state of theory and empirical knowledge about deterrence.[1] The information in this publication is drawn from Nagin’s essay with additional context provided by NIJ and is presented here to help those who make policies and laws that are based on science.[2] NIJ’s “Five Things About Deterrence” summarizes a large body of research related to deterrence of crime into five points. 1. The certainty of being caught is a vastly more powerful deterrent than the punishment.

Research shows clearly that the chance of being caught is a vastly more effective deterrent than even draconian punishment. 2. Sending an individual convicted of a crime to prison isn’t a very effective way to deter crime. Prisons are good for punishing criminals and keeping them off the street, but prison sentences (particularly long sentences) are unlikely to deter future crime. Prisons actually may have the opposite effect: Persons who are incarcerated learn more effective crime strategies from each other, and time spent in prison may desensitize many to the threat of future imprisonment. See Understanding the Relationship Between Sentencing and Deterrence for additional discussion on prison as an ineffective deterrent. 3. Police deter crime by increasing the perception that criminals will be caught and punished. The police deter crime when they do things that strengthen a criminal’s perception of the certainty of being caught. Strategies that use the police as “sentinels,” such as hot spots policing, are particularly effective. A criminal’s behavior is more likely to be influenced by seeing a police officer with handcuffs and a radio than by a new law increasing penalties. 4. Increasing the severity of punishment does little to deter crime. Laws and policies designed to deter crime by focusing mainly on increasing the severity of punishment are ineffective partly because criminals know little about the sanctions for specific crimes. More severe punishments do not “chasten” individuals convicted of crimes, and prisons may exacerbate recidivism. See Understanding the Relationship Between Sentencing and Deterrence for additional discussion on prison as an ineffective deterrent. 5. There is no proof that the death penalty deters criminals. According to the National Academy of Sciences, “Research on the deterrent effect of capital punishment is uninformative about whether capital punishment increases, decreases, or has no effect on homicide rates.” Understanding the Relationship Between Sentencing and Deterrence In his 2013 essay, “Deterrence in the Twenty-First Century,” Daniel S. Nagin succinctly summarized the current state of theory and empirical knowledge about deterrence. The information in this publication is drawn from Nagin’s essay with additional context provided by NIJ and is presented here to help those who make policies and laws that are based on science. There is an important distinction between deterrence and incapacitation. Individuals behind bars cannot commit additional crime — this is incarceration as incapacitation. Before someone commits a crime, he or she may fear incarceration and thus refrain from committing future crimes — this is incarceration as deterrence. NIJ’s “Five Things About Deterrence” summarizes a large body of research related to deterrence of crime into five points. Two of the five things relate to the impact of sentencing on deterrence — “Sending an individual convicted of a crime to prison isn’t a very effective way to deter crime” and “Increasing the severity of punishment does little to deter crime.” Those are simple assertions, but the issues of punishment and deterrence are far more complex. This addendum to the original “Five Things” provides additional context and evidence regarding those two statements. It is important to note that while the assertion in the original “Five Things” focused only on the impact of sentencing on deterring the commission of future crimes, a prison sentence serves two primary purposes: punishment and incapacitation. Those two purposes combined are a linchpin of United States sentencing policy, and those who oversee sentencing or are involved in the development of sentencing policy should always keep that in mind. “Sending an individual convicted of a crime to prison isn’t a very effective way to deter crime.” Prison is an important option for incapacitating and punishing those who commit crimes, but the data show long prison sentences do little to deter people from committing future crimes. Viewing the findings of research on severity effects in their totality, there is evidence suggesting that short sentences may be a deterrent. However, a consistent finding is that increases in already lengthy sentences produce at best a very modest deterrent effect. A very small fraction of individuals who commit crimes — about 2 to 5 percent — are responsible for 50 percent or more of crimes.[3] Locking up these individuals when they are young and early in their criminal careers could be an effective strategy to preventing crime if we could identify who they are. The problem is: we can’t. We have tried to identify the young people most likely to commit crimes in the future, but the science shows we can’t do it effectively. It is important to recognize that many of these individuals who offend at higher rates may already be incarcerated because they put themselves at risk of apprehension so much more frequently than individuals who offend at lower rates. “Increasing the severity of punishment does little to deter crime.” To clarify the relationship between the severity of punishment and the deterrence of future crimes, you need to understand: The lack of any “chastening” effect from prison sentences. That prisons may exacerbate recidivism. The different impacts of the certainty versus the severity of punishment on deterrence, and That individuals grow out of criminal activity as they age. More severe punishments do not “chasten” individuals convicted of crimes. Some policymakers and practitioners believe that increasing the severity of the prison experience enhances the “chastening” effect, thereby making individuals convicted of an offense less likely to commit crimes in the future. In fact, scientists have found no evidence for the chastening effect. Prisons may exacerbate recidivism. Research has found evidence that prison can exacerbate, not reduce, recidivism. Prisons themselves may be schools for learning to commit crimes. In 2009, Nagin, Cullen and Jonson published a review of evidence on the effect of imprisonment on reoffending.[4] The review included a sizable number of studies, including data from outside the U.S. The researchers concluded: “. . . compared to non-custodial sanctions, incarceration has a null or mildly criminogenic impact on future criminal involvement. We caution that this assessment is not sufficiently firm to guide policy, with the exception that it calls into question wild claims that imprisonment has strong specific deterrent effects.” Certainty has a greater impact on deterrence than severity of punishment. Severity refers to the length of a sentence. Studies show that for most individuals convicted of a crime, short to moderate prison sentences may be a deterrent but longer prison terms produce only a limited deterrent effect. In addition, the crime prevention benefit falls far short of the social and economic costs. Certainty refers to the likelihood of being caught and punished for the commission of a crime. Research underscores the more significant role that certainty plays in deterrence than severity — it is the certainty of being caught that deters a person from committing crime, not the fear of being punished or the severity of the punishment. Effective policing that leads to swift and certain (but not necessarily severe) sanctions is a better deterrent than the threat of incarceration.

In addition, there is no evidence that the deterrent effect increases when the likelihood of conviction increases. Nor is there any evidence that the deterrent effect increases when the likelihood of imprisonment increases. A person’s age is a powerful factor in deterring crime. Even those individuals who commit crimes at the highest rates begin to change their criminal behavior as they age.

The data show a steep decline at about age 35.[5] A more severe (i.e., lengthy) prison sentence for convicted individuals who are naturally aging out of crime does achieve the goal of punishment and incapacitation. But that incapacitation is a costly way to deter future crimes by aging individuals who already are less likely to commit those crimes by virtue of age.