Dealing with Urban Terror: Heritages of Control, Varieties of Intervention, Strategies of Research*

HARVEY MOLOTCH and NOAH MCCLAIN

The attacks of September 11th indicate a new kind of threat to urban security and imply the need for new urban knowledge or at least fresh ways to apply older understandings. Although various cities around the world have long faced organized violence, both internal and from the outside, the attacks on New York and the Pentagon shatter precedents in a number of respects. They raise the potential for new research strategies that might lessen danger from terrorists as well as from authoritarian internal responses that undermine civic society and, over the long haul, the means of urban self-protection. We define 'terror' as an attack on civilians to communicate a political message (Gearty, 2002). We do not here deal with state-organized terror, focused as we are on security within the US and other countries that remain safe from such aggression (while capable of practicing it). With a focus on the recent US events, we join other efforts (see, e.g., Graham and Marvin, forthcoming) in helping redress the relative lack of study, in general, of cities in the context of war.

The New York and Washington events obviously differ from conventional military assaults on cities like the sacking of Rome or General Sherman's march on Atlanta. The terrorist aim is not against cities as the container of military targets or booty, but as containers of people. The aerial bombardments that began during the first world war were a start in this direction, with the apogee achieved by US bombs at Nagasaki and Hiroshima, along with the destruction of Dresden. Different from such state-directed campaigns, and hence closer in type, is the mayhem experienced in Northern Ireland, the former Yugoslavia, and continuing in the Middle East. But unlike those instances of proximate shelling or guerilla war, the September 11th attacks did not arise from an ongoing localistic conflict over access to land and symbolic sites. They were assaults organized from far away, constituting a local-global nexus in threat and vulnerability.

The events resemble state-centered aggression in their distant origin and in the scale of damage; three 'bombs' destroy thousands of lives and billions in assets. But this damage did not come from a state adversary at all, but from faith-based subversives who, at least for a time, operated locally. They did not use the more modest means of partial destruction associated with urban guerillas. For all the violent results, the Irish insurrectionaries tended to set off their London explosives when offices were closed or after issuing warnings to evacuate. Perhaps an element of cross-group empathy blunted the strategic use of death. Nor, as sometimes is the pattern, did the September 11th attackers gun down or kidnap victims moving through urban space. Instead, the complexity and magnitude of metropolitan life was used against itself, a move of urban Aikido terror in which the smaller opponent leverages the giant's strength to bring it down. The distant subaltern gains the means, previously reserved for colonialists and great powers, to engage in remote control (see Law, 1984).

In various ways the phenomenon is a particularly urban one. Densely populated space facilitates extensive loss of life. Damage to buildings with strong symbolic meaning generates high levels of continuous anxiety for a large population. The complex array of interactions that make for successful urban functioning can be undermined — not just in the immediate aftermath of the event, but by the insertion of existential insecurity as an ongoing element of routine existence. Whatever the half-life of the initiating angst, it continues as an eerie presence. Such 'weapons of mass disruption', as they have been termed, are unevenly felt across urban space. Contrasting the mood in Washington DC with the rest of the US in December 2002, Timothy Ash referred to the special anxiety of living in a targeted city as 'a municipal fact' (Ash, 2002). It is also an urban phenomenon in that the reactions, including putative safeguards, are urban-based as well. A security business sector prospers as a growing part of the urban industrial base and as a stake-holding force lobbying to perpetuate its revenues. Whereas prisons are a largely rural enterprise, at least in the US context, the new security-industrial complex is urban in both the locus of development and application.[1] Factory owners' hiring of Pinkerton guards to deal with strikers is one of the precedents, now greatly expanded in both public and private sectors.

We believe there are indeed 'root causes' located in past and continuing foreign policies and interventions of both US and other powers — topics appropriate for debate among urbanists and non-urbanists alike. But people endangering the lives of others occurs through proximate acts. And national as well as local policies derive from fears those acts stimulate. Political leaders were able to mobilize authentic anxiety into mechanisms that increased the parameters of suspicion rather than sharpening focus. The USA PATRIOT[2] Act of October 2001 broadened law enforcement power to inspect and detain, to greatly expand wiretaps and bypass other rules of due process. The new regulations can pertain to a wide range of phenomena, including riot of almost any sort, sports bribery and obscenity (Doyle, 2002). They provide new bases for selectively picking off political and moral enemies — who make the easy targets — while possibly obscuring knowledge of real threat.

What could be the antidote? Because urban scholars have particular understandings of how people interact in physical and social space, they plausibly may know things about the nature of proximate danger as well as reactions to it. They also have insights into how institutions actually behave compared to the way they are supposed to behave. More than people in public policy and administration or agencies of social control, there is a realist conception of the world's workings. Without laying claims to omnipotence or even mastery, urban analysts should know enough to justify participation in the discourse. Given the complexity of it all, the appropriate model is not the domestic command system favored by the Bush Administration, but something more like a seminar in which diverse perspectives combine. Through appropriately oriented urbanist analysis and commitment, an enlarged politics might help better connect public anxieties into positive action.

Although there have been admirable essay collections on the events of September 11th (see, e.g., Calhoun, 2002; Sorkin and Zukin, 2002), urbanists have not had much presence in the larger debates. The voluminous National Academy of Science response to the attack[3] pays scant attention to urbanist issues, or indeed social science approaches of any sort. There is some discussion of how people respond to disaster, as in their levels of anxiety or ability to avoid panic, but the authors of the various reports deal overwhelmingly with research from engineering, natural science and economics.

---

1 Danny Walkowitz gave us this observation.
2 The acronym title of the Act stands for: Uniting & Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism.
3 The report's most relevant sections emphasized human reactions to terrorist events, rather than how modes of human organization affect their likelihood (see National Academy of Science Committee on Science and Technology for Countering Terrorism, 2002).

This article outlines a rationale for urbanist involvement, suggesting some directions for the study of the new varieties of terror. In particular, it examines current threats in terms of past practices of policing and their related scholarship to test for relevance to the current situation. Operating in a realm of great analytic and real-world uncertainty, we explore ways that urban scholars might be in position to contribute.

Policing normal crime

A first approach is to ask whether past analysis and policy on crime are relevant to the current situation. Notions of urban security, in the US as elsewhere, derive from a rich tradition of interlinked doctrines, policies and practices (Garland, 2001), some of which we can take up in turn.

Crowding crime out

In some sense, the very rise of cities, at least the medieval city, was as a 'crime-control' device. By ingathering those otherwise vulnerable to marauders, cities and their walls provided safety zones for ecclesiastic and commercial functionaries (Pirenne, 1936). In modern form, densifying public spaces is an analogous crime-fighting tactic. Going back in New York City's history to the late 1960s when John Lindsey was mayor, the safety strategy — for Central Park most famously — was to encourage people to use it. In the mid-1990s, the Giuliani administration made the same tactic an aspect of its program to 'reclaim public spaces', a cornerstone, in turn, of its quality-of-life campaign. But in the context of global terror and modern technology, a strategy of 'crowding out' criminals through dense use backfires; it gathers up a target.

Zero tolerance

Giuliani-style 'zero tolerance' policing, also thought useful in combating 'normal crime',[4] similarly becomes problematic as an antidote to terror. By catching people who commit small infractions, the theory goes, you run into or interrupt people who commit large crimes. By securing a street or neighborhood from signs of vandalism and petty disturbance, authorities serve notice to criminal and innocent alike that offending acts will not be tolerated. This also gets more people on the street that can then observe trouble in the making and hence further reduce its occurrence. This is the now famous 'broken windows' theory in action (Wilson and Kelling, 1983; 1996). Often police use dubiously legal or extralegal tactics to uncover the possession of contraband. Even if the small harassments do not pass constitutional muster and are rarely successfully prosecuted, they nevertheless control anti-social behavior (see Rohde, 1999; Fagin and Davies, 2000). The problem here is that would-be terrorists are likely to be scrupulous in conforming to the civilities of daily life. Those preparing terrorist activity are probably the least prone of any group to be disruptive. And when terrorists strike, it is too late. Prevention has to be complete and total; it is not a matter of using sidewalk justice to eliminate the signs of trouble; one must gain zero incidence of it.

We can, however, consider how broken windows theory would transfer to the kinds of small deviations that terrorists might indeed practice. They organize money transfers of dubious legality, falsify identification, misuse charities and set up phony enterprises. Zero tolerance policing would mean chasing after all involved in such borderlands of criminality. This implies massive surveillance and processing lots of leads, suspects and events that have nothing to do with terror. As a collateral problem, by chasing after the

---

4 We borrow the term from David Sudnow (1964) whose usage was different from ours; he used it to speak of routines of life that, although technically criminal, arise as 'normal' given the particularities of context.

legally marginal, authorities may alienate vital sources of information. Those at the margins know the techniques, sources of supply and capacities of those who might indeed be terrorists. In particular, those thought to be suspect by dint of national origin may be people who cross paths with the makers of real trouble. Cracking down on them with arrest, imprisonment or deportation (never mind torture) encourages non-cooperation across the board (Powers, 2002). Well-intentioned people, including some who have done some wrong, make themselves scarce. The literature on community crime prevention indicates that residents of affluent and low-crime neighborhoods are the ones most eager to cooperate with authorities (Skogan, 1988; Bennett, 1995; Buerger, 1998), presumably because such people have not had unpleasant dealings with police. Rudely intruding on those who might know something increases the chances they will not be forthcoming.

Real-time policing

A straightforward modern crime-fighting strategy is to coordinate police presence with the actual occurrence of crime. More than 50 years ago, Chicago-based urbanists, following in a Durkheimian tradition, demonstrated correlations between crime and location (Shaw and McKay, 1942). Contemporary policing innovations like the Compstat now used in New York and other cities (Ainsworth, 2001) generate cartographies of criminal activity for purposes of deploying police. So-called 'real time policing', however odd it may seem, has only come about in the US within the last decade or so. Prior police regimes reallocated police strength only after differential geographic patterns of crime incidence became so obvious they could not be ignored. But there are problems on the terror front; location of perpetrators and sites of crime are radically disassociated and, as already implied, acts of urban terror can devastate with only a small number of hits. Techniques that depend on recognizable patterns of geographic incidence are not very useful.

Target hardening

A plausible strategy, following Compstat logic, becomes adding special *physical* protections to sites resembling those previously targeted. But terrorists' knowledge of reactions to their own past behavior allows them to neutralize such acts of defense. Hence the air attackers defeated the extensive hardening of the World Trade Center after the bombing attempt of 1993 by substituting planes for explosives. American authorities responded to September 11th by adding security personnel and new technologies to airports. This outcome, so publicized and obvious in its operations, becomes part of the strategic thinking of terrorists who can either move on to other venues or develop alternative strategies for dealing with the same target. As Lyon (this issue) says, humans are more 'flexible and imaginative than technologies'.

   Ostentatious hardening suggests to would-be terrorists a special utility or vulnerability of the site. The concrete barriers commonly installed in front of buildings and utility installations, 'Jersey barriers' as they are called in the US Northeast, likely have no effect. They are supposed to protect against trucks loaded with explosives — the commonly feared threat — but rather than being embedded in the ground, they sit on the surface. An oncoming heavy vehicle would push them aside and invade the zone of critical danger. Deploying troops and guards is a similarly problematic kind of exhibitionism. There is little police can do to stop disaster once a bomber has actually reached a target location. But concentrating police and security personnel does add to the potential death toll.[5] So many were lost at the WTC through feeding police and fire fighters into the jaws of disaster.

5 We thank Maki Haberfeld for this observation.

Tacit understandings

Much of what goes on in crime control is not accessible to outsiders, in part because of police secrecy and in part because it is based on tacit knowledge deeply embedded in police officers' 'working personality' (Skolnick, 1966; Skolnick and Fyfe, 1993). The publicly available NYPD Patrol Guide, the official handbook of police practice, reveals little of the proactive instruction given to officers much less what they pick up on the job.[6] Whatever might be 'in the book', we know police go beyond it. They rely on unwritten understandings to continuously evaluate prospects of risk and trouble (Ericson and Haggerty, 1997) and utilize, as need arises, police solidarity to cover their tracks.

In imagining who is guilty of what and how perpetrators operate, police trade on their class and ethnic origins. US police departments tended to recruit from among white working-class men, disproportionately Irish-American — now gradually giving way to recruitment from the ranks of the African-American and Hispanic-American working class. To some degree there is overlap in sensibility between the police and those they seek to control. This is no doubt a first operating resource for sizing up one's adversaries, identifying informants and evaluating their veracity.

Such potentials are less in play when dealing with perpetrators whose cultural patterns are so distant. Police are not dealing with crimes of small-time greed or scam. Nor are these familiar crimes of mundane passion, as among disgruntled lovers or quarreling kin. There are no obvious signals of impending violence that those caught in the moment so often reveal — screams of vengeance or harrowing displays of weaponry. Difficult to anticipate through familiar narratives, the perpetrators obscure intentions through forethought and cunning. Compared to the deviance regularities with which police become familiar, this is utter wildness.

At the higher levels of the social control apparatus, the analogous empathetic interface across organizations like those experienced by the CIA and KGB is similarly disabled. When it comes to terror from movements like Al Qaeda — not even an organization in the usual sense, much less a state (Burke, 2003) — authorities simply do not know the perpetrators or their 'scene'. Authorities must understand the relation between suspects and their targets as well as linkages among police agencies internationally. Those at the local level need to somehow access exotic information about how foreigners translate operations in their home territories into distant actions. This is a tall order.

Wars on deviance

The US 'war on drugs' represents a precedent that involves extensive foreign operations, ongoing commitment, as well as a large urban domestic focus. From a law enforcement perspective, officials waging the drug war have had certain advantages. Authorities can take specific aim at vulnerable spots in the system: point of manufacture, border crossings, transport operations and points of sale. In important respects, drugs is a business like any other; people are motivated by profit, try to minimize transaction costs, and orient towards a commodity chain through which their goods exist. Their activities yield a trail of necessary routings between producers and consumers. Further, it is relatively easy to do police work without trouncing on rights of association; no surveillance of religious institutions is needed and there are good alternatives to invasion of residential privacy. A large number of distributors and users lack sophistication. They may themselves be so under the

6 The NYPD Patrol Guide provides regulations regarding personal conduct, handling of weaponry, prisoners, their property, chains of custody and paperwork requirements. The real content of police academy instruction, as well as that of 'in service' training materials, is only available piecemeal under controlled conditions which follow specific permission and which disallow republication. The caution is not wholly unreasonable, however, as comprehensive knowledge of police practices can be utilized to identify its 'holes' by terrorists as well as by urbanists.

influence of their products that they screw up and become accessible as sources of evidence and as informants.

But even with such advantages, vast government efforts — aided by extensive support from media, schools and private organizations including religious groups — did not succeed. It is hard to detect overall declines in drug use over the duration, much less attaining the goals of zero production, distribution and consumption.[7] In terms of interdiction, as police techniques grew in sophistication, so did, as is the pattern, criminals' concealment techniques. Responding to enhanced port inspections at one location, importers shifted to other spots. What was once smuggled in suitcases and car fenders found its way into rectal cavities, then the digestive systems of humans and then into that of their pets (US Customs Service, 2000). Again, a war on terror cannot tolerate iterative moves.

Object profiling

A possible way to ward off acts of crime is to target objects used in crime — another piece of drug war thinking. By classifying certain artifacts as 'paraphernalia', one can hunt for them and then capture their users. All human action involves interaction with physical objects; indeed, behavior and artifact constitute one another as a single, almost seamless phenomenon (Latour, 1987). Authorities can single out particular artifacts as *ipso facto* signals of wrongful behavior, providing grounds for surveillance, search and arrest. A bong pipe can be a basis for 'reasonable suspicion'. So-called 'gang attire', including the way particular garments are worn (baseball caps with the bill facing backwards) is a subtler prompt. As with the social profiling with which it is closely connected, such object profiling obviously leaves a lot of room for error, both in the kinds of objects classified and the notion that their use necessarily indicates wrongdoing.

One complicating factor is that objects innocent in one context become dangerous in another and vice-versa. Bank robbers can brandish a water pistol to intimidate the teller; marksmen can use a gun to shoot a paint can. The range of 'dual use' items — the terminology from authorities' lexicon (US Transportation Security Administration, 2002) — is wide-ranging, perhaps infinite. Mundane objects can also become weapons-grade through combination with one another. In prisons, the inmate-bricoleur can convert a piece of chain-link, sharpened on a cement wall and lashed to a toothbrush, into a dagger (see Conover, 2001). Published how-to guides offer steps to make blades, explosives and guns from the chaff of the prison environment (Luger, 1985; Dean, 2001). An online site instructs how to build a 'disposable paper shotgun' using a single cartridge, a nail, rolled paper and a rubber band (Spooner, n.d.). Some prison systems officially showcase confiscated improvised weaponry in museums and reception areas, such as one can visit in the New York State Corrections Museum.

Concern with terror expands the list of objects, separately or together, that warrant concern. The castor bean produces castor oil, but thanks to US second world war weapons programs, it now can be processed into the lethal toxin, ricin.[8] The US Transportation Security Administration bans ski poles, spray paint and screwdrivers as air travel carry-ons.[9] Knitting needles and cuticle scissors may also cause authorities to intervene. But the planes themselves, we now know, are dual use, as are the floors of the buildings that come crashing down on their occupants. Any public space, including its utilities and bric-a-brac, is a rich inventory of destructive tools.

Elements of the physical city are also potential constituents of the symbolic arsenal of terror. That is, the power of each weapon is its capacity to invert the meaning of value-laden artifacts. Mohamed Atta, credited as ringleader of the September 11th

---

7 In a recent survey, 36% of US high school seniors acknowledged use of illicit drugs in the prior year (Winter, 2003).

8 A ricin-tipped umbrella was used to assassinate, on contact, a Bulgarian dissident in London in 1978.

9 See http://www.tsa.dot.gov/public/display?theme=12&content=15.

attacks, had been a student of urban planning in Hamburg (his thesis was on urban renewal). The choice of the Twin Towers was influenced by their stand-alone access on the skyline but no doubt also their standing as icons of a historic time and place. The Pentagon, with a different iconography was powerfully freighted as well; the very word for the building was synonymous with US military might and used grammatically in the active voice ('yesterday, the Pentagon ordered . . .'). Its visual quality was (and is) also a part of the world imagination. By way of contrast, the CIA Headquarters resemble a suburban office park and in part for that reason are unknown to the world and hence less useful as a target.

There is a double hermeneutic in play; one must think about how would-be assailants think and how they think we think about how they think. 'Getting into the mind' of the terrorist involves more than understanding their religious beliefs and what 'drives' them to their deeds. It also means understanding how they operate as 'city users' (Martinotti, 2002) in their spatial imaginings, practical daily lives, and strategic determinations. Besides knowing buildings, the assailants also showed they knew other aspects of urbanism as a way of life: how to move through air terminals, pilot planes, rent housing and dress for their success, shaving beards and avoiding distinctive clothing. Their selection of airports, flights and timing (when office buildings would be full of people) was quite precisely right. In part through their knowledge of urban social patterns as well as material mechanics, the perpetrators were able to engage in careful urbanist algorithms, avoiding strategic mistakes. These were no grunts or peasants; studies of the social-physical interface of terrorism need to deal with such complexities of urban praxis.

Some US government action seems likely to increase the presence of artifacts most prone to constitute danger. Decades of modern penal experience have taught that guns are dangerous, almost in any context. Whatever benefits there may be in having firearms at the disposal of prison guards are countered by the possibility of having those guns taken from them, especially in the confines of the prison, which inhibits escape by both prisoner and keeper. Thus few, if any, US prisons allow guns anywhere near incarcerated populations. The recent arming of US airline pilots with handguns fails to take this lesson on board. Armed troops in train stations and building lobbies imply a similar potential for reverse targeting — inviting another version of Aikido.

Strategies of object profiling need acute awareness of context to avoid going seriously awry. Objects do not exist on their own, but in a 'lash-up' (Law, 1986; Molotch, 2003) or 'suite' (Shove, 2003) of artifacts and practices with which they are in mutual determination. The challenge is to determine, perhaps using emerging tools of material culture analysis (e.g. Miller, 1995), how those objects are typically put to use and how uses can be transformed through new types of combination. Analytic scans of the social use of the material world might facilitate better understanding of the specificities of paraphernalia and lead to more reasonable and effective controls.

Punishment

Not nearly so subtle, the dominant trend in policing systems has been punishment, using whatever evidentiary basis can be mustered. Punishment has replaced rehabilitation and searches for the root causes of crime (Garland, 2001). Such a stance and the high incarceration rates it has spawned go under the 'irrelevant' column when classifying strategies that might affect terror. Although there is robust debate about whether or not systems of rewards and punishments work on ordinary criminals, no one ever accuses terrorists of being motivated by economistic rational choice. Imposing harsh penalties, doubtful in any context as a crime deterrent, is even more dubious when the perpetrators regard loss of their own lives as a cost worth paying.

Situational crime prevention

Instead of punitive reprisal, crime can be averted by reduction of 'criminogenic situations' (Garland, 2001; see also Walker, 1986). In its city planning application, this

translates as the doctrine of defensible space — the idea of 'crime prevention through environmental design' (Jeffery, 1971). Oscar Newman's well-known strategies of the 1970s and 1980s call for street closures, secure perimeters, limited access portals, and other mechanisms that discourage interlopers by making their movements visible to residents (Newman, 1972; see also Katyal, 2002; Russell, 2002). By marking off physical space through specific land-use arrangements, the local people can themselves discriminate between those who 'belong' and those who do not. Supplanting Jane Jacobs' idea of 'eyes on the street', designers build safety into the physicality of buildings and spaces. However worrisome the aesthetic and social implications of the restricted space doctrine (Low, 2003), the notion of mobilizing urban design does raise, in ways we will later discuss, some constructive possibilities that may be relevant in delimited situations.

Ronald Clarke (1997) enumerates four techniques of situational crime prevention that can be evaluated in the terror context. The first is to increase the perceived effort required to commit a crime by adding obstacles to success. Building defensible spaces is an example of this. On a more micro-scale, harden pay phone coin boxes to defeat any but the most persistent and well-equipped thieves. Construct subway turnstiles that are difficult to leap over. In the retail context, keep small, pocketable store items behind the shop counter. Outdoors, eliminate benches, ledges and incidental canopies and building insets to discourage loitering and rough sleepers. In the face of terror during the era of IRA bombings, London authorities did do away with nooks and crannies, post boxes, and trash bins where devices could be left. Towards the same end, New York City authorities sealed manhole covers with tar in the Times Square vicinity on New Year's Eve 2002.

Alas, terror involves culprits with an especially high commitment to the task. As the May 2003 destruction of the fortified Riyadh barracks (killing 34 people) made clear, a great deal of effort can come to naught against rather ordinary explosives. What is clear is that hardening big cities to the point of significantly changing the effort needed to do terror risks destroying the very texture of what makes cities function as urbanistic centers in the first place. In order to save the city, the city would have to be destroyed; the whole city becomes the airport (only more so).

A second strategy of situational crime prevention, also implied by defensible space doctrine, is to increase the perceived risks of being caught and punished, such as through surveillance by video or other forms of monitoring. The mounting evidence (Lyon, this issue) suggests such measures are problematic even in dealing with ordinary crime, given the multitude of places to which crime can be displaced. More importantly, as Lyon indicates, the exponential growth of bits coming in from diverse inspection techniques (e.g. fingerprints, eye-scans) vastly increases the noise out of which police agents need to find meaningful patterns. Too much data works against having usable data. More basically, surveillance technologies are generally thought helpful in identifying criminals after the fact but not in stopping the crime before it occurs. In the case of terror, the assailants are typically dead and the surveillance equipment destroyed anyway; the perpetrator was oblivious to risk.

Clarke's third approach is to reduce the anticipated reward of success, as when a clothing store utilizes dye-loaded tags that burst onto an item when not extracted with a special tool. But the very idea of 'reward' loses much of its meaning when perpetrators knowingly prepare their own demise. Setting up planes or buildings to automatically self-destruct when threatened by terrorists is obviously absurd.

The final situational crime prevention strategy, and the noble one, is to remove the 'need' for committing offenses, such as providing accessible restrooms to forestall public urination or homes to get rid of vagrancy. Eliminating the need for terror means legitimate enfranchisement for foreign and domestic subalterns — the strategy to which we give our (largely gratuitous) support. But it is a goal well beyond the grandest ambitions of the policing apparatus and its related urban analysis, including ours. We thus end up, after this brief tour of methods for dealing with disorder, without much by way of positive guidance from the past. But, as we will later more specifically argue, exposing what doesn't work can suggest certain approaches that do make sense.

The case for helping out

What can or should urbanists, criminological or otherwise, offer up? Typically, the left-liberal intelligentsia situates itself outside the applied problems of crime control. Many, even some who themselves do criminology, like the 'new criminologists' active since the late 1960s (see, e.g., Platt, 1974; Cohen, 1985; Chambliss, 1986; Christie, 1990) seem reluctant to even acknowledge crime control as a social good. Police practices tend to be the targets, rather than the activities the police themselves target. Police brutality, corruption and repression are — as they should be — topics of analysis. But this tradition has not advanced proximate methods to deal with intolerable activities. Nor are urban studies students encouraged to take jobs within the social control apparatus; indeed those who do are often regarded as showing, by that fact, a mediocre — if not renegade — sensibility. Questioning authority at virtually every level, few among the intelligentsia are practiced in coming up with ways to make it more effective.

This has not always been so, whether in creating the early crime and delinquency literatures or in regard to fighting military opponents. During the second world war, intellectuals among the Allies served the war effort with enthusiasm just as did the most important scientists, with Einstein in the lead. Scholars across the board embraced the national mission; the Communist Party (stimulated by Hitler's attack on the USSR) unleashed its operatives to offer full support, whether in or out of uniform. US sociology's 'American Soldier' project enlisted some of the leading academics to examine issues like morale of the Allied troops as well as ways to undermine that of the enemy (Shils and Janowitz, 1948; Stouffer *et al.*, 1949). Many served in the intelligence services. Apart from committed pacifists, there was little controversy about academics becoming part of the war machine.

Under the post-war conditions, 'complicity' became anathema. But even while not approving of US policies across the globe, some of which are indeed incriminated in the blowback toward disaster, urban defense is a just and appropriate cause. Joining the current effort means consciously trying to change the way those in power exercise their authority while still supporting the goal of security. The problem can be conceived as not whether to help, but how to be relevant to the simultaneous and interlinked tasks of increasing physical safety and democratic practices.

In thinking about the politics of responding to terror, we should realize that some of the threat to security comes also from people who are clinically disturbed, rather than politically or morally motivated. The same changes in technology, mobility and vulnerability that allowed ideological fanatics to destroy the towers permits anyone to do great damage, including those with personality aberrations. A single individual or random small group, domestic or foreign, can, for whatever reason, create mayhem. Although only the field of psychology takes them on as a research problem, there are nuts out there — always have been and likely always will be. People start forest fires, switch train tracks to cause pileups, and shoot people dead from the tops of towers. For no apparent reason, a man managed to kill over 120 people in South Korea by lighting a plastic milk bottle filled with paint thinner and tossing it into a crowded subway car. All other things equal, the larger the population, the greater the sum of such misguided individuals. So even with no increase in the rate of psychological derangement, vulnerability grows with numbers and density. Add in technological development and vulnerabilities further increase. To the degree it is possible to enhance local security through prevention, one creates a prophylactic response to dangers that exist outside the putative evil empires of the world.

Whatever their source, dangerous people and their plans can be dealt with in ways that are more benign or less benign. The trick is to use evolving possibilities to secure more positive policy outcomes. Given at least the possibility of political change and shift in US voter sentiment, consideration of fundamental issues in urban analysis can point toward better strategies.

Surveillance in ethnographic perspective

An aspect of their role as information centers, cities function as systems of surveillance — people watching one another. Along with surveillance also comes control, much of it benign and also necessary. Surveillance discourse has, unfortunately, operated as two extremes: the panopticon at one end and absolute privacy at the other. Yet we know that in no culture do people go around unscrutinized. From Goffman (1957; 1971) and all the Meadian analyses like his, we learn of the hyper-mutuality of attentiveness and the acute skills people deploy to read off intentions and act upon them. Out of such observations come reputations, life chances, and the possibility of collective governance.

In urban analysis, Jane Jacobs gave this propensity to observe and discipline a happy face. Mutual awareness allows residents to watch out for one another, neutralize offenders, and embrace diversity. Jacobs seems uncritical of control so long as it is very local and based in informal interaction rather than state authority or corporate presence. On empirical grounds, Jacobs argues that real social order, as opposed to makeshift and artificially propped-up structures, operates outside or even in spite of government efforts to establish codes of behavior and systems of legal stricture. But what Jacobs took as nice neighborliness can be oppressive, especially for those at the social margins. Busybodies — 'moral entrepreneurs' in Becker's phrase — are not always welcome even by the straight and narrow (Becker, 1963). We also know, of course, that mere proximity, at least in terms of adjacent neighborhoods, is not necessarily a basis for social solidarities when people are dissimilar (Suttles, 1970). First in-migrants are especially subject to harassment and even violence. Regardless of one's stance toward the value or generalizability of Jacobs' vision, at least it suggests the problem: in thinking about terror, surveillance poses dilemmas, not resolutions.

There is at least one US instance that shows how people's thick knowledge of one another's habits and artifacts can indeed deal with terror. It is drawn from a 1980 incident in Evanston, Illinois, involving the arrest and prosecution of suspects involved in 100 bombings in five US cities, staged on behalf of Puerto Rican independence (the FALN movement). A neighborhood resident alerted police to activity she considered 'suspicious', based on seeing men in jogging suits repeatedly getting in and out of a parked van. What apparently clinched it was a lit cigarette. According to *The New York Times* report, 'the woman said she doubted the people were really joggers when she saw one light a cigarette' (Sheppart, 1980). The police arrested nine people and found a large number of rifles and pistols in the vehicle.[10] Research based on natural disasters in the US (tornados, earthquakes, etc.) indicate that ordinary people massively 'watch out for one another'; this helps them operate in orderly and other-regarding ways to mitigate negative impacts, as indeed they did in the non-natural attacks on the WTC (Tierney, n.d.).

In terms of popular action against terrorist acts since September 11th, we have two US precedents. One involved the plane that went down over Pennsylvania later that same morning. The plane's passengers, apparently having learned by cell phone of the prior attacks, made sure they would not be part of another one. In the second example, passengers successfully restrained the 'shoe bomber' who attempted to ignite explosives imbedded in his trainers on a transatlantic flight destined for the US in December 2001.[11] As pointed out by Elaine Scarry (2002), normal people with ordinary resources succeeded in doing what systems of surveillance, intelligence and massive armaments could not: minimize, even stop, disaster. Although the Pennsylvania

10 This case may or may not be compromised by the fact that this smoking jogger was also Puerto Rican. But Evanston has long been a diverse, racially mixed town. We thank Tom Tyler of the NYU Psychology Department for alerting us to the Evanston case.

11 In a non-US incident on 17 November 2002, passengers overpowered a man who brandished a penknife against a flight attendant en route from Tel Aviv to Istanbul (*The New York Times*, 25 January 2002).

passengers were not able to forestall loss of life, they did curtail the magnitude of the tragedy.

One set of mechanisms that disables both civilian as well as police is reliance on crude stereotypes, including cues of race or ethnicity. Racial profiling, an unrefined form of detective work in any circumstance, leads to bad leads as well as injustice. The risk runs especially strong in the US, given, in Twine's useful terminology, the ethnic and racial 'illiteracy' of both citizens and government officials (see Lash and Urry, 1994; Twine, forthcoming). The US Department of Justice added Armenia, a Christian country with no hint of terrorist organizing against the US, to the list of places whose adult male citizens must register with immigration authorities (Broder, 2002). Apparently it was a sense of darkish coloration that got Armenians in trouble, or perhaps the sound of a country that ends in 'ia'. Most Americans seemingly do not actually know what, say, South Asians look like or what languages they speak. Nor are they probably aware there are deep divisions within the world that make certain types of medium complexion people, like Hindus or Christian Indians, highly unlikely to be 'Islamic terrorists'. In one incident in the Spring of 2002, perhaps important to hundreds of millions of people elsewhere, US law enforcement officials detained Samyuktha Verma, a top Bollywood movie star, for five hours after fellow passengers on a flight from Chicago to New York noted that she and her entourage were making a lot of commotion 'laughing and talking' (Polgreen, 2002). Authorities ordered up fighter jets to escort the plane into La Guardia. Verma was later quoted, 'I say to Indians, don't laugh during a flight, just sit there quietly, read something or sleep' (*The Indian Express*, 19 July 2002). Lacking accurate notions of the variety of ways people with the same skin tone might behave, populist perceptions combine with authoritative power to waste resources on bum steers.

Folk surveillance includes stereotyping of other sorts — the supposed immorality of atheists, the implied threat of the odd Communist or lonely misfit. The stock of visions drawn on to report suspicious behavior is nothing less than a palimpsest of urban myths that permeate indigenous local culture. We need studies of these systems of stereotype — not just to document injustice or ignorance, the usual research stance — but also to gain knowledge for interpreting and focusing the workings of local surveillance. The ultimate goal becomes an enhancement of popular ethnographic knowledge; in a sense, the solution to faulty cognitive discrimination is better cognitive discrimination. The more people know, the more effective becomes the instrument of folk surveillance.

That civilians (as opposed to law enforcement or military figures) will, in the relatively close-confines of urban environments, be the proximate agents in the moments leading up to and responding to future incidents, means it is time to conceptualize spontaneous social responses. For their part, defense and policing officials have not helped much to either explain or bolster this primary line of defense. Limiting themselves to color-coded alerts, authorities do little that might potentially activate meaningful civil engagement. Somehow there will need to be a combination of authority systems linked to mutual observing, with both spheres intelligently guided to provide effectiveness and restraint. Beyond the confines of applied criminology, sophisticated analysts know that enduring crime control in a democratic context rests on the bedrock of social routine. A two-tiered avenue of study would include firstly analyses of how certain kinds of knowledge (and certain breeds of ignorance) evoke social responses. The second challenge would be to determine how these responses provide coherent 'defensive social infrastructures' or fail to do so in interaction with various kinds of government set-ups, including the ways police relate to particular social groups.

Surveillance like a state

The question persists as to how eyes on the street can translate into effective organizational action. Beyond disciplining hooligans, how can people's ordinary detection apparatus make appropriate contact with authority systems? Neighbors, local public characters and bystanders can perhaps pick up on clues of plots in the making or at least the 'wrong people' being in the wrong place, but they lack access to other

reports and data that might separate false cues from real ones. Without capacity to constrain and arrest, they are not set up to deal with the results of their detection. Somehow, local observation and the machinery of state power need to connect. If this happens in the wrong way, dystopia results — intimate authoritarians welded into state despotism.

State structures carry their own tendencies toward trouble. In *Seeing Like A State* James Scott draws on cases across history and cultures to argue that states have a logic to their intrusion, one that disrupts the very processes that people like Jacobs say are intrinsic to social order (Scott, 1998). The state needs mechanisms for macro-controls and modes of organizational manipulation, starting with citizens being identifiable with individual names (not always the historical case). Names (or ID numbers) allow state officials to count up subjects, maybe to be conscripted, permitted to vote, or be given welfare checks. As the list implies, some of these ways of seeing lead to positive outcomes, including in realms like epidemiology, public health and sewage. Of course, states vary by the nature of those who are in control and the economic systems in which they are embedded (a point not well made by Scott), but state logic does have a relative autonomy.

The state uses its tools to hammer away at problems for which it is not well suited. In a way familiar to urbanists, Scott tellingly invokes Jacobs to analyze urban renewal as destroyer of the basis of social life. He makes analogous arguments in regard to the way state regimes, North or South, socialist or capitalist, pre-modern and modern, exploited forests and destroyed eco-systems. Many of the post-September 11th rulings and practices resemble this sort of clumsy destructiveness, whether in the case of civil liberties, cutbacks in environmental protections, or damage to landscapes in the Middle East.

Besides blunders against nature and civic life, the state is also plagued by coordination problems across its various internal elements. Impulses from one part of the official apparatus can have trouble making contact with other parts. Diverse elements of the state each 'see' in particular ways, given their operatives' specific contextual fields — something that must be overcome. As made evident in the unheeded warnings from within the FBI that preceded September 11th,[12] the disconnects can be dangerous. There have been many subsequent calls for enhanced connectivities between federal agencies and local law enforcement (see, e.g., Crowley, 2002). Sociologists of organization have long understood that there are good reasons why those in bureaucratic units develop non-cooperative rivalries. Individuals within organizations have multiple goals, including advancing their own careers, building up their units, as well as enhancing social connections with co-workers and supervisors (Sills, 1957; Merton, 1968; Blau, 1974). This may mean hoarding information, restricting access, and holding back other resources from agencies 'on the same side' (Perrow, 1985; Vaughan, 1996; Beamish, 2002).

We also know that the individuals who make up organizational life have incentives to normalize what is in fact idiosyncratic observation. Those who patrol the ICBM silos walk the perimeter for days on end, collectively for decades, with only rare appearances of noticeable abnormality. Whether in regard to such patrols or repeated satellite launchings, an 'atrophy of vigilance' tends to set in (Freudenburg, 1992). More generally there can be undue hesitation, imprecise identification of vulnerable populations, and troubled lines of communication with them. We need to learn how these various dynamics work in the context of terror.

In terms of lay people's positive and empathetic linkage with organizations, the requirement is not just assent, but willful and skilled cooperation. As conversation analyst researchers repeatedly demonstrate, even ordinary communication among friends and kin is a remarkable accomplishment (Sacks, 1992). But things may be especially likely to go wrong, or at least go wrong in particular ways, when the informal

---

12 Besides the FBI incident, the CIA warned President George Bush of danger from Al Qaeda hijackings weeks before September 11th (for a summary of related FBI and CIA inadequacies, see Powers, 2002).

modalities of interaction get entangled in bureaucratic procedures. A caller's emergency phone-in for help ('911' in the US) travels through a labyrinth of channels before an ambulance, police officer or fire truck is dispatched to address the problem (Manning, 1988; see also Whalen and Zimmerman, 1987). It takes all sorts of unsung competencies and good intentions to be brought off. Otherwise, as studies indicate, help is not on the way and matters of life and death are decided in favor of death.

Fear of authority can obviously derange effectiveness. People may hold back in their scan of objects and interactions. They may hesitate to contact agencies or fail to empathetically activate information when interrogated. They may take special measures to be secretive. Given that we all have our secrets to protect, we risk interaction with those in power only when we feel secure. If instead we go into ad hoc hiding, the whole surveillance apparatus has to iteratively escalate to overcome cumulating acts of self-protection (Ericson and Haggerty, 1997). Sensing the angst, ordinary people become suspicious of one another and all have reason to be suspicious of the state. The end result is that society becomes less rather than more transparent as mundane privacy becomes contrived secrecy (Shils, 1956).

The experiences of various societies could be helpful as an inventory of mechanisms through which the eyes on the street connect into authoritative actions. We have a history of reports under Stalin and Hitler as well as the less catastrophic but dangerous surveillance and informant structure of the domestic US anti-communism crusades. How does (did) it work in Cuba under Castro or Chile under Pinochet? Is this one model or two? Or more? We have Havel's subtle description of 'living in the lie', explaining how routines of life fused with authoritarian edict in the former Czechoslovakia (Havel, 1978). Contemporary Sweden represents an alternative, but also highly structured way that face-to-face interactions connect to larger authority systems. Must the informal-formal nexus necessitate noxious outcomes? What are the alternative paths?

Whether 'calling the state' or calling out to one another, folks can be either too enthusiastic or too shy. They may declare trouble when there is only innocence or conjure innocence where there is real trouble. People must balance risk of embarrassment against failures of moral citizenship. How do people take the chance of being, in Garfinkel's sense, 'judgmental dopes' (Garfinkel, 1967), deciding to step out of line, to shout 'fire' because they think the building is, in fact, about to ignite? Informal networks tend to be complicated by disbelief, misinterpretation and incomplete social coherence among community members (Tierney, 2001). As in organizational life, the bizarre cannot be easily accepted. 'This can't be real' was a theme repeated again and again by the thousands witnessing the collapse of the World Trade Center (Steinert, this issue). People said it was 'surreal'. But people cannot, almost by definition, perceive things as surreal and still operate with effective consequentiality (see Pollner, 1987).

In the US, as elsewhere, 'neighborhood watch' fuses a sort of mobilized folk surveillance with government authority. Such programs are a core part of 'community policing' strategies. They systematize a way for neighbors to keep alert to the streets and sidewalks, with volunteers reporting to one another and to the police. We need to understand not just the effectiveness of such programs — reputedly difficult to measure (McConville and Shepard, 1992; Bennett, 1995; Friedman, 1998) — but also learn what exactly is watched, by whom, and gets reported. We also need to study the degree that such reports reflect what actually goes on. Another research resource is the 'tip lines' people use to call in suspicious behavior and offer potential evidence on unsolved crimes. Are there noticeable linkages between attributes of the callers, the circumstance of the call, and the utility of the information? And what is revealed through these phone-ins about public perceptions and myths in the making? Just who tends to get blamed for what, based on what kinds of cues and evidence? Out of such knowledge, it is conceivable a more sensitive system of observation could be developed. There could be strategies, at all levels of the surveillance apparatus, to make other contextual elements count. Informing and educating the public about the varieties of innocence is as important as making them aware of the signs of danger. Unless both occur as a

refined social vision, public observation is disarmed as a preventative tool. As part of spreading the sociological imagination, there is a need to spread ethnographic specifics — 'everyman' a good ethnographer.

Specificities of class and ethnic vulnerability

Urbanists know about class and document the distributional impacts of social policy, a skill of relevance to security precautions. Unless compensatory moves are built into programs, government policies tend — given hegemonic routine — to displace and otherwise penalize the poor. But there are some subtleties that distribute security and insecurity in ways that do not necessarily favor the rich. Kidnappers have incentive to nab children of the wealthy, not the poor. In regard to terror, the rich make better symbolic targets. As Steinert points out (this issue) the well-off were a disproportionate segment of those lost in the World Trade Center attacks. Those at the top were in greater danger than those lower down. An ongoing reluctance to inconvenience the wealthy may also cut against their security, although with implications for the safety of others as well. First-class air passengers may receive less scrutiny than those in lower categories; indeed a number of the September 11th terrorists flew first class, perhaps to lower their exposure to scrutiny. Even after the attacks, airline club lounges permit customers to leave luggage unattended, something not allowed in the standard waiting areas.

On the other hand, the well-off may take measures at self-protection, some of which could have macro urban consequences. Past urban dynamics, almost as a convenience for terrorists, gathered up culture, economy, and power into single agglomerations. But people of means and authority will likely place their personal security ahead of optimizing production inputs and the creative buzz they otherwise may value. Personalistic preferences, like having the office near one's home, have long played a role in executives' decisions on where to locate the corporation. Maximizing production efficiencies in the conventional sense may well take a back seat to individual survival and protection of the activities generating wealth. All our models of aggregate efficiency rest on assumptions of security taken for granted in places like US cities and those in most of Europe. In tellingly raising the issue of an 'ecology of fear' Mike Davis had in mind low-tech and individualistic attacks from domestic subalterns (Davis, 1998), but danger emanating from abroad may become the more significant force to shape urban morphology. New kinds of locational decisions may be in the offing which, whatever their effectiveness in terms of safety, would impact the lives of millions.

In contrast to the distribution of risks from terrorists that fall disproportionately on the well-off, risk from the authorities falls disproportionately on those with weak resources or the wrong ethnic identity — those who appear, or who actually are, linked to the Middle East. At least for a time, those who endure the brunt of racial prejudice, African-Americans, seem to benefit from the displacing of suspicion toward those who 'look Arab'. But watch out: under the umbrella of anti-terror laws, authorities gain greater capacity to harass those more typically in their cross hairs. Affluent white people, 'real' white people, with access to lawyers and ongoing deference from officials, will better withstand the authoritarian threat.

Distributional effects also occur in the way struggles against one threat displace resources that would go elsewhere — both geographically and in class terms. So much of the US war on terror has been defined as a national problem, that money has been dispersed to places that are extremely unlikely targets. There seems to be a bit of jingoistic celebration across the country in which minor towns and cities 'join in' the battle, avidly competing for federal aid to fortify their airports and county fairs. This disadvantages places at most risk like New York, which also happen to bear the heaviest welfare costs. At whatever jurisdictional level, money spent on policing erodes budgets for health and welfare. The pattern from past wars on drugs and crime repeats. If people die from pneumonia caused by lack of access to medical care, they are no less dead than if they had been cremated in a bombing. In the current context of increasingly regressive tax and fee

structures, the poor pay disproportionately for any 'new services', including terror protection. And by so dominating the issue agenda with its unending stream of 'symbolic politics' (Edelman, 1985), the war against terror helps conservative politicians advance such policies. Research needs to monitor these processes and determine who is paying the fiscal price of the various wars and how different types of anti-terror measures impose differential costs on people, including those of the inner cities.

In terms of qualitative costs, who will have to put up with police-imposed dislocations, including geographic adjustments? The Israeli manipulations of borders, erection of walls, and limits on access all point to uneven effects imposed by those in charge. In a less consequential way in the US, some air terminals, as a way of deferring to elite flyers, now offer short-line screening stations for first-class and other special travelers. Those owning or using private planes escape most of the hassle. How will privilege under terror be manifest in other spheres of urban life? In one scenario, 'pre-approved' individuals can pay for smart ID cards, perhaps with implanted biometric data that would allow fast and unproblematic access to problematic sites. In various ways, those with less wealth may be subjected to Lyon's 'digital discrimination'. And pity the poor person who somehow gets bureaucratically miscoded and lacks the lawyers or skills needed to get his or her personal bits reset.

Outside particular impacts on class and ethnic groups, authoritarian impositions threaten certain types of urban activities more than others. Creative and spontaneous behavior is particularly fragile. Under repression, artistic expression faces special challenge. Artists themselves, given their proclivities toward deviation, face persecution — whether from Stalin, Hitler, or today's authoritarians of whatever civilization. Besides demise through denunciation, exile and murder, art can be chilled to death. The loss of art is itself a bad thing, but as we increasingly learn, urban and regional economies rest on creative innovation and the culture industries (Lash and Urry, 1994; Molotch, 1996; Malecki, 2000; Florida, 2002). The supposedly frivolous realms like sport, dance and the other arts are in fact deeply implicated in the major technological, scientific and business breakthroughs of the last centuries (Smith, 1981). Learning economies presume a free-flow of individuals and ideas from one local realm to another, made possible by vibrant 'third places' like coffee houses and bars (Oldenburg, 1989; Pratt, 2000). Again, it is not just acts of terror that inhibit such flows and gatherings, but also the insecurities spawned by government intrusion. People operate in networks that make possible brainstorming and ways of effectively collecting up images, data and passions into a coherent force — 'co-development webs' as Jacobs (2000) called them. Anything that constrains spontaneous creativity by blocking the networks and modes of expression threatens the economy as well as the capacity for human satisfaction.

Policy and research under uncertainty: the decency default

Whatever measures are taken against terror occur in a context of ambiguity both in terms of what research should be done or what effective policy might be. In terms of ordinary crime incidence, social scientists still cannot explain recent US declines, just as they were at loggerheads over the cause of the prior increases. Even though crime data is plentiful and, at least in the case of murder, generally reliable and precise, other variables intrude on efforts to explain. Not only is it hard to choose the independent variables (i.e. the putative causes of crime), it is difficult to decide the proper time lag to statistically apply (does crime go up, say, one month after unemployment rises or does it take two years for the hopelessness to set in?). The problem of which preceding variables to use and how much lag time to assign bedevils the search for cause versus effects when using time series data. Some now choose acts of imperialist US foreign policy as the cause of September 11th, while others select what they consider prior acts of appeasement and displays of national weakness. Past acts of US aggression can be seen as a source of blowback or insufficiently punitive to have done their job. The classic tragedy of action-retribution-action, as in Shakespeare or the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, displays how 'first cause' gets lost in the flow of incidence.

The 'Israeli model' also shows the difficulties, if not impossibilities, of figuring out where terrorists come from (quite literally) or how to make buildings and places safe from mayhem. In the US context perpetrators are not segregated into a single geographic zone, as in Palestine, but spread across vast regions of the country. Various US cities are each larger than all of the occupied territories combined. Every artifact of life is a possible tool to be examined and watched. In so many ways, ambiguities are rife, including — and this follows almost as a matter of logic — the observations in this article.

Nevertheless, we can advance our own version of an uncertainty principle: when you really don't know what you are doing, the default should be affirmative action for decency. When it was believed that installing basketball hoops or sending children to summer camp would decrease delinquency, a lot of kids got to have a nice experience. That was a good thing, even if delinquency continued at the same rate. It was better than the alternative of mass incarceration. If we do not know what we are doing, we might as well choose mechanisms that preserve or even enhance the quality of life and do no damage to civil liberties and democratic goals. It follows that research should also carefully examine the security benefits of enhanced social policy and improved urban environments.

This translates, in security terms, to physical and social infrastructure improvements that, whatever they do or do not do in providing civilian defense or punishing subversives, benefit populations. In the context of post-attack budget woes, New York Transit officials increased reliance on subway fare-card machines in order to cut staffing of ticket kiosks. The result makes life less convenient as well as more dangerous. Troops in the subway look for who knows what with eyes trained for battle conditions rather than subway life. They serve on shifts in neighborhoods they do not know. In contrast, ticket clerks operate as local surveillance intermediaries, with an institutionalized link into authority structures, including the police. Street vendors, a direct target of the Giuliani Administration's 'quality of life' campaigns (see Duneier, 1999), might alternatively be cultivated as potential allies in linking folk surveillance with authoritative power .

It also does not make for the good life to be constantly intruding in routine existence. Guards go through intimate belongings in purses, backpacks and suitcases. They physically examine bodies at building doorways, plaza entries, along with the airports. Several generations ago, Gunnar Myrdal (1960) argued that governments should strive for least interference while still accomplishing the aims of an activist welfare state. Response to terror in the US and elsewhere has not followed this principle. In the near-term, even micro-hassles add up to tension, inconvenience and delay (Glaeser, 2002). Over the long haul, the intrusions are massive and breed resentment and anxiety — a frisk society in the making. Having people around who do nice things, doormen and flight attendants are examples, would be a better alternative.

Benign expenditures on the physical environment can also do some unobtrusive good. Upgrading systems of building and tunnel air exhausts to mitigate the effects of a chemical intrusion increases air quality generally as well as improving survival chances against an accidental event. Old and weak infrastructure is easiest to sabotage; outdated systems make problem detection and remedy most difficult. In general (as a related principle), priority should go to those facilities that are most decrepit in terms of their ability to provide for their original function or that serve the most people. Some installations, like chemical production plants are particularly dangerous, especially when embedded in high-density urban areas. They may themselves be potential targets (Keller, 2003). Requiring substitution of lower toxicity chemicals in production systems would reduce pollution of all sorts, as well as lower the risk of catastrophic releases. Inspections of urban workplaces to ensure safe disposal (or at least storage) of explosives would similarly be of general benefit. Better equipment for emergency workers to track and rescue people trapped in collapsed buildings would also provide a generic public good. These reforms likely bias benefits toward the less affluent because they tend to live and work amidst the most dangerous materials and least stable structures.

Enlightened improvements in the health infrastructure are similarly helpful and tend not to concentrate their benefits among the already well-off. Coordinating response between hospitals, fire and police brings gains, as does decreasing emergency response time. New York public health officials were well served by a post-September 11th intensification of data systems that, in searching for incidence of SARS symptoms, allowed them to spot apparent outbreaks of other diseases.

There are precedents, some more ambiguous than others, of collateral benefits from US government military policies. The US interstate highway system, originally sold as a defense program, gave unparalleled mobility to Americans, albeit at the expense of mass transit. Investment made by the Defense Department's Advanced Research Projects Agency (Darpa) was the R&D for the internet, the web and all the satisfactions and economic growth to which they led. The net was a good target. This is useful exemplar, rather than the mischievous billions spent on missiles, the war in Vietnam, and the destabilization of socialist democracies.

There are also some urban design configurations that can bring better results than others (Forgey, 2003). The concrete Jersey barriers give sidewalks and building forecourts a menacing quality and keep people out. Installing concrete planters filled with flowers and shrubbery is at least as effective and certainly more pleasant. Large-scale trees, when mature, provide a root structure that gives them a far greater stopping power. In lieu of trees, ordinary street furniture and urban implements like parking meters, news racks, benches and signage can be 'deputized' by mooring them deep in the ground (Friedman, 2001; Dunlap, 2003; Forgey, 2003). These strategies strengthen the social fabric of cities while perhaps making them more secure. Instead of hostile citadels, there are new public spaces. As urban planner Michael Sorkin has suggested,[13] a good security solution for the financial district of lower Manhattan is to pedestrianize the whole thing. In that way, security measures increase access rather than limiting it.

Anti-terror sentiment may also be used to facilitate gun control in the US. Besides inhibiting murders and injuries encouraged by guns at hand, new restrictions might curtail the weapon stockpiling by so-called 'militias' — the likes of which perpetrated the Oklahoma City bombing in April 1995. Striving to eliminate guns from terrorists means less fear and less violent death in general.

Authorities charged with addressing the September attacks have proclaimed an endless war against the perpetrators, harkening back to the most regressive traditions of dealing with crime and disorder, domestic and foreign. We know from this past history that fear of crime — to take the crucial precedent — leads to major policy consequence, including race and class effects. Fear of terrorist crime in the US now escalates to global consequence, including abuse of human rights and the potential for cycles of turmoil around the world. With some analytic and empirical help it may be possible to transmute an understandable public anxiety into outcomes that increase rather than curtail social enfranchisement, protect civil liberties, and add some safety. We need more knowledge about how cities, including those in the rich centers of the world, work in the context of terror — both for the sake of better policies as well as more informed and effective populations.

Harvey Molotch (MOLOTCH@aol.com) and **Noah McClain** (noah.norberg-mcclain@nyu.edu), Department of Sociology and Metropolitan Studies, New York University, 269 Mercer Street, New York, NY 10003, USA.

---

13 'Designing for Security' panel discussion celebrating publication of Setha Low's (2003) *Behind the Gates* (New York, 14 May 2003).

References

Ainsworth, P.B. (2001) *Offender profiling and crime analysis*. Willan, Portland, OR.

Ash, T.G. (2002) The capital makes up its mind. *The New York Times* 12 December, A39.

Beamish, T. (2002) *Silent spill*. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.

Becker, H. (1963) *Outsiders: studies in the sociology of deviance*. Free Press. Glencoe, IL.

Bennett, S.F. (1995) Community organizations and crime. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 539, 72–84.

Blau, P. (1974) *On the nature of organizations*. Wiley, New York.

Broder, J. (2002) U.S. Drops Armenian men from list of visitors who must register. *The New York Times* 19 December, A22.

Buerger, M.E. (1998) A tale of two targets: limitations of community anticrime actions. In D.R. Karp (ed.), *Community justice: an emerging field*, Rowman & Littlefield, New York.

Burke, J. (2003) The tentacles of terror. *The Observer* 18 May, 17.

Calhoun, C. (ed.) (2002) *Understanding September 11*. New Press, New York.

Chambliss, W. (1986) *Criminology*. Wiley, New York.

Christie, N. (1990) *Crime control as industry: towards Gulags, western style*. Routledge, London.

Clarke, R.V. (1997) Introduction. In R.V. Clarke (ed.), *Situational crime prevention: successful case studies*, Harrow and Heston, New York.

Cohen, S. (1985) *Visions of social control*. Blackwell, Oxford.

Conover, T. (2001) *Newjack: guarding Sing-Sing*. Knopf, New York.

Crowley, J. (2002) *Securing New York: a blueprint for securing New York City's Homeland Security requirements*. 7th Congressional District, New York (www.crowley.house.gov/pdf/homelandreport.pdf).

Davis, M. (1998) *Ecology of fear: Los Angeles and the imagination of disaster*. Random House, New York.

Dean, R.O. (2001) *Prison killing techniques: blade, bludgeon and bomb*. CRBbooks, Commack, New York.

Doyle, C. (2002) *The USA PATRIOT Act: a legal analysis*. Congressional Research Service/The Library of Congress, Washington, DC (www.fas.org/irp/crs/RL31377.pdf).

Duneier, M. (1999) *Sidewalk*. Farrar Straus Girroux, New York.

Dunlap, D.W. (2003) Blocks: envisioning a safer city without turning it into slab city. *The New York Times* 17 April, D3.

Edelman, M. (1985) *The symbolic uses of politics*. University of Illinois Press, Champagne, IL.

Ericson, R.V. and K.D. Haggerty (1997) *Policing the risk society*. University of Toronto Press, Buffalo.

Fagin, J. and G. Davies (2000) Street stops and broken windows: Terry, race and disorder in New York City. *Fordham Urban Law Journal* 26, 363.

Florida, R. (2002) *The rise of the creative class: and how it's transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life*. Basic Books, New York.

Forgey, B. (2003) The fear factor. *Planning* April, 4–10.

Freudenburg, W. (1992) Nothing recedes like success? Risk Analysis and the organizational amplification of risks. *Risk: Issues in Health and Safety* 3.1, 1–35.

Friedman, R.L. (2001) *Designing for security in the nation's capital*. Interagency Task Force of the National Capital Planning Commission, Washington, DC (www.ncpc.gov/planning_init/security/DesigningSec.pdf).

Friedman, W. (1998) Symposium: Volunteerism and the decline of violent crime. *Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology* 88, 1453–74.

Garfinkel, H. (1967) *Studies in ethnomethodology*. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Garland, D. (2001) *The culture of control*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Gearty, C. (2002) Terrorism and morality. *RUSI Journal* 147.5, 34–9.

Glaeser, E. (2002) Cities and warfare: the impact of terrorism on urban form. *Journal of Urban Economics* 51, 205–24.

Goffman, E. (1957) *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Doubleday, Garden City, New York.

—— (1971) *Relations in public*. Harper and Row, New York.

Graham, S. and S. Marvin (eds.) (forthcoming) *Cities, war and terrorism*. Blackwell, Oxford.

Havel, V. (1978) [1992 edn.] The power of

the powerless. In P. Wilson (ed.), *Open letters: selected writings 1965–1990*, Vintage, New York.

Jacobs, J. (2000) *The nature of economies*. Random House, New York.

Jeffery, C.R. (1971) *Situational crime prevention through environmental design*. Sage, Beverly Hills, CA.

Katyal, N.K. (2002) Architecture as crime control. *Yale Law Journal* 111.5, 1039–139.

Keller, B. (2003) De-fense! De-fense! De-fense! *The New York Times* 19 April, A25.

Lash, S. and J. Urry (1994) *Economies of signs and space*. Sage, London.

Latour, B. (1987) *Science in action: how to follow scientists and engineers through society*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

Law, J. (1984) *On ships and spices: technology, power and the Portuguese route to India*. Centre de Sociologie de l'Innovation, Ecole des Mines de Paris, Paris.

—— (1986) On the methods of long-distance control: vessels, navigation, and the Portuguese route to India. In J. Law, *Power, action, and belief: a new sociology of knowledge?*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London and Boston.

Low, S. (2003) *Behind the gates*. Routledge, New York.

Luger, J. (1985) *Improvised weapons in American prisons*. Published by the author.

Malecki, E. (2000) Knowledge and regional competitiveness. *Erdkunde* 54, 334–52.

Manning, P.K. (1988) *Symbolic communication: signifying calls and the police responses*. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.

Martinotti, G. (2002) A city for whom? In S. Body-Gendrot and R. Beauregard (eds.), *The urban moment*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

McConville, M. and D. Shepard (1992) *Watching police, watching communities*. Routledge, New York.

Merton, R. (1968) *Social theory and social structure*. Free Press, New York.

Miller, D. (1995) *Acknowledging consumption*. Routledge, London.

Molotch, H. (1996) LA as design product: how art works in a regional economy. In A. Scott and E. Soja (eds.), *The city: Los Angeles and urban theory at the end of the twentieth century*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles.

—— (2003) *Where stuff comes from: how toasters, toilets, cars, computers and many others things come to be as they are*. Routledge, New York.

Myrdal, G. (1960) *Beyond the welfare state: economic planning and its international implications*. Yale University Press, New Haven.

National Academy of Science Committee on Science and Technology for Countering Terrorism (2002) *Making the nation safer: the role of science and technology in countering terrorism*. National Academies Press, Washington, DC.

Newman, O. (1972) *Defensible space: crime prevention through urban design*. Macmillan, New York.

Oldenburg, R. (1989) *The great good place*. Marlowe, New York.

Perrow, C. (1985) *Normal accidents: living with high-risk technologies*. Basic Books, New York.

Pirenne, H. (1936) *Economic and social history of medieval Europe*. K. Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co, London.

Platt, A.M. (1974) *Policing America*. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Polgreen, L. (2002) Actress's detainment upsets Indians here and abroad. *The New York Times* (www.nytimes.com/2002/07/19/nyregion/19PLAN.html).

Pollner, M. (1987) *Mundane reason: reality in everyday and sociological discourse*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and New York.

Powers, T. (2002) The secret intelligence wars. *The New York Review of Books* 49.14, 32–5.

Pratt, A. (2000) New media, the new economy and new spaces. *Geoforum* 31, 425–36.

Rohde, D. (1999) Safir insists arrests were valid and says police won't change their tactics. *The New York Times* 24 August, B3.

Russell, J. (2002) *Designing for security: guidelines for the Art Commission of New York City*. Design Trust for Public Space, Art Commission of New York City, New York.

Sacks, H. (1992) *Lectures on conversation*. 2 volumes, Blackwell, Oxford.

Scarry, E. (2002) Citizenship in emergency: can democracy protect us against terrorism? *Boston Review* 26.5, 40–5.

Scott, J.C. (1998) *Seeing like a state: how*

certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed. Yale University Press, New Haven.

Shaw, C. and H. McKay (1942) *Juvenile delinquency and urban areas*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Sheppart, N. (1980) New York Police take warrants for F.A.L.N. suspects to Illinois. *The New York Times* 6 April, A1, A25.

Shils, E. (1956) *The torment of secrecy: the background and consequences of American security policies*. The Free Press, Glencoe, IL.

—— and M. Janowitz (1948) Cohesion and disintegration in the Wehrmacht in World War II. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 12, 280–315.

Shove, E. (2003) *Comfort, cleanliness and convenience: the social organization of normality*. Berg, Oxford.

Sills, D. (1957) *The volunteers, means and ends in a national organization*. Free Press, Glencoe, IL.

Skogan, W. (1988) Community organizations and crime. In N. Morris (ed.), *Crime and justice: a review of research*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Skolnick, J. (1966) *Justice without trial: law enforcement in democratic society*. John Wiley, New York.

—— and J. Fyfe (1993) *Above the law: police and the excessive use of force*. Free Press, Glencoe, IL.

Smith, C.S. (1981) *A search for structure: selected essays on science, art, and history*. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.

Sorkin, M. and S. Zukin (eds.) (2002) *After the World Trade Center: rethinking New York City*. Routledge, New York.

Spooner, T. (n.d.) When the going gets tough, the free improvise: disposable paper shotguns. In *Doing freedom!: services for those who want to live freer now*. Available at www.doingfreedom.com/gen/0600/ht.paperguns.html.

Stouffer, S.A., L.A. DeVinney, S.A. Star, E.A. Suchman and R.M. Williams (1949) *The American soldier*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.

Sudnow, D. (1964) Normal crimes. *Social Problems* 12, 255–75.

Suttles, G. (1970) *The social order of the slum*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

The Indian Express (2002) Don't laugh in US, warns ''terror suspect'' actress. *The Indian Express* 19 July (1http://www.expressindia.com/fullstory.php?newsid=12849#compstory).

The New York Times (2002) Man denies trying to hijack plane. *The New York Times* 25 January, A7.

Tierney, K. (2001) *Facing the unexpected: disaster preparedness and response in the United States*. Joseph Henry Press, Washington, DC.

—— (n.d.) *Strength of a city: a disaster research perspective on the World Trade Center attack*. Social Science Research Council/After Sept. 11, New York.

Twine, F.W. (forthcoming) *Bearing blackness in Britain: an ethnography of racial formation and antiracism*. Duke University Press, Durham, NC.

US Customs Service (2000) The constant change in concealment methods. *U.S. Customs Today* (www.customs.ustreas.gov/custoday/jul2000/conceal.htm).

US Transportation Security Administration (2002) Can I take it with me?: permitted and prohibited items. (www.tsa.dot.gov/public/display?theme=12&content=15.)

Vaughan, D. (1996) *The Challenger Launch decision: risky technology, culture, and deviance at Nasa*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Walker, N. (1986) Introduction. In K. Heal and G. Laycock, *Situational crime prevention*, HMSO, London.

Whalen, M. and D. Zimmerman (1987) Sequential and institutional contexts in calls for help. *Social Psychology Quarterly* 30, 172–85.

Wilson, J.Q. and G.L. Kelling (1983) Broken windows: the police and neighborhood safety. *Atlantic Monthly* 249, 29–38.

—— and G.L. Kelling (1996) *Fixing broken windows: restoring order and reducing crime in our communities*. Free Press, New York.

Winter, G. (2003) Study finds no sign testing deters student's drug use. *The New York Times* 17 May, A1.