Objects of Urban Security, Part I: Background and Research Starts

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Abstract

Cities are populated by mechanisms of security. Notice the many intrusive devices and repertoires of control at airport departure gates, office reception, subways, and other sites of modern life. But the presence of security, at least more broadly construed to include infrastructures that channel, inhibit, and intrude, did not originate with 9/11 in America.

Indeed, the beginning of cities is virtually synonymous with the rise of apparatuses for exclusion and collective inclusion, the ancient city walls being the prominent exemplar. From the perspective of this essay, it is useful to think of security as an intrinsic part of urban life. To the famous Louis Wirth list of attributes of the city (1938)—numbers, density, and heterogeneity—we need to add instruments of security.

Urbanism *entails* security; it is not a simple add-on. Deliberately or by happenstance, the presence of large numbers of diverse people in small spaces opens the way for collision. People need to be allocated to particular spaces in specific ways, either by force or guidance through more genteel maneuver. Technological developments in building construction (e.g., high-rise), transportation appliances (cars and buses), and the impersonality of urban life mean that threats, many arising internally, are omnipresent and nonspecific as to source.

This essay asks how this instrumentation works, how it "blends in" with social practices including larger political structures through which it operates. In addressing such questions, we approach important topics that have long occupied the agenda of urban studies and analyses of civic life more generally but most often in separation from one another. As remedy, we must traverse intellectual domains usually treated as discrete—things, cities, and security and find ways to present them as coherently linked. We also need to depart from common orientations that, while critiquing security, surveillance in particular, leave largely unexamined the materiality involved and the social practices of on-the-ground human–thing encounter.

BACKGROUND: THINGS OF THE SOCIAL

Material objects have an uneven history in social science. For anthropology, they were intrinsic to the discipline's development, with the human–object

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relationship central to understanding culture (Belk, 1988; Tilley, 2011). Often lacking access to the peoples themselves, archaeologists in particular had to interpolate everything from surviving baskets, shards, beads, or other remnants. Lending itself to some ridicule as "ceramic sociology," (Plog, 1978) a lot of stretching, ingenious or otherwise, took place and, in some cases, yielded a mechanistic technological determinism. Anthropology evolved, of course, into much broader understandings and strategies, taking on greater resemblance to sociology in a turn to domestic environments but also, alas, in paying less attention to artifacts.

As sociologists for their part became more cosmopolitan, with studies no longer limited to North American and European environments, they continued, regrettably, keeping objects at a distance. Lyn Lofland (1998) describes this as "Sociology's agoraphobia," a fear of the idea that the built environment (and, by extension, urban objects) could play a causal role in social life. When analytically or descriptively present, the physical elements were incidental to "real" events and social dynamics, treated "as marginal, irrelevant or passive with respect to the production of social order" (Preda 1999, p. 347). At times, things were even banished from the realm of social action altogether for their inability to meet certain requirements such as possessing the means of cognition and ability to create utterance (Luhmann 1990, p. 3). Among followers of the Frankfurt School, goods did come in for sociological attention, but primarily as "bads"—fetishistic substitutes for meaningful social relations and civic life. The general absence—except for occasional disparagement—was the basis of Bruno Latour's needling query to so-called materialist (Marxist) sociologists: "Where are the missing masses?" (1992).

Anthropologists, however, starting in about the early 1990s, underwent "a return to things" (Domanska, 2006) with the emergence of "material culture studies" as exemplified in Daniel Miller's explicit program—with followers in the United Kingdom and Europe, but fewer in the United States. More or less simultaneously arose interdisciplinary fields of Science and Technology Studies (STS) and Actor-Network Theory (ANT), under the leadership of Latour, Michael Callon, Karin Knorr-Cetina, and John Law, along with others.

Among those social scientists who do want to let objects come in, the commonality is a belief that both objects and people are, in some manner, agentic—in mutual determination and conjoining as worldly force. They operate, somehow and in some way, in simultaneous engagement. Various scholars have reached for terms and concepts, micro and macro and in-between, to capture the thing/social duality. The celebrated historian Fernand Braudel, referring to the *longue durée*, but always working from quotidian materiality, used the word "conjuncture," a term that reemerges in some contemporary writing. For Latour, the workhorse term is "assemblage"

(Marcus & Saka, 2006). Archaeologist Heather Lechtman (1977) proposed the word "style" as standing for an array of seemingly diverse elements that are in fact intimately linked in practice and cognition. As used in political science and political sociology, the word "regime" has a long-standing utility for its inclusionary nature of diverse elements that contribute to a single whole—rather than, as was conventional practice, treating "government" as something independent of institutional context.

In her studies of modern bathing, Elizabeth Shove (2003) refers to the complement of fixtures, products, and social habits (e.g., tubs, shampoos, showering), as "ensembles" that also have determining quality, both upon one another but also, once in repertoire, as social force. In the same vein, Frank Geels (2004) advocates considering "sociotechnical systems" consisting of "artefacts, knowledge, capital, labor, cultural meaning, etc." (p. 900) and within which the focus of attention is "the co-evolution of technology and society, of form and function" (p. 902). On the basis of some phrasing by John Law, Molotch (2003) phrased the conjoining as "lash-up." Thus, the system is not people, ideas, or things, but the evolving trajectory of all three.

Among the convinced, the result has been an eagerness to efface the distinction between the social and material. The effort to give materiality its due sometimes resembles a race back to animism. Tim Ingold (2007), a strong voice for the material, has not been content with the turn to the object, ruefully noting that "the ever-growing literature in anthropology and archaeology that deals explicitly with the subjects of *materiality* and *material culture* seems to have hardly anything to say about *materials*" (p. 1, his emphasis). He means that the focus is too much on the "finished" thing, ignoring the force arising from the content of that thing, its chemical makeup for example, which also counts as an ongoing force in both micro and macro ways.

The price of all the analytic broadening, of which we are in strong sympathy, has been to increase the totality of what needs to be studied, the missing masses now included. If it is all continuous, laterally and temporally, physically and ideationally, then it is an open question—a very practical one—as to where to start in with any analysis. Our combining of "thing" with urban and with security, while partaking of the broadening spirit, also offers some helpful delimitation.

BACKGROUND: URBAN

Taking up the materiality in the urban context opens up new possibilities, not just for method but also to the kinds of findings to which a different method might lead. Or, as Amin (2007) notes, "proper recognition of the

complex ways in which urban dwellers have come to incorporate artefacts … into their daily lives forces us to re-think urban community" (p. 109). He calls implicitly on scholars to "explore 'community' with these artefacts on the inside of human association" (p. 109). Aligned with Amin's call—and getting us closer to our topic—Marres and Lezaun (2011) argue that objects and settings take on political capacities, enacting material participation as a specific public form. They ask, "What are publics made of?" (p. 489) and use this query to inject artifact and materiality as dynamic aspects of the "public"—supplanting asymmetric notions that the public is about ideas and that, if there is a materiality involved, it is simply about having the right kind of agora in which citizens can exchange views and decide which actions to take. In a way, it follows up on Henri Lefebvre's seminal "production of space" idea—people themselves produce the city through their own practices—but now stressing inclusion of urban instrumentation as itself involving a highly relevant range of invented practices and narratives (Sonda, Coletta, & Gabbi, 2010).

Despite all the urging, the pickings are still quite slim; as Farias and Bender (2010, p. 18) lament, it is still not easy to find good examples in the urban literature that represent fusion, instead of veering off toward technological determinism or at the other extreme, social constructivism. The good starts are out there but not at all in the mainstream (Amin & Thrift, 2002; Kaika & Thielen, 2006; Latham & McCormack, 2004; Pile, 2005). We want to continue with the good urban starts, making use of both prior conceptual work as well as payoffs through our own delimited focus on urban instrumentalities.

We cover a wide range of scales. For us, urban objects include sidewalk trashcans and skyscrapers, traffic lights, buses, metro tickets and water fountains—and the social practices they help embed and which are embedded in them (some of which are taken up in detail elsewhere—see Part II: Future Trends by same authors in this volume). These "urban goods" are not urban simply by being located in the city, but—and this is crucial for us as a first criterion—by having public encounter as an intrinsic aspect of their existence.

Secondly, our urban things involve coordination and control. The very characteristics that define the urban—Wirth's classic list—create conditions that induce mechanisms to secure order. Trash has to be put in certain places, not others (nowadays there are complex can systems for different recycling categories), bins must be regularly emptied, and people must drive on either the right or the left (it does not matter which, only that there be behavioral alignment). Some such practices become embodied in so regular a set of practices that virtually no external policing needs to be involved (although sometimes it does, as with inexperienced or drunken drivers). There are more indeterminate cases such as which side of the London tube corridor to walk in, thus

requiring signs to guide pedestrians to one side or the other. Similarly, street lettering may instruct the nonindigenous which way to look before crossing. The objects themselves—streets, corridors, sidewalks—do not tell the necessary story and must be augmented with side-by-side instruction. For most people, habituation makes the signage unnecessary and the embodied practice occurs unimpeded by the need to think about it.

Finally, to be urban, there needs to be enough "community" and social legitimacy to allow the stuff to be implemented, its use distributed, and to be maintained. Citizens should also have sufficient private life resources and civic virtue to not steal public materials. Across the world there are great variations in what can and cannot be left unpoliced (toilet paper, sugar packets, wiring, "manhole" covers), given the specifics of civic and economic life. Indeed, the presence or absence of vulnerable public things is itself an index of the larger realities.

BACKGROUND: SECURITY

Armed with things and urban, we enter the field of security. Our security artifacts, true to pattern, happen at multiple scales and in great variety, their core function at least putatively to protect lives or to protect economic assets. Security involves the whole "world" in which it resides: the authorities who impose the rules and buy the stuff, the individuals who encounter the appliances, the artifacts themselves as they enforce or facilitate one kind of behavior or another. Controls can be seen as running along a continuum between gentility and authoritarian. A highway median strip guides drivers to stay in the lanes reserved for going in a particular direction and can be landscaped as a pleasing parkway. Other material interventions, such as roadway traffic spikes ("Do Not Back Up, Tire Damage will occur"), puncture tires of anyone (no questions asked) going in the nonprescribed direction. This is rude.

Because they have been dealt with extensively in social science treatments elsewhere and because we are so oriented toward human-machine *practice*, we steer clear of surveillance cameras and similar passive recording devices (e.g., electronic recording of Internet, phone, and messaging systems). Such instruments are not dense with person–artifact interaction and thus we leave it to others to stay with them for study (e.g., Goold, Loader, & Thumala 2010; Graham, 2011; Lyon, 2006). We also bypass more familiar macro security issues centered on clashes among nation states as well as conflicts typically involving one-on-one threats within the domestic sphere. The former constitutes much of the subject matter of international relations; the latter is the realm of conventional criminology—a focus on offending individuals, correctional personnel, and the policies behind the latter. In taking up our urban

security artifact, we address a kind of middle ground, which is more ordinary and mundane, the *in situ* appliances and related security regimes built in to modern experience.

Our security objects do offer up evidence of more macro dynamics. As sediments of the past, they are marks of collective anxieties and attempted remediation. In effect, they lend themselves to a kind of reverse engineering to discover the forces, large or small, which went into their creation, deployment, and the impacts their presence continues to exact. Sometimes they persist even when original rationales no longer exist, such as city walls in the age of aircraft or, as in Western Europe, an absence of ground war. Our search for urban security ranges widely, operating in the spirit that Becker suggests as proper for analysis of any "case"—examining the same phenomenon in highly dissimilar sites to find the common elements (Ragin & Becker, 1992).

EARLY TAKES

We can point to prior investigations of material–human interaction involving security and across a variety of spheres, albeit without the ontological and epistemological base of such schools as ANT and STS. In terms of theoretical or methodological acumen, analysts, sometimes quite brilliantly, figured it out as they went along. They operated under the lens of seeing how two separate spheres—the social and material, could interact—albeit short of detailing how they might conjoin as a single phenomenon. But by at least taking both spheres into account, they posed fresh analyses as well as policy recommendations. We might say these are examples of ANT-lite that point to the potential payoffs of bending toward inclusionary thinking about things, urban, and security.

A prominent instance is the concept of "defensible space," offered by planner and architect Oscar Newman (1973). Concerned with street crime and juvenile delinquency, Newman proffered the idea that proper site layouts and building configuration could diminish wrongdoing. Hence, by limiting entry points into a housing complex, the walls of the buildings act, in themselves, as passive protectors. This is the architectural form we see in classic courtyard style layouts—college quadrangle design, for example. Although they stylistically and symbolically mimic ancient cloisters, Newman's application comes from a very different goal, a modernist mode adapted not for contemplation but for crime protection. The simple mechanism of the gate at the gated community is another route toward control but it does presume walls that meet at the gates—an element often missing (see subsequent text) from the contemporary suburban ensemble (Low, 2001).

Writing at about the same time as Newman, Jane Jacobs (1961) was, in ways less noted than with other aspects of her work, similarly oriented toward

crime. Jacobs was responding, in particular, to juvenile delinquency (think "Blackboard Jungle"), a "moral panic" then in play (Cohen, 1972). But rather than walling off the local as per Newman's recommendation, she wanted more of it. City blocks and buildings themselves should be porous. No dwelling should be higher than six floors above the ground, the maximum distance allowing for "eyes on the street" from above. The window was an important part of the Jacobs ensemble but no more so than other design attributes she recommended: architecturally diverse streetscapes, mixed uses, short city blocks. The Newman–Jacobs contrast shows a more basic distinction in how to deal with prospective urban trouble. In the Jacobs response, you manipulate physical elements to bring people into the scene rather than blocking them out. You build in ways for them to trust and take care of each other, including to correct errant ways that might unfold among "their own." In contrast, Newman uses the obduracy of walls to enlist the double duty of protecting from the elements as well as from those with criminal intent.

James Wilson and George Kelling (1982), a political scientist and a criminologist, respectively, also made the window a central part of their security focus but treated it not so much as a useful tool as a marker of dysfunction. Jacobs assumed windows worked, that they were not broken or covered up with plywood. Wilson and Kelling, famous for their "broken windows theory" focused on window *damage*, not because it interfered with anyone's ability to see the streets but because breakage signals that nobody is taking care of things. This implies that no one is watching; there is not in place what Annmarie Mol (2008) called a "logic of care." If trouble strikes, one cannot assume that help will be on the way. Fear of crime, itself no small penalty in urban life, leads people to avoid the place and the absence of eyes on the street (and here there is an overlap with Jacobs) creates, the theory goes, higher crime, in fact. Although windows, as physical artifact, were not a starting point in Wilson and Kelling's analysis, they came to the researchers' attention (metaphorically and literally) through evidence on the ground and the presumed correlation between disregard and actual rates of crime (see also Sampson, 2012). The physical tracings go beyond just the windows, of course, involving other signs of disregard such as graffiti, inoperative street lamps, and vandalized public artifacts.

That presumption may not be warranted and indeed raises the possibility that a security regime may derive from a different sort of goal, in this case an effort to mitigate the *appearance* of disorder. Social control agencies, individuals and organizations—the "moral entrepreneurs" again following Becker—have a long tradition of mistaking appearances of the poor and their dwellings as evidence of fundamental moral failing or social incompetence.

So, the logic goes, faulty logic according to the critics, cosmetic intervention in poor people's lives will foster individual benefits as well as collective well-being. This tendency is revealed in the dictum to "clean up the slums," a phrase that created so much mayhem in the United States and other countries as poor people's housing was replaced by the sterile towers (Oscar Newman-like in some instances) that were themselves later frequently torn down as pathological and "crime-infested."

A remedial measure, short of full-scale urban renewal, involves "fixing up"—with, a noteworthy possible outcome (for good or bad), gentrification. Whatever its source or consequence (Freeman, 2006), gentrification involves changes in the physical that work in conjunction with the social, with security a possible gain. Across these various modes of intervention and technique, the issue of security invites—as per usual—its own variety of difficulties and dilemmas. We run into obvious public debates about what does or does not work and also, quite regardless of what might happen to local crime rates, the proper price to be exacted from the resident population in pursuit of such a goal. In relation to the physical world involving direct action, whether vandalistic, obeisant, or celebratory, we have a route into controversies, aka "matters of concern" in Latour's lingo. Disagreements, coalitions, and cleavages appear on questions of whether or not a particular remedy is or is not of net value and who will pay the price and reap the benefit. Analyses along these lines provide an opportunity for investigation of citizenship and its material negotiation.

DISTRIBUTION OF PRIVILEGE

All machines, ensembles, and regimes have distributional effects—whether at the micro or macro-level of security systems, including their elements ill-conceived as "dumb" artifacts. Some privilege is dispensed along conventional sociological lines of race, class, and gender and some of it is more idiosyncratic. The gates of a gated community are reminiscent of more ancient internal urban separations, the gated Jewish ghetto most prominently. Ghetto walls were the defining attribute of civic life, determining the distribution of populations and the nature of their daily rounds—as do Israel's contemporary internal borders, an irony not lost on critics on both sides of the walls. The US-style gated community—now spreading around the world (Blinnikov, Shanin, Sobolev, & Volkova, 2006; Kovács & Hegedűs, 2014) contributes strongly to what Zukin (1991) calls "landscapes of power." Those trying to enter must show "good reason."

Some of the gating is stylistic "exclusivity"; security is something of a pretense to achieve a status gain. There can be no other reason why some gated

communities lack walls—the entry is the *only* control. No real security bulwark would consist of control solely at the official entry and leave bushes, lawns, and service roads open and available. Even if it is "only" security theater, such displays always have potential to at least humiliate those on the wrong side of the proscenium (Low, 2001; Salim, 2013). Separate is not equal and indeed that is, in both physical and symbolic terms, the point. This installing of security-like artifacts for reasons other than actual security alerts us to a more general phenomenon—with distribution of privilege, one of the latent functions.

Pushing the point more strongly, Mike Davis (1992) was unflinching in his assertion that cities in the United States are brazenly controlled environments. We "now live," he says (writing well before 9/11), "in 'fortress cities' brutally divided into 'fortified cells' of affluence and 'places of terror'; where police battle the criminalized poor" (p. 155). Following on, Aradau (2010) comments that "things and their material connectivities have become instrumental" in furthering an urban dystopia under the guise of protection against terrorist attacks and other risks and hazards (pp. 491–492). At a minimum, we can see the manipulations made to keep the dangerous classes at bay, such as installation of "bum proof" benches with surfaces punctuated by armrests to interfere with sleeping. Otherwise functionally useless metal brackets are spaced close enough together on ledges and stair treads to disrupt skateboarding. Street people continuously must jockey around intrusions of planters, news racks, and bollards strategically placed to keep them at bay (Duneier, 1999).

To discourage uses and users judged inappropriate to urban space, US public toilet stalls are configured with large open spaces above and below and open "seams" to facilitate inspection of what goes on within. In some installations in the United Kingdom, authorities have replaced incandescent light bulbs with ultraviolet ones because this makes it more difficult for drug injectors to see their veins (Greed, 2003, p. 231). The lighting gives out a ghastly blue hue. The rearrangement has the effect, quite common for security systems, of generating other kinds of danger. Unable to see what they are doing, injectors risk opening up wounds and spreading contaminated blood to other users. Those who might then turn to other locations (back alleys?) to inject will lack access to hygienic methods to rinse syringes between injections. At the extreme response, public restrooms are removed altogether, the most common outcome throughout the United States. The result is that nobody ends up with the public restroom: fear trumps affordance and common decency—another not uncommon outcome from security infrastructure.

Retail is a massive feature of urban existence and part of what goes on is constituted by efforts to guard the merchandise against those coming in from the streets and also to protect an ambiance suitable to the goods on offer. At

a time when retailers believe that stock shrinkage is getting steadily worse (Beck, 2002, p. 13), they consequently seek new ways of minimizing it (Lindblom & Kajalo, 2011). Besides hiring guards, there are material arrangements (Cardone & Hayes, 2012). These include radio frequency identification tags ("RFID") attached to garments and other merchandise as well as souped-up surveillance systems, and airport-like scanning portals. The security tags affixed to merchandise work as ensemble with the detector gates at stores' doors. The tags perform actual and symbolic security functions, not only triggering alarms when removed from stores without approval but also encoding hierarchies—store employees are the only gatekeepers able to remove them. They redefine the retail transaction: The customer is buying not only the commodity but also its removal from a securitized ensemble.

In contrast to sites such as airports where security is overwhelmingly ceded to police and TSA guards, employers charge sales clerks with prevention of shoplifting as part of their routine (and sometimes literally charge them for merchandise stolen under their watch). At the same time, in the United States, guards do not participate in sales or tasks ordinarily done by other types of employees; to do so would pollute, in the Mary Douglas sense. They are there for security, treated as a segregated role. In Moscow, by contrast, a city where one of the authors has lived and done field work, it is not uncommon for security guards (plentiful even in supermarkets as well as mall chain stores) to participate in the daily activity of other retail workers. Perhaps because their jobs have been made less urgent by security cameras and threshold detection systems—and very vigilant sales staffs—guards will frequently scan groceries, hold doors, weigh vegetables, and even fold and refold clothes to fill their time. This highlights the question of how the security role is dispersed among people with different job titles as well as the balance between human and nonhuman actors.

In an emerging technical development, stores may come to have facial recognition systems that will check not just for shopper characteristics such as jail and debt records but also credit scores and buying patterns. Identities may also become available through customers' smartphones that, unless the relevant feature is consciously turned off, send signals through the store's Internet system. This is surveillance in real time with potential to directly affect interactional repertoires (unlike more passive urban surveillance systems). Looking at the bright side, the new e-surveillance might enable sales clerks to tailor advice to customers' consumption, travel, and residential needs. But it also will alert store (and office) personnel to who does or does not properly belong. Such individuals can then be at least ignored, if not disparaged—in effect, "fired" from browsing or even buying (as banks and magazines now sometimes do to those with insufficiently impressive profiles). It will be harder for shopping to be an urban recreation, of people

visiting spaces where they do not really belong, because, for example, they lack the cultural or financial capital. How is it possible to pass off for a wealthy browser or member of the "in" crowd when one's records expose the naked truth? So long Flâneur; out of here, arriviste.

The retail exit detector panels become still another gate, creating separate security thresholds that, when crossed, screen in some individuals and behaviors and screen others out. Specific spatial units are security bubbles operating according to their own needs and social orders. Whatever they do to prevent shoplifting, they also create distinct moral fiefdoms operating within and adjacent to the separate moral world of security on the city street. At times, such worlds collide. An innocent person's wares may set off the alarm, generating perhaps some delay or embarrassment for the customer or, if a well-off person has been offended, an apologizing shop keeper. When the detection panels fail to stop an actual shoplifter, he or she is not simply exiting a private space with stolen goods but entering a new security territory that is defined by both different objects (cameras, police clubs, guns), but also different rules (private vs state). Once gone from the store and its immediate area, the deed is done. The gates themselves are liminal and transitionary.

Flying turns security on with its own spatial logics and modes of detection. Erving Goffman (1961) distinguished "total institutions" from other more typical types, but as we move through public life, we encounter institutions that vary in their *degree of totalness*—not really the oxymoron it may at first appear. Much of the temporal and spatial allocation of "freedoms" is handled through material intermediaries, such as those at airport security. Airport security is a space of the total with the machinery at hand—roped-up stanchions, metal detectors, conveyer belts, body scanners—imbricating movement and consciousness. It is a fascistic moment, when even utterances are inspected and where people are induced to bottle up recalcitrant feelings. The guards are scripted as an intrinsic part of the regime. Although security at airports (or subways, museums, schools, etc.) has not thwarted any terrorists in the United States (see subsequent text), it has led to the arrest of those found to have guns or illegal drugs in their possession. This fact was part of the defense made by security authorities against the claim that their measures were a waste of money, given the lack of evidence against terrorists (Halsey, 2013). By having otherwise routine police matters wrapped into the security apparatus, the practices—otherwise running afoul of civil liberties protections—can go forward. This is sanctioned mission creep.

People who fly as airline elite gain certain pardons. Those who make the proper arrangements have paid for the background check, earning them "Trusted Traveler" status, get faster and lighter processing and need not

wait at all for a human passport controller when reentering the United States. Those in business and first class face shorter security lines and while on board share their toilets with fewer others. On at least some airplane flights, loudspeakers tell passengers to remain in their assigned cabins "as a matter of security." Passengers waiting in airport "club" lounges do not have to put up with announcements to keep their belongings nearby. People over 75 do not have to take off their shoes at US airports, a new privilege for rich and poor alike who have lived long enough. Radically less democratic, anyone who flies privately gets no inspections whatsoever and the "general aviation" airports they typically use have no security personnel at all (rent a projectile, anyone?).

The differentiation of security routines is not confined to the airport. Museums, which now also have security inspections, provide provision for at least partial escape for members and certainly for special donors who are "whisked through" with at least fewer indignities (those that remain are an embarrassment for museum development officials). Depending on time and place, veterans, students, and members of certain professional associations, can be singled out for particular advantage.

As a more routine matter, the common card-operated security door at office buildings and other places of employment divides populations between the elect and the excluded, with higher ranking people sometimes given special calibrations for more speedy and dignified entries. Such gizmos require not only the right kind of card, but the right type of physical approach, speed of swipe, and choreography of movement, further discriminating among those who can display their belonging versus those with humiliating fumbles in a world to which they do not quite belong. Registering one's movements via GPS trackers, cell phones, and monitored RFID's create further potential divisions, if not Orwellian in nature at least pervasive and, for some, quite worrisome (Want, 2004). Even so, this is trivial compared to what has gone on and continues to go on in other parts of the world. The US–Mexican border, with its guards, fences, and associated paraphernalia, impacts economic, political, and life-course dynamics on both sides. During the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics in Russia, local residents had to receive special passes simply to allow them to run the gauntlet of guard posts and security barriers to get to and from their homes. Examples are readily available from all over the world, with life and death as not uncommon outcomes of the various intersections.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTESTATION

Security managers are less accountable to publics than those who operate other systems, such as schools or auto dealerships. Delays, profiling, mishaps

(even violence) are all just the way the cookie crumbles. If the candy box we buy in the market lacks the full complement of chocolates, we are in a position to demand redress. If we miss our plane because of the security line (and having been profiled), that is too bad: Our rights as consumers take second place to the rights of others to be protected from a putative threat to the collective. Security agents, and their political and commercial allies, actively promote this protection of the protectors. The issue of security excess is kept off the agenda (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962; Lukes, 1974). So while critics and movements may strive to voice opposition, there is an "unpolitics" (Crenson, 1971) at the manifest level and the opposition has to remain latent.

Fed by an ideology to build "high and strong," Ground Zero rebuilding has itself become a kind of security architecture. The result is a new kind of skyscraper that makes no economic sense. The buildings had to be erected to show America and New York were "coming back"—including downtown Manhattan as the world's financial center. This meant building a vast amount of office space in a downtown real estate market that was growing only in terms of residential use. The building, initially named "Freedom Tower," was further made commercially nonviable because of excessive concrete meant to bolster security and a huge spire (twice the height of the Empire State's) to reach its patriotic height of 1776 feet. To offset the costs, the New York Port Authority (which owns the site as well as the tunnels and bridges into the city along with its airports), steeply raised bridge and tunnel fares. The increases, which saw tolls rise by 56% over 5 years, were opposed by many users, but the sources of the increase—security issues related to the rebuild—were lost in the fog. But the continuing imposition of security hardware in the post 9/11 Wall Street area is strongly opposed by neighborhood groups and some real estate entrepreneurs who increasingly give voice to their concerns. Nine-eleven somewhat wanes as justification to block out complaint.

From the New York subway comes a different version of contestation, one between local jurisdictions and also with complications influenced by the 9/11 events. In order to protect the fare, the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), which operates the city's buses and subways, introduced increasingly restrictive fare turnstiles to block fare-beaters. The problem arose when the Fire Department (a city agency) complained that these turnstiles impede emergency exit—as from, for example, terror events. The two agencies' imperatives were reconciled by construction of additional "emergency exits" which respond to the simple pressing of a bar across the middle of the door. This sets off a piercing alarm, albeit one connected to nothing. The settlement yielded two negative impacts: the piercing sound that is almost constant—a detriment for all subway users, but especially for MTA workers at the platforms as well as operators of station newsstands. The second negative outcome was a new source of financial loss because a single

fare-paying user can, once past the entry turnstile, open the emergency exit to allow friends and random strangers to enter without paying. Fare-paying riders thus subsidize those who cheat, the problem that initiated the changes in the first place.

Urban things often have multiple effects, which engender different forms of acceptance and opposition, even within the same communities. Some citizens (and police) champion high-wattage street lamps, for example, as a crime deterrent. Historically, outdoor lighting helped make factory work possible virtually around the clock in part by easing the commute to it. It also aids the enjoyment and use of the city, maybe especially for tourists uncertain in unfamiliar surroundings. Street lighting plausibly reduces pedestrian falls, goods being lost, or legal bills from litigious pedestrians. But various residents oppose streetlights. Sometimes this is precisely because of the "citiness" they imply for otherwise "country-like" (and affluent) settings. Lighting may disrupt human and animal circadian rhythms, bird migration patterns, and individuals' ability to see stars—whether for scientific or personal reasons. The simple street lamp is not so simple.

To the degree that a street lamp is "security," it not only gains adherents but also blunts criticism. People who like having public trash bins can lose out when they are seen as a security threat, as they have been so demarcated by London Transport, which has banished them from tube stations. The security classification also engages different types of agency involvement; most crucially, the question of what is the reach of military versus civilian authority. Things "about security" gain access to special budgets and police/military protections that otherwise would not be present and, as at the first-class airplane toilet, capacity to solidify other types of distinction.

A useful concern for security studies is thus just what is in—and what is out. Virtually all objects and actors, subject only to the limits of human imagination and the ripening of unpredictable conjunctures, are candidates for security demarcation. The range of potential danger, being infinitely large, means that with sufficient concern, so must be the range of potential interventions to head it off.

INGENUITY

Precisely because of their potential for unwelcome intrusion, security is a laboratory to witness the dynamics of ingenuity to overcome. Some of this is very hands-on. Working through urban space (and also domestic space for that matter) people manipulate a continuous stream of physical elements, including the curbs, hand rails, and construction barriers that at times (for some) enable but also at other times (and for others) intrude. We sustain a

choreography of reaching, pushing, and manipulating while balancing packages, children, and equipment of the day—umbrellas, brief cases, and purses. As new elements emerge, as at a temporary construction setup, or new innovations come into being, such as public bike racks and extinction of telephone booths, we adopt and adapt.

In the New York subways, McClain (2007) has described ingenuity of metro-card "benders" who set up side businesses selling rides of their own. There are multiple intricacies. New Yorkers sometimes throw their used metro cards on the floor right next to the turnstiles. As it turns out, each of those "spent" cards can yield one additional ride if the end of the magnetic strip is bent in a precise way. "Specialists," we will call them, make the precise bend and then, standing by the turnstile, sell a swipe for about half the cost that otherwise must be paid. Such individuals have learned the local artifact ecology and successfully embedded themselves into it. Some prior social science commentary treats such strategies as "resistance," but I doubt political or moral motivation. Such thinking does not do justice to the *craft* that is in play.

Prisons teach us a lot about ingenuity, even of people otherwise radically resource deprived. Prisoners can turn plumbing pipes into musical instruments and communication tools. Bits of fencing or toothbrush handle can be formed into shivs or more constructive tools. Urban security elements are also subject to such creative appropriation. Those who run drug dens install security doors (ordinarily marketed to anxious householders) to delay the police long enough to destroy evidence. Joyriders who do not care about the condition of their stolen cars deliberately use roads with speed bumps—meant precisely to encourage safe driving—in the hope of outrunning police who may be more concerned about their cars and the risk to other road users if they lose control at high speed. High chain-link fences can be escape routes for athletic young people who escape the less agile guards who pursue them. The study of urban security objects is therefore also the study of how different groups and interests seek to appropriate and (re)purpose their environment.

Sometimes people's creative response is to ignore security elements conceived as in their own benefit. In Britain, during the height of the German bombing, a majority of Londoners still did not use the underground bomb shelters (Fridlund, 2011, p. 400). In the New York subway system, workers will likely shun the masks provided for emergency use because, as McClain wrote, the masks block communication and are too awkward and constraining. Hardly anyone on commercial airplanes puts down their reading material to follow the safety card as the flight attendant works through it. Most people pay no attention to the squeals of the alarms on emergency gates in the New York subway and ignore car alarms. Likewise, the occasional beeping of

metal detector gates that have proliferated in Moscow shopping malls since the start of suicide bombings from the North Caucasus are generally ignored by shoppers and security guards alike. Just as people frequently self-organize when disasters do strike (Drabek & McEntire, 2003; Fischer, 1998; Solnit, 2010; Tierney, 2007), they work out, quite on their own, ways to deal with mechanisms that lack their confidence.

In these various cases, we see how security operates as ensemble of bodily elements, objects, and particular attitudes, including belief or nonbelief in the security system itself. It is a project that mobilizes (and reveals) the full panoply of individual and collective dynamics making up social life, including those with a pernicious outcome.

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