cognition. The extent of all possible influences on decision making are extremely complex and beyond the scope of this study.

Figure 2: Model of the Culture and Environment Relationship.

One cannot examine how people react to built and natural cues without reference to the area of architectural study which concerns the effect the built and natural environments can have on humans. The complexity of all the relationships in Figure 2 is revealed through the examination of just one aspect of the centre circle and how homogeneity and heterogeneity influence territoriality. Rapoport (1980) has argued that throughout history neighbourhoods have been predominantly homogeneous. Humans have a natural desire to be in a homogeneous neighbourhood, as homogeneity has inherent benefits.

Homogeneity increases predictability or reduces un-predictability thus reducing stress. There is less need to process new information, which reduces the chance of information overload. Homogeneity reduces the perception of density, which
reduces stress levels, and allows a large number of psychological, cultural and other natural defences to operate more effectively. Homogeneity allows meanings to be taken for granted, and this leads to more effective and clearer non-verbal communication. It is easier for inhabitants to understand body language, clothing, behaviour and physical cues in this environment. Homogeneity leads to agreement about notions of environmental quality and that reduces the chance of conflict about standards. Informal control is much more effective than formal control as a homogeneous area makes informal control easier and more efficient. Homogeneity provides support and comfort in times of stress and change. The benefits of homogeneity are supported by work on successful and unsuccessful housing projects (Beck and Teasdale, 1977; Francescato, 1979). A good example of how the level of homogeneity or heterogeneity effects B&E is illustrated in the work of Smith and Jarjoura (1988) who conducted a victimisation study of fifty-seven neighbourhoods. After controlling for all possible influences, they found that as neighbourhoods became more racially heterogeneous, rates of B&E increased.

Rapoport (1980) has argued that people interact best when they can define others as strangers or familiar. Homogeneity facilitates social interaction. Rapoport stated that if there was a choice for a designer between homogeneity and heterogeneity they should choose homogeneity. However, Rapoport did not expect homogeneity to mean identical. For example, the exterior of dwelling units should be similar overall, but they should have individual aspects in their design. Occupants can experience homogeneity, but not at the expense of individuality. The work of the Brantinghams (1975a; 1975b; 1978), Lee (1968; 1981) and O'Shea (2000) support the argument that homogeneity has a retardant effect on B&E. Suttles (1968) has argued that homogeneous neighbourhoods have higher levels of social interaction, which facilitates the identification of suspicious persons and behaviour. The study of the built and natural environment is an important complementary discipline to routine activity theory and the rational choice perspective.

Environment and behaviour research is driven by the view that self-conscious processes of design decision making will be improved and enhanced by improving
rational analysis techniques. Two developments that aid design are environmental programming and post-occupancy evaluation.

Environmental programming is the identification of goals and criteria of different users, clients and designers in the design process. Design is seen as a problem solving process. Today environmental programming covers various activities ranging from studies of economic feasibility, activity analysis, user requirements, space layouts, consumer participation and design guidelines in regards to what to build, whether to build, the size to build and where to build.

Hsia (1988) stated that post occupancy evaluation was “the examination of the effectiveness for human users of occupied designed environment” and it was the “evaluation of an environment after it has been occupied” (p. 304). Traditional architectural criticism is concerned with aesthetic evaluation, pleasure, and judgement. Design guidelines are one of the products of post occupancy evaluation research that bridges the gap between theory and design.

Hsia has argued that the separation of space and society is merely made as a matter of convenience for researchers. Hsia’s view is that they are too interrelated to be separated. The separation by researchers and others is a social or technical construct. Hsia’s argument is a further discussion of the positivistic versus phenomenological difference. Hsia has argued that more research is needed into how people, including offenders, interpret the built environment. Ward and Brooks (1991) and Topping and Pascoe (2000) argue that when crime escalates in or around a building, the answer is usually making the area more formidable by installing fences, alarms, access control, CCTV, or gates. Target hardening is often the predominant preventative approach to crime (Gant and Grabosky, 2000). Ward and Brookes detailed some crime prevention building projects and they argued that if one designed a “building right in the first place then the need for drastic target hardening after it was occupied will be greatly reduced” (p. 75). One inner Sydney City Council gives property developers guidelines for the incorporation of crime minimisation in the design of new buildings
and their surroundings such as locks, adequate lighting and the designing out of hiding places where crime can occur (Sydney Morning Herald, 21/1/92).

Researchers into the links between architecture and behaviour contend that increased social homogeneity through design will lead to a reduction in criminal offences such as B&E. These researchers also argue that it is often a difficult exercise to discern how a person interacts with their environment when one considers subtle cognitive and cultural influences. They argue that increased research is needed to tease out the separate and combined effects of the built environment, cultural influences and cognitive abilities. Many of the concepts discussed in this section could influence B&E rates. An examination of decision making without reference to possible environmental influences would be deficient.

A further evolution of environment and behaviour research has been crime prevention through environmental design. Although this concept was originally a purely architecturally based concept it has evolved into one of the many tools used for situational crime prevention initiatives. Crime prevention through environmental design is discussed in the next section.

**CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN**

The previous discussion of environment and behaviour research highlights the relevance of the study of crime prevention through environmental design. Whereas environment and behaviour research is focussed on how the built environment influences any behaviour, crime prevention through environmental design is focussed on deviant and criminal behaviour and how alterations to the built environment can affect their occurrence. Crime prevention through environmental design is a large and diverse area of research and theory that needs to be addressed in order to assess environmental cues that could influence the occurrence of crime. The full potential of crime prevention through environmental design is yet to be realised. In addition to crime prevention through environmental design being used to prevent offending Del Carmen and Robinson (2000) argue that crime prevention through environmental
design principles have been under utilised and could be extended to other fields such as disease prevention.

Two theories have dominated the relationship of society to space. The first claims that our socio-spatial environment is deficient and that the heterogeneous nature of a modern urban environment does not reflect the territorial nature of humans. The aim of this perspective is to create, design and organise space so that it corresponds to and reflects the way humans group together. Proponents of this first view are Alexander (1977), Lynch, (1981) and Newman (1980; 1996). They argue that many modern design practices have created environments that do not take into account territoriality. As a result, a dysfunctional environment often emerges. The second view states that any influence a designer tried to exert is immaterial, because humans act independent of their spatial environment. Social and economic factors outweigh and dissipate any effect that design could have (Pahl, 1970; Weber, 1964).

Although these views seem polarised, they share one assumption. If space is to have an importance to society, there must be a correspondence between social groupings and spatial demarcations. Hanson and Hillier (1987) argue that territorial theory dominates the field (Alexander, 1979; Coleman, 1986; McClusky, 1979; Newman, 1972; Rapoport, 1980). The territorial view is based on the assertion that *homo sapiens* are territorial mammals (Montifore, 1979) and territoriality is a basic behavioural characteristic (Hall, 1969; Lynch, 1981; Sommer, 1969). The territorial view is best illustrated with the concept of privacy, as the need for privacy is a supposed expression of territoriality (Rapoport, 1969). Hanson and Hillier (1987) argue that privacy is usually required so one can be with family or close friends. The family in whatever form needs to be insulated from the outside at certain times.

Hanson and Hillier argue that once a principle of group territoriality is established it can be extended from the family, to neighbours, to the local community and so on. There is an evolving hierarchy of socio-spatial interaction. The authors argue that this theory makes design easier to develop. By having clearly defined boundaries, design would reflect each level of territoriality. The authors described two areas with
a lively community life that were created because the individual dwellings were not
turned away or closed off from their immediate surroundings, and there were no clear
discernible physical boundaries. Stranger identification occurred because locals had
many kin and friends and they knew who should and should not be about. Many
researchers have found support for the territoriality view of collective human
behaviour (Hillier, Burdett, Peponis and Penn, 1987; Perkins, Meeks and Taylor,
1992; Turner, 1969). What Hanson and Hillier fail to acknowledge however is that
when a community was closely related and connected they are more likely to have
mechanisms for identifying strangers based on knowing neighbours and neighbours’
kin and friends. When a location was made up of strangers, perhaps being a transient
area, or a new estate, the environment would be best served by defining territory
more clearly, for example, cutting homes off from the whole by using cul-de-sacs
that would enable easier stranger identification.

Hillier, Burdett, Peponis and Penn (1987) raise an interesting concept, that of ‘spatial
pathology’. This is where an architect has set out to design a particular space to
promote human encounter, such as a communal area for interaction. Sometimes after
such a space is created, it may become derelict and not be used at all. Often the
question is whether a design was flawed or a designer misjudged the cultural and
social mores of the inhabitants. It may be that such a design would have been well
used in another social or cultural setting. An example of this is Southbank in
Brisbane (Australia). Through the day tourists, shoppers and workers use it, but after
dark gangs may use the same space. Design can only create a possible space for a
community, it is up to people and their culture to make it a total and real community.

The study of architecture and behaviour is interdisciplinary. If the goal is to have a
better design for people then one needs to know what better is. Interpretations of the
degree of influence of an environment vary along a continuum from the totally
deterministic to the environment having minimal inhibitive or facilitative properties.
Many would argue that functionally deterministic environments are rare, but it is the
case that some environments can block or restrict certain behaviours. The effect of
design can be direct and/or indirect. If cues are to be integrated into a design, then
designers must have a greater understanding of the persons who will use the built environment for unintended means. An example of work in this area is Hansford (1982), who compared victimised with non-victimised commercial properties. Building design, security precautions and environmental surveillance patterns were significant predictors of victimisation or non-victimisation for B&E.

An example of designing out crime is given by Tell (1990). A 577 unit estate had slowly been taken over by drug sellers and buyers to a point where children could no longer play in the streets. An largely architectural solution was invoked. The estate was redeveloped into five separate villages that gave residents a greater sense of neighbourhood. Easy entry and exit points were eliminated. All through-ways were blocked off as drug buyers and sellers used these when making a hasty retreat when needed. The estate also had extensive exterior refurbishment and landscaping, all units were upgraded internally. Tell argued that the residents made the difference, but this only occurred after physical changes were made. Tell gave no figures to support his assertions but he concluded that in 1990 the streets were safe to play in and were free from drug sellers and buyers. The initiative consisted of restricting the movements of pedestrians by relocating ground floor entrances with new enclosed lobbies, installing guard stations and metal detectors and issuing residents with identification cards. The surveys found that 88% of respondents said shootings and fighting in their building had declined. It also found that 64% of the residents said drug dealing in their building had declined. Other studies have found similar results (Popkin, Gwiasda, Rosenbaum, Anderson, Olson, Lurigio and Taluc, 1995; Popkin, Olson, Lurigio, Gwiasda and Carter, 1995).

Environment and behaviour researchers and crime prevention through environmental design researchers agree that more research is needed to determine what kind of information should be used when formulating a design. Since design is for people, one should know as much as possible about human behaviour and how it interacts with the built environment. This also includes research into how offenders interact with the built environment. Better design is based on information that is collected and analysed, rather than guessing or making arbitrary assumptions.
The theoretical origins of crime prevention through environmental design are different to the rational choice perspective. Crime prevention through environmental design is based on the notion of group and individual territoriality and concepts such as defensible space and public and private space. Changes based on crime prevention through environmental design endeavour to increase individual and group feelings of territoriality in order to increase informal protection of space to prevent crime. On the other hand the rational choice perspective tries to prevent crime by manipulating cues to increase the level of deterrence when an offender weighs up risk versus gain. The intention is to have more offenders deciding that the risk is too great and the gain too small, so an offender will choose not to offend. However, despite these differences, situational crime prevention practitioners have embraced both concepts in an effort to prevent crime (Bennett and Durie, 1999; Eck, 1995; Sherman, Gottfredson, MacKenzie, Eck, Reuter and Bushway, 1998).

**ROUTINE ACTIVITY THEORY**

This section introduces and discusses routine activity theory. This is followed by an examination of the interrelationship between routine activity theory and the rational choice perspective. At this stage the two main theories and the three ancillary theories that this thesis examines will have been presented and explored.

When a decision occurs according to the rational choice perspective, whereby a burglar is selecting a possible target, a decision is made within external constraints or forces. Human ecological theorists such as Hawley (1950) contend that time and space are two major limiting factors in human organisation. People must adapt themselves to the limited spatial and temporal factors of the environment. Deviant behaviour also has to organise itself around these two factors. Deviant behaviour can be mapped geographically to examine its spatial pattern and it can be recorded in terms of its temporal attributes, such as the number of crimes per hour. Routine activity theory is a recently developed ecologically based theory that explains crime in regards to Hawley's spatial and temporal limiting factors.
Hindelang, Gottfredson and Garofalo (1978) first detailed how one could link lifestyle and its antecedents in order to predict victimisation. Hindelang et al. described lifestyle as “routine activities, both vocational activities (work, school, keeping house etc) and leisure activities” (p. 241). Cohen and Cantor (1981), Robinson (1998b; 1999; 2000) and Wittebrood and Nieuwbeerta (2000) have found great support for lifestyle theory in regards to B&E using national census and national crime victim survey data.

Whereas Hindelang et al. concentrated on individual lifestyles of different social subgroups, Cohen and Felson (1979) took a more comprehensive approach in their development of routine activity theory. They argued that “structural changes in routine activity patterns can influence crime rates by affecting the convergence in time and space of the three minimal elements of direct-contact predatory violations: (1) motivated offenders, (2) suitable targets, and (3) the absence of a capable guardians against crime” (p. 589). With developments, such as global information systems and computer software, the analysis of crime and place has greatly increased. Many findings support the contention that offenders often indirectly survey potential targets while pursuing their non-criminal daily routines (Wiles and Costello, 2000). Many studies support the major elements of routine activity theory (Lauritsen and Davis-Quinet, 1995; Osborn, Ellingworth, Hope and Trickett, 1996). Other studies have revealed that B&E is sensitive to factors that increase or decrease opportunity (Boggs, 1975; Brantingham and Brantingham, 1980; Cook, 1986; Engstad, 1975), while others show that one can predict B&E risk by a measure of variables that record when persons are away from their homes for varying reasons (Cohen and Cantor, 1981; Cohen, Kluegal and Land, 1981; Hindelang, Gottfredson and Garofalo, 1978; Jackson, 1984; Maxfield, 1987a; 1987b; Sparks, 1981).

Cohen and Felson (1979) argued that the proliferation of lightweight durable goods and the dispersion of activity away from the family home in the 1960s and 1970s accounted for the rapid rise in crime, because “modern society invites high crime rates by offering a multitude of illegal opportunities” (p. 911). This finding is supported by Kock, Kemp and Rix (1997) and Van Hofer and Tham (2000) who
found that offenders are drawn to items that are expensive, transportable, marketable and difficult to identify. Clarke (1999; 2000) has recently suggested that manufacturers should identify potentially ‘hot products’ and engage in proactive design changes to reduce their desirability. Clarke, Kemper and Wyckoff (2001) have shown how redesigning cell phones has reduced related fraud offences. England and Taft (1968) reinforce the disposable goods argument. They found that an increase in B&E had grown out of the improvement in economic conditions: “the average householder possesses valuable and easily portable goods [and this] presents a high degree of opportunity for this type of offence [B&E]” (p. 122).

Cohen, Felson and Land (1980) stated that the B&E victimisation rate per 100,000 was 290 in 1947, 310 in 1957 (+7%), 710 in 1967 (+129%) and 1550 in 1977 (+118%). The increase in situational opportunities (increased population densities, decreased guardianship [housewives] and increases in light durable electronic goods) over the post Second World War years provided circumstances which favoured criminal activity. Burglars were more attracted to the suburbs and the growth in such communities offered greater opportunities to burglars. Conklin and Bittner (1973) argued that burglars “capitalise on low population density, the absence of street traffic, the privacy of single family dwellings, the extensive inventory of portable wealth which suburban homes typically contain, and the frequent need for both spouses to work to finance such luxuries” (p. 208). Mirrles-Black, Budd, Partridge and Mayhew (1998) supported these concepts when they found that tertiary students were most at risk of a burglary. The students were susceptible because they often lived in areas with high crime rates, were often away from their dwelling, they often owned lightweight portable and desirable goods and they usually lived in rented dwellings and the physical security measures were less than a private dwelling would have. Mustaine and Towksbury (1998) supported these findings.

Cohen and Felson (1979) first determined that four elements (now six) influenced the suitability of a stealable target in routine activity theory and they spelt the acronym V.I.V.A. The first element was value. Offenders are only drawn to targets that they value. The second element was inertia. Offenders are more drawn to lightweight
goods than heavy items (unless motorised and/or with wheels). The third element is *visibility*. Offenders notice and are more drawn to targets that publicly advertise their existence. The fourth element is *access*. Goods are more susceptible to theft if offenders can easily access them. Such as valuables left on top of a dresser rather than put in a safe (Felson and Clarke, 1998).

The original four elements were described in brief and were never intended to be authoritative. V.I.V.A. neglected motivational factors and target characteristics concerning concealment or disposal. V.I.V.A. has since been refined and redesigned into a six element schema that constructs the acronym C.R.A.V.E.D (Clarke, 1999). The first element is *concealable*. Items that can be concealed on the person of an offender or can be concealed for use later are more likely to be stolen. The second element is *removable*. This is similar to the element in V.I.V.A. called *inertia*. Property that is easily transportable is more desired. The third element is *available*. It comprises the two elements in V.I.V.A. called *visibility* and *accessibility*. If goods are more accessible and visible they will become a higher theft risk. The fourth element is *valuable*. This is similar to the element in V.I.V.A. called *value*. The determination of the worth of an item is often related to the reason that an offender takes it. For example, a joyrider will take a performance car regardless of its relative value. The fifth element is *enjoyable* and was not covered by V.I.V.A. Many products that are stolen are enjoyable items to own and often goods of equivalent value are not stolen in an offence. The last element is *disposable*. Many items that are stolen are on-sold so offenders will weigh up the characteristics of merchandise that make it easy or hard to sell.

Felson (1986) further developed routine activity theory to embrace and complement control theory. Control theory (Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990; Hirschi 1969) asserts that a potential offender commits a deviant act when his or her bond to society is weak or broken. The bond comprises four elements. The first is *attachment*. If a person has a strong attachment to other individuals, the community or institutions, they will be less likely to engage in unacceptable behaviour because it would be contrary to the aspirations and expectancies of the people they are bonded with. The
second element is commitment. A person can invest time and energy in attaining a position in their life, such as an education, career or their reputation. When a person considers engaging in deviant behaviour they run the risk of losing the investment they have spent time and energy acquiring. The third element of the bond is involvement. The more a person is involved in non-criminal pursuits the less time and stamina they will have to contemplate deviant behaviour, let alone act on their contemplations. The final element is belief. People have dissimilar levels of belief in the ethical legitimacy of the rules, norms and conventions of modern society and culture. The less faith a person has in these rules, norms and conventions the more likely they are to violate them. Felson (1986) condensed Hirchi’s four elements under the term handle. Those who can grasp and utilise the handle in an effort to exert control are the intimate handlers of a potential offender. Intimate handlers are found in a physical and non-physical state and can be people, institutions, beliefs, morals or ethical values. The intimate handler is anything that can grasp the handle of a potential offender and exert some control. Felson argues that offenders will be naturally drawn away from their intimate handlers in order to offend with a greater degree of anonymity. Control theory highlights the problem of prevention utilising traditional policing methods. For example, extensive use of police blitzes of recent years, especially in the United States have given many young men criminal records for minor offences (Tonry, 1995). This could weaken their bond to legitimate society thus increasing their likelihood of further and more serious criminality.

Eck (1994) proposed an additional type of controller, which he termed a place manager. A place manager is one who manages a place, such as a home owner, doorman, concierge, janitor or a building manager (Eck and Weisburd, 1995). Goldstein (1997) provides an excellent example how crime can be discouraged by exerting pressure on poorly performing place managers. He sets out a hierarchy of methods whereby authorities can exert pressure on place managers so that they realise that it will become too great a risk if they continue to ignore a problem. In essence, Goldstein argues that authorities can manipulate circumstances so that when a place manager is weighing up the continuation of their current behaviour they can be made to change. Goldstein’s list of methods is arranged in ascending order by
strength of impact and difficulty of implementation. The initial methods are providing advice and information for example, leaflets and brochures or targeted information, such as erecting signs in hot spots. The methods that have the highest impact, but are difficult to implement, are bringing civil actions or charging a fee for police services.

Eck and Wartell (1996) also give an excellent example of how place managers can influence the occurrence of crime when they presented the results of a randomised and controlled experiment using threatened property seizure. Landlords who owned properties that were the sites for much crime were randomly allocated to three groups. One group received a letter, one group had a meeting with police and town officials and there was a control group. In a pre and post comparison the properties in the meeting group had significantly lowered the number of reported crimes compared to the control group. The letter group also had a decline in crimes, but it was not significantly different from the control group or the meeting group.

Felson (1995) has integrated place managers into routine activity theory. Eck (1994) described routine activity theory as two triplets; a potential offender is monitored by handlers, targets are monitored by guardians and amenable places are monitored by place managers (Eck, 1995). Figure 3 illustrates the process according to the two triplet version of routine activity theory. In the first example (top of Figure 3) the bonds between the handler and likely offender, place and manager and guardian and target are strong. Therefore, the three controllers are able to keep the three elements from converging. In the second example (bottom of Figure 3) the bonds between the three elements and their controllers are weak or broken and the elements can converge.

These developments have led to a revision of routine activity theory. It is now explained as a general theory of crime (Felson, 2000). Felson (1998) states that the chemistry for a burglary would need a capable and motivated offender to locate a suitable and accessible target, with the lack of a person or something that can keep the two away from each other. The absence of a person or something to keep the two
apart refers to a capable guardian, an intimate handler or a place manager. The other reasons a burglary may not occur is because the offender was not motivated enough or capable or the target was inaccessible.

Figure 3: Illustration of the convergence aspect of routine activity theory.

Routine activity theory contends that while changes in the crime rate may be related to changes in the supply of offenders, changes may also be explained by Hawley’s (1950) concepts of rhythm, tempo, and timing. These three factors can affect the frequency of convergence of the three minimal elements in routine activity theory. Rhythm is the regularity of the recurrence of certain events, such as the habits of persons who commit B&E. Tempo is the number of events per period, such as the number of burglaries per month. Timing is the coordination of different activities.
that are apparently independent, such as places where the target and offender’s rhythms converge. These three factors can increase or decrease the occurrence of deviance because they directly influence the convergence of the three minimal elements. Curtin, Tilley, Owen and Pease (2001) encapsulate routine activity theory when they conclude that “a crime will only occur when there is a capable and motivated offender who finds a suitable target, without anyone or anything there to keep the two apart” (p. 1).

THE ROLE OF OPPORTUNITY

At this point we need to recognise the influence of opportunity, which permeates all of the aforementioned approaches to the study of crime. Felson and Clarke (1998) state that “no single cause of crime is sufficient to guarantee its occurrence; yet opportunity above all others is necessary and therefore has as much or more claim to be a root cause” (p. 1). Felson and Clarke (1998) contend that opportunity has a central role in routine activity theory and the rational choice perspective. Studies of crime that focus on settings, whether at the individual or community level, rely on opportunities being conducive to crime.

Felson and Clarke (1998) offer an example that encapsulates their thinking. “Any store that makes shoplifting easy causes more crime to occur in two ways: by encouraging more people to participate in the crime and by helping each shoplifter to be more efficient as a thief” (p. 1). The authors argue that overt situational opportunity provides an environment where crime can arise where it might not otherwise have occurred. Persons may elect to engage in highly opportunistic or almost spontaneous behaviour if the situational factors actively encourage crime. A place can induce increased criminal activity from persons with little or no predisposition to engage in a criminal act. The authors cite Farrington and Knight (1980) who conducted a study where they scattered addressed and stamped envelopes in public streets. Envelopes that clearly contained money were less likely to be
posted by persons who picked them up from the street. People's behaviour reflects situational opportunities. Quite simply, opportunity causes crime.

Increased opportunity has a central role in routine activity theory. In the 1960s and 1970s the rise in expensive, lightweight, easily transportable and durable goods coupled with a rise in the proportion of homes that were left unattended created structural changes in criminal opportunities that best explains the dramatic escalation in burglary.

In terms of the rational choice perspective an offender will search for, and select targets that maximise immediate criminal opportunities. Therefore, measures will have a greater deterrent effect if they have a closer proximity to the criminal act in contrast to distant factors that supposedly explain criminal propensity.

According to Felson and Clarke (1998), opportunity as a cause of crime is constituted from ten sub-principles. The first is that opportunity plays a role in all types of crime, not just property crime. By way of example, the incidence of violence at drinking establishments can be influenced by design and management practices.

Second, opportunity factors are highly specific to each crime type and each situation. Mechanisms that reduce one crime may have no effect on others. For example, introducing controls at the exit of a multi-level car park may reduce the theft of cars, but have no deterrent effect on theft from cars.

Third, criminal opportunities are not evenly distributed throughout a community in terms of time and place. A setting may provide increased opportunity for street robberies at night but lesser opportunity during the daytime. Conversely a burglar may have increased opportunity during the daytime in a suburb, due to deserted homes, but decreased opportunity at night due to occupiers returning home from
work. Fourth, criminal opportunity is often produced by everyday movements and activities. Public transport that only operates for a set time period each day only provides limited increased criminal opportunity for a period each day along that route.

Fifth, one crime can generate an opportunity for another crime to occur. One example is a break and enter that can result in the opportunity for a previously unintended sexual offence, assault or weapons violation. Another example is that often the monetary proceeds from an acquisitive crime are spent on other illegal activities. Sixth, some items are more alluring in the criminal opportunity mix. Besides cash, items that are readily transferable for money, lightweight, easily transportable and in high demand are more appealing.

Seventh, social and technological innovation can often produce new crime opportunities. As a new product gains acceptance, becomes widely available, in demand and can be readily exchanged for cash it will increase the opportunities for crime. A recent example is the mobile phone. In the 1980s mobile phones were heavy and not widely used. Throughout the 1990s mobile phones became lighter, more widespread and more desirable. This has led to a surge in mobile phone thefts in recent years. Eighth, reducing opportunities can prevent crime. Ninth, reducing opportunities to prevent crime does not necessarily displace crime. Tenth, opportunity reduction can have wider beneficial effects than that intended. Many successful opportunity reducing techniques, displacement and ‘diffusion of benefit’ are discussed on pages 39 to 45 in the section titled, ‘The Merits of Situational Crime Prevention’.

Personal disposition and motive are important in explaining crime. The interaction between person and place is also critical in understanding the criminal act. However, the role of opportunity is essential in any discussion on the causes of crime. Crime is result of the interplay of person, place and opportunity.