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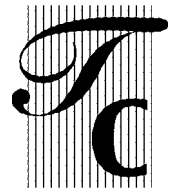

Invasion of the 'body snatchers':

Burglary reconsidered

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Abstract

The victim of crime has become the focus of increasing concern in recent years, particularly in the context of the impact crime has on its victims. This article takes a novel approach within this debate contending that the conceptualization of victimization remains underdeveloped with respect to the experience of crime for victims. In particular, this article explores elements of threat to or loss of property and physical safety that impinge on personal and communal well-being. Further, we draw together perspectives on 'well-being' that focus on the boundaries of body, home and personal space as key constituents of a sense of both identity and safety. We argue for a richer conceptualization of victimization developing existing approaches with discussions of fear, embodiment and personal/spatial 'privacy'.

Key Words

burglary • embodiment • home • invasion of privacy • objects • victim

Introduction

Within contemporary academic debate it is widely accepted that, in the last few years, the victim of crime has become an increasing focus of attention,

analysis and discussion within both academic and political spheres and in more populist 'law and order' debates. As a number of theorists have argued (see, for example, Young, 1986, 1994; Grimshaw, 1989; Mawby and Walklate, 1994), there has been an increasing shift away from offenders and the causes of their behaviour towards the victim of crime and the impact of victimization. Indeed, some notion of the victim of crime can in many respects now be regarded as both implicitly and explicitly central in contemporary debates around issues such as fear of crime, urban regeneration and redevelopment and situational crime prevention as well as criminal victimization.[1] The collection and analysis of crime and victimization statistics by both governmental and academic bodies, and the use of crime surveys on a cross-national, national and local level have become relatively commonplace. In the process a great deal of data on the extent and aspects of the impact of criminal victimization have been assembled.

In addition, the emotional impact of victimization has been increasingly examined (see, for example, Edwards, 1989; Stanko, 1990), particularly in the case of crimes against the person involving violence. It is within this context that this article will develop its argument. While the nature of embodied, emotional responses to certain forms of criminal victimization is to an extent being examined, we would argue that the emotional effects of property crimes such as burglary and theft of and from one's car, while being widely recognized in much of the literature, remain relatively undertheorized. In order to try and unpack the nature of victims' responses to property crimes, this article will examine existing data and debates within victimology and criminology in order to identify a range of common responses to this form of victimization which have been identified in much of the existing research. This article will also draw on aspects of our own research (on consumption and 'home' in a new private housing estate, and on older urban residents and their experiences of victimization) to demonstrate the extent to which many of these responses to victimization can only really be understood in the context of victims' relationships to their homes, personal possessions and related significant personal objects. We will argue that approaches within cultural theory that examine embodiment and boundaries, the home and personal possessions can make a significant contribution to critical victimology and aid our understanding of how victims respond to property crimes.

Researching victims of burglary—the context

Research into criminal victimization in general and burglary victims in particular has in many respects been dominated by survey-based approaches. Large-scale surveys, such as the *National Crime Survey* (which has been carried out in the US annually since 1972), the *British Crime Survey* (which has taken place in England and Wales in 1982, 1984, 1988, 1992, 1996 and 1998, with accompanying surveys in Scotland) and similar

surveys in countries such as Canada, Australia and Holland have used relatively large samples to gauge respondents' experiences of crime. In the process of this attempt to chart the 'true' extent of crime in their respective societies, these surveys have, because of the nature of their approach, essentially focused on personal victimization. Consequently, as Hough and Mayhew suggest, these surveys have been regarded as 'an invaluable source of new information and the risks and consequences of victimisation' (1983: 3). These government-funded national criminal victimization surveys have had important implications for policy initiatives on crime. For example, in the British context, the BCS has served a twofold purpose: first, the victim-oriented approach of the BCS and its findings have played an important role in the development of relatively cost-effective but high-profile initiatives for 'tackling crime' which place an emphasis on victimization avoidance, voluntary action and the 'active citizen'.[2] Second, the data generated by the BCS have provided a useful method of minimizing the apparent level of crime and risk of criminal victimization in British society.[3]

The findings of these descriptive national crime surveys produced by state-sponsored 'administrative criminology' have stimulated an extensive critical literature that highlights the shortcomings of its approach. This literature cannot satisfactorily be examined in the limited confines of this article,[4] but, in particular, the possibility that national crime surveys have been unable fully to uncover the impact of issues such as gender, ethnicity, locality on experiences of victimization of socially located individuals has been widely discussed. Attempts to address these shortcomings, particularly by left-realist criminologists, have stimulated a range of local crime surveys that have attempted a more explanatory approach to the patterning and experience of victimization in specific localities.[5] In particular, the local surveys have identified different patterns of victimization, particularly related to gender and ethnicity, with far higher levels of sexually and racially motivated offences than suggested by national surveys such as the BCS.

In many respects, while local crime surveys have identified a range of issues that national crime surveys could not address, they too have been subject to criticisms that in many respects echo those levelled at national surveys. So, as Walklate (1990: 31–2) points out, while local crime surveys may espouse a commitment to concepts of age, class, gender and ethnicity, they share with national surveys a tendency to offer a range of empirical observations concerning effects of victimization rather than a consideration of the patternings and interconnections between these variables on a theoretical level. In essence, such surveys tend to reduce criminal victimization to a series of generalizable effects, with little concern for the complex experience of crime. Or, as Zedner has suggested:

> In switching attention from offenders to victims, it could be argued that victim surveys did no more than suggest a new subject area for positivist criminology . . . [T]he counting of crimes and detailed descriptions of the

> age, sex, socio-economic and geographical characteristics of victims could be said to do no more than provide a new measure of crime and a new set of portraits, in many ways parallel to those previously drawn of offenders.
>
> (1994: 1217)

In this context, for both types of survey, the *immediate* experience of crime can often be seen as a 'black box' that is taken for granted in the presumptions of survey designers. For example, this 'black box' of burglary contains a number of issues such as invasion of privacy, the loss of objects of sentimental value and strangers in the home: responses which are so self-evident, common and obvious that the reasons for these responses remain almost completely untheorized within victimology.

Critical victimology and the 'qualitative turn'

The apparent shortcomings of both traditional/administrative and left-realist approaches to victimization have produced a range of theoretical responses which can broadly be termed critical victimology (Mawby and Walklate, 1994), an approach which while recognizing the usefulness of criminal victimization surveys asserts that this approach cannot effectively address both victimization in a general context and in the everyday lives of specific social actors. In part, these concerns have led to a range of more qualitative, smaller-scale approaches to researching victimization including use of focus groups and in-depth interview techniques in order to elicit the complex interplay of structure and experience.[6]

This qualitative agenda calls for an approach which:

> . . . takes account of a number of processes which contribute to the construction of everyday reality; people's conscious activity, their 'unconscious' activity (that is, routine activities people engage in which serve to sustain, and sometimes change, the conditions in which they act), the generative mechanisms (unobservable and unobserved) which underpin daily life, and finally, both the intended and the unintended consequences of action which feed back into people's knowledge . . . At a theoretical level it requires postulating and testing the existence of generative mechanisms which may underpin specific individual actions at specific moments.
>
> (Mawby and Walklate, 1994: 18–20)

We suggest that this need is particularly pertinent in relation to property crime, since the a priori assumptions in surveys, policy outcomes and the tacit knowledges of everyday life recognize that property crimes such as burglary elicit emotional responses. Yet, despite this widely held recognition, the question remains: why do we respond in this way to these kinds of offences?

The rest of this article is concerned with an attempt to unpack this issue in relation to burglaries.

The next section will outline, with examples, some of the key responses that have consistently emerged from burglary victimization research. Following on from this, we will explore theoretical explanations for the relationships between people, homes and possessions that we think shed some light on the emotional impact of burglary.

Key themes

As stated earlier in this article, it is our contention that in much of the victimization data relating to burglary, from national and local surveys, victim support organizations and small-scale qualitative research, certain key themes emerge from victims' responses to burglary. These can basically be categorized in two ways:

1 invasion of privacy/the strange(r in the) home;
2 emotional investment in lost objects/comparative hierarchies of loss.

Burglary as an invasion of privacy, the intrusion of a stranger into one's home, the jolt to our sense of comfort, safety and security in our own home space is an issue which emerges consistently in research over a long period of time and in a range of social contexts (apparently irrespective of issues such as the financial impact of burglary). In BCS data, invasion of privacy is the most commonly noted response to questions assessing the worst aspects of the burglary (Mirlees-Black et al., 1996), cited by 33 per cent of respondents in the 1988 BCS. In his study of 322 burglary victims, Maguire (1982) found that 63 per cent of victims cited invasion of privacy as the 'worst' or 'second worst' aspect of their burglary. Identical concerns were expressed in a recent ethnography of older urban residents in South Manchester (Kearon, 1996, 1998). In addition, in both academic research and more 'common sense'/media representations of burglary, the loss of items of sentimental value, and the subsequent emotional effect on the victim is another common theme. In the ethnography of older urban residents referred to above, the loss of items with some kind of sentimental value was frequently extremely significant and upsetting.

A common feature of many of the responses in this research to loss of items as a result of burglary was the appearance of what could be termed a hierarchy of significance of objects. In these households at least there was a sense that certain objects (particularly electrical goods) were essentially utilitarian, and seemed to manifest little or no emotional investment. The loss of objects such as televisions and videos was felt far less keenly, with the objects themselves being regarded as relatively easy to replace, and their loss regarded more of an inconvenience than as an upset. The loss of other, more unique items (in particular jewellery) which appeared heavily invested with sentiments, memories and emotions, was usually felt far more strongly (often in conjunction with discourses of 'invasion of privacy').

These issues that emerge consistently in much of the research into burglary raise interesting questions. It seems apparent that the experience

of burglary potentially has profound effects on its victims and their sense of control, ownership and comfort in their own home. It problematizes the 'taken-for-grantedness' of our relationship to this domestic space, and confronts us with our relationship to the objects with which we fill this space (often provoking powerful emotional responses). In some respects, as has been argued elsewhere (Kearon, 1996, 1998 and below), experiences of this nature may have implications for the ontological security of the individual.[7] But why does burglary seem to have this impact? In order to understand this we would argue that it is necessary to examine further the nature of 'home' and our relationships to our personal objects and possessions.

The significance of home, bodies and things

Recent victimology debates, as discussed in the previous sections, have broadly ignored the detailed examination of the experience of burglary and related property crimes. The undertheorization of the nature of 'victim-hood' is the principal outcome, which may have implications for policy and support systems. In particular, we suggest that the complex relationship between people, their homes and the things that belong to them is of prime sociological and philosophical significance. In much of the victimology literature the victim's relationship to the things stolen and/or the privacy intruded upon is a 'blackbox', in which the categories and experiences are unexamined by researchers, since they appear so very obvious. But in an attempt to explore the specific processes of the lifeworld, we take the taken-for-granted very seriously.

In what follows, we argue that the notion of embodiment is useful in understanding the experience of burglary because it highlights a number of 'threats' and objects of threat that are neglected in the existing literature as discussed above. Such threats go beyond a simple understanding of lost objects, even beyond a more complex grasp of objects' meaning within a symbolic frame. Our position is that objects hold a more nuanced relation to the self, the body and the 'space' around bodies than the classic discussions of burglary allow.

This nuanced position could be summarized with reference to different versions of embodiment that have emerged in recent literature on the body (e.g. Csordas,1994; Feher, 1989; Price and Shildrick, 1999; also see the journal *Body & Society*)—and detailed below in relation to the embodied experience of home and belongings. It is important to note, however, that for our purposes the schema of versions of embodiment is not exhaustive, nor are the different categorizations to be seen as universal and isolated: we use this as a working model to begin to understand embodied experience. The first version of embodiment we call *literal* embodiment. In the case of the burglary experience, literal embodiment is the actual sensations felt as a consequence of invasion of privacy, loss of objects, etc. It is often

experienced as fear, shock and dread manifesting as actual physical symptoms—shaking, sweating, changes in temperature and pallor for example. In this very obvious sense, burglary can be an embodied experience—on its own, however, this insight is not particularly interesting. Embodiment becomes more interesting as a concept when we consider other versions used within social science.

A second version we are calling *partial* embodiment. The idea of partial embodiment emerges in work that explores how the body 'lives' in space—both physical and social—in order to constitute itself as a sentient and sensate being. The term partial attempts to summarize the ways bodies are always incomplete—bodies cannot operate without biological and social feedback. Such (social) feedback has been conceptualized in a variety of different ways. Phenomenology (see below; Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Crossley, 1994, 1995; also see the tradition emergent in Meadian sociology and psychology), for example, conceives of bodies-as-lived as the immediate interaction between, and extension of, matter in space. There are a series of important interactions between the potentials and feelings of the body (such as proprioception—the sense that the body has of 'itself' in space—and kinetics—the ability the body has to move in certain ways) and the 'world' at large—other people, objects in sensing range and, more complexly, the social and symbolic. Merleau-Ponty's examples are lucid: one gets to know writing by using a pen, to know others by touch and talk, to know the world in blindness by use of a stick. In other words partial embodiment recognizes that bodies are not simply biological entities but intersubjective and interobjective relations that come into being and are experienced through a variety of practices.

This sense of partial embodiment hints at a third version, which we title *symbolic* embodiment. Bodies do not only construct and come up against objects and people: they also come into being and engage in feedback within the social and symbolic environment. The apparently diverse work of Bourdieu and Foucault is instructive here, since they both (in different ways) presume that layers of social and symbolic meaning allow the enactment of bodily practices and form constraints on bodily knowledges. Foucault's (1979, 1980) sense of disciplines of the body and Bourdieu's (1977, 1984) use of the term habitus indicate a body that enacts social differences and rewrites them as 'it' acts. In other words, bodies are always inscribed within social space and symbolic rules—they are not simply universally undefined tools but are repositories of power. To summarize this for our purposes, embodiments of victim experiences could be investigated as manifestations of disciplinary power or the appropriate 'habitus' of victimhood. Victimhood could be defined and constrained by micro-knowledges of practice—an example for investigation might be the reconstruction of embodied victimhood in scenes of crime officer encounters; or indeed burglars' own transgressions/constructions of the boundaries of home.

A fourth version of embodiment might be termed *metaphoric* embodiment—in which the body 'stands for' and/or extends to a wider social or material form. Again this version clearly intertwines with the others, since the social and material can never really be separated from the symbolic. As experience, however, metaphoric embodiment encompasses wider versions of partial embodiment: most pertinently here, the house or possessions may be experienced as extensions of the body or 'stand ins'.[8] These versions of embodiment inform our understandings of the cultural and personal significance of home and belongings that we discuss in more detail below.

Dwelling places . . .

The key to our understanding of the complex and emotional experience of burglary is partially found in the significance of the home and possessions in western cultures. In many ways, the emotional relationship to home and belongings, and the sense of belonging that (sometimes) emerges within such spaces, is very straightforward: our home is our territory,[9] a symbolic and emotional space in which we live with the fantasy of control. Any invasion of such boundaries is deeply troubling. But victimologists have not sufficiently brought together the extensive interdisciplinary debates that have explicitly addressed these questions of belonging, belongings and boundary struggles. There is considerable (empirical and theoretical) reason to explore this dynamic further: home is symbolically central to western (and particularly north European) mythology, history and literature; for many people, everyday material cultures configure identity and belonging; at a sociological level, domestic space is a fiercely contested and problematic territory that defines, constrains and contains powers and interactions. For our purposes, we take cues from recent revivals of theoretical exploration into the investments made into belonging. Cultural theory is rediscovering 'dwelling' as a rich and ambiguous category within the social that denotes the experience of domestic space rather than its status as the bearer of structure.[10] Dwelling works in two key ways: first, dwelling, homeliness, domesticity and familiarity are used as metaphoric representations of the processes of drawing in things that we 'know'—a sort of primary symbolization. Second, however, dwelling is to be taken literally: this is a phenomenological recognition of the centrality of 'home' and 'things' to our basic grasp of the world. This interrelationship—the recognition of the mutually constitutive character of the categories and experiences of home—is central to our concerns. In particular, we wish to posit the importance of an embodied understanding of the home and belongings for understanding the experience of burglary. We would argue that the experience of invasion of privacy, loss and disturbance caused by, and commonly described about, burglary can be explained by this disruption of the embodied experience of home.

In different contexts, cultural and social theorists have been working their way around to such an understanding of home. Saunders' (Saunders and Williams, 1988; Saunders, 1989) pioneering but problematic work on consumption of home and ontological security begins to open out these questions. Ontological security is borrowed from Giddens to suggest a certain clarity about boundaries and belonging. Saunders' concern to account for privacy as a defining feature of this security was made in the context of a debate about owner-occupation: simply, it was suggested that private ownership was more likely to engender well-being and feelings of emotional investment and security.[11] For us, the issue is the ontological security that is possible in any ordinary relations between people, residences and objects.[12] This ontological security is a version of the forms of embodiment discussed above; as well as referring to people's sense of identity and symbolic belonging, it also refers to their practices of the body in habit, familiarity, status position and interaction. Any breaching of this security can have profound effects upon the sense of well-being and homeliness of an environment.

Consumption as a way in to homes

Home has also become central in social and cultural theory as an adjunct to debates about consumption, commodities and taste. In the concern to evaluate scales of meaning of different objects, and to explore the outcomes of exchange and the significance of symbolic hierarchies of identity, the home and objects within it have achieved an invigorated status. Partly as a way of exploring the sociological/economic 'black box' of the household, home is now a key site for research—see, for example, Bourdieu (1984), Miller (1990, 1994), Putnam and Newton (1990); Silverstone (1996). In particular, such approaches have attempted to challenge structural-determinist accounts of consumption as the outcome of production relations. Instead they (increasingly) highlight the constitutive powers of consumers to construct their own meanings and values from consumer objects. As such, the object per se (including the home) has become invested in the literature with a transformative potential: objects and homes are both the sites of social structuring and the fabric on which creative 'becoming' is expressed as identity.

However, the object in consumer studies has not rested simply as the repository of identity. Rather, there is an increasing concern to map the 'magical' properties of the object. There is a recognition of the fascination and aura that objects have for human beings and a continued attempt to pull out their 'mute and brute' qualities. This concern for the unspeakability of things is perhaps best addressed in the literature on collecting and museology, which seeks to defend objects as having deep symbolic, social and material significance in all cultures; increasingly, there is a turn away from exoticized anthropological accounts of objects towards a concern for

the aura of objects in western consumer societies (Pearce, 1994; Belk, 1995).

One of the most significant conclusions from such debates highlights the intense work that is done in constructing a sense of objects belonging to people: sentimental value cannot be taken for granted—rather it is a laboured (and embodied) achievement. Authors highlight the investment, cultivation and extension of selves into objects (Cziksentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, 1981; Belk, 1995) and suggest that in doing so, the relationships between people and their objects are reflexively reconstructed. This is particularly the case in the praxis of ritual engagement with objects, which is not simply an activity found in other more 'spiritual' cultures. In particular, there is a recognition that things are socially embedded, mobile and transformable: in other words, a thing is simultaneously materially, symbolically, ethically and spiritually constructed—as such, it can never be taken for granted. These ideas are best represented in attempts to map the mobility of object relations found in, for example, Appadurai (1986, especially Kopytoff) and McCracken (1990).

The significance of these ideas for our purposes lies in the realization that sentimental value rests in multiple dynamics—as such objects are opaque, 'magically' experienced and mute. Sentiment (like aesthetics) needs to be considered in a manner closer to its original pre-18th-century form,[13] as knowledge that exists because it emerges as an embodied response to things or contemplations: in other words, sentimental value can be perceived more as 'feeling-of' objects rather than cognitive, rationally explainable 'meaning'.

Of particular significance are bodies of work that highlight the sense of metaphoric embodiment that objects represent—for example, Belk's (1988) piece on possessions and later work on collecting (1995) highlight the ways familiar and cherished things almost become forgotten, because they are so close. This 'forgetting' becomes a 'standing in for' parts of the body such that the loss of objects is an amputation. Although amputation proper is clearly devastating, the use here conveys the way in which loss highlights how much a thing meant. Such meaningful things, however, are often, if not mostly, blended into the familiar background. In a similar way to that in which body parts are not much thought about in day-to-day use (Merleau-Ponty's account (1962) of proprioception discusses this), truly loved and familiar objects become part of the 'habitus' of comfort. Maldonado (1991) beautifully describes this idea of comfort as embodied objects that become invisible to everyday vision and interaction. Moreover, McCracken (1990), discussing the material cultures of consumption, writes of the ritualization of consumer goods such that apparently 'meaningless' objects can be incorporated (into the larger 'body' of the house?) and divested by means of intricate rituals. One of the most common examples is the obsessive concern with other people's dirt when moving house or buying second-hand—known dirt is much less of a threat and unknown dirt must be given extra hygiene to purify it.

Cyborgs and prosthetics: new and old

The current dominant interpretations of the object (and by extension the home as the largest consumer object, as well as a prime site of display, reproduction and use) in consumer studies (sociological and cultural) are as a repository of meanings and as the site for social exchange and reproduction. However, more recent work is engaging with a view of consumption that goes beyond consumption (and home) as either symbolic representation or materialist alienation. In many ways, these new configurations revisit materialism but with alienation given a gloss (quite literally) unfamiliar to Marxist theory.[14] In this work, the object is afforded a dual and unfinished space, the site of many interactions both objectified and subjectified simultaneously. This work might best be represented by the term 'cyborgology'. Following similar poststructuralist critiques of division (showing the fictional nature of the divide), cyborgology has sought to inhabit boundaries. Unlike poststructuralism, however, cyborgology seeks to extend the concept of the boundary beyond linguistic structures, to bring it back into the fundamental divide: the division between 'nature' or the world of things, and 'culture' or the known world. Central to such debates is the fundamental assumption of the necessary boundary between alien and non-alien objects, the familiar and the horrifying. Linguistically, they are but words and letters away from each other: in other words, not very far at all. In other (structuralist) words, you can never have, for example, cleanliness without dirt. For poststructuralists, it is essential to recognize this constitution of difference in language; for cyborgologists, however, dirt and cleanliness as categories have to be refigured alongside dirt and cleanliness as prosthetic entities, attachments, as material interferences with the order of discourse. To put it another way, cyborgology asks difficult questions about the status of things and bodies in a way that poststructuralism often sidesteps.[15] Cyborgology does often deal with the prosthetic as metaphor, as a linguistic device for grasping new forms of consciousness (Haraway, 1991). But it also takes seriously the extending and extensive effects of new technologies in grasping how bodies work. As such much of the useful literature on embodiment emerges out of this cyborg consciousness (Hables-Gray, 1995; Stone, 1996).

Our interest, however, is to examine how such approaches might be used in empirical research. The contention here is that the cyborg is a new formulation necessitated by rapidly changing technology, but that the principles of such thinking are found in earlier philosophical and psychological ideas. There are some attempts to ground the notion of the prosthetic in 'ordinary' cultures (Leach, 1998a, 1998b; Lury, 1998) such that cyborg concepts do not simply deal with spectacular technologies. It is the ordinary technologies—i.e. ways of configuring the lifeworld, both cognitively and materially together and inseparably—that we are concerned with here. It is our contention then, not that there is something new cyborg-ish about houses and objects (on the contrary they are very, very old

social forms) but that cyborgology (old and new) offers useful insights in understanding victimization.

The architectural uncanny: houses as larger bodies

'Old' cyborgology here is used to mean those ideas which take seriously the interrelatedness and fictionality of the subject/object division. In different but related ways this is found in a tradition connecting Freud, Winnicott, Heidegger, Douglas and others. Perhaps the central body of work that can be used to unlock the experience of burglary emerges from the interface of philosophy and psychoanalysis and which deals with the uncanny. Freud's use of the uncanny has had an extremely suggestive and influential role in the analysis of the leakage between boundaries that is always necessary in boundary-drawing cultures. The uncanny is that which is unknown but in the German, unheimlich means unhomely. This interesting distinction has been extensively discussed as a figure for symbolic activity in general: if home is that which is familiar and close (homely), beyond the home exists that which is defined as unknown, dangerous.

Freud's central interest was to use the home as figure for known spaces: this motif is evident in Heidegger's use of space as a way of figuring knowledge and experience.[16] Such a metaphoric use of space as knowledge is crucial to understanding the way belonging is defined and problematized. But it is also vital to redouble this figuring back onto literal spaces to show up their symbolic centrality and immediacy within the processes of everyday living. In other words, 'house' as a metaphor for the known world that is drawn in around oneself is so very central symbolically because it is literally immediate. In phenomenological fashion, the house is the product of everyday, ordinary yet vitally important distinctions and praxes that provide the possibility for symbolic existence.

It is also crucial to note that the unheimlich is so important as adjunct to the heimlich because they are inseparable. The key point here is that the familiar is always threatening to break out of its boundaries, to leak, to be intruded upon. This is because the working out of such boundaries of known and unknown is a labour of division (Hetherington and Munro, 1997): such symbolic activity is a fiction that can easily be transgressed by the realization of the brute horror of not knowing.

This invasion of the known by the unknown causes deep uncertainty: it is uncertainty itself. It is best demonstrated by the most obvious uncanninesses of bodily experience and the ways in which bodily experience is integrated into the social and the symbolic. The internal organs and functions of our bodies are the most proximate experiences we have yet they are some of our most horrific. Digestions and indigestions, leakages, piercings and penetrations: such stuff is the immediate unknown that configures our sense of comfort and discomfort, known and unknown, taste and disgust. This leakiness of the body is a way of understanding our

embeddedness within the home: drawing into ourselves a material collection of known things, we try to forget that these things are things and not-us. Home, then, is the things that have lost their thingliness; home and body are simply wider concentric circles (see below on Winnicott's spaces), things subject to our (apparent) control, always threatening to leak out of this control:

> Any house is a far too complicated, clumsy, fussy, mechanical counterfeit of the human body . . . The whole interior is a kind of stomach that attempts to digest objects . . . The whole life of the average house, it seems, is a sort of indigestion. A body in ill repair, suffering indisposition—constant tinkering and doctoring to keep it alive. It is a marvel we, its infesters, do not go insane in it and with it. Perhaps it is a form of insanity we have to put in it. Lucky we are able to get something else out of it, though we do seldom get out of it alive ourselves.
>
> (Frank Lloyd Wright, quoted in Wigley, 1995: frontispiece)

The embeddedness of the body in the social (for some poststructuralists, it is the constitution of the body in the social that is important) reminds us, however, of the need to negotiate some kind of resolution of the body's unfinished character. For psychoanalysts the negotiation of symbolic space provides one such (fictional, temporary and moveable) resolution.

Objects and boundaries: understanding 'betweenness'

Winnicott's version of psychoanalysis provides one telling insight into the relationship between bodies and objects. For him, the process of child development occurs in the fundamental relationship to the primary carer (in Winnicott's observations, the mother). In order to effect the separation between the primary narcissistic self (the stage of almost complete absorption) and the autonomous self, babies undergo shifts in their subjective experience. This occurs by gradual experience of the not-me through the use of 'transitional objects'. The transitional object (Phillips, 1988) is any object adopted by the infant that comes to represent security in the absence of a parent—it does this by combining the qualities of a thing both loved and hated, both present and absent, both permanent and transitory, and both independent of the child's will and controlled by her. This multiple nature is created by the emergent separation of child from parent but at the same time serves to effect or at least aid that separation. The transitional object is then, for Winnicott, a representation of (although not a substitute for) the space between people. The security a child feels through the presence of a primary carer must be diminished in their absence. In the loss of that certainty, children play with, feel affection for and attack objects in order that they might learn otherness. This sense of otherness is crucial for the ability to interrelate with others: the 'linking of subjective reality to shared reality' (Phillips, 1988: 117). But the dual status of the transitional

object highlights beautifully the requirements for negotiation of this uncanny divide. As Winnicott points out, it is:

> neutral territory . . . there is a tacit understanding that no one will claim that this real thing is created by the world or that it is created by the infant. It is understood that both these things are true: the infant created and the world provided it.
>
> (Phillips, 1988: 117)

It is easy to see the significance of this theory for the understanding of actual, physical objects, as well as those things constituted as symbolic objects (e.g. mothers), and, moreover, for an understanding of space in general. This can be found in the related Winnicottian concept of 'holding': the child needs to be held by the primary carer in order that it achieves a sense of continuity of experience, in spite of the child's own vicissitudes of emotional and libidinous desires. The holding of the child provides the space from which 'breaking out' into oneself can occur. This idea often finds a spatialized explanation:

> In a practical sense the little child needs to break away from the mother's arms and lap, but not to go into space, the breaking away has to be to a wider area of control, something that is symbolical of the lap from which the child has broken away. A slightly older child runs away from home, but at the bottom of the garden has finished running away. The garden fence is now symbolical of the narrower aspect of holding which has just been broken up, shall we say the house. Later, the child works out all these things in going to school and in relation to the other groups that are outside the home. In each case these outside groups represent a getting away from the home and yet at the same time they are symbolical of the home that has been broken away from and in fantasy broken up.
>
> (Winnicott, in Davies and Wallbridge, 1981: 135)

We are suggesting here that such ideas locate fundamental experiences of the world that is not-me (the alien, objectified, uncanny/canny) in early childhood experience. Moreover, it is argued that there is some continuity between childhood experience and adult perceptions of objects and spaces. This idea has strong reminders of, and parallels to, some very central questions in philosophy and the social sciences.

In particular, what such psychoanalytic models do is provide an explanatory framework for some of the experiential dramas at the heart of wider and more literal boundary disputes. In many ways although Winnicott, like others above, uses the space of the house as a graspable metaphor for social space and bodies, in fact it is just as relevant and logical to turn the metaphor around. The phenomenology of spaces found in the work of Vidler (1992) or Bachelard (1994) highlights the social and symbolic centrality to people of actual houses in their lived, material constitution. Our argument here is that as well as being logically possible to see the psychoanalysis and phenomenology of people in spaces as compatible, it is

also necessary for an understanding of the intricate details of the value of home-as-lived. Geographies and anthropologies of social spaces do achieve this to an extent (see, for example, Douglas, 1984, 1991; Pile and Thrift, 1995) by taking seriously the boundary and its leakages. Structuralist anthropology in particular has identified the centrality of the boundary as the key defining feature of social ordering. As in the work of Winnicott, the boundary in Douglas or Levi-Strauss represents a series of concentric circles that cultural insiders butt up against and outsiders invade. In such analyses, the idea of home, as in Freud, is that which is close, familiar.

The boundary, however, cannot simply be taken as a given, as post-structuralism has shown us: it needs to be understood as constructed, policed and unfinished. Boundaries imply separation and structuralist anthropology can often reify this separation. Instead the processual nature of the boundary needs to be clarified. As in Winnicott this processual boundary making can be recognized as a disturbance. To overcome this disturbance, humans develop strategies for coping: fictions, politenesses and tacit knowledges that confirm the apparent clarity and fixity of boundaries. When such politenesses are made explicit (as ethnomethodology shows us convincingly) a deep discomfort can be invoked.

Familiarity: dynamics of embodied remembering and forgetting

Our central argument here, then, is that what is neglected in victimology studies is a full grasp of what it means to be victimized. Of crucial significance in this experience is the meaning and experience of boundary transgression. It is not, however, simply a (structuralist) case of the outside invading the inside; rather, we suggest that burglary serves to highlight the problematic accord that people make with boundaries in order to live comfortably. In the everyday lifeworld, it is necessary to ignore our dual status as both 'me/not-me' entities. Our objects and the 'skin' of our living (in the form of the house) are a constant physical presence, concrete poetry that could (but does not) remind us of our betwixt-and-between existence.

Why do we say that objects and houses could but do not remind us of our contradictory and unfinished existence? Because the precise task of the familiar is to be forgotten, to blend in with the background. At the same time, however, objects and things are always just there in their brute existence. Possessions and belongings seem to have this dual status, like the Gestalt images that can be two things, but are never really perceived as both simultaneously. Like Winnicott's transitional objects, actual objects in adult life seem both ours, created in our own image and form, and they represent the world, structures, otherness at large. It is this paradox that is

at the heart of much recent discussion of consumption. In other words, this dilemma is how to understand the transformations between objects as fragments of a system of fashion, part of a system of exchange of value, and objects as possessions, apparently expressive and interpellating entities that speak directly to the sense of self of the owner/user.

We must ask though, how it is that such transformations are actually effected within everyday lives, how such a forgetting (such that life can be lived unencumbered by a surfeit of horror at alien objects) can take place? The work of Merleau-Ponty and others who attempt to ground the living of boundary-struggles within embodied experience gives us a remarkably similar answer to that offered by Winnicott. Grosz argues that 'Merleau-Ponty . . . speculates that there must be a distinct stage in the infant's development in which the opposition between virtual and real space does not exist' (1995: 91). This idea of a disruption of the apparent imagined (subjective) life of the child and the real (objective) world of others is addressed explicitly by Merleau-Ponty in his concern to elucidate the bodily praxis of knowing. The carnal possibilities of the body form a pre-subjective bodily knowledge that allow for categorizations (e.g. subject/object divisions) to be made. These ideas are centred on a relationship between people and objects that is inseparable: knowledge-of[17] objects is always knowledge-by a body.

What this bodily knowing implies to us is an appreciation of the experience of home and the things in it that is often unmediated: the body learns its particular praxes within objective spaces and in so doing constitutes those spaces. Because of the lack of (Cartesian) separation between bodies and environments, there is a kind of physical remembering written on the body, and a forgetting of the difference between 'me' and 'not-me' that operates simultaneously to engender a sense of comfort.

Burglary revisited: invasion of the body snatchers?

The conclusions that we draw from putting together these two very different bodies of work—victimology and the theoretical issues of homeliness—focus on what happens when burglary occurs. We suggest that the ideas above offer a way of understanding the particular transgressions that are so disturbing. Specifically, burglary is so emotionally and physically upsetting because it stimulates a sort of existential dread or 'bad faith': ontological security is immediately, instantaneously and lastingly revealed for the necessary fiction that it is.[18] It is not so much that burglary is the invasion of outsiders (although this is a prerequisite for our analysis); rather that the very issue of inside/outside maintenance is made evident. It is a real-life 'breaching experiment' (Garfinkel, 1967) that disinters the drives behind tact and security that enable us to live without dread.

Moreover, the significance of the invasion is problematized by the embodied nature of the relationship to home and things: by their very nature, familiar objects are conceived of and lived as extensions of the body. The necessity of familiarity in homeliness creates this praxis of proximity: things that are so close to the body, that are in the body, that they feel amputated by burglary. This horror at quasi-amputation is akin (although not as intense) to the horror of pollution, piercing and cutting, violence (Douglas, 1984; Price and Shildrick, 1999) and it is this that engenders the real loss.

The loss of objects, crucially, is much more than the loss of part of a cognitive, discursive identity. As discussed above, sentimental value needs to be understood as more than just the sense of the meaning of objects in relation to the biographical narratives people tell about themselves. Objects are valuable because they are rich with sensory and memory-laden experience, as well as representing identity. In this way, we need to understand the hierarchies of value-as-lived of particular objects. Thus the experience of loss is often experienced retrospectively in burglary (people do not always know what something means until it is gone) and this loss can be of apparently unsentimental items. Here, we suggest that (although not specifically about loss) a sense of matter out of place is as important in the sense of loss as a careful and rational sense of what something represents.

Thus, we would argue that a more nuanced understanding of the complexities of our relationship to our home and possessions is both a necessary and timely intervention in the attempts of criminologists, victimologists and related professionals both to theorize burglary victimization and to address the more 'practical' issues encountered in contact with victims on a daily basis. We would expect such developments of existing approaches to have a number of possible outcomes. In particular, more detailed qualitative work might be conducted to explore the full impact of property crime in this vein. The potential aims of such research would include an investigation into the significance of home and embodied experiences for both victims and burglars to expose the cultural disjuncture that allows crime to occur. This in turn may feed into crime prevention strategies. Most pertinently, we expect such ideas to be of use in victim support, both in terms of developing programmes for reappropriation of personal space and in terms of giving weight to the full and detailed impact of property crime in victim impact statements. Research in this vein might pursue professional strategies for unpacking the experience of invasion, loss and recovery of ontological security for victims. Such strategies could pay attention to bodily experiences as they contribute to a general sense of incivility within spatial environments, and could feed into discussions on the extent of crime reporting, since while reporting is so closely linked to monetary loss and actual physical harm, the implications of burglary and related offences, as we have demonstrated, significantly transcend these constraints.

Notes

1. To the extent that, as Karmen (1990) has argued, crime prevention initiatives have increasingly become exercises in 'victimization prevention'.
2. For more discussion of this see Mawby and Walklate (1994).
3. For example, the often cited assertion from the BCS that '. . . a "statistically" average person aged 16 or over can expect an assault resulting in injury once every century, a robbery once every five centuries . . .' (Hough and Mayhew, 1983: 15).
4. For further critiques of national crime surveys see, for example, Walklate (1990) and Mawby and Walklate (1994).
5. See, for example, Hough and Mayhew (1983, 1985); Jones et al. (1986); Maxfield (1987); Mayhew et al. (1989); Crawford et al. (1990).
6. For an example of a more qualitative approach, see Maguire and Corbett (1987).
7. Following Giddens, our use of this concept, 'refers to the confidence that most human beings have in the continuity of their self-identity and in the constancy of the surrounding social and material environments of action' (1990: 92). Ontological security is an emotional, existential phenomenon concerned with 'being' in the social world, not in an abstract philosophical sense, but in the context of the day-to-day actions of socially located individuals. Following Kierkegaard, Giddens suggests that the unknown, both in terms of a general sense of anxiety, dread, fear and chaos and in terms of the specific threat of 'fateful moments' (which could range from criminal victimization to death), is only held at bay by the 'ordinariness of everyday conventions' (Giddens, 1991: 36)—routine, structure, a sense of belonging and containment all contribute to the process of 'bracketing off' this chaos and securing the identity of the individual. For further discussion of the impact of ontological *insecurity* see Young (1999).
8. We are grateful for a discussion with Elizabeth Stanko who pointed out the close link between violence towards women's possessions (and pets) by male partners, such that it is an extremely close indicator of impending violence to the body. This strengthens the case that the body is in 'extension' beyond its physical boundaries.
9. While addressing this symbolic centrality, it would be naïve to suggest that this experience of home is uncontested or universal: clearly home and relations within it can equally be the source of emotional and physical discomfort. However, we do not believe that this recognition negates our concerns—if anything, this analysis would offer useful additions to the debate on domestic violence, gender relations and deprivation for example.
10. It can, of course, be both/and simultaneously. On the revival of interest in dwelling, at different scales of spatial concern (including home, nation, tribalism, etc.) see, for example, Rybczynski (1988); Samuel (1989);

Putnam and Newton (1990); Gurney (1991); Strathern (1992); Maffesoli (1995).

11. Here we leave aside the now well-worn criticism that was levelled: that owner-occupation does not necessarily lead to ontological security, nor is it empirically clear that rented property leads to insecurity. Rather, we would argue that Saunders clearly has a point; it is just that his literal definition of possession (as purchase and legal ownership) obscures the issue.
12. It is clear, however, that different types of homes/objects might engender different securities.
13. Eagleton's (1990) and Campbell's (1987) account of the emergence of modern conceptions of sentiment and aesthesis are relevant here.
14. There is some purchase in the idea of philosophical continuities between alienation in Marx and the centrality of processes of alienation and embodiment employed in contemporary work but here is not the place to explore them. See, for example, Miller (1987), Strathern (1991, 1992) and Hetherington and Munro (1997—especially the chapter by Munro).
15. Compare, for example, the subtle but important differences between the conceptions of the body in Butler (1993) and Grosz (1995).
16. See, for example, Wigley's (1995) discussion of the architectural metaphor in Derrida's deconstructive technique: here Heidegger's spatial entities—house, dwelling, clearing—are used as the ur-boundaries for deconstruction to disrupt.
17. This type of language use is common within phenomenology as a deliberate attempt to overcome dualism by highlighting the interdependence of bodies, objects and ideas.
18. It lasts for different lengths of time for different people; some of the more helpful accounts of burglary experience indicate the temporal scale of trauma—some people relive this dread at intervals, some manage to reinstate the fictions of control.

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