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Toleration by Victimized Coffeeshops in Amsterdam

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ABSTRACT

Dutch coffeeshops are quasi-illegal. Their sale of cannabis is de jure prohibited but de facto permitted. In this sense, their criminal acts are tolerated. Less often explored, and less well understood, is that coffeeshops also tolerate crimes against them. "Doing nothing" is a common way to manage conflict. Why and how does it occur? In this article, we use the opportunity and rationality perspectives to analyze qualitative data obtained during interviews with 50 personnel of coffeeshops in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. After presenting our findings, we discuss their general implications for tolerant, and intolerant, ways to manage conflict.

Introduction

Dutch "coffeeshops" are the world's chief example of drug control via toleration (see Leuw, 1991; Leuw & Marshall, 1994; MacCoun, 2011; MacCoun & Reuter, 1997; Reinarman, Cohen, & Kaal, 2004; Wouters & Korf, 2009). In the Netherlands, it is *de jure* illegal to sell cannabis, but the national government and some municipalities condone its retail distribution by coffeeshops (NMHWS, 2003; NMFA, 2008). In this sense, their activity is "quasi-illegal," or what some call a "grey area" (see Jacques, 2019). A reason to study tolerant drug control is it helps explain more coercive approaches. After all, the conditions that harbor toleration should be opposite those conducive to intolerance, in all its forms (see Black, 1998).

This article takes the same approach to knowledge production, except flips the script: instead of investigate toleration of crime *by* coffeeshops, we look at their personnel's toleration of crimes *against* them. Why and how do they "do nothing" when victimized? What are the general implications for the study and improvement of crime control? No study of dealers – legal, quasi-legal, or fully-illegal – focuses on those questions. Yet it is impossible to fully explain dealers' conflict management – as a whole or a given type – without attending to toleration (Jacques & Wright, 2008). Again, the factors that promote tolerant responses to victimization should inhibit intolerant ones, like violent retaliation and legal mobilization.

In what follows, we describe the present study's foundational elements: social control as conceptualized by Black (1998); the opportunity and rational choice perspectives (Cornish & Clarke 1986; Cohen & Felson, 1979); and, our analysis of qualitative data obtained via interviews with personnel (owners and employees) of 50 coffeeshops in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. From there, we present our findings on why and how

coffeeshops tolerate victimization, followed by a discussion of where the findings lead us.

Social Control

This article broadly contributes to the study of "social control." The concept has different definitions, within and outside criminology (Carmichael, 2012). For example, they variably emphasize creating conformity (Kempf-Leonard & Morris, 2012), responding to threat (Eitle & Morgan-Edwards, 2011), or managing conflict (Campbell, 2011). Likewise, there are multiple typologies and taxonomies of social control. For example, it is often divided into "formal" and "informal" control, respectively defined by the presence or absence of government actors or institutions. But the exact type of involvement varies across conceptual schemes, which reflects, in part, their starting definitions of social control (e.g., cf. Black, 1998 with Bursik & Grasmick, 1993). Hence, it is important to know what we mean, definitionally, when referring to social control and its subtypes.

Social Control as Conflict Management

Herein, our use of social control is synonymous with "conflict management." This approach derives from Black (1976, 1998). As he defines it, social control is a response to wrongdoing. Potentially, anything could be defined as "wrong," though, for practical reasons, we focus on criminal victimization. Conflict management is a criminologically rich behavior, including everything from "litigation, mediation, arbitration" to "beating, torture, assassination," to "fasting, confessions, psychotherapy, and suicide," among other acts (Black, 1998, p. 74). To organize these diverse types into more general kinds, Black created a typology of social control's "forms," or "mechanism[s] by which a person or group expresses a grievance" (p. 5). He outlines five forms, specifically: "settlement" involves a nonpartisan third party, such as criminal justice officials; "self-help" is unilateral antagonism, violent and nonviolent; "avoidance" is limiting contact; "negotiation" is joint discussion; and, finally, "toleration" is inaction (see also Cooney, 2009).

Toleration as Social Control

Toleration is to criminology what dark matter is to physics: it cannot be directly observed, but it is inferred from the absence of other things. In the case of toleration, it is said to occur when the other forms of social control do not (Black, 1998). To be clear, toleration cannot be simply inferred from the absence of any other *single* form. For example, if a victim does not call the police (an example of settlement), this does

not necessarily mean toleration took place. Instead, the victim could have engaged in self-help, avoidance, or negotiation. If none of those occurred either, toleration did. It is at the intersection of the other forms' nonoccurrence, you could say. It is more than not calling the police; not fighting; not ending a relationship; not talking it out; et cetera. It is all those things and more, combined. Ergo, explanations of toleration – why it occurs – give us logical insight into why the other forms of social control occur (see Jacques & Wright, 2008).

Opportunity and Rationality

There are multiple theories suitable to explaining toleration. In this article, we use the opportunity and rational choice perspectives to frame prior research and analyze our data. We use the opportunity perspective because it provides a foundation to what is possible (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Felson & Clarke, 1998). The rationality perspective orients us to how the perceived utility, or benefits minus costs, of options affects the decision to enact one or another (Bentham, [1823] 1988; Cornish & Clarke, 1986).

Opportunity Theory

To explain behavior, we must first determine what is possible. Opportunity varies. It also precedes decision-making. We look to see what can be done and, by extension, what choices are to be made. Every action hinges on the congruence of minimal elements (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Cohen, Kluegel, & Land, 1981, p. 508-9; Felson & Clarke, 1998; Sparks, 1982, p. 29-30). Without them, the action is impossible. For example, if a victim cannot determine the offender's identity, it is impossible to retaliate. This makes the rationality of that response a moot point; it is inconsequential because there is zero opportunity to act on it. Conversely, if the victim knows the offender's identity, it is possible to retaliate and thus a plausible option.

Rational Choice Theory

If a person is faced with two or more possible ways to act, they choose between them by weighing their respective utility (Bentham, [1823] 1988). Benefits and costs come in many forms, such as financial versus reputational. There are influences that "bound" rationality, like culture, emotion, and intoxication. (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). Within those boundaries, people are assumed to act in ways that maximize utility. So, for example, if it is plausible for a victim to retaliate, they assess its benefits and costs versus alternative actions and then act accordingly. In the case of conflict, the alternatives would be other types of self-help (e.g., gossip), settlement (e.g., call the police), avoidance, negotiation, or "none of the above" – toleration.

Opportunistic and Rational Social Control by Dealers

Violent Retaliation

Traditionally, research on social control by drug dealers focuses on violent retaliation (e.g., Anderson, 1999; Jacobs & Wright, 2006; Jacques & Allen, 2015; Topalli, Wright, & Fornango, 2002). It is an example of what Black (1998) terms self-help (see also Cooney, 1998, 2009). The opportunity to enact violent retaliation requires a physically capable victim to overlap with the offender in time and space (Jacques, 2010). The response is rational to the extent it provides vengeance, resource recovery, and deterrence, but this is weighed against the risk of being hurt, killed, apprehended, prosecuted, or punished for pursuing "justice" (Jacques & Allen, 2015).

Legal Settlement

Dealers' use of violent retaliation is often attributed to lacking formal means of dispute settlement. Recall that settlement is third-party intervention (e.g., by a police officer or judge). In the dealer literature, there is a subtle tension between whether dealers can mobilize law – a facet of opportunity – or *choose* to forgo it (cf. Jacobs, 2000, p. 1 with Reuter 2009, p. 275). Fact is, any dealer can mobilize law (Jacques & Wright, 2013). The opportunity always exists, but it is not always a rational choice. Victims may fear snitches get stitches; or see the police as an enemy; or worry about exposing their own crimes. Yet dealers *do* turn to government officials for help (e.g., Copes et al., 2011, p. 159; Goldstein, 1985, p. 501; Mohamed & Fritsvold, 2009, p. 145; Moskos, 2008, p. 100; Rosenfeld, Jacobs, & Wright, 2003). Why? Legal mobilization has the same potential benefits as violent retaliation: vengeance, resource recovery, and deterrence (Jacques & Wright, 2013; Jacques & Allen, 2015).

Nonviolent, Nonlegal Responses

Dealers also manage victimization with nonviolent and nonlegal forms of control (Jacques & Wright, 2008, 2011). Nonviolent retaliation, a type of self-help, is possible when a victim can get close enough to an offender's property to damage or steal it (Jacques, 2010). Another form of nonviolent self-help is gossip, which only needs an audience to reputationally harm offenders (Dickinson & Wright, 2015). Negotiation provides a means for reaching compensation, but requires offenders' cooperation and so may lead to repeat victimization (Hoffer, 2006; Venkatesh, 2008). Conversely, avoidance is protective because it limits further interaction, but this may come at the cost of lost sales (Denton, 2001; Taylor, 2007).

Toleration

Another type of nonviolent, nonlegal response is toleration (Black, 1998; Jacques & Wright, 2008). It has not been the principle focus of any study on conflict management by dealers, to our knowledge. What is known about it is piecemeal: a jumping-off point, digression, side-point, or concluding thought tied, mostly, to violent retaliation (e.g., Coomber & Maher, 2006; Jacobs, 2000; Jacobs & Wright, 2006; Jacques & Wright, 2008, 2015; Moeller & Sandberg, 2017; Taylor, 2007). Nonetheless, those findings provide a useful starting place for understanding dealers' toleration of victimization. Jacobs (1999), for instance, attends to the lack of violent retaliation among street-level dealers. In the following excerpt, note the importance of opportunity and costs in the decision to forgo retaliation:

> [T]he extent to which sellers could or did seek revenge was limited. Tracking down petty brigands not only is difficult, but it takes time, foresight, and planning —qualities few offenders can muster. Given their desperation for customers, the availability of the same undifferentiated product in nearby locales, and the general state of stagnating demand, a certain sense of ambivalence seemed to prevail about punishing customers they did track down. (p. 80)

A separate study of street dealers, namely that of Topalli, Wright, and Fornango (2002), focuses more on the rationality of toleration:

> A number of drug dealer/victims indicated that, in the absence of direct retaliation, the only way to recover from a robbery was simply to go back out and resume selling. … These individuals not only were unwilling to suffer the potentially serious consequences of retaliating (i.e. counter-retaliation or arrest and incarceration), they also considered retaliation an inefficient use of time better spent hustling. … Typically, this meant accepting robbery [victimization] as a normal cost of street-corner drug selling. … [Or they] justified their unwillingness to engage in retaliation as sound fiscal policy. Smirk, for example, claimed that he could easily have retaliated against the assailants, but chose not to because "that shit's bad for business." (p. 346-8)

Those ideas are echoed in Jacques and Wright's (2011) research on conflict management by lower-class and middle-class dealers:

> Toleration is valuable to disputants because it maintains the *status quo*. Toleration takes no time or effort, nor is it illegal. Therefore, disputants may prefer to do nothing rather than exercise more costly forms of informal control. Tolerating a

> grievance may allow for the reparation of formerly beneficial partnerships and thereby facilitate drug trade. … Drug traders will sometimes refrain from retaliation and other forms of popular justice for fear of subsequent retaliation, which may entail the cost of injury or theft. (p. 754-5)

Social Control by Coffeeshops

The present study examines toleration of victimization by coffeeshops in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. We build on what are, to our knowledge, the only two prior articles focused on their responses to victimization.

Coffeeshop Law and Policy

For context, recall that coffeeshops' business is quasi-illegal. At their so-called "backdoor," it is *de jure* and *de facto* illegal to purchase supply; i.e., it is fully illegal. Their "front door" retail sales are *de jure* illegal, yet formally tolerated under certain conditions. They are prohibited from selling more than 5 grams per day to any adult (NMFA, 2008; NMHWS, 2003). The rules also prohibit minors, hard drugs, or more than 500 grams of cannabis on the premises. Coffeeshops cannot advertise or be a source of a nuisance. The rules are actively enforced and dictate much of the day-to-day activities within coffeeshops (Jacques, 2019). The government looks for violations by requiring the police to randomly search each coffeeshop twice annually, at least (Trimbos Institute, 2010). Violations are punishable by short-term to permanent closure. Criminal prosecution is on the table. At the time of data collection, described below, the maximum penalty for possession, cultivation, sale, transport, and production of cannabis for commercial purposes was 6 years imprisonment and/or a fine of €67,000 (NMFA, 2008).

Jacques and colleagues (2016)

Jacques and colleagues (2016) compared coffeeshops to bars and street dealers. Bars sell a drug (alcohol) that is fully legal, whereas street dealers sell various drugs (e.g., cocaine, heroin, ecstasy) that are fully prohibited. A goal of their study was to determine if the illegality of a victim's businesses affected their likelihood of responding formally or informally. They found mixed support for that hypothesis: Coffeeshops responded similarly to bars, which were more likely than street dealers to mobilize police, less likely to violently retaliate, and less likely to tolerate. That article left much unexamined and unexplained. Its limitations include no qualitative analysis of why coffeeshop personnel responded to victimization in a particular way.

Author and Author (XXXX)

In a prior article, we began to address the above study's limitations by exploring coffeeshops' qualitative reasons for mobilizing police in response to victimization (Authors XXXX). Personnel weighed, one, whether police officers would be willing and able to help; two, and relatedly, the crime's seriousness and its conduciveness to formal investigation; three, if a written police report could be used to "write-off" the loss in tax filings to make an insurance claim; and, four, whether mobilization would lead the police to see the coffeeshop as less respectable or discover a rule violation. Those findings show that due to their quasi-illegal status, victimized coffeeshops' motivations for formal control are somewhat, on the one hand, like those of fully-illegal dealers (e.g., the fourth motive) and, on the other hand, like those of fully-legal ones (e.g., the third motive), as well as that some motivations (e.g., the first and second) cut across the spectrum of legal statuses.

Implications for Toleration

Our prior study has logical implications for explaining toleration, given its inverse relationship with police mobilization (i.e., legal settlement) and other forms of social control. Personnel's explanations *for* mobilizing police are explanations for *not* tolerating, and vice versa. An example is Hassan's toleration of a €400 theft from the register. He did not call the police because "[the thief] was gone. If you call them they are going to see the camera and that's it. They are not going to do shit, believe me. It's going to get reported, that's the only thing [that will result]. It's only giving me extra work, extra headache for nothing" (Authors XXXX, p. 5). The crime was relatively serious, but he figured the police would be unwilling or unable to do much about it because of investigatory challenges, plus he was unaware that a written police report had tax or insurance benefits. He perceived greater cost than benefit to legal settlement, which made toleration more attractive.

The Present Study

Whereas our prior article analyzed personnel's reasons for mobilizing police, the present study focuses on why and how they tolerate victimization, as seen through the opportunity and rational choice perspectives. Put colloquially, we make toleration the main course. In doing so, we also shed light on why the other forms of social control do not occur, as their absence is equivalent to toleration's presence. Before delving into our method and data, we connect our study with the qualitative tradition in (active) offender-based research.

Offender-Based Research

The story of criminology cannot be told without offenders. The field has a strong tradition in "offender-based research," with a particularly rich qualitative tradition (Copes, Jacques, Hochstetler, & Dickinson, 2015). This method is classic, exemplified in Shaw's (1930) *The Jack-Roller* and Sutherland's (1937) *The Professional Thief.* The premise of the approach is that offenders know things that other people, such as victims and police, don't know, positioning them to provide unique insight (Copes et al., 2015; Jacques, 2019). Within offender-based research is the niche of *active* offender research. Here, the premise is that active offenders know things that desisted or institutionalized criminals may not know, remember, or be willing to discuss (Copes et al., 2015; Jacques, 2019).

Active Offender Research

Active offender research has been focused on crimes that are fully-illegal. Examples are auto-theft, burglary, carjacking, criminal retaliation, and robbery (e.g., Decker & Van Winkle, 1996; Jacobs, 2000; Jacobs & Wright, 2006; Miller, 2001; Wright & Decker, 1994, 1997). There are countless studies of dealers whose activity is fully-illegal. There is a growing group of sellers whose trade is illegal on the books, but not entirely in practice. These quasi-illegal dealers are a result of decriminalization and legalization, depending on the law or policy (to compare countries, see Killias et al., 2011; Félix & Portugal, 2017; Brewster, 2017; Bretteville-Jensen & Bramness, 2019; Moeller, 2020).

Sampling

Locale and Population

Worldwide, the oldest and most famous example of quasi-illegal sellers are coffeeshops in the Netherlands, in particular Amsterdam (Kleiman, Caulkins, & Hawken, 2011). Our study is based on qualitative data collected by [name of coauthor], here forward "the fieldworker," during interviews with personnel of 50 coffeeshops in and around Amsterdam's Red Light District. It is about one square mile in size, and a popular tourism spot because of its history, architecture, and, not least, deviant attractions – including coffeeshops. An initial research step was to create a population list of coffeeshops in the area. To do so, the fieldworker walked every street segment in fall 2008, recording the names and addresses of every coffeeshop. He verified the list's accuracy and completeness by comparing it to results on Google Maps and the Amsterdam Coffee Shop Directory (coffeeshop.freeuk.com/Map.html). The result of that process was a list of 84 coffeeshops.

Recruitment

The fieldworker conducted interviews and made observations from September 2008 to May 2010, with follow-up visits in the summers of 2011 and 2016. The present study focuses on the interview data, as our focus is on personnel's explanations for tolerating victimization. Before recruiting personnel of a coffeeshop, he mailed it a letter. It described the study and requested participation, with one side of the page written in Dutch, the other English. Then he visited each coffeeshop to ask for an interview. On arrival, he introduced himself, provided his business card, and quickly described the study's purpose and methods, with an offer of €50 remuneration. The stated preference was to interview higher- than lower-ranking personnel, but, at least, the person must have owned or worked at the coffeeshop for 6 months.

Participant Traits

The interviewed personnel are 64% male, with an average age of 34, of whom 70% identified as White, 6% Black, and 24% other. Also, 40% immigrated to the Netherlands; 10% were married; 26% graduated from secondary school; and, 56% and 30% reported, respectively, daily use of cannabis and alcohol. Participants also provided data on the traits of fellow-personnel at their coffeeshop. On average, 67% are male, 81% White, 47% immigrants, and 15% married. At the average coffeeshop, there is one owner, one manager, five "dealers" who focus on cannabis sales but may also serve food and drink, two "servers" who focus on food and drink, a "runner" who is responsible for stocking cannabis, and perhaps one other person (e.g., dedicated cleaner or doorman). For details, see tables 1 and 2.

--Table 1 about here--

--Table 2 about here--

Interviews

The goal of interview was to obtain data about coffeeshops' prevention of, experience with, and responses to victimization. A semi-structured interview protocol provided consistency in coverage while permitted unplanned follow-up questions. Naturally, some participants may have distorted the "truth," intentionally or not (Presser & Sandberg, 2015). To address this concern, the fieldworker asked clarifying, promised confidentiality, and made participants aware of their rights as a research participant. The study was approved by the fieldworkers' Institutional Review Board. Conversations were in English because the fieldworker is only fluent in it, but this did

not stop anyone from participating. All recruited personnel were fluent in English, the most spoken language in the study area's coffeeshops and other tourist attractions.

Analysis

Interviews lasted an hour to two, were audio-recorded, and transcribed verbatim. Eight of the 50 interviews could not be transcribed, as 7 personnel declined to be recorded and another interview took place in a loud environment. The fieldworker took detailed notes during those interviews. For analysis, we used a qualitative software package, NVivo. First, the fieldworker coded data with identification tags corresponding to relevant research issues. The tags were initially broad, such as "Social Control" and then, within that node, "Toleration." Then he made narrower distinctions within those nodes. Next, we performed a detailed analysis of variance across cases to uncover, for the present study, how and why personnel tolerated victimization. For this step of analysis, the second-author coded the data into broad themes and a narrative; in turn, this was revised, as appropriate, by the fieldworker (the first-author); finally, the second-author checked the validity of the fieldworker's revisions. In the following quotes, all names are pseudonyms.

Toleration by Victimized Coffeeshops

Opportunity and Toleration

As to be expected, personnel commonly tolerated property crimes of low seriousness. An example is graffiti on the exterior of coffeeshops. Unanimously, coffeeshops did nothing about these offenses, other than cover them up. "We paint over it," to quote James. Responses in the same vein were "painted it" (Gwen), "just try to clean it a little bit" (Mike), "the clearer repaints it" (Jens), "[the maintenance man] has to clean that shit" (Victor), and "we have a service that I can call and they come to clean it" (Anna). Max put it this way: "You just get it off and don't worry about it. I think that's the way to do business."

Graffiti was a more common problem inside coffeeshops. Patrons would add words and images to tables, seats, and other places by carving them out or penning them on. Lizzie described how she responded to writing on a table, which was made with a large black marker: "I tried to clean it, but you can't always get it all off so you have to wait [until someone can come to fix it professionally]. I think the tables are covered in some sort of epoxy. You have to pay someone to do it. That takes time. You have to buy the epoxy and sanding stuff."

Vandalism was most rampant in bathrooms, presumably due to the lack of surveillance therein. When personnel were asked about handling bathroom vandalism, their typical response amounted to "nothing" (Jasper). At most, coffeeshops would semi-regularly "paint it over" (Hassan). Gwen said the "cleaner cleaned it," referring to "Cosa Nostra" in big letters on the bathroom wall. Dean explained that for graffiti in his coffeeshop's bathroom, the stall (i.e., partition) "is metal, [so] you have to use special stuff to clean it."

Another common and minor crime in coffeeshops was the unseen theft of low value items. Especially for small things, it is challenging for personnel to watch out, notice their disappearance, and know who took them. The theft of low value items are ripe for toleration, then, especially when coupled with restraints on surveillance. A case in point is how personnel become cognizant of, and responded to, stolen "grinders." These tools are about the size of macarons, used to cut marijuana into smaller pieces suitable for rolling into a joint or packing into a pipe. Olivia observed: "It is always afterwards [they are gone] that I think, 'Oh shit, someone has taken the grinder.'" Stefan explained: "You never notice [immediately] that [they are stolen] because you lend them out and then forgot or whatever, and then you're like 'Oh, the grinder's gone.' You always realize it later, of course."

In Luca's coffeeshop were little trashcans on each table. Their purpose was to keep the place tidy, but they were attractive targets to some thieves. Asked how they handled these victimizations, he stated: "We don't see it happen, so we have to tolerate it. If I see them I would tell them [not to], but I never see them. [We] just buy a new one." Elias responded likewise after potted plants were stolen from the patio: "We just bought new ones."

Vandalism and minor thefts were as common as they were tolerated. Yet this inaction to victimization is not fully explained by the crime's seriousness. Rather, a factor that increased the crimes' frequency – a lack of surveillance – also explains why they were tolerated. Of any place in coffeeshops, for example, the least watched were bathrooms. Rules of comportment dictated against applying panoptic principles to lavatories. By extension, bathroom vandalism was only discovered after the fact.

Without identifying a victimizer, it is impossible for victims to respond with self-help, avoidance, or negotiation. At the heart of rational choice is weighing the utility of options. Yet if there is only one option, its utility is inconsequential. This was often conveyed by personnel when explaining their responses to graffiti and minor theft: "There is nothing I can do about it [graffiti carved into table]. No idea who it was"

(Gwen); "By the time we realize [the glasses are stolen], they have gone" (Joseph); "You can't do anything about it [stolen ashtrays]" (Ruben).

Rationality and Toleration

In the above cases, however, toleration is not the only option for social control. In any circumstance, victimized coffeeshops can call the police to report a problem. Thus above, what explains toleration is not a total lack of alternatives. Yet personnel gave no real thought to handling those crimes with the police. Personnel assumed they would be unwilling and unable to help; saw the crimes as minor and unconducive to investigation; and, did not consider them worth writing-off in tax filings or for filing for an insurance claim (see Authors, XXXX). Also, it was possible that by involving the police in a problem, personnel would do damage to their coffeeshop's reputation or inadvertently bring attention to a rule violation (ibid.). Thus, personnel responded to the above victimizations by, at most, proverbially or literally painting over the problem.

Toleration does occur in more serious circumstances. Rationally speaking, this can be advantageous by allowing business to carry on and preventing conflict from escalating. An example is how personnel responded to customers who attempted to pay with counterfeit bills. Though legally required to confiscate fakes and make a police report, personnel sometimes took a more passive approach. "I don't accept the money," said Kamila, "I return the money to the customer and ask for some different one [bill]." The fieldworker asked her, "And so this is never reported to the police or anything, you just give them the bill back and ask them to go?" She responded, "Yes, because it is not my problem at this moment."

Also evident in the above case is that victims tolerate offenses by known offenders. Linda recounted when an employee stole €150 on his last day at work. Asked how the coffeeshop's manager handled it, she answered, "Except for being pissed, I don't think much." Emma fell victim to a thief who ran off with a bag of marijuana. She could have chased after but explained: "I am not going to run after somebody for a bag of weed, no way." After someone suddenly sprinted away with a bag of marijuana before paying, Hanna's reaction was, "'What' [just happened?]' And then I ran after him, but he ran away [too far] already. Outside the door [is how far I got], not far." Jana was working one day when someone paid with half of a €5 bill: "I picked it up and he was already gone. I was like, 'Hey!' and there was a big group [of customers that] just walked in so I could not [leave]. When I got out of the door he was already at the end [of the block], and I did not want to leave my shop alone."

The utility of toleration for moving on, versus making things worse, is seen in personnel's responses to violent victimization. James had an ongoing problem with a homeless individual. One of the recent cases was an attempted assault; a glass bottle had been thrown at him, with the intention of causing bodily harm. Instead of respond in kind, James believed the best response was to do nothing:

> Nothing, because over the years it has caused me more aggravation getting wound up over him. You can say, "I have had enough of this," and try to do something about it but he has 24 hours being insane and taking all his vengeance on the world out on one person and he has a lot more effort to put into having fights. So yeah, I just really try to ignore it as much as possible because it really drains me of energy. You have to turn the other cheek. So I just decided to leave it. It is easier to just ignore it than get involved in it, because it just escalates and escalates.

Another example of tolerating violence was narrated by Selma. The story began when "two or three kilos" of cannabis were robbed from the coffeeshop owners. Asked about how they handled the situation, she responded: "I think nothing. I don't think they went after them, no." Asked if she knows why not, she said, "I think it was impossible because they were Romanian, and they come here with a car from Romania to buy this stuff to go back, and you can never find them again. How would you find them? I think it is impossible." It may have been impossible to find the robbers, but this did not make toleration the only option. The owners could have reported the crime to the police. We did not interview the owners, so we do not know their motives. Yet it is easy to imagine that they did not want to involve "the law" in a victimization that sprang from a fully-illegal deal gone wrong.

Discussion

Victimization is an ever-present risk for coffeeshops. They lose money when robbed, stolen from, or defrauded. They spend money to repair the damage of vandalism. Potentially, victims can respond in a few different ways: self-help, settlement, avoidance, and negotiation. Another option is to do nothing. This article examined personnel's toleration of crimes against their coffeeshops. We did so by analyzing qualitative data obtained during interviews with personnel of 50 coffeeshops in Amsterdam. Our focus was on the effect of opportunity and rational factors. In this section, we summarize and discuss our findings.

First, we found that personnel were apt to tolerate minor victimizations, such as graffiti and the theft of low value items. A lack of surveillance helps to explain this non-response. Often, by the time victims had realized they were victimized, the perpetrators were gone and their identities unknown. Personnel had no opportunity to retaliate, seek compensation, or ban the offenders. This left two options for social control: mobilize law or do nothing. In line with findings in our prior article (Authors, XXXX), personnel deemed it irrational to mobilize police for those crimes. Toleration prevailed.

Personnel could have done more to expand the options for social control (i.e., increase the range of alternatives). As a reactive measure, for example, personnel could have regularly inspected bathrooms for fresh marks. If found, personnel could then retaliate or, more likely, demand compensation from the culprit or remove them. In a world without limits, that would make more sense. Yet there are rational limits on investigation, and it may be more rational to act in other ways, as explained below.

Second, we found toleration is not wholly attributable to offense seriousness or limited opportunity. Toleration has no direct benefits or costs. Sans benefit, the rationality of toleration reflects cost-savings relative to other options. In other words, as alternative forms of social control get more expensive (e.g., take more time or effort), toleration becomes more likely. To use a concept from the drug literature, toleration is "harm reduction" if used to prevent making a bad situation worse; instead, it may free resources for more profitable activities, like selling cannabis. Therefore, coffeeshop personnel often cast victimization as a cost of business.

In short, there are a variety of opportunistic and rational influences on personnel's toleration of victimization. Opportunity wise, our data suggest that toleration becomes more likely when a victim did not observe the offense and does not know the offender's identity. With respect to rationality, personnel leaned on toleration when they were busy, feared legal trouble or escalating the conflict, the offense was minor, and the offender was inaccessible.

Our findings should help to explain "intolerant" forms of social control – self-help, settlement, avoidance, and negotiation – because the presence of toleration dictates their collective absence, and vice versa (Black, 1998; Jacques & Wright, 2008). Thus, our findings suggest that intolerant forms of control are more likely when the victim observed the offense, knows the offender's identity, is not busy or fearful of legal trouble or escalation, and the offense is serious. These findings are in line with – but an expansion on – prior studies of social control by dealers, including our own of

coffeeshops and legal mobilization. See table 3 for a summary of the theoretical influences on (in)tolerant responses to victimization.

--Table 3 about here--

So far as we can tell, fully-illegal and quasi-illegal dealers have roughly the same reasons for tolerating victimization: a lack of opportunity to engage in alternative forms of social control; and, a perception of toleration as significantly less costly than intolerant options. Presumably, those explanations are not unique to sellers of fully- or quasi-illegal drugs. We would expect to find roughly the same in all types of contexts, among all types of people. Always, there is opportunity to tolerate. Always, it costs nothing. That said, a different matter is the extent to which people use toleration. In and outside research on dealers, we need quantitative research to better inform the rate of tolerant responses to victimization.

Better yet, quantitative criminologists should investigate toleration's magnitude. To explain what that means, allow us to quote Black (1998, p. 98-9):

> A matter of degree, toleration is measurable by comparing what might otherwise occur under the same circumstances. When a group exacts blood vengeance for one killing but does little or nothing in response to another, its behavior in the latter is extremely tolerant. The same applies when a case of inaction might otherwise result in police intervention, arrest, or prosecution. We can also compare the degree of toleration across society and historical epochs. There is noticeable variation, for example, in reactions to drunkenness, adultery, homosexuality, and homicide. Nothing automatically attracts social control.

Our study basically treated toleration as a dichotomous outcome: it occurred or not. We did not treat toleration as bigger or smaller. By addressing this limitation, future research would help to explain tolerant and intolerant conflict management.

We conclude with a thought on *how* personnel tolerated crimes against them. In addition to social inaction (e.g., not retaliating or calling the police), personnel would, sometimes, replace or repair stolen or damaged items. In their words, "painted over it" (James), "clean[ed] it a little bit" (Mike), or "bought new ones" (Elias). Prior literature analyzes the replacement of stolen money and drugs (Jacobs, 1999; Topalli, Wright, & Fornango, 2002), but not other items like those above, to our knowledge. Maybe, researchers see them as too trivial to report, much less problematize and analyze. If so, that view is unfounded.

In criminology, the body of work mostly closely associated with repair and prevention is that on order-maintenance, or "broken windows," policing (Kelling & Wilson, 1982; Kelling & Coles, 1997). The theory is that in any given place (e.g., unique address, street block or neighborhood), onlookers perceive its physical disorder as inversely related to its control; thus, offenders' see the place as a less risky place to offend; and, therefore, more crime occurs there. In other words, a clean, unblemished environment serves as a deterrent. The practical implication is that to reduce crime at a place, its physical disorder should be minimized. This was not Jack's motivation for cleaning bathroom vandalism, but its effect was apparent:

> The toilet gets tagged [graffiti on it] a bit. We let it build up and I decorated it three months ago, and it hasn't happened since. That was the first time I decorated it in a couple of years and it was fairly heavily covered in stickers and tags and shit like that. Since I decorated, I think there has been one put up, so say once in three months. It was covered; it was hard to tell the timescale of it with something happening every week probably [in the preceding nine months].

Future research should explore how dealers' (non)repair of vandalism, and perhaps their (non)replacement of stolen items, affects their future odds of victimization. More broadly, what is the opportunity and rationality of repair and replacement?

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Tables

Table 1. Interviewee Characteristics

Participant Name (#)	Coffeeshop	Position	Tenure	Age	Race/ Ethnicity	NL Born
Adam (41)	Howling Man	Dealer	<1	30	White	Yes
Amani (30)	Stop	Owner	24	48	Black	No
Amir (21)	Mirror Image	Dealer	1	30	Arab	Yes
Anna (22)	Maple Street	Manager	2	40	White	Yes

Charlotte (43)	Nick of Time	Server	<1	23	White	No
Claire (14)	Sun	Dealer	<1	28	Multi	No
Dean (39)	Dollar Room	Manager	<1	32	White	Yes
Elias (32)	Passage	Dealer	2	34	White	Yes
Emir (4)	Walking Distance	Dealer		40	Arab	No
Emma (19)	Purple Testament	Manager	7	38	White	Yes
Fabian (46)	Most Unusual	Dealer	5	30	White	No
Finn (26)	Execution	Owner	23	53	White	No
Gijs (6)	Escape Clause	Manager	2	46	White	Yes
Guus (36)	World of His Own	Dealer	20	48	Multi	No
Gwen (29)	Like a Child	Manager	1.5	32	White	Yes
Hanna (47)	Meek	Dealer	<1	31	White	No
Hassan (5)	Shrine	Manager	4	25	Arab	Yes
Helen (18)	Last Flight	Manager	<1	38	White	No
Imran (42)	Eye of the Beholder	Owner	15	45	Multi	No
Jack (25)	Alike All Over	Manager	3.5	35	White	No
James (37)	No Return	Dealer	4	31	White	No

Jana (23)	World of Difference	Dealer	6	26	White	Yes
Jasper (44)	The Hour	Manager	5	28	White	Yes
Jens (28)	Nice Place to Visit	Dealer	1.5	28	White	Yes
Joseph (11)	Open Sky	Manager	6	55	Black	No
Kamila (15)	Arrow in the Air	Server	2	32	White	No
Keven (13)	Four of Us	Dealer	10	39	White	Yes
Lizzie (50)	Whole Truth	Manager	3.5	35	White	Yes
Lola (17)	Fever	Server	9	30	White	Yes
Luca (7)	The Lonely	Dealer	5	38	White	Yes
Lucia (3)	Doomsday	Server	<1	20	White	No
Luuk (2)	Angels	Owner	16	50	White	Yes
Maikel (40)	Thing	Owner	4	38	Black	Yes
Mara (27)	Wish	Owner	6	35	White	Yes
Maud (8)	At Last	Dealer	1	27	Asian	Yes
Max (1)	Everybody	Manager		37	White	Yes
Mike (10)	Judgment Night	Dealer	<1	19	White	No
Noah (12)	What You Need	Dealer	5	35	White	Yes
Noortje (48)	Dust	Dealer	10	34	White	Yes
Olivia (20)	Elegy	Dealer	3	24	White	Yes

Omar (49)	Back There	Manager	8	25	Arab	Yes
Ruben (35)	The Mighty	Dealer	10	45	White	Yes
Selma (38)	Man in the Bottle	Dealer	<1	27	Multi	Yes
Sophie (16)	Hitch-Hiker	Server	2.5	25	Multi	Yes
Stefan (34)	After Hours	Dealer	5	40	White	No
Stijn (33)	Mr. Bevis	Dealer	8	35	White	No
Thomas (45)	Buzz	Manager	3.5	32	White	No
Victor (31)	Chaser	Dealer	<1	30	Multi	Yes
Willem (9)	Perchance	Owner	1.5	27	Asian	Yes
Wouter (24)	Live Long	Dealer	<1	44	White	No
Modal Category or Average	-	Dealer	5	34	White	Yes

Note: An empty cell denotes "Don't know." "#" refers to participant's order in study, from first interviewed (1) to last (50). "Tenure" reflects a participant's time serving in a specific position at the coffeeshop, not their total time working there or other coffeeshops. "NL Born" shows whether each participant was born in the Netherlands. Overall averages may be slightly different from those reported in Jacques et al. 2016 due to rounding. To calculate average tenure, employees with less than 1 year in the position are counted as 0.5 year, or 6 months.

Table 2. Personnel Characteristics of Interviewed Coffeeshops

Coffeeshop	# Personnel	# Male (%)	Age Range	# White (%)	# Immigrant (% NL Born)
After Hours	11	5 (45)	21-40	10 (90)	1 (91)

Alike All Over	11	4 (36)	24-50	11 (100)	4 (64)
Angels	D/k	11 (D/k)	20-44	14 (D/k)	14 (D/k)
Arrow in the Air	7	4 (57)	24-40	7 (100)	7 (0)
At Last	4	2 (50)	21-34	2 (50)	1 (75)
Back There	6	6 (67)	25-41	5 (83)	1 (83)
Buzz	7	7 (100)	23-43	6 (86)	3 (57)
Chaser	9	9 (100)	D/k	5 (56)	D/k (D/k)
Dollar Room	12	11 (92)	22-36	12 (100)	2 (83)
Doomsday	D/k	4 (D/k)	18-36	18 (D/k)	14 (D/k)
Dust	9	6 (67)	32-45	8 (89)	0 (100)
Elegy	13	7 (54)	24-49	12 (92)	12 (8)
Escape Clause	9	8 (88)	25-46	9 (100)	8 (11)
Everybody	19	11 (58)	20-45	19 (100)	1 (95)
Execution	12	7 (58)	25-53	12 (100)	6 (50)
Eye of the Beholder	8	7 (88)	22-46	4 (50)	6 (25)
Fever	5	4 (80)	25-33	3 (60)	4 (20)
Four of Us	7	6 (86)	27-50	7 (100)	0 (100)
Hitch-Hiker	17	12 (71)	21-52	14 (82)	1 (94)
Howling Man	15	12 (80)	20-51	12 (80)	2 (87)
Judgment Night	23	15 (65)	19-50	D/k (D/k)	6 (74)

Last Flight	19	10 (53)	20-38	10 (53)	10 (47)
Like a Child	20	9 (45)	18-44	18 (90)	10 (50)
Live Long	7	7 (100)	22-50	7 (100)	0 (100)
Man in the Bottle	4	3 (75)	27-41	4 (100)	3 (25)
Maple Street	9	4 (44)	23-42	9 (100)	2 (78)
Meek	4	1 (25)	21-46	3 (75)	3 (25)
Mirror Image	D/k	2 (D/k)	30-33	3 (D/k)	3 (D/k)
Most Unusual	5	0 (0)	30-60	5 (100)	5 (0)
Mr. Bevis	18	2 (11)	19-50	8 (44)	14 (22)
Nice Place to Visit	18	9 (50)	21-43	14 (78)	4 (78)
Nick of Time	13	9 (69)	23-44	13 (100)	12 (8)
No Return	9	9 (100)	28-47	8 (89)	4 (56)
Open Sky	3	3 (100)	33-55	1 (33)	3 (0)
Passage	3	3 (100)	25-34	3 (100)	2 (33)
Perchance	4	3 (75)	27-32	2 (50)	3 (25)
Purple Testament	5	2 (40)	20-38	2 (40)	3 (40)
Shrine	6	5 (83)	22-36	4 (67)	2 (67)
Stop	2	2 (100)	48	0 (0)	2 (0)
Sun	9	2 (22)	25-50	8 (89)	8 (11)
The Hour	21	13 (62)	20-40	20 (95)	1 (95)

The Lonely	D/k	6 (D/k)	32-40	7 (D/k)	0 (D/k)
The Mighty	9	8 (89)	20-46	8 (89)	9 (0)
Thing	4	3 (75)	21-38	1 (25)	1 (75)
Walking Distance	4	4 (100)	31-48	0 (0)	4 (0)
What You Need	11	6 (55)	21-50	11 (100)	0 (100)
Whole Truth	27	7 (26)	21-43	25 (93)	10 (63)
Wish	8	5 (63)	24-41	8 (100)	3 (63)
World of Difference	15	10 (67)	23-50	12 (80)	15 (0)
World of His Own	10	6 (60)	21-60	1 (10)	8 (20)
Average	10	6 (60)	24-44	8 (80)	5 (50)

Note: "D/k" denotes do not know. "% NL Born" shows percent of personnel born in the Netherlands. Overall averages may be slightly different from those reported in Jacques et al. 2016 due to rounding and number of cases in denominator. Here, overall average percentages are calculated by dividing the variable's mean by the average number of total personnel across coffeeshops, which is 10. Especially for coffeeshops with more personnel, these numbers may not perfectly reflect the actual characteristics because they are based on interviewees' knowledge and recall.

Table 3. Influences on Tolerant and Intolerant Responses to Victimization

Theoretical Factor		Response to Victimization	
		Tolerant	*Intolerant*
Opportunity	Victim observed offense	-	+

Victim knows offender's identity	-	+	
Rationality	Offense is serious	-	+
	Offender is inaccessible to victim	-	+
	Victim is busy	+	-
	Victim fears legal trouble	+	-
	Victim fears escalating conflict	+	-

Note: '+' and '-' denote, respectively, presence or absence of theoretical factor.