

# Shoplifters and their dirty little secrets...

Mick Pinneke – Home Depot

Chad McIntosh – Macy's

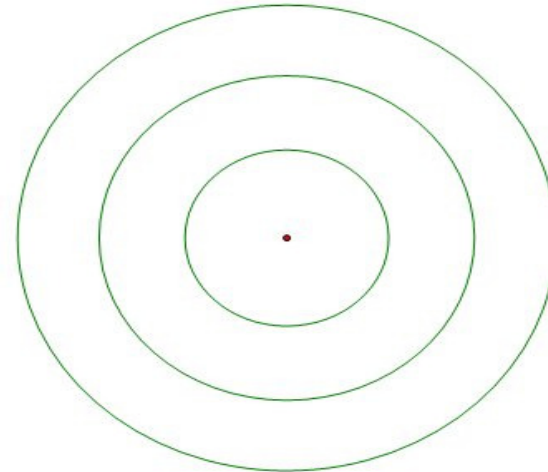
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- Objectives of offender interviewing:

- Zones of influence

*Determine how we might influence behavior at different points*

- Before the location
    - Parking lot
    - Store entry
    - Store interior
    - Product location



- Objectives of offender interviewing:
  - Cues would-be shoplifters/DE's notice
    - People, programs, systems
  - How offenders interpret these cues
    - No threat
    - Possible threat
    - Probable threat
  - How offenders generally respond to cues
    - Continue behavior
    - Alter behavior
    - Cease behavior



what's

**next?**

INSIGHT, ACTION, & TECHNOLOGY IN LOSS PREVENTION

**NRF**  
**LOSS PREVENTION**  
CONFERENCE & EXPO  
**2009**

# Offender Interview Program

- **Support members' asset protection efforts by collect actionable data on:**
  - Item and location targeting
  - Theft and fencing methods
  - Associations and group dynamics
  - Decision-making factors and process
  - Effective deterrent cues and techniques

# Offender Interview Program

- **Deterrent requirements**

- The individual must realize or believe there is a countermeasure (person, program or system) present that will detect, hinder or devalue their crime attempt.
  - The individual must understand how the countermeasure can personally affect them.
  - The individual must believe the countermeasure is an immediate and serious threat to them.
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# Offender Interview Program Phases

- Phase I-
  - 170 retailers sent data from 170,000 detained shoplifters
  - Offending did not cluster by month or time of day
  - African and Hispanic people were caught at greater rates
  - Note all customers, learn behaviors, any place-any time
- Phase II-
  - Three retailers, 3000 apprehended subjects
  - Motives, methods, item selection, theft methods-
  - Overwhelmingly opportunistic, simple concealment, looked like regular shoppers
  - Make deterrents obvious and impressive, eliminate hidden spots



# Offender Interview Program Phases

- Phase III-
  - Move to trained interviewers
  - 105 offenders from 40 stores
  - Target data
- Phase IV-
  - More in-depth interviews of 20 subjects in 3 areas

## Risk-Focused Asset Protection

- A word about research:
  - Theoretical tools- explain relationships
  - Empirical research- carefully collect data to test hypotheses



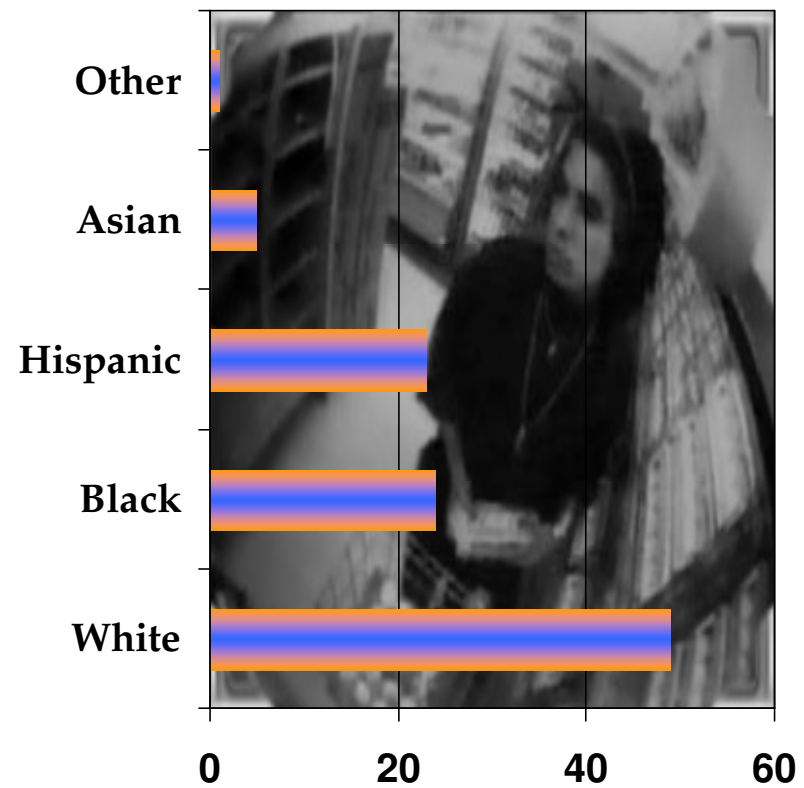
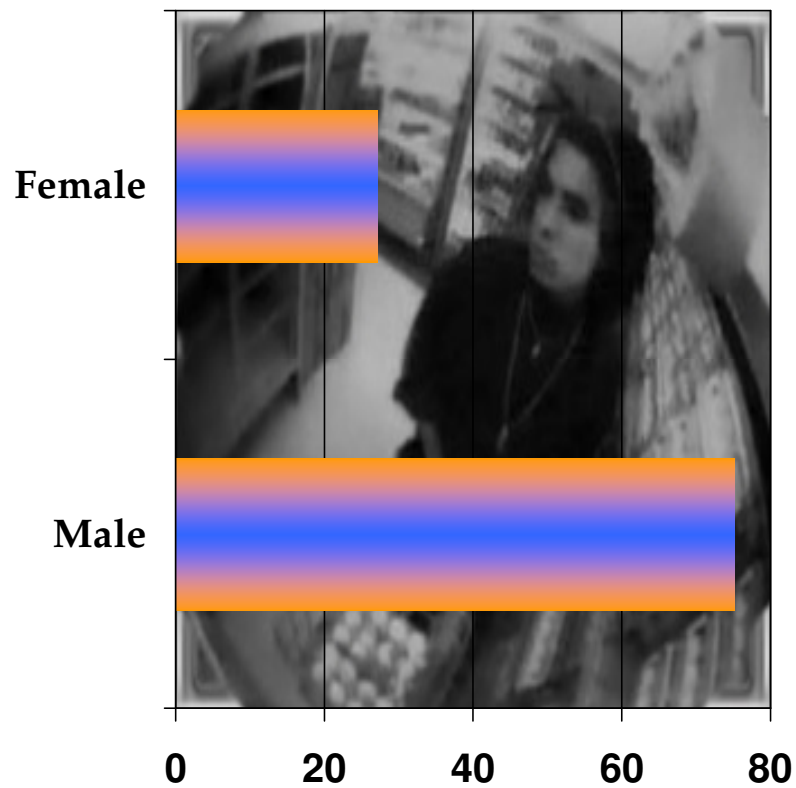
# what's next?

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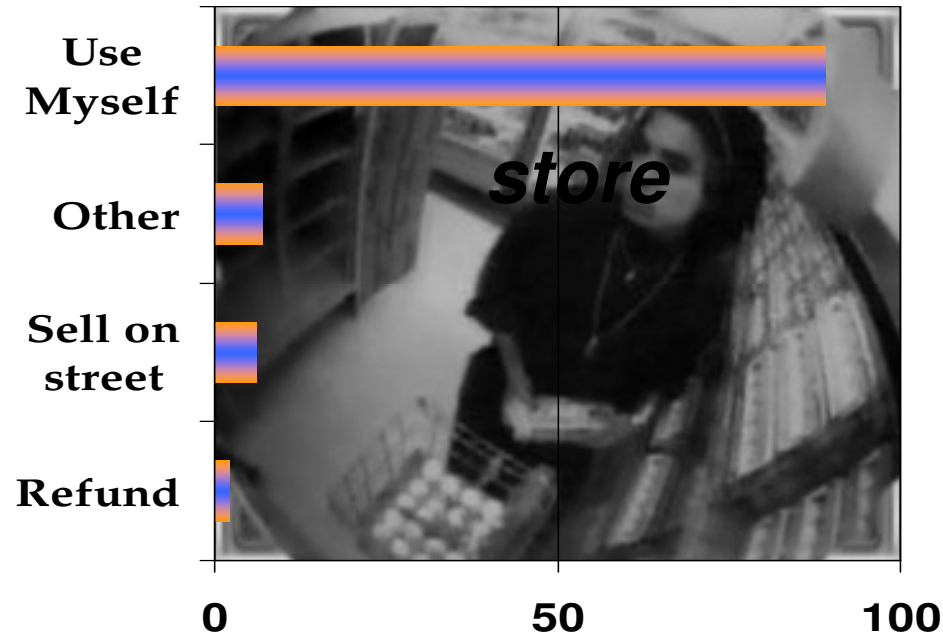
- The Sample
  - 105 apprehended shoplifters



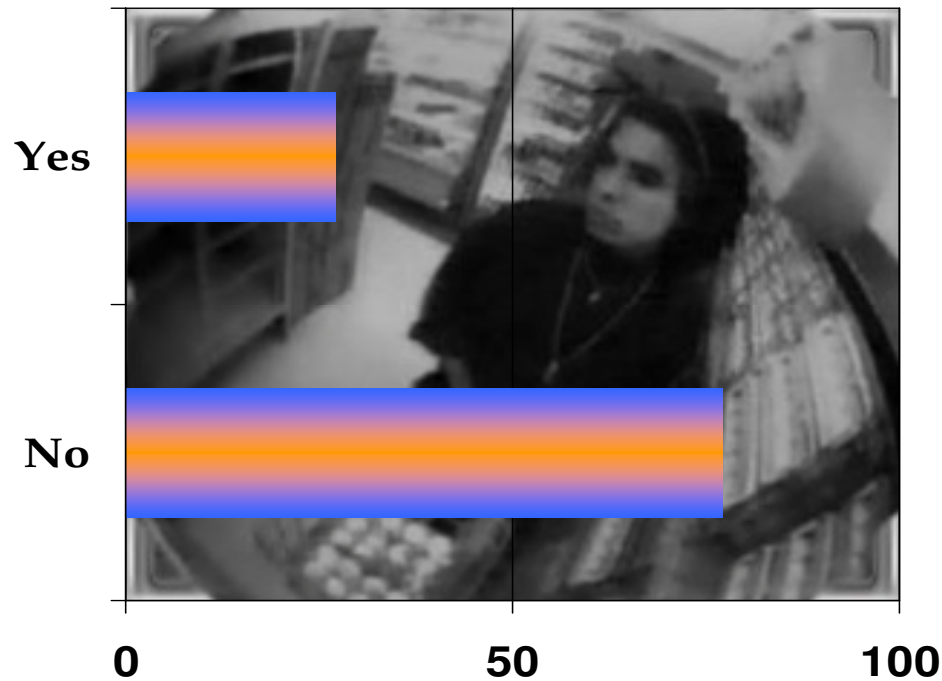
## Risk-Focused Asset Protection

- Motive:
  - To possess the item
  - When did they decide *what* they wanted
  - To steal the item
  - When did they decide to *steal* the item

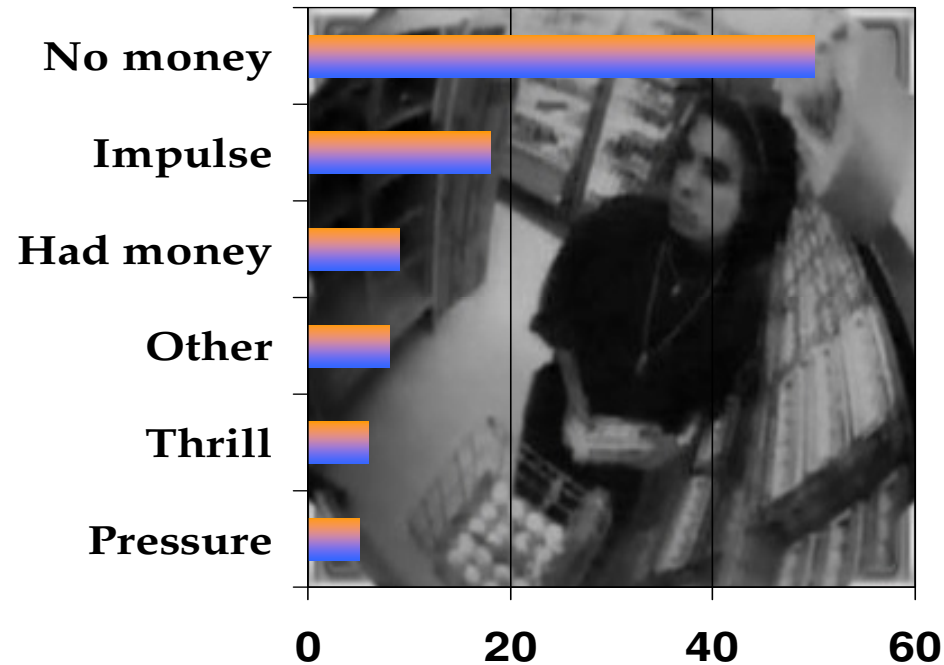
*What were you going to do with the items?*



*Did you know what you wanted before entering the store?*

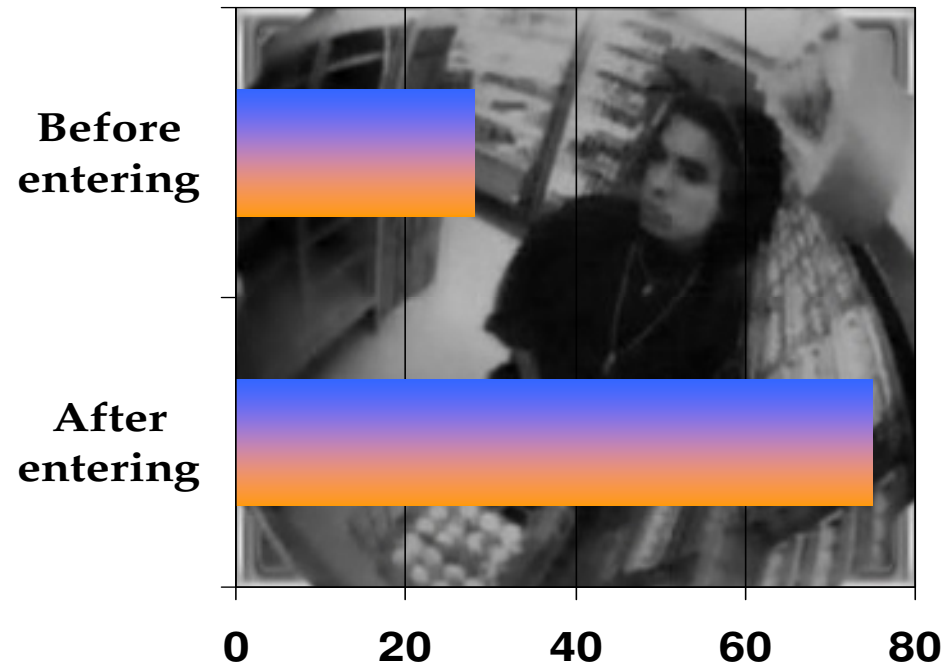


*Why did you take the items rather than pay for them?*



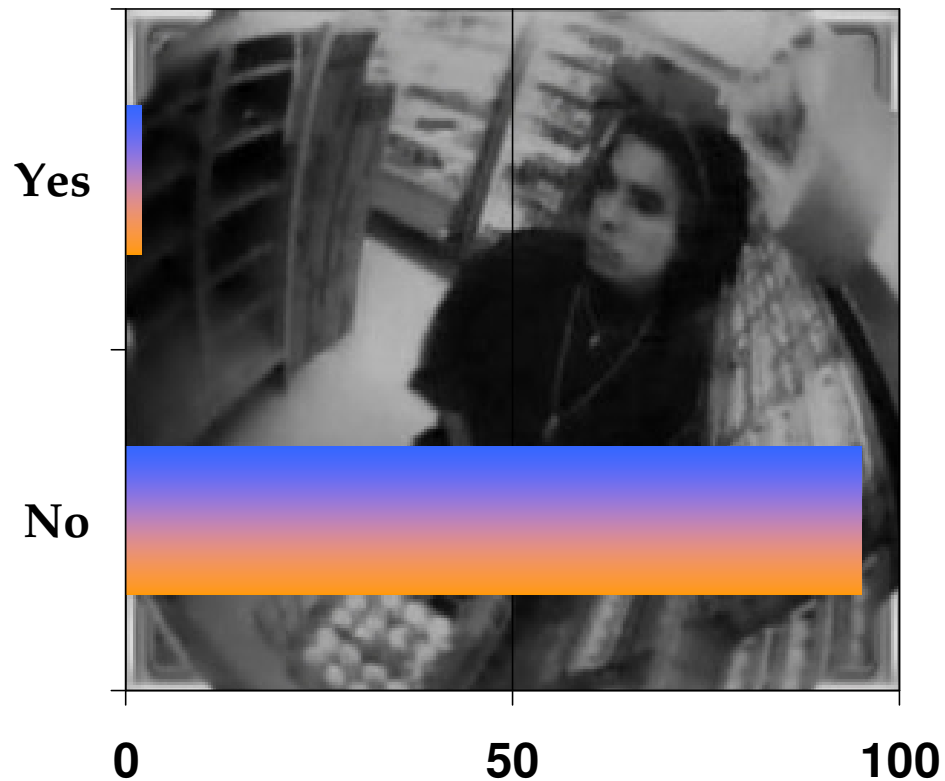


*When had you decided to take something from the store?*





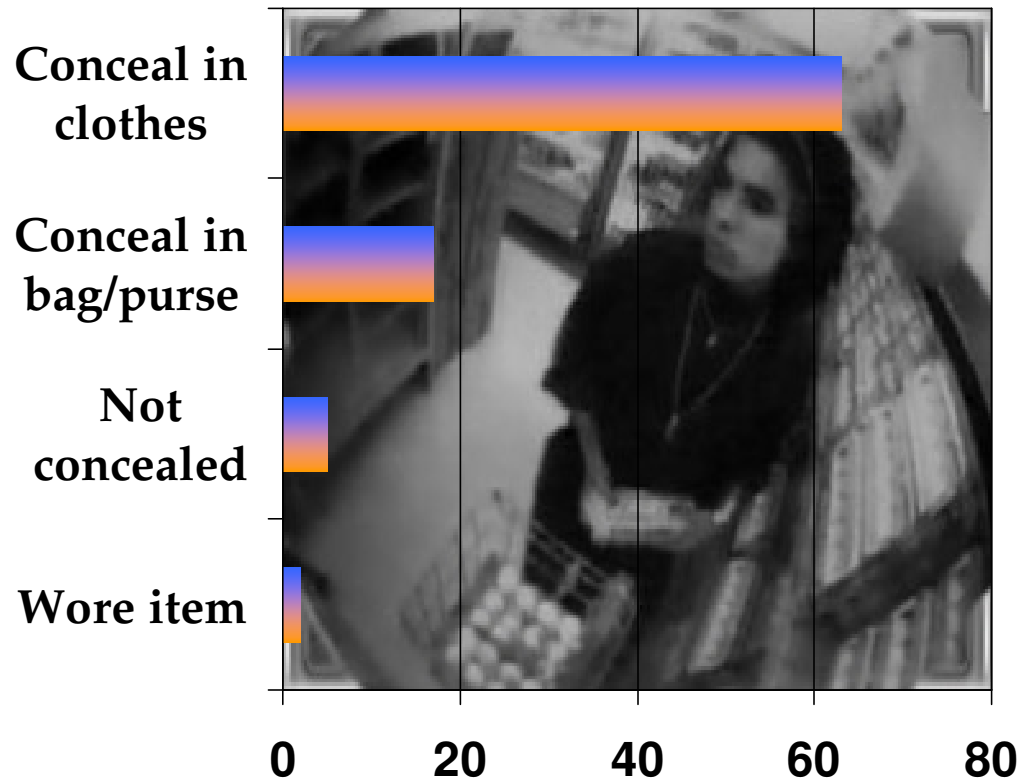
*Have you been to the store in the past solely to “scope out” the store’s security measures?*



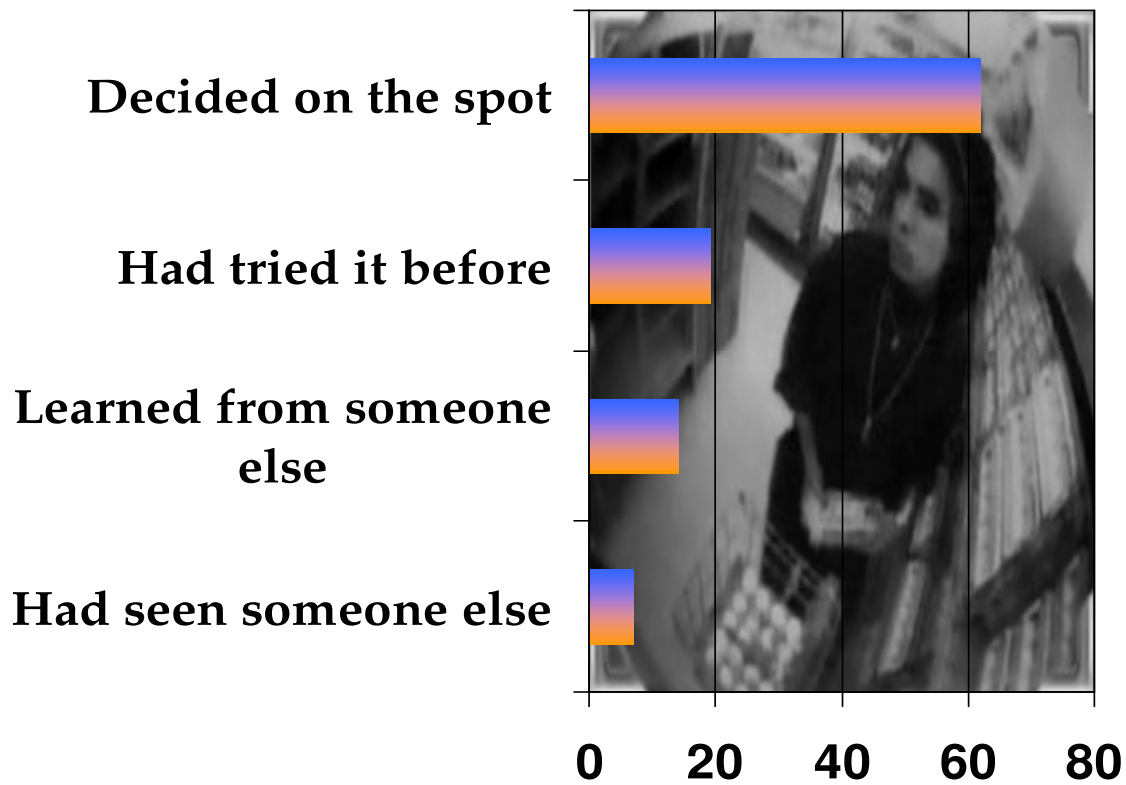
## Risk-Focused Asset Protection

- Opportunity- Situational factors:
  - How they took the items
  - Where did they conceal the items
  - Did they remove packaging or devices from the items
  - How long were they in the store during the theft
  - Did they come to the store just to steal

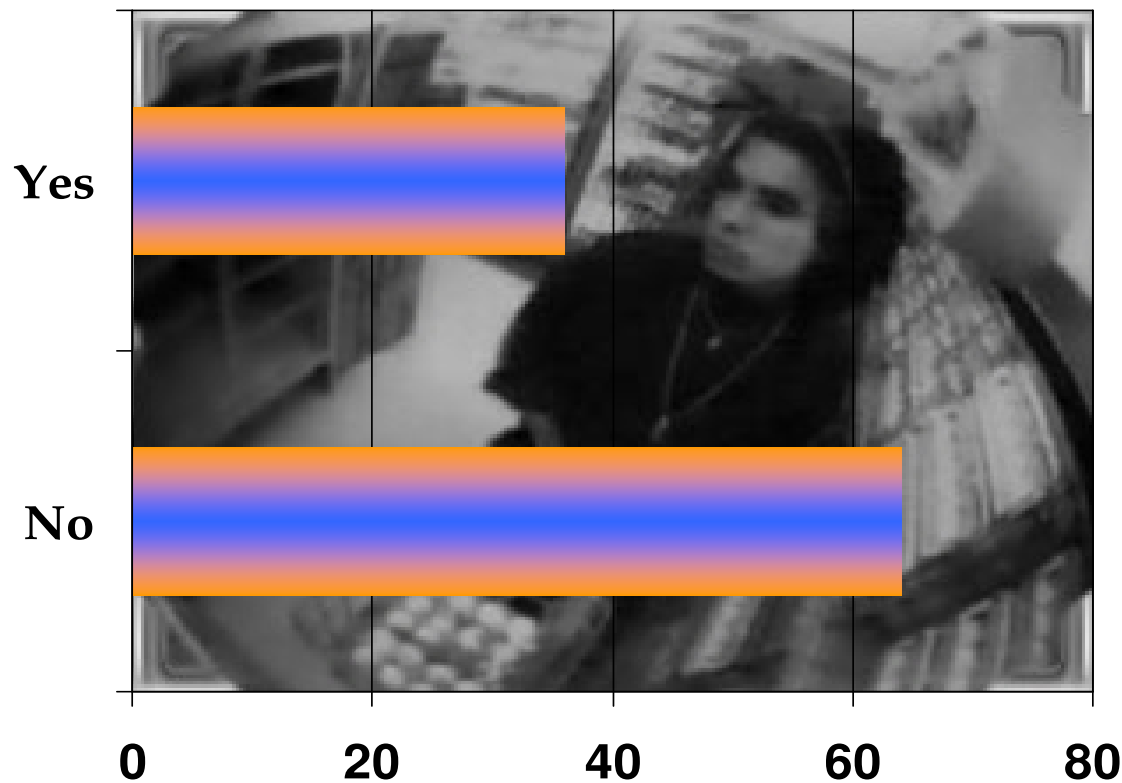
*How did you take the items?*



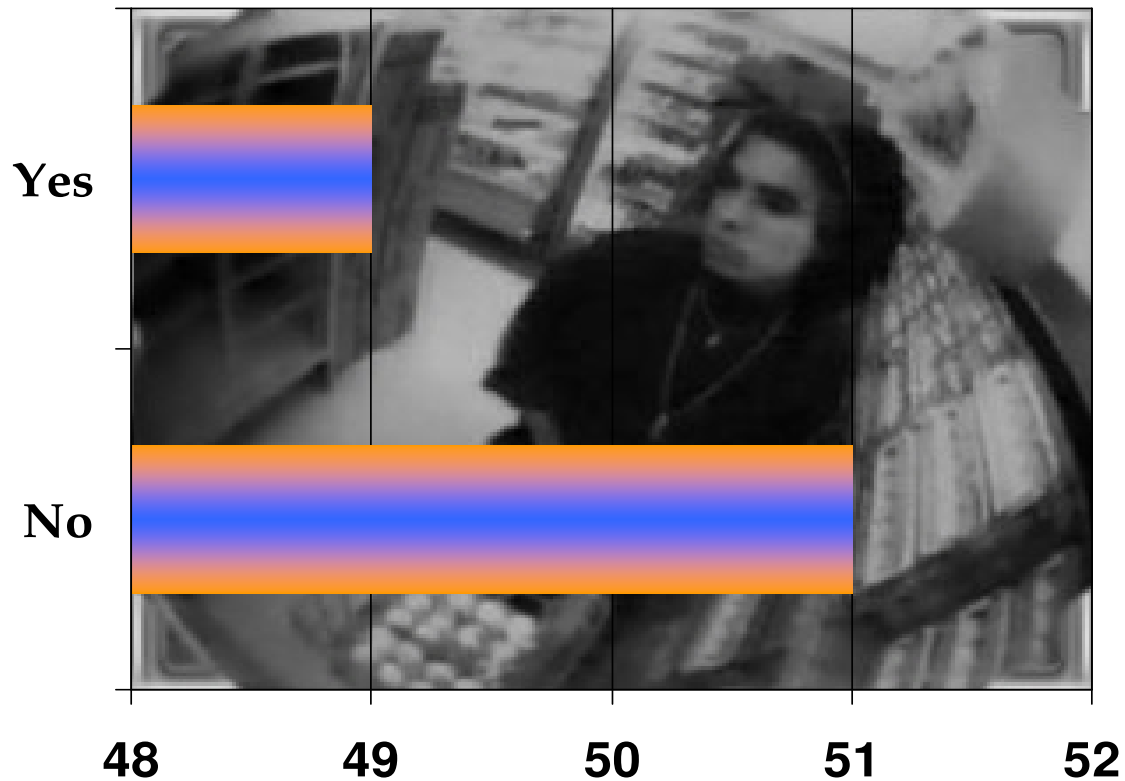
*How did you know how to take the items?*



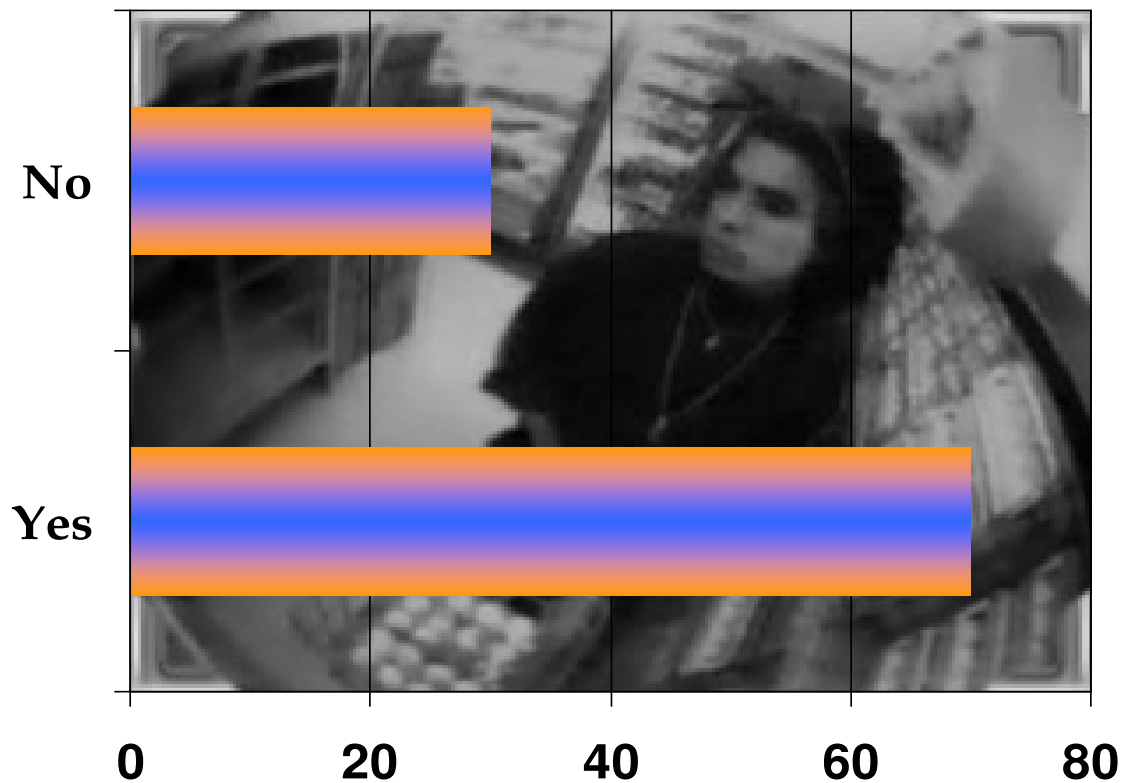
*Did you conceal the items in the same department you took them from?*



*Did you attempt to remove any security devices from the items before leaving the store?*

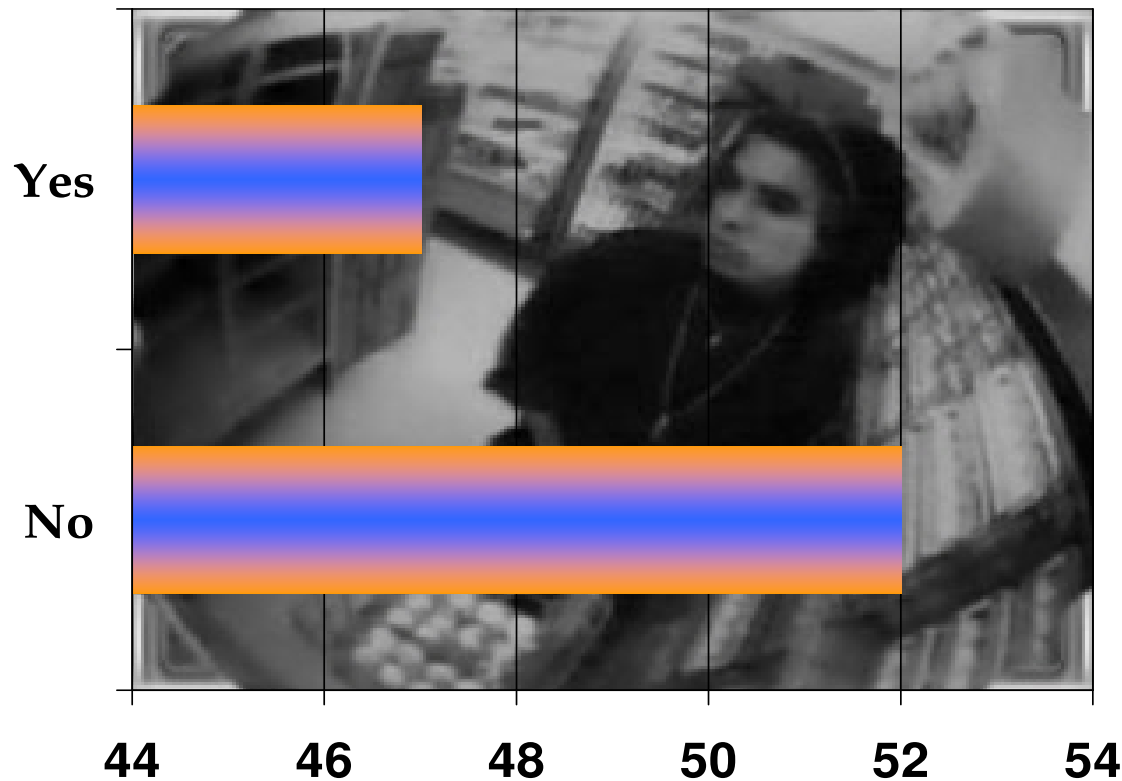


*Did you remove any of the items from their original packaging before leaving the store?*



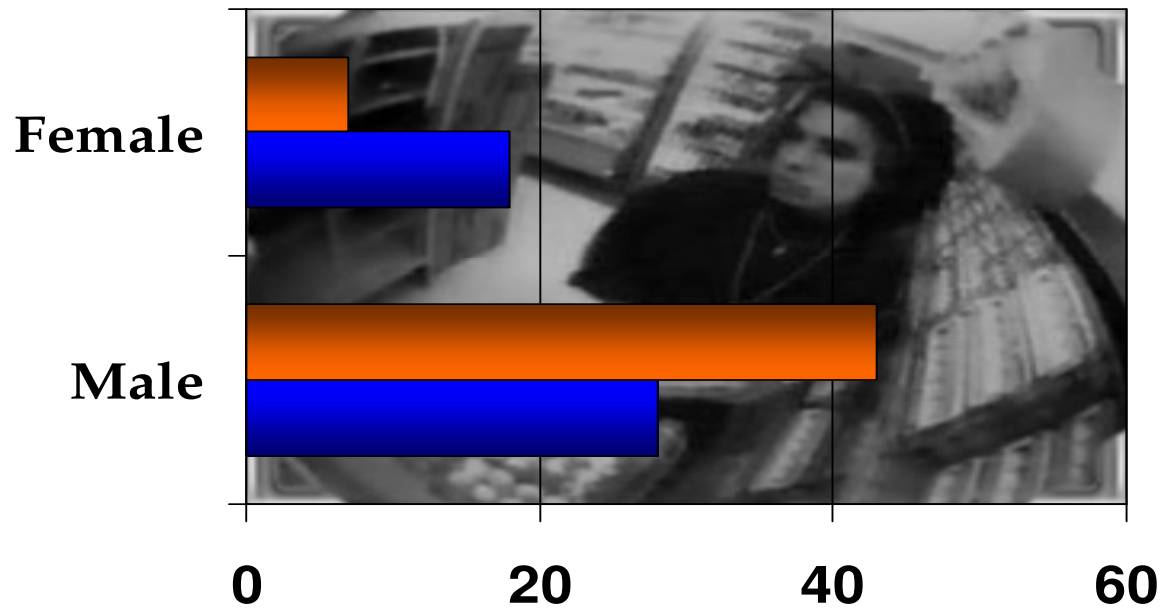


*Did you remove any price tags, size tags, or additional labels from the items before leaving the store?*



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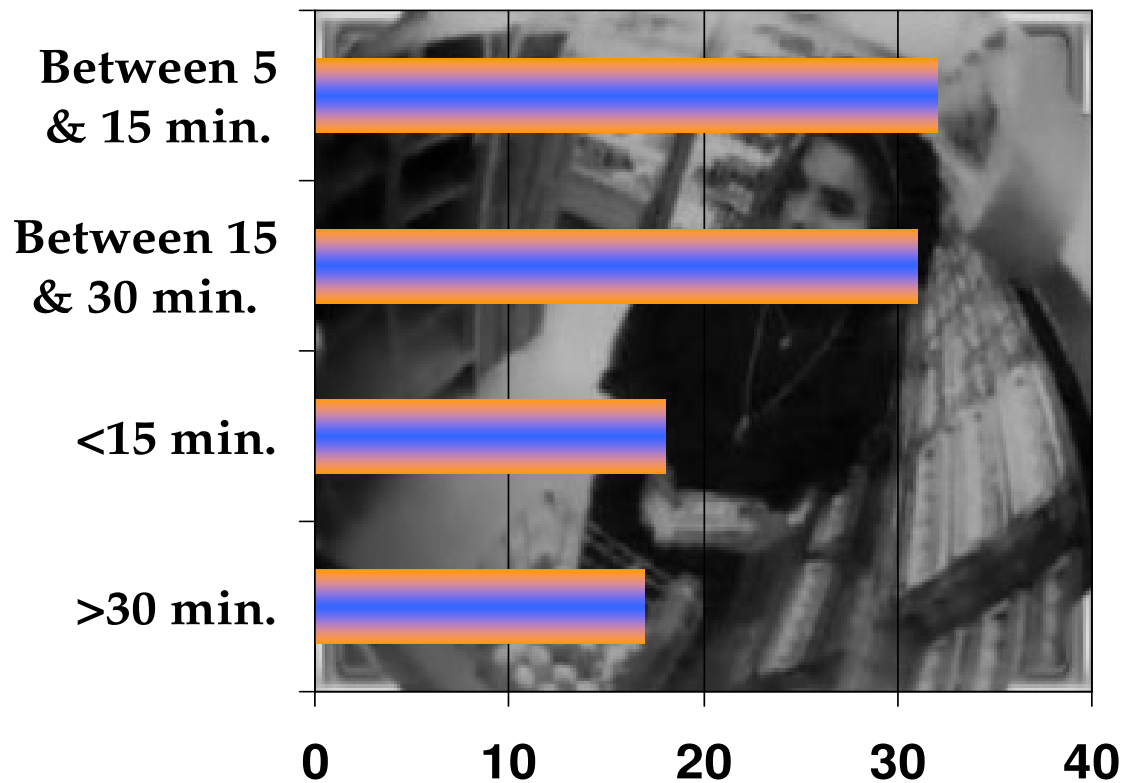
*Gender Behavioral Differences*



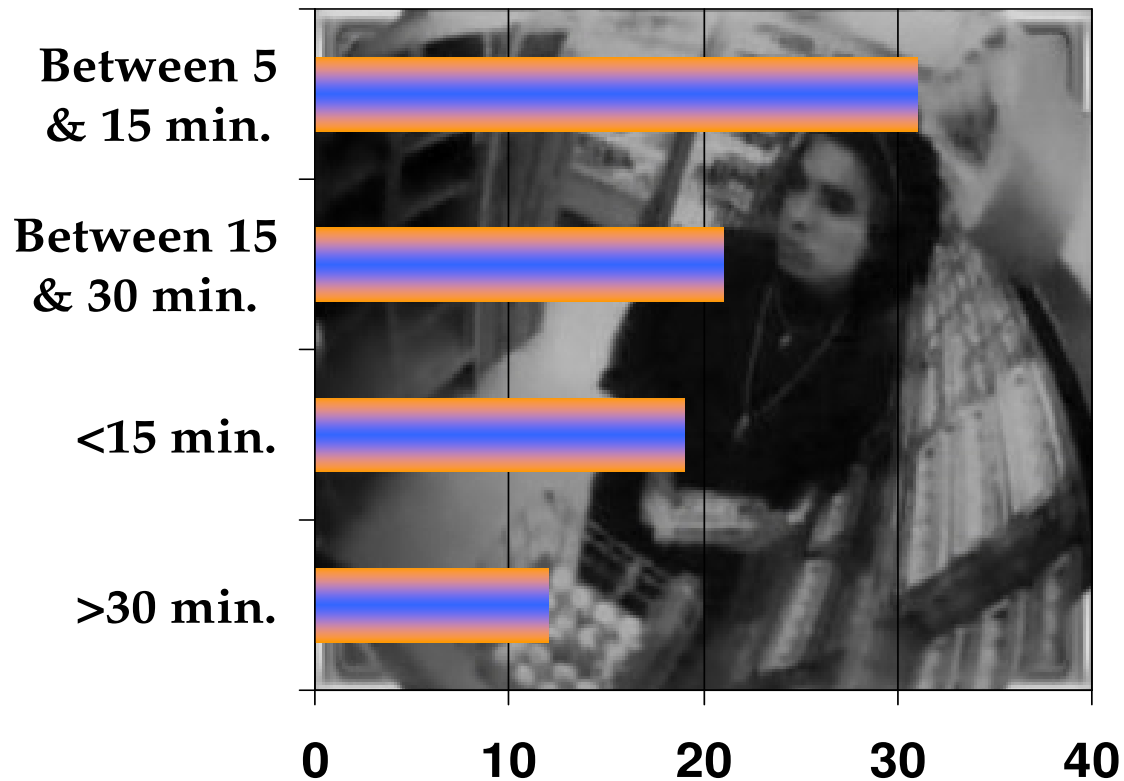
\*Significant at the .005 level.

**Yes** **No**

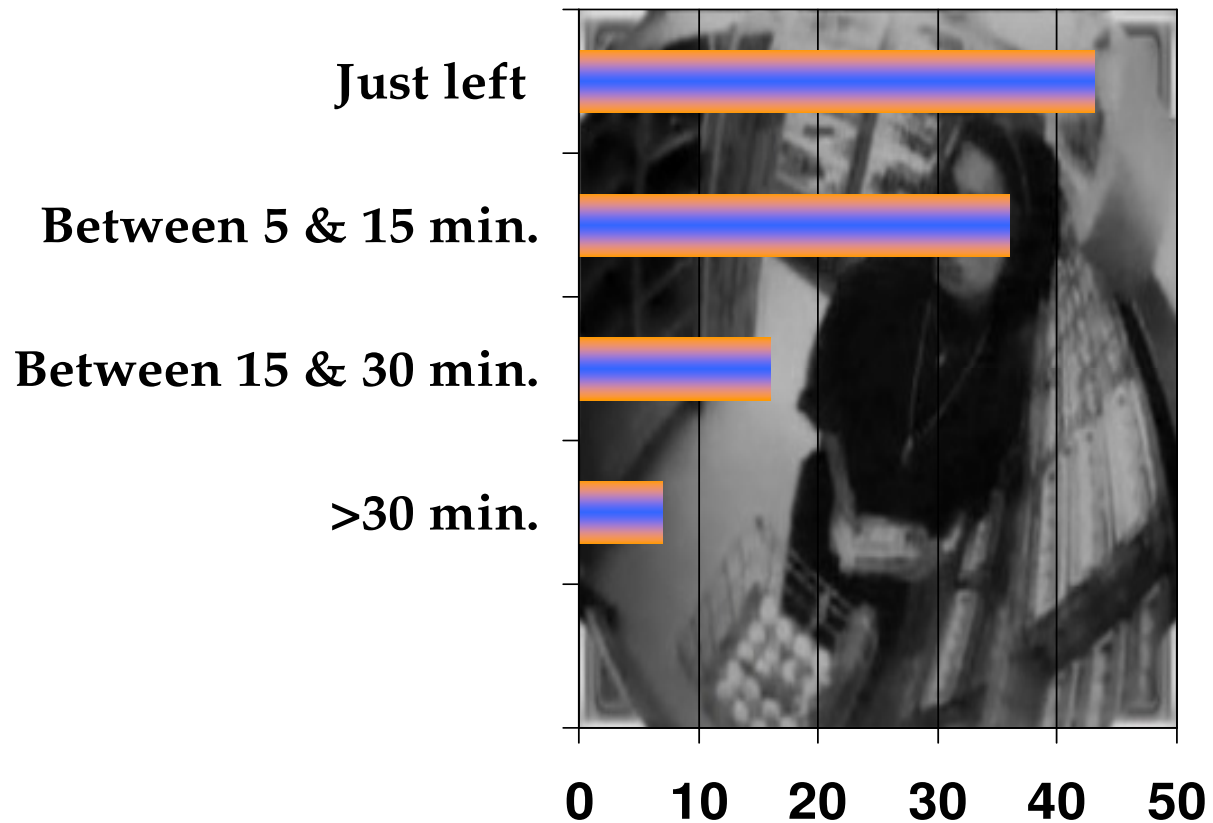
*Approximately how long were you in the store from the time you first entered until you took the first item?*



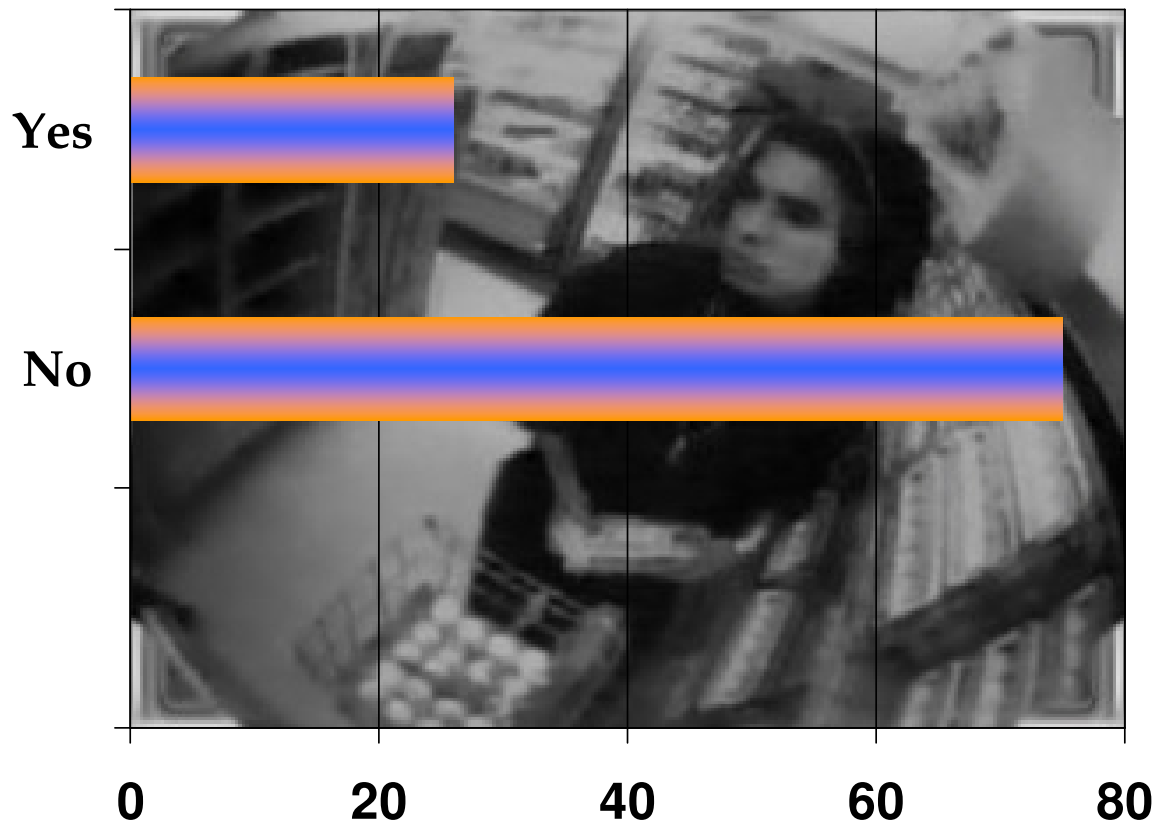
*Approximately how long were you in the store from the time you selected the first item until you selected the last item?*



*Approximately how long did you spend in the store  
after you had taken the last item?*



*Did you purchase anything in the store today?*





*Did you purchase anything in the store today?*  
*Gender Behavioral Differences*



\*Significant at the .001 level.

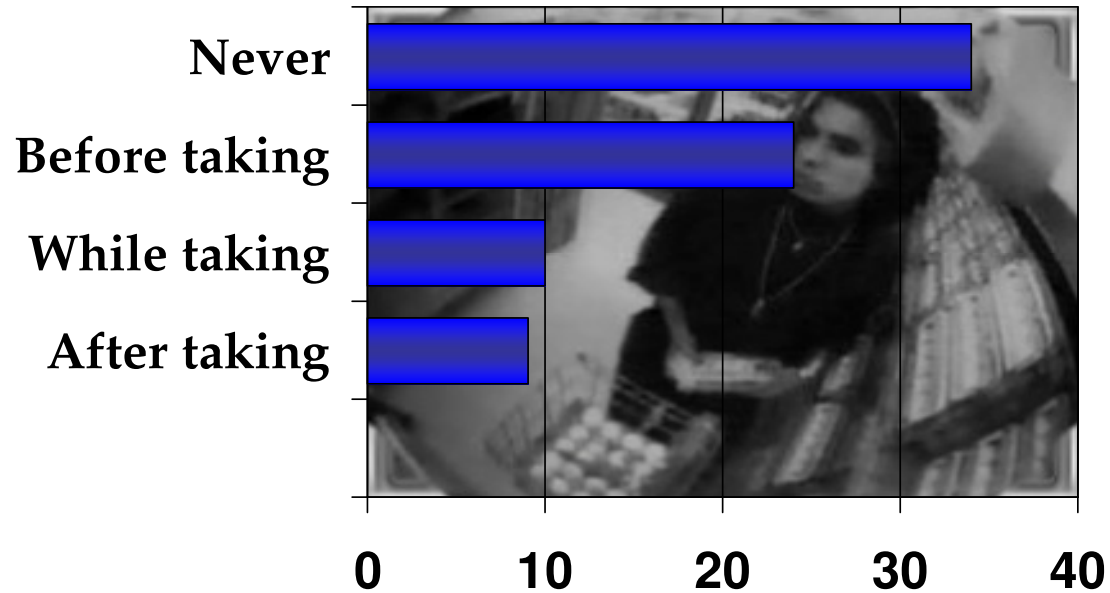




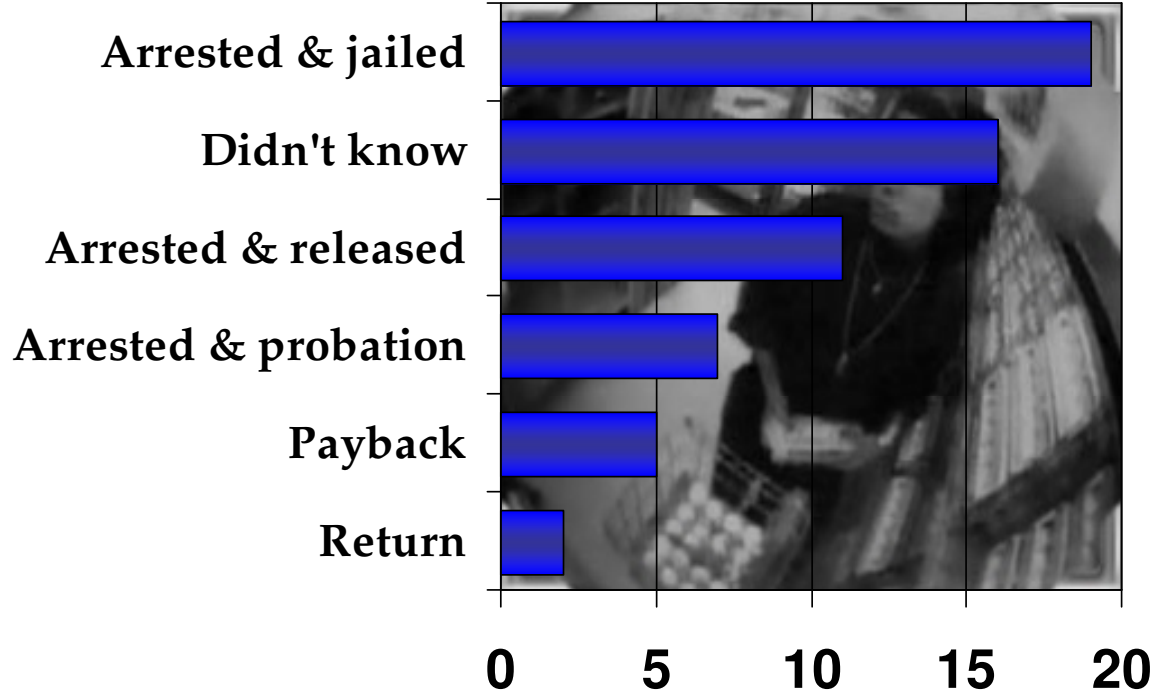
## Risk-Focused Asset Protection

- Perception of Personal Risk
  - Did they think about getting caught
  - What might happen if they were caught
  - Did they notice any LP measures
  - Why weren't they deterred by the measures they saw

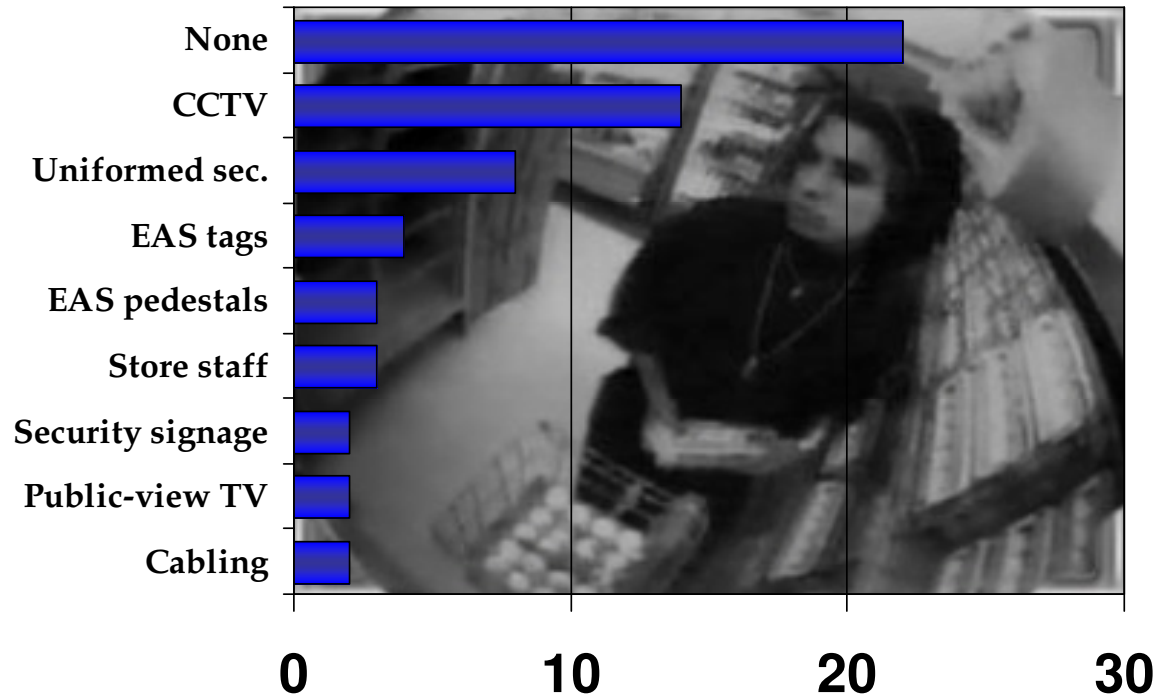
*Did you think about getting caught?*



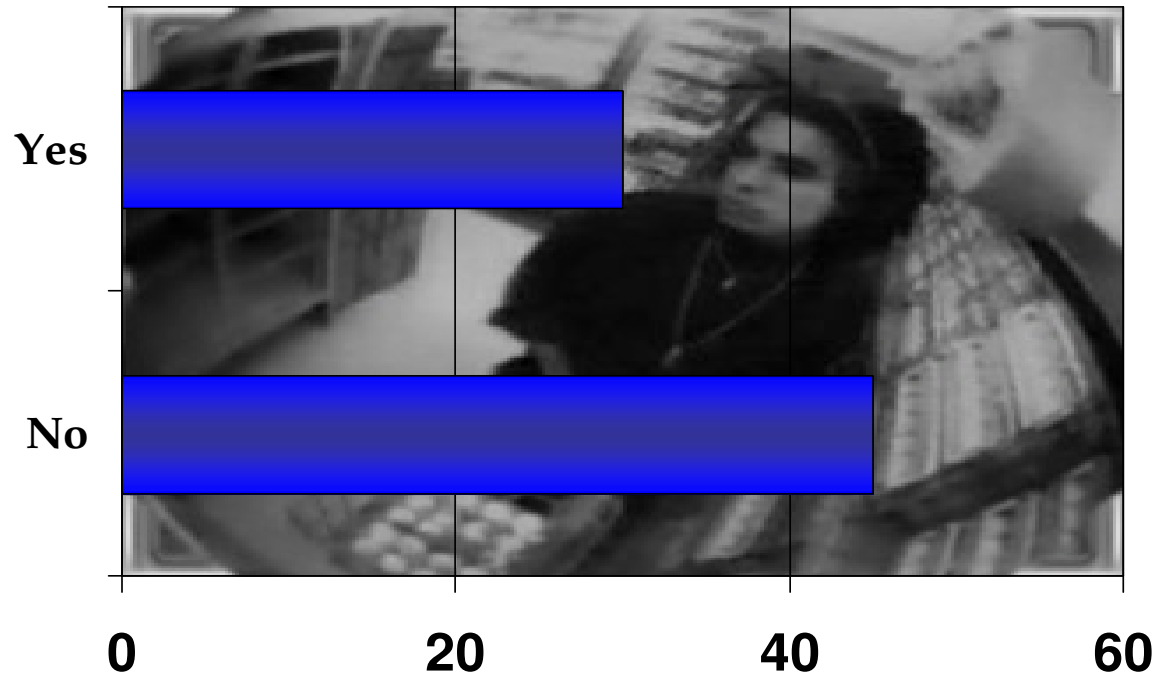
*What did you think might happen if you were caught?*



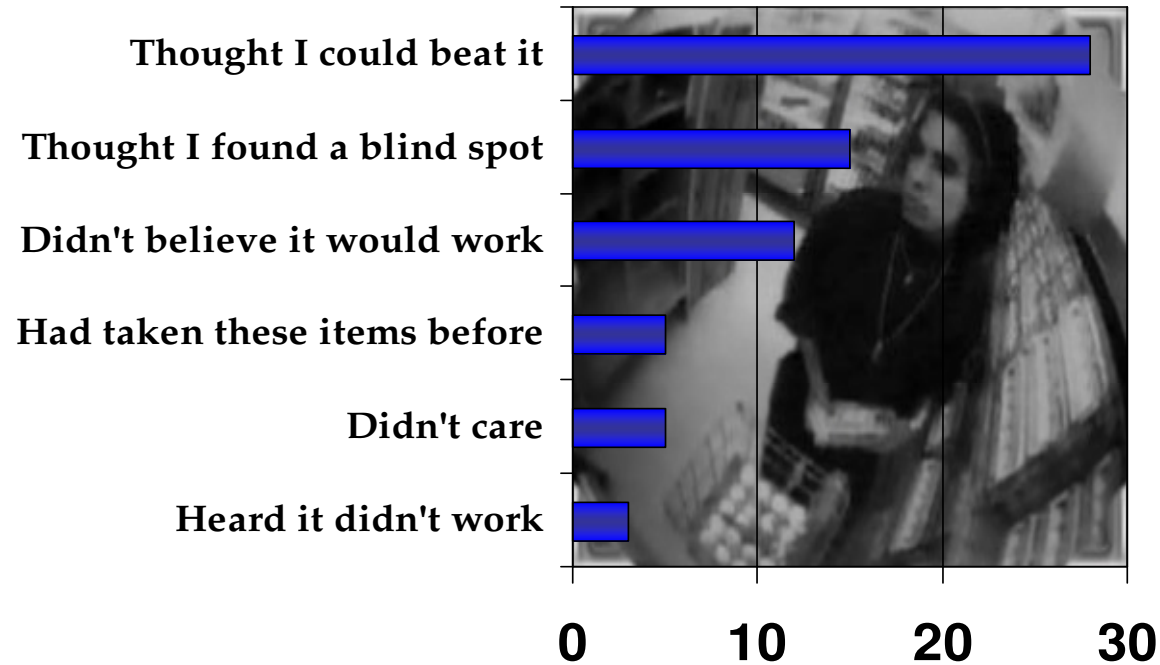
*What security measures did you notice in the store before you took the items?*



*Did you know where to look for the security items before you entered the store?*



*Why did you still try to take the items knowing about the security measures?*





# Initial Results

## Common Theft Methods

- Most just select some items and conceal more than one in pockets, bag (shopping or garbage) or purse- "I take a quick look around and then stick in 'em in my pocket," "If I take a lot ..I will use a magic (foil-lined) bag"
- Often work with more than one SL if pro's- "we always work together"
- Most leave in the package: especially if the item is to be converted to cash- "so long as they are not open you can sell them"
- If the item is believed to be tagged: 1. If for conversion- shield or "jet" 2. If for personal use- remove packaging, or just run if staff comes- "I can feel a package to tell if there is a buzzer in it," "sometimes I will go into a bathroom to check if there is a buzzer inside, if there are none I will go out and load up"



# Initial Results

## Risk Factors for Offenders

- Numerous, active employees in very close proximity, especially with walkie talkies, are considered a threat- "they're a problem if they watch you"
- Uniformed guards and police can be a threat if they appear alert, and are roving; store detectives can work if their presence is known, but not them personally- "I watch for spotters, undercover people that walk around..."
- Many offenders respect EAS, but either avoid obviously tagged items, or neutralize it: Hit and get, remove packaging, place in foil or metal, surreptitiously de-activate, or destroy tag- "undercover people and buzzers.. are the two major things"
- CCTV can deter- but only if it appears to be monitored and covers all concealment areas- "cameras I don't pay much attention to," "you can take the chance that nobody is watching," "I will turn my back to cameras"

# Important Findings

- 77% were alone
- 25% admitted to stealing on more than 10 occasions
  - Could they be some of our 'best' customers?
- 5% part of a group
  - f/u questions would point to not being ORC
  - None admitted to stealing for resale

# Important Findings

- 65% decided to steal after entering store
  - Does that mean that if something were different they would have made a different decision?
  - What are decision changers?
    - Better customer service
    - CCTV?
    - EAS systems

# Important Findings

- 60% looked for security measures
  - 83.3% looked for cameras
  - 33.3% looked for security tags
  - 29.2% looked for store employees that may be observing them
  - 20.8% looked for uniformed security

# Important Findings

- 75% of respondents that looked for security measures reported some are deterrents
  - 33.3% security tags
  - 33.3% cameras or domes
  - 33.3% plainclothes security
  - 27.8 uniformed security
  - 22.8 eas warning barriers or pedestals
  - 16.7 store employees paying attention

Respondents may provide more than one answer

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Questions?

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