



MALMÖ UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF CULTURE
AND SOCIETY

Hot Spots of Robberies in the City of Malmö

A Qualitative Study of Five Hot Spots, Using the
Routine Activity Theory, and Crime Pattern Theory

Carl Dymne

Main field of study – Criminology
Two-year master program
30 credits
Spring 2017
Supervisor: Manne Gerell

ABSTRACT

Studies about hot spots of crimes have found that crimes are clustered; few places have many crimes. There is a consensus among criminologists that opportunities for crimes are important when explaining hot spots, at some places, there are more opportunities than at other places. The same applies for hot spots of robberies. Most studies done on the subject are quantitative, relatively little is done using a qualitative approach. Furthermore, little research is done in a Swedish or Scandinavian context. To fill these research gaps this study use participant observations to research five hot spots of robberies in Malmö. The research will try to answer which characteristics are important to explain why the places are hot spots and what the similarities and differences there between the places are. This will be analyzed using the Routine Activity Theory and the Crime Pattern Theory. The findings suggest that place-specific things are important to explain why the places are hot spots, but when using the theories several places are similar.

Keywords: Hot spots, Robberies, Routine Activity Theory, Crime Pattern Theory, Place-specific things

TABLE OF CONTENT

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Content of the Thesis	1
2. Previous research	2
2.1 Hot Spots of Crime	2
2.2 Situational Crime Prevention.....	3
2.3 Hot Spots and Robberies.....	3
2.4 Qualitative Studies About Hot Spots	5
2.5 Swedish Studies About Hot Spots	6
2.6 The Relevance of This Study.....	6
3. Aim and Research Questions	7
4. Theory.....	8
4.1 The Routine Activity Theory	8
4.2 The Crime Pattern Theory	9
5. Method.....	10
5.1 Participant Observation- Advantages and Disadvantages	10
5.2 Data Collection	12
5.2.1 Problem with the Data	12
5.3 Use of Theories in the Observations.....	13
5.4 How the Observations Were Done	15
5.4.1 Tallriken.....	16
5.4.2 Nydala Square.....	16
5.4.3 Nydala Bike Path	16
5.4.4 Lorensborg	17
5.4.5 Amiral Street.....	17
5.5 Analysis of the Material.....	17
5.6 Ethical Considerations	18
6. Result and Analysis	18
6.1 The Characteristics of the Five Places	18
6.1.1 Tallriken.....	19
6.1.2 Nydala square	20
6.1.3 Nydala Bike Path	23
6.1.4 Lorensborg	25
6.1.5 Amiral Street.....	26
6.2 Similarities and Differences Between the Five Places	28
6.2.1 Similarities	28
6.2.2 Differences.....	29

7. Discussion.....	30
7.1 The Importance of Suitable Victims and Capable Guardians.....	30
7.2 Place-Specific Things	31
7.3 Solutions to the Problems	32
7.4 Are the places hot spots?	33
8. Conclusion	34
8.1 Limitations	35
References.....	37
Annex 1 - Field Notes	40
Annex 2 - Checklist	44
Annex 3- Information About the Robberies	45

1. INTRODUCTION

Hot spots of crime are small places where a proportionally substantial number of crimes are committed. Since the 1980s it has been a popular topic within criminology (Weisburd, et al., 2014). Hot spots can be narrowed down to a street corner or an address, so called micro places; a whole neighborhood is seldom criminogenic (Weisburd, 2015). Hot spots of robberies have the same characteristics as crimes in general; few micro places have a proportionally large amount of robberies. To explain why it is this way, opportunities for crimes are a key factor. At some places, there are more opportunities to commit robberies than at other places (Braga, et al., 2011). Most studies done are quantitative which means that researchers try to map and generalize findings of the hot spots, usually to explain citywide trends. This means that researchers seldom visit the places they research (Braga & Weisburd, 2010; Vito, et al., 2014). Instead of a generalization, qualitative research can provide in-depth research and find place-specific attributes (St Jean, 2007). Because of the relatively few qualitative studies about hot spots, there is currently a research gap within this field. Besides, most research has been done in the American society, relatively little has been done in a Swedish or Scandinavian context. Thus, there is also a research gap in that context.

To fill this research gap, this thesis is qualitative with the use of participant observation as the method. Five hot spots of robberies outside the city center in Malmö (Tallriken, Nydala Square, Nydala Bike Path, Lorensborg and Amiral Street (Annex 1)) were visited, to research which characteristics could explain why the places were hot spots for robberies and what similarities and differences there were between the places. The point of the observations was to research the everyday movement, not to witness any crimes. Each place was visited and observed two to three times with two to three hours observation each time. The places were analyzed using the Routine Activity Theory and the Crime Pattern Theory. First in the form of a checklist (Annex 2) of what to look for in the observations and then as a tool to do an analysis of the findings.

1.1 Content of the Thesis

The thesis will start with *Previous Research*, which will be a presentation of previous research, both of hot spots of crime in general and hot spots of robberies. There will also be a presentation of the lack of qualitative and Swedish studies done, which will lead to the relevance of this thesis. Next, the *Aim and research questions* will be presented. The heading after that is *Theory*, where the theoretical concepts of the Routine Activity Theory and the Crime Pattern Theory will be shortly explained. In the section *Method*, there will be a presentation of participant observations, why the method was chosen in this thesis, how data was collected, how the theories were used in the observations and the analysis and detailed information about how the participant observations were done at each place. In the heading, *Result, and Analysis* the results will be presented and discussed. Because of the qualitative aspect of the thesis, the result and analysis will be integrated with each other. After that, the result will be discussed in the heading *Discussion* and finally, there will be a *Conclusion* of the thesis.

2. PREVIOUS RESEARCH

There have been many studies done about hot spots of crime and hot spots of robberies. However, there is relatively few qualitative studies or studies done in a Swedish context. In this section, previous research will be presented. The subject will be narrowed down and lead to the aim and research questions of the thesis.

2.1 Hot Spots of Crime

Most studies, within the field of criminology, are person focused, while relatively little research has been done about crime and places. However, since the late 1980s, crime and place have become a popular topic of studies and several studies show that most crimes occur at few places in a city. To reduce crime it is, therefore, important to analyze those places (Weisburd, et al., 2014). An important aspect of hot spots is that, according to research, crimes are often found at micro places; you can often narrow it down to an address or a street corner (Weisburd, 2015). Sherman et al. (1989) performed a study where they found that 3,5 percent of the addresses in Minneapolis accounted for 50 percent of all emergency calls during a year. Another researcher, Spelman (1995), also conducted a study on emergency calls. He found that the 10 worst locations accounted for 50 percent of all emergency calls. Hot spots of crimes also seem to be stable over time (Weisburd, 2015). Weisburd et al. (2004) did a study about hot spots in Seattle between 1989 and 2002. They found that 50 percent of all crimes were committed at 4,5 percent of the micro places. The findings propose that it is better to focus on small places to prevent crime, instead of entire neighborhoods or areas. Even though it is popular to cluster crime on a neighborhood level, the whole neighborhood or area is rarely criminogenic; most places in high-crime neighborhoods have no or very little crimes (Herrmann, 2015). There are also other disadvantages of studying entire neighborhoods. Social boundaries that go beyond the administrative boundaries could exist, which means there could be boundaries within neighborhoods and people from different neighborhoods might belong together. Studies of micro places do not have this problem. Also, interventions to reduce crime applied on a neighborhood level will include the area that has no or little crime. Resources that is needed on high crime places are then redirected to other places. This means, that with a focus on micro places it is possible to identify most of the criminal activities and focus intervention at places where crime happens (Gerell, 2016).

Studies of hot spots have led to improvement in crime control policies. There is now an understanding of how certain places attracts criminals and how certain settings increases the risk for people to become victims. This means that the police can map certain places and target them. Also, by changing the characteristics of these places crimes can be prevented, often without displacement of criminal activities (Braga & Weisburd, 2010; Weisburd, et al., 2006). The biggest affect the analysis of hot spots has provided is the change in police work. Instead of randomly patrolling the streets, the police have in many countries changed tactics to focus on high-crime places (Braga & Weisburd, 2010). This is a change to a preventive, rather than a reactive approach to crime (ibid). Many studies have offered evidence that hot spot policing is effective. The

research of hot spots has also provided an understanding of how other stakeholders, than the police, can reduce crime. It is, for example, possible to build obstacles at hot spots, install surveillance cameras, or remove abandoned houses, that usually are hot spots for drug sales (Clarke, 1997). The idea of hot spots of crime is closely linked to the Routine Activity Theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979) which will be discussed further in the theory section of this thesis. The assumption is that crime is strongly related to situational factors. Nightclubs, for example, attracts a lot of intoxicated people. They are therefore more exposed to violence there than at other places. There is also an assumption that it is easier to prevent situational factors, rather than individual or social factors, since situational factors could be dealt with faster (Granath, 2014).

2.2 Situational Crime Prevention

Situational crime prevention focuses on opportunities of crimes. The focus is on reducing crime at the place rather than reducing the risk for the offender (Clarke, 1997). As Clarke (1997, p. 2) says:

“Proceeding from an analysis of the circumstances giving rise to specific kinds of crime, it introduces discrete managerial and environmental change to reduce the opportunity for those crimes to occur. Thus it is focused on the settings for crime, rather than upon those committing criminal acts. It seeks to forestall the occurrence of crime, rather than to detect and sanction offenders. It seeks not to eliminate criminal or delinquent tendencies through improvement of society or its institutions, but merely to make criminal action less attractive to offenders.”

The most known situational crime prevention is the security design in houses; by making property harder to steal, more secure locks, better doors, and windows in houses and camera surveillance at parking lots, the property is harder to steal and the risk of being detected increase. This has been proven an effective way to reduce burglaries (Waller, 2014).

There are diverse ways to reduce opportunities for crimes. It is dependent on the type of crime, the situation, the potential victim, and the place (Clarke, 1997). Clarke (1997) have listed 16 opportunity-reducing techniques that could be used to reduce crime at individual places. Understanding why crime happens in a place is, therefore, the key to doing something about the problem (Braga, et al., 2011). When you understand why some places are hot spots of certain crimes, you can start with finding techniques to reduce problems at these places. It is also a good thing that you can exclude some interventions, which would be a waste of time and money (Waller, 2014). An interesting aspect of situational crime prevention of hot spots is that evidence shows that there is little or no displacement of crimes, even if that is expected (Weisburd, et al., 2006). The most common hot spot interventions often involve the police, but there are other solutions involving other partners which have proven to be effective (Braga & Weisburd, 2010; Waller, 2014)

2.3 Hot Spots and Robberies

Robbery is a violent crime which is economically motivated. It can vary from attacks on individuals to larger bank robberies, but there is always an economic

loss for the victim (Braga, et al., 2011). Robbery is a crime that spread fear and affects people. As Braga et al. (2011, p. 8) say:

“Robbery is particularly fear-inspiring, as it usually involves an unprovoked attack by strangers that includes bodily harm or the threat thereof. The threat of robbery victimization has far-reaching effects on urban life through its influences on choices for residents and visitors about where to live, work, shop, and go out to dinner”

The crime is most common in cities and the most common robbery is when one or several people attack a single person. This is because there are more people on a smaller surface in cities. Also, an offender is more likely to be relatively anonymous there (Braga, et al., 2011). In a Swedish setting, the situation is the same. In 2015, 8360 robberies were reported to the police, 69 percent were classed as muggings or personal robberies. Of the muggings, 81 percent were reported in public places and the robber had for the most part been unknown to the victim (BRÅ, n.d).

Hot spots of robberies have the same pattern as general crime trends; few micro places accounts for most of the robberies (Braga, et al., 2011). Sherman et al. (1989) found that almost all robberies reported to the police, happened at 2,2 percent of the street addresses in Minneapolis, and Braga et al. (2011, p. 9) found that “In fact, roughly 8 percent of street segments and intersections in Boston are responsible for nearly 66 percent of street robbery incidents between 1980 and 2008 even when controlling for prior levels of robbery and existing trends.”

There is a consensus among criminologists that opportunity is a key factor to explain hot spots of robberies; the place must provide offenders with an opportunity to rob victims without getting too much attention. This explains why hot spot policing projects has been regarded successful; it has decreased opportunities at hot spots by increasing surveillance at these places. To explain why some places are hot spots while others are not, scientists have looked at and tried to find risk, and protective factors. The risk and protective factors can be the places themselves, but also the people who spend the time at these places (Braga, et al., 2011; Braga & Weisburd, 2010; Weisburd, et al., 2014). The risk-reward aspect in robberies seems to be important. Places must be visited by victims with things to steal (preferably money), and offenders must know they can find victims there. Also, the best places of robberies are places where it is difficult to get caught or supervised since the offender often rob people who they do not know. This makes some places more ideal for robberies than others and the result is a clustering of robberies at some places (Braga, et al., 2011). By interviewing offenders, researchers have found that they rarely plan their robbery carefully, rather, they go to places where they know that people carrying valuables will be (Bernasco & Block, 2009; Feeney, 2014; St Jean, 2007). Feeney (2014) did research on 113 offenders, who were charged with robbery. He found that fewer than 60 percent wanted money when they robbed the rest desired other things, such as thrills. St Jean (2007) also found in his study, that robbers rarely carefully plan who to attack, but instead go to places where they know they can find victims and where they can be relatively anonymous. This implies that certain places are better than others to commit robberies at. When offenders find a place suitable for robbery, they might return to that place many times. Other offenders might also get information about the place and start committing offenses there. Thus, making it a hot spot for crime (Bernasco & Block, 2009; St Jean, 2007). The choice of

places is also linked to the temporal variation. “Great places for robbery in the morning may be pretty useless places at night” (Bernasco & Block, 2009, p. 122). This makes it important to consider when the offenses are taking place when studying places of crime (Bernasco & Block, 2009).

2.4 Qualitative Studies About Hot Spots

Studies about hot spots of crimes tend to be quantitative, using official data to draw conclusions (St Jean, 2007). The studies mentioned above such as Braga et al. (2011), Sherman et al. (1989), Spelman (1995), and Weisburd et al. (2004) have all used quantitative approaches to answer their research questions. This is in line with criminology in general. Only about five to ten percent of published articles in journals have a qualitative approach to them (Copes, et al., 2016). The vast quantitative data have provided knowledge about micro-places, and that most crimes in cities are committed there. This kind of research has been reproduced and used in many cities and the conclusion is that the situation is the same in all cities (Braga, et al., 2011). To understand why some places are hot spots for crimes, studies have found that opportunities for crimes important. Quantitative studies most often use crime data to find the right places, thereafter they use what is known about why offenders choose the places and theories, to explain why those places are hot spots of crimes. The analysis of the studies can be that situational features or movement of persons can explain why certain places are hot spots (Braga & Clarke, 2014). These are valid research methods, but the purpose of the quantitative approach to research is to generalize the results to a larger setting. (Vito, et al., 2014). “Qualitative research seeks indepth, detailed information which, though not always completely generalizable, allows for a deeper understanding of those specific persons/events from whom data is collected.” (Vito, et al., 2014, p. 172). For research of hot spots of crimes, this means that researchers often do not visit the places they study. Mostly they try to map places and generalize why they are hot spots based on theory or general features, both situational and social (Braga & Clarke, 2014). When using a qualitative approach, it is possible to explain why a certain place is a hot spot, by visiting the place, and why offenders choose certain places, by interviewing them. There could be features of a place that is not visible on a map, which could explain why offenders are drawn to the place or why it is not supervised. With the relatively few qualitative studies of hot spots of crimes, there is, therefore, a research gap of in-depth analyses of these places (St Jean, 2007).

Despite the relatively small number of qualitative studies, there are some studies produced. One example of a study that tries to answer why certain places are hot spots, is a study done by Kooi (2015). When he found that three bus stops in a city handled much of the crime and disorder, observations were done to answer why these places were hot spots. Because of the observations, he could analyze both the physical attributes of the bus stops as well as what kind of people were hanging around at these places. By these analyses, he could discuss and suggest place specific, instead of general solutions to the problems. St Jean (2007) did a study of hot spots of crimes when he spent four years in disadvantaged neighborhoods in Chicago, interviewing and observing people and places. He observed hot spots of drug dealing, violence and robberies and interviewed offenders about why they chose certain places to commit crimes. The conclusion of the study was that the theories of broken windows and collective efficacy could be used to explain why some places had more crime than others. Weisburd et al.

(2006) conducted a qualitative study to find if crime prevention initiatives displace crime or not. By doing interviews and observations they found that there was no displacement of crimes in the areas researched. A pattern of qualitative studies is to depart from theoretical perspectives to look for certain aspects which can be explained (St Jean, 2007; Weisburd, et al., 2006). In general, qualitative studies of hot spots have contributed to our understanding of why certain places are hot spots for crime, although they have also been able to view things from the offenders' perspective and see why they choose certain places (St Jean, 2007).

2.5 Swedish Studies About Hot Spots

Although there is a scarce amount of research done on this topic, even less has been done in a Swedish or Scandinavian context. There are however some evaluations of interventions at hot spot places. Examples of evaluations are one study about CCTV in the Stockholm subway system, that showed a decrease in planned crime after the CCTV was introduced (Priks, 2015) and two types of initiatives to direct police, security guards, or volunteers to hot spot areas to prevent crime (Frogner, et al., 2013; Østergaard Larsen, et al., 2015). A common theme in these studies was that the hot spots covered larger areas than micro places and the interventions in the studies were regarded as having no effect (ibid). One study that analyzed hot spots of crimes was Uittenbogaard and Ceccatos (2014) study. The authors analyzed why some subway stations in Stockholm had more crime than other stations. By looking at several types of crimes, such as vandalism, violence, and property crime, they analyzed the characteristics at the stations with a higher number of these crimes. They also made suggestions for interventions to prevent these crimes. The study is, however, quantitative which means that they looked for general characteristics, rather than detailed.

2.6 The Relevance of This Study

This study will be qualitative, where five micro places which are hot spots of robberies will be researched. By doing observations it will be possible to describe the places and the people who spend time there. The findings will contribute to the relatively little qualitative research that has been done about hot spots and crime. From previous studies, we know why offenders choose certain places to rob people: they prefer places where they know there are victims and where they have a minimal risk of getting caught. From generalization, we know that places, where a lot of people moving around and the visibility is low, make good places for robberies and that the clustering of robberies are often at places that have these characteristics (Braga, et al., 2011). This study aims not to generalize why certain places are hot spots, but instead to conduct an in-depth study of five places and explain why just these places are hot spots. In his study, St Jean (2007) found different attributes at various places which explained why they were hot spots. This study could hopefully do the same. This could give an indication, if it is important to research certain places in detail to find why they are hot spots, or if it is enough to generalize. By visiting the places, it might also be possible to find certain aspects that are place-specific, which means that you cannot see them on a map or generalize them from other places. Since there have been relatively few studies done of hot spots using participant observation, there is little knowledge of what you can find using this method. This study could, therefore, contribute to the research gap which exists.

When looking for previous studies, no qualitative studies about hot spots done in a Swedish context were found; all studies found used quantitative methods. The findings of the studies found are, however, that the same conclusion as the American studies applies to a Swedish setting; there are few places that have many crimes, throughout a city (Granath, 2014; Priks, 2015; Uittenbogaard & Ceccato, 2014; Østergaard Larsen, et al., 2015). This means that there is a lack of knowledge about individual characteristics of hot spots in Sweden. Even though there are qualitative studies done in other countries, it is difficult to say if the same things could be applied in a Swedish context. St Jean (2007) for example, using the broken windows theory, says that:

“Physical disorder refers to conditions that suggest lack of care for the physical environment of a neighborhood. These conditions include abandoned buildings, broken and/or boarded-up windows, graffiti, overgrown lawns, and untidy vacant lots. Social disorder refers to unpleasant and potentially intimidating patterns of social interaction such as panhandling, loitering, and public drinking” (St Jean, 2007, p. 2).

These conditions may not apply to a Swedish setting since the environment here is different. Abandoned buildings, for example, are less common in a Scandinavian context (Østergaard Larsen, et al., 2015). This thesis will offer some knowledge of what could be important to explain hot spots of robberies in a Swedish context. Hopefully, it can provide information about what is and is not important in a Swedish context.

Robbery is a crime that injures people, spread fear, and lead to an economic loss, it is, therefore, important for the society to prevent it (Braga, et al., 2011; Waller, 2014). There are well-established methods of how to prevent robberies and several projects have been successful in doing that. However, it requires that the problems are diagnosed correctly which means, you need to know the causes of why robberies happen at certain places (Waller, 2014). This thesis will provide an analysis of five hot spots and explain why they are hot spots. The knowledge presented in this thesis can be used to find methods to reduce crimes at hot spots, the solution might even be really simple. It could also provide information on how to get place-specific information.

3. AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this thesis is, to use the Routine Activity Theory and the Crime Pattern Theory to explain why five places, outside the city center in Malmö, are hot spots of robberies. I want to research the characteristics of the places and the people who visit them, to analyze place-specific reasons for them being hot spots of robberies. The analysis will be based on the everyday movement of people at the places, thus there is no attempt to see any robberies. The aim is to analyze each place individually to explain place-specific characteristics, not to generalize. However, the places will be compared to each other to find what they have in common and what differs them apart. The theories will be used to find which

characteristics are important and to analyze the result. Because of this aim, two research questions have been formulated. These are:

1. What are the individual characteristics of the places, which could explain why they are hot spots of robberies?
2. What are the similarities and differences between the five places regarding their characteristics?

4. THEORY

In studies where hot spots of certain crimes have been researched, the most common way has been to depart from a theoretical assumption and look for attributes of that theoretical perspective (Uittenbogaard & Ceccato, 2014). In his study, St Jean (2007) used the theories of Collective Efficacy and Broken Windows to research if they could explain why some places have more crime than others. Uittenbogaard and Ceccato (2014) also did a study where they tested theories. They used the Crime Pattern Theory and the Routine Activity Theory to suggest situational crime prevention methods in Stockholm's subway.

In this thesis, the aim is to analyze the places themselves, but also the people who spend time or pass through there. The Crime Pattern Theory (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995) and the Routine Activity Theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979) have therefore been chosen as a theoretical background. The reason for this is, that they both focus on people and physical aspects to explain why crimes do or do not occur at certain places (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995; Cohen & Felson, 1979).

4.1 The Routine Activity Theory

The routine activity theory originates from Cohen and Felson (1979), who says that:

“Each successfully completed violation minimally requires an offender with both criminal inclinations and the ability to carry out those inclinations, a person or object providing a suitable target for the offender, and absence of guardians capable of preventing violations” (Cohen & Felson, 1979, p. 590).

The theory does not explain who is the offender or the victim; rather it is a descriptive theory that describes the risks of becoming victimized at certain places (Pratt & Turanovic, 2016). Routine activity means that there are certain patterns in peoples' everyday lives. People might go to work, to school or to other activities. When people are moving around in their everyday lives they will visit and pass through certain places. Some of the places visited by people will offer opportunities for offenders to commit a crime against them. The way to reduce crime is therefore to reduce opportunities for crimes (Cohen & Felson, 1979). To think that leaving the house is a risky behavior is not a useful analysis though.

This because, you cannot stop people from leaving their houses since people must do that to engage in activities and meet other people (Pratt & Turanovic, 2016). “Thus, thinking about what constitute high risk, people, and places—as opposed to just people and places—is a more useful theoretical endeavor when thinking about victimization” (Pratt & Turanovic, 2016, p. 339). Within environmental criminology and in research about places of crime, the Routine Activity Theory is often used to analyze victims and crime targets. The vast number of analyses are about victims at certain places and how the lack of capable guardians makes certain targets more vulnerable. The theory put little emphasis on the potential offenders, the assumption is that there are enough motivated offenders around and the key to understanding crimes are potential victims and lack of capable guardians (Clarke, 1997).

ROUTINE ACTIVITY THEORY

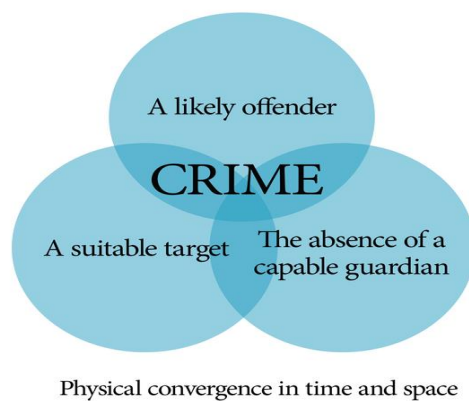


Figure 1 The Routine Activity Theory (Wikipedia, 2017)

4.2 The Crime Pattern Theory

In contrast to the Routine Activity Theory, the Crime Pattern Theory put more emphasis on the offenders, why certain places attract them or generate criminal activities. According to the theory, there are three types of places, crime attractors, crime generators and crime-neutral areas (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995). Crime attractors are places which attract offenders because offenders know people will be there and the place will offer an opportunity for crime. Crime generators, on the other hand, do not attract offenders, but instead, crime opportunities are generated because many people are attracted to a place during certain times of the day. The number of people there will produce offenders who in the crowd will find people to victimize. Crimes at these places are therefore less planned. Crime-neutral areas are places that are neither crime attractors or crime generators. Generally, crime rates there are lower. Places are not often pure attractors, generators, or crime-neutrals, there is usually a mix or an interaction between the levels (ibid). The theory also explains where people commit offenses in the concepts of nodes, paths, and edges. Nodes mean that people commit offenses and get victimized at central places in their lives, such as home, work, or school. Many people have the same nodes in their life, and therefore crimes are clustered. “Paths determine where people go and what they learn about the city. People spend long hours in routine paths, traveling to and from work, school, shopping, and entertainment. Paths determine where people search for criminal targets and

where people are victimized” (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995, p. 11). Paths therefore strongly explain the distribution of crimes in a city. There are also edges which are places between two areas and they often have high crime rates.

“Edges can be considered in terms of physical barriers, or in terms of the strong cognitive images created by paths with diverse land uses on either side of a road; or in terms of the limits of perceptual comfort felt by outsiders entering unknown areas” (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995, p. 12).

The reason edges have higher crime rates is that:

“Edges may create areas where strangers are more easily accepted because they are frequently and legitimately present, while the interiors of areas may constitute territories where strangers are uncomfortable and subject to challenge. Edges may also contain mixes of land uses and physical features - crime generators and attractors - that concentrate criminal opportunities” (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995).

Both the Routine Activity Theory and the Crime Pattern Theory has been developed to understand crime at places. The Crime Pattern Theory can be used to map crime and explain geographical crime rates (ibid).

5. METHOD

The point of this thesis is to do a qualitative study; therefore, qualitative methods will be used. The aim of qualitative research is to understand the environment, the humans within it and to analyze rather than describe (Stake, 2010). Participant observation has been chosen as the method to use since the emphasis of the method is to visit places to understand them and the human behavior there (Spradley, 1980). The purpose of observing the five locations is to understand why they are hot spots of robberies, based on their appearances and the everyday movement of people there. It is possible to see the general structures of places on a map, but by visiting them a more personal experience will be provided. It will be possible to observe things that are impossible to see on a map and how things interact with each other. For example, how much it is possible to see from a house or peoples’ movement at the places. The main goal is not to see any robberies, but to analyze how the places could be explained as hot spots of robberies, based on their appearances and the everyday movement of people there.

5.1 Participant Observation- Advantages and Disadvantages

Participant observation focuses on studying behaviors in social settings. The researcher observes a behavior to find a meaning and to explain it (Spradley, 1980). The idea of participant observation is to do fieldwork; the researcher wants to go to places where the behavior is taking place, observe, and partly participate in the behavior. The goal is to get primary data, which could be used to explain the behavior and its meaning (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011). A participant observer has two purposes: “(1) to engage in activities appropriate to the situation and (2) to observe the activities, people, and physical aspects of the situation” (Spradley,

1980, p. 54). Observation is the important part of the method. A good observer should objectively observe details and behavior and take notes of them, considering the bigger picture and the researcher's own role in the behavior and situation. Participation can be done in the form of taking part in the behavior studied, but also in form of informal interviews, where people are asked about what they think or how they experience things. Most interviews are casual conversations, where the researcher gets information by talking to people (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011). It is important to note that the researcher's main goal is to see and analyze, not to participate in every action (Vito, et al., 2014). This research will not be deep in the context that there are many interactions with people. The vast part will be observing people passing by.

The advantages of the method are the gathering of primary data and direct contact with people. "Ethnography yields empirical data about the lives of people in specific situations" (Spradley, 1980, p. 16). It is possible to see how humans behave in social situations, in contrast of just asking them or guessing, which is common in quantitative studies. This makes it possible to analyze how people act rather than how they say they act. Society is complex, there are many different behaviors and people behave in diverse ways in different situations. Participant observations allow the researcher to meet the reality and analyze it from what he or she sees (Spradley, 1980). The method relies on personal experience and the ability to interpret the surrounding. The advantage with that is that, it is easy to find patterns and structures and it is possible to decide what is important and not (Vito, et al., 2014). The involvement of the researcher however also is a disadvantage, because of the bias of the researcher. Emotions, feelings, and pre-knowledge provides the researcher with a bias, which influences the research. It is possible that this will influence the results and the conclusions. There could also be a problem, where the researcher does not understand or misinterpret what they are researching (Wakeman, 2014). When doing participant observations, it is impossible to come around that the research is biased, however, it requires that the researcher tries to reflect on it. Another problem with qualitative research is that it is difficult to replicate. This is because, the researcher's own perspective is so important and other researchers might observe different things or interpret things different (Vito, et al., 2014).

This research will be biased because it will rely on my own observations. The observations will only have one perspective and this would be a problem if my own thoughts and feelings were the only analyze. To make the bias less of a problem the theory will be used. First, to create a checklist of what to look for and second, to analyze the observations. This will give this research a theoretical analysis, which departs from other peoples' thoughts and research rather than my own thoughts and feelings. To make the research valid theoretical analyses must be used to support the participant observations, the conclusion can not be drawn just because I think it something is valid. Therefore, everything observed must be explained. Another important thing is to reflect on how valid the observations are. Important things might be missed and there might things observed, which is not important.

5.2 Data Collection

To find hot spots to research, data of robberies reported to the police in 2013 and 2014 were examined. The data might not be 100 percent reliable when looking at the distribution of robberies since not all crimes are reported to the police. However, the data is somewhat reliable and the only available information which can show the distribution in detail (Hvitfeldt, et al., 2016). Most robberies in Malmö, as other crimes, occurs in the city center, where a lot of people spend time away from home and where many night clubs are found, which means the presence of intoxicated people. Places that many people visit, generally have more crime than others. This because more people are present there.

“It is well established that places visited by many people tend to have more crime, which can largely be explained in terms of the presence of more potential victims and potential offenders coinciding in space and time. In particular, places such as shopping malls or night clubs that attract large numbers of visitors may act as generators or attractors of crime” (Gerell & Kronkvist, 2016, p. 4).

This is not exclusive to Malmö but is the general pattern of any city (Gerell & Kronkvist, 2016). Outside of the city center, however, seven places stood out as hot spots of robberies. These seven places had lower rates of robberies than the city center and could be referred to as warm spots rather than hot spots. They will, however, be called hot spots since they are hot spots outside the city center. Seven places were too much to observe according to me, instead, five of the seven places were chosen. These were: *Tallriken*, *Nydala square*, *Nydala bike path*, *Lorensborg* and *Amiral street* (Annex 1). The two places removed were Rosengård Centrum and a place close to a school in Lindängen. They were removed on the basis that I would not feel safe spending time at those two places after dark when many of the robberies occurred. It is possible that the removed places were different, but the aim of this thesis is not to generalize the results. All places chosen were so called micro places since they narrowed down to a street corner or another small area. Previous research has shown that micro places are best to use when researching hot spots of crime (Braga, et al., 2011).

5.2.1 Problem with the Data

There are several problems with the data used in this thesis. The data consist of reported robberies to the police. Using reported crimes is not always the most reliable way to measure crime rates since you then will miss the dark figure of crime (Waller, 2014). In this study, it means that there might be even more places that should be regarded as hot spots of robberies but because of the dark figure, it is not possible to find these places. This, in turn, might mean that in comparison to other places the places observed in this thesis should maybe not be regarded as hot spots of robberies. It can also mean that more robberies happened at the places researched. The problem is simply that there is no knowledge of exactly how many robberies occurred, both at the places researched and at other places in Malmö. Another problem is the distribution of the robberies. The police always report a crime on an address. This means that the police use the closest address available when reporting a crime. However, at some places, the closest address might be up to hundred meters away from the crime spot. In this thesis, micro places are used, it might mean that at some of the places there might be robberies that are reported to an address which is far away from the place researched. There

might also be robberies committed elsewhere that are included in the data. A third problem is a gap between the data and when the observations were done. The data is from 2013-2014 which means that the robberies occurred four to five years before the observations were done in 2017. Things might have changed during that time which means that the places observed no longer are hot spots of robberies.

The reason to use this data anyway is that it is the latest data available. It would have been better to have access to the dark figure of robberies when doing this thesis, but there is no way to find that kind of information. This means that the police statistics is the only information which shows the location of robberies committed and thus it is the data used. The displacement of robberies in the statistic is problematic, but at the same time are the robberies displaced to nearby areas. This means that it would be a good idea to take a look at the robberies located close to the micro place to see if they belong to the place researched. The most problematic thing is the time gap between the data used and the observations done. It would have been much better to use later data that shows the location of robberies in Malmö. There is no such data available though. The places researched might still be hot spots though and research have shown that hot spots of crime tend to be located at the same places over time (Weisburd, 2015; Weisburd, et al., 2004).

5.3 Use of Theories in the Observations

The Routine Activity and Crime Pattern Theory will be used in two ways. First, a checklist with the theoretical concepts will be created (Annex 2). The theoretical concepts will be drawn from previous research to find what is important to look for in the observations. This is because previous research offers a pre-knowledge of what hot spots and robberies look like. The checklist will provide use of established facts as a compliment to my own feelings. This is good since the critique of participant observations is that emotions and feelings influence the results and interpretation too much (Wakeman, 2014). If you depart from the Routine Activity Theory, the hot spots are places where motivated offenders, suitable victims and a lack of capable guardians are present (Cohen & Felson, 1979). From a Crime Pattern Theory perspective, the places are either crime attractors, crime generators or both (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995). Statistics and previous research have also offered some knowledge. Most offenders are young men who rob other young men and the offender is usually unknown to the victim (BRÅ, n.d). Further, research has shown that offenders often go to places they have knowledge of and where they can be relatively anonymous (Bernasco & Block, 2009). Pre-knowledge will, therefore, be used to categorize what for example could be considered as motivated offenders, capable guardians, crime attractors, or crime generators.

The Routine Activity Theory states that there needs to be a motivated offender, a potential victim, and a lack of capable guardians for a crime to happen (Cohen & Felson, 1979). However, the theory does not clearly say who a motivated offender, potential victim or capable guardian is. The researcher must, therefore, categorize people into these groups based on the crime type and situational factors (Groff, 2007). Groff (2007) has in her study used knowledge of robberies to create a list of who belongs to each category. Her way of conceptualizing the categories

will be used because she defines them clearly. The basic principle is that any civilian person could be characterized by one or more of the three categories (ibid). Since the Routine Activity Theory emphasis little on how motivated offenders looks like (Clarke, 1997), it is difficult to spot potentially motivated offenders based on physical appearances. The assumption of the Routine Activity Theory is that there is *a supply of motivated offenders* (Groff, 2007). Statistics shows that young males are the most common offenders (BRÅ, n.d), therefore it is the only category in potentially motivated offenders. It does not mean that all young men are potential offenders, but if many young men visit a place, there is an increased chance that an offender will be present. The category potential victims include young men, people with money and easy targets. Groff (2007) says that: “Suitable target is an individual who is visible, accessible and has perceived value” (Groff, 2007, p. 82). Young men are the most common victim of robberies and for it to be a robbery there must be an economic loss (BRÅ, n.d). People with money is defined as, a person who will have money and it is easy to know that, for example, if they take out money from an ATM or shop in a store. We know that sometimes offenders rob people, not for money but for the thrill (Feeney, 2014), then it is more rational to choose an easier target to rob. An easy target is someone who will have difficulties to fight back, such as intoxicated or handicapped people (Groff, 2007). The reason to include handicapped people is that some of the robberies reported were categorized as robberies of handicapped. The category of capable guardians consists of cameras, constant observers, and hard targets. Groff (2007) categorize guardians as people who is hard to rob and therefore can interfere when a crime is taking place. The category will also include physical appearances too since it sometimes is enough that a motivated offender will feel observed for him or her to be deterred from offending (Cohen & Felson, 1979). The presence of cameras and constant observers, therefore, might deter offenders. Constant observers are people or the appearance of people who spend a long time at the places and therefore can observe the places during a longer time. For example, store personal or windows where people are living.

The Crime Pattern Theory is clearer than the Routine Activity Theory in its definition of the theory’s concept. Therefore, I will use Brantingham & Brantinghams (1995) concepts in the checklist. A crime attractor, in this case, is a place where offenders know there will be people with money. Such places could have a presence of ATMs, stores, or restaurants. It could also be connected to the path concept, which means people will walk through that place. Crime generators are places that attract a lot of people and thereby generates crimes (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995). In the checklist, a large gathering of people or if many people visit a place during the same time will be observed. Nodes are places that are important in peoples’ everyday lives such as workplace, school, living close, stores or spare time activities (ibid). If the place is a path between nodes and if it is an edge between two areas will also be researched.

Table 1 Concepts and explanations

Concept	Appearances
Routine Activity Theory	
Motivated offenders	Young Men
Potential Victims	Young men People with money (easy to know people have money, i.e. ATM, shopping in stores) Easy targets (Drunk people, handicapped)
Capable guardians	Cameras Constant observers (windows where people live, stores with personal) Hard targets (people able to interfere)
Crime Pattern Theory	
Crime Attractor	ATM Stores, shops, or restaurants
Crime Generator	Large number of people gathering Many people walking through at the same time
Nodes	Workplace/School close Stores Living close
Paths	People walking through in everyday nodes
Edges	Is it an edge, between two detectable areas?

5.4 How the Observations Were Done

First, the five places were visited to see what they looked like and for maps to be drawn. By observing the places and looking at the maps, some ideas of what could be important in explaining why the places are hot spots were formulated. The second part was to decide when to do the observations since a place might not be a hot spot during certain days or certain hours (Bernasco & Block, 2009). By looking at the statistics of when the robberies took place, at three places most of the robberies occurred during a six-hour period. At some places, most robberies occurred either on weekdays or weekends and at all places, one or more trends could be found. After deciding when to do the observations, the checklist (Annex 2) was created.

The main goal of the participant observations was to see the general structure and patterns of the places, based on how the places looked and how people moved around. This required only spending time at the places taking notes, not to participate in any special kind of behavior. However, sometimes questions about certain things were asked to the people present. The participant observations were done differently at each place, because of the individual characteristics of the places, but there were some general attributes to all observations. At all places, the checklist was used as a guide of what to look for. When arriving at a place the environment was observed to find any physical attributes that applied to the checklist. Then two to three hours were spent at each place every time to see people and their movement. What was observed was, however, different at each place, but field notes were taken everywhere (Annex 1). The field notes departed from the checklist, for example, it was noted if any suitable victims or capable guardians could be found and if the place had any crime attractors, if it was a

crime generator or if it was a pathway or an edge. Also, other things considered important was noted. When doing the observations, several considerations had to be renowned. The first consideration was what the weather looked like. What it looks like could affect how many people are present. Rain might keep people indoors, while the sunny weather might inspire people to go outside. This could affect how many people are passing through the places. The second consideration, connected to the weather, is what time of the year the observations were done. All observations were done in March and April. In summer and winter, the movement and number of people passing through might be different.

5.4.1 Tallriken

Tallriken is an open area surrounded by trees. It is a part of a larger park (Pildammsparken). Next to Tallriken a daycare center and a dog yard are present. There is also a running track in the woods. The first observation was done Thursday the 9th of March between 17.00 to 19.00. This was around sunset (Annex 1). The observation took place on a bench with a view of the whole place and notes were taken. The checklist was used as a guide of what to look for. At the second observation the 29th of March (Annex 1), the same thing was done, but I also walked around in the park to see if there were any differences between Tallriken and the rest of the park.

5.4.2 Nydala Square

Nydala Square is a square where stores, a gym and a supermarket is present. Above the stores, there are nine-floor houses. Behind the square, there is a park on one side, parking lot on another side and a yard on a third side. The place lies next to a road where there is a tunnel under that road. The first observation took place between 18.00 to 21.00 Friday the 10th of March. The first two hours were spent in the middle of the square with the checklist, observing the place and how people were passing through. From the observation point, it was possible to see the ATM and the number of people taking out cash was counted. Other things considered important was noted such as how it looked in the tunnel and how it looked like around the corner where the Kebab shop was located (Annex 1). The last hour of the first observation was spent at a pizza place eating pizza. From there it was impossible to see one of the ATMs. Two of the stores closed at 22.00, therefore the second observation was done when the stores were closed. It took place on Saturday the 18th of March between 21.00 to 23.00. It was done the same way as the first observation. I also decided to talk to the owner of one of the stores, since he spends a lot of time at the place. I asked him about the flow of people walking through and if young people hang out at the square.

5.4.3 Nydala Bike Path

The bike path is a path stretching several hundred meters. It passes by houses schools and fields. The first observation was done Tuesday the 14th of March at 12.00 to 15.00 (Annex 1), by first sitting on a bench with the checklist and taking notes. After one hour, I decided to walk up and down the bike path to see how the bike path looked further up and down the way to see the differences between the stretch and the rest of the bike path. After the first observation, it was decided to observe the place in the evening when the school was closed and it was dark outside. The second observation was done on Thursday the 23rd of March (Annex 1). This, to see how the flow of people looked like after dark. A third observation

was also done to see how the path looked like at the time when school finished. The observation was done in the same way as the other two between 13.30 to 15.30 on Friday the 31st of March (Annex 1).

5.4.4 Lorensborg

The place is located at the crossing of Lorensborg Street and Hallings Street. Next to the crossing, there is a supermarket, a bus stop, and a grill. The first observation took place on Thursday the 16th of March between 18.30 to 21.00 and the second between 21.00 to 23.00 on Wednesday the 22nd of March (Annex 1). At the first observation, there was no hypothesis of what could be important, therefore as many things as possible were noted. I sat on a bench at the bus stop and observed how people were passing through, how many people were getting on and off the bus, how the flow of people into the supermarket looked like and how the flow of people to the grill looked like. I also walked around in the crossing to see it from different angles and trying to estimate how much you could see of the crossing from the houses. The second observation was done later in the evening than the first one after the supermarket was closed and the focus was one side of the road. I still, however, took notes about the whole crossing. Otherwise, the observation was done in the same way as the first. A third observation was done where the previous and next crossing were observed. This to see similarities and differences between crossings, to be able to explain why just this crossing is a hot spot.

5.4.5 Amiral Street

The place is located at the crossings of Amiral Street and Baskemölle Street. Next to the crossing, there is a bus stop. The first observation took place on Sunday the 26th of March (night between Saturday and Sunday between 00.00 to 02.00 (Annex 1). I sat at the bus stop, taking notes of the place and how cars and people passed by, how many buses stopped and how many people stepped on and off the bus. Also, how many people who walked by were intoxicated were noted, since it was the time when people walked home from bars or night clubs. During the second observation on Sunday, April the 2nd between 03.00 to 05.00 (Annex 1), the previous and next bus stop on the bus line were visited to see if was possible to explain why crossing on Amiral Street was more exposed to robberies than the other places.

5.5 Analysis of the Material

Being able to explain the observations are important since the aim is to find why the places are hot spots of robberies. The analysis will be integrated into the observations with the checklist and the use of theories. In Appendix 1, the field notes will be written. They will contain what have been seen in the observations, without any attempt to explain it. The result and analysis will be integrated in a way to present what was observed and how it can be analyzed by the theories. Both theories used will be applied and analyzed together. This because, the theories are linked together in the way that they both explain crime at places, thus being applicable on the same thing (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995). Using theory as an explanation is well proven in research and offers the researcher with a framework to depart from. This means people doing research will have more than just their feelings to rely on when analyzing the data (Wakeman, 2014).

The result and analysis will consist of a presentation and an analyze of what was observed; there will be a presentation of the observation, how the theories could explain what was observed and how different things interact with each other. The Routine Activity Theory says that motivated offenders, suitable victims, and a lack of capable guardians are important to explain crimes (Cohen & Felson, 1979). What in the observations, which could be considered as motivated offenders, suitable victims, and capable guardians will be presented. Then it will be analyzed if all those components are present, if some or more are missing and what that means. The same thing applies to the Crime Pattern Theory; if some things are crime attractors if the place is a crime generator and how nodes, paths, and edges interact with each other. Each place will be analyzed individually since they are different but there might also be different explanations of why they are hot spots. After the individual places have been presented and analyzed, they will be compared to each other to analyze the similarities and differences between them.

5.6 Ethical Considerations

There are no major ethical considerations in this thesis. Most of the fieldwork consists of observing places and people, with little personal interaction. Anyone can sit at a public place and observe people if that person does not disturb the order. There is, therefore, no reason to think that the method used in this thesis will personally affect anyone. There are however some things which must be regarded when doing the observations and interviews. The persons interviewed must consent and the questions must be about the place. Personal questions shall be avoided. During the observations, places that are public must be used that have no insight into peoples' private lives, for example where it is possible to see into peoples' homes.

6. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

The analysis will consist of two parts. The first part aims to answer the first research question, which means each place will be presented and analyzed separately. In the second part similarities and differences between the places will be analyzed to answer the second research question. The similarities and differences will be discussed in relation to the theories but also regarding the places individual characteristics. The presentation of the result and the analysis will be integrated with each other, because the observations were done in an analytic way, using the checklist.

6.1 The Characteristics of the Five Places

Each place observed was different, regarding location, appearance, time of day when the robberies took place, number and characteristics of people who moved around and how many robberies occurred there. Since each place has its own characteristics, each place will be presented and analyzed separately.

6.1.1 Tallriken

When looking at the statistics, 16 robberies occurred in 2013-2014 (Annex 3). More than half of the robberies occurred in July to September; only six robberies happened outside of that period. This implies that when the observations took place, the 9th of March between 17.00 and 19.00 and the 29th of March between 16.00 to 17.30 (Annex 1), tallriken should not have the characteristics of a hot spot.

During the observations, it was difficult to find characteristics which could explain the place as a hot spot. In fact, the findings suggested it was not. When departing from the checklist using the Routine Activity Theory, there were both a lack of potential victims and a presence of capable guardians (Annex 2). Both the daycare centers and the dog park could be viewed as capable guardians since people spent time there and could see what happened at Tallriken (Annex 1). Few people passed by and it would have been easy for people who spent time there to see an offender who committed a robbery. People at the outside gym could also be viewed as capable guardians since they could see Tallriken through the trees. Because few people passed by and most of them were either exercising or walking their dogs (Annex 1), it was difficult to find any characteristics which meant that potential victims would be present. It was hard to know who had money/valuables or not. The vast number of people exercising even suggests that there were many people who did not have any money/valuables on them. The runners and dog walkers could even be seen as hard targets and thus capable guardians (Annex 2) since they were fit or had a dog with them, which would have made them more difficult to rob. Rather than a hot spot of robberies, the observations suggested that few potential offenders and victims were present and there were many capable guardians. No one spent any long time at Tallriken, few walked through and after dark, due to the absence of lights, the place was almost completely empty (Annex 1). The lack of potential victims and the presence of capable guardians meant that the place could not be a crime attractor or a crime generator, rather it was a crime neutral place; where only occasional crimes take place (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995). The place is a pathway between peoples' nodes since most of the people observed passed through and it was popular for people to go there when taking a walk or exercise. According to theory, pathways have a lot of crimes (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995), but in this case, the opposite conclusion is drawn due to the circumstances presented; few people present and most of the people present were considered as capable guardians.



Figure 2 Picture of Tallriken

Even though what was observed suggested that the place was not a hot spot of robberies, during the summers of 2013-2014 Tallriken was a hot spot of robberies. This means that additional knowledge must be used to explain why. As a researcher, I have a pre-knowledge of the place since I have been there during other times of the year. The observations took place in March when the weather was cloudy and between five to ten degrees, which means that fewer people spent time outside then for example in the summer. Tallriken, as well as the whole park it is located in, is a popular place for people to visit when it is warm outside. This means simply that more people are present there at the same time during the summer than at other times of the year. Tallriken is also a place where events take place, like festivals and concerts. This means that during the summer there is a change in the characteristics of the place. In the summer, it would be more difficult to see the place through the trees, meaning the people running and spending time at the outside gym cannot see it. The gathering of many people is an indicator that Tallriken is a crime generator (Annex 2). The number of potential offenders and victims will in the summer increase because of a large gathering of people at the same time. This, in turn, increases opportunities for crimes. The gathering of people could also attract offenders to the place however, it is difficult for potential offenders to have any knowledge if people would have valuables there or that they would be able to rob. This because, the only knowledge an offender can have of the place is that there would be many people there, not if they are suitable victims or if there is a lack of capable guardians. Rather it suggests that in the situation, a motivated offender would find opportunities for robberies there. Tallriken is probably not an edge since an edge is a place between two areas where people live (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995). Tallriken is part of a park, therefore no one lives there.

6.1.2 Nydala square

According to the statistics, six robberies happened at the square itself and four just next to the square in 2013-2014. Six robberies happened between 17.30 to 23.00 on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays and three within the same period on Thursdays (Annex 3). Since most robberies happened during the evening on

Fridays or weekends the observations were done Friday the 10th of March between 18.00 and 21.00 and Saturday the 18th of March between 21.00 and 23.00.

It was easy to find characteristics which could explain the square as a hot spot for robberies. Two ATMs were used by between 20 to 30 people per hour in average when the observations were summarized and there were several shops, stores, and restaurants open (Annex 1). These characteristics indicate that the place is a crime attractor (Annex 2) since it is easy for a motivated offender, who knows the area, to know that people will have money there. The presence of a supermarket, some stores, and two ATMs suggested that the place was a central node in people's lives. People visited the shops to buy things, especially the supermarket, people visited the ATMs to get cash and some people ate at a restaurant or exercised at the gym. This explains why there was a constant flow of people who passed by, but few people who spent any longer time at the square (Annex 1). When inside a store, it was difficult to have a view of the square thus, the square was lacking capable guardians even though many people were present there. The square itself is could, therefore, be seen as a path between the nodes home and supermarket, restaurant, and gym.

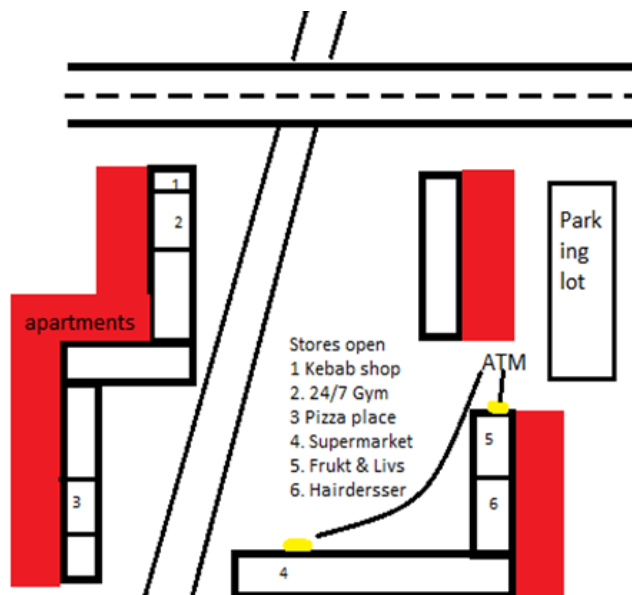


Figure 3 Map of Nydala Square

The groups of young people who, according to one of the shop owner, hangs out at the square when the weather is warmer (Annex 1), is an indicator that the place also could be a crime generator (Annex 2). Young people are the most common offenders (BRÅ, n.d) and if groups of young people spend a long time at the square, the risk that one or more people will find opportunities to commit robberies there will increase. Even though not every young person is a motivated offender, the fact that most offenders are young males means that, if many young males are present the risk of an offender being present increases. The reason to consider the place as a crime attractor rather than a crime generator is that robberies took place all around the year in 2013-2014. This means that most robberies occurred when groups of people were not likely there.

During the observations, many suitable victims were seen, in people taking out money from the ATMs, and at three spots that were observed, there was a lack of

capable guardians. The first spot was the ATMs located around the corner of the square since it could not be seen from any of the open shops (Figure 3). The ATM itself had a camera, which could be considered as a capable guardian (Annex 2), but there was a narrow corridor of about 20 meters between the ATM and the square. Behind the ATM there was a parking lot where few or no people were present during the observations (Annex 1). It was, therefore, possible to rob someone at both sides of the ATM. That most people used the pathway on the left side of the square also lead to the impression that the place by the ATM felt empty. The second place was the tunnel under the road next to the square (figure 3). From the gym and the kebab shop, it was possible to see the down ways to the tunnel, but there was no insight in the tunnel itself (Annex 1). Since most people who passed through the square used the walking path through the tunnel it was possible for an offender to follow a victim or wait for him or her there. The third place was behind the supermarket. After the square, the pathway went through a small park that few people could see. This place was more likely to be a good place for robberies later in the evening or during the night when the stores were closed. This since, most people passed by there earlier in the evening.



Figure 4 Picture of the ATM around the corner

Windows of apartments towards the square could be viewed as capable guardians were present (Annex 2), but the three places mentioned were difficult to see from most windows. Besides, most windows were dark during the observations. A lack of capable guardians could also explain the time distribution of the robberies. During the day, a café, and a bakery with a view of the ATM around the corner were open, thus it was more likely that capable guardians were present then. The most difficult part is to say whether the place was an edge or not. There are some indicators of that, for example, the entrance to the houses were not on the square but on the opposite side. The presence of stores is on the other side something which speaks against the place being an edge because some of the stores have

selling and activities at the squares. Overall it does not make much difference if the place is an edge or not though, there are other factors which are more important such as many suitable victims present and capable guardians were absent.

6.1.3 Nydala Bike Path

On a small part of the bike path, eleven robberies occurred in 2013-2014. When looking at the statistics, they happened both during the day and the evening on weekdays (Annex 3). The observations were therefore split between the day and the evening. The first observation took place on Tuesday the 14th of March between 12.00 to 15.00, the second observation took place on Thursday the 23rd of March between 17.30 to 19.30 and the third observation took place on Friday the 31st of March between 13.30 to 15.30 (Annex 1). There could be a problem with the disposition of robberies since the bike path is not an address and all police statistics of robberies are connected to an address. There could, for example, be more robberies connected to the bike path and robberies included which were committed elsewhere. More of this problem will be discussed later.

The bike path was a path that stretched several hundred meters. It started, passed by, and ended in areas where people lived. The place was, therefore, a pathway between nodes. Even though the pathway was several hundred meters long, it was only a small part of the pathway that was a hot spot according to the police statistics. When walking up and down the pathway, the nodes were noticed. There were many houses, two schools, and a football field connected to it (Annex 1). Because of the school, many young people were spotted using the path, especially when school finished for the day (Annex 1). The presence of many young people meant that there was a higher risk both motivated offenders and suitable victims were present (Annex 2) since young men are the most common offenders and victims of robberies (BRÅ, n.d). That the schools seem to be important is supported by the fact that all reported robberies occurred during the semesters; no robberies were reported during the holidays. The time of the day when the robberies occurred in 2013-2014 was evenly distributed between the day and the evening. The flow of people was the same both before and after dark and even though there were times when the path was almost empty, for the most part, one or more people walked through (Annex 1). There was thus no change in the flow of people before and after dark. The whole path had the characteristics of an edge, because, next to the path there were fields, trees, or bushes and where there were houses next to the path, the entrance was on the opposite side. At the hot spot itself, there were planks towards the villa area on one side and fields and bushes on the other side (Annex 2). The appearance of the pathway itself was that it was built between areas to provide a good passage through.

Nydala Bike Path could both be a crime attractor and a crime generator since most places are a combination of these concepts (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995). People could be attracted to the place because they know young people will be present there. The place could also generate crimes because of the presence of many young people. The reason to consider the place to be more of a crime generator than a crime attractor is that robbers rarely plan the robberies careful, but go to places where they know they can find victims (Bernasco & Block, 2009; Feeney, 2014; St Jean, 2007). Here it is difficult to know that people on the path

will have money since there are no places where you obviously use money near the path. The fact that offenders might search for thrills and not money when robbing someone (Feeney, 2014), also points to the place being a crime generator. When people are walking home from school or walking to their spare time activities it is likely they encounter other young people. Since most offenders and victims are young men (BRÅ, n.d), the presence of many young men may provide opportunities for offenders to both get money but also a thrill. A third thing that points toward the place is more of a crime generator is that Nydala Square, which is considered as a crime attractor is close by.

Everything presented so far explains, *why the path* is a hot spot for robberies, but not *why* it is just a small stretch of the path that is a hot spot. In fact, most of the stretch is not, according to police statistics. Since many young people used the path, especially around the time when school ended (Annex 1) and most offenders and victims are young men (BRÅ, n.d), there was most likely a presence of both potential motivated offenders and suitable victims at the path (Annex 2). To then explain why it is just a small stretch that is a hot spot, you must look at the presence of capable guardians. When walking up and down the path, it was noticed that the path passed by houses, some of them nine floors tall. On the hot spot stretch, however, there were planks on the left side and trees and bushes to the right. Both the planks, the trees, and the bushes blocked the view of the path from any house nearby. At other stretches, capable guardians could be present in form of windows where people lived (Annex 2). On this stretch, however, there was an absence of capable guardians, because of the planks and bushes. The path was a pathway between peoples' everyday nodes. Because of the presence of two schools and a football field many young people walked through, thus increased the possibility that motivated offenders and suitable victims were present. At most of the pathway there were potentially capable guardians, but at the hot spot, capable guardians were absent. The place was also an edge between the villa area and the apartment area, which means that it does not belong to any area.



Figure 5 Picture of the hot spot part of the bike path

6.1.4 Lorensborg

When looking at the statistics, the place had eight robberies in 2013-2014. Seven of those occurred between 17.00 to 01.00 on weekdays (Annex 3), therefore the observations took place on weekdays, during the evening, after darkness. The first observation was done on Tuesday the 16th of March between 18.30 to 21.00 and the second observation was done on Wednesday the 22nd of March between 21.00 to 23.00. The crossing was relatively large since there were two more crossings at the same place (figure 6). This meant that it was difficult to observe the whole crossing at the same time.

The crossing is a clear pathway in both directions. During the observations, the road was heavily trafficked, especially before the supermarket closed, and people walked by, both in groups and alone (Annex 1). In the area where the crossing is present many people live, which could explain why the crossing was a place where many people walked or drove through. The presence of a supermarket also makes the place a pathway between nodes, since people went there to buy food. Where many people live and pass through, many people will get knowledge of the place (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995), this could apply to this crossing. The assumption is therefore that many people know about the place. The lack of capable guardians was one of the first things noticed in the observations. The houses around the crossing were located about 50 to 100 meters from the crossing. The presence of a treeline next to the road made it difficult to see what was happening at the crossing (Annex 1). It will be even more difficult to see the crossing from the houses the summer when the trees have leaves on them. The crossing is no clear crime attractor. People shopped at the supermarket, but it closed at 20.00 and most of the robberies occurred after that time. Besides, it was difficult to find people who clearly had money on them, thus it is difficult to say if suitable victims were present. According to the doors on the supermarket, the place had an ATM, however, it could not be found. Since Swedbank Stadium is close, the times of the robberies were examined to see if they coordinated with football matches, however, this was not the case. In fact, almost all robberies could not have happened in connection to a football game since there are no games on certain days. The first impression, that the robberies were connected to the grill as many people might gather there during the evening, was also wrong. When looking at the reported robberies a second time, they occurred on the other side of the street; where the bus stops and the supermarket were located (Annex 1).

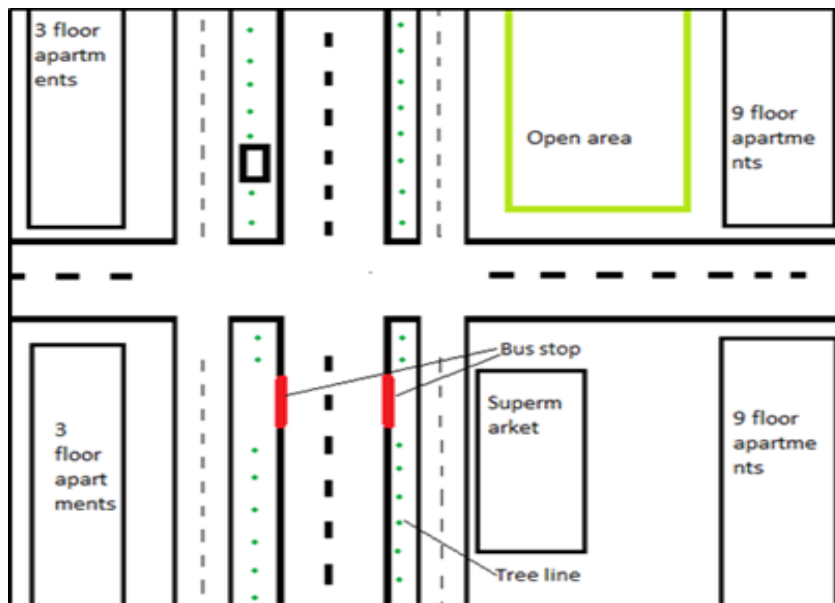


Figure 6 Map of the crossing at Lorensborg

The only thing found which could explain the place as a hot spot, was the location of the supermarket and the bus stops. During one observation, a group of young people was spotted hanging out next to the supermarket (Annex 2). The supermarket laid next to the bus stop and in average four to five people stepped of each bus. When stepping off, an opportunity for a robbery could rise, if a motivated offender would find a suitable victim. Already mentioned, the place probably had a lack of capable guardians, which would make the place a crime generator. There are some problems with this analyze though. First, it is difficult to know by only two observations how common it is for young people to hang out outside the supermarket. Second, it is difficult to know that people stepping off the bus will have money on them. Third, some of the people stepping off the bus are hard targets and not suitable to rob, but instead capable guardians (Annex 2). From the observations done, it is only clear that there is a lack of capable guardians. It is difficult to say much about motivated offenders and suitable victims. Therefore, it is difficult to say if the place is a crime attractor or a crime generator, even though it is leaning towards the last. The conclusion is therefore that, using the observations and the knowledge of the place, it is not possible to state why the place is a hot spot for robberies.

6.1.5 Amiral Street

According to the statistics, 9 robberies happened at the crossing in 2013-2014. Seven of those robberies happened between 22.00 to 04.00 on Thursdays, Fridays, and weekends (Annex 3). The decision was, therefore, to do the observations during weekends or a night on a weekend. The observations were done on Sunday the 26th of March at 00.00 to 03.00 and Sunday the 2nd of April at 03.00 to 05.00.

Unlike the other places, few people passed through here during the observations. However, the lack of people who passed through could be an explanation of why the place is a hot spot of robberies. The first impression was also that it should not be a hot spot since very few people did pass through (Annex 1). After one hour of observation, it was hypothesized that the bus stop was important since it was only when the bus stopped that a larger number of people were present. Five to ten

people in average stepped off the bus that departed from the city center. It stopped three times per hour. Many of the people who stepped off the bus were visibly intoxicated. Only occasional people stepped on the buses in the other direction (Annex 1). For the most part, the place was completely empty, which could be seen as few capable guardians were present. Most of the windows of the apartments were dark, which increased the feeling of being alone. There were also no cameras at the bus stop. Even though there were cameras on the bus, once a person stepped off the bus, the capable guardians (cameras) were no longer present. A person who is a motivated offender could spend time around the bus stop without being noticed by others. He or she could sit at the bus stop, pretending to wait for the bus. Thus, the people walking by will not notice anything strange with the person. Not all people stepping off the bus were suitable targets, but several people were intoxicated which made them more suitable to rob (Annex 2). After they stepped off, people walked in every direction. Thus, it would have been easy for an offender to find a suitable target and follow that person.

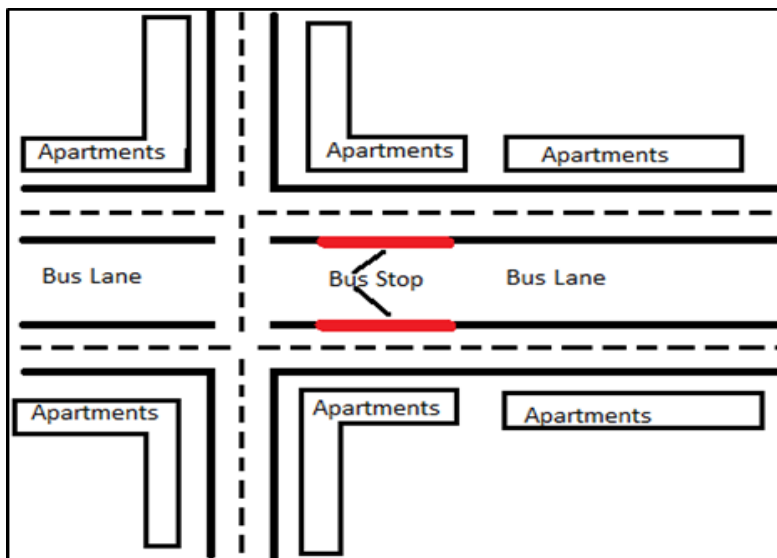


Figure 7 Map of the crossing at Amiral Street

The place was ideal for robberies in the sense that there were many suitable targets and almost no capable guardians present. There is also reason to believe that there are a substantial number of people who know this. Around the crossing, there were many central nodes for people. In the whole area, there were apartments, which meant people were living close. There were also gathering locals for ethnical groups further down the street. A motivated offender who lives close or spends time there may know how it looks like at the bus stop. There is also reason to believe that people who are on the way home from nightclubs or bars have money on them. The place could, therefore, be considered as a crime attractor. Also, few people spend any longer time at the place, thus it could be viewed as a pathway. It is difficult to say whether the place is an edge or not. The place is considered a hot spot since few people were present, except for three times per hour when there were more people around. Thus, a motivated offender could be present there without drawing too much attention from others.

With the notice that the bus stop was important, it is also important to explain why this bus stop and not the next or previous one are hot spots. The bus stop at

Amiral street is viewed as a crime attractor, but why are offenders attracted to just this bus stop? The question is relevant since it is not far between the bus stops. It only took about five minutes to walk to the previous one and ten minutes to walk to the next one (Annex 1). A person who has a node close to the bus stop at Amiral Street would probably therefore also be familiar with the other two. When looking at appearances of the three bus stops it was possible to see differences between them. The previous bus stop was located at the Nobel Square. Because of the square, it had the characteristic of an open space. Also, the side street of the crossing had more people passing by (Annex 1). When comparing the place to Amiral Street, the Nobel Square probably had more capable guardians present, thus making it less of a crime attractor. The next bus stop had the characteristics of a hot spot; with few people, bushes, trees, and a park-like feature to it. It had not any houses around it, a motivated offender who would wait there could therefore also be relatively anonymous. Why this place was not a hot spot could not be analyzed thought.

6.2 Similarities and Differences Between the Five Places

All the places looked different, were in various parts of the city, and had distinctive characteristics; there were differences in how close people lived to the places, how many trees blocked the view and how many people walked through. This means that there are different explanations for why the places are hot spots and the characteristics are place-specific; no place has the same characteristics as the other. When applying the theories, however, similar features were found in some cases.

6.2.1 Similarities

When applying the Routine Activity Theory, a lack of capable guardians was found at four places, suitable victims were found at all three places where it was possible to analyze why it was a hot spot and potentially motivated offenders were seldom spotted (Table 2). This was expected since the theory states that all these three categories must be present for a crime to occur (Cohen & Felson, 1979), but the theory does not emphasize on the offenders rather it just assumes that there are motivated offenders out there (Clarke, 1997). At four places, it was observed that capable guardians were absent (Table 2), which meant that capable guardians were either observed or could be visualized. Capable guardians consisted mostly of people who spent time at the places, whether it was people who lived there as at Nydala Bike Path, Lorensborg and Amiral Street or people who had other reasons to be there because of work or spare time activities as at the other two places (Annex 1). Capable guardians were not always physical persons, but also implications that persons could be present such as windows where people live as at Nydala Square, Nydala Bike Path, and Amiral Street (Annex 1). Why they were not present could be for several reasons. For whatever reason, it meant the same; there was a feeling that the places were not observed. The lack of capable guardians could be linked to paths and nodes in the Crime Pattern Theory. When people walked through they did not spend time at the places, which was important. As with the lack of capable guardians, all the places were observed as paths and at four places nodes were close (Table 2). The paths were different regarding why and how many people walked through; it could vary from few people to a constant flow and people could be walking home, to spare time activities or to shops. How many people walked through did not matter, the

important thing was that the places were not observed thus you could be relatively anonymous there.

Table 2 Summary of the findings

	Crime Attractor	Crime Generator	Path	Node	Edge	Motivated Offenders	Suitable Victims	Lack of Capable Guardians
Tallriken		X	X		X			
Nydala Square	X		X	X			X	X
Nydala Bike Path		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lorensborg			X	X				X
Amiral Street	X		X	X			X	X

Suitable victims were observed at three places and at the other two places where suitable victims were not observed there was an idea of who could be suitable victims (Table 2). If it was possible for me to spot suitable victims and a lack of capable guardians after a couple of hours' observation, a motivated offender who knows the place would also be able to spot them. Since nodes are close in most places and people often commit crimes close to their central nodes (Bernasco & Block, 2009), it is reasonable to conclude that there are people in the local areas who have knowledge of these places, the people spending time there and the people passing through. In general, when using the Routine Activity Theory there were similarities between all places. Suitable victims were present and there was a lack of capable guardian, which could explain why the places were hot spots. The reason for the lack of capable guardians was that the places were paths between nodes, which means that few people spend a long time there, thus the places went unobserved.

6.2.2 Differences

When applying the theories and categorizing the observations there were some similarities, but the characteristics creating these similarities were different, as were the places themselves. When just looking at the places there was a variety: a park, two crossings, a square and a bike path. Also, the robberies happened at different days and within different time intervals. At some places, they occurred during the day and at other places during the evening or the night. This meant that attributes, which was categorized as one thing at one place meant a different thing at another place. For example, the lack of people at Tallriken meant it was not a crime attractor because it was difficult to know if people had money there. At the same time, the lack of people at Amiral Street meant that it was a crime attractor since it was possible to know people there could have money. Regarding suitable victims, what it could consist of was also different. At Nydala Square it was

people taking out cash, on the bike path not far away it was many young people present and at Amiral Street, it was drunk people walking home. The same applies to the lack of capable guardians. At some places, it was the visibility of the place which could explain it, at other places it was people not living there. It means that in the description of how the places looked, each place had its own characteristics. When categorized however those differences became similarities.

When applying the Crime Pattern Theory, some places were considered as crime attractors while other were considered as crime generators; it is even between the places with two places categorized as crime generators, two as crime attractors and Lorensborg as uncertain, but leaning towards crime generator (Table 2). No place is purely a crime attractor or generator, most places are a bit both (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1995), but when the characteristics were added together most places leaned towards one or the other category. This implies that robberies can happen because an offender knows a place where he or she can find victims, but also that robberies can occur situationally at a suitable place. Two of the places were regarded as edges while three were not. This is unclear though since the other places could be edges too, but it was not clear from the observations. Interestingly there were differences in the possibilities to draw conclusions in why the places were hot spots. At three places, it was possible from the observations, at one place it was possible because of pre-knowledge and at one place it was not possible to draw any conclusions. The meaning of this is that characteristics could be easier or harder to find at some places, even though the observations are done in the same way everywhere.

7. DISCUSSION

The findings from the observations imply several things. First, for understanding the hot spots a lack of capable guardians and suitable victims was the most important thing to find. The other conceptions were, however, important, but only as a further explanation. Second, it was possible, within a couple of hours' observation, to find place-specific things that could explain the places as a hot spot; things that could not be seen on a map. Those things could be place-specific but could also be categorized into one or more categories, with help of the theories. This means that it is possible to quickly say what the things meant and how important they were. Third, the findings of place specific things that could explain why the places were hot spots lead to the conclusion that place-specific solutions are necessary to prevent robberies. Sometimes those solutions might be simple. In addition to this, there will also be a discussion about if the places really are hot spots.

7.1 The Importance of Suitable Victims and Capable Guardians

Where it was possible to (by observations) explain why the places were hot spots of robberies, suitable victims and capable guardians was identified. Therefore, to be able to explain why a place is a hot spot those two categories must be identified. The reason it is important to find the suitable victims is that without any suitable victims there would be no crime according to the Routine Activity Theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979). At Tallriken and Lorensborg, where suitable

victims were not found, it was not possible to extend the analysis even though other important attributes were found, such as that it was a path, that central nodes were close or that there was a lack of capable guardians. It was important to identify capable guardians to explain why there was a lack of them at the places researched. At Nydala Bike Path it was even important to explain why just a narrow part of the bike path was a hot spot and not the whole bike path. When it was found why there was a lack of capable guardians, it was possible to detect where an offender had an opportunity to rob a victim. This meant that it was possible to narrow everything down to a few small places where the robberies most likely would happen. The conclusion of this is that the Routine Activity Theory is the most important theory in this thesis. Suitable victims and capable guardians must be identified to at all be able to analyze the places. This was something noticed early, therefore, the first thing done in the observations was to try to identify these two categories. Motivated offenders were not important to find, but that is in line with the theory which states that it is not important to identify who is a motivated offender or not, it is enough to assume that motivated offenders are just around (Clarke, 1997).

This does not mean that the Crime Pattern Theory was unimportant, rather it was good to use after the Routine Activity Theory as an extended analysis. When suitable victims and capable guardians were found, it was possible to use the Crime Pattern Theory to see how the physical place and the people there interacted with each other. At Nydala Square it was for example, possible to analyze how the place could attract offenders and how peoples' everyday movement made three places around the square ideal for robberies. The reason to consider the Routine Activity Theory as more important than the Crime Pattern Theory is that, without findings of the Routine Activity Theory's concepts, analysis at the places could not be done. The suggestion is, therefore, (when doing qualitative research about hot spots) to first find people who could be potential victims or guardians and thereafter do an analysis the place itself.

7.2 Place-Specific Things

Since all places looked different, laid at separate neighborhoods, and had distinctive characteristics, important place-specific were found at all hot spots. This implies that detailed knowledge of a place might be important when doing an analysis of hot spots. When looking at a map it is possible to get an overview of how the places look like and an assumption of peoples' movements there. For example, a bike path between schools could be a path where a lot of young men are present and a square contains shops, which means that people might shop there. However, many of the things found in the observations, which was important in the analysis, were not possible to see on a map; only by visiting the places it was possible to do an analysis of them. Several examples of this were the ATMs and the view of one of them at Nydala Square, the lack of capable guardians at Nydala Bike Path, intoxicated people, and the lack of capable guardians at Amiral Street, how many people stepped of the bus at Lorensborg, and the fact that Tallriken was not a hot spot at certain times of the year (Annex 1). This means that local knowledge of places is important if you want an extended analysis of why they are hot spots. The lack of capable guardians at Nydala Bike Path is one example. Before the observations, it was possible to know that many young men used the bike path, due to the number of schools and houses close to the path. However, with that information, the whole bike path

should be a hot spot. After the observations, it was found why only a small part of the bike path was a hot spot. This shows that place-specific analysis has something to add when it comes to knowledge about hot spots. One of the findings in this thesis suggests that when it comes to hot spots of robberies it is difficult to generalize places. There is not one characteristic which can explain everything, but there are several different characteristics at various places which interact with each other. This, in turn, is important if you want to do something about the places.

Quantitative studies such as Braga, et al. (2011), Uittenbogaard & Ceccato (2014) and Weisburd, et al. (2004) have provided knowledge about hot spots. For example, by looking at micro places you can identify those hot spots and target them. The lack of qualitative studies, however, means that there is a lack of explanation why certain places are hot spots and how place-specific things may vary. This thesis, with its qualitative approach, provides an analysis of five places and shows that there might be place-specific things which are important; things that quantitative approach misses because it focuses on generalizing attributes. Generalization is however not bad and this thesis is not in contradiction of any quantitative research. Rather it shows that there is something more to the subject. Where a quantitative approach can find where hot spots are located, a qualitative approach can explain the individual hot spot. Thus, an interaction of the method can extend the knowledge of hot spots and what to do about the problems at them. Qualitative research could also be done within a reasonable time limit. In this thesis, the total time of the observation was 25 hours, with a time span of about one month. During those hours, it was possible to find explanations for three places and possible explanations for the other two. This means that with 25 hours per month it is possible to, within a six-month period, research 30 places. Regarding that the total number of hot spots of robberies in Malmö, outside of the city center, was seven, it is a reasonable period to research a vast number of places.

7.3 Solutions to the Problems

With place-specific reasons for hot spots comes place-specific solutions. At all the places interventions could be implemented which might decrease the robbery rate. The suggestions in this part will not be too extensive though since people must still be able to freely live their daily lives. Also, things that cost too much money, such as hire guards to be at a place all the time or completely rebuild a place will not be suggested since those solutions are not realistic. The suggestions will rather be trivial things that could be changed at some places. When hot spot intervention has been studied it is often in the form of police interventions such as hot spot policing (Braga & Weisburd, 2010; Weisburd, et al., 2014). However other interventions than placing police at hot spots could be done, examples of that are to make things harder to steal, to prevent theft or to put up surveillance cameras (Clarke, 1997). To find the right interventions both the Routine Activity Theory and the Crime Pattern Theory could be used. The theories could be used to think about what a place need to decrease the crime rate. If a place is a crime attractor, what could be done to make it less of a crime attractor? If there is a lack of capable guardians, what could be done to increase the number of capable guardians there? The research and analysis of a hot spot could therefore only be the first step. The second step would be to use the analysis to find interventions.

The same thing applies to this thesis, therefore there will be some suggestions of what could be done to maybe reduce the number of robberies at some of the places. At Nydala Square, many people took out cash at the ATM around the corner. The ATM was placed so that it was hard for potential capable guardians to see it. That, in turn, made the place a crime attractor since a motivated offender would know that he or she could rob someone there without getting too much attention (Annex 1). If the ATM was to be placed at the square instead, it would be visible to the store personnel, the people living there and if it was to move to the other side of the square, most of the people passing through on the path would pass by it. Thus, the number of capable guardians will increase and a motivated offender would be more supervised and the place will be less attractive to commit robberies on. At Nydala Bike Path, most of the path had capable guardians, but at the stretch that was a hot spot, there was a lack of that because the place was difficult to see due to the trees that blocked the view. If the trees were to be removed, the place would be visible from the houses left to the road and the place would feel more supervised. At Lorensborg, trees could also be removed, to make it possible for the people living there to see the crossing. Setting up cameras at Amiral Street might also increase capable guardians and make the place less of a crime attractor because a motivated offender then would be supervised.

The important thing to consider is that to do these interventions the police does not need to be involved. It is common to otherwise suggest police involvement because the police are the symbol of preventing crime and withhold law and order (Braga & Weisburd, 2010). The fact is that the police can not be everywhere all the time and other partners could be involved to prevent crime (Waller, 2014). In this thesis, some of the findings suggest that small interventions from some partners such as the bank at Nydala Square or the city at Nydala Bike Path and Lorensborg could perhaps contribute to lower the robbery rate at these places. A more extensive study of the city of Malmö, involving more places could perhaps find more crime problems and more “easy” solutions, which does not require much effort. Perhaps unexpected partners could contribute.

7.4 Are the places hot spots?

There are several problems regarding the conclusions of the research done in this thesis. These problems come with the data collected, which the observations were based on. The statistics of the robberies were from 2013-2014, four to five years before the observations were done. Things might have happened between this time. Places might have changed and people might have moved. This, in turn, could affect the robbery rate. An example could be Lorensborg, where an ATM at the supermarket was supposed to be present. The ATM could not be found in the observations though. If there was an ATM present in 2014 and it later has been removed, the place may no longer be a hot spot of robberies. This could explain why it was not possible to do an analysis of why Lorensborg was a hot spot. Changes at places between when the robberies occurred and when the observations were done, could also be applicable to the other places. This is problematic but unavoidable since 2013-2014 is the latest data available. The results of the observations should therefore rather be seen as possible explanations of why the places could be hot spots of robberies, rather than solid explanations.

Another thing that could question if the places observed were hot spots, are the fact that the police always register a crime on an address. This means that the crimes could be displaced up to a hundred meters away. Examples of places that did not have an address were Nydala Bike Path and Tallriken. The robberies on the bike path were placed both to the left and to the right of the path, depending on where the police decided to register the robberies. This means that all registered robberies on the addresses nearby may not be connected to the bike path. Displacement of robberies could be applicable to all the places observed. The implication of this is that it is difficult to say exactly how many robberies was committed at each place. At some of the observed places, it is only needed that three or four robberies were displaced for the places to no longer be considered as hot spots. Nydala Bike Path is one such example since the bike path has no address, another example might be Nydala Square. Only six robberies happened at the square itself, which means that it is arguable if the square is a hot spot. Tallriken was not considered as a hot spot on other times than the summer since only six robberies occurred during that time. Maybe the square itself is not a hot spot, but you need to extend the area to include other parts as well. The implications are that it is difficult to be certain if a place is a hot spot or not based on the data, rather it can only give an indication of the places being hot spots.

8. CONCLUSION

The aim of the thesis was to do an analysis of individual characteristics at the places researched and to compare similarities and differences between them. This was done by using a qualitative method, in participant observation. The results suggested that it was possible to find place-specific things which were important when hot spots of robberies were analyzed. The places-specific things could also be categorized with use of the theories. To be able to do an analysis of the findings from the observations, it was important to identify capable guardians and suitable victims, otherwise, it was difficult. When the theories were applied, similarities and differences could also be found. Most places were pathways and had nodes close to them. There were, however, differences between the places regarding if they were crime attractors or crime generators. I found almost instant that it was possible to find and do an analysis of why some places were hot spots. Often within an hour of the observations. The rest of the time could be used to find details that mostly supported the first impression. The theories used, really helped me in both the observations and in the analysis. Without the theories, it would have been harder to find what was important. They worked in the way that everything observed could be run through them to see whether it was important and to explain why it was/was not important. For example, it was possible to argue that an ATM was a crime attractor since if many people were taking out cash there it would be possible, for a motivated offender, to know that people who are able to rob would be present. When analyzed it was interesting that at most of the places I had a clear view of why they were hot spots of robberies. The feeling is also that participant observation of hot spots is a method that could be used to explain hot spots of other crimes.

This research is important since most research is quantitative. In this thesis, I have found that it is possible to explain why places are hot spots of robberies by using

qualitative methods. The findings suggest that it is possible to find place-specific problems and solutions to those problems. This means that it could be useful to look at the individual characteristics of a hot spot instead of trying to generalize everything. If more of this kind of research would be done I think it would be possible to extend the knowledge of hot spots. Instead of seeing them as places with similar characteristics, they could be viewed as places with specific characteristics that could be categorized. This would perhaps provide a better knowledge of what is good to generalize and not. Also, this research has shown that it is possible to use qualitative methods to research hot spots of crime in a Swedish setting. The research, I think, could encourage other Swedish researchers to do qualitative research, because in contradiction to quantitative research it is possible to find important place-specific things.

Recommendations for future research would be to extend this research to involve more hot spots, both of robberies and other crimes. An extended qualitative research about hot spots of robberies could hopefully find how important place-specific things are and find more similarities and differences between places. Qualitative research about hot spots of other crimes would be interesting since you then could see what kind of results you would get or if it would be possible to get any results at all. It would also be interesting to extend this kind of research to other places in Malmö. Practitioners could use this research to implement a place-specific solution to the problems identified. They could maybe also start to think about how to get information and what to do at places that have a high cluster of crimes.

This thesis has used a qualitative approach to research five hot spots of robberies in Malmö. The findings were that it was possible to find place-specific things that were important to explain hot spots of robberies, that those things may vary from place to place and that distinctive characteristics mean different things at separate places. When using the Routine Activity and the Crime Pattern Theory, however, similarities between the places were found and distinct characteristics may mean the same thing. This means that to implement solutions at places that are hot spots of robberies, place-specific things are important. It is also important to compare places to each other and see the larger picture.

8.1 Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. It is done at only five places in Malmö, it is therefore not possible to generalize it and apply it to the whole city of Malmö or as a general picture of Sweden. Rather it should be seen as research trying to answer if it is possible to do qualitative research about hot spots in a Swedish setting. The study has only researched robberies, it is therefore not possible to say whether this kind of method could be used on other types of crimes or on crime in general. The findings and characteristics are also only applicable to robberies. Furthermore, the period when the observations took place was one month (March to early April). Observations during other times of the year or spanning several months might have given a different result. The qualitative approach is also a limitation. The observations were analyzed from what I saw and interpreted. The findings and analysis are therefore a bit biased even though the checklist was used to lower that bias. Last, the statistics were from 2013-2014. Newer statistics may

provide a different picture and characteristics may have changed in four to five years.

REFERENCES

- Bernasco, W. & Block, R., 2009. Where Offernders Choose to Attack: A Discrete Choice Model of Robberies in Chicago. *Criminology*, 47(1), pp. 93-130.
- Braga, A. A. & Clarke, R. V., 2014. Explaining High-Risk Concentrations of Crime in the City: Social Disorganization, Crime Opportunities, and Important Next Steps. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 51(4), pp. 480-498.
- Braga, A. A., Hureau, D. M. & Papachristos, A. V., 2011. The Relevance of Micro Places to Citywide Robbery Trends: A Longitudinal Analysis of Robbery Incidents at Street Corners and Block Faces in Boston. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 48(1), pp. 7-32.
- Braga, A. A. & Weisburd, D. L., 2010. *Policing Problem Places: Crime Hot Spots and Effective Prevention*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Brantingham, P. & Brantingham, P., 1995. Criminology of place: Crime generators and crime attractors. *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, 3(3), pp. 1-26.
- BRÅ, n.d. *Robbery*. [Online]
Available at: <http://www.bra.se/bra/bra-in-english/home/crime-and-statistics/robbery.html>
[Accessed 26 January 2017].
- Clarke, R. V., 1997. Introduction. In: R. V. Clarke, ed. *Situational Crime Prevention: Successful Case Studies*. Guilderland, New York: Harrow and Heston Publishers.
- Cohen, L. E. & Felson, M., 1979. Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach. *American Sociological Review*, 44(4), pp. 588-608.
- Copes, H., Tewksbury, R. & Sandberg, S., 2016. Publishing Qualitative Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice Journals. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, 27(1), pp. 121-139.
- DeWalt, K. M. & DeWalt, B. R., 2011. *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*. 2 ed. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Feeney, F., 2014. Robbers as Decision-Makers. In: D. B. Cornish & R. V. Clarke, eds. *The Reasoning Criminal: Rational Choice Perspectives on Offending*. New Brunswick, Nwe Jersey: Transaction Publishers.
- Frogner, L., Andershed, H., Lindberg, O. & Johansson, M., 2013. Directed Patrol for Preventing City Centre Street Violence in Sweden — A Hot Spot Policing Intervention. *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, Volume 19, pp. 333-350.
- Gerell, M., 2016. Smallest is Better? The Spatial Distribution of Arson and the Modifiable Unit Problem. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, pp. 1-26.
- Gerell, M. & Kronkvist, K., 2016. Violent Crime, Collective Efficacy and City-Centre Effects in Malmö. *British Journal of Criminology*, pp. 1-23.
- Granath, S., 2014. Public place violence in Stockholm City: trend, patterns and new police tactics. *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention*, 15(2), pp. 200-208.
- Groff, E. R., 2007. Simulation for Theory Testing and Experimentation: An Example Using Routine Activity Theory and Street Robbery. *Journal of Qualitative Criminology*, Volume 23, pp. 75-103.

- Herrmann, C. R., 2015. The dynamics of robbery and violence hot spots. *Crime Science*, 4(1), pp. 1-14.
- Hvitfeldt, T., Westerberg, S. & Irlander Strid, Å., 2016. *Nationella trygghetsundersökningen 2015: Om utsatthet, otrygghet och förtroende*, Stockholm: Brottsförebyggande rådet.
- Kooi, B., 2015. Security Concerns at Hot-Spot Bus Stop Locations. *Journal of Applied Security Research*, 10(3), pp. 277-307.
- Pratt, T. C. & Turanovic, J. J., 2016. Lifestyle and Routine Activity Theories Revisited: The Importance of “Risk” to the Study of Victimization. *Victims & Offenders*, 11(3), pp. 335-354.
- Priks, M., 2015. The Effects of Surveillance Cameras on Crime: Evidence from the Stockholm Subway. *The Economic Journal*, Volume 125, pp. 289-305.
- Sherman, L. W., Gartin, P. R. & Buerger, M. E., 1989. Hot spots of predatory crime: Routine activities and the criminology of place. *Criminology*, 27(1), pp. 27-56.
- Spelman, W., 1995. Criminal careers of public places. In: J. E. Eck & D. Weisburd, eds. *Crime and Place*. Monsey, NY: Criminal Justice Press.
- Spradley, J. P., 1980. *Participant Observation*. United States of America: Thomson Learning.
- St Jean, P. K. B., 2007. *Pockets of Crime: Broken Windows, Collective Efficacy, and the Criminal Point of View*. USA: The University of Chicago Press.
- Stake, R. E., 2010. *Qualitative Research: Studying How Things Work*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Uittenbogaard, A. & Ceccato, V., 2014. Safety in Stockholm’s Underground Stations: An Agenda for Action. *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, Volume 20, pp. 73-100.
- Wakeman, S., 2014. Fieldwork, Biography and Emotion: Doing Criminological Autoethnography. *British Journal of Criminology*, Volume 54, pp. 705-721.
- Waller, I., 2014. *Smarter Crime Control; A Guide to a Safer Future for Citizens, Communities, and Politicians*. United States of America: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Weisburd, D., 2015. The Law of Crime Concentration and the Criminology of Place. *Criminology*, 53(2), pp. 133-157.
- Weisburd, D., Bushway, S., Lum, C. & Yang, S.-M., 2004. Trajectories of crime at place: A longitudinal study of street segments in the city of Seattle.. *Criminology*, 42(2), pp. 283-322.
- Weisburd, D., Groff, E. R. & Yang, S.-M., 2014. Understanding and Controlling Hot Spots of Crime: The Importance of Formal and Informal Social Controls. *Prevention Science*, Volume 15, pp. 31-43.
- Weisburd, D. et al., 2006. Does Crime Just Move Around the Corner?: A Controlled Study of Spatial Displacement and Diffusion of Crime Control Benefits. *Criminology*, 44(3), pp. 549-592.
- Wikipedia, 2017. *Routine activity theory*. [Online] Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Routine_activity_theory [Accessed 4 June 2017].
- Vito, G. F., Tewksbury, R. A. & Kunselman, J. C., 2014. *Introduction to Criminal Justice Research Methods : An Applied Approach*. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C Thomas Publisher.

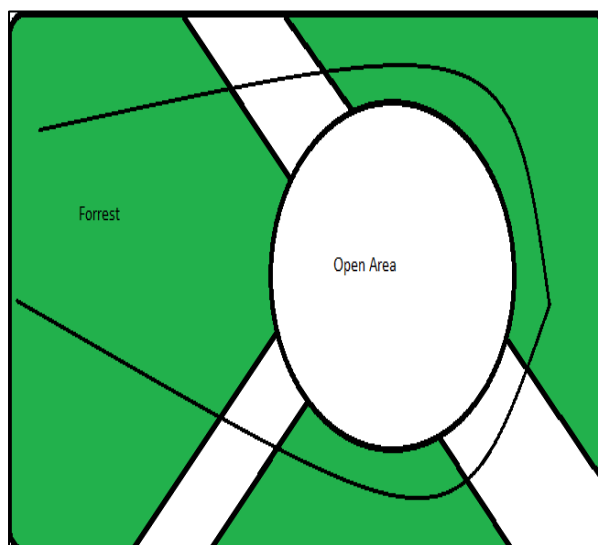
Østergaard Larsen, B., Bendix Kleif, H. & Kolodziejczyk, C., 2015. The volunteer programme 'Night Ravens': a difference-in-difference analysis of the effects on crime rates. *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention*, 16(1), pp. 2-24.

ANNEX 1 - FIELD NOTES

Tallriken (In Pildammsparken)

9/3 2017 17.00-19.00

The place consists of a circular open area surrounded by woods. In the woods, there are a running track and an outside gym. There are also two kindergartens and a dog resting area. The kindergartens are open during the day but were closed when I was there. Before dusk, there were a constant flow of people in all ages passing through, mostly alone or in pairs. Many dog walkers were spotted and



the dog resting place were used all the time I was there. The running track and outside gym were frequently used by people who exercised and three times a group of joggers gathered to exercise together. Since there were no leaves on the trees it was possible to see the running track and the roads outside the park. The circular area was empty and no people spent any long time at the place. After dark, there were no lights and the place became almost completely empty, besides for two joggers who exercised there. The weather was cloudy and it was about 5 degrees. From experience, I know warmer weather attracts a larger number of people who spend time in the open area. Sometimes up to a hundred people. It is also a place where festivals and other gatherings are held.

29/3 16.00-17.30

The same pattern as the last time was observed. The weather was a little bit worse than last time which meant that there were fewer people just walking by. Most people were walking their dogs or exercising. The weather was a little bit rainy about 5-8 degrees.

Nydala Square

10/3 2017 18.00-21.00

The area is a square with shops and eight-floor houses surrounding it. It is in the shape of a square with a pathway through it. Two ATMs are placed there and there is also a 24/7 gym. The stores open when I was there being the supermarket, the pizza place, the grocery store, the gym, and the hairdresser (closed at 19.00). There was a constant flow of people passing through and there was always people on the square. It seemed to be a meeting spot for people before they went somewhere else. Most of the people (my estimation about 80 %) were passing through on the walking path on the left side of the square and many people went to the supermarket. One ATM was outside the supermarket, and the other one was on the side of the grocery store. During the time spent there, 25-30 people were taking out cash from the ATMs each hour. The ATM on the side of the grocery

store is on a little side street with a parking lot behind. You could not see it from any of the open stores. There were also lights on the square, but no lights by the ATM. I spotted a group of young people hanging out around the corner, by a kebab shop. Most windows were dark, which suggests that many people were not home or have gone to bed. I also noticed that the pizza place and the supermarket close at 22.00. The weather was clear, some degrees plus when it was light, about zero degrees when dark.

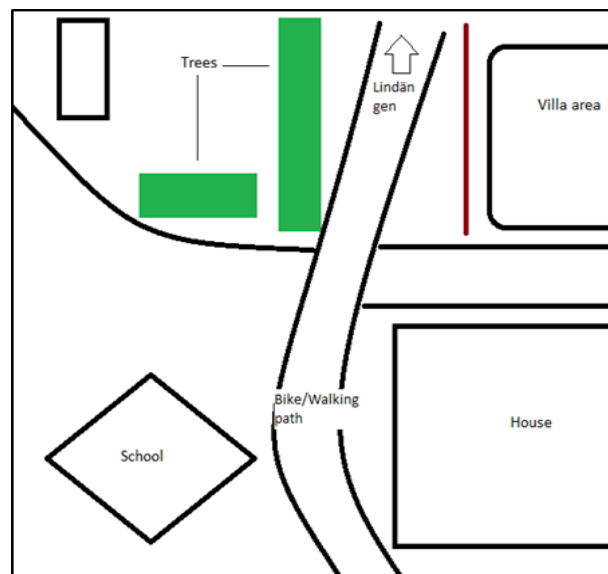
18/3 2017 21.00-23.00

I noted the same pattern as last time, many people are walking through and many people are going to the supermarket to shop. About 20 people per hour used the ATM. The walking path goes through a tunnel under the road. You cannot see what is happening in the tunnel from the gym or the kebab shop. After 22.00 (when the supermarket and pizza place closed) the flow of people reduced, still, people were taking out cash from the ATM. Fewer people were moving between the square and the parking lot. I talked to the owner at one of the stores and he said that when the supermarket closes there are not as many people at the square, in fact, it becomes quite empty. He also said that young people sometimes hang out at the square, but not this time of year, but usually when it is warmer and they have no school.

Nydala bike path (100-200 meters northwest of Nydala Square)

14/3 2017 12.00-15.00

The place is a bike and walking path in Nydala, close to the square. The stretch on the bike path where robberies happened consisted of bushes with trees and a playground, a field, and a power station to the left and planks toward a villa area on the right side. People in all ages walked by, but I noticed that most of the people who passed through were young people. If comparing to the other places



observed so far, fewer people moved around in this place, but there was still a stream of people and the pathway was never empty. You could also see several hundred meters up the pathway. I decided to walk up and down the pathway to see where it lead. It starts in a living area with eight-floor houses, easy home to several hundred people. The pathway also passes several houses and living areas. Close to the start, there is also a football course, with young people on it when I was there. Walking further down the pathway it passes a school and some houses and when walking home I noticed another school connected to the path. The place where the robberies occurred were the only place on the pathway where a house not next to the pathway, rather it was planks and bushes on the sides. The weather was cloudy 5-7 degrees.

23/3 2017 17.30-19.30

The flow of people was the same as during the last observation. Many young people were moving around. The bike path is a pathway where people are traveling from one place to another, it is also the major pathway in the area. I spotted more mopeds and cyclists than the last observation. The flow of people was about the same after dark. A new thing noticed was that cars were driving up the street and letting people off continually. The weather was sunny about 7-10 degrees before sunset.

31/3 2017 13.30-15.30

The same pattern as the last two observations was observed, but around 14.00 a lot of young people were using the bike path, probably walking home from school. The flow of people increased then and consisted mainly of young people.

Lorensborg (the crossing of Lorensborg Street and Hallings Street)



16/3 2017 18.30-21.00

The place is a crossing of two roads, with two more roads parallel to the main road. At the crossing, there is a bus stop, a supermarket, and a sports bar. On the other side, there is a grill. Along the road, there are trees and bushes. Nine and three-floor houses are present along the road, about 50-100 meters away. The main road was trafficked heavily and there were many cars passing through on the parallel roads as well, there was also parking on the parallel roads. The place was hard to observe since many things were going on and it was hard to be at a place where you could see everything. People were constantly passing through in both directions, some of them a group of youths. Occasional people visited the supermarket, that closed at 20.00. A group of young people hangs around outside the supermarket. The windows were far away and with the trees in the summer could not see much of the road. Three to five buses per hour stopped at the bus stops in both directions. Between 19.00-20.00 10 busses stopped, 40 people stepped off a bus and six people went on. The weather was cloudy, about seven to ten degrees.

22/3 2017 21.00-23.00

The flow of traffic was a little bit smaller than last time, even though there was a continually flow of cars. The same applies to people, even though people still passed through. After looking at the map, it seems that the robberies were more connected to the bus stops and the supermarket than the other side. The supermarket was closed and I could still not find the ATM, who the entrance said it had. When the supermarket was closed, the entrance became a place difficult for the surrounding to spot due to the location and the trees along the road. Between 21.00-22.00 three busses stopped in each direction, 16 people stepped off the bus and 5 people stepped on. The weather was clear, about 5 degrees.

Amiral street (the crossing of Amiral Street and Baskemölle Street)**26/3 2017 00.00-03.00**

The street is the main road between Rosengård and the city center. Three-floor apartments surround the crossing. Down the street, there are a Turkish gathering local, but it was closed the time I was there. The middle of the road is a bus lane and there is a bus stop next to the crossing. The road was lightly trafficked, but there was a continuing flow of cars passing by. There were however only occasional people passing by, most of them young and intoxicated. The bus stopped three times per hour in every direction and between five to ten people stepped off the bus on the route towards Rosengård. On the route towards the city center, only occasional people stepped off. However, some people stepped on each bus. Between the houses next to the bus stop it was dark and it leads to an inner yard. The weather was clear, a few degrees plus.

2/4 2017 03.00-05.00

Almost everyone I spotted could be categorized as young (max in their 30s). Fewer people walked by than last time and the place was empty most of the time. About ten people stepped of each bus, many people were intoxicated and on their way home from a bar or nightclub. I also noticed that around the next corner there were also a bus stop and some of the people who walked by stepping off the buses stopping there. Almost all the windows were dark. I decided to look at the previous and next bus stop on the bus line. The previous bus stop was located at a square with the characteristic of an open area. At the next bus stop the apartments did not lay next to the road, but a bit further away. The area next to the road consisted of trees, bushes, and a park-like feature. The weather was about 10 degrees and clear.

ANNEX 2 - CHECKLIST

Routine activity theory

Potential victims:

1. Young men
2. People with money (easy to know people have money, i.e. ATM, shopping in stores)
3. Easy targets (Drunk people, handicapped)

Capable guardians (people who can watch or interfere):

1. Cameras
2. Constant observers (windows where people live, stores with personal)
3. Hard targets

Potential motivated offenders:

1. Young men

Crime pattern theory

Crime attractors (knows that people will have money there):

1. ATM
2. Stores, shops, or restaurants

Crime generators:

1. Large number of people gathering
2. Many people walking through

Nodes:

1. Workplace/School close
2. Stores
3. Living close

Paths:

1. People walking through in everyday nodes

Edges:

1. Is it an edge?

ANNEX 3- INFORMATION ABOUT THE ROBBERIES

Tallriken

Date	Time	Day
2013-01-11	13:40	Friday
2013-02-15	20:15	Friday
2013-05-18	00:30	Saturday
2013-07-31	18:00	Wednesday
2013-08-02	20:45	Friday
2013-08-03	17:30	Saturday
2013-08-04	01:00	Sunday
2013-08-04	02:45	Sunday
2013-09-08	03:00	Sunday
2013-09-21	16:25	Saturday
2013-09-30	13:00	Monday
2014-01-28	21:30	Tuesday
2014-08-02	15:00	Saturday
2014-11-04	19:20	Tuesday

Nydala Square

Date	Time	Day
2013-10-12	22:00	Saturday
2014-01-19	22:25	Sunday
2014-03-08	18:00	Saturday
2014-04-25	14:30	Friday
2014-06-07	17:30	Saturday
2014-07-29	05:00	Tuesday
*2013-05-02	13:00	Thursday
*2013-10-31	21:45	Thursday
*2013-11-17	01:00	Sunday
*2014-04-17	20:55	Thursday

*Robberies that happened next to the square

Nydala Bike Path

Date	Time	Day
2013-02-26	09:30	Tuesday
2013-04-08	23:00	Monday
2013-09-05	14:30	Thursday
2013-09-21	01:15	Saturday
2013-09-21	01:15	Saturday
2013-10-03	14:25	Thursday
2014-02-13	16:10	Thursday
2014-03-03	11:15	Monday
2014-03-28	20:50	Friday
2014-06-01	22:30	Sunday
2014-09-30	18:30	Tuesday

Lorensborg

Date	Time	Day
2013-12-27	19:00	Friday
2014-01-09	17:05	Thursday
2014-01-16	11:15	Thursday
2014-05-29	18:00	Thursday
2014-06-10	21:33	Tuesday
2014-06-19	01:14	Thursday
2014-08-25	21:20	Monday
2014-10-01	23:10	Wednesday

Amiral Street

Date	Time	Day
2013-04-04	22:00	Thursday
2013-07-26	23:30	Friday
2014-02-27	21:00	Thursday
2014-02-28	18:06	Friday
2014-05-26	10:30	Monday
2014-06-07	04:00	Saturday
2014-08-08	23:42	Friday
2014-08-10	04:30	Sunday
2014-10-12	03:50	Sunday