Violence against women and girls on public transport:

Encouraging reporting and exploring precautionary behaviour and responses

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Presentation to UWE Social Science Research Group

Preventing Sexual Violence Seminar Series

NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

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1. Public Transport Environs
    - Why are they different/ the same?
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    - VAWG/Sexual Violence
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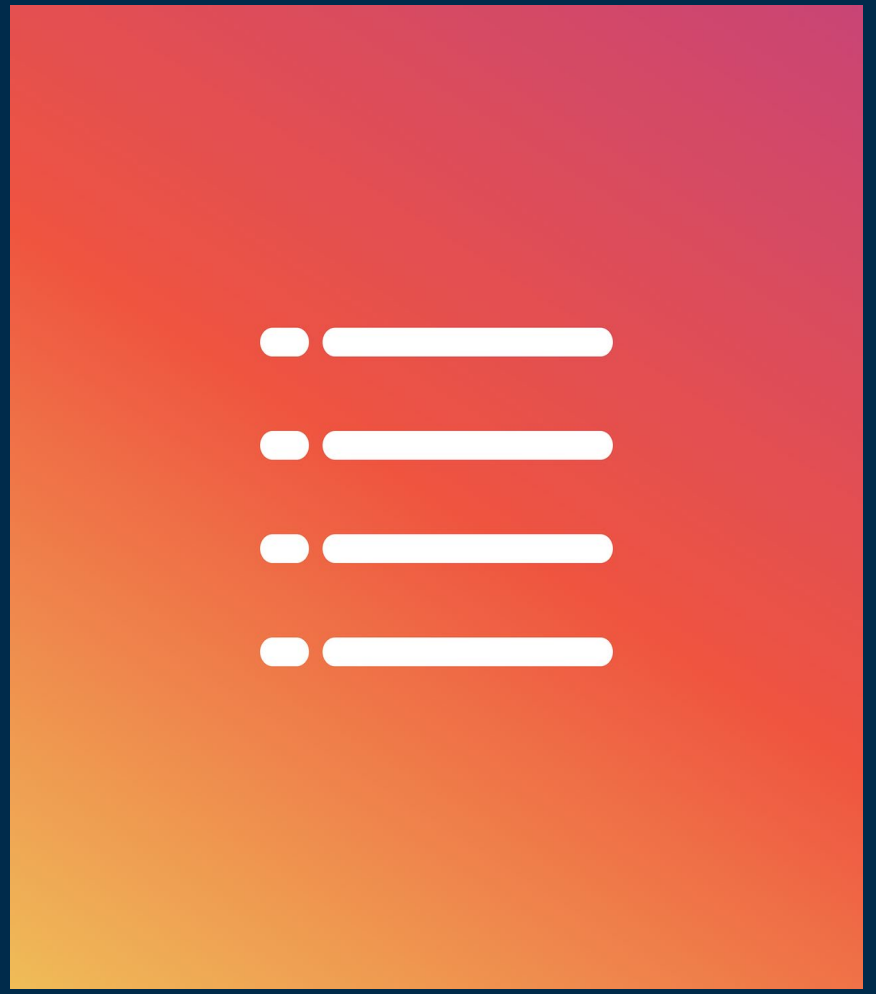
3. Precautionary Behaviour
    - International PT Survey
    - Avoidance and Risk Management
4. Prevention
    - What is/might be best practice?
    - Transferability of best practice?
5. Concluding thoughts



2) Crime and Public Transport Environs

1) Public Transport

- British/American English
  - *public transport, mass transit, rapid transit or public transit*
- No widely accepted definition:
- Key characteristics:
  - A system used by the **public**, often for **transporting mass numbers** of passengers
  - Generally a **for-hire system** that occurs across a **fixed route** or **line**
  - Range of **modes**, railway (light rail, metro/subway/ underground, high-speed rail, and intercity), buses, trolleybuses, trams; ferries; coaches; airlines; water taxis, gondolas; and pedi cabs

Newton, (2014)

David Preston @thewzrdharry

dLucas Gallone @lucasgallone

1) Public Transport

- Key characteristics (cont)
  - **Bicycle hire schemes** could be included
  - In some regions "**collective transport**" considered form of public transport, (eg minibus/fixed group taxi - South America and Russia)
  - "**Paratransit**" sometimes used in areas of low demand and for people who need a door-to-door service
  - There is a debate as to whether or not **taxis** are part of the public transport system

Newton, (2014)

Linda Xu @rhindaxu

JJ Ying @jjying

1) Public Transport

Whole Journey Approach

‘door to door’

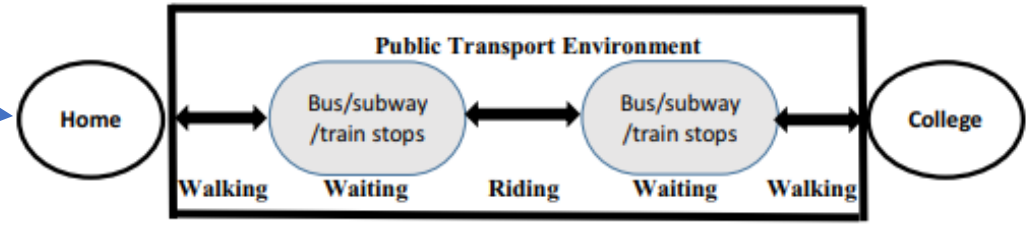


Fig. 1 The journey to and from college: crime victimization and the whole journey approach

Natarajan et al, 2017

Booking Online

Public Transport and its Environs

spatial interaction

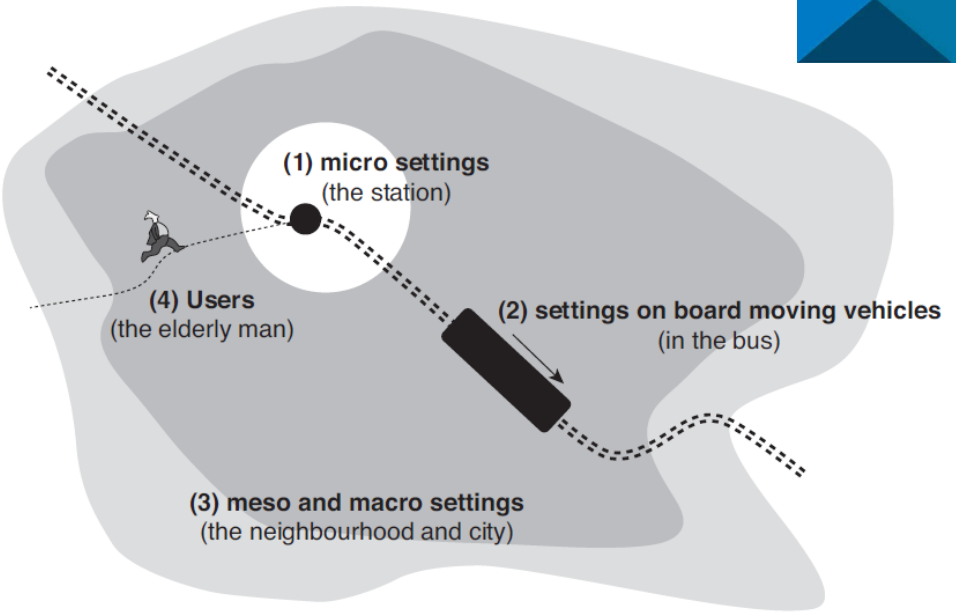
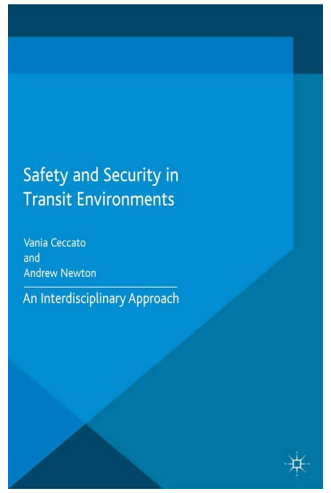


Figure 1.1 Security and safety in transit environments: the conceptual framework.

Ceccato and Newton, 2015



1) Public Transport, Crime and its Environs

What crimes might happens at stops and stations

- Waiting/connecting

What crimes might happen ‘en-route’

- Inside closed/confined environment (internal)
- Travelling through changing external environment (familiarity)
- Constant boarding/alighting of passengers at each stop
- Missiles projected at moving vehicles (external to internal)

What other crimes might happen

- Line of route (trespassing)
- Metal theft
- Revenue fraud
- Damage to infrastructure
- Commercial burglary
- Shoplifting

- Who are the victims/targets and in what setting
  - Passengers: Commuters/Tourists/Social Visits/Retail/Education/Other
  - Staff: Revenue protection/engineers/cleaners/drivers/retail workers/other
  - Vehicles
  - Stations and station furniture
  - Tracks

1) Public Transport Complexity

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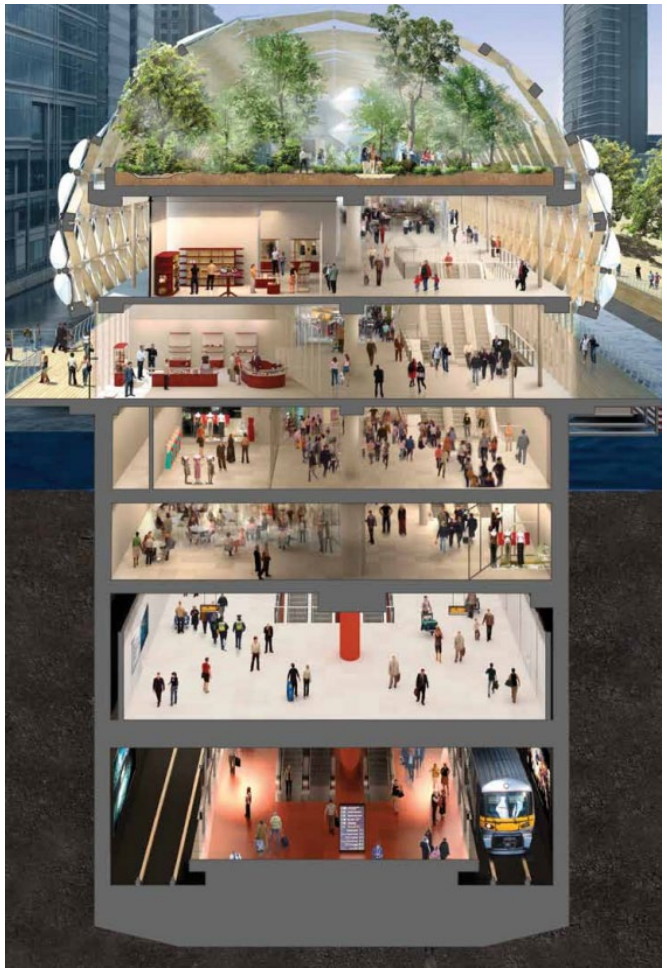


By Rob Faulkner from Leeds, United Kingdom - Altnabreac Station Approaching Train to Wick, CC BY 2.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=38403111

http://sydneyandlondon.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Super_Stations1.pdf

1) Public Transport Complexity

Function of places

PLACE!

How place shapes the behaviour of people

People using places (and why they are in this place)

e taken from www.pixabay.com (and used under a Creative mons Licence

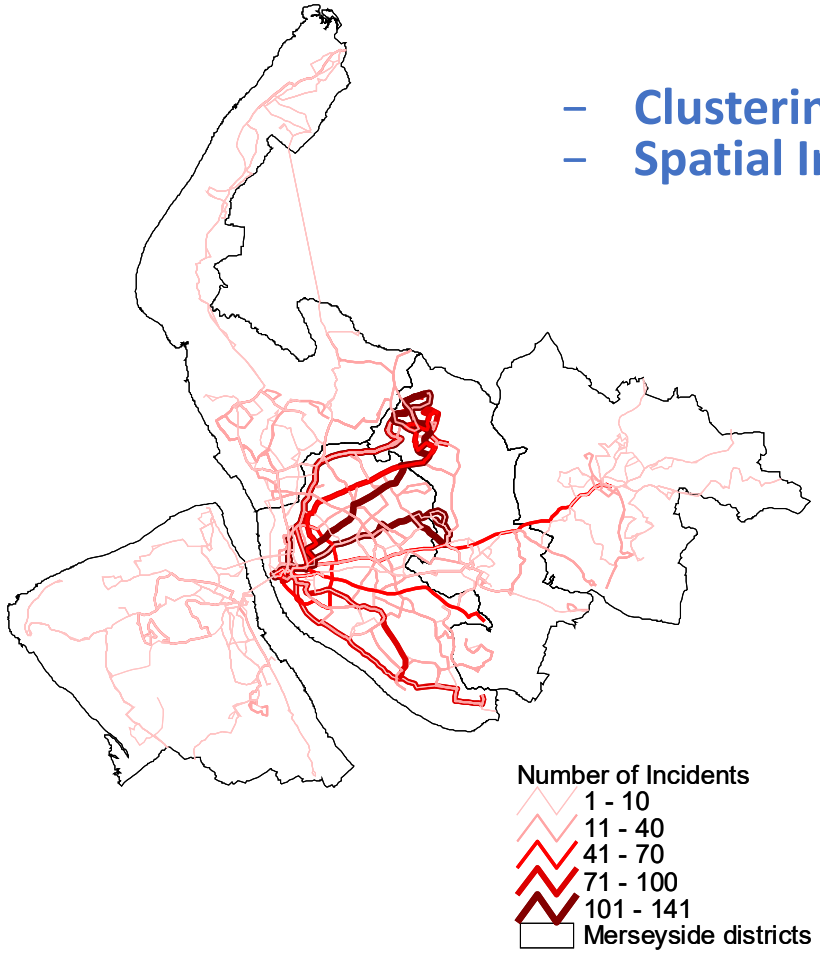
Interactions between people

Underpinning Concepts

- Risky Facilities
- Crime Pattern Theory
- Crime Generators
- Routine Activities
- Repeat and Near Repeat Victimisation

1) Hot Routes/Risky Journeys/Pathways

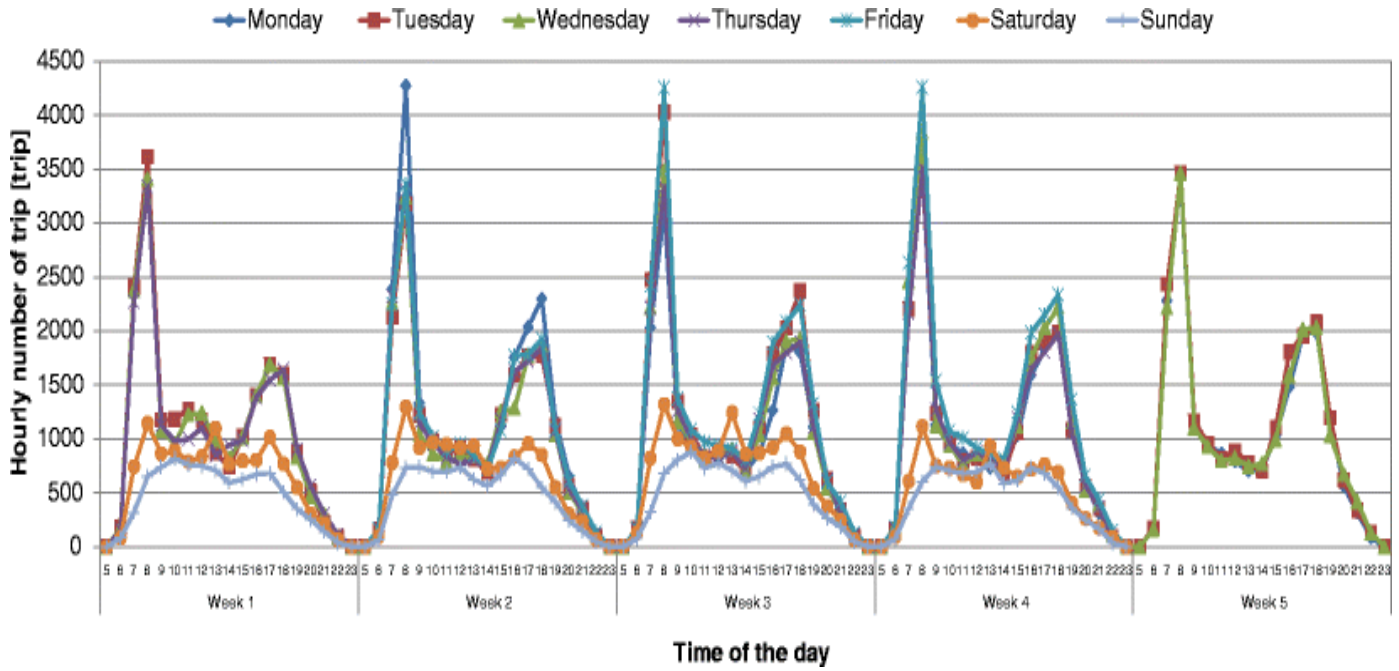
- Bus route crime
  - positively correlated with levels of crime in environs (places it traverses)
  - crime those routes that traverse high crime areas is greater than on other routes
  - The risk propensity is heightened in high crime areas
- Routes that have more stops in high crime areas have greatest risk
  - multiple entry and exit points



- **Clustering/Concentrations**
- **Spatial Interactions**

Newton, 2004

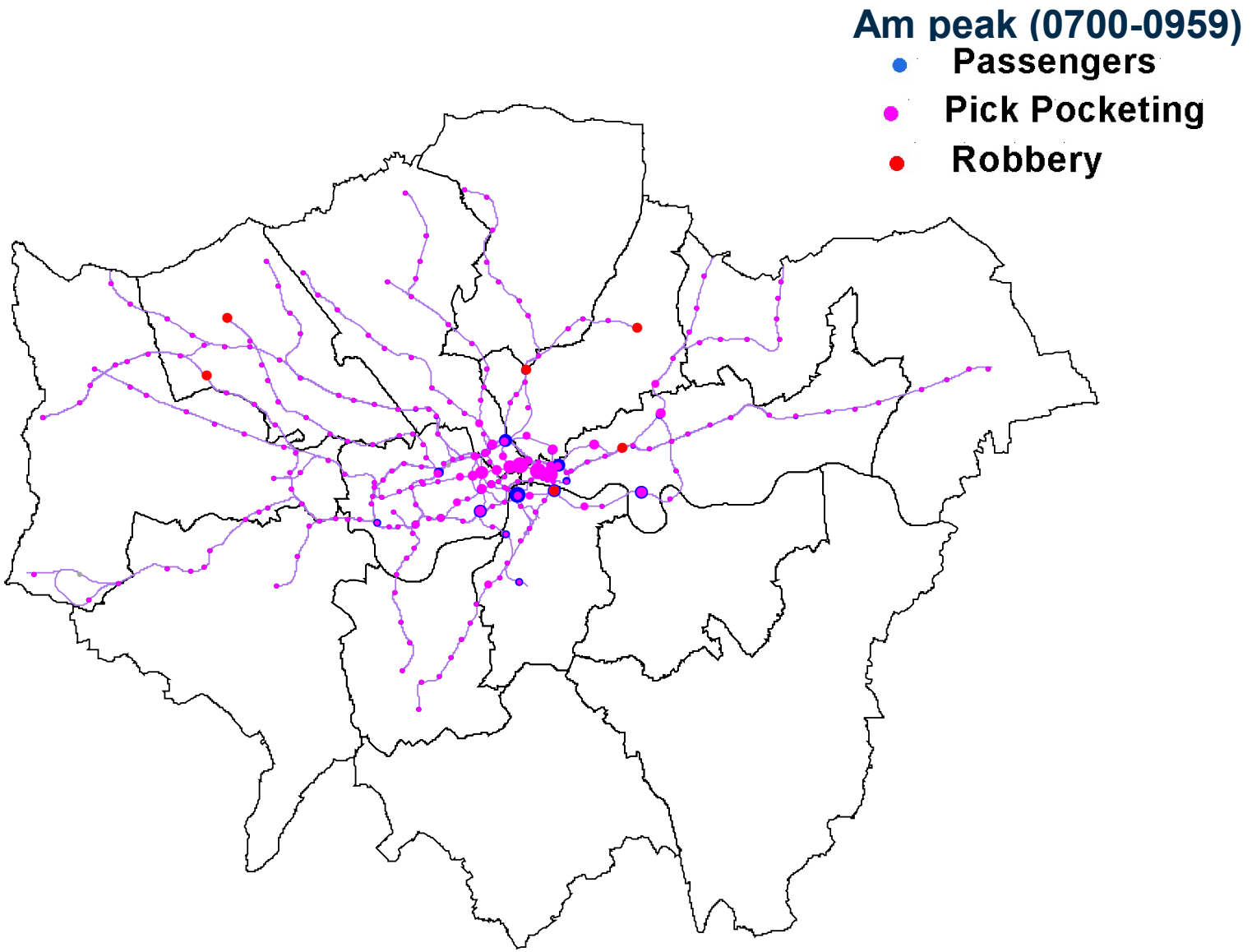
The temporal nature of public transport

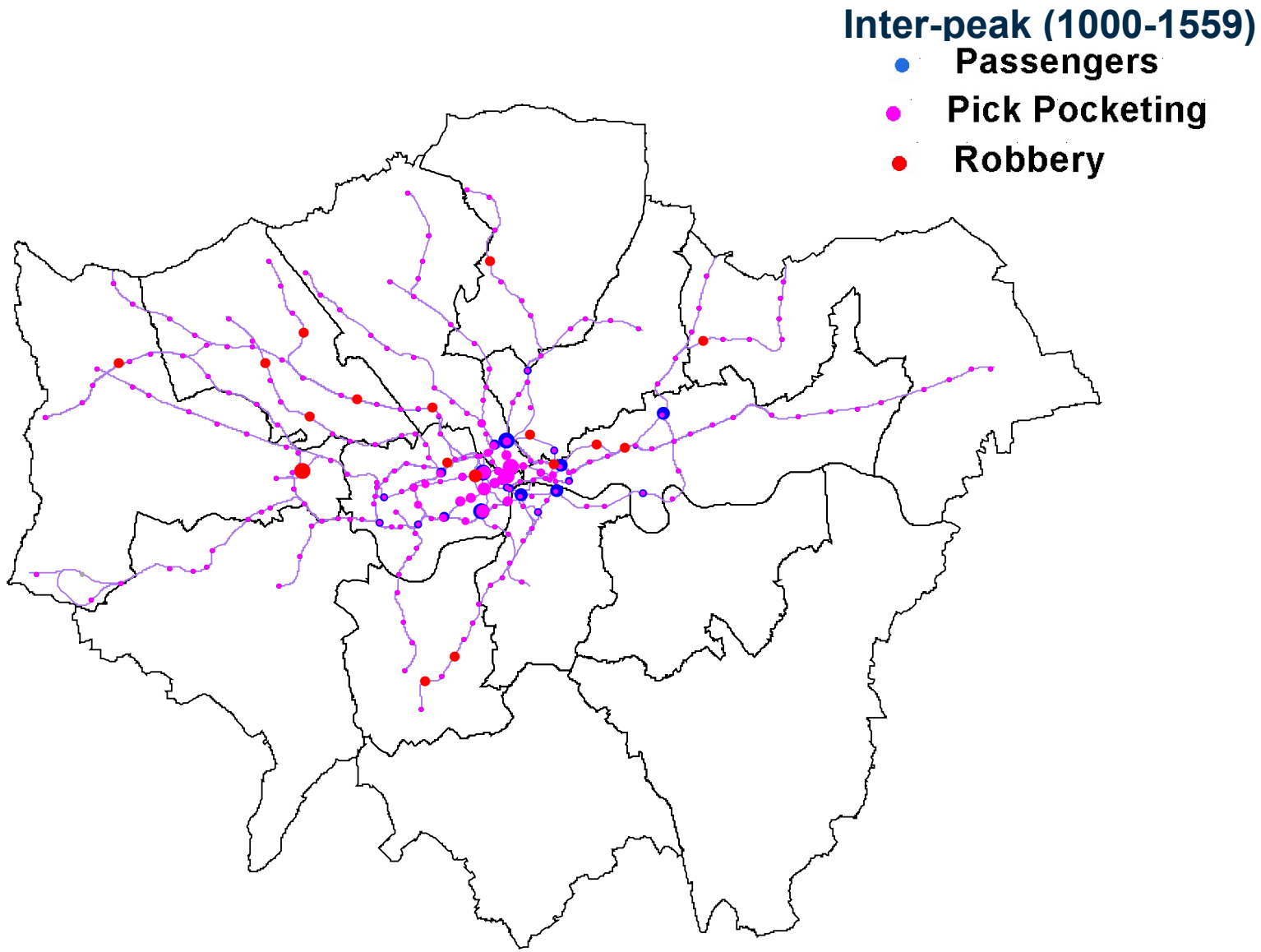


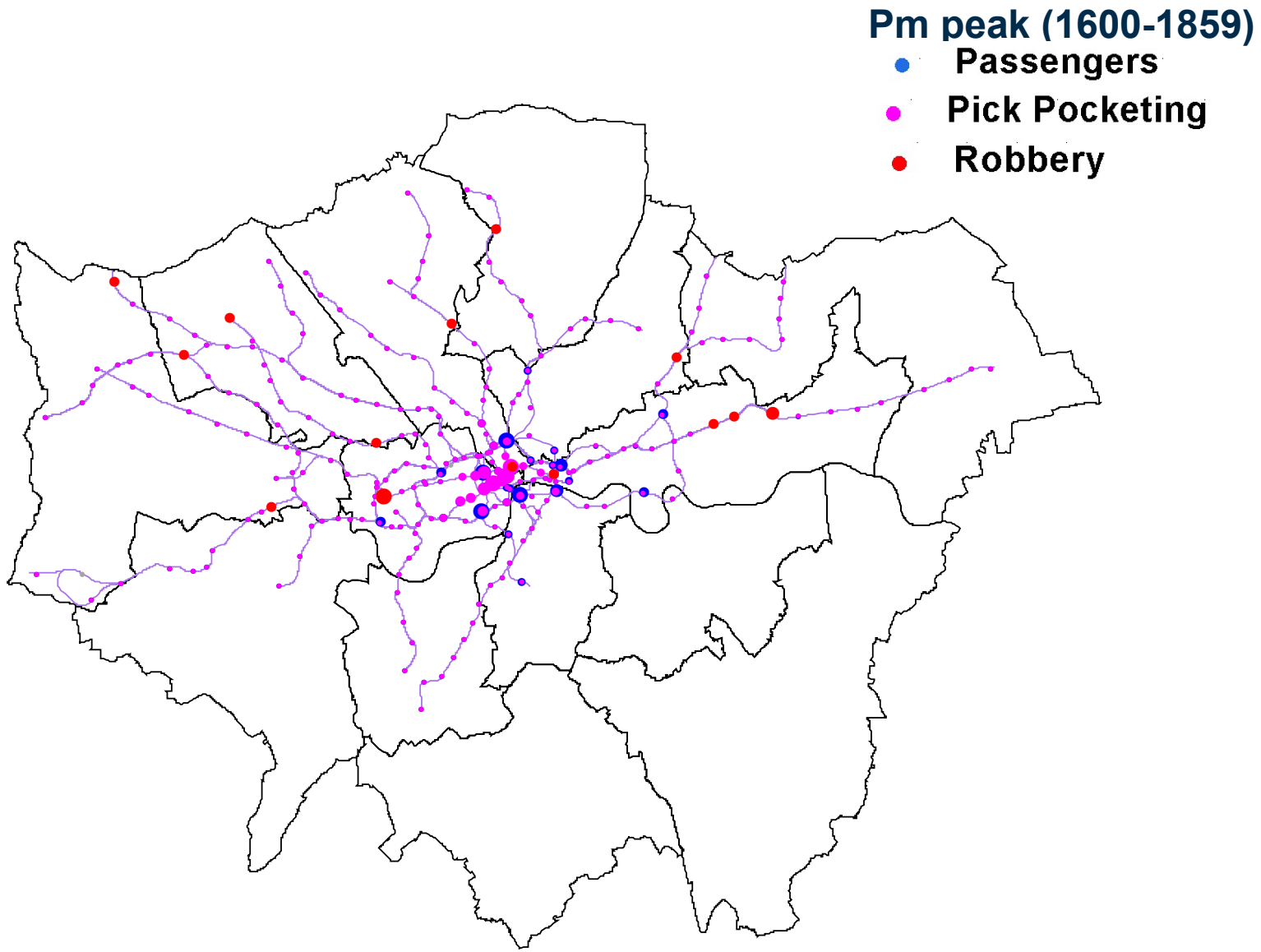
Nishiuchi et al, 2013

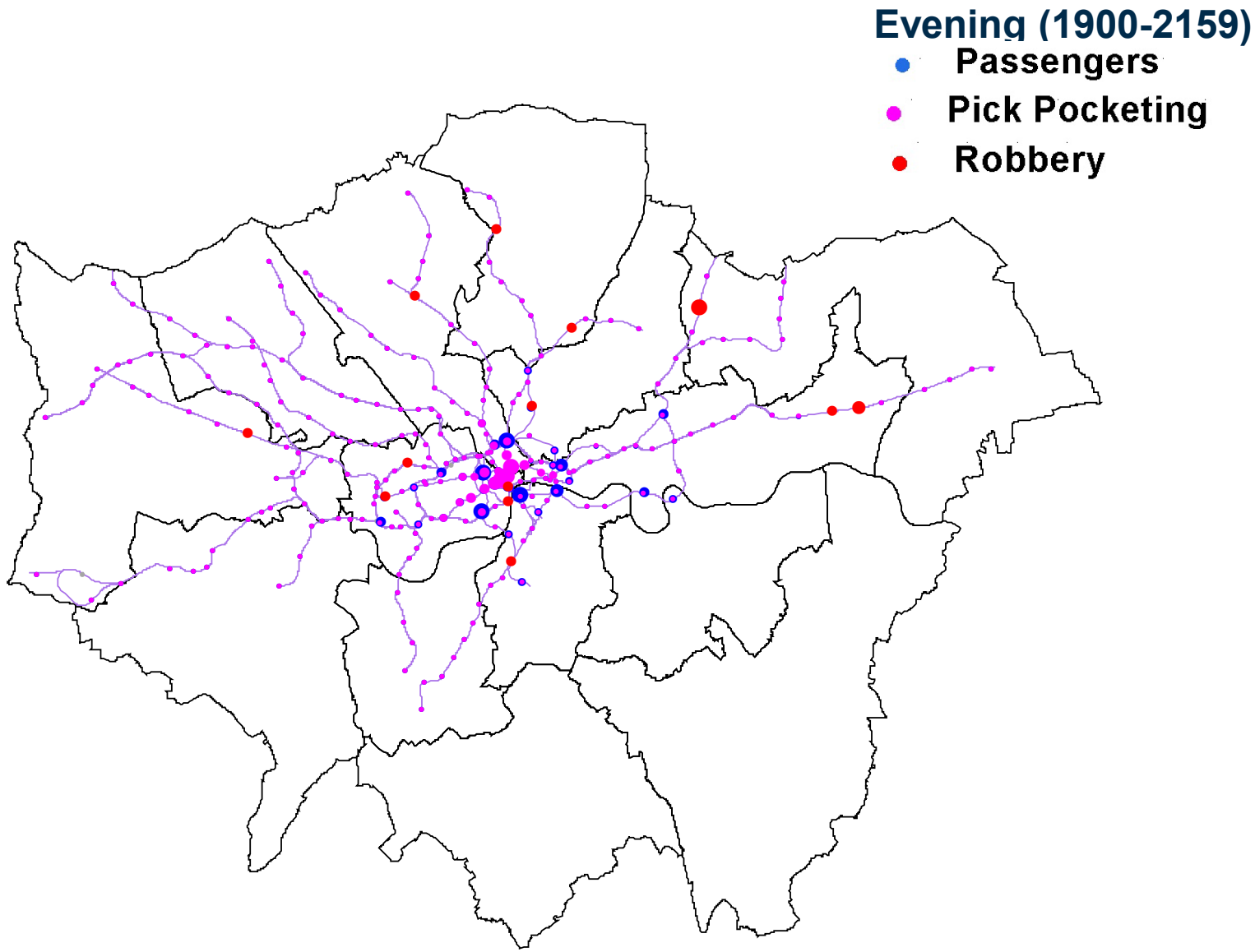
Well defined temporal rhythm
Regular Periodicity
Known peak hours and off peak travel
Switch between 'busy' and 'quiet'

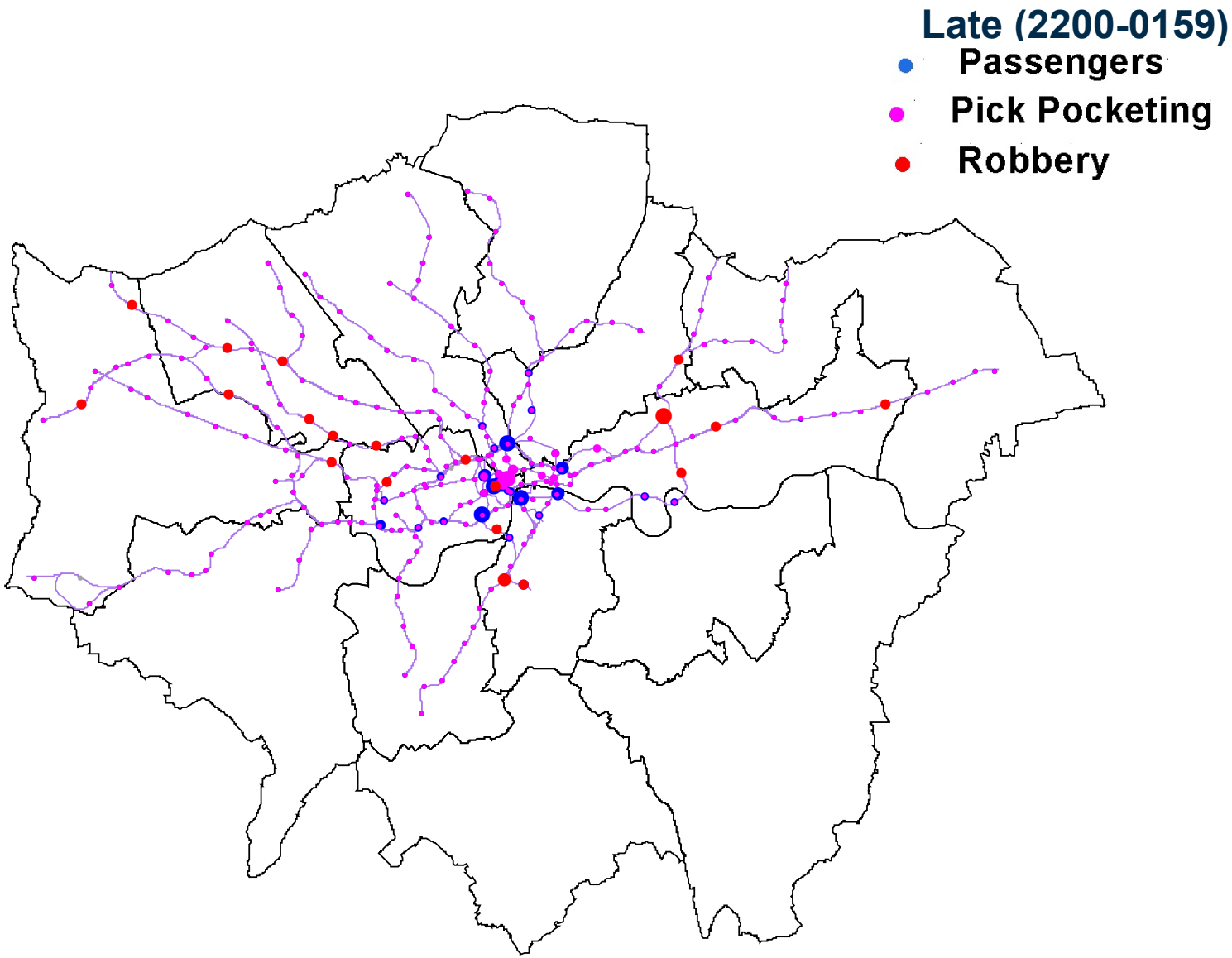
Network Position and mobility flows


Am peak (0700-0959)
Passengers
Pick Pocketing
Robbery

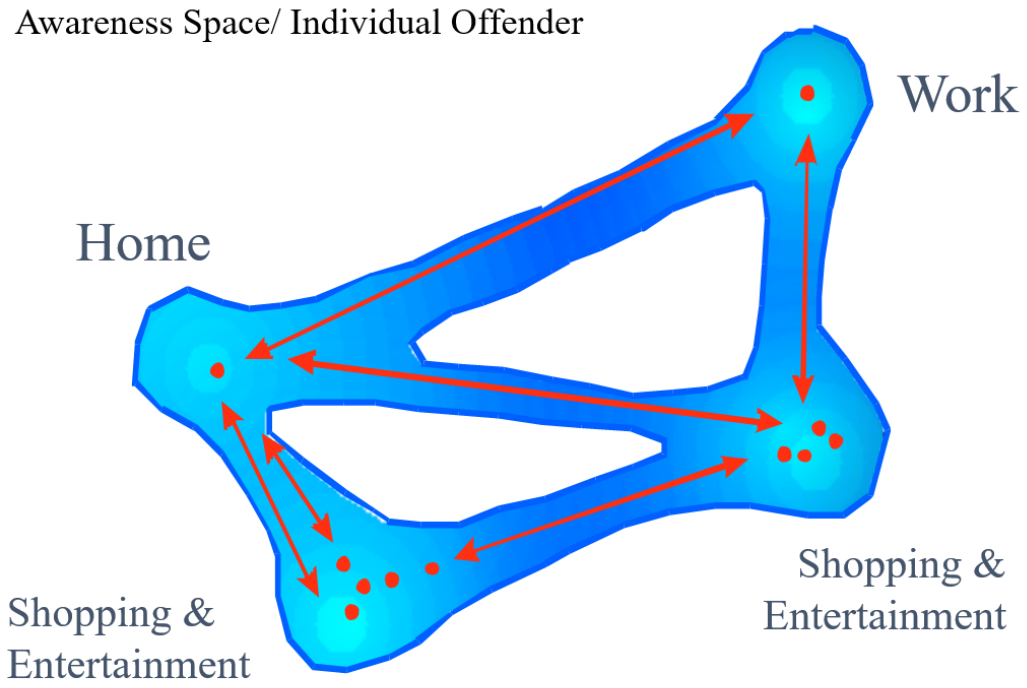

Inter-peak (1000-1559)
Passengers
Pick Pocketing
Robbery


Pm peak (1600-1859)
Passengers
Pick Pocketing
Robbery


Evening (1900-2159)
Passengers
Pick Pocketing
Robbery


Late (2200-0159)
Passengers
Pick Pocketing
Robbery

1) Crime pattern theory



Public Transport
- Nodes – stations/stops
- Paths – 'en route' journeys
- Edges – PT infrastructure

Crime attractors/generators
- people attractors/generators

Newton, 2018

Brantingham, 2021

1) crime attractors/generators

Crime generators

- areas to which large numbers of people are attracted for reasons unrelated to criminal motivation
- produce crime by creating particular times and places that provide appropriate concentrations of people and other targets . . . Mixed into the people gathered at generator locations are some potential offenders with sufficient general levels of criminal motivation that **although they did not come to the area with the explicit intent of doing a crime**, they notice and exploit criminal opportunities.

Crime attractors

- are particular places, areas, neighbourhoods, districts which create well-known criminal opportunities
- to which strongly motivated, intending criminal offenders are **attracted because of the known opportunities** for particular types of crime.
- The attraction is created by an ecological label . . . , often supplemented by the intending offender's personal past history, establishing that location as a known place to go for that kind of crime.

Brantingham and Brantingham (1995)

1) Crime attractors/generators

Why was an offender there at that place and time

For most offences we don't know this

Crime attractors and generators difficult to measure

Table 22.3 Comparing Crime Numbers and Rates at Attractors and Generators

	Number	Rate
Crime generator	High	Low
Crime attractor	High	High

Newton, 2018 – developed from Clarke and Eck (2005)

1) Crime attractors/generators

Table 22.2 Facilities, Densities of Persons, and Attractor/Generator Properties of Place

Crime type	Facility	Level of crowd density	Attractor or generator
Disorder	Park at quiet time	Low	Attractor
Disorder	Sports event or shopping mall	High	Generator
Sexual assault (rape)	Park at quiet time	Low	Attractor
Sexual assault (grooping)	Station at peak time	High	Generator
Criminal damage and arson	Park at quiet time	Low	Attractor
Theft of/from car	Unsecured car park outside rail station	Low	Attractor

Table 22.2 Facilities, Densities of Persons, and Attractor/Generator Properties of Place

Crime type	Facility	Level of crowd density	Attractor or generator
Assault	Train station late at night	Low	Generator
Assault	Nightclub	High	Generator or attractor
Robbery	Shopping center	Intermediate	Attractor
Theft from person	Bag snatch at shopping mall	Intermediate	Attractor or generator
Drug dealing	Park or open market	Intermediate	Attractor
Pickpocketing and petty theft	Train station	High	Generator

Newton, 2018

1) Busyness

Density Hypothesis

Street robbery (Angel. 1968)

- more likely intermediate levels of pedestrian traffic
- Less likely low or high crowds densities
- Suggested "**critical intensity zone**" for robbery to occur

Second critical zone (Loukaitou-Sideris,1999)

- as places get busier, serious robbery and violence offenses less likely
- as crowd density increases further, a new critical zone reached
- other offenses emerge, such as minor theft and pickpocketing

Routine Activities Theory

- Pedestrian traffic sparse = too few targets for offenders
- Pedestrian traffic high = many guardians present to intervene

Routine Activities Theory

- In high-density crowds
- Presence of more people does not increase capable guardianship
- Acts as barrier to detection, giving anonymity to offenders, reducing visibility, limiting likelihood of offenders being spotted or identified

Newton, 2018

1) Density, Proximity, and ‘Busyness’

Do we have an ‘optimal level of busyness/quietness for:

1) *Criminal Damage*
2) *Robbery*
3) *Pickpocketing*
4) *Sexual Assault*
5) *Drug Dealing*

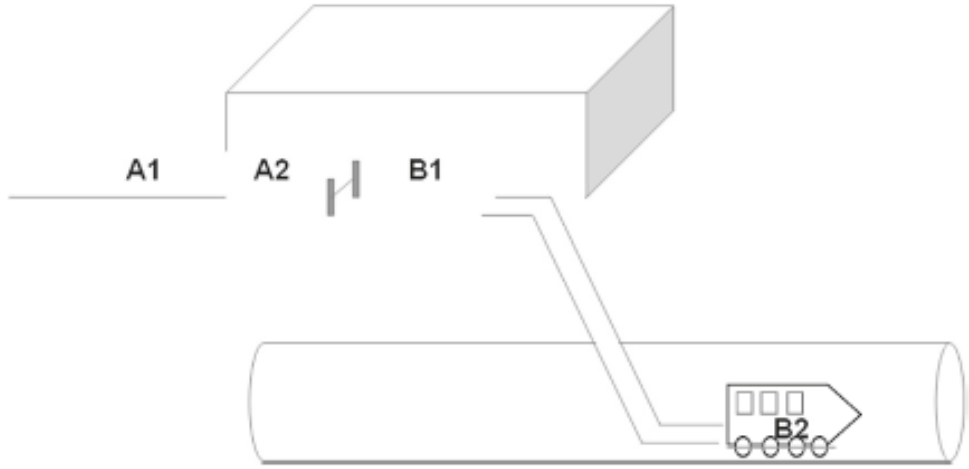
A range of factors need to be considered including:

- how many people are present: volume
- the number of people relative to the size of the space: density
- how close together these people are: proximity
- for how long they are in close proximity: proximate interaction
- All are related to ‘flow’ and rhythm of people (urban mobility)

1) crime radiator/absorber

- You can actually arrive at the station from inside and move out
- Underground system connected by ‘pipes’
- Overground system separated by internal/external environment of a vehicle
- You don’t have to enter and exit via a boundary entrance

- Enter station at B2
- Mix of Public spaces and controlled access spaces



A1: *Above* ground: Outside a station

A2; *Above* ground: Inside a station (before paid access control barrier)

B1: *Below* ground: Inside a station (after paid access control barrier)

B2: Below ground: Inside station (on carriage)

Figure 1 Potential theft settings at transit stations.

1) Public Transport Environs and Interactions

- *Several studies demonstrate for correlations between PT and surrounding environs (rail and bus)*

  Block and Davis (1996); Levine et al (1986); Newton, 2008; Bernasco and Block, 2011; Ceccato et al, 2013; Newton et al (2014 a,b), Stucky and Smith (2017), Gerell (2018) Zahnow and Corcoran (2019); Ceccato & Gustavo, 2020

What are the mechanisms for this spatial interaction

Three Hypotheses

1. High crime public transport settings are a receptor of being located in a high crime area – situated in high crime areas
2. Public transport settings act as an input to the area, and criminogenic public transport facilities radiate crime out to surrounding area
3. Public transport settings act as both an absorber of crime and a radiator of crime – with a two way interplay/interaction between the transport facility and the features/facilities of its nearby environs.
4. How might this influence sexual violence on public transport

Is public transport as a uniquely risky setting

- Spatial interaction with environs
- Do other places have same regular rhythm/periodicity of travel?
- Public Transport also has directionality of travel?
  - Journey from ‘activity node 1’ to ‘activity node 2’
  - Return journey ‘activity node 2’ to ‘activity node 1’
  - Multiple Trips
- What is the importance of position on the network?
- What is relevance of mix of publicly accessible open spaces and controlled access spaces?
- Generators or Attractors for Sexual Violence (vary by location, time and type of offence?
- How influenced by regular peak and off peak hours (density, proximity and busyness?)

Is public transport as a uniquely risky setting

2) Increasing Reporting

2) RITSI Beginnings: Project Guardian

- Report it to Stop it (RITSI) was implemented against background of an existing partnership
- Project Guardian (since 2013) to reduce unwanted sexual behaviour on PT
  - Transport for London (TfL)
  - British Transport Police (BTP)
  - Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)
- Initiatives
  - ➢ working alongside Everyday Sexism Project to launch a twitter hashtag
  - ➢ setting up the 61016 text number for reporting sexual offences to BTP.
  - ➢ used 'days of action' where officers would go to transport hubs in London and engage with the public to raise awareness of USB and hand out the media material
  - ➢ Officers and call-centre staff were also trained to handle reports and support victims reporting sexual offence
- Underlying Framework for RITSI

Solymosi et al, 2018

2) RITSI: Aims and Purpose

- The aim of RITSI was to encourage women aged 17–34 to report experiences of sexual offences on the transport network
- This group identified by police-recorded crime data as the most victimised demographic

- The RITSI campaign was launched in April 2015
- Initially consisted of four waves of information campaigns
- material was disseminated through video and leaflets

Solymosi et al, 2018

2) RITSI: Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tUevV_Nsmzs

2) RITSI: Evaluation Design

Hypotheses to Test: Realist Evaluation

- **Impact on perceptions**: RITSI publicity waves result in increased recognition of campaign material in target audience, and those who have seen the campaign material are encouraged to report USB on transport
- **Unintended outcomes**: RITSI publicity waves are not followed by increased fear of crime in the target population
- **Changes to police-recorded levels**: Reported instances of USB increase after RITSI interventions
- **Changes to self-reported levels**: Prevalence of USB identified using self-report measures does not increase after RITSI interventions.

Table 1 Data used for realist evaluation

Hypothesis	Data used
Impact on perceptions	RITSI questionnaire
Fear of crime	Attitudes survey
Changes in USB reporting to police	Police-recorded crime data
Changes in self-reporting of USB	RITSI questionnaire, Attitudes survey

Solymosi et al, 2018

2) RITSI: Mechanisms

- A three-stage approach was employed to develop RITSI campaign
- First, the barriers to reporting were identified using focus groups
  - Normalisation – *USB nuisance akin to ASB but not crime*
  - Internalisation – *victims internalise event – think at fault somehow*
  - Lack of Awareness – *around reporting – unclear offences warrant reporting – and process to do this*
  - Credibility – *nothing will be done*
- Second, a framework was developed from these to guide the message development
  - Name – target normalisation and lack of awareness – clear examples of incidents could/should be reported
  - Blame – lack of awareness and internalisation – victim not responsible/how to report it/how process will work
  - Claim – credibility and internalisation – effect of reporting re justice and benefits to other women
- Finally the message was tested against success criteria using another focus group.
  - 6*90 minutes FGs
  - Any form of unwanted sexual behaviour is a crime and not tolerated on London's transport

Solymosi et al, 2018

2) RITSI: Evaluation Findings

Fear of crime (TfL Attitude Survey)

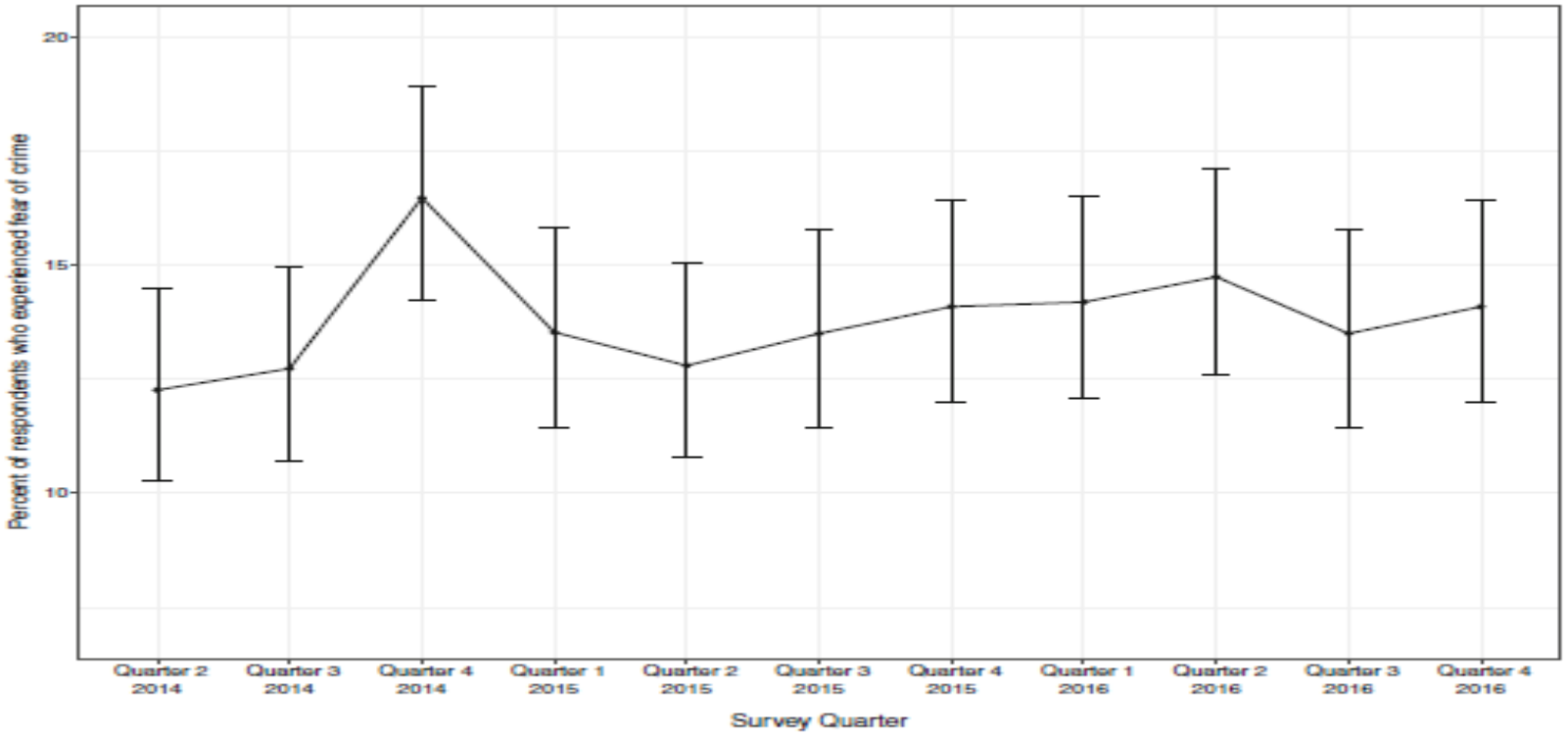


Fig. 1 Percent of respondents who expressed worry about crime quarterly over the RITSI campaign period

11-sample test for equality of proportions without continuity correction:
X-squared = 15.199, df = 10,
p value = 0.125

Solymosi et al, 2018

2) RITSI: Evaluation Findings

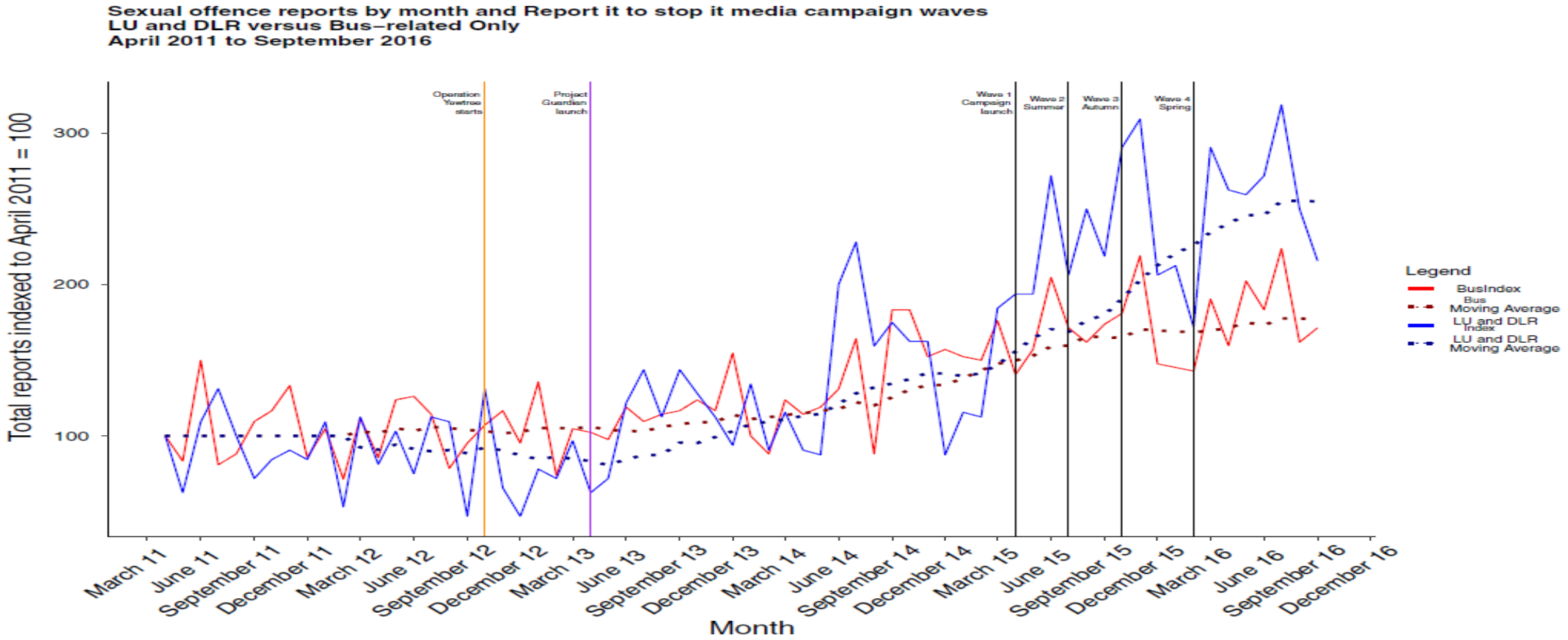


Fig. 3 Volumes of USB reports over time, comparing London Underground and Docklands Light Rail (LU and DLR) reports and those on buses or at bus stops

Solymosi et al, 2018

2) RITSI: Evaluation Findings

Change Point Analysis
Following the launch of RITSI, clear change detected for LU and DLR which corresponds with campaign waves. However, this is not recorded for bus-related data.

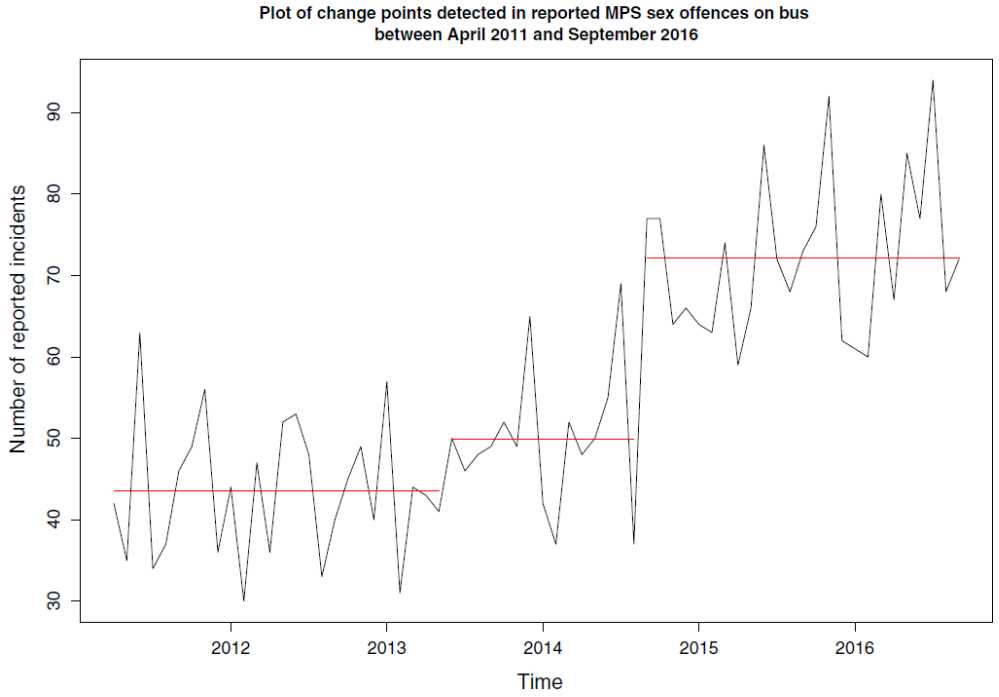


Fig. 4 Change points detected in volume of reported sex offences on buses

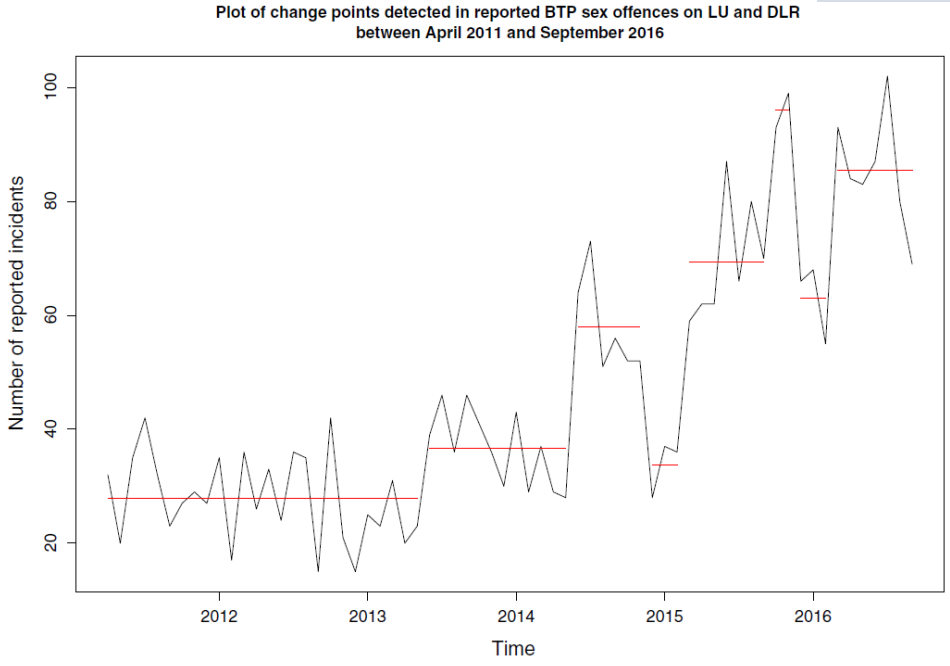


Fig. 5 Change points detected in volume of reported sex offences on LU and DLR

Solymosi et al, 2018

2) RITSI: Summary

1. analysis shows an increase in the number of reported offences with each wave
2. more pronounced effect on LU- and DLR-related offences than on bus-related ones
3. no corresponding increases in self reported levels of USB (TfL Attitude survey)
4. increase in police-recorded crime numbers likely to be attributable to **increased reporting**, rather than increased prevalence

Report It  To Stop It? 

Solymosi et al, 2018

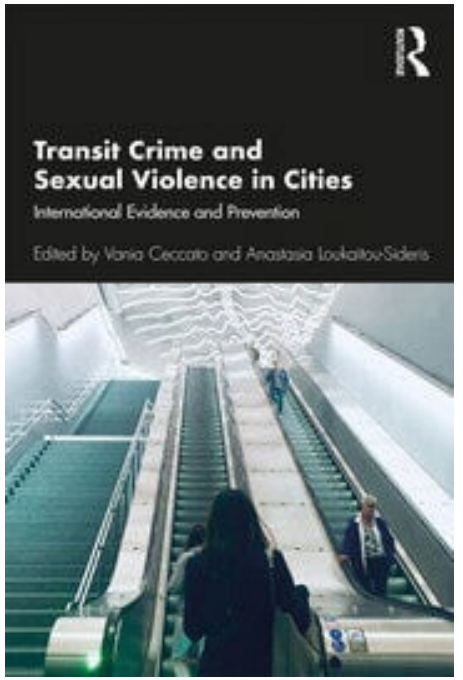
2) RITSI: Why Reporting Helps

- Operators and authorities better understand where and when the incidents are occurring
  - Target resources more appropriately
  - can be investigated by the police and that offenders can be identified and caught.
- Many offenders are repeat offenders.
  - Reporting helps police identify them and take action against them.
  - Could be lead to offenders being prosecuted and can help stop this happening to others.
- Even if only provide small piece of information police can use it with other information
  - reports, witnesses and CCTV evidence to identify them.
- TfL staff are there to support our customers
  - know what to do to support people who have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment on our network.
  - They can help you report it to the police if that is what you want to do.

TfL Website: https://tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/safety/report-it-to-stop-it

3) Precautionary Behaviour

3) Precautions and Reponses



- International Study (questionnaire at 18 cities across 18 countries & 6 continents)
- This chapter one of four cross cutting themes
  - Intersectionality/incidence and reporting/transit environment/precautions and responses
- Draw data from five cities
  - Guangzhou (China), London (UK), Los Angeles (USA), Paris (France), and Vancouver (Canada)
- Aims:
  - To explore the use of precautionary behavior on public transit by bus and rail users across the five cities
  - To examine the use of risk management and avoidance strategies across the five cities by mode of travel, gender, frequency of travel, feelings of safety when travelling, and prior victimization
  - To investigate what factors are predictive of precautionary behavior across both bus and rail travel.

Newton et al, 2020

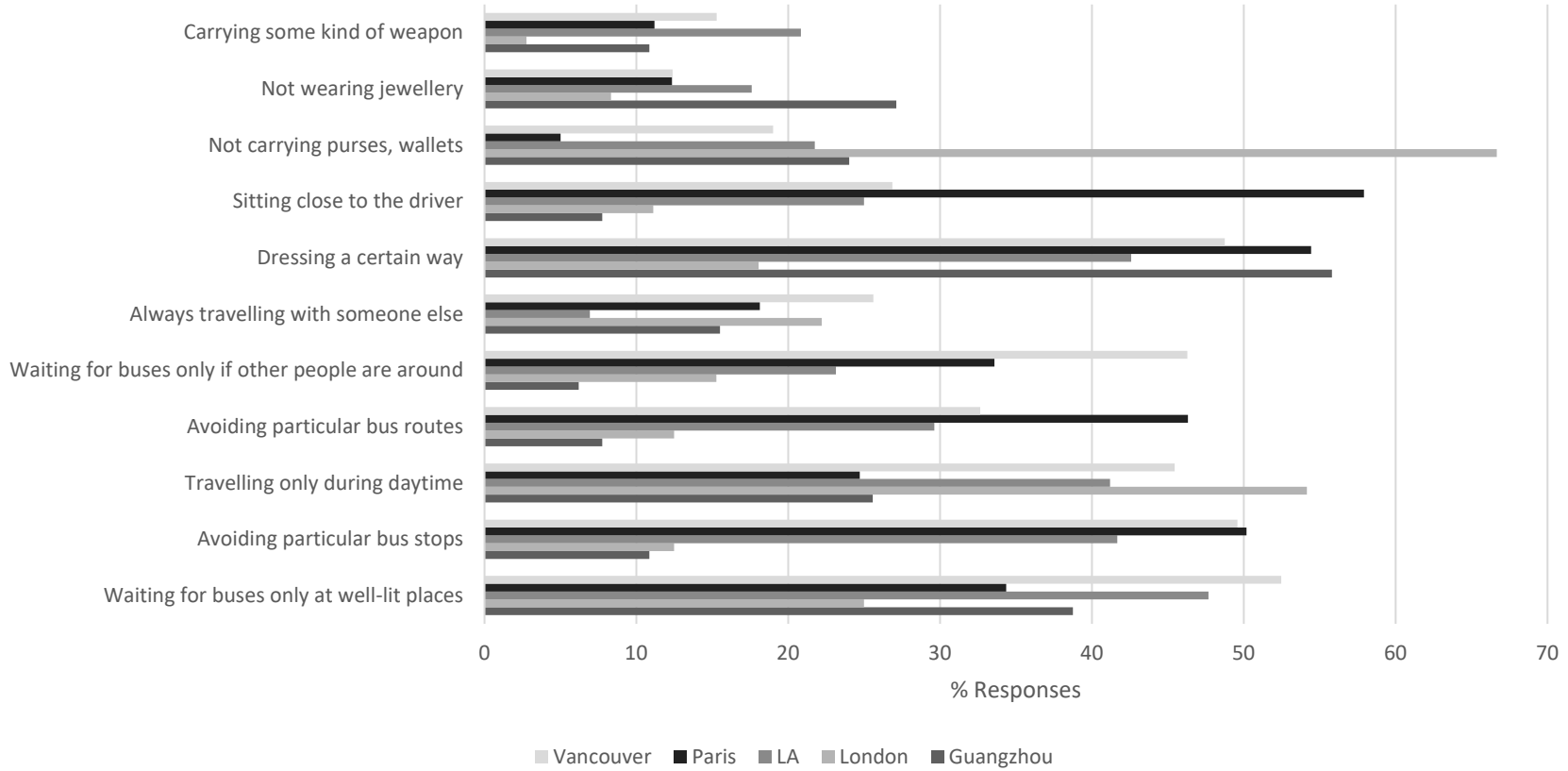
3) Precautions and Reponses

- Classification

Precautionary Behavior	Classification
Travelling only during daytime	Avoidance
Always travelling with someone else	Avoidance
Avoiding particular bus lines	Avoidance
Avoiding particular bus stops	Avoidance
Waiting for transit only at well-lit places	Avoidance
Waiting for transit only if other people are around	Avoidance
Sitting close to the driver	Risk management
Dressing in a certain way	Risk management
Not wearing jewellery	Risk management
Not carrying purses, wallets	Risk management
Carrying a weapon, an object to defend yourself	Risk management

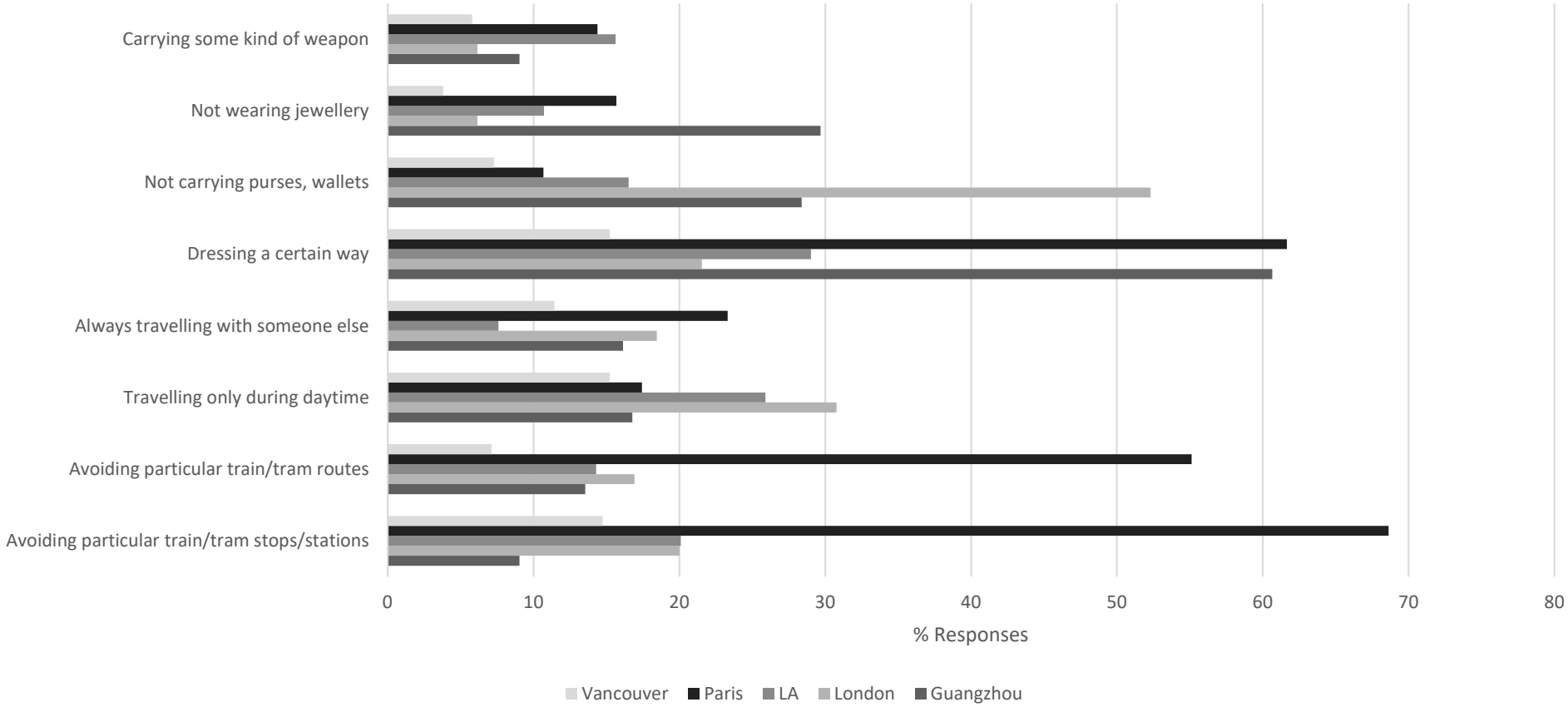
3) Precautions and Reponses

Types of precautionary behaviors taken by *bus* users in the five cities



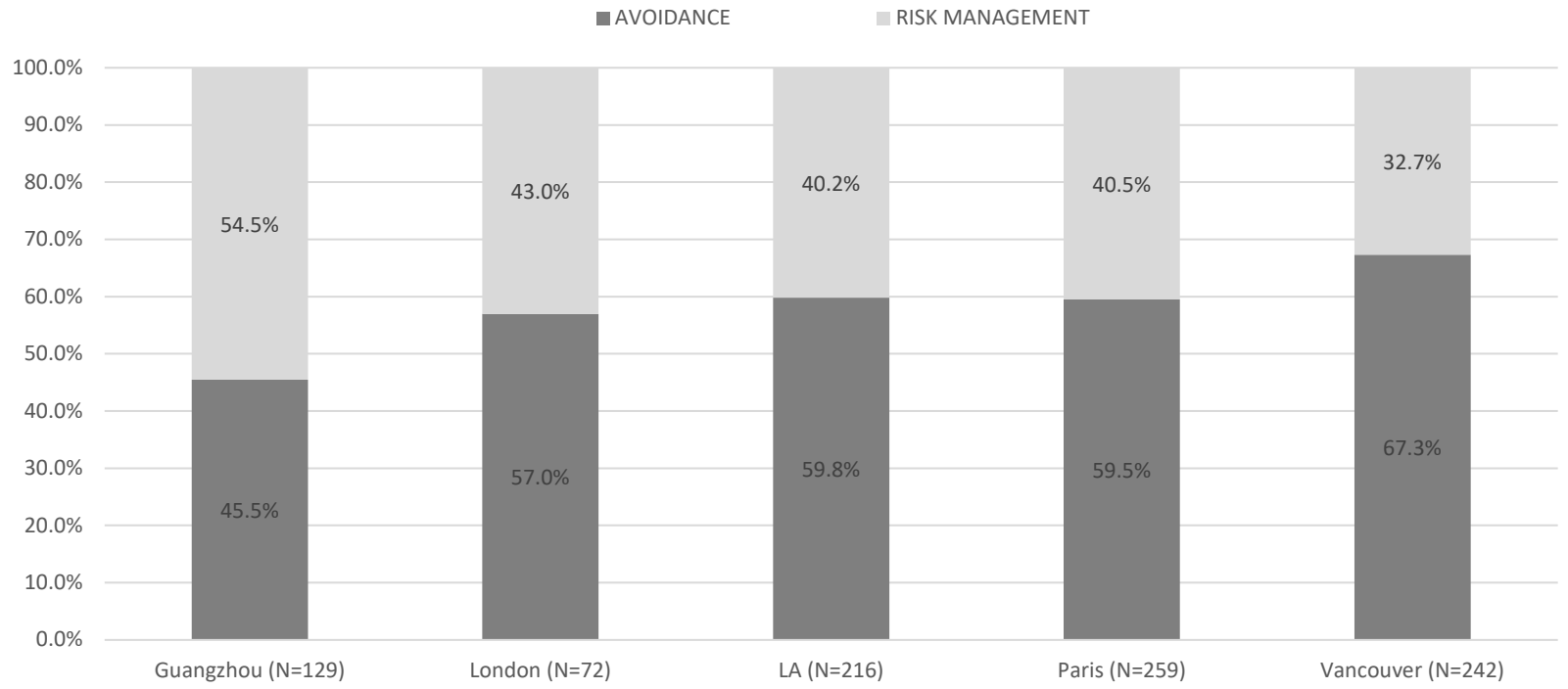
3) Precautions and Reponses

Types of precautionary behaviors taken by *rail* users in the five cities



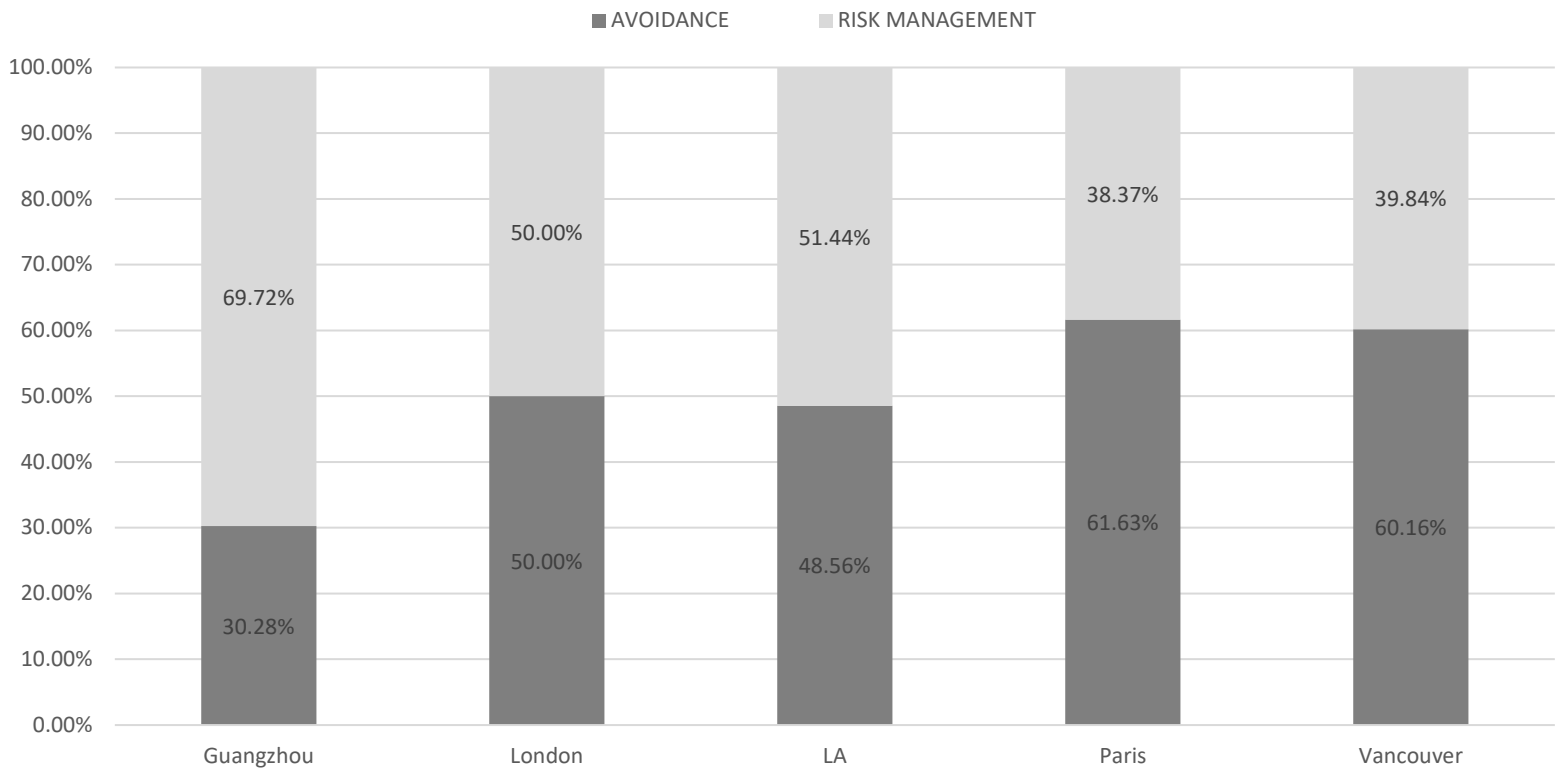
3) Precautions and Reponses

Avoidance and risk management behaviors by bus users in the five cities



3) Precautions and Reponses

Types of precautionary behaviors taken by *rail* users in the five cities



3) Precautions and Reponses

Logistic Regression. Predictors of Bus Riders' Precautionary Behavior

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Gender	-.602	.148	16.530	1	**.000**	.548
Age	-.280	.206	1.835	1	.176	.756
LGBTQI	.403	.215	3.503	1	.061	1.496
Ethnicity	-.053	.062	.730	1	.393	.948
Bus Duration	.101	.087	1.356	1	.244	1.106
Bus Frequency	.260	.073	12.769	1	**.000**	1.297
Safe Day	-.332	.142	5.465	1	.019	.718
Safe Night	-.285	.101	7.984	1	**.005**	.752
Bus Victimisation	-.098	.140	.488	1	.485	.907
Constant	.921	.695	1.758	1	.185	2.512

3) Precautions and Reponses

Logistic Regression. Predictors of Rail Riders' Precautionary Behavior

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Gender	-.222	.139	2.528	1	.112	.801
Age	-.229	.211	1.180	1	.277	.795
LGBTQI	.352	.214	2.719	1	.099	1.422
Ethnicity	-.120	.064	3.568	1	.059	.887
Rail Duration	.152	.082	3.434	1	.064	1.164
Rail Frequency	.237	.073	10.605	1	**.001**	1.268
Safe Day	.006	.146	.002	1	.969	1.006
Safe Night	-.644	.124	27.174	1	**.000**	.525
Rail Victimisation	.026	.137	.036	1	.850	1.026
Constant	.450	.687	.430	1	.512	1.569

3) Precautions and Reponses

- generally avoidance more frequent than risk management,
  - experienced in four of the five cities, except for Guanhou
- When comparing frequency, gender, and feelings of safety on buses and trains
  - unsurprising that greater percentage of female users, those who feel unsafe at night time, and those who travel more frequently take more precautions than male users, those who feel unsafe at daytime, and those who travel less frequently
- On rail - males used avoidance techniques more than expected.
- On bus and rail - frequent users used more avoidance techniques than expected.
- Statistical differences in precautionary techniques were not found for prior victimization and feelings of safety
- Finally, gender (on bus only and not rail), feelings of safety at night-time (bus and rail), and frequency of travel (bus and rail) were shown to be significant predictor variables of use of precautionary behavior on public transport

3) Precautions and Reponses

- Need to better identify precautionary tactics taken by transit users
- Can we design prevention measures that both reduce the need for users to take precautions without reducing the patronage of public transit
- Specific attention to those who take avoidance strategies, especially females, frequent users, and those who feel unsafe at night-time.
- Suggest these groups most likely to stop travelling if risk/fear becomes a barrier to travel, which might even outweigh their necessity to travel using public transit.

4) Prevention

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4) Prevention

- July 2021, UK Government appointed two transport champions
- Laura Shoaf, chair of the Urban Transport Group and Chief Executive of the West Midlands Combined Authority and Anne Shaw, Executive Director of TfWM.
- Responsibility was to produce a report of recommendations for how the transport network in the UK could be improved to better protect women and girls
- Spent year working with the Department for Transport (DfT) and passenger groups across the UK

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=auRo8RDGUUU

4) Prevention

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=auRo8RDGUUU

4) Prevention

Short-term Priorities:

- Recommendation 1: Better national transport planning guidance on ways to make transport infrastructure safer **with a clear, monitored reporting service** for infrastructure damage or issues

Requirement for improved reporting

- Recommendation 2: Improvements in the collection of **gender disaggregated data**

Requirement for improved reporting

- Recommendation 3: Undertake a **national communications initiative** into tackling VAWGs, which is promoted nationally across our transport networks

Underpinning framework for communication?

- Recommendation 4: Deliver better, **effective training** across the transport industry to help manage incidents involving VAWGs

Lessons from Project Guardian/RITSI staff training?

- Recommendation 5: Review current safeguarding practices and standardise Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all front facing staff across the transport industry

4) Prevention

Medium-term Goals:

- Recommendation 6: Encourage an increased uptake of women working in the transport industry
- Recommendation 7: Embrace more use of technology to combat VAWGs
- Recommendation 8: Introduce Gender Responsive Budgets to support the delivery of gender equality infrastructure and policies

Long-term Goals:

- Recommendation 9: Create a national, intelligence database which captures incident reporting from all transport modes and areas
- Recommendation 10: Develop a national education initiative in schools which educates young people on ways they can play a role in preventing VAWGs
- Recommendation 11: Target available resources including staffing and deployment of police forces at locations which will have the greatest impact on our transport networks
- Recommendation 12: Establish more Safer Travel Partnerships between operators, local authorities and the police
- Recommendation 13: Continue to raise awareness and make a positive impact through the tackling VAWG strategy

Unintended Consequences

Requirement for improved reporting in fragmented operator system

Requirement for improved reporting

Precautionary behaviour – especially avoidance not directly addressed?

4) Prevention

Transport for London 2021 campaign

Focus On Specific Offences

1.Cat Calling
Making unsolicited remarks of a sexual nature about someone
2.Exposing
Revealing intimate body parts
3.Cyber-flashing
Sending or showing sexual content without consent
4.Pressing
Rubbing against someone on purpose
5.Touching
Touching someone inappropriately
6.Staring
Intrusive staring of a sexual nature
7.Upskirting
Taking photos under someone's clothing

https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2021/october/new-campaign-launches-to-stamp-out-sexual-harassment-on-public-transport

4) Prevention

Bystander Guidance: what to do if you witness harassment

- Ways help if witness USB on transport network.
- Don't need to have been targeted yourself to report

Ways to support a fellow passenger who is being harassed:

- Get help by calling/texting police, speaking to a member of transport staff, using a help point or passenger alarm
- Engage in conversation with them about something unrelated, ignoring the offender and their behaviour
- Still going about your normal business, stand in between them and the offender, ignoring the offender and their behaviour
- Offer help and check that they are okay/Ask a fellow passenger for help
- If you feel safe, and only once you have assessed the risks, you could record the incident on a phone. Keep a safe distance and give the recording to the police
- After an incident, check in with them and see if there is anything you can do to help
- Report the incident to transport staff and/or police
- Directly challenging the offender about their behaviour is risky and you need to assess the situation very carefully before speaking up.
- Avoid putting yourself in harm's way.

https://tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/safety/report-it-to-stop-it

5) Overall Reflections

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5) Challenges of PT environs

- Public Transport presents diverse set of opportunities
  - busy and quiet times and locations
  - Varied levels of staffing
- Low levels of reporting
- Mix of open spaces and controlled entry
- Unfamiliarity of settings
- Users – intersectionality (transit ‘captives’)
- How support users who use avoidance strategies
- Co-design interventions with user community

Any Questions

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