

Shoplifting is not a victimless crime!

by [GEORGE_HELON](#)

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So there I was doing my regular shopping at one of our major supermarkets.

I am down by the fresh meat section when I overhear a male customer ask his female companion "which steak would you like tonight hon?"

Normally I wouldn't bat an eyelid - and I know this seems like stereotyping - but when you have a dishevelled couple wearing unclean track pants and loosely hanging hoodie tops with dirty hair in disarray looking at Drover's Choice premium meat cuts at 20 bucks a kilo, you sort of know the supermarket is about to be fleeced.

He looks left, he looks right, and down the front of his track pants goes two 20 buck or so steaks.

Then the man walks calmly over to where the sausages are and selects a nice big pack of traditional English beef sausages which he effortlessly shoves down the back of his track pants.

After adjusting his garments to disguise his precious plunder Clyde coolly walks over to his Bonnie.

Not to be outdone, his female companion in crime waltzes over to where the energy drinks are, looks about, and up the front of her hoodie top goes a few cans.

Then not forgetting desert, they casually walk over to the freezer section where she just nicks a pack of Peters Drumstick ice cream cones without a second thought.

An announcement over the P.A. address system rings out, "security check camera 3."

Staff have obviously noticed and are fully aware of what is going on but can do absolutely nothing to deter the shoplifting spree.

You see, shoplifters it seems have more rights than store owners, managers, staff and we customers.

According to information posted to the Queensland Police website "you do not have a legal right to use force to stop a person, you (cannot) physically touch a suspected shoplifter, you do not have a legal right to search a person's bag or property" - it is a bloody a free-for-all.

So what is shoplifting?

Shoplifting is when one selects, conceals, and removes items from a retail or other establishment without any intention of paying, or having paid for them.

In epidemic proportions, shoplifting - as it has been for decades - is the scourge of retailers and traders, it accounts for a large proportion of reported annual retail, shop and store losses.

Shoplifting is law-breaking pure and simple, it is not a victimless crime!

The effects and ramifications of shoplifting by petty crooks and wanton theft by professional thieves can be devastating.

Stealing from retailers and traders increases store overheads, results in price increases, costs livelihoods, it can result in staff losses or the dropping of convenient products; everybody suffers in some way.

Many times I have seen people walk out with full trolley loads of groceries, partially paid for goods, substituted goods, even someone who put a whole hot cooked chicken down his pants.

There is no use even reporting it. Why bother?

The fact that the meat bears a security label that reads 'Security Protected Chilled Foods' is of absolutely no deterrence at all as the culprits - obviously career shoplifters - just brazenly walk out the store flipping the bird if challenged.

Okay, an alarm might go off as the thieves boldly exit the premises, but all it does is alert the store that more meat has just walked out the door.

Now thinking I was doing the right thing I once called-out a shoplifter but was promptly admonished and chastised by the Store Manager.

COVID-19 it seems is being used to justify wanton theft, the increased bludging off and hoodwinking of charities, and sponging off the goodwill and honourable intentions of people desirous to help those less fortunate.

With Christmas around the corner, not having a job, having children, or not being well is no excuse for stealing from others, charities and the government.

At the very least the government gives every person some sort of financial support.

People need to get their priorities in order, take a reality pill and look at themselves in a mirror.

Forget living beyond your means, forget the drugs, the booze, the fags and the gambling; be up-front and honest with yourselves, your children and your families.

So stop nicking things.