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words

Shoplifting

Martin S. Humphreys

Shoplifting is common. The Centre for Retail Research estimates that customer and staff theft in the UK accounted for nearly £4000 million in 2011 alone. Generally there is no link with mental disorder. But it can be associated with depression, often in apparently well-adjusted, law-abiding women, in middle or later life and what appears to be a conventional marriage. Characteristically in such cases it occurs in a major high street retailer, is of an unwanted item that the perpetrator possesses the funds to buy, which is removed if not ostentatiously, then with no attempt at concealment. A cry for help?

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