

# ATLAS SAFETY & SECURITY DESIGN, INC.

## CPTED: SECURITY FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

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I've known Randy Atlas a long time. Since the first day we met, Randy has been the champion of a security concept still foreign to many of us. It is CPTED.

Heard of it? No, it is not Coping with People who Tease Edward Daily. CPTED stands for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. It is an architectural concept espousing the view that crime can be curtailed with a little architectural foresight and equal cooperation from the security community.

Randy, or Dr. Atlas to his friends, is a noted security expert and architect living in Miami. His cause celebre has been to spread the gospel of CPTED for almost two decades to those in both the architectural and security communities, realizing that only a cooperative effort will yield success. Although research and actual practice of CPTED concepts prove they work, this common-sense approach to security is still fighting for acceptance. CPTED's greatest enemy is ignorance.

The concept of protecting one's home or entire community by incorporating the flow of nature is not new. Respect for property and planning for its protection goes back more than 6,000 years to the Valley of Sumeria. Among the strict code of laws and ethics developed by the Sumarian king Hammurabi were no-nonsense laws and consequences designed to protect tenants from unscrupulous builders.

There are countless archeological finds that suggest we have actively searched for ways to control our environment since the dawn of man. Chinese practitioners of Feng Shui promoted the design of harmony in space when planning everything from the smallest room to complete cities in the eighth century. In the eighth through the eleventh centuries, the cliff dwellers of the North American deserts constructed impregnable homes in the face of cliffs accessible only by ladders -- and the entrances could be sealed by huge boulders.

We are in a transitional period of history, a time where the explosion of technology and space management advances are linked in a union which can ensure an environment which promotes accepted human behavior. Protection of property and the security of tenants can be influenced by the building and its surroundings. That is CPTED in the raw.

How does CPTED win even wider acceptance? Education and training is the key. CPTED must become a standard track at all professional, educational, and training seminars. Legislators, planning board members, and professional associations need to orient themselves with CPTED's principles so ongoing planning decisions are made with security concepts in mind.

In addition to education, current building codes need to be mindful of CPTED. Interagency and interdisciplinary decision-making should include an expanded view in the design process using CPTED concepts. And last but not least, a push through civil litigation that aesthetically-minded security planning reduces victimization and property loss is simply good for us all.

How did I do, Dr. Atlas?

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