

SUPPLEMENTARY  
EMPIRICAL  
TEACHING  
UNITS IN  
POLITICAL  
SCIENCE

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# THE FEAR OF CRIME

Developed by

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**WESLEY G. SKOGAN**

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**WILLIAM R. KLECKA**

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**SETUPS: AMERICAN POLITICS**  
Revised Edition: December 1977

# **The Fear of Crime**

Developed by

**Wesley G. Skogan**  
**Northwestern University**

and

**William R. Klecka**  
**University of Cincinnati**

The victimization survey data used in this module was collected by the U.S. Bureau of the Census under contract with the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, U.S. Department of Justice. We would like to thank Dawn D. Nelson and Charles R. Kinderman of LEAA and Linda R. Murphy of the Census Bureau for their advice and assistance with these data.

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A test edition of *The Fear of Crime* was distributed to 36 faculties for class use and evaluation. The field test reports and faculty reviews were used by the authors and project director in revising the module.

The revised edition of *The Fear of Crime* is published under the auspices of the Division of Educational Affairs. However, the views expressed are those of the authors and not of the Division of Educational Affairs or of the American Political Science Association.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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### Chapter

1	Introduction—The Fear of Crime .....	1
2	Using Surveys to Study Crime .....	5
3	The Data for this Module .....	15
4	Crimes and Their Victims .....	25
5	Victimization and the Fear of Crime .....	43
6	City Differences in Victimization and Fear .....	53

### Appendices

A Methodological Note to Advanced Analysts .....	63
Notes to the Instructor .....	67
Annotated Bibliography .....	69
Codebook .....	75

## FOREWORD

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The publication of revised editions of SETUPS: American Politics in 1975 launched the Association's education program to develop and distribute innovative instructional materials. The publication of the revised editions of SETUPS: Cross-National and World Politics, in 1977, expanded the coverage of recent research topics to these other fields of political science.

All these SETUPS were written by political scientists working in College Faculty Workshops, supported by grants from the National Science Foundation and hosted by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research. The SETUPS they prepared proved to be useful, popular learning packages. Approximately 25,000 copies have been ordered for classes by faculty in over 200 universities and colleges in the United States, Canada, Australia and Europe. Since the format and applicability of the SETUPS was established, the Steering Committee for the political science undergraduate education project invited faculty working at their own institutions to develop other SETUPS units.

Wesley G. Skogan and William R. Klecka were the first to accept this invitation. While on leave from their departments for project assignments at the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, they had access to the LEAA victimization surveys and, in preparing *The Fear of Crime*, they have made these data, and the policy problems they address, accessible now to other social science faculty and students.

*The Fear of Crime* is a welcome addition and first extension of the current series of SETUPS: American Politics.

## SETUPS: American Politics

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The SETUPS in this series were designed for use in courses on American Government and public policy analysis. During a testing period they were widely used in these courses, and found to be helpful in advanced courses as well. Data in the form of OSIRIS, SPSS or card image form for all SETUPS is provided by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, University of Michigan, without charge through an agreement with the American Political Science Association, for each order of 25 or more SETUPS.

SETUPS in the American Politics series are:

*Voting Behavior: The 1972 Election*, by Bruce D. Bowen, C. Anthony Broh, Charles L. Prysby.

*Political Socialization Across the Generations*, by Paul Allen Beck, Jere W. Bruner, L. Douglas Dobson.

*Political Participation*, by F. Christopher Arterton, Harlan Hahn.

*Representation in the United States Congress: 1973*, by Ray A. Geigle and Peter J. Hartjens.

*The Supreme Court in American Politics: Policy Through Law*, by John Paul Ryan, C. Neal Tate.

*U.S. Energy, Environment and Economic Problems: A Public Policy Simulation*, by Barry Hughes.

*The Dynamics of Political Budgeting: A Public Policy Simulation*, by Marvin K. Hoffman.

*The Fear of Crime*, by Wesley G. Skogan and William R. Klecka.

# PREFACE

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The victimization survey data used in this module was collected by the U.S. Bureau of the Census under contract with the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, U.S. Department of Justice. We would like to thank Dawn D. Nelson and Charles R. Kinderman of LEAA and Linda R. Murphy of the Census Bureau for their advice and assistance with these data.

Wesley G. Skogan is Associate Professor of Political Science and Urban Affairs at Northwestern University. William R. Klecka is Associate Professor of Political Science and Senior Research Fellow in the Behavioral Sciences Laboratory at the University of Cincinnati. During the development of the Test Edition of this module, the authors were associated with the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. Skogan served as a Visiting Fellow at the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (Grant #76-NI-99-0032) and Klecka was a Visiting Statistician at the National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service. The points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice or the American Political Science Association.

The revised edition of this SETUPS is developed to compliment the series as topics in American Politics, initiated in a college faculty workshop, Summer 1974, and supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation. The extension of SETUPS by the development of units on additional topics, drawing upon recent research findings and more advanced analytical skills, is supported by the Project to Improve Undergraduate Education in Political Science.

# CHAPTER I.

## Introduction-The Fear of Crime

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Over a decade ago—July, 1965—President Johnson pledged the resources of the federal government to “banish crime from the United States of America.” He charged his new advisory group, the President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, to gather information on crime and the effectiveness of crime control programs and to propose bold new alternatives to halt the rising victimization rate. During the following decade, expenditures by all levels of government on the criminal justice system (the police, courts and prosecutors, jails, etc.) rose over 200 percent. In 1975 (the latest year for which the information is yet available) these activities cost more than 17 billion dollars. This increase has come at a time when municipal agencies, which bear most of the cost, are hard-pressed to meet demands for services of any kind. Money for jails comes at the expense of competing uses for tax dollars. In terms of percentage *increases* since 1965, more has gone to fund crime-control activities than has been spent on either education or health services in the United States (Skoler, 1975).\*

At the same time that investments in the criminal justice system have been rising, the crime rate has skyrocketed. In the decade since the President’s Commission began its work, officially reported property crime has risen 160 percent and the violent crime rate has jumped 190 percent (Federal Bureau of Investigation 1975:55). In 1965 there were 9,060 murders “known to the police” (a term indicating that they had been reported to the police and, after investigation, were determined actually to have been murders); in 1975 there were 20,510. The police recorded only 906,600 burglaries in 1965, but over 3,200,000 in 1975. Part of the increase in the absolute number of crimes can be attributed to an increase in the American population during the same period. For this reason we usually talk about crime “rates,” or the number of incidents for every 100,000 persons. Even when we examine crime rates, however, we still find that victimization is on the upswing. The burglary rate, for example, rose

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\*This type of footnote refers the reader to a bibliography located near the end of the module. It lists the works cited in the text by their author’s last name and the date of the publication. In the case of references to specific tables or quotations, page numbers are given in the textual note as well.

200 percent in the 11 years between 1965 and 1975 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1976:49).

Not only has the rate of crime increased, but in some ways its character has been changing as well. In Chicago, for example, guns were used in 50 percent of all murders in 1965, and in more than 70 percent by 1973 (Block, 1975:498). The proportion of murders which occur in the course of the commission of another crime (such as robbery or rape) has been increasing as well (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1975:19). Such violent crimes are largely an urban phenomenon. In general, violent personal crimes are concentrated in larger cities. For example, in 1970 the 32 largest cities in the nation (which housed 16 percent of the population) reported 67 percent of all robberies known to the police in the U.S.

The years since the creation of the President's Commission also have witnessed increasing public concern about the crime problem. Between 1965 and 1973, the proportion of the population who indicated in public opinion polls that they were afraid to walk alone at night in their own neighborhoods rose steadily, reaching a high of over 40 percent (U.S. Department of Justice, 1975d:172). Those polls consistently find that the crime problem ranks as the number one local concern of citizens, especially those in large cities. A 1975 Gallup poll asked residents of cities over 500,000, "What do you regard as your community's worst problem?" In the replies, crime ranked far above unemployment, housing, education, and the cost of living. This is in contrast with a similar poll conducted in 1949, which found only 4 percent of big-city residents indicating that crime was the worst local problem (U.S. Department of Justice, 1975d:171). These polls indicate that related problems, including drug use, youthful delinquency, and the ineffectiveness of the police, attract public concern as well.

These findings complement our own research on patterns of victimization and the fear of crime in American cities. The Bureau of the Census has conducted surveys of the populations of 26 major cities, questioning citizens about crime. These surveys uncovered high levels of fear in many communities. One-half of those living in Detroit and New York City, and almost 60 percent of the residents of Newark, indicated that they were afraid to walk alone on the streets of their own neighborhoods at night. New Yorkers were most likely to think that their chances of falling victim to a personal crime (robbery or assault) had risen; over 70 percent thought the probability was up. They were followed closely by citizens in Cleveland, New Orleans, and Baltimore. When asked if crime led them to change their day-to-day activity, 55 percent of those questioned in New York and over 70 percent of those living in Detroit indicated that it had.

On the other hand, there is considerable variation in the level of fear even among major cities. While some communities scored consistently high on these measures, citizens in other places evidenced much lower levels of fear. For example, only 26 percent of San Diegans indicated that they were afraid to use the streets at night, and only about one quarter of the residents sampled in Pittsburgh, Minneapolis, and San Diego reported that they had changed their

behavior due to crime. People in all of the surveyed cities indicated that their *own* neighborhoods were fairly safe; a maximum of only 12 percent (in Newark) thought that the area in which they lived was more dangerous than others in the city.

Our analysis of the data also indicates that there are considerable differences in the frequency with which people are victimized in these cities. A series of reports detailing patterns of victimization in the 26 cities have been published by the U.S. Department of Justice (see the bibliography). They indicate that criminal victimization rates vary from city to city and by type of crime. Residents of San Diego were robbed at a rate of 11 incidents per thousand, while the rate in New York was 24 per thousand and in Detroit it was 32 per thousand. Simple property thefts were much more common in San Diego than in other cities, however. There the theft rate from households was 190 per thousand, while in New York the comparable rate was only 33.

While these city comparisons are informative, the most important use of the data is its ability to shed new light on the problems of individuals. In the interviews people were given an opportunity to relate their experiences and express their own opinions about crime and its impact upon their lives. We can use that data to analyze the distribution of victimization and fear across various population subgroups. By dividing respondents to the survey on the basis of their age, race, and other personal attributes, it is possible to isolate those groups which bear the heaviest burden of crime.

In this instructional module we will examine these new data on the crime problem in large American cities. We will focus upon three particular subjects: the *frequency* of various kinds of victimization, the personal characteristics of the *targets* of those crimes, and the impact of criminal victimization upon the *fear* of crime. The data we will employ to study these issues were collected in personal interviews conducted by the Bureau of the Census in New York City in 1973 and early in 1974 in San Diego, California. Interviewers questioned large, randomly-selected samples of residents of those cities about their crime experiences and about their perceptions of the magnitude of the crime problem, their fear of victimization, and the impact of crime on their daily lives. We will use the results of those interviews to examine a series of specific questions about the frequency, distribution, and consequences of crime.

In Chapter 2 of this module you will learn how and why the surveys were conducted. Beginning with Chapter 3, you will learn to use a specially-selected subsample of the original data from San Diego and New York City to address particular problems. Your instructor will assist you in learning how to use a computer analysis program and how to access the victimization data with it. Chapter 3 describes in some detail the data you will be using. It presents part of the questionnaire originally used to collect it, and it illustrates how answers to the questions were converted into quantitative data suitable for computer analysis. It then introduces a codebook which documents the exact contents of the data set. The codebook lists the questions which were used to gather the information desired, summarizes the distribution of the responses to each, and indicates exactly where the data for each question are located. Finally, in

**Chapter 3 you will do your first analysis of the data.**

**In the remaining chapters you will use the computer to examine patterns of victimization and fear. In Chapter 4 you will determine the frequency of various crimes in New York City and San Diego and you will analyze how victimization is distributed across population groups. Using such variables as race, sex, and age, you will discover who bears the burden of urban crime. In Chapter 5 you will isolate the relationship between victimization and fear, and in Chapter 6 you will analyze differences between the two cities on all of these variables. At each step you will be assigned a series of specific exercises to complete. These will guide you in your use of the data. However, there are many variables described in the codebook which we will not be using in the exercise, and you may wish to explore additional topics of interest on your own. A brief annotated bibliography has been included in this module to assist those who wish to continue their research on victimization.**

# CHAPTER 2.

## Using Surveys to Study Crime

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### Introduction

During the past decade there has been considerable interest in the use of sample surveys to study the frequency of crime and public opinion about crime and its consequences. The inadequacy of official statistics about these topics led the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (widely known as the "Crime Commission") to sponsor the development of the first reliable techniques to measure the incidence of criminal victimization using survey interviews. The Census Bureau has pursued this task since 1970, first through the refinement of those techniques and then through a large-scale interviewing program. Supported financially by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, the Bureau has conducted major victimization surveys in 26 major cities, and continuously monitors a national sample of households in order to gather data on victimization trends. These surveys have produced a large body of data on the attitudes and opinions of Americans, their perceptions of crime and the operation of local police departments, and their experiences with crime. This module will explore some of that information, probing the relationship between the personal attributes of individuals, their victimization experiences, and their views of the world.

### Traditional Measures of Crime

Before the development of victimization surveys, most of what we knew about crime was based upon information found in police files. After answering calls for assistance, police officers are expected to write up reports upon criminal incidents using standardized forms. Those forms call for detailed descriptions of offenders (to aid the police) and descriptions of the offense (to aid prosecutors). These reports are also used for administrative purposes (to keep track of what police officers are doing) and to provide data for planning local criminal justice activities. Some of the most important research on crime also has utilized the information gathered in this way, including Marvin Wolfgang's (1958) classic study of homicide in Philadelphia and Franklin Zimring's (1968) analysis of the effect of guns on the murder rate in Chicago. Many researchers rely upon the national crime data published yearly by the FBI in their *Uniform Crime Report*. The information reported there is supplied by local police departments

throughout the nation, who forward summary reports of their activities to Washington. From this the FBI compiles city-wide, regional, and national accounts of the nature and extent of crime.

There are many reasons to be dissatisfied with these official statistics, however. First, they are highly compressed and summarized in their published form, and much of the detailed information required by criminal justice analysts is lost from sight. For example, both city and national reports typically provide data only about arrestees, ignoring the vast amount of data that is collected about victim's descriptions of successful criminals—those who got away. Information about the frequency of crime is summarized in large, general categories which combine quite dissimilar offenses. The official reporting system also is by nature inadequate to collect certain kinds of important information. The police are not in a good position to gather research data on many of the personal attributes of victims (income, employment). It probably also is infeasible to expect them to collect reliable, non-reactive measures of the opinions and perceptions of victims, nor indicators of the quality of police performance and victim satisfaction with police services. More fundamentally, the police do not solicit information of any sort about *non*-victims. In order to understand the dynamics of crime it is necessary to learn why some persons are not victims, which requires some agency capable of contacting persons who do not request police services at all.

Finally, there is widespread suspicion of the quality of much of the data that the police presently collect. We know that a great deal of crime—perhaps as much as 50 percent in some categories—goes unreported to the police (Skogan, 1976a). These incidents make up what commonly is known as "the dark figure of unreported crime," a pool of events of unknown magnitude which escape the official notice of the criminal justice system. We also suspect that the police themselves are prone to under-report or misrepresent some of the information that comes to their attention. Crimes often are recorded in less serious categories than they deserve in order to downgrade their apparent significance, or they may be scratched from the official record entirely (Seidman and Couzens, 1974). This problem is particularly acute when police commanders are under pressure to reduce the crime rate. The result is that we are never sure if crime statistics are telling us about crime or about police department politics.

### **Survey Measures of Crime**

The Crime Commission was charged by President Johnson to "seek out new knowledge, new techniques, and new understanding. . ." of the crime problem in America (President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, 1967a). The Commission quickly recognized the severe limitations imposed upon them in this pursuit by the data on crime which was available for analysis. One of their major projects was a series of survey studies of crime and attitudes toward crime. First they investigated the methodological problems involved in conducting such studies, then they carried out a national survey to assess the incidence of crime and the status of public opinion.

It was important to pretest the techniques to be used in the study of victimization, for it was unclear at the outset that survey interviews could be used to gather reliable data on crime. It was not certain, for example, that people would be willing to discuss many crime-related experiences. Some crimes arise out of highly private or embarrassing circumstances, which their participants may be unwilling to reveal. Sexual offenses often present similar problems, as do assaults and other crimes which involve victims and offenders who are related or who know one another personally. Earlier studies of homicide and interpersonal violence indicated that the victims of such crimes often could be blamed for initiating the dispute, and it was suspected that interviewers would have difficulty eliciting reports of events in which respondents were at least partially at fault.

In addition, preliminary investigations revealed that the inability of victims to remember or accurately recall the details of victimization could present serious problems. Most crimes involve relatively small losses, and it became clear that the limited ability of victims to dredge those events from their memory would limit severely the length of the time period the surveys could cover. Finally—and ironically—it was not certain that there was *enough* crime to study in this fashion. Despite its importance, crime is a relatively rare event; most people report that they were not victimized at all when we ask them about their experiences during some limited period of time (one year in most surveys). Most of the serious assaultive crimes against persons which ignite public concern occur only infrequently. In 1965, the year before the crime surveys were carried out, the official robbery rate for the United States was 72 crimes per 100,000 persons (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1966); if crime were truly this infrequent, it would be impossible to mount a practical survey which could uncover enough robbery victims for study. Only the discovery that there were many unreported robberies and other personal crimes, enough to ensure that their victims were common enough to survey, enabled researchers to proceed with the project. (For the official report of this early methodological research, see the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, 1966b.)

### **Current Survey Activities**

Work on the current federal crime survey began in 1970. Following the publication of the results of the Commission's surveys there was a brief hiatus while policy analysts and academic researchers digested the import of their findings. The Commission's national survey attracted considerable attention, for it revealed rates for certain crimes which were five to seven times those published by the FBI. The survey indicated that a substantial amount of crime went unreported to the police, and that blacks and the poor suffered disproportionately from the burden of crime and from poor relations with the police (see the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, 1966c). There also was considerable controversy over some methodological aspects of the Commission's research.

About 1970, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration began investigating the feasibility of conducting new and more reliable victimization surveys. Methodological studies were conducted to develop better techniques for measuring both the frequency and characteristics of criminal events. The survey program currently conducted by the Census Bureau for LEAA involves a number of on-going activities. The largest single component of the program is the National Crime Panel, which involves continuously monitoring the experiences of the residents of a national sample of households and the employees of a national sample of commercial establishments. Persons who live in households which are selected to become part of the National Crime Panel are reinterviewed every six months for up to three and one-half years. About 21,000 interviews are conducted each month. Data from those interviews are used to calculate estimates of the national frequency of certain crimes against persons (rape, robbery, assault, and personal thefts like purse snatching) and property crimes which victimize households (burglary, motor vehicle theft, and other property thefts). In addition to the household sample, a smaller group of business establishments and other organizations is interviewed regularly to produce national estimates of commercial robbery and burglary rates. Those figures are based upon interviews with owners, managers, or senior clerks, and include only crimes which victimize the establishment. Interviewing for both components of the national survey began in July, 1972. The results of these surveys are being published in a regular series (see the reports issued by the U.S. Department of Justice in the bibliography).

During the same period the Census Bureau also has conducted victimization surveys in 26 major American cities. These surveys were designed to produce estimates of the victimization rate for residents of those communities and to gather information about their perceptions of the crime problem, their fear of crime, and the impact of crime on their day-to-day activities. Because the city studies gathered a rich collection of attitudinal data, the household surveys in two of them—New York City and San Diego—have been selected for use in this module.

### **The City Surveys: Procedures**

It is important to understand the procedures by which potential respondents for the surveys in these two communities were selected, how they were located, and the manner in which they were questioned, for those factors determine the uses which can be made of the data and the limits upon the inferences we can make from the surveys to the residents of those cities as a whole.

Most of the families to be interviewed in the city surveys were selected from a list of households that had been compiled from the 1970 Census of Population in each city. Housing units were randomly selected from the list in pre-arranged numbers, based upon whether they were owned or rented in 1970 and whether they were inhabited by whites or nonwhites, high or low income families, and

large or small families in that year.\* In addition, group quarters (including college dormitories and rooming houses) were sampled. Because the household list was somewhat out of data, a sample of housing units built since the 1970 Census of Population was drawn from a list of building permits issued by each city. The final household sample for each city was quite large. In New York City, for example, 11,913 households were selected for inclusion.

Once a list of sample households was compiled, interviewers were dispatched from the Census Bureau's field offices in each city to conduct interviews with all persons 12 years of age and older who resided in each of them. This is quite different from the technique used to gather data in the surveys conducted for the Crime Commission. Those studies asked a "household informant"—one responsible adult in each household—to supply data on the crime experiences of each household resident. While this involved considerably fewer interviews than the current "complete enumeration" of a household, it proved to be an unreliable procedure to gather victimization information. The informants proved to be remarkably uninformed about the experiences of others. They recalled primarily their own victimizations, which led researchers to overestimate the amount of crime which affected adults (primarily housewives) rather than youths or those employed outside the home who were not often chosen to be informants. The Census Bureau's city surveys do continue to employ an informant to gather information about the youngest members in the sample, those 12 and 13 years of age. In addition, the attitude questionnaire was given only to those 16 years of age and older.

In general, the Census Bureau's field interviewers were quite successful in finding the sampled households and securing the cooperation of their residents. In New York City, 1,156 of the sampled units proved to be vacant or demolished, or were otherwise ineligible for inclusion in the actual sample. Of the 10,757 eligible households, contact was established and at least some interviews were conducted in 10,229 (95.1 percent) of them. Interviews eventually were conducted with 21,489 persons living in the sample households. The sample size, success rates, and number of respondents interviewed in San Diego was approximately the same as in New York City. The New York survey was conducted during January-March, 1973, and the San Diego survey a year later.

It is important to note that these surveys sampled only the *residents* of the legally-defined *central city* in each area. This has several implications. First, it means that the survey data are not comparable with crime statistics gathered by police departments in these cities, for official figures include crimes *committed*

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\*Actually, the sampling design was somewhat more complex than this. There were several income and family size categories, and some households which were vacant at the time of the 1970 Census of Population were included in this sample. For a more detailed description of the sample procedures for the household and commercial surveys, see any of the full-length official reports about the city surveys discussed in the bibliography.

in jurisdiction. They count victimizations of many persons who were not eligible for inclusion in the sample, including tourists, commuters, and even former residents who moved out of the cities shortly before the survey began but who lived in them during the period covered by the questionnaire. The latter also present a problem in understanding the dynamics of the fear of crime. One popular response to such fear (by those who can afford it) may be to *move* to the suburbs—and thus out of the range of the sample. The survey samples also include persons who recently moved into the cities, and the victimizations they report may have occurred elsewhere. The general point to remember is that the procedures we employ to study a problem may be intertwined with the substance of that problem. In this case, the inclusiveness of the sample design is related to the issue of who is victimized and where, and the findings of these surveys and the population to which they can be generalized must be interpreted with some care.

Samples of this size are extremely large compared to those usually employed in survey research. A typical national sample of 1,500 respondents or so, for example, will provide data which will be accurate within three or four percentage points. However, victimization surveys are conducted to gather data on a small number of events, not attributes shared by all respondents. The large samples employed in the city studies reflect the experience of the Crime Commission: they are necessary in order to sample enough victims of personal crimes to be able to make reliable inferences from those interviews to the population of a city as a whole. If the number of sample cases used to make such an inference is small, even trivial errors in the reading of a question or recording a respondent's answer, or mechanical errors in the computer processing of the data, can have a tremendous effect on the apparent victimization rate for a city. Even with these large samples, the number of actual victims encountered by interviewers in the city surveys often was painfully small. For example, only 22 victims of rape were uncovered in the New York City survey. As a result, we have excluded the data on rape from this module entirely.

Table 2-1 presents a breakdown of the victimization data gathered for New

**TABLE 2-1**  
**The Frequency of Victimization in New York City and San Diego**

Crime Type	Percent of Respondents Victimized in:	
	New York	San Diego
Robbery	2.6	1.1
Assault	1.2	3.9
Burglary	6.7	13.6
Larceny	12.1	37.9
Motor Vehicle Theft	3.0	2.5
(N)	(1,017)	(981)

Source: These frequencies were computed from the special data set constructed from the Census Bureau's attitudinal data files for New York and San Diego.

York City and San Diego which are used in this module. It illustrates the relative frequency (or, more appropriately in this case, the infrequency) of several crimes measured in the city surveys. The table reports the percentage of the respondents in your data set who recalled that they had been victimized in various ways during the year preceeding their interview. The figures are given separately for each community. Also given is the number of cases upon which the percentages are based, or the "N" for each city in your data set.

As you can see, the crimes against persons measured in the city surveys occurred relatively infrequently within that one-year time period: only 2.6 percent of New Yorkers and 1.1 percent of San Diegans interviewed reported that they were robbed. The proportions are substantially higher for other types of crime. As this suggests, the size of the samples drawn in the city surveys was determined in part by the nature of the crime that was to be measured. If more frequent property crimes (for example, larceny) were the only offenses of interest in the surveys, much smaller samples would have yielded enough information for analysis.

The same point can be made with regard to the attitude questionnaire administered in the city surveys. Data on the opinions and perceptions of respondents were not gathered in every case; rather, the attitude questionnaire was employed only in a randomly-selected *half* of the households. Because perceptions and opinions are personal attributes that most of us possess, the large samples required for the victimization component of the survey are not needed for the analysis of attitudes. The attitude questionnaire was administered only to a sub-sample of each city sample because this offered an opportunity to reduce the cost of the surveys. The general point to remember is that research procedures are determined in part by the nature of the problem at hand, and that some knowledge of the substance of that problem (in the first example, the approximate frequency of various kinds of crime) is important when drawing up even the most technical components of the research design for a project.

The victimization data you have examined were gathered in the following way. First, each respondent was asked a series of 12 "screening" questions. They were asked to recall whether any of a number of specific things had happened to them during the preceding year. On the next page there is an actual reproduction of that part of the survey questionnaire.

Every "yes" response to a screening question indicated that a victimization may have occurred. For each affirmative response to a screening question the respondent later was asked a series of questions probing for details of the event. On the basis of the information gathered in that part of the questionnaire it was determined if a crime had indeed occurred and the appropriate category in which it was to be counted. This incident report also elicited descriptions of offenders and their use of weapons, information on the magnitude of financial loss and physical injury resulting from the crime, and whether or not it was reported to the police. This part of the questionnaire contains a rich body of new information on the nature of the crime.

In addition to the victimization component of the survey, data also were gathered on the personal attributes of all respondents and their households.

INDIVIDUAL SCREEN QUESTIONS	
36. The following questions refer only to things that happened to you during the last 12 months - between _____, 197__ and _____, 197__.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How many times? <input type="checkbox"/> No
37. Did anyone take something (else) directly from you by using force, such as by a stickup, mugging or threat?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How many times? <input type="checkbox"/> No
38. Did anyone TRY to rob you by using force or threatening to harm you? (other than any incidents already mentioned)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How many times? <input type="checkbox"/> No
39. Did anyone beat you up, attack you or hit you with something, such as a rock or bottle? (other than any incidents already mentioned)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How many times? <input type="checkbox"/> No
40. Were you knifed, shot at, or attacked with some other weapon by anyone at all? (other than any incidents already mentioned)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How many times? <input type="checkbox"/> No
41. Did anyone THREATEN to beat you up or THREATEN you with a knife, gun, or some other weapon, NOT including telephone threats? (other than any incidents already mentioned)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How many times? <input type="checkbox"/> No
42. Did anyone TRY to attack you in some other way? (other than any incidents already mentioned)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How many times? <input type="checkbox"/> No
43. During the last 12 months, did anyone steal things that belonged to you from inside any car or truck, such as packages or clothing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How many times? <input type="checkbox"/> No
44. Was anything stolen from you while you were away from home, for instance at work, in a theater or restaurant, or while traveling?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How many times? <input type="checkbox"/> No
45. (Other than any incidents you've already mentioned) Was anything (else) at all stolen from you during the last 12 months?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How many times? <input type="checkbox"/> No
46. Did you find any evidence that someone ATTEMPTED to steal something that belonged to you? (other than any incidents already mentioned)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes - How many times? <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>47. Did you call the police during the last 12 months to report something that happened to you which you thought was a crime? (Do not count any calls made to the police concerning the incidents you have just told me about.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No - SKIP to 48</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes - What happened? _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(038) <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>48. Did anything happen to you during the last 12 months which you thought was a crime, but did NOT report to the police?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No - SKIP to Check Item E</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes - What happened? _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(039) <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>49. Did anything happen to you during the last 12 months which you thought was a crime, but did NOT report to the police?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No - SKIP to Check Item E</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes - What happened? _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(039) <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	

Questions were asked about each respondent's age, education, marital status, race, and (for whites) national ethnic origin. The household informant also supplied information about the family's income, how long it had lived at that address, and whether they owned or rented their home. These variables were included in order to compare the characteristics of victims and non-victims, and they will play an important role in your analysis of the victimization data.

The period of time for which respondents were asked to remember criminal events is called the "reference period" for the survey. Most retrospective interviews (those which call for respondents to recall events in the past) impose some limitation upon the recall period. Because the Crime Commission found that one's ability to remember many crimes or details about them (such as when they occurred, or how much was lost) faded with time, it was necessary to fix a reference period short enough to allow respondents a reasonable chance to recall past events with accuracy. From a practical standpoint it also is necessary not to specify *too* brief a reference period, for the shorter this span the more frequently interviews must be conducted. Because these surveys now cost \$40 to \$50 an interview, this is an important decision.

The choice of a one-year reference period for the city surveys balanced practicality with the results of a methodological investigation of patterns of memory failure. The problems of forgetting were studied using a technique known as a "reverse record check." The study involved selecting respondents who were *known* to have been the victims of crime by sampling police department records. Interviewers were then sent to locate those victims and administer to them a standard victimization questionnaire. In the phase of the study investigating the effect of the passage of time on the ability of the interviewer to collect accurate information about the crime, samples of victims were selected for crimes which occurred at various points in time which were increasingly distant from the date of the interview. By comparing descriptions of offenses gained through the interviews with those recorded by the police at the scene of the crime, it was possible to make some judgments about the effect of the passage of time on (1) the ability of the victim to accurately recall details about the incident (measured by their knowledge of its exact *date*) and (2) the ability of the victim to remember that it occurred at all. These pretests indicated that (1) the ability of many respondents to remember the exact date on which an incident occurred declined after about six months, and (2) a one-year reference period is as good as a six-month span if the criterion of success is simply whether or not an incident is remembered at all (U.S. Department of Justice, 1972b). The six-month standard was chosen for the National Crime Panel survey, for it is a continuing survey designed to produce time-series data. The city studies are "one-shot" projects, on the other hand. They were conducted to study city-specific victimization patterns, so it appeared cost-effective to accept more inaccuracy in parts of the data in return for gathering *more* data on events in those cities using a longer reference period.

## CHAPTER 3.

# The Data for this Module

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### Introduction

The data from the Census Bureau's crime surveys provide a wealth of information that can be used to answer a wide variety of research questions. In fact, the volume of the data is overwhelming. Not only does the questionnaire go into great detail about citizen attitudes and victimization experiences, but samples of hundreds of thousands of people have been interviewed. Although we could pursue our inquiry with the data from all 26 cities in which surveys have been conducted, the task would be a very large one. Consequently, we have selected the data from San Diego and New York City as examples. These two cities will serve as an introductory investigation. As you will see, they are sufficiently different to show us the effect of a city's environment upon crime levels and attitudes toward crime. Our data, therefore, will be representative of the residents (aged 16 or older) of San Diego and New York. We must keep this limitation in mind: this is not a nationwide study, nor a study of people living in large cities, although we suspect that the relationships we find here are likely to resemble those in other urban centers.

Our inquiry is further limited by the questions asked in the Census Bureau's surveys. Because we did not design the questionnaire, we are restricted to the topics selected by the original investigators.\* While this limits the way in which we can define "fear of crime," the questionnaire contains a number of questions measuring respondents' attitudes about crime. The actual attitude component of the questionnaire used in the New York and San Diego surveys is reproduced on the following page. Some of those questions were not appropriate for our purposes and others were omitted to keep our investigation to a manageable size. We have selected ten useful questions for inclusion in the data set that accompanies this module. These questions are about:

- trends in crime in the respondent's neighborhood; whether crime is going up or down (question 9a on the questionnaire).
- who commits crime in their neighborhood; if crime is committed by outsiders or by people who live there (question 9c).

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\*Research based upon data gathered by other persons or for other reasons is called "secondary analysis."

**SECTION A (Cont.) - INDIVIDUAL ATTITUDE QUESTIONS - Ask each household member 16 or older**

**KEY - BEGIN NEW RECORD**

1. List number        Name       

2. How often do you go out in the evening for entertainment, such as to restaurants, theaters, etc.?

1 ☐ Once a week or more 4 ☐ 2 or 3 times a year  
2 ☐ Less than once a week - more than once a month 5 ☐ Less than 2 or 3 times a year or never  
3 ☐ About once a month

3. Do you go to these places more or less now than you did a year or two ago?

1 ☐ About the same - SKIP to Check Item A  
2 ☐ More 3 ☐ Less

Why? Any other reason? (Mark all that apply)

1 ☐ Money situation 7 ☐ Family responsibility  
2 ☐ Opportunity 8 ☐ Activities, job, school  
3 ☐ Convenience 9 ☐ Crime or fear of crime  
4 ☐ Health 10 ☐ Want to  
5 ☐ Transportation 11 ☐ Other - Specify         
6 ☐ Age

(If more than one reason)

4. Which reason would you say is the most important?

Enter item number       

**CHECK ITEM A** Is box 1, 2, or 3 marked in 8a?  
☐ No - SKIP to 9a ☐ Yes - Ask 8b

8. When you do go out to restaurants or theaters in the evening, is it usually in the city or outside of the city?

1 ☐ Usually in the city  
2 ☐ Usually outside of the city  
3 ☐ About equal - SKIP to 9a

9. Why do you usually go outside the city (in the city)? Any other reason? (Mark all that apply)

1 ☐ More convenient  
2 ☐ Parking problems  
3 ☐ Too much crime in other place  
4 ☐ More to do  
5 ☐ Better facilities (restaurants, theaters, etc.)  
6 ☐ More expensive in other area  
7 ☐ Because of friends, relatives  
8 ☐ Other - Specify       

(If more than one reason)

1. Which reason would you say is the most important?

Enter item number       

9a. Now I'd like to get your opinions about crime in general. Within the past year or two, do you think that crime in your neighborhood has increased, decreased, or remained about the same?

1 ☐ Increased 4 ☐ Don't know - SKIP to c  
2 ☐ Decreased 5 ☐ Haven't lived here that long - SKIP to c  
3 ☐ Same - SKIP to c

b. Were you thinking about any specific kinds of crimes when you said you think crime in your neighborhood has (increased/decreased)?

1 ☐ No Yes - What kinds of crimes?       

c. How about any crimes which may be happening in your neighborhood - would you say they are committed mostly by the people who live here in this neighborhood or mostly by outsiders?

1 ☐ No crimes happening in neighborhood 3 ☐ Outsiders  
2 ☐ People living here 4 ☐ Equally by both  
5 ☐ Don't know

10a. Within the past year or two do you think that crime in the United States has increased, decreased, or remained about the same?

1 ☐ Increased 3 ☐ Same  
2 ☐ Decreased 4 ☐ Don't know

Ask b ☐ SKIP to 11a

b. Were you thinking about any specific kinds of crimes when you said you think crime in the U.S. has (increased/decreased)?

1 ☐ No Yes - What kinds of crimes?       

11a. How safe do you feel or would you feel being out alone in your neighborhood AT NIGHT?

1 ☐ Very safe 3 ☐ Somewhat unsafe  
2 ☐ Reasonably safe 4 ☐ Very unsafe

b. How about DURING THE DAY - how safe do you feel or would you feel being out alone in your neighborhood?

1 ☐ Very safe 3 ☐ Somewhat unsafe  
2 ☐ Reasonably safe 4 ☐ Very unsafe

**CHECK ITEM B** Look at 11a and b. Was box 3 or 4 marked in either item?  
☐ Yes - Ask 11c ☐ No - SKIP to 12

11c. Is the neighborhood dangerous enough to make you think seriously about moving somewhere else?

1 ☐ No - SKIP to 12  
2 ☐ Yes - Why don't you? Any other reason? (Mark all that apply)

1 ☐ Can't afford to 4 ☐ Plan to move soon  
2 ☐ Can't find other housing 5 ☐ Other - Specify         
3 ☐ Relatives, friends nearby  
4 ☐ Commitment to work, etc.

(If more than one reason)

d. Which reason would you say is the most important?

Enter item number       

12. How do you think your neighborhood compares with others in this metropolitan area in terms of crime? Would you say it is -

1 ☐ Much more dangerous? 4 ☐ Less dangerous?  
2 ☐ More dangerous? 5 ☐ Much less dangerous?  
3 ☐ About average?

13a. Are there some parts of this metropolitan area where you have a reason to go or would like to go DURING THE DAY, but are afraid to because of fear of crime?

1 ☐ No Yes - Which section(s)?       

Number of specific places mentioned       

b. How about AT NIGHT - are there some parts of this area where you have a reason to go or would like to go but are afraid to because of fear of crime?

1 ☐ No Yes - Which section(s)?       

Number of specific places mentioned       

14a. Would you say, in general, that your local police are doing a good job, an average job, or a poor job?

1 ☐ Good 3 ☐ Poor  
2 ☐ Average 4 ☐ Don't know - SKIP to 15a

b. In what ways could they improve? Any other ways? (Mark all that apply)

1 ☐ No improvement needed - SKIP to 15a  
2 ☐ Need more policemen  
3 ☐ Patrol or investigate more  
4 ☐ Be more prompt  
5 ☐ Improve training, raise qualifications or pay  
6 ☐ Be more courteous, concerned  
7 ☐ Don't discriminate  
8 ☐ Need more traffic control  
9 ☐ Need more policemen in certain areas or at certain times  
10 ☐ Don't know  
11 ☐ Other - Specify       

(If more than one way)

c. Which would you say is the most important?

Enter item number       

15a. Now I have some more questions about your opinions concerning crime. Please take this card. (Hand respondent Attitude Flashcard, NCS-57-0) Look at the FIRST set of statements. Which one do you agree with most?

1 ☐ My chances of being attacked or robbed have GONE UP in the past few years  
2 ☐ My chances of being attacked or robbed have GONE DOWN in the past few years  
3 ☐ My chances of being attacked or robbed haven't changed in the past few years  
4 ☐ No opinion

b. Which of the SECOND group do you agree with most?

1 ☐ Crime is LESS serious than the newspapers and TV say  
2 ☐ Crime is MORE serious than the newspapers and TV say  
3 ☐ Crime is about as serious as the newspapers and TV say  
4 ☐ No opinion

16a. Do you think PEOPLE IN GENERAL have limited or changed their activities in the past few years because they are afraid of crime?

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

b. Do you think that most PEOPLE IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD have limited or changed their activities in the past few years because they are afraid of crime?

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

c. In general, have YOU limited or changed your activities in the past few years because of crime?

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

**INTERVIEWER - Continue interview with this respondent on NCS-1**

- how safe they feel alone on the streets of their neighborhood during the day and at night (questions 11a and 11b).
- how they compare crime in their neighborhood to other places in the metropolitan area; is it more or less dangerous than other places (question 12).
- whether they think their chance of being attacked or robbed has gone up or down in the past few years (question 15a).
- whether or not people in their neighborhood have limited or changed their activities because they are afraid of crime (question 16b).
- whether or not *they* have limited or changed their activities because of crime (question 16c).
- their rating of the performance of the local police, and their most important suggestion for improving the police (questions 14a-c).

An examination of the distribution of the answers to these questions is only one step in the analysis process. Other research questions include, Why do some people fear crime, and not others? What is it about their backgrounds and experience that might lead them to be afraid of crime? To probe these questions we need to know something about our respondents in addition to their attitudes toward crime.

One obvious explanation for fear is that one has been a victim of a crime. In the surveys respondents were asked to report victimizations which affected them during the past 12 months. We include data here on five broad crime categories: assault, robbery, burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft. Definitions of these crimes and more information on how they were measured will be given in Chapter 4.

For indicators of the respondents' social backgrounds we have selected responses to questions about several demographic characteristics: these include the person's age, sex, race, and family income. These will enable us to determine what types of people are likely to be victimized. For example, are older people more likely to be robbed than younger people? Do burglars strike at the homes of the wealthy more often than the poor? In later chapters, we will develop a more explicit theoretical framework for examining these questions.

### **The Codebook**

When an interviewer administers a survey questionnaire, the answers are recorded on the questionnaire itself. Usually each response fits into a predetermined category which the interviewers can check off directly. If you examine the attitude questionnaire presented earlier, you can see that question 9a allows a respondent to choose one of five answers concerning changes in neighborhood crime. If the person's response to the question is "increased," then the interviewer would check the appropriate box. However, if the respondent says, "I don't know," the fourth box would be marked. This is an

example of a "closed-ended" question in which the respondent must give an answer which fits one of the specified categories. At other times, "open-ended" questions are asked and the respondent's own words are noted. This is done when there is no obvious list of categories that encompass all possible responses. An example of this type of question is item 9b, in which the respondent is asked to describe the crimes he or she had in mind. When the questionnaire is returned to the field office, trained staff members (called "coders") will study the written response and assign it to a general category.

Once the survey is completed, the research organization transfers the answers onto punch cards or some other computer-readable storage medium. The answers are recorded in the form of numeric codes. Thus, on the neighborhood crime question, an answer of "increase" would be recorded as the value "1," "decrease" would have the code number "2," etc. Each question has its own unique location on the computer card, so that each person's answer can be found in the same place. Responses to the first question would go in the first column, the second question would go in the second column, etc. (A computer card holds 80 columns of information.) Some questions need two or more columns, and we often need to use more than one card for each person to hold all the information collected during an interview.

To keep track of the location of the codes for each question, the researcher prepares a document called a "codebook." The codebook describes the information that is stored in each column of the data cards. This description includes the wording of the question, the meaning of each code used to represent the various possible answers, how many people gave each response, and other identifying information. The codebook for the complete city victimization survey is long and complicated. However, we will be dealing with only a few questions in the special data set that accompanies this module; thus, our codebook is rather short, and you can find it at the end of this booklet.

To understand how a codebook is used, look closely at a typical entry. Below is the first entry from the codebook for our data set.

Variable Number	Frequencies		Variable Description
	New York	San Diego	
V1			HOUSING TENURE Col. 1 "Are your living quarters:"
	314	583	1. Owned or being bought (includes homes, condominiums, and co-ops)
	703	398	2. Rented for cash or occupied without cash rent (includes share-croppers)

We will refer to the responses we are analyzing as "variables" (a general term for anything that can have more than one value). As you can see in the example above, each variable is given a number preceded by the letter "V," a short-hand

reference for "variable." If you use the SPSS or OSIRIS computer programs, you will use this number to access the variables.

Next to the variable number is a brief label that describes the content of the question. This label will be printed by SPSS and OSIRIS if you use one of those programs.

On the first line of the variable description you also will find the computer card column in which this variable is stored. "Col. 1" in the example means that V1 is located in the first column.

You will find the exact question wording and other descriptive information about the variable immediately below the variable label for each question. V1 concerns ownership of the respondent's living quarters, technically known as "housing tenure." The possible responses to the question and their associated codes are indicated. In this example, there are only two possible response categories. If those who live in the dwelling unit own their quarters, then the variable is given the code of "1." If the dwelling unit is rented, then "2" is the appropriate value for this variable.

To the right of the code categories for each variable you will find a set of numbers referred to as "frequencies." These tell us the number of respondents in each city survey who have given that response to the question. As you see, 314 New Yorkers owned their home, while 703 were renters. (Note that the proportion of apartment dwellers in San Diego is much smaller than in New York.)

Some variables (such as V2 and V3 in the codebook at the end of the module) have a code which denotes "missing data." This includes a variety of answers or non-responses. For example, people who refused to indicate or who could not remember their family income are given this code. Also, some people may refuse or be unable to finish an interview, and sometimes an interviewer will forget to ask a question. All of these possibilities can result in the assignment of a missing data code for that respondent to a question. When you (or the computer) construct analysis tables, respondents with missing data on any of the variables used in the table normally will be omitted. In this data set, we consistently used the value of zero for missing data. You may also wish to exclude other responses from an analysis. For instance, when analyzing variable V9 (crime in the neighborhood), you may also wish to consider response categories 4 ("don't know") and 5 ("haven't lived here that long") as missing data categories too.

Before going any further, examine carefully the codebook at the end of this text. Acquaint yourself with the kinds of variables it includes and the ways in which they are coded. If you have any questions, consult your instructor before beginning the computer exercises.

### **A Note about the Special Subsample**

By now you will have noticed that the codebook indicates we have 1,017 respondents from New York City and 981 from San Diego. The original attitude samples consisted of about 9,500 persons 16 years of age and older in each city.

These large samples are very expensive to process. In addition, the precision that one obtains from a sample of that size is not required in an instructional exercise. Our purposes are well satisfied by a sample of only 1,000 respondents per city.

In preparing the data we did not take a simple random sample of the full survey sample because many types of victimization are so infrequent that a random sampling procedure would have yielded too few persons with those experiences. Rather, we drew separate samples of those who were victimized and those who were not. (Details appear in the Appendix.) A disproportionately large number of victims were selected so that we would have enough of them in the data set to insure minimal levels of statistical accuracy. We then "down-weighted" the victims and "up-weighted" the non-victims so that tabulations based on the data will be based upon the proper proportion of each. "Down-weighting" means that a respondent who has been victimized is not counted as a full person, but only as a fraction. For example, if our data contained ten times the number of victims it should, each victim would be counted by the computer only as one-tenth of a respondent. In a similar fashion, non-victims are "up-weighted" by counting them more heavily. Consequently, your tables will be based upon the proper proportions of victims and non-victims. We have done this by adjusting the *case weight* variable (V27) which must be used in all your analyses.

The effect of this sampling design and weighting procedure is that the frequencies printed in the codebook and the numbers computed by statistical computer programs do not correspond to the number of respondents physically present in the data set. Although there are 1,017 respondents from New York, we cannot say that 703 actually live in rented quarters. Rather, the figure 703 is an estimate of the proper number of apartment dwellers for a sample of this size.

The effect of the weighting scheme is most pronounced on the victimization measures. Although the codebook indicates that there are only 27 robbery victims in the New York data (V19), the data set actually contains 167 respondents who were robbed. If we actually had only 27 robbery victims in the New York data we could not proceed with our study, for we would not feel comfortable that the behavior of robbery victims was adequately represented. The presence of 167 actual robbery victims in the New York data, however, allows us to produce tabulations with a reasonable degree of confidence, even though they will *appear* to be based upon only 27 victims.

Because of this procedure, the computer occasionally will be making computations for you which deal (arithmetically) with "fractions" of persons. Because it will round off its output to "whole" persons, your computer output sometimes will appear to "add up" incorrectly. This is not anything to be concerned about.

### Simple Frequency Counts and Percentages

Earlier in this chapter, we discussed the housing tenure variable (V1). At that point we made the parenthetical statement that the New York sample has a

larger *proportion* of renters. How did we know that? First of all, there are numerically more renters in the New York sample (703 versus 398 in San Diego). Because the two samples are approximately the same size, it is obvious that the New York sample has the larger proportion of renters. However, if the groups we were examining were very different in total size, a larger number might merely mean we were looking at a larger group.

To make comparisons easier, we convert frequency counts into percentages. This insures that we are viewing each city from the same frame of reference. Doing some simple arithmetic, we see that 69.1% of the New York sample are renters ( $703 \div 1,017 \times 100 = 69.1\%$ ), while only 40.6% of the San Diego respondents live in rented quarters ( $398 \div 981 \times 100 = 40.6\%$ ). Often it is useful to examine percentage frequencies for the categories of a variable. The following table gives these figures for V1.

Now let us look at the distribution of family income. Here our comparison between the cities is hindered by the fact that many of the category frequencies are very similar in size and that there are several categories in the data. Percentage frequencies will be more helpful in this case. They are given in the following table, which shows the absolute and percentage distribution of family incomes by city.

**TABLE 3-1**  
**Percentage Distribution of Housing Tenure (V1) by City of Residence**

	New York	San Diego
1. Owned	30.9%	59.4%
2. Rented	69.1	40.6
Total (N)	100.0% (1,017)	100.0% (981)

**TABLE 3-2**  
**Percentage and Absolute Distribution of Family Income (V2)  
by City of Residence**

	New York		San Diego	
1. \$0 to \$5,999	24.7%	251	22.1%	217
2. \$6,000 to \$9,999	17.4	177	17.6	173
3. \$10,000 to \$14,999	25.1	256	24.2	237
4. \$15,000 or more	19.4	198	31.4	308
5. Missing Data	13.4	136	4.7	46
Total	100.0%	(1,018)*	100.0%	(981)

\*In this table, the number of respondents (N) from New York adds up to 1,018 because of rounding. The weighting scheme produces fractional counts for the frequencies which were rounded to the nearest whole number. When these are added, the total may be off by one or two persons from the true value.

In this table we see that the proportion of respondents from poor families is slightly higher in New York City than San Diego, while the proportion of high income families there is higher too. However, there are many missing data cases in the New York sample. As long as these persons are kept in the tabulations we cannot make very meaningful income comparisons between the two cities. Our solution is to recompute the percentages based only on those persons for whom we have the desired information. To do this we use the number of people without missing data (882 for New York and 935 for San Diego) as our base totals. To calculate each frequency we then divide by the base total and multiply by 100%. The result for New Yorkers with family incomes of less than \$6,000 is 28.5% ( $251 \div 882 \times 100 = 28.5\%$ ). The following table shows the new distributions for both samples.

**TABLE 3-3**  
**Percentage Distribution of Family Income (V2)**  
**by City of Residence with Missing Data Cases Omitted**

	New York	San Diego
1. \$0 to \$5,999	28.5%	23.2%
2. \$6,000 to \$9,999	20.1	18.5
3. \$10,000 to \$14,999	29.0	25.3
4. \$15,000 or more	22.4	32.9
Total	100.0%	99.9%*
(N)	(882)	(935)

\*Because of rounding, percentage distributions do not always add up to exactly 100.0%.

Now we have a better picture of the income distribution in our two cities, and we are able to compare them more accurately. The procedure we have used—deleting the missing data cases from the base total—is based on the assumption that respondents for whom we do not have valid data do not differ from the others. We assume that their refusal to answer the question (or whatever caused the data to be missing) was not related to their income level. If that assumption is false, then the resulting distribution will be a biased estimate of the true income distribution for the population as a whole.

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## EXERCISE 1

Before continuing with an analysis of crime, let us compare the cities on a few more demographic variables. Using the frequency counts given in the codebook, compute the percentage distributions on the age (V3) and education (V7) variables, excluding missing data. Write your results in the space provided in the tables below. Which city has a younger population? Which city's population is more highly educated?

---

**Percentage Distribution of Respondent's Age (V3)  
by City of Residence**

	New York	San Diego
1. 16 to 26		
2. 27 to 39		
3. 40 to 64		
4. 65 and older		
TOTAL		
(N)		

**Percentage Distribution of Respondent's Education (V7)  
by City of Residence**

	<b>New York</b>	<b>San Diego</b>
<b>1. Less than 8 years</b>		
<b>2. 8 through 11 years</b>		
<b>3. 12 years</b>		
<b>4. Some college through college graduate</b>		
<b>5. Post-graduate training</b>		
<b>TOTAL</b>		
<b>(N)</b>		

# CHAPTER 4.

## Crimes and Their Victims

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### Introduction

One purpose of the victimization surveys conducted by the Bureau of the Census for the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) was to gather data on the frequency of crime and its distribution in the population.\* LEAA was interested not only in how much crime took place, but in who fell victim to it as well. The surveys were designed to produce estimates of the *victimization rates* for various sub-groups of the population. The crimes that were studied were selected for a variety of reasons, including their appropriateness for measurement using sample surveys. Official reports based upon the surveys dwell primarily upon the frequency of offenses, or upon the number of victimizations (the number of persons or households affected) per thousand in the population. They summarize the experiences of sub-groups by reporting the number of victimizations affecting each group for every thousand persons sharing that sub-group membership. Thus we find that blacks in New York City suffered 30 robberies per thousand in 1973, and whites 23 robberies per thousand (U.S. Department of Justice, 1975b:99).

In this chapter we will employ the data which were used to generate those estimates for New York City and San Diego. Rather than calculating victimization rates, however, we will use the survey data to examine the experiences of individuals. In this data set we have indicated whether or not each respondent was victimized by each of a number of crimes during the preceding year. This will enable us to examine both the frequency of victimization (the percentages of persons in our sample who were victimized) and the distribution of victimization (comparing those frequencies across various sub-groups in the sample). By dealing with individuals rather than focusing upon the number of crimes which have occurred we will be able to follow our analysis of victimization with an examination of other questions, including that of the relationship between being a victim and being afraid to walk the streets at night.

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\*The Census Bureau carried out the interviewing and analyzed the data for these surveys under contract to LEAA, which paid for them and participated in designing the questionnaire.

## Problems in Measuring Crime

One of the most important strategic decisions to be made in conducting a victimization study is the choice of crimes to be covered in the survey. There are many types of crime: state statutes often define hundreds of them individually, and even the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting System—which was developed to bring some order to the crime recording process—recognizes 29 distinct categories of offenses. Some of these crimes are more interesting to policy-makers than others and not all crimes can be studied using interviews. Thus, the decision about what to cover in a victimization survey is influenced both by the technical judgment of the research expert and by the needs of the ultimate consumers of the information to be generated by the survey.

Certain kinds of crime were included in the victimization surveys because they were of interest to the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. The questionnaire devotes considerable attention to personal crimes: rape, assault, and robbery. These are "street crimes" upon which so much public attention and fear is focused. Other offenses, such as burglary and auto theft, were included because of their high volume and economic impact. Both of these crimes strike middle-class persons more frequently than do personal crimes, and these victimizations frequently lead to claims against insurance companies. Because of their volume, burglary and auto theft involve enormous sums of money. Losses to burglary alone were estimated by the FBI on the basis of official figures to total 1.4 billion dollars in 1975 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1976:28).

Other crimes might interest policy-makers, but are inappropriate topics for survey research; some are too few in number to uncover in reasonably-sized samples, others do not involve personal victims who can be relied upon to tell interviewers about them, some call for a degree of legal sophistication or knowledge that many of their victims do not possess, and some demand a different research technology than that employed in the victim surveys.

As we have seen in Chapter 2, the "frequency of events problem" is an important determinant of the content of a victimization survey. Even the large samples employed in the city studies were barely adequate to uncover enough victims of major personal crimes for analysis. For this reason, several crimes which might interest federal policy-makers, such as kidnapping and counterfeiting, could not even be considered for inclusion in the Census Bureau's surveys. In this module we will exclude two other crimes which were measured in the surveys—rape and personal theft (purse snatching and pick-pocketing)—because they were so infrequent that the sub-samples of respondents employed in this instructional data set could not adequately represent them.

Other crimes could not be considered for inclusion in the surveys because they are "victimless" in nature. Victimization surveys rely upon the targets of crime to relate their experiences. When all of the participants in a criminal transaction are willingly involved in it, it is difficult to depend upon them as informants. Crimes in this category include drug offenses, gambling, illegal abortions, and many offenses for which juveniles are arrested, including curfew

violations and truancy. These are crimes which come to official attention largely through investigatory police work rather than through citizen complaints for the same reason that they are inappropriate for survey analysis: they leave no victim behind willing to tell a tale.

There are other crimes which involve victims who may not know of their status. In this category fall many white collar offenses. Some white collar crimes usually victimize businesses and other organizations; these offenses (including embezzling) fall outside of the scope of household surveys, which are conducted among individual citizens. Other white collar crimes victimize great numbers of persons, but only indirectly. In this category fall price fixing arrangements (which add illegally to the price of individual consumer purchases) or violations of pure food and drug statutes (which may have only long-run individual consequences). These victimizations also are difficult to *count* in a manner comparable to the way in which we count robberies or burglaries, for one violation may literally have millions of victims. Frauds against consumers at the retail level, including instances of overcharging, the sale of faulty merchandise, false advertising, and excessive interest charges, are perhaps the most detectable white collar crimes and they immediately affect individual victims. However, these offenses often go unnoticed or their victims fail to recognize them as crimes.

All of these factors make it difficult to use survey techniques to measure the incidence of white collar crime. It must be noted that this is not without its consequences, for it focuses our attention upon crimes which poor people rather than middle-class and upper-class white males are likely to commit. The city victimization surveys gathered reports about the apparent age, race, and sex of offenders in personal crimes. While those data provide important new information on the characteristics of criminals, their overall distribution is largely shaped by the kind of crimes which were chosen for inclusion in the survey questionnaire. It must be remembered that the victimization surveys focus only on selected crimes, and that the choice among them has consequences.

Another limitation on the scope of victimization research stems from the nature of criminal activity. A crime involves an interaction between individuals, some of whom may label themselves victims of its outcome. Most crimes involve fleeting encounters between strangers which are instigated by the guilty party. Others, however, arise out of continuing relationships or involve labels which victims may be unwilling to attach to themselves. Those events may be more difficult to uncover in a standard survey questionnaire.

In the victimization surveys these problems are most acute for instances of interpersonal violence, including events which may fall into the categories of rape and assault. Some people suffer considerable personal abuse from parents, relatives, lovers, spouses, neighbors, and others with whom "victims" have a continuing personal relationship. This leads to two problems in the use of survey interviews to gather reports about such episodes and convert them into data on discrete criminal events. First, they often are so frequent and so much a part of their victims' daily lives that it is difficult to gather information on each event, or to distinguish between abuse and true criminal violence. Second, it is clear

that the victims of those relationships often do not want to tell a representative of the government about them. This was documented in the same reverse record check which we discussed in Chapter 2. In that experiment, police reports were selected on the basis of the relationship between the parties before the incident; cases in which victim and offender were strangers and others in which they knew or were related to one another were sampled from official files. Interviewers were then dispatched to interview the victims of those offenses using the standard survey questionnaire. They found that crimes involving friends and relatives often were not recalled in the interview. The effect was particularly strong for cases of assault. This was true even though all of the cases in the sample previously had been reported to the police (U.S. Department of Justice, 1972b). This pretest does not give us much confidence in the validity of the data on assault which was collected in the city surveys. A number of those we have classified as non-victims may in fact have suffered the same experiences as those we have classified as victims, and the data on assault should be interpreted with some care.

A special study of the willingness of the victims of rape to recall their experiences in a personal interview also was carried out using a reverse record check. In this experiment, a small sample of victims of rapes which were reported to the police were located and interviewed. The results were a little better than cases of assault in which the parties involved were strangers, but rapes in which the victim knew the offender before the event were recalled in the interview only about one-half of the time (U.S. Department of Justice, 1972b). Between the stigma which often is attached to labeling oneself a rape victim and the unwillingness of many women to discuss their experiences in a personal interview, there is serious doubt about the reliability of the data on rape in the victimization surveys. For this reason, and because of the rarity of the crime, we have deleted reports of rapes from your data set.

## **The Crimes**

The data you are using in this instructional module contains information on the incidence of five types of crime: assault, robbery, burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft. Assaults and robberies are crimes against persons: they involve direct physical contact between victim and offender. A weapon often is used in these crimes, especially when the assailant is an adult, and many of them lead to serious injuries. The difference between the two is the intent of the perpetrator: robberies involve thefts of property or cash, while offenders in assault cases presumably meant only to inflict some degree of harm upon their victims. Following the usual standard in crime reporting, the surveys record *attempted* as well as successful offenses.

The coding system for recording the data also uses the FBI's definitions of crime types to classify each incident into one and only one crime category. The convention used by the FBI establishes a hierarchy of crimes and specifies that each incident be placed in the "highest" category on the scale. In this case, robberies are higher on the scale than assaults, although the two may share many

of the same elements of weapon use, physical attack, and injury. (Remember, however, that the "highest" crime type is homicide, and that robberies or assaults which end up with a dead victim are not included in the victimization surveys. Nationally, perhaps one quarter of all murders are "felony type" homicides which began as rapes, robberies, or other crimes [Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1975:18].)

On the property crime side, burglaries (which involve the unlawful or forcible entry of a structure to steal something) take precedence over simple thefts when that element is present in an event, and any theft of a motor vehicle

**Assault**—an unlawful physical attack by one person upon another. This category includes "aggravated assaults," which are attacks or attempted attacks with a weapon or attacks without a weapon which lead to serious injuries (e.g., broken bones, loss of teeth, internal injuries or loss of consciousness). It also includes simple assaults, which are attacks without a weapon resulting in minor injuries (cuts, bruises, black eyes, etc.). Attempted assaults, which do not lead to any injury, also are counted. This category excludes rapes and attempted rapes, which may share many of these circumstances. It also excludes assaults involving thefts or attempted thefts, which fall into the robbery category. Most of the crime reports published by the FBI cover only aggravated assaults.

**Robbery**—is theft or attempted theft directly from a person which is accomplished by force or the threat of force. This category includes successful and attempted armed robbery, which involves the use of a gun, knife, club, or other instrument, and "strong-armed" robbery, which is carried out without a weapon. Robbery may or may not involve an actual physical attack, for the simple threat of force or loss of life is sufficient to place a personal theft in this category. Again, both successful and attempted robberies are counted here. Robberies which take place in the course of rape or attempted rape (which is not uncommon) are excluded.

**Burglary**— is successful or attempted property theft which involves the unlawful entry of a home or other building. Many burglaries involve forcible entry, which often is carried out by breaking a window, slashing a screen, or kicking in a door. Attempted forcible entries, which can be detected by physical evidence, also are counted here. Burglary also may involve only simple trespass, as when a burglar enters through an unlocked door or window. Thefts committed by persons who have a right to be on the premises (e.g., personal guests, the milk man) are not included in this category, for no unlawful entry has occurred. Crimes which began as burglaries but which unfortunately lead to a confrontation with a resident often will end up in the robbery category. Burglaries counted here may involve ancillary buildings (garages, sheds) as well as homes and apartments.

**Larceny**— is successful or attempted property theft. It characteristically does not involve a personal confrontation between victim and offender. It is a crime of stealth which leads only to the loss (or threatened loss) of property or cash. Included in this category are bicycle thefts, stolen overcoats, pillaged school lockers, and other simple "rip-offs." This definition excludes many crimes which are included in the FBI's larceny count—purse snatchings, picked pockets, shoplifting and property crimes against businesses and organizations rather than individuals or households.

**Motor Vehicle Theft**—involves stealing or the unauthorized removal of an automobile, snowmobile, motorcycle, or other powered vehicle, or attempts to do so. It is otherwise similar to larceny.

automatically qualifies it for that category. In published reports on the victimization surveys these property crimes are counted as crimes against the *household* rather than as victimizations against an individual. In this case we have attributed the victimization of a respondent's household to him or her as well, for we are interested in people's reactions to crime.

Although each incident uncovered in the surveys falls only in one category (the classifications are "mutually exclusive"), these groupings are quite broad, and there is considerable variation in the nature of offenses sharing the same label. The extortion of a student's lunch money in a schoolyard falls into the same category as an armed robbery on the street, for they both share the defining element of a robbery—*theft or attempted theft by force or threat of force*. More precise definitions of each of the crime categories we are using here are presented on the following page. The official government reports based upon the Census Bureau's surveys present most of their tabulations using more refined categories, but here we will use a simple "victim-nonvictim" dichotomy of the major types of crime.

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## EXERCISE 2

In this exercise we will examine the information in the codebook to get an idea of how often each crime type occurs. For now we will combine the data from the two samples.

In the case of robbery (V19), we see that 1,960 respondents (990 from New York and 970 from San Diego) did not report being robbed during the year preceding the interview. On the other hand, 38 respondents (27 from New York plus 11 from San Diego) reported at least one incident. The number of victims is clearly very small, but we will have trouble comparing these raw figures to other data unless we standardize them in some fashion. Calculating the percentage victimized would give us a good standardized statistic. We can compute this easily by dividing the number of victimized respondents (38) by the total number of respondents (1,998) and multiplying the result by 100. In the end we find that 1.9% of all respondents were robbed at least once during the previous year.

The robbery data we have just discussed are recorded in the first row of the table below. Complete the remainder of the table by using the raw frequency counts given in the codebook. (You will notice that the "total" number of respondents sometimes is 1,997 and sometimes is 1,998. This is due to the rounding procedures of the computer when it uses the weighting factor. Do not be disturbed by this minor discrepancy.)

From the percentages you have computed, would you say that these types of crimes are generally rare events? Which type of crime is least likely to occur? Which type is most likely? Some crimes are considered more serious, because they involve physical injury to the victim (assaults) or a personal confrontation with the perpetrators (robberies). What kind of relationship do you see between the seriousness of a crime and the likelihood of being a victim?

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## Victimization Experiences for Combined Sample

	Non-Victim	Victim	Total	Percent Victimized
Robbery (V19)	1960	38	1998	1.9%
Assault (V20)				
Burglary (V21)				
Larceny (V22)				
Motor Vehicle Theft (V23)				

### Discussion of the Findings

The frequency tabulations you have computed illustrate the incidence of crime in New York City and San Diego, as measured by the city surveys. As you can see, the data indicate that recent victimization (the questionnaire asks only about events during the past year) was uncommon for most of the crimes measured in the surveys. This is extremely important, for it documents the relative infrequency—even in these large cities—of the “fear crimes” which dominate discussion of the crime problem in America. Robbery is perhaps the most important of these crimes, for it usually involves a stranger-to-stranger confrontation, it may feature the use of guns or other weapons, and it potentially involves violence and the threat of serious physical injury. The relatively low frequency of robbery, however, will make it difficult for us to do much analysis of its victims.

The property offenses do not involve direct personal contact between victim and offender, their victims frequently are insured against major financial loss, and they are not likely to lead to the injury or death of their victims. Burglary is perhaps the most important of the property crimes. It often involves forcible entry into a private home, thus breaching one of the most basic sources of personal security. The most common property crime was larceny, which struck almost one-quarter of the respondents at least once in the preceding year. While these thefts often involve small losses, they typically are not covered by insurance. When they strike the poor their financial consequences may be substantial.

### Who Are the Victims?

While many of the crimes included in the data set are relatively infrequent in occurrence, they are not evenly distributed in the population. Some respondents

are much more likely than others to report being victimized, and in certain sub-groups the victimization rate is quite high. Patterns of victimization vary by type of crime as well as by type of victim, creating a complex problem for analysis. In this section we will review briefly some of the factors which generally lead people to be victimized. Then we will use our data set to examine some of the factors related to specific kinds of victimization experiences in New York City and San Diego. This chapter will not exhaust the data available for analysis, so you may wish to pursue your own hypotheses about victimization using the variables described in the codebook.

Previous studies of patterns of victimization, which were based upon the data on reported crime found in police files, suggest that three factors affect the likelihood of criminal victimization. The first is the *desirability* of a potential target of crime. Put simply, some things are worth stealing more than others. People who own those things are, therefore, more likely to be victimized. The desirability of potential targets is easiest to measure in the case of property crime. Other factors being equal, expensive sporty cars are more likely to be stolen than older sedans. Homes promising to contain expensive television sets, stereos, and other items worth carrying off for re-sale or for the personal use of burglars should be more likely to be invaded. People who look prosperous or who are more likely to be carrying cash should present attractive opportunities for potential robberies.

Balanced against the desirability of potential targets is their apparent *vulnerability*—how easy they seem to be to approach, attack, and escape. Small children are notoriously vulnerable to school-yard shakedowns by their immediate elders because they are physically vulnerable; adults are more likely to be able to resist unarmed attacks—until they reach old age. Some homes are better equipped than others with defenses against attack. Security guards, watchdogs, alarm systems, and even strong locks can be effective in reducing the probability that an individual home will be burglarized. Finally, some people live anonymously in highly transitory neighborhoods where no one is familiar with their neighbors, no one challenges suspicious outsiders, and where people are loath to “get involved” even in crime-prevention activities. They should be more likely to fall prey to crime than persons who live in stable, cohesive neighborhoods where strangers are viewed with suspicion.

The third factor which should affect victimization is one's *availability* as a target. While some persons or households may not be particularly attractive targets for crime (they may be poor or have few valuables), they may be in neighborhoods where potential criminals live or hang out. Some people are more likely than others to live in neighborhoods where people are unemployed, where legitimate opportunities appear to be foreclosed, which are over-populated by young males (who commit most predatory crime), and in which many youngsters' activities are unsupervised. These “environmental” factors should affect patterns of property-crime victimization and robbery rates as well. There also has been some speculation that sheer availability affects the incidence of interpersonal violence among family and friends. A substantial amount of assault (about 40 percent in the surveys; undoubtedly more in fact) occurs between

persons who are related in this way; they probably are available targets for releasing frustration and acting out hostilities developed outside the relationship as well as within.

In addition to factors which affect systematically the probability of an individual being victimized, there doubtless is a strong *random* component to the process as well. In the end the factor most likely to lead one to fall victim to a robbery is to be in the immediate vicinity of a person with a weapon who is intent on robbing someone at that moment and who perceives an opportunity to act successfully and with profit. The unhappy conjunction of victim and offender under those circumstances is highly problematic in any individual case. Furthermore, data gathered from the point of view of the *victim* can speak only indirectly to most of those contingencies. We can use the data in the victimization surveys to measure certain of them *indirectly* (we can use family income for a measure of desirability, age and sex for vulnerability, and length of residence for community involvement, for example), but survey data based upon victim's descriptions of events speak only vaguely to the distribution of offenders, their motives and skills, and their rationality.

Let us begin our investigation of "who are the victims" by examining the robbery experiences of white respondents compared to black respondents. First, we use a computer analysis program to divide the sample according to race (V5) and then tally the robbery reports (V19) for each group. The results appear in Table 4-1.

**TABLE 4-1**  
**Robbery Experience (V19) by Race of Respondent (V5),**  
**Frequency Counts**

Robbery	Race		
	White and Other	Black	Total
No	1707	253	1960
Yes	29	9	38
Total	1736	262	1998

Table 4-1 does show us that robbery is a rare event for both races, but we cannot immediately tell whether whites or blacks are more likely to be victimized. Is 29 victims out of 1,736 a larger or smaller proportion than 9 out of 262? Again, percentages will allow us to make quick and easy comparisons. Table 4-2 shows these data recomputed as percentages.

In Table 4-2, we used column percentages because we want to compare one column (whites) to the other (blacks). These percentages were computed by dividing the number of victims in each column by the total respondents in that column and then multiplying by 100. For example, we found that 1.7% of the whites reported victimizations, because  $29 \div 1736 \times 100 = 1.7\%$ . Percentages for

**TABLE 4-2**  
**Robbery Experience (V19) by Race of Respondent (V5),**  
**Column Percentages**

Robbery	Race		Total
	White and Other	Black	
No	98.3%	96.4%	98.1%
Yes	1.7	3.6	1.9
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

non-victims are derived in a similar fashion (for whites:  $1707 \div 1736 \times 100 = 98.3\%$ ). Because these are column percentages, the figures for each column must add up to 100%. (An exception is when rounding may give us a total of 99.9% or 100.1%.) From these percentages, we can now easily see that blacks in our samples reported robbery incidents at a rate more than double that for whites.

The tables we have been dealing with here are called "crosstabulations," because at least two variables were used to look at the joint distribution of cases. Instead of dividing the sample on one characteristic—such as victim versus non-victim—we used two characteristics to obtain the counts of white non-victims, white victims, black non-victims, and black victims. Each respondent was classified on both characteristics *at the same time*. Notice that this is different from the table used in Exercise 2, which was actually a series of five tables, one for each type of victimization. In that series, each respondent was counted again for each variable. In Tables 4-1 and 4-2, they were counted only once.

When we convert a crosstabulation to percentages, there are actually three methods that could be used depending upon the type of comparison desired. Table 4-2 consists of column percentages, because we wanted to compare one column to the other. The other methods, illustrated in Tables 4-3 and 4-4, are called row percentages and total percentages.

**TABLE 4-3**  
**Robbery Experience (V19) by Race of Respondent (V5),**  
**Row Percentages**

Robbery	Race		Total
	White and Other	Black	
No	87.1%	12.9	100.0%
Yes	75.2%	24.8	100.0%
Total	86.9%	13.1%	100.0%

**TABLE 4-4**  
**Robbery Experience (V19) by Race of Respondent (V5),**  
**Total Percentages**

Robbery	Race		
	White and Other	Black	Total
No	85.4%	12.7	98.1%
Yes	1.5	0.4	1.9
Total	86.9%	13.1	100.0%

We use row percentages when our research question requires comparisons between the rows. Thus, if our question was, "Is there a larger proportion of blacks among robbery victims than non-victims?" we would use the row percentages from Table 4-3.

Our answer would be affirmative, since there are 12.9% blacks in the non-victimization group compared to 24.8% in the victimization group. Although Tables 4-2 and 4-3 may appear to be giving the same kind of information, they are not. They are addressing *very different* research questions, and the differences are very important. Table 4-2 tells us about the relative victimization experiences *within* racial groups, while Table 4-3 tells us the racial composition of victims compared to non-victims. Many researchers confuse this subtle difference and then draw unwarranted conclusions from their data. One way to help yourself make the proper choice is to ask which percentages from the total sample would be an appropriate comparison. When the appropriate total breakdown is along the side margin (as in Table 4-2), you want column percentages. Conversely, you want row percentages when the appropriate total sample distribution is along the bottom margin (as in Table 4-3). The percentages you choose should add up to 100% in the same direction as the appropriate marginal percentages.

We compute "total percentages" by using the total number of cases as the base. In Table 4.4, 85.4% of the respondents were both white *and* non-victims (1,707 out of 1,998). Similarly, the 253 black non-victims constitute 12.7% of the total sample. Total percentages are not very helpful in comparing one row to another row or one column to another column. Rather they give us a standardized picture of the distribution of cases within the entire table. This is most helpful when we want to compare one table to the same tabulation derived from a different sample. This is also useful when we want to analyze social policy questions. A "total percentages" table tells us what proportion of a population is (in this case) suffering from a social problem, and how they divide across demographic target groups.

The tables we have been looking at in this chapter are the simplest forms of a crosstabulation, because they only have two rows and two columns. This is what is often called a four-fold table or a two-by-two table (sometimes written as "2 x

**TABLE 4-5**  
**Robbery Experience (V19) by Age of Respondent (V3),**  
**Frequency Counts**

Robbery	Age				Total
	16-26	27-39	40-64	65 and Older	
No	487	497	684	248	1916
Yes	13	9	10	4	37
Total	500	506	695	253	1953

Note: Marginal totals do not exactly equal the row and column sums due to rounding.

2"). As we add more rows or columns, the interpretation of the table becomes more complex. Consider, for example, Table 4-5 which is a two-by-four table. When comparing the victimization experiences of different age groups, we again run into the problem of unequal number of cases in each group and unstandardized data. This time, however, the problem is compounded because we have four groups to compare. The solution, of course, is to use percentages. Because we want to compare the victimization experiences of one age group to another, we will need column percentages as shown in Table 4-6. Now we can immediately see that the youngest age group (16-26) has the highest proportion of robbery victims, while the other groups are very similar.

Before we leave Table 4-5 behind, notice that the grand total of respondents is only 1,953 rather than the full count of 1,998 cases. This is because some cases have been deleted due to "missing data." Most of you will use a computer program which does this automatically. While we have complete information about reported robbery incidents, we are missing the age for 45 respondents. Some respondents may have refused to give their age or did not know how old they were, or the interviewer may have forgotten to ask that question. Because we cannot place these persons into an age category, we have to omit them from the table. As long as the number of missing cases is small, we can assume that this omission will not bias our conclusions.

**TABLE 4-6**  
**Robbery Experience (V19) by Age of Respondent (V3),**  
**Column Percentages**

Robbery	Age				Total
	16-26	27-39	40-64	65 and Older	
No	97.4%	98.2%	98.5%	98.3%	98.1%
Yes	2.6	1.8	1.5	1.7	1.9
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

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### EXERCISE 3

In this exercise, we want to pursue further our investigation of the relationship between certain demographic characteristics and the five victimization variables. To do this you will have to instruct the computer to crosstabulate each of the victimization variables (V19, V20, V21, V22, and V23) by race (V5), sex (V6), and age (V3), one at a time. Be sure to request percentages *within* the race, sex, and age groups. This will give 15 tables similar to Tables 4-2 and 4-6.

A problem with so many tables is that it is difficult to keep track of them and to visualize the many comparisons that will be needed to answer the questions below. There are some ways, however, to put these data into graphical form so that the relationships will be more obvious.

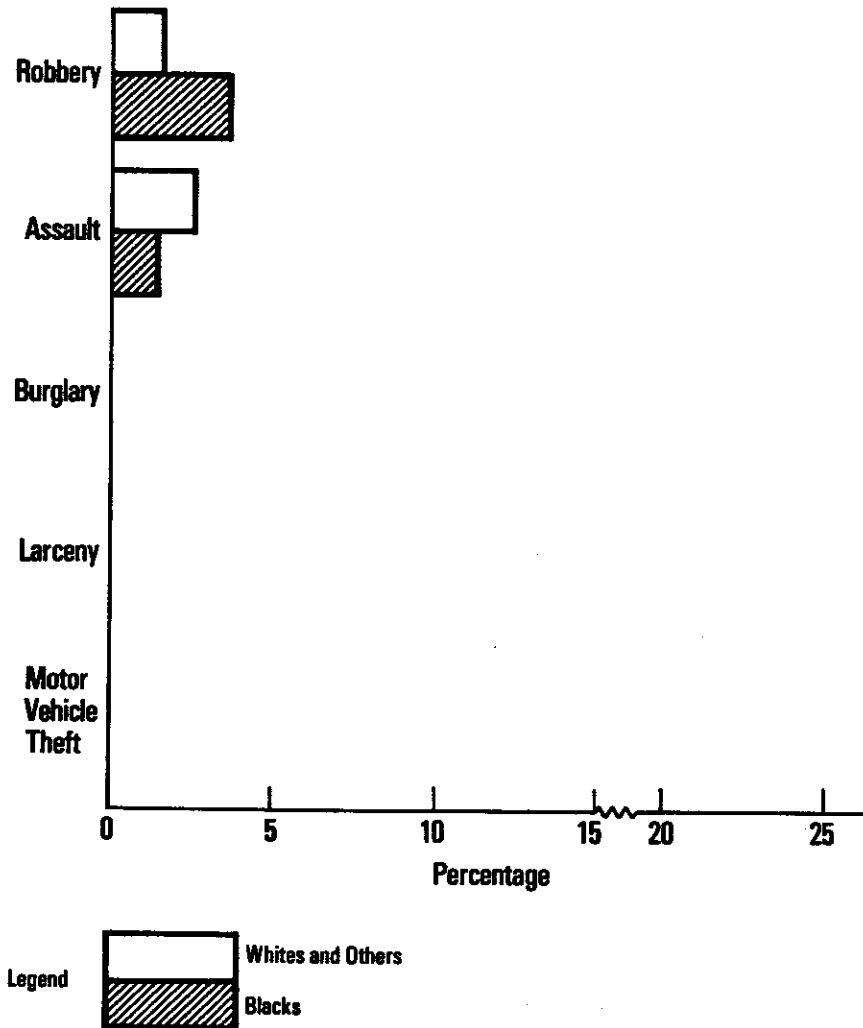
For variables with only two or three categories, such as race and sex, a bar graph is useful. An example is given below for race with the results for robbery and assault already filled in. A white bar of the appropriate length is drawn for the percentage from the "White and other" category, while a shaded bar is used for the "Black" category. You can draw in the bars for the other three victimization types. The outline for a bar graph based on sex is also provided.

With the variable age a line graph can be helpful. This is because age has several categories that are arranged in numerical order. (A line graph would not be appropriate for a variable like marital status where the categories do not have any inherent order.) In the graph below, the lines for robbery and assault have already been drawn in. You should add lines for the other three types by plotting the points for the appropriate percentages and then connecting them with a line. Use different colors for each victimization type so that the lines can be easily distinguished. Add these colors to the legend.

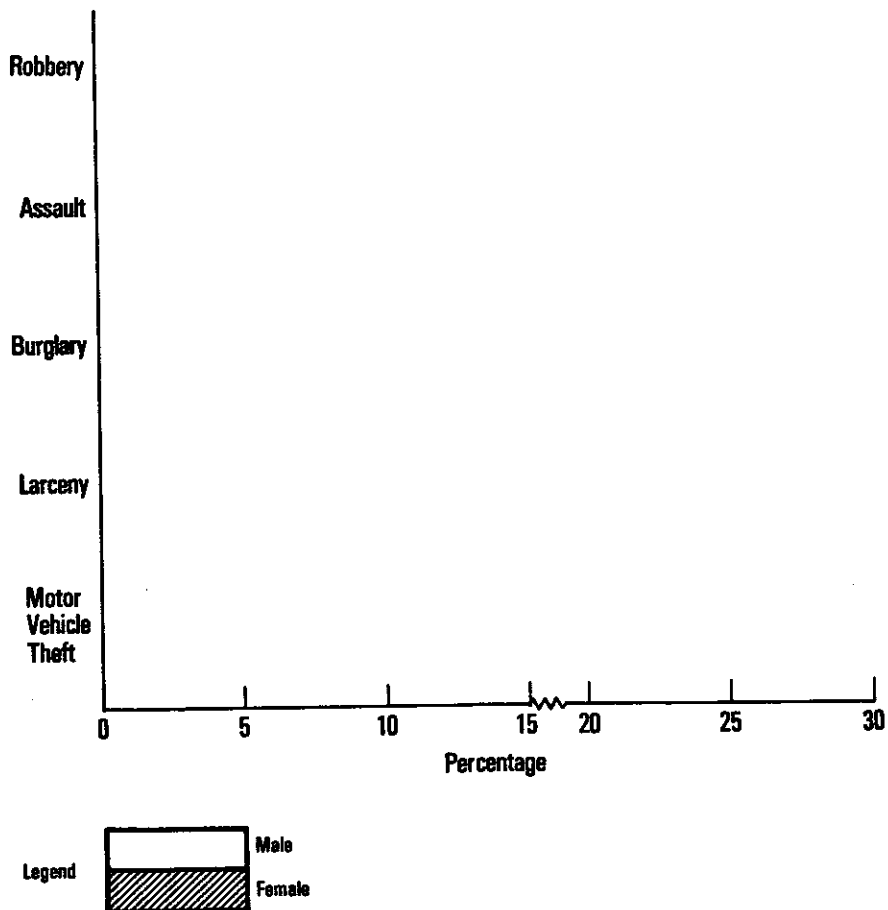
Now that you have the necessary data before you, answer the following questions: Which groups are most likely to be victimized? Is the pattern always consistent—i.e., do blacks have a higher proportion of victims in each crime type? For age, is there a regular trend from the youngest to the oldest group? Are there some crimes that show greater differences between the levels for men and women on the personal contact crimes (robbery and assault)? Race interacts with other personal characteristics, such as wealth and where one lives. How might this help us to explain the results for the racial comparisons?

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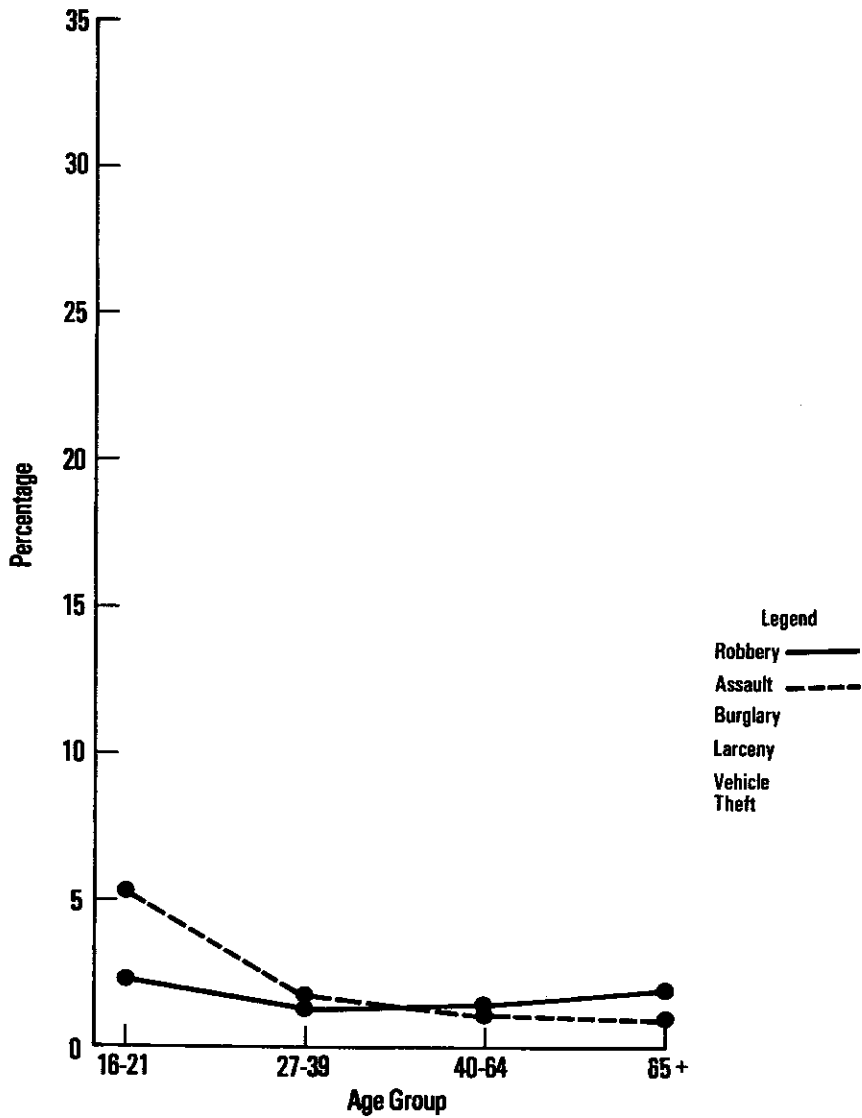
## Percentage Victimized By Race



## Percentage Victimized By Sex



## Percentage Victimized By Age Group



## Discussion of the Findings

These crosstabulations indicate that certain sub-groups of the population are much more likely than others to fall victim to the crimes included in the survey. Only living in a household that was burgled was not clearly related to age; this is to be expected, for it is likely that potential burglars are more tempted by the apparent desirability and vulnerability of the *physical structure* which is the target of this crime than they are by the age (or sex or race) of one of its inhabitants. Could family *income* be used as a surrogate measure for the desirability of a house for a potential burglar? What could be used as a measure of vulnerability?

In general, males are more likely to fall victim to crime than females. The difference is especially great in the case of assault. This doubtless is related to the aggressive and physically assertive nature of many relationships between males, especially youths, and because they are likely to frequent places (bars, parking lots, alleyways) where assaults by virtual strangers are more common.

The relationship between the race and the victimization experiences of this group is more problematic. Blacks were more likely than whites to fall victim to robbery and to auto theft, but whites were more likely to recall being assaulted and suffering actual or attempted thefts of other kinds. Unlike sex and age, race is systematically related to other attributes of individuals which also affect their probability of being victimized. It may be that other variables confound the simple relationship between race and victimization. For example, whites may be more desirable targets for many property crimes (they have higher incomes), but blacks (who cannot so easily purchase physical distance from high crime areas within these cities) may be more available for easy victimization. You will later learn to construct multivariate crosstabulations to test such hypotheses.

## Further Research Questions

1. How does victimization relate to other characteristics of respondents? What is the relation between victimization and education, marital status, home ownership, and residential stability? Does this vary by type of crime?
2. Are people who are victimized by one type of crime more likely than others to be victimized by another type of crime? Does this vary by type of crime—does personal and property crime “go together” separately?

If you want to read something on these topics, see: Skogan, 1976e; Hindelang, 1976; U.S. Department of Justice, 1976a.

## CHAPTER 5.

# Victimization and the Fear of Crime

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### Introduction

The fear of crime can have a great effect upon the quality of urban life. It affects us directly through its impact upon our willingness to use streets and parks, and it affects us indirectly through its impact upon social activity, community morale, and the economic base of the city. The fear of crime causes shops to close and downtown streets to become lonely canyons at night, and it forces those who can flee life in the central city to do so. Victims and nonvictims both suffer these consequences of crime.

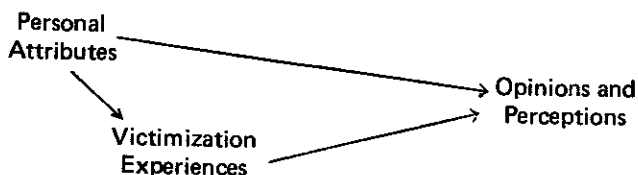
Crime and the fear of crime have become the object of a great deal of attention during the past decade. Most criminal justice policies have been aimed at the former, including efforts to increase police manpower and the presence of patrols on city streets, decrease the time which elapses between the commission of a crime and the arrival of the police on the scene, and encourage citizens to report more crimes to the police. Fewer policies have been aimed specifically at reducing the fear of crime, although there is evidence that this fear is often independent of direct victimization and that it has its own consequences for city life.

In this chapter we will examine several aspects of the fear of crime problem in large cities. First we will inspect closely the distribution of opinions about crime in New York City and San Diego. We will see how people feel about using the public streets during the day and at night, their perceptions of the crime problem in their neighborhoods, their ideas about who is committing those crimes, their estimates of their own chances of being attacked, and the impact of the fear of crime on their day-to-day activity. Next, we will examine the relationship between victimization and the fear of crime. We will test the general hypothesis that victims are more fearful and more cautious about their own behavior than nonvictims, and we will examine the impact of several types of victimization on those variables. We also will examine the relationship between the personal attributes of individual and their fear of crime, for it is apparent that there are many fearful people who have not been recent victims of crime. Personal attributes are related independently to the fear of crime, reflecting subgroup differences in exposure to risk.

This chapter reflects a simple causal model of the factors affecting opinions and perceptions of crime. That model, which is illustrated below, indicates the

causal relationships (the arrows) which are hypothesized to link the variables discussed in this chapter. This model can be tested extensively using your data set and multivariable crosstabulations. The exercises in this chapter will use only a few of your variables, and you may wish to test additional hypotheses using your data.

### THE CAUSAL MODEL



### The Attitude Questionnaire

In addition to information on patterns of victimization, the surveys conducted for LEAA also gathered data about the opinions, perceptions, and self-reported behavior of big-city residents toward crime and its consequences. (For the sake of brevity we will call all of these "attitudes.") These data are somewhat different than that collected on criminal events. The crime study employed respondents as *informants*. They were asked to describe objective events and persons, and the methodological questions raised by that research involve the accuracy of those reports. Because they were events, however, they could be seen and measured by other persons using other data-gathering methods. By comparing these independent observations we can make informed judgments about the accuracy of the measurement of different crimes in the surveys. This is the logic which lay behind the "reverse record check" described in Chapter 2.

The measurement of attitudes or individual's interpretations of their behavior raises different problems, for they are *subjective* attributes of individuals; unlike crimes they cannot be observed directly, but only through responses to questions or other artificial stimuli. Those responses are only indirect indicators of how each respondent feels, for the questions may be subject to different interpretations and the same questions or responses may mean somewhat different things to different people. As a result, we never expect to find perfect relationships between attitude questions, or between attitudes and reports of behavior or experiences. Rather, such measures tell us generally which groups of people sharing other attributes of interest (being of the same sex, or having been mugged) are *more or less* fearful or more or less worried about being attacked personally. Establishing the validity of such measures is a difficult proposition. (For a discussion of these issues see Kerlinger, 1965:411-462.) One advantage which the attitude component of the survey has over the victimization segment

is that there is no rare-events problem. Unlike crime experiences, virtually everyone has opinions about crime. This greatly facilitates the analysis of this part of the data.

### **The Distribution of Attitudes About Crime**

Before beginning to use the computer to analyze the attitudinal data, examine carefully the frequency distributions of the attitude items presented in the Codebook (variables V9 through V13 and V16 through V18). You probably will need to convert some of them into percentages to clarify differences between the cities. In some cases (for example, V17) it is clear that they differ strongly; in others (V10 or V11) percentages will be helpful. The frequency distributions reported in the Codebook provide some provocative information on perceptions of crime. They indicate that New Yorkers and San Diegans feel much safer on the streets of their neighborhoods during the day than at night. However, many respondents in each city indicated that the fear of crime has had no significant impact upon their day-to-day activity. They were likely to attribute such changes in patterns of activity to their neighbors, however. In this study (and in others), people appear to attribute great importance to the role of crime in the lives of others more readily than they do to themselves. As the referent of a question becomes more distant and abstract, more people impute the existence of the fear of crime; the more closely the question inquires about the *respondent's* attitudes or activities, the less important the fear of crime appears to be.

This may be reflective of these citizen's perceptions of the locus of the crime problem. While many of our respondents indicated that crime appears to be on the upswing, many fewer thought that this was the trend in their neighborhoods. This discrepancy may reflect their perception that they are more likely to be victimized in *other* neighborhoods. When they were asked to compare crime in their neighborhood to that in other parts of the metropolitan area, only 6 percent of the respondents thought that their local problem was above average, and almost 60 percent put it below average. When queried about who committed crime in their neighborhood, a plurality indicated that it was done by "outsiders," and only 20 percent indicated that it was committed by "locals" alone. (On the other hand, perhaps the most realistic answer was given by the 28 percent who indicated that they did not know. Crime is a furtive activity—criminals often do their best to disguise "whodunnit," and the most successful crimes leave few clues behind for the police.)

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## EXERCISE 4

Two immediate research questions are whether people who have recently experienced a crime victimization are more fearful of crime and whether they have changed their activities because of crime. To examine these relationships, crosstabulate the five crime victimization types (V19, V20, V21, V22, and V23) by the question on night-time safety (V11) and then by the item on limiting or changing activities (V18). Because you want to study the effect of victimization upon the attitudes (victimization is the "independent variable"), you should construct your tables so that the victimization variables fall along the columns. (Which percentages would you want to use: Row or column? Why?)

Once you have computed the tables, write a few paragraphs addressing the questions posed above. Be sure to consider the possibility that certain crimes may have more effect than others upon these behaviors. Why is this the case? What is it about specific types of crime that lead them to have different attitudinal consequence?

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### Discussion of the Findings: Victimization and Fear

The crosstabulations you have computed between victimization experiences and the two measures of the fear of crime present some seemingly curious findings. Only robbery appears to have a clear attitudinal effect. It is not surprising that being robbed had a powerful effect upon its victims, for it is an offense that combines many of the most feared elements of crime: it usually is perpetrated by strangers, weapons may be employed, often the victim is physically assaulted, and substantial amounts of money may be involved. The consequences of other types of victimization measured in the survey were quite different than expected. Other types of crime did affect the day-to-day behavior of some victims. However, victims of crimes other than robbery uniformly reported that they were *less* fearful than nonvictims of walking the streets of their neighborhoods at night.

There may be two explanations for these apparently anomalous findings. First, we probably should not expect a strong relationship between property crime victimization and fear of walking the streets. Those crimes do not involve personal confrontations between victim and offender, there is no violence, and weapons are not employed. The fact that the victims of those crimes feel *safer* than nonvictims is probably due to the influence of other factors. It is likely that the relationship between victimization and fear is affected by other variables that are related to each. In fact, this contingency is reflected in the causal model we presented at the beginning of this chapter. We have already seen that victimization itself is related to other attributes of individuals. The victims of property crimes, for example, often are more affluent than nonvictims (they

have more to steal), and higher status persons in general are less fearful of crime. In the case of assault, victims are overwhelmingly young and male, and many of them were white. Those groups are less fearful of crime than others, however. Other factors beside victimization affect levels of fear, and the two sets of forces often may be working in the opposite direction. We will investigate this hypothesis by crosstabulating those personal attributes with the fear of crime, and then examining the relationship between personal attributes, victimization, and fear in a multivariate analysis.

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## EXERCISE 5

The causal model presented at the beginning of this chapter specifies that other factors besides victimization affect the level of fear. Now we will look at personal attributes, one example of these other factors. After exploring the simple relationships between personal attributes and fear, we will then examine how victimization and personal attributes interact and have a joint effect upon the fear of crime.

For this exercise, crosstabulate the questions on night-time safety (V11) and limiting activities (V18) by family income (V2), age (V3), race (V5), and sex (V6). What types of individuals are more likely to express fear? Are the differences large or small? Which variables seem to have the greatest impact? The potential consequences of a victimization situation differ from one social group to another. For example, the elderly are less able than others to flee attack or resist in the face of an attempted robbery, and their injuries are slow to heal. Thus the effect of falling victim is potentially greater for them than for young people. Many women are more vulnerable than men to the predations of young males on the street, either in the form of sexual attacks, robberies, or purse snatchings. The effects of property theft or personal injuries which require medical care may be more extreme for the poor than for those who can afford the loss. Is this consistent with the data in your tables? Can other observed differences in fear between social groups be explained by differences in the potential consequences of victimization?

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## Multivariate Analysis

As we have seen, the fear of crime reflects our respondents' feelings about what *might* happen to them as well as what has in fact occurred. How much this caution affects the fear of crime *independently* of victimization can be determined through analyses which consider the joint effect of victimization and personal attributes.

In order to study joint effects, we need to introduce "control variables" into our tabulations. A control variable is a third variable that divides the sample into groups which you wish to examine separately. For instance, we might suspect that race influences the relationship between victimization experience and fear of crime. By using race as a control variable, we can divide the sample into a group of white respondents and a group of black respondents. We then crosstabulate victimization with fear for each racial group, yielding two subtables that we can compare. Table 5-1 is an example of such a crosstabulation of burglary by limiting activity, controlling for race.

**TABLE 5-1**  
**Limiting Activities by Burglary Victimization Controlling for Race,**  
**Column Percentages**

Limited or Changed Activity?	Burglary Victim?		
	No	Yes	Total
Whites and others			
Yes	38.1%	43.4%	38.6%
No	61.9	56.6	61.4
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	(1,552)	(174)	(1,726)
Blacks			
Yes	49.5%	65.6%	51.1%
No	50.5	34.4	48.9
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
N	(233)	(27)	(259)

Because the subtables for Table 5-1 are different in several ways, we can see that race and burglary victimization do have separate effects upon fear. In particular we can conclude:

- a. blacks are more cautious than whites in their day-to-day behavior regarding crime (49.5 and 65.6 percent, as compared to 38.1 and 43.4 percent);
- b. the victims of burglary also are more cautious than nonvictims (43.4 and 65.6 percent, as compared to 38.1 and 49.5 percent);
- c. the effect of being burglarized is the same within each racial group, but the magnitude of this effect is much greater among blacks than among whites (the difference between 65.6 percent and 49.5 percent, as compared to the difference between 43.4 percent and 38.1 percent).
- d. the effects of race and victimization are independent and cumulative. Being black and being victimized each contribute to bringing about (self-reported) changes in behavior.

This illustrates the power of multivariate analysis. If the two subtables were similar, we would have concluded that race had no effect independent of the impact of victimization. The differences in the *level*, or size, of the "yes" response in each table, and the difference in the *differences* between victims and non-victims within each racial group, indicate that complex and interesting things are going on in the data. The lives of our black respondents are more impacted by the fear of crime, and the effect of victimization upon them is even more pronounced.

## EXERCISE 6

As we have seen above, the relationship between group membership and fear depends upon the type of social grouping. In Table 5-1, we examined the joint effect of race and burglary victimization. But what about the joint effect of income and burglary victimization?

Before proceeding to compute the necessary tables, take a moment to write down what you expect to find. From Exercise 4, you know that burglary victims are slightly more likely than nonvictims to have limited or changed their activities. (Go back and look at that table to refresh your memory.) In Exercise 5, you found that lower income groups were more likely to limit their activities than higher income groups. And from Table 5-2 below, you can see that income has a curvilinear relationship to burglary—the most wealthy and the less wealthy report more burglaries than those in the \$10,000 to \$14,999 group. Putting this information together, what do you expect to be the joint effect of burglary victimization and income upon the limitation of activity?

**TABLE 5-2**  
**Burglary Victimization by Family Income, Column Percentages**

Burglary Victim?	Family Income				Total
	Under \$6,000	\$6,000-\$9,999	\$10,000-\$14,999	\$15,000 or More	
No	88.2%	89.0%	91.3%	89.8%	89.6%
Yes	11.8	11.0	8.7	10.2	10.4
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

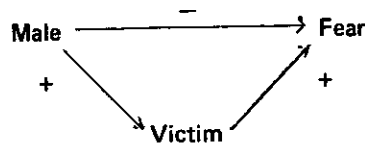
Do the tables produced by your computer run conform to this expectation? How are they different? Is the relationship between burglary and the limitation of activity the same within each income category (check both magnitude and direction)?

## EXERCISE 7

Now let us examine a multivariate test of the causal model which clarifies an apparent anomaly in our data. You can remember that we found that males were much more likely than females to feel safe alone on the streets at night, and that the victims of robbery are more likely than non-victims to feel unsafe. Yet we found in Chapter 4 that males are much more likely than females to be victimized by robbery. These single-variable relationships are mutually inconsistent.

To clear up this puzzle, crosstabulate night-time neighborhood safety (V11) by robbery victimization (V19), while controlling for sex (V6). Then within the victim and non-victim groups, examine the percentage who feel "very safe" in their neighborhood at night. Within each subgroup non-victims are more likely to feel very safe, but in which is the difference between victims and non-victims greater—among males or females? How does the rarity of victimization help to explain the apparent anomaly we found in our earlier bivariate analyses?

This illustrates the importance of multivariate analysis when the causal factors we are investigating are related to each other as well as to the variable of interest. In this case, the following causal model might be appropriate:



We have seen each of these linkages individually, but the lower fear level of males (the negative sign on that arrow) is confounded with the higher fear levels of victims (the positive sign), who are more likely to be males. The best way to cut through such causal complexity is to control for the most fundamental, or *causally distant* variable(s) in your conceptual model (here sex), and then examine the resulting tables as you have in Exercises 6 and 7. This also indicates the importance of clearly thinking out what should be related to what, and in which order, before you go to the computer.

### Further Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between other characteristics of respondents and their fear of crime? Is fear higher or lower among persons who own their own homes rather than rent, or have high or low educations? Are these differences due to *income* differences? (In this case, control for income.)

2. What is the relationship between different measures of fear? Are the *same people* afraid to walk during the day and at night? Are people who think that crime in their *neighborhood* is "up" think that *their* chances of being victimized is "up"?
3. What is the relationship between *attitudes* and the question about limiting *behavior* because of crime? Under what circumstances do the two not go together? (This calls for control factors.)
4. Are people more fearful when they think that their *neighbors* are the ones who are committing crimes? Who thinks that their neighborhood is "worse" than most, and how does this affect them?
5. Examine the question on evaluations of the *police* with care. Are victims more likely to dislike the police? (And is this separate from the effect of race and income?) Do people who think that crime is getting worse seem to blame the police?

Before you do any data analysis on these topics, formulate *specific* research questions and develop hypotheses about what you expect to find. This should help you to identify key "other factors" to control for in your computer runs. Always keep in mind that the important question is, "why is what I am finding true?" Try to find variables in the data set which will test your explanations. Above all, do not be blind to results which contradict your expectations. We collect data to confront reality, and to change our ideas if they prove to be false.

For further reading on fear of crime and evaluations of the police, see: Skogan, 1976b; Furstenberg, 1971; Conklin, 1971; Hindelang, 1975; Block, 1971.

# CHAPTER 6.

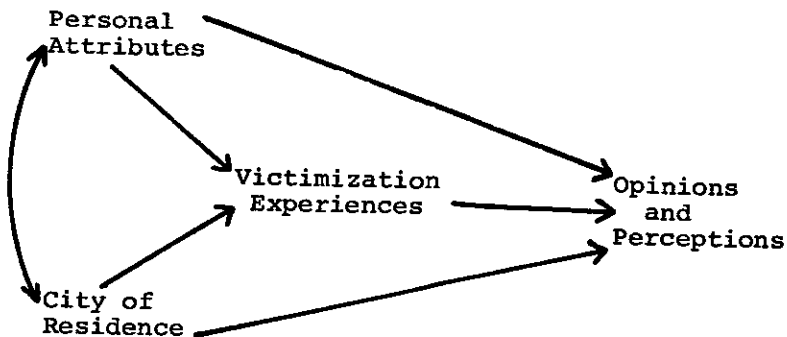
## City Differences in Victimization and Fear

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### Introduction

Until now we have dealt with the respondents in the city victimization surveys as a single sample; we have not distinguished between those who lived in New York City or San Diego even though the surveys were conducted separately in each community. However, there are a number of reasons to expect that things about the city in which one lives have an effect upon victimization and fear. Cities differ in their history, culture, politics, and social arrangements, and all of these affect the quality of our lives. The samples of residents of the two communities also differ considerably in racial composition, housing, and economic and educational attainment. We have already seen how these can influence perceptions of crime, the fear of crime, and victimization experiences. Thus, how much of the difference between two communities is unique to its environment and how much it reflects individual differences in the character of those who live there remains an open question. The addition of inter-city differences to our inventory of concerns extends the causal model discussed in the previous chapter by one step, as illustrated below. In this chapter we will examine the effect of city of residence upon various indicators of victimization and fear, and we will attempt to determine if this effect is separate from that of the individual attributes of our respondents.

THE EXTENDED CAUSAL MODEL



## City Differences

There are many differences between American communities which might serve to explain inter-city variations in the level of crime or the intensity of the fear which haunts their populations. Cities have different *histories*. Current opinion in a community in part reflects the past, including the effect of previous crime waves, sensational events, and long-run trends which have led up to the current state of affairs. Communities also are characterized by their *culture*, or the norms, expectations, and usual activities of their citizens. The "normal" level of violence, disorder, and crime is higher in some places than in others, and people there seem willing to tolerate it without undue concern. Communities also differ in the characteristic self-protective precautions taken by individuals who live there. In some places one never walks the streets after dark, doors are always double-bolted, and people purchase dogs for reasons other than companionship; in other places such behavior would seem excessive and out of place. The same is true of commercial crime prevention activities. The deployment of armed guards in office buildings, the use of plastic shields in taxicabs, and the frequency of exact-change policies on buses, differs from place to place. These overt symbols of a state of siege undoubtedly communicate to customers that they live in a hostile environment and that those around them are not to be trusted.

Cities also differ *physically* and organizationally. Some communities are more deteriorated than others, and there is evidence that physical decay contributes to the decline of community morale. Communities also differ in the anonymity of life there; in some places people never know their neighbors and do not challenge strangers who in more cohesive areas would be considered "suspicious." Finally, in some cities the upper- and middle-classes dwell in close proximity to places where criminals habitually prowl, while in other communities criminal activities are highly segregated and the poor are much more likely than others to fear for their lives and property. Cities also differ in the extent to which these issues have become the domain of *politics*. In some areas "law and order" has not been a prominent issue. Rhetoric about crime may sensitize people to the problem; it also may raise the general level of information about crime as a policy issue. In either case it would influence their responses to the attitude questionnaire. The same role may be played by the *media* in a community. Television and the newspapers may routinely report sensational local events on the front page, or they may bury them in the back columns. They may cover the doings of the police and affairs in the courts on a systematic basis, or they may ignore those activities.

While factors such as these may explain inter-city differences in concern about crime, there also are forces at work which serve to "even out" differences between American communities. Those forces may act to reduce inter-city variance on our survey measures. The daily media may have created a national market for crime news. Television stations and newspapers across the country report the same set of horrifying or exotic events (a mass murder in Texas; an heiress robs a bank in California). This may serve to increase *everyone's*

sensitivity to the crime issue (or at least those who pay attention to the media), but it also erases local variations in that concern. The nationalization of law-and-order politics may have had the same effect. Likewise, the tremendous mobility of the American population may serve to homogenize public opinion. People move into and out of our sample cities every day, importing or exporting experiences with crime which they can communicate to others or to survey interviewers. This mobility also serves to reduce distinctions between local areas, increasing the similarity of their residents on our attitude measures.

### **New York and San Diego**

New York City and San Diego differ in many ways. In fact, they were chosen for inclusion in your data set because they represent contrasting types of cities and because they scored quite differently on key measures in the victimization surveys. Some variables describing the two communities are presented on the following page.

Both cities are quite old: New York was founded by the Dutch in 1626, and San Diego by the Spanish 140 years later. They have developed along contrasting lines, however. New York City belongs to the complex of large, industrial cities of the Northeast. It is the largest city in the nation, with an estimated population in 1973 of over seven and one-half million persons. Like other cities of its type, its population has been declining steadily for nearly 20 years. It remains extremely densely populated (over 26,000 persons per square mile) however. It also is extremely heterogeneous. According to the 1970 census, over 40 percent of the population of New York City is foreign born or born to parents who were. The leading white foreign-heritage group is the Italians. An additional 10 percent of all New Yorkers claim Spanish heritage. The economy of the city is based upon light manufacturing and assembly operations (including the garment industry), and upon wholesale trade and corporate white-collar activities which have made New York the leading commercial center of the nation. San Diego, by contrast, is thinly populated (its density is 10 percent of New York's) and it houses an overwhelmingly white and native-born population. The estimated population of San Diego in 1973 was also only 10 percent of that of New York, although it was among the largest cities (14th) in the nation. Its population is increasing rapidly, as are the number of jobs available there and the prosperity of the city's economic base. On the whole, its people are young and more highly educated than New Yorkers, median family incomes are higher in the California community, and fewer San Diegans were counted as poor by the Census Bureau in 1970. In short, San Diego is representative of many Western cities and of a great swath of young, growing, prosperous "Sun Belt" cities which stretches from Atlanta through Texas and the Southwest to the Southern Pacific coast.

These two communities present contrasting images in the victimization surveys as well. Based upon the Census Bureau's interviews, New York City had an extremely high victimization rate for robbery. The personal robbery rate there was 24 per thousand persons 12 years of age and older, compared to San

# NEW YORK AND SAN DIEGO: A TALE OF TWO CITIES

	New York City	San Diego
<b>Founded</b>	1626 (Dutch)	1769 (Spanish)
<b>Population Characteristics<sup>a</sup></b>		
1970 population	7,894,862	697,027
1973 estimated population	7,646,818	757,148
Percent foreign stock	41.9	22.2
Percent black	21.0	7.6
Percent Spanish heritage	10.3	12.7
Leading foreign heritage group	Italians	Mexican-Americans
Median family income	\$9,673	\$10,159
Percent families below poverty income level	11.5	9.3
Percent of adults educated four years of college or more	10.6	15.8
Median age	32.7	25.9
Percent female	53.1	48.5
Persons per square mile	26,343	2,199
<b>Climate<sup>b</sup></b>		
Average January temperature	33.2	55.0
Average July temperature	76.8	70.1
Average percent of days with sunshine	59.0	67.0
Air pollution-sulphur dioxide tons per year square mile <sup>c</sup>	11,688	132
<b>Economic Base</b>	Light manufacturing, small assembly, white-collar employment, and wholesale trade	Fishing, navy facilities, military bases, aerospace, electronics, and shipbuilding
<b>Law Enforcement Data for the Reference Year<sup>d</sup></b>		
Total police department employees <sup>e</sup> (employees per 10,000)	32,812 (4.3)	1,271 (1.7)
Official violent crime total <sup>f</sup> (crimes per 10,000)	118,603 (15.5)	2,699 (3.6)
Official property crime total <sup>g</sup> (crimes per 10,000)	358,575 (46.9)	42,801 (56.5)
Percent police officers black <sup>h</sup>	8.0	7.0
Serious assaults on police officers <sup>i</sup> (assaults per 1,000 policemen)	958 (29.2)	137 (107.8)
Clearance rate for robbery <sup>j</sup>	19.3	60.1
Clearance rate for burglary	19.3	41.2
Percent of stolen autos recovered <sup>k</sup>	27.7	91.7

<sup>a</sup>Except as indicated, all population data are for 1970. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. Census of Population, Vol. I (1970); U.S. Bureau of the Census. County and City Data Book (1972), Table 6.

<sup>b</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census. County and City Data Book (1972), Table 6.

<sup>c</sup>Environmental Protection Administration. The National Air Monitoring Program: Air Quality and Emissions Trends Annual Report, Vol. II (1971). The data are for 1970.

<sup>d</sup>The reference period was 1972 for New York City, and 1973 for San Diego

- <sup>e</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation. Uniform Crime Report, Washington, D.C.: Federal Bureau of Investigation, yearly.
- <sup>f</sup> Violent crimes include rape, robbery and assault. Homicide is excluded as murder data were not collected in the victim surveys. All crime data were drawn from the Uniform Crime Report.
- <sup>g</sup> Property crimes include burglary, larceny and auto theft.
- <sup>h</sup> These estimates are for 1971.
- <sup>i</sup> Includes assaults resulting in injury to the officer only. These figures are for 1971, the last year San Diego made this information available to the FBI. The data were supplied by the FBI.
- <sup>j</sup> The percentage of robberies officially "cleared by arrest." The data were supplied by the FBI.
- <sup>k</sup> Average for the reference year and the preceding year. The data were supplied by the FBI.

Diego's 11 per thousand. The commercial robbery victimization rate for New York was 103 per thousand establishments, while in San Diego it was only 49. Guns were used in virtually identical proportions of personal robberies in each city (12 percent in New York, 11 in San Diego). Residents of the two cities experienced virtually identical motor vehicle theft rates. San Diegans came off worse on most measures of the property crime rate, on the other hand. The commercial burglary rate was higher in San Diego than in New York City, and the household burglary rate in the West coast city was more than twice as high as in the East. Insurance coverage of property crime losses was virtually identical in each place, 23 percent in San Diego and 22 percent in New York. On the average, New Yorkers were more likely than San Diegans to suffer from purse snatchings and other personal thefts (the comparative rates were 15 and 5 per thousand), but the Californians were *three* times more likely to report that they were the victim of a serious (aggravated) assault, and *four* times more likely to claim victimization by assaults of all kinds. However, a larger proportion of interpersonal violence was committed by strangers in New York. There, 84 percent of all rapes and assaults reported in the surveys were attributed to strangers, while the comparable figure in San Diego was 64 percent.

A number of striking contrasts between the two cities are apparent in the frequency distributions for the survey items in your codebook. To gain a quick picture of the differences between the two samples you will be analyzing, examine carefully the demographic characteristics (variables V1 to V8), attitudinal measures (V9 through V18) and victimization indicators (V19 to V23) listed in the codebook.

The city frequency distributions illustrate how our samples match the description of the two cities based upon 1970 Census of Population data and the published victimization survey findings. Twice as many San Diegans as our sample of New Yorkers reported that they had completed at least some college, and they were 50 percent more likely to claim high family incomes. Many more New Yorkers than Californians rented rather than owned their homes. Twenty percent of our New York sample was black (one percent less than the 1970

Census's estimate), as was six percent (two percent less than 1970) of our San Diego sample. The New York City data included somewhat more females, as did the city as a whole in 1970. New Yorkers were more than twice as likely as San Diegans to report that they were robbed in the previous year, while San Diego scored less favorably on measures of the frequency of victimization by assault, burglary and larceny.

The attitudinal measures gathered in the victimization surveys indicate that residents of the two cities felt quite differently about most aspects of the crime problem. New Yorkers were more likely to think that crime was up in their neighborhoods, and that their chances of being victimized personally had increased. More New Yorkers also felt that their neighborhood was more dangerous than other places in the city, but the outstanding fact about that question remains that scarcely anyone in the two communities felt that way. On the other hand, over one-half of all New Yorkers, but only 29 percent of those from San Diego, reported that they had limited or changed their activities due to crime, and 70 percent of the New York City sample indicated that they thought their neighbors had done so. Residents of both cities had the same perceptions about who was committing crime in their home areas: 39 percent of the New York group and 37 percent of the Californians felt that only "outsiders" were responsible. However, one-third of the San Diegans reported that they would feel "very safe" alone on the streets in their neighborhoods at night, and only 13 percent of those from New York City felt the same way.

It is apparent from these data that New Yorkers are much more concerned than San Diegans about the impact of crime on their daily lives.

What we see, then, is an overlap at the city level in the characteristics of populations, their experiences, and our measures of the fear of crime. Thus, it is not clear how much of the difference between the cities in levels of fear is due either to the attributes of those who live there or to their victimization experiences, and how much independently can be attributed to living in the city itself. New Yorkers are more fearful than San Diegans, but a larger proportion of them fall in high-risk categories that your previous research indicates are "high fear" groups—women, blacks, and less-educated and lower-income individuals. We have seen that robbery is strongly related to the fear of walking the streets at night; the fact that New Yorkers were more than twice as likely as San Diegans to report such offenses may be related to the aggregate levels of fear in the two communities as well. Victimization itself also may be distributed across cities in response to the characteristics of the people (the targets of crime) who live there. Property crime rates are higher in San Diego than in New York, but we have seen that such rates often rise directly with income, and that San Diegans on the whole are more prosperous (have more to steal) than those who live in New York.

## EXERCISE 8

In Chapter 4 we examined relationships between personal attributes and victimization. Let us now explore the effect of the city of residence upon those relationships. Rather than looking at all possible combinations of variables, crosstabulate the two types of victimization, robbery (V19) and assault (V20) by age (V3), race (V5), and sex (V6) while controlling for city (V26). Before looking at your computer output, however, formulate some expectations about the effect of city upon these relationships. For instance, on which relationships do you think the control for city will have little or no effect?

Now examine your tabulations and compare them to your expectations. There are two kinds of effects you should look for: those of direction and those of magnitude. For example, in the full sample we know that males are more likely to report victimizations than females; does the *direction* of the relationship remain the same for both the San Diego and New York samples? What about the *magnitude*? Are the percentages of male and female victims the same in each city, and is the difference between males and females the same? To help you answer these and similar questions concerning the age and race comparisons, you could arrange the victimization percentages into a table like the following:

PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS REPORTING VICTIMIZATION			
City	Sex	Robbery	Assault
San Diego	Male		
	Female		
New York	Male		
	Female		

---

## EXERCISE 9

Now let us turn our attention to the measures of fear. Crosstabulate night-time safety (V11) and limits on activities (V18) by age (V3), race (V5), and sex (V6) while controlling for city of residence (V26).

How does city of residence effect the overall relationships between personal characteristics and the fear variables? Are the residents of one city generally more fearful than those in the other even when personal attributes are taken into consideration? (Hint: When studying night-time fear, concentrate on the "very safe" category.) Are there any situations where the control for city of residence drastically changes the direction or magnitude of the basic relationship?

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## EXERCISE 10

The final step in exploring the full causal model presented at the beginning of this chapter is to deal with all four elements (city, personal attributes, victimization experiences, and attitudes) simultaneously. This requires the introduction of another level of control to give us a four-dimensional table. For example, you might examine the effect of burglary victimization upon activity while simultaneously controlling for race and city of residence. This yields four tables, one for each valid combination of the race and city categories (i.e., whites in San Diego, blacks in San Diego, whites in New York, and blacks in New York). Each table should have burglary victimization along the rows and limiting of activity as the column variable.

Begin this exercise by preparing this tabulation—burglary by limiting of activities—while controlling for both race and city. With four tables to juggle, you may have difficulty keeping things straight. You can simplify things by selecting the required percentages of respondents who reported limiting their activities and arranging them in a table like the one on the following page.

Is it always true that burglary victims are more likely to have limited their activity than non-victims? Are blacks always more likely to have changed? Are people in New York more likely to report limiting their activities than those in San Diego?

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## PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS WHO LIMITED THEIR ACTIVITIES

City	Race	Burglary	Percent Who Limit Activity
San Diego	White and others	Non-victim	
		Victim	
	Black	Non-victim	
		Victim	
New York	White and others	Non-victim	
		Victim	
	Black	Non-victim	
		Victim	

Notice that these three causal variables (city, race, and burglary victimization) tend to have a cumulative effect. Being a victim increases one's fear; black victims are even more likely to express fear; black victims from New York are the most fearful as a group! In contrast, white non-victims from San Diego are almost the least likely to express fear.

You can also see the powerful impact of city of residence in these tabulations. For New Yorkers, white non-victims are the least likely to express fear (49%), yet this percentage is *higher* than the *most* fearful group in San Diego (black victims at 45%).

### EXERCISE 11

For another look at the full model, crosstabulate robbery victimization by limits on activities while controlling for both sex and city of residence. Describe the independent effect of the three causal variables as you did in Exercise 10. Are the effects cumulative here as well? Are there any important differences which would lead you to revise your understanding of the full causal model?

Despite the fact that your data set is quite large, this last exercise spread the respondents rather thinly over some subgroups. This is an important problem when control variables are added. Indeed, the problem of "shrinking cell sizes" is a major obstacle to social research whenever the causal model becomes complex. In Exercises 10 and 11, we tried to minimize the harm by sticking to dichotomous variables as a way of limiting the number of subgroups. Unfortunately that is not always a meaningful solution. As you progress with

your own research, be alert for small cells which may reduce the reliability of the inferences you are drawing.

### Further Research Questions

We have now touched on all aspects of the full causal model underlying our analysis of these data. However, many more tests of the model can be made, for we have made available several measures of each of its components. You may wish to examine some of the other variables in the data set.

1. In Exercise 10 you observed striking inter-city differences in fear. Why should this be the case? What are the factors which lead to such differences, even when we control for many extraneous variables? (See if you can test your ideas using the data presented in the "Tale of Two Cities." You may also want to consult Census Bureau publications for more city data.)
2. We have seen throughout that race is a powerful determinant of victimization and fear. Yet, in San Diego blacks feel safer than whites in New York City. Can this be explained by age, income, education, marital, and home-ownership differences between the black populations of the two cities?
3. In what other ways do New Yorkers and San Diegans differ? Are New Yorkers more likely to suspect their neighbors of being criminals, to think their neighbors are fearful of crime, to think their chances of victimization have gone up, or to think that their neighborhood is less safe than average? Do your findings agree with those we found in Exercises 10 and 11 regarding fear?
4. Examine inter-city differences in the evaluation of police services. Are city, race and victimization effects as powerful as they are in the case of fear? How would you explain the gap between blacks in San Diego and whites in New York? Could you relate *city* characteristics (as in question one above) to ratings of the police in your data?

For further reading on city differences, see: Skogan, 1976b; Conklin, 1971; U.S. Department of Justice, 1975b and 1975c.

# APPENDIX

## A Methodological Note to Advanced Analysts

The data set provided with this module includes only a sample of the cases collected in the original surveys. Because crime is a relatively rare event for most people, the Census Bureau had to interview very large samples in order to find enough respondents who had been victimized during the previous year. In the city surveys, approximately 10,000 households were interviewed in each city. The Census Bureau collected data on everyone aged 12 and older in each household, bringing the total number of respondents to about 21,000 per city. All were asked about their victimization experiences. Only a random sample of half the respondents aged 16 or older were asked the "attitude" questions, an extra series of items on crime related attitudes and behaviors. Thus, we began with about 9,000 respondents per city to whom interviewers had administered the attitude questions. Although those samples contained a sufficient number of crime victims, they are very costly to process, especially for classroom exercises.

In order to reduce these data files to a workable number of about 2,000 cases, we needed to draw another subsample. We decided against taking simple random samples from the full files, for they would include too few crime victims for reliable analysis. For example, the original San Diego data contained only 98 robbery victims. A simple ten percent sample would have left us with about 10 robbery victims.

**TABLE A-1**  
**Unweighted Counts of Non-Victims and Victims in Each Sample**

	New York		San Diego	
	Original	SETUPS	Original	SETUPS
Total number of respondents*	9477	1017	9124	981
Non-victims	7270	339	4835	353
Robbery victims	246	167	98	98
Assault victims	110	110	364	178
Burglary victims	623	204	1241	237
Larceny victims	1130	227	3436	411
Motor vehicle theft victims	286	168	226	150

\*Some respondents were victimized in more than one way, so the sum of victims and non-victims exceeds the total number of respondents.

Our ultimate sampling strategy was to divide the sample into non-victims and the five different types of victims. We then drew separate random samples in each group. Only a small proportion of non-victims were selected, while all or a large proportion of the respondents from the victimization groups were included. Table A-1 shows the raw count of cases for each of these categories.

In its raw form, the special subsample of cases is thus not representative of the population. There may be enough victims in each category to provide stable estimates of their characteristics, but their proportions are incorrect. To adjust this, we assigned a weight to each respondent such that the group would be returned to its correct proportions in the population. Thus, in our New York data non-victims have weights of almost 2.0, which has the effect of counting them twice. For the victims, the weights vary considerably depending on the type of crime and whether the respondent was a victim of more than one type. A typical victim weight is near 0.1, which means that these respondents effectively are counted only one-tenth during tabulations.\*

There are three advantages to this weighting scheme. One is that tabulations prepared from the weighted subsample will have distributions very similar to tables computed from the full file, and percentages and correlations computed on both sets of data will be nearly the same. A second advantage is that computations based on the victims will be very accurate estimates of population values, even though it appears that only a handful of cases were used. For instance, Table 4-1 shows 38 robbery victims broken down by race. Most analysts would be nervous making inferences from only 38 cases, but we must remember that there are really about 400 cases hiding beyond that figure! The third advantage is that we can do reasonably accurate analyses without consuming the computer resources needed for the full sample.

Along with these rather powerful advantages, there are some countervailing disadvantages. One is that the experienced analyst is likely to have trouble dealing with weighted data where 38 cases are really 400 and 1,960 cases are really something near 1,600. This may be especially troublesome for those who intuit statistical significance by examining cell sizes. And when it comes to formal tests of statistical significance, the standard formulas (in particular those built into typical computer programs) can *not* be applied to these data; because those formulas assume *unweighted* data.

When analyzing these data, the researcher should keep in mind that respondents from two very different cities have been combined. Thus, a control for city may be important for certain analyses. People in New York may not always react to crime in the same way as those living in San Diego. Of course, these data do not necessarily represent typical life in America, or even urban

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\*The matter of weighting is complicated further by the fact that the Census Bureau had weighted the data to correct for undersampling or differential non-interview rates in certain demographic categories. These weights were not related to being a victim, and the differences from one respondent to the next are relatively minor. The Census Bureau weight was combined with our special sampling weight to obtain the final weight appearing in variable V27.

America. The samples were drawn from two specific cities which may or may not be typical.

Despite the benefits of our special weighting scheme, analysts should not use these data for publication purposes. They were designed for an *instructional* module, and we feel that they serve this heuristic purpose quite well. Serious researchers should not use this file for anything more than rough, exploratory analyses. If interesting results are found, they should be recomputed from the full data files before any firm interpretations are made.

Complete sets of these and other LEAA survey data can be obtained at nominal cost from DUALabs, Inc., 1601 N. Kent Street, Arlington, Va. 22209. In the near future, the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106) will also be making copies available to its member schools.

## NOTES TO THE INSTRUCTOR

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In a course which meets three times per week for one hour sessions, this module can be covered easily in six unhurried segments. The first can cover the status of crime statistics and handle discussion of Chapters 1 and 2. The second can introduce the data, talk about frequencies (Chapter 3) and introduce the class to Chapter 4. The third lecture probably should be devoted to using the computer. Then, Chapters 4, 5, and 6 can be discussed in turn, with a day or so between each session for computing. A seventh, catch-up day could be used to review material, hear oral reports, and (perhaps) make additional assignments.\*

Many of those who used the Test Edition of this module had students do a brief paper on an original topic, or on one of the suggested research questions. Skogan employed this module to open up a course on the criminal justice system, and then required a substantial research paper on citizen satisfaction with the police later in the course.

Because of the necessity to weight the data cases, students can perform the exercises only on a computer equipped with a crosstabulation program that accepts a weight variable. The standard statistical packages, such as SPSS, OSIRIS, SAS, BMD, and others, will have no difficulty with this. Schools which have access only to a small computer may not be able to use these data, either because the software does not permit weighting or because the machine takes too much time to read the data. No difficulties should be encountered on larger machines, especially if the data can be stored as a disk file for simultaneous access by several jobs. Our experience on machines of the IBM 370 and CDC 6000 variety is that students will spend about one or two dollars per computer run.

As with all the SETUPS modules, the data were set up for easy access by SPSS and OSIRIS. Other programs can process the data set in its "card image" format. A counter-sorter can *not* be used because of the necessity of weighting the data.

Students do not need much knowledge of computers in order to perform the exercises. At a minimum they need to know where the computer facility is, how to keypunch, how to turn in a job, and how to get it back. In addition, they will need to know how to use the software command which generates crosstabula-

\*Another strategy is to spread the module out over a long period with other material interspersed. This will give the students more time for the computer exercises.

tions. All other software commands can be prepared by the instructor and passed out in printed form or as prepunched computer cards. For example, with SPSS the student needs only to learn how to construct a CROSSTABS instruction. Everything else can be supplied by the instructor. (Note: If computer time is scarce, SPSS users should employ the integer mode of the CROSSTABS instruction. Eliminating the "total" percentages with an OPTIONS card will also make the printout easier to read.) Of course, some instructors may want to teach more about computer usage and have the students prepare all of their control cards.

The module is not intended to be a computer manual, so we have not included an instructional section on computers or software packages. The more widely used statistical programs have manuals which will serve this purpose. In particular, the *SPSS Primer* (Klecka, Nie, and Hull, 1975) has several beginning-level chapters on computers and data processing which would be helpful regardless of the program being used.

Similarly, this module does not aspire to teach statistics beyond the interpretation of simple percentages. We are aiming to introduce unsophisticated students to the possibility of analyzing social problems by quantitative techniques. Many of these students have enough trouble with percentages, especially in understanding which direction to percentage a table, without presenting more advanced materials.

Instructors who are using this module with more advanced students or in methodology courses, may want to utilize supplementary materials. Indeed, this module might be the supplement to a standard statistics text or one of the quantitative "laboratory manuals" available in the social sciences. For some courses, the *SPSS Primer* may be a good companion, because it explains elementary statistics and basic SPSS commands at the same time.

Other statistical concepts that could be covered in conjunction with this module are: levels of measurement, measures of central tendency, and measures of association for nominal and ordinal data. Because of the weighting scheme, standard tests of significance cannot be applied to these data and should not be taught in this context. This prohibition includes chi-square and tests for the differences of percentages.

## Annotated Bibliography

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This article discusses the basic concepts involved in victimization surveys and the development of the Census Bureau's survey program.

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Published yearly, this series of reports remains one of the most comprehensive sources of statistics about the frequency of reported crime and police crime-prevention activities.

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Hindelang, Michael. 1974. "Public Opinion Regarding Crime, Criminal Justice, and Related Topics," *Journal of Research on Crime and Delinquency*, Vol. 11 (July): 101-116.

Hindelang, Michael. 1976. *Criminal Victimization in Eight American Cities*. Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger Publishing Co.

This book describes detailed patterns of victimization in Atlanta, Baltimore, Cleveland, Denver, Dallas, Newark, Portland, and St. Louis. It examines who is victimized, how much is lost, patterns of weapon use and physical injury, and the reporting of crimes to the police. It includes an analysis of both household and commercial victimization data.

Kerlinger, Fred. 1973. *Foundations of Behavioral Research*. New York: Holt, Reinhart & Winston, Second edition.

This is an excellent introductory research methods textbook, providing a good introduction to the issues of reliability and validity of quantitative data.

Klecka, William R., Norman H. Nie, and C. Hadlai Hull. 1975. *SPSS Primer*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

This elementary book introduces the reader to the statistical package for the social sciences. All the SPSS commands needed for the exercises in this manual are discussed. Basic statistical concepts and an introduction to computers are included.

President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. 1966a. *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

This is the final report of the Crime Commission. It includes a number of recommendations based upon the findings of the Commission's victimization surveys.

President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. 1966b. *Field Surveys I: A Report on a Pilot Study in the District of Columbia on Victimization and Attitudes Toward Law Enforcement*. By Albert D. Biderman. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

This volume reports the findings of a pretest of the methodology used by the Crime Commission in its surveys.

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This volume reports the findings of the Crime Commission's national survey of victimization and attitudes about crime and the criminal justice system.

Seidman, David and Michael Couzens. 1974. "Getting the Crime Rate Down: Political Pressure and Crime Reporting." *Law and Society Review*, 8 (Spring): 457-493.

This is the best description of the organizational processes involved in the distortion of police statistics on crime.

Skogan, Wesley G. 1976a. "Citizen Reporting of Crime: Some National Panel Data." *Criminology*, 13 (February): 535-549.

This article examines in detail the process of reporting crime to the police. It concludes that the decision to report a crime often is a highly rational one, reflecting realistic assessments by victims of the importance of their experiences.

Skogan, Wesley G. 1976b. "Public Policy and the Fear of Crime in Large American Cities," in John A. Gardiner (ed.), *Public Policy and Public Law*. New York: Praeger, Chapter 2.

This essay examines two measures of fear which are included in your data set: the fear of walking alone on the street in one's neighborhood at night, and changes or limits on one's behavior due to crime. Survey data for New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Detroit were used in the analysis. The chapter focuses upon the policy implications of the fear of crime.

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This article describes the surveys which have been conducted by the Bureau of the Census. It discusses some of their methodological problems, and ways to acquire additional victim data.

Skogan, Wesley G. 1976d. *Sample Surveys of the Victims of Crime*. Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger Publishing Co.

This volume contains 12 original articles on victimization research, including analyses of patterns of injury in robbery and assault, the use of handguns, and the economic costs of crime. A number of chapters explore the role of victimization research in criminal justice planning and program evaluation. Chapter 2, by Barbara Boland, reports on the city victimization surveys.

Skogan, Wesley G. 1976e. "The Victim of Crime: Some National Panel Data," in Anthony L. Guenther (ed.), *Criminal Behavior and Social Systems*. Chicago: Rand McNally (second edition), Chapter 9.

This chapter uses the Census Bureau's national survey data to describe the volume and character of crime in the nation, the attributes of its victims, and the consequences of victimization.

Skoler, Daniel L. 1976. "Financing the Criminal Justice System—Taking Stock, 1965-1976," *Criminal Justice Digest*, Vol. 4 (February); 1-4.

A useful review of patterns of expenditures on criminal justice.

Sparks, Richard, Hazel Genn and David J. Dodd. 1977. *Surveying Victims*. New York: John Wiley Publishers.

This volume reports the findings of a victimization survey conducted in middle- and working-class neighborhoods in London. It also explores English attitudes and perceptions about crime. It contains a thorough discussion of the methodological problems involved in conducting victim surveys.

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A list of all surveys regarding crime which were conducted before 1972. This is a handy index to previous opinion polls.

U.S. Department of Justice. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service. 1972b. *San Jose Methods Test of Known Crime Victims*. By Anthony G. Turner. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

This documents one of the methodological investigations which preceded the Census Bureau's victimization surveys. It examines the results of a "reverse record check" (described in Chapter 4) which compared the results of survey interviews with police files.

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A brief summary report on patterns of victimization in Atlanta, Baltimore, Cleveland, Denver, Dallas, Newark, Portland, and St. Louis.

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A summary of the findings of the national household and commercial victimization surveys for 1973.

U.S. Department of Justice. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service. 1975b. *Criminal Victimization Surveys in the Nation's Five Largest Cities*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

This volume reports the findings of victimization surveys conducted in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and Detroit.

U.S. Department of Justice. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service. 1975c. *Criminal Victimization Surveys in 13 American Cities*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

This report summarizes the findings of victimization surveys conducted in San Diego and 12 other major cities.

U.S. Department of Justice. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service. 1975d. "Public Opinion Regarding Crime, Criminal Justice and Related Topics." *Utilization of Criminal Justice Statistics Project Analytic Report No. 1*. By Michael J. Hindelang. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

This report presents detailed breakdowns of the responses to a number of national public opinion polls collected since 1970. Responses to questions

about drug use, gun control, and the causes of crime typically are tabulated by sex, race, education, age, religion, income, region, and community size.

U.S. Department of Justice. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service. 1976a. *Criminal Victimization in the United States: 1973*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

This volume documents in detail the findings of the national victimization surveys of households and commercial establishments for 1973. It examines patterns of victimization, weapon use, financial loss, and personal injury, as well as the reporting of crimes to the police.

U.S. Department of Justice. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service. 1976b. *Criminal Victimization in the United States: A Comparison of 1973 and 1974 Findings*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Reports changes in the rate of victimization for many groups between 1973 and 1974, as well as changes in the rate at which crimes are reported to the police and other topics of interest.

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Details changes in patterns of victimization in three years for Atlanta, Baltimore, Cleveland, Denver, Dallas, Newark, Portland, and St. Louis.

U.S. Department of Justice. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service. 1976d. *Criminal Victimization Surveys in the Nation's Five Largest Cities: A Comparison of 1972 and 1974 Findings*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

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U.S. Department of Justice. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service. Yearly. *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics*. By Michael J. Hindelang. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

This volume, which has been issued annually since 1973, is the best source of general information on crime and criminal justice activities, and the status of public opinion about crime. Results of victimization surveys are included as well.

Wolfgang, Marvin E. 1958. *Patterns in Criminal Homicide*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

A path-breaking analysis of official police records on murder in Philadelphia, including patterns of weapon use, victim-offender relationships, and the role of victims in precipitating their own demise.

Zimring, Franklin E. 1968. "Is Gun Control Likely to Reduce Violent Killings?"  
*University of Chicago Law Review*, Vol. 35, pp. 721-736.

Important for its use of official crime data to analyse a controversial policy issue.

# Codebook

This section contains the codebook describing the variables available in the data supplied for this SETUPS module. Chapter 3 gives an explanation of how to use this section.

Variable Number	Frequencies		Variable Description
	New York	San Diego	
V1			HOUSING TENURE Col. 1 "Are your living quarters:" 1. Owned or being bought (includes homes, condominiums, and co-ops) 2. Rented for cash or occupied without cash rent (includes sharecroppers)
	314	583	
	703	398	
V2			FAMILY INCOME, GROUPED Col. 2 "What was the total income of this family during the past 12 months? This includes wages and salaries, net income from business or farm, pensions, dividends, interest, rent, and any other money income received by the members of this family." (Interviewer shows a flashcard with categories—here grouped.) 1. \$0-5,999 2. \$6,000-9,999 3. \$10,000-14,999 4. \$15,000 or more 0. Missing Data
	251	217	
	177	173	
	256	237	
	198	308	
	136	46	
V3			AGE, GROUPED Col. 3 Respondent's age at last birthday (grouped).

Variable Number	Frequencies		Variable Description
	New York	San Diego	
	250	295	1. 16-26
	264	242	2. 27-39
	366	328	3. 40-64
	137	116	4. 65 and older
V4			MARITAL STATUS Col. 4 "Is (respondent) now married, widowed, divorced, separated, or has (respondent) never been married?"
	602	639	1. Married
	89	41	2. Widowed
	30	71	3. Divorced
	51	21	4. Separated
	242	206	5. Never married
	3	3	0. Missing data
V5			RACE OF RESPONDENT Col. 5 "What is (respondent's) origin or descent?"
	815	920	1. Whites and others (primarily Oriental)
	202	61	2. Black
V6			SEX OF RESPONDENT Col. 6
	468	487	1. Male
	549	494	2. Female
V7			EDUCATION OF RESPONDENT Col. 7 Number of years of regular school completed (grouped).
	123	51	1. Less than 8 years
	311	173	2. 8 through 11 years
	358	338	3. 12 years
	161	322	4. Some college through college graduate
	64	97	5. Post-graduate training
V8			LIVED HERE ON APRIL 1, 1970 Col. 8

Variable Number	Frequencies		Variable Description
	New York	San Diego	
			"Did you live in this house on April 1, 1970?"
	760	420	1. Yes
	257	561	2. No
V9			CRIME IN NEIGHBORHOOD Col. 9
			"Within the past year or two, do you think that crime in your neighborhood has increased, decreased, or remained about the same?"
	492	315	1. Increased
	31	51	2. Decreased
	312	429	3. About the same
	123	72	4. Don't know
	48	113	5. Haven't lived here that long
	11	2	0. Missing Data
V10			WHO COMMITS CRIME IN NBH Col. 10
			"How about any crimes which may be happening in your neighborhood—would you say they are committed mostly by the people who live here in this neighborhood or mostly by outsiders?"
	21	58	1. No crimes happening in neighborhood
	125	268	2. People living here
	399	355	3. Outsiders
	140	48	4. Equally by both
	310	247	5. Don't know
	23	4	0. Missing Data
V11			SAFE ALONE IN NBH, NIGHT Col. 11
			"How safe do you feel or would you feel being out alone in your neighborhood at night?"
	129	320	1. Very safe
	414	419	2. Reasonably safe
	226	157	3. Somewhat unsafe
	237	85	4. Very unsafe
	11	0	0. Missing Data

Variable Number	Frequencies		Variable Description
	New York	San Diego	
V12			SAFE ALONE IN NBH, DAY Col. 12 "How about during the day—how safe do you feel or would you feel being out alone in your neighborhood?"
	437	765	1. Very safe
	468	198	2. Reasonably safe
	71	14	3. Somewhat unsafe
	30	4	4. Very unsafe
	11	0	0. Missing Data
V13			COMPARE NBH CRIME TO AREA Col. 13 "How do you think your neighborhood compares with others in this metropolitan area in terms of crime? Would you say it is—"
	21	1	1. Much more dangerous
	60	35	2. More dangerous
	361	325	4. About average
	436	444	4. Less dangerous
	115	160	5. Much less dangerous
	24	15	0. Missing Data
V14			RATE LOCAL POLICE Col. 14 "Would you say, in general, that your local police are doing a good job, an average job, or a poor job?"
	326	554	1. Good job
	382	329	2. Average job
	155	61	3. Poor job
	150	38	4. Don't know
	5	0	0. Missing Data
V15			MOST IMPT POLICE IMPROVE Col. 15-16 "In what ways could they (local police) improve? Which would you say is the most important?"
	124	166	1. No improvement needed
	198	118	2. Hire more policemen
	133	59	3. Concentrate on more important duties

Variable Number	Frequencies		Variable Description
	New York	San Diego	
	44	80	4. Be more prompt, responsive, alert
	33	36	5. Improve training, raise qualifications
	38	106	6. Be more courteous, improve attitude
	17	19	7. Don't discriminate
	4	3	8. Need more traffic control
	127	80	9. Need more policemen of particular type (foot, car) in certain areas or times
	74	201	10. Don't know
	34	58	11. Other
	191	54	0. Missing Data

V16

#### CHANCE OF ATTACK, ROBBERY

Col. 17

"Please take this card. Look at the first set of statements. Which one do you agree with most?"

678	519	1. My chances of being attacked or robbed have GONE UP in the past few years.
41	75	2. My chances of being attacked or robbed have GONE DOWN in the past few years.
199	361	3. My chances of being attacked or robbed haven't changed in the past few years.
74	25	4. No opinion
24	1	0. Missing Data

V17

#### NBH LIMIT—CHANGE ACTIVITY

Col. 18

"Do you think people in this neighborhood have limited or changed their activities in the past few years because they are afraid of crime?"

711	337	1. Yes
270	605	2. No
35	39	0. Missing Data

V18

#### U LIMIT—CHANGE ACTIVITY

Col. 19

Variable Number	Frequencies		Variable Description
	New York	San Diego	
			"In general, have you limited or changed your activities in the past few years because of crime?"
	517	283	1. Yes
	488	698	2. No
	12	0	0. Missing Data
V19			WAS RESPONDENT ROBBED Col. 20
			Was the respondent robbed one or more times during the past 12 months (includes attempts)?
	990	970	1. No
	27	11	2. Yes
V20			WAS RESPONDENT ASSAULTED Col. 21
			Was respondent assaulted one or more times during the past 12 months (includes attempts)?
	1,005	942	1. No
	12	38	2. Yes
V21			WAS HOUSE BURGLARIZED Col. 22
			Was the respondent's dwelling unit entered illegally with intent to commit a theft one or more times during past 12 months (includes attempts)?
	949	847	1. No
	68	133	2. Yes
V22			HH LARCENY, PROP TAKEN Col. 23
			Was any property stolen from the household or from a member of the household one or more times during past 12 months (includes attempts)?
	894	609	1. No
	123	372	2. Yes
V23			WAS MOTOR VEHICLE STOLEN Col. 24

Variable Number	Frequencies		Variable Description
	New York	San Diego	
			Was a motor vehicle belonging to someone in the household stolen during the past 12 months (including attempts)?
	986	956	1. No
	31	25	2. Yes
V24			ACTUAL AGE OF RESPONDENT Col. 25-26
			16
			—
			—
			—
			99
V25			FAMILY INCOME, ORIGINAL Col. 27-28
			Original categories for family income (see V3 for question wording).
	16	18	1. Under \$1,000
	22	18	2. \$1,000 to \$1,999
	44	41	3. \$2,000 to \$2,999
	52	45	4. \$3,000 to \$3,999
	58	53	5. \$4,000 to \$4,999
	59	42	6. \$5,000 to \$5,999
	64	58	7. \$6,000 to \$7,499
	113	115	8. \$7,500 to \$9,999
	168	88	9. \$10,000 to \$11,999
	88	150	10. \$12,000 to \$14,999
	97	126	11. \$15,000 to \$19,999
	52	60	12. \$20,000 to \$24,999
	48	122	13. \$25,000 and over
	136	46	0. Missing Data
V26			CITY OF RESIDENCE Col. 29
			The city in which the survey was taken.
	0	981	1. San Diego
	1,017	0	2. New York

Variable Number	Frequencies		Variable Description
	New York	San Diego	
V27			<p><b>CASE WEIGHT</b> Col. 30-34</p> <p>The statistical weight assigned to each case. This weight must be used with all computations to insure the valid representation of each population group. There are four implied decimal digits.</p>

# SETUPS

Survey of Economic Trends in the United States  
Political and Social Data

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