

National studies of victimization

Victims and offenders: The Australian experience*

JOHN BRAITHWAITE AND DAVID BILES

¹¹ To summarize, offenders involved in the types of crimes of interest here are disproportionately male, young, urban residents, black, of lower socioeconomic status, unemployed (and not in school), and unmarried. In our brief review of victim characteristics above, and in earlier chapters, it was seen that victims disproportionately share these characteristics. (Hindelang et al. 1978:259) ¹¹

The first national victimization survey conducted in Australia has produced results that in many respects are similar to those obtained in the United States. The findings provide strong support for the proposition that victims and offenders share many characteristics. If the Australian data can be shown to confirm the American findings of substantial similarities between victims and offenders, a strong case can be made for linking victimological studies with the more traditional studies of offenders. The similarities between the two groups may also have profound implications for crime prevention policies and practices.

This paper sets out to show that Hindelang et al. found from their extensive review and analysis of the American evidence is also substantially true in Australia—the demographic profiles of crime victims and of convicted criminals are strikingly similar. To take the Hindelang et al. demographic characteristics in turn, official and self-report data tend to confirm that Australian criminals are *disproportionately*:

- *Male* (Althuisen 1977; Biles 1977a:353, 1977b:105, 1977c:83; Braithwaite 1977:26; Challengier 1977; Fielding 1977; Mukherjee and Fitzgerald 1978; Braithwaite 1980:223).
- *Young* (New South Wales Department of Corrective Services 1973; New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research 1974).
- *Urban residents* (New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research

Dr. Braithwaite and Dr. Biles are currently at the Australian Institute of Criminology, Woden, Australia.

*This paper was made possible by the generous assistance and cooperation given to the Australian Institute of Criminology by the staff of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

1972a; Kraus 1973; New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research 1974).

- *Black* (New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research 1972; Biles 1973; Criminal Law and Penal Methods Reform Committee of South Australia 1973:202-4; New South Wales Department of Corrective Services 1974; Eggleston 1976:15-16).
- *Of lower socioeconomic status* (Barber 1973; New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research 1974; Kraus 1975; Smith 1975; Dunstan and Roberts 1977; Braithwaite 1979).
- *Unemployed* (Braithwaite 1978; Kraus, 1978; South Australian Office of Crime Statistics 1978, 1980a; Braithwaite 1980).
- *And unmarried* (Martin et al. 1979; South Australian Office of Crime Statistics 1980b).

Australia now has a National Crime Victims Survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1979) which permits consideration of whether these demographic characteristics are also typical of crime victims. The national sample of 18,694 persons might seem small compared to American surveys, but the sampling fraction is higher given the relatively small Australian population. In considering the demographic characteristics of victims, reference will also be made to local victim surveys by Wilson and Brown (1973) and Congatton and Najman (1974) on samples of 1,096 and 619 respectively.

Methods in the National Crime Victims Survey

Sample. Dwellings for inclusion in the stratified multistage area sample were selected from all parts of Australia except the Northern Territory, rural regions, and locations with a population of less than 500 people. Of 10,500 dwelling sites originally selected, 9,200 contained effective households, of which 8,414 provided data for the survey. These households contained 18,694 persons age 15 years and over, each of whom supplied some data. The remarkable household response rate of 91.5% is only possible, of course, in a survey that has the legal authority of the Bureau of Statistics.

The crimes. Interview data were gathered on all victimizations during the previous 12 months for 10 types of crime:

- *Break and enter*—Breaking into and entering a dwelling and then committing or intending to commit a crime in that dwelling.
 - *Motor vehicle theft*—Stealing or illegally using a motor vehicle or using a motor vehicle without authorization.
 - *Theft*—Stealing without threatening or using violence or force to any person or property.
 - *Fraud, forgery, false pretenses*—All types of fraud, forgery, uttering (circulating any fraudulent document or money), falsification of records, false pretenses, and all offenses involving false claims, deception, trickery, cheating, or breaches of trust.
 - *Rape and attempted rape*—All rape, attempted rape, and assault with intent to rape. Only females were asked about rape victimization.
 - *Robbery*—Stealing which involves the threat or use of actual violence or force to a person or property.
 - *Assault*—Unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting bodily injury.
 - *Nuisance calls*—Threats, abuses, indecent calls, and other nuisance calls by telephone.
 - *Peeping*—Only females were asked if they had been spied upon by a "peeping Tom."
 - *Indecent exposure*—Only females were asked if a male had "indecently exposed" himself in front of them.
- For all offenses except motor vehicle theft, an attempt counts equally with an actual offense. Thefts in connection with breaking and entering are only included in "break and enter."
- Standard error.* With a sample of such magnitude, problems of statistical inference loom less large than with most social science data. Nevertheless, with less common types of crime, marginals can become quite small. As a matter of policy, the Bureau of Statistics will not make available raw data on the number of actual victimizations of each type within the sample. Instead, we are provided with estimates weighted from the sample for the number of victimizations nationally. There can be no doubt that the

Bureau's weighted national estimate is a superior statistic to the raw figure. The weighting procedure is such that raw figures from different geographic areas will be multiplied by different weights depending on the proportion of the population of the nation living in that area the response rate.

While the weighting procedure provided a superior statistic, it does create some complexity for the social scientist who might be interested in calculating a conventional test of statistical significance. Tests of significance have not been calculated for each comparison made in this paper. However, Table 1-1 provides the standard errors for survey estimates of the number of victimizations of each type.

As can be seen in Table 1-1, the survey estimate is that 146,500 break-and-enter victimizations occurred in Australia during 1975. The standard error on this estimate is approximately 8.5%. This means that the standard error is 8.5% of 146,500, (that is, 12,500). Discounting nonsampling errors, there are therefore about two chances in three that the true number of break and enters in Australia during 1975 was between 134,000 and 159,000; and about 19 chances in 20 that it was between 121,500 and 171,500.

Adequacy of the data. Funding for criminal justice research is miniscule in Australia when compared to the United States. The Australian Bureau of Statistics, which has responsibility for the census, is the only organization in Australia with the resources and expertise to conduct survey research of a standard comparable with the American work. The high response rate in the National Crime Victims Survey and the level of training and experience of the interviewers could never have been achieved in a university-based survey.

Even so, there were problems in this first national survey which hopefully will be redressed next time around—problems that the bureau simply had not foreseen. For example, rape within marriage is an offense in some but not most Australian jurisdictions. Because there were no instructions to cover the contingency of reported rape within marriage, no one really knows how this issue has been resolved by interviewers in different jurisdictions. In the next survey, if it is funded, greater effort will be devoted to injecting more detail into the manual defining the terms used in questions. Moreover, less importance will be attached to legally correct definitions and more to specifying categories of behavior that can be recorded reliably. Inter-

1-1. Approximate standard error percent for survey estimates of numbers of victimizations in Australia, 1975

Crime	Estimated number of victimizations	Standard error percent
Break and enter	146,500	8.5
Motor vehicle theft	62,700	9.8
Robbery with violence	14,200	18.6
Theft	609,900	3.4
Fraud, forgery, false pretenses	214,100	8.6
Rape, attempted rape	7,800	26.5
Nuisance calls	1,612,594	11.3
Peeping	127,892	27.5
Indecent exposure	26,366	15.1
Assault	191,500	13.6

1-2. Victimization rates per 100,000 population age 15 and over, by sex

Crime	Male	Female
Break and enter	2,851.9	715.3
Motor vehicle theft	1,265.8	262.1
Theft	8,854.8	5,909.4
Fraud, forgery, false pretenses	4,145.7	1,065.4
Rape and attempted rape	—	186.4
Robbery with violence	168.0	173.6
Assault	3,775.4	847.9
Nuisance calls	10,516.9	28,170.7
Peeping	—	3,045.4
Indecent exposure	—	627.9

national comparability will be fostered by focusing on objective categories of harm. For example, with assault, "injuries given medical attention" or "requiring hospitalization" are more useful categories for comparative purposes than "graveous bodily harm," "actual bodily harm," etc. Nevertheless, medical treatment might indicate a more serious assault in a poor country than in one where most people can afford a doctor.

Victim surveys that are designed for international comparability can facilitate more meaningful comparisons than police statistics that are designed for domestic purposes only, but the level of comparability one would like can never be achieved. Nor, for that matter, can one do away with substantial differences in typifications of crimes between interviewers and respondents. However, some basic methodological deficiencies of the Australian survey can be remedied simply by a more rigorous approach.

The Australian research is clearly inferior in the way it deals with the telescoping

problem. A number of callback studies (Biderman et al. 1967; Ennis 1967; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1970a, 1970b; LEAA 1972) have shown that faulty memory is a problem with victim surveys, even though Gottfredson and Hindelang (1977) found that memory error tended to be random rather than systematically related to characteristics of the victim (such as age, race, education) (cf. Skogan 1975). Victim surveys have been criticized both for undercounting (Maltz 1975) and for overcounting (Levine 1976). There is evidence that accuracy of recall of known victimizations declines as the gap in time between interview and incident increases (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1970a).

Hence, U.S. data, based as they are on 6-month recall periods, employs a methodology superior to the single 12-month recall of the Australian survey. Moreover, because this first Australian survey is unbounded, the problem of forward telescoping is greater than in a bounded survey which asks respondents whether they have been a victim "since the last interview." LEAA has found that unbounded surveys produce higher victimization rates than bounded surveys, presumably because of forward telescoping (OECD 1976:26).

Correlates of victimization

Sex. According to the design of the research, only women were eligible for rape, peeping, and indecent exposure victimization. Apart from these three, the only offense on which women reported a higher level of victimization was nuisance calls. Table 1-2 shows that men had higher victimization rates for break and enter (largely because men were more likely to be nominated as head of the household), vehicle theft, theft, fraud, forgery, false pretenses, and assault. The other local surveys by Wilson and Brown (1973) and Congalton and Najman (1974) both confirm that in aggregate men are more likely than women to be victims of crime.

Age. American data tend to show respondents around the 20-year age group having the highest victimization rate, with both younger and older people having lower rates (e.g., Hindelang 1976:112). The aged (over 60) have the lowest rate. Australian data tend to be consistent with this picture, with the 20-24 year olds having the highest rates on the majority of offenses, and the over-60s the lowest (Table 1-3). Again, Wilson and Brown (1973) and Congalton and Najman (1974) support the association of youth with victimization.

Crime	1-3. Victimization rates per 100,000 population age 15 and over, by age					
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59 60 and over
Break and enter	155.1	2,397.2	2,164.8	2,523.3	1,778.6	1,748.7
Motor vehicle theft	418.7	1,398.6	905.8	1,262.5	865.1	436.4
Robbery with violence	77.2	534.3	54.1	163.1	159.8	160.5
Theft	6,302.4	12,603.2	11,546.9	9,148.9	6,522.2	4,427.3
Fraud, forgery, false pretenses	860.8	3,508.6	4,818.3	4,017.0	3,217.6	1,034.4
Peeping	1,215.5	2,562.9	932.9	1,164.0	3,713.3	1,370.0
Indecent exposure	619.9	706.2	542.9	323.0	—	222.1
Rape, attempted rape	174.8	127.0	140.1	187.1	—	53.3
Nuisance calls	8,612.0	18,512.0	30,671.3	27,536.3	21,634.7	19,501.3
Assault	3,676.2	5,792.4	1,803.9	3,205.0	759.9	1,702.7

Crime	1-4. Victimization rates per 100,000 population age 15 and over, by residence in State capital cities versus other urban centers				Total Australia
	State capital cities	Other urban centers			
Break and enter	1,933.9	1,369.9	3,090.1	2,584.2	1,768.8
Motor vehicle theft	917.4	369.6	1,419.8	1,543.8	757.0
Robbery with violence	218.1	56.9	87.4	318.3	170.9
Theft	7,992.6	5,837.0	7,361.6	7,361.6	7,361.6
Fraud, forgery, false pretenses	2,374.8	3,090.1	3,090.1	2,584.2	2,584.2
Peeping	1,595.1	1,419.8	1,419.8	1,543.8	1,543.8
Indecent exposure	413.9	87.4	87.4	318.3	170.9
Rape, attempted rape	113.5	48.4	48.4	94.5	94.5
Nuisance calls	23,586.8	9,509.3	9,509.3	19,465.6	19,465.6
Assault	2,726.0	1,287.9	1,287.9	2,305.0	2,305.0

Crime	1-5. Victimization rates per 100,000 population age 15 and over, by employment			
	Not in work force	Employed Unemployed	Employed full-time	Employed part-time
Break and enter	918.4	3,162.3	2,748.3	1,150.6
Motor vehicle theft	192.9	409.9	1,317.8	706.3
Robbery with violence	82.9	364.4	257.0	146.3
Theft	4,799.8	12,927.5	9,451.8	7,741.3
Fraud, forgery, false pretenses	633.9	2,864.7	4,364.4	2,659.1
Peeping	1,535.8	11,365.0	1,389.6	1,047.1
Indecent exposure	371.5	321.8	286.0	372.9
Rape, attempted rape	116.6	—	72.0	147.2
Nuisance calls	2,443.2	15,266.6	17,834.7	26,835.3
Assault	1,211.7	8,374.8	3,283.0	1,467.6

Urban residence. Data to compare strictly urban versus rural residents are not available from any of the Australian surveys. Nevertheless, there is a good approximation in the National Victims Survey comparison between State capital cities and the rest of the population.

The State capitals are all large cities, though the rest of the population includes three moderately large cities with populations of over 200,000. Moreover, it should be remembered that the victim survey excludes rural localities with populations low-

Race. Since Aboriginals constitute less than 1% of the Australian population, a much larger sample would be required to permit inferences concerning race. Racial data were not collected in the Australian survey.

Socioeconomic status. Both Wilson and Brown (1973) and Congalton and Najman (1974) failed to confirm a negative relationship between socioeconomic status and aggregate victimization rate in Australia. Moreover, this is the picture from cross-tabulations of National Crime Survey victimization rates by education, occupation, income of respondents, and household income (see particularly Braithwaite and Bilcs 1980). In some respects, higher socioeconomic status respondents have higher victimization rates. Tertiary educated respondents are more likely to be victims of nonviolent property crimes but less likely to be victims of assault. There is a consistent positive correlation between gross weekly income of household and vehicle theft victimization (possibly because wealthy households own more automobiles). There is a positive correlation between family income and automobile theft victimization in the United States as well (Gottfredson et al. 1978:348).

The Hindelang et al. quote that opens this paper refers to data on the violent crimes: rape, robbery, assault, and larceny from the person. In the Australian survey, the last of these types of crime is not represented as a separate entity, and the first two have an intolerably high standard error for most purposes because of the smaller sample and lower crime rate in Australia. It is therefore quite possible that if adequate data were available, the Australian and American data might converge to show a positive correlation between victimization and income for certain nonviolent property offenses (particularly automobile theft) and a negative correlation for certain violent offenses. In this respect, the Australian data have a long way to go.

Unemployment. Despite the generally equivocal nature of Australian findings on socioeconomic status, the findings about unemployment specifically are supportive of the Hindelang et al. assertion. The unemployed have clearly higher rates of victimization for theft, break and enter, peeping, and assault (Table 1-5). Most striking is the difference with respect to assault, where the unemployed were more than twice as likely to report victimization than those in fulltime jobs and six times as likely to have been assaulted than respondents not in the workforce or in part-time jobs.

er than 500. Hence, the comparison in Table 1-4 is not an urban-rural one but a comparison between large cities and smaller cities and towns. In Table 1-4, for all crime categories except fraud, forgery, and false pretenses, the capital cities have higher reported victimization rates. A finding that urban residence is a feature shared by both criminals and victims is hardly of great moment. If there are more criminals in urban areas, then of course there should be more victims in urban areas.

The unemployed did have lower rates of victimization for automobile theft and nuisance calls, perhaps because they did not own motor vehicles or telephones. They are also less likely to report being victims of fraud, forgery, and false pretenses—an expected finding because it is people in business who generally report this kind of crime. Standard error with respect to robbery, indecent exposure, and rape is too high for any statement to be made about the rates for these offenses among the unemployed.

Marital status: Hindelang et al. conclude that in the United States the unmarried are more likely to be criminals and victims of crime. The Australian data in Table 1-6 indicate that if the widowed are to be counted as unmarried, there are problems in sustaining this proposition.

Probably because of their average age, the widowed had the lowest victimization rates in most crime categories. If, however, one were to treat the unmarried as those who have never married plus those who are separated or divorced, it would be true to say that unmarried people (excluding the widowed) had much higher victimization rates on most types of crime. Congatlon and Najman's (1974) findings are completely consistent with those of the national survey on marital status.

Other possible correlates of both crime and victimization. There is a long history of research linking high residential mobility with involvement in delinquency (Longmooor and Young 1936; Sullenger 1936; Portenfeld 1948; Reiss 1951; Nye 1958; Eaton and Polk 1961; Clinard 1964; Lundden 1964; Shaw and McKay 1969). It is assumed that this is because residential mobility disrupts the lives of people, severing the social bonds that maintain order. Normative order is threatened when families moving from one community to another constantly confront conflicting moral standards and adjust by playing the game of life by ear instead of by clearly defined rules. One of the more interesting findings from the Australian survey was that high residential mobility was also a characteristic of victims. Table 1-7 presents data on a Bureau of Statistics composite variable to classify respondents' residential mobility as high, medium, or low, depending on how long she or he had lived at both current and previous addresses. For all crimes except indecent exposure and nuisance calls, the respondents with lowest residential mobility were those who were least likely to be victims. Hence, high residential mobility

Crime	Victimization rates per 100,000 population age 15 and over, by marital status			
	Never married	Now married	Widowed	Separated, divorced
Break and enter	1,368.0	1,661.4	1,966.8	6,162.3
Motor vehicle theft	880.5	771.8	72.6	1,477.4
Robbery with violence	337.2	117.9	115.0	304.0
Theft	8,598.6	7,088.9	3,752.7	15,433.5
Fraud, forgery, false pretenses	1,836.2	3,011.5	338.9	5,436.6
Peeping	1,187.3	1,312.1	2,989.0	6,542.5
Indecent exposure	747.8	203.6	—	480.4
Rape, attempted rape	133.0	64.4	53.1	323.9
Nuisance calls	7,986.0	21,348.4	1,093.3	69,206.8
Assault	4,003.8	904.0	54.0	22,109.3

Crime	Victimization rates per 100,000 population age 15 and over, by residential mobility		
	Low	Medium	High
Break and enter	1,515.0	1,880.0	3,482.0
Motor vehicle theft	845.0	1,443.1	1,444.0
Robbery with violence	136.5	308.1	276.6
Theft	6,139.8	10,760.5	12,814.4
Fraud, forgery, false pretenses	2,120.0	4,928.8	3,487.3
Peeping	1,162.3	1,668.5	3,979.7
Indecent exposure	250.1	180.2	915.8
Rape, attempted rape	65.5	252.9	132.1
Nuisance calls	20,186.5	22,551.2	16,424.4
Assault	2,013.7	3,116.1	3,597.5

ity might be another characteristic shared by both criminals and victims.

There is evidence that migrants from non-English-speaking countries are underrepresented in Australian prison populations (Francis 1975; Francis and Cassel 1975; Francis 1977). This may or may not reflect a lower real crime rate among people who have come to Australia from non-English-speaking countries. The problems of assessing differences in real crime rates from imprisonment rates need hardly be repeated here. Nevertheless, Australian criminologists are inclined to advance the argument that non-English-speaking migrants do in fact have a lower crime rate because it is difficult for them to get into Australia unless they can demonstrate that they do not have criminal records and that they have relatives or sponsors in Australia. Given this speculation, it is interesting that on all offenses except break and enter and vehicle theft, respondents born in a non-English-speaking country reported higher victimization rates than those born in Australia or other English-speaking countries.

Another suggestive finding is that owners of firearms had higher victimization rates than nonowners for break and enter, motor

vehicle theft, theft, fraud, forgery, false pretenses, and assault.

There is no systematic evidence that firearm owners are more likely than others to commit crimes in Australia. Nevertheless, if the Australian lobby against gun control is right with its slogan, "Outlaw guns and only outlaws will have guns," then one would expect some correlation. It is worth exploring further whether firearm ownership is a distinguishing characteristic of both criminals and victims of crime.

A final area that merits further investigation is the startling finding from the Australian survey that victims were more likely to define themselves as having nervous and mental health problems and to have visited a "professional or other expert person for nervous or mental problems" during the previous 12 months (Blies et al. 1979).

Discussion

The data reviewed here, combined with the different data sets reviewed by Hindelang et al. (1978), constitute a compelling case for the proposition that offenders and victims have similar characteristics. From that simple proposition, the imagination can run wild with possible explanations. The dis-

discussion here will be limited to three broad types of interpretations that have some plausibility. Empirical work has not been done that would permit a judgment as to the validity of any of the interpretations. Yet there is an interesting phenomenon to be explained, perhaps even a seminal finding that might establish the great relevance of victimology to the direction of mainstream criminology. It is important to set down alternative theories that could provide a framework for future empirical work in the area.

First, there is the provocative explanation that victims are often themselves criminals. Differential association with criminals might lead to "an excess of definitions favorable to violation of law over definitions unfavorable to violations of law" (Sutherland and Cressey 1970:75). Perhaps, in addition, that differential association might produce "an excess of exposures to violation of law." If you mix with criminals, they can teach you their tricks, or use them on you—or both. This could be why victims and criminals appear similar. Victimizations and offenses might be, in some measure, part of the same social process. With respect to violence, Singer (1979) has expressed one of the many possible versions of how victimizations and offenses could be part of the same social process:

If violence is learned as a legitimate form of conduct, it appears not only in the role of an offender as a winner, but in the important position of a loser as well. The schoolyard fight may leave only one of its combatants with a loss—awaiting the chance to turn the experiences into a win and the victimization to another.

There is some convincing evidence that victims of violent crime themselves have considerable criminal involvements. Johnson et al. (1973) followed up all victims of gunshot and stab wounds admitted to the City of Austin Hospital in Texas during 1968 and 1969. They found that 75% of the male victims had a criminal record, and 54% had a jail record. In their London survey, Sparks et al. (1977:102) found victims of violent crime to be significantly more likely than nonvictims to self-report committing violent crimes. Savitz et al. (1977:46), for a Philadelphia cohort, also observed an association between official records of having committed assault and assault victimization. Singer (1979) followed up a sample of 567 of the Wolfgang et al. (1972) cohort. Respondents were asked whether they had been a victim of a stabbing or shooting at any time during the 26

years of their lives. It was found that having been a stabbing or shooting victim was the best of several predictors of self-reported involvement in violent crime: "The most critical determinant of having committed a serious self-reported assault is being a victim of serious assault" (Singer 1979:10). However, when Singer switched from self-reports to official records of serious violent offenses, the correlation between victim and offender status continued to apply for the adult years of the cohort but not for the juvenile years. Despite this last discouraging finding, the evidence as a whole is consistent with the inference that victims and criminals have similar demographic characteristics because many victims are criminals. For future national victimization surveys, consideration should be given to questions on the criminal involvement of respondents.

A second explanation is that people with victim/offender characteristics (young, male, unemployed, unmarried, etc.) are more likely to spend their time in public space—in trains and buses rather than private automobiles, streets and parks rather than offices and homes, public bars rather than private clubs. Most crucially, they are more likely to spend their time in public space in the evening, when crimes disproportionately occur. Sitting at home watching television in the evening, one is not likely to seize on an opportunity to commit a crime, have one's purse snatched, or be arrested for a crime one did not commit. This is the kind of explanation that Hindelang et al. (1978) found most attractive. Moreover, Hindelang et al. emphasize the fact that people with victim/offender characteristics are people who spend a large proportion of their time with nonfamily members. Especially with theft-related crimes, it is nonfamily members who are most likely to commit the crime (Hindelang et al. 1978:260-1). Spending time in public space and spending time with nonfamily members are obviously related.

One of the attractions of the public space interpretation is its capacity to explain seemingly incomprehensible empirical findings. Consider the following perplexing finding: In the Australian National Survey a higher rate of victimization was reported on some offenses for respondents who reported having no religion. Inevitably, we construed this as "perhaps a consequence of insufficient prayer!" (Braithwaite and Biles 1980). Interestingly though, Wilson and Brown (1973:84-5) found something comparable. Church attendance had a clear relationship with victimization. Those who

never went to church were notably susceptible to victimization. Wilson and Brown were only half tongue-in-cheek when they opted for a public space explanation: "Perhaps non-attenders are more likely to frequent hotels, theaters, and other places of entertainment, thus rendering themselves more open to victimization, while churchgoers generally pursue a more circumspect existence, abstaining from the boisterous nightlife and avoiding places of ill repute!" From the trivial to the sublime, Cohen and Felson (1979) have had remarkable success in explaining variations in crime rates in the United States between 1947 and 1974 by indicators of the proportion of time people spent outside the home in different periods. The public space explanation does give a preliminary impression of parsimony.

A third and final type of interpretation is that common victim/offender characteristics are associated with certain behavior patterns and attitude sets that produce both offenses and victimization. Three characteristics that might be associated with youth, maleness, being unemployed, and being unmarried (and perhaps even being a heathen guntoyer) are: propensity to risktaking, propensity to violence, and alcohol consumption.

Risk taking. Perhaps young males are socialized more into risktaking, and perhaps unmarried and unemployed people have less to lose through taking a risk. However, since Miller (1958) first argued that "excitement" was one of the focal concerns of delinquent subcultures, the evidence to support an association between propensity to risktaking and delinquency has hardly been overwhelming (Gordon et al. 1963; Short and Strodtbeck 1965; Sherwin 1968; Ball-Rokeach 1973; Cochran 1974; Feather 1975:181-3). Nevertheless, it seems sensible to keep this explanatory option open because of the extreme plausibility of an association between propensity to risktaking and victimization. Surely people who run risks by leaving their houses unlocked, walking alone down dark inner city alleys, or leaving keys in their automobiles are more likely to be victimized.

A nice feature of the risktaking argument is that it offers some explanation of the well established phenomenon that fear of crime is, if anything, negatively associated with the actual probability of being a victim of crime (Skogan and Klecka 1977; Sparks et al. 1977; Braithwaite et al. 1979; Carfalo 1979; Muggford 1980). Risktakers, by definition, are less afraid of risks. So if people become victims of crime because they are

risktakers, why should we be surprised to find that victims of crime are less afraid of crime?

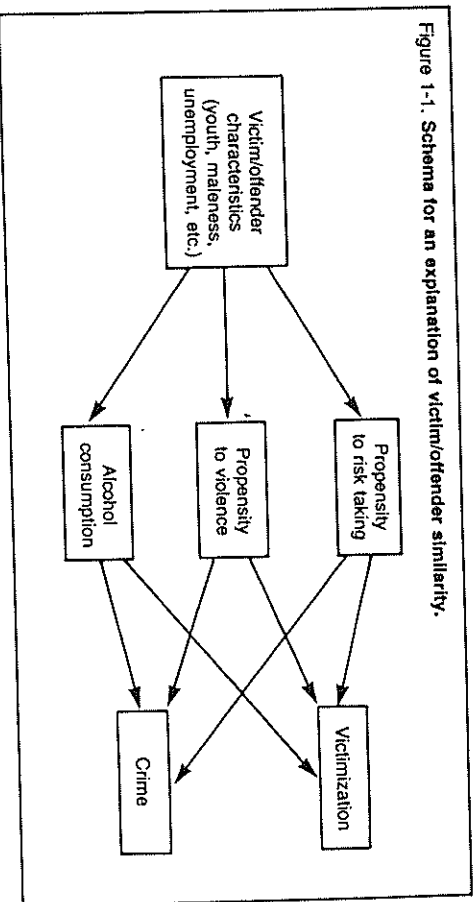
Propensity to violence: People with victim/offender characteristics are more likely to adopt violent role models. Young males are more likely to identify with Muhammad Ali than are elderly females. Obviously, it is not difficult to postulate propensity to violence (be it based on attitudinal tolerance of violence or adoption of violent role models) as a factor leading to violent crime. As far as victimization is concerned, we know that hostility (be it in the form of a derogatory remark or a jostle) promotes reciprocal hostility. Moreover, Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967) have eloquently advanced an "ethos of violence" in victim/offender interactions that simultaneously explains the crime and the choice of victim:

... when the attacked see their assaulters as agents of the same kind of aggression they themselves represent, violent retaliation is readily legitimized by a situationally specific rationale, as well as by the generally normative supports for violence (Wolfgang and Ferracuti 1967:161).

Alcohol consumption: Again it is Wolfgang (1958) who first established the importance of alcohol in crime. He found that alcohol was a factor in almost two-thirds of the homicides in his study (see also Wolfgang and Strohm 1956). A similar result has been found in Australia (Bartholomew 1968). The assumption is that alcohol consumption loosens inhibitions against deviance, both in the form of crime and provocative conduct that might precipitate crime from others (see Wolfgang 1967:83). Under the influence of alcohol, people might have a greater propensity to risktaking, and might be more "vincible" as targets for crime (Hindelang et al. 1978:206). Moreover, it is assumed that people with victim/offender characteristics are more likely to indulge in alcohol consumption, perhaps particularly at times when they go out into public space.

Because it is somewhat more complex than the previous two, this third set of explanations is represented schematically in Figure 1-1.

The three explanations considered here, grounded as they are in a modicum of empirical work on victim/offender similarity, deserve systematic investigation. It is possible that moving from separate studies of criminals and victims to studies of the victim/offender nexus could be the kind of



paradigm shift that criminology needs. Victimization surveys in the future will be of particular value if they incorporate self-reports of participation in crime as well as a range of items on the use of leisure time spent in public space and interpersonal relationships.

References

- Althuisen, F. (1977)
"Juvenile offenders in South Australia," in P. R. Wilson (ed.), *Delinquency in Australia: A critical appraisal*. Brisbane: University of Queensland Press.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (1979)
General social survey: Crime victims, May 1975. Catalogue No. 4105.0. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.
- Ball-Rokeach, S. (1973)
"Values and violence: A test of the subculture of violence thesis." *American Sociological Review* 38:736-750.
- Barber, R. (1973)
"An investigation into rape and attempted rape cases in Queensland." *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 6:214-230.
- Bartholomew, A. A. (1968)
"Alcoholism and crime," *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 1:70-99.
- Biderman, Albert; Louise Johnson; Jennie McIntyre; and Adrienne Weir (1967)
Report on a pilot study in the District of Columbia on victimization and attitudes toward law enforcement, field surveys I. President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Biles, D. (1973)
"Aborigines and prisons: A South Australian study," *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 6:246-250.
- Biles, D. (1977a)
"Prisons and prisoners in Australia," in D. Chappell and P. R. Wilson (Eds.), *The Australian criminal justice system*, 2nd edition, Sydney: Butterworths.
- Biles, D. (1977b)
"Car stealing in Australia," in Paul R. Wilson, (ed.), *Delinquency in Australia: A critical appraisal*. St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, pp. 101-115.
- Biles, D. (1977c).
"Prisons and prisoners." in D. Biles (ed.), *Crime and justice in Australia*, Melbourne: Australian Institute of Criminology and Sun Books.
- Biles, David, and John Braithwaite (1979)
"Crime victims and the police," *Australian Psychologist* 14:345-355.
- Biles, David, John Braithwaite, and Valerie Braithwaite (1979)
"The mental health of the victims of crime," *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 23:129-134.
- Braithwaite, J. (1977)
"Australian delinquency: Research and practical considerations," in P. R. Wilson (ed.), *Delinquency in Australia: A critical appraisal*. Brisbane: University of Queensland Press.
- Braithwaite, J. (1978)
"Unemployment and crime: An interpretation of the international evidence," in *Unemployment and crime*, Proceedings of the Institute of Criminology, No. 36, University of Sydney.
- Braithwaite, J. (1979)
Inequality, crime, and public policy. London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Braithwaite, J. (1980)
Prisons, education and work. Brisbane: Australian Institute of Criminology and University of Queensland Press.

- Braithwaite, John, and David Biles (1979)
 "On being unemployed and being a victim of crime," *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 14:192-200.
- Braithwaite, J., and David Biles (1980)
 "Overview of findings from the first Australian national crime victims survey," *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 13:41-51.
- Braithwaite, J., D. Biles, and R. Whitrod (1979)
 "Fear of crime in Australia," *Proceedings of the Third International Symposium on Victimology*, Muenster.
- Challinger, D. (1977)
Young offenders. Carlton: Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders.
- Chinard, M. B. (1964)
 "The relation of urbanization and urbanism to criminal behavior," in E. W. Burgess and D. Bogue (eds.), *Contributions to urban sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Cochrane, R. (1974)
 "Values and correlates of deviance," *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 13:257-267.
- Cohen, L. E., and N. Felson (1979)
 "Social change and crime rate trends: A routine activities approach," *American Sociological Review* 44:588-607.
- Congalang, Athol A., and Jake M. Najman (1974)
Who are the victims. Sydney: New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.
- Criminal Law and Penal Methods Reform Committee of South Australia (1973)
First report: Sentencing and corrections. Adelaide: South Australian Government Printer, pp. 202-204.
- Dunstan, J. A. P., and S. F. Roberts (1977)
Delinquency and socioeconomic status: An ecological analysis of Melbourne. Occasional monograph no. 1. Melbourne: Caulfield Institute of Technology.
- Eaton, J. W., and K. Polk (1961)
Measuring delinquency: A study of probation department referrals. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Eggleston, E. (1976)
Fear, favour or affection: Aborigines and the criminal law in Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia. Canberra: Australian National University Press.
- Ennis, Phillip (1967)
Criminal victimization in the United States: A report of a national survey: Field surveys II. President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Feather, N. T. (1975)
Values in education and society. New York: Free Press, pp. 181-183.
- Fielding, J. (1977)
 "Female delinquency," in P. R. Wilson (ed.), *Delinquency in Australia: A critical appraisal*. Brisbane: University of Queensland Press.
- Francis, R. D. (1975)
 "Migrant imprisonment rates in New South Wales since federation," *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 5:206-209.
- Francis, R. D. (1977)
 "Contemporary issues concerning migration and crime in Australia," in D. Chappell and P. R. Wilson (eds.), *The Australian criminal justice system*, Sydney: Butterworths.
- Francis, R., and A. Cassel (1975)
A national prison survey with particular reference to birthplace. Report to the Criminology Research Council, Canberra, December.
- Garafalo, J. (1979)
 "Victimization and the fear of crime," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 16:80-97.
- Gordon, R. A., J. F. Short, D. S. Cartwright, and F. L. Strodtbeck (1963)
 "Values and gang delinquency: A study of street corner groups," *American Journal of Sociology* 69:109-128.
- Gottfredson, Michael R., and Micheal J. Hindelang, (1977)
 "A consideration of memory decay and telescoping biases in victimization surveys," *Journal of Criminal Justice* 5:205-216.
- Gottfredson, Michael R., Micheal J. Hindelang and Nicolette Parisi (eds.) (1978)
Sourcebook of criminal justice statistics—1977. Washington: U.S. Department of Justice, LEAA.
- Hindelang, M. J. (1976)
Criminal victimization in eight American cities. Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger.
- Hindelang, M. J., M. R. Gottfredson, and J. Garofalo (1978)
Victims of personal crime: An empirical foundation for a theory of personal victimization. Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger.
- Johnson, Joan H., H. B. Kerper, D. D. Hayes, and G. G. Killingier (1973)
The recidivist victim: A descriptive study. Criminal justice monograph 4(1). Huntsville, Tex.: Sam Houston State University.
- Kraus, J. (1973)
 "Urbanization and patterns of juvenile delinquency in New South Wales," *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 8:227-233.
- Kraus, J. (1975)
 "Ecology of juvenile delinquency in metropolitan Sydney," *Journal of Community Psychology* 3:384-395.
- Kraus, J. (1977)
 "Some aspects of delinquency in Australia," in P. R. Wilson (ed.), *Delinquency in Australia: A critical appraisal*, Brisbane: University of Queensland Press.
- Kraus, J. (1978)
 "Juvenile unemployment and delinquency," in *Unemployment and crime*, Proceedings of the Institute of Criminology, no. 36, University of Sydney.
- Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, Statistics Division. (1972)
San Jose methods tests of known crime victims. Statistics technical report no. 1. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Levine, James (1976)
 "The potential for crime overreporting in criminal victimization surveys," *Criminology* 14:307-330.
- Longmoon, E. S., and E. F. Young (1936)
 "Ecological interrelationships of juvenile delinquency, dependency, and population movements: A cartographic analysis of data from Long Beach, California," *American Journal of Sociology* 41:598-610.
- Lunden, W. A. (1964)
Statistics on delinquents and delinquency. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, pp. 152-154.
- Maltz, Michael (1975)
 "Crime statistics: A mathematical perspective," *Journal of Criminal Justice* 3:177-194.
- Martin, J., M. K. Rook, and P. Filton (1979)
Trends in prison population in Victoria. Victoria: Department of Community Welfare Services, February.
- Miller, W. (1958)
 "Lower-class culture as a generating milieu of gang delinquency," *Journal of Social Issues* 15:5-9.
- Mugford, S (1980)
 "Fear of crime: The role of the mass media," paper to Conference of Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, Adelaide, May.
- Mukherjee, S., and W. Fitzgerald (1978)
In search of female criminality: Are women bad enough yet? Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.

- New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (1972)
Aborigines in prison: Census 1971. Sydney.
- New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (1972)
Crime in our cities: A comparative report. Sydney: Statistical Report 6.
- New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (1974)
A thousand prisoners. Sydney: Statistical Report 3.
- New South Wales Department of Corrective Services (1973)
NSW prison population 1973: A statistical report. Sydney: Research and Statistics Division publication no. 3.
- New South Wales Department of Corrective Services (1974)
Census of prisoners 1974: Prisoners' social background. Sydney: Research and Statistics Division publication no. 12.
- Nye, I. F. (1958)
Family relationships and delinquent behavior. New York: Wiley.
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (1976)
Data sources for social indicators of victimization suffered by individuals. Paris: OECD Social Indicator Development Programme, special study no. 3.
- Porterfield, A. L. (1948)
 "A dread of serious crime in the United States: Some trends and hypotheses," *American Sociological Review* 13:44-54.
- Reiss, A. J. (1951)
 "Delinquency and the failure of personal and social controls," *American Sociological Review* 16:196-207.
- Savitz, L., M. Lalli, and L. Rosen (1977)
City life and delinquency—Victimization, fear of crime, and gang memberships. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Shaw, C. R., and H. D. McKay (1969)
Juvenile delinquency and urban areas. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Sherwin, R. C. (1968)
Social class values and deviant behavior: An empirical test of some theories of delinquency. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Connecticut.
- Short, J. F. and F. L. Strodtbeck (1965)
Group process and gang delinquency. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Singer, S. I. (1979)
 "Victims and offenders: Another look at their relationship," paper at meeting of American Society of Criminology, Philadelphia, November.
- Skogan, W. G., and W. R. Klecka (1977)
The fear of crime. Washington: American Political Science Association.
- Skogan, Wesley G. (1975)
 "Measurement problems in official and survey crime rates," *Journal of Criminal Justice* 3:17-32.
- Skogan, W. G. (1976)
Sample surveys of the victims of crime. Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger.
- Smith, G. (1975)
Leisure, recreation and delinquency. M.A. thesis, University of Queensland.
- South Australian Office of Crime Statistics (1979)
Crime and justice in South Australia: Quarterly report for the period ending 31 December 1978.
- South Australian Office of Crime Statistics (1980a)
Robbery in South Australia. Adelaide: South Australian Office of Crime Statistics (1980b)
- South Australian Office of Crime Statistics (1980b)
Statistics from courts of summary jurisdiction, series II, no. 4, March.
- Sparks, R. F., H. G. Genn, and D. J. Dodd (1977)
Surveying victims. New York: Wiley.
- Sullenger, T. E. (1936)
Social determinants in juvenile delinquency. New York: Wiley.
- Sutherland, E. H., and D. R. Cressey (1970)
Criminology. 8th edition. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott.
- U.S. Bureau of the Census (1970a)
 "Victim recall pretest (Washington, D.C.): Household survey of victims of crime." Mimeographed. Suitland, Md: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Demographic Surveys Division.
- U.S. Bureau of the Census (1970b)
 "Household survey of victims of crime: Second pretest (Baltimore, Maryland)." Mimeographed. Suitland, Md: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Demographic Surveys Division.
- Wilson, Paul R., and Jill Brown (1973)
Crime and the community. Brisbane: University of Queensland Press.
- Wolfgang, M. E. (1967)
 "Victim-precipitated criminal homicide," in M. E. Wolfgang (ed.), *Studies in homicide*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Wolfgang, M. E. (1958)
Patterns in criminal homicide. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Wolfgang, M. E., and F. Ferracuti (1967)
The subculture of violence: Towards an integrated theory in criminology. New York: Tavistock.
- Wolfgang, M. E., and R. Strohm (1956)
 "The relationship between alcohol and criminal homicide," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 17:411-425.
- Wolfgang, M. E., R. Figlio, and T. Sellin (1972)
Delinquency in a birth cohort. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.