

WHO CALLED THE COPS?: DECISIONS TO REPORT CRIMINAL VICTIMIZATION

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An important intersection of the disciplines of law and social science is the social setting of law enforcement. The point of application of the law is almost completely social, with the exception of the totally automated justice of parking violations (Skolnick, 1966). The social factors in the enforcement encounter which produce the official definition of crime have been discussed in studies of police discretion (Skolnick, 1966; Cicourel, 1968), police/suspect interaction (Piliavin and Briar, 1964; Wertham and Piliavin, 1967; Black and Reiss, 1970), and the influence of complainants' wishes and demeanor on police action (Black, 1970). A second social setting that greatly influences the extent of law enforcement and the resultant official crime rate is the setting of victimization. This setting occurs prior to the enforcement encounter and is quite distinct from it except in cases of police observation of crime. The setting of victimization has received relatively little research attention. Questions pertaining to the perception of victimization and the subsequent decision by the victim on ways to handle the situation have not been systematically addressed. The goal of this study is to describe why, and under what conditions, victims decide to invoke formal sanctioning procedures in response to criminal victimization.

Research on sanctioning decisions would be valuable in clarifying what the actual rate of crime is in a community. Studies of the differentials in reportability of various types of law violations would contribute to a specification of the correspondence (or lack of it) between actual and official rates of criminal behavior. Victim surveys would also provide a means of assessing such concepts as "tolerance limits" of various norm violations (Clinard, 1968: 22). Knowledge of the determinants of formal sanctioning activity by victims would provide a basis for increasing the reportability of law viola-

tions known to citizens. The study of victim response is important since decisions in this setting delimit the possible actions in the enforcement encounter, e.g., police action differs for citizen- versus police-initiated encounters, availability of complainant who presses for action, and the social class of the victim (Black, 1970).

The first large scale victim surveys were completed for the President's Crime Commission in the late 1960's. Albert Biderman and his colleagues (1967) studied victimization and reporting in selected high crime precincts in Washington, D.C. Phillip Ennis (1967) conducted a national survey of households to provide regional comparisons. These studies were mainly descriptive summaries of victimization which compared the crime rate from victim information to the amount of crime known to the police. They were not concerned with explaining the reasons for reporting victimization to the authorities. In this paper we propose specific hypotheses in an attempt to delineate the factors which produce sanction initiation by victims of criminal acts. Our primary concern is with three potential independent variables.

The first of these variables, the threat of crime, is defined as an individual's perception of the probability that he will be victimized. It is felt that those who perceive crime as a threat may modify their behavior to reduce this threat. Previous studies have shown that individuals who feel threatened by crime often change their pattern of living, e.g., they are less likely to expose themselves to situations conducive to victimization (Biderman, *et al.*, 1967: 130). Perceived threat of criminal victimization is also related to increased household security measures (Ennis, 1967: 78-79). Since individuals with high perceived threat of victimization are more likely to take more "preventive measures," it is hypothesized that they would be more likely to report victimization (to the extent they feel the police are effective). Thus, it is proposed that:

Hypothesis 1: Given confidence in the police, the greater the perceived threat of victimization to an individual, the greater the probability of reporting victimization.

A conditional relationship is postulated since Biderman, *et al.*, found that individuals with high anxiety scores tend to be less respectful of the police (1967: 140).

A second factor which may influence sanctioning behavior is the extent to which a victim's occupation involves some type

of norm enforcement. We might expect those who perceive themselves as committed to enforcing rules may be more likely to initiate sanctioning when they are the object of the norm violation. Commitment to a consistent line of activity has been suggested as a condition which increases the correspondence of words and deeds (Becker, 1960). Becker accounts for this correspondence in proposing "that only those decisions bolstered by the making of sizable side bets will produce consistent behavior" (1960: 38). Fendrich has provided empirical support for this proposition. He found that for individuals making a commitment to participate in one or more civil rights activities, the relation of racial attitudes and overt behavior was higher than for members of a control group not asked to make such a commitment (Fendrich, 1967). In Becker's terms, those asked to make a commitment to future civil rights activities had inadvertently placed a side bet which increased the correspondence of attitudes and behavior when measured at a later time.

In a similar manner, an individual who defines his occupation as one which involves rule or norm enforcement is committed to the sanctioning of norm violations. It is proposed that sanctioning behavior on the job will be a side bet which may commit the actor to the sanctioning of norm violations in other contexts, specifically, when he or his family is victimized. The greater likelihood of sanction initiations for victimization would also be predicted by Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory since nonreporting of victimization by norm enforcers would be "attitude-discrepant behavior" which would create dissonance (Secord and Backman, 1964: 149). Since the basic premise of dissonance theory is that individuals will try to reduce dissonance, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 2: Norm enforcers are more likely to report victimization than individuals whose occupations do not involve norm enforcement.

The imputations of motives and responsibility to the author of an action may also influence the reaction or sanction applied. Knight (1965) found that assigned punishments were less when there was information available on the biography of the offender and the details of the act compared to situations where only information about the act was provided. Similarly, Rose and Prell (1955) found assigned punishments varied when the social background characteristics of the offender were experimentally manipulated. Unfortunately, we cannot assume that

most victims will know the identity or background characteristics of the offender involved. Consequently, we must move to a more general level. When specific information is lacking, imputed motive for behavior may be highly correlated with an individual's belief about the causal forces of human behavior. It is proposed that individuals who see the motive for deviant behavior as beyond the control of the deviant may be less likely to demand punishment (Stoll, 1968). Research by Kim (1965) found that students holding a deterministic view of human behavior were less punitive in their attitudinal reactions to deviant behavior than were students holding a free-will interpretation. Similarly, Nettler concluded that individuals holding a free-will interpretation of behavior are more likely than determinists to "recommend disinterested punishment in response to behavioral deviations" (1959: 381). Consequently, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 3: Other things being equal, the more deterministic an individual's view of human behavior, the less likely he will initiate sanctions following victimization.

Research Procedures

The tests of the hypotheses described above were based on data collected by a survey of households in Seattle, Washington, in the summer of 1968. A modified interval sampling plan was devised which produced 2,212 addresses from the Polk City Directory for Seattle. Letters describing the study and stating that an interviewer would call were sent to these addresses. Interviewers were randomly assigned to request either the male or female head of household to insure an equal number of male and female respondents. Interviewing efforts produced 1,890 contacts¹ which resulted in 1,411 completed interviews.² To check for the possible bias of non-response, a one page questionnaire was mailed to all "refusals" and "inaccessibles" to get background information as well as data on self-reported victimization. Our concern with non-response was that it might be positively correlated with victimization histories. Victimization was lower in the non-response group than in the original sample. Taking into account the greater recall potential of interviews over questionnaires, we concluded that non-response was not systematically related to victimization. In terms of the background characteristics, there was very little difference between the non-respondents and the initial sample. Comparison of the demographic characteristics of these

two groups with census data for Seattle indicates that our sample is quite representative of the population from which it was drawn.

Respondents were asked to report incidents of criminal victimization in the past year. They were given a category, *e.g.*, burglary, followed by examples of the category to promote recall. The frequency of victimization was recorded for ten categories. If a respondent was a multiple victim, *i.e.*, a victim of two or more offense categories or a number of victimizations within the same category, he was asked to give details on the incident which he felt was the *most serious* within the past year. Our dependent variable, sanctioning initiation, was obtained from these details.

The variables of perceived threat of victimization and attitudes about free will/determinism were assessed by having the respondent mark a line scored in units of ten ranging from zero to one hundred. Markings were coded to the nearest five percent with respondents grouped into percentage quartiles for tabular analysis. For the variable of occupational rule enforcement, respondents were asked if their job involved any time in rule or law enforcement; if so, they were asked to estimate the proportion of time actually spent enforcing rules. It was felt that self-perception of rule enforcement would be a more accurate indicator for our purposes than a more direct method such as classifying an individual as a rule enforcer based on occupational title. The variable was then trichotomized into: none, less than half, and over half the time spent on rule enforcement.

Description of Victimization

The nature and extent of victimization in the Seattle survey were similar to previous victim surveys (Biderman, *et al.*, 1967; Ennis, 1967). In terms of frequency of victimization, we found that 55 percent of the respondents were victims of at least one criminal act within the last year.³ Of the 774 victims, a majority were victimized two or more times during that period, *i.e.*, a multiple victim of the same offense or a victim of more than one type of violation. Victimization involved primarily property offenses (83 percent) rather than crimes against the person (17 percent). This ratio is comparable to other victim survey results. The most frequent victimization involved larceny (which included auto theft), vandalism, and burglary, in that order.

Demographic data on the victims indicate that younger

respondents were more likely to be victimized than older respondents and that the young were also more likely to be multiple victims. Generally, males were more often victims than females. However, women were more likely to be victims of crime against the person (23 percent) than were men (10 percent). Victimization in general was not related to race of respondent; also there was no difference in the type of victimization for racial groups. Thus, blacks were not more likely to be victims of crimes against the person — an exception to other studies (Reiss, 1967: 43). Generalization based on race, however, must be qualified due to the small number of blacks and other minorities in our sample. Respondents with higher education (beyond high school) were victimized more than individuals with lower educational attainments. Income was not related to victimization in general, but when property and person victimization were compared, high income groups had greater rates of property victimization, as would be expected.

Of the incidents of victimization defined by respondents as the most serious⁴ within the past year, 45 percent became known to the police. Thus, a majority of the cases of victimization *did not* come to the attention of the police. Of the 347 cases known to the police, 263 or 77 percent were reported by the victim. Thus, in approximately one-third of the incidents of victimization, the victim himself initiated the reporting of the violation to the police.⁵ The reasons for this low proportion are a major concern of this report.

Test of Hypotheses

Prior to a discussion of our threat hypothesis, a word of explanation about the time order of variables is necessary. Our first independent variable, threat of victimization, involves threat as perceived on the day of the interview while the dependent variable, sanction initiation, is based on reports of past behaviors (within the last year). So, in a measurement sense, the dependent variable precedes the independent variable in time. In order to justify treating threat as an independent variable in an hypothesized asymmetrical relation to sanction initiation, we must assume that the level of threat prior to victimization is similar to the level at the time of measurement (after victimization). In order to resolve the time order problem, we would have to show that those individuals who were actually victimized during the past year *expected* to be victims, i.e., if we had a measure of threat prior to their victimization we might find that they were highly threatened. In making

this interpretation we are essentially saying that (1) the extent of victimization does not dramatically affect perceived threat of victimization, and that (2) threat is determined mainly by other factors, e.g., the mass media, the reputation of an area of the city, experience of friends, etc.

Our data suggest that the extent of experience as a victim does not influence perceived threat. There was little difference in the level of threat for those victimized once compared to two or more victimizations in the past year.⁶ Biderman, *et al.*, also concluded that victimization was not a major factor influencing threat:

We found that attitudes of citizens regarding crime are less affected by their past victimization than by their ideas about what is going on in their community — fears about a weakening of social controls in which they feel their safety and broader fabric of social life is ultimately dependent (1967: 160).

Biderman found that the major sources of threat were the news media and what other people had said about crime.

For threat of victimization, two indicators were used: perceived threat of property victimization and perceived threat of crimes against persons. The data indicate that the threat of property victimization is significantly related to reporting victimization to the police, while no significant relationship obtains for threat of personal victimization.

TABLE 1: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SANCTION INITIATION AMONG VICTIMS BY THREAT OF PROPERTY VICTIMIZATION

Report by Victim	Threat in Percent				Total
	00-20	25-45	50-70	75-100	
No	73.0	67.8	54.5	53.4	61.2
Yes	27.0	32.2	45.5	46.6	38.8
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	141	143	235	133	652

Gamma = .25* z = 2.74
 * significant at p = .05, one-tailed test

TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SANCTION INITIATION AMONG VICTIMS BY THREAT OF PROPERTY VICTIMIZATION

Report by Victim	Threat in Percent				Total
	00-20	25-45	50-70	75-100	
No	65.6	56.0	59.2	57.1	61.3
Yes	34.4	44.0	40.8	42.9	38.7
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	308	168	147	28	651

Gamma = .12* z = 1.20
 * not significant at p = .05, one-tailed test

Since the majority of victimization involved property crimes, we examined the original relationship, controlling for the type of offense (property or person). Perceived threat of property victimization had a significant influence on sanction initiation regardless of the type of victimization. Fear of property victimization generalized to increase the reporting of crimes against person. When threat of personal victimization was used, there was a significant relationship between threat and reporting for crimes against person only (see Table 4). In contrast to the general impact of threat-to-property, the influence of perceived threat of personal victimization seems to be specific to crimes against person.

The original significant relationship between threat-to-property and sanction initiation did not change when partialled by control variables such as age, sex, race, occupation, income, education, marital status, and magnitude of loss of the victimization.⁷ The original threat-to-person and sanction relationship remained weak when most control variables were introduced. Two important exceptions were discovered; the original relationship became significant for females and for respondents earning less than \$3,000 annually. This is consistent with the fact that females and the poor are high risk categories for crimes against persons. Those who sensed this danger or threat seemed to translate it into sanctioning action when victimized.

In order to assess the influence of confidence in the police, we will examine the original relationship of threat-to-property to reporting, controlling for confidence in the police. It should be noted that two dimensions of confidence have been assessed — confidence in “police operations” and confidence in “police personnel” (see footnotes to Table 5 and Table 6). When either of these measures of confidence in the police is controlled, the association between threat-to-property and reporting does not differ very much from the original relationship.

TABLE 3: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SANCTION INITIATION AMONG VICTIMS BY THREAT OF PROPERTY VICTIMIZATION CONTROLLING FOR THE MAJOR TYPE OF VICTIMIZATION EXPERIENCED

Report by Victim	Property Victimization Threat in Percent					Person Victimization Threat in Percent				
	00-20	25-45	50-70	75-100	Total	00-20	25-45	50-70	75-100	Total
No	68.6	67.8	51.3	52.3	58.7	84.4	72.7	61.3	57.1	69.8
Yes	31.4	32.2	48.7	47.7	41.3	15.6	27.3	38.7	42.9	30.2
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	105	118	191	107	521	32	22	31	21	106
Percent Col.										
Total of Table Total	20.2	22.6	36.7	20.5	100.0	30.2	20.8	29.2	19.8	100.0

Gamma = .22* z = 2.21 Gamma = .37* z = 1.65
 *significant at p = .05, one-tailed test *significant at p = .05, one-tailed test

TABLE 4: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SANCTION INITIATION AMONG VICTIMS BY THREAT OF PERSON VICTIMIZATION CONTROLLING FOR THE MAJOR TYPE OF VICTIMIZATION EXPERIENCED

Report by Victim	Property Victimization Threat in Percent					Person Victimization Threat in Percent				
	00-20	25-45	50-70	75-100	Total	00-20	25-45	50-70	75-100	Total
No	61.3	54.6	58.0	57.9	58.7	80.8	71.4	57.7	42.9	70.8
Yes	38.7	45.4	42.0	42.1	41.3	19.2	28.6	42.3	57.1	29.2
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	248	141	112	19	520	52	21	26	7	106
Percent Col.										
Total of Table Total	47.7	27.1	21.5	3.7	100.0	49.1	19.8	24.5	6.6	100.0

Gamma = .06* z = .59
 *not significant at p = .05

Gamma = .42** z = 1.85
 **significant at p = .05, one-tailed test

TABLE 5: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SANCTION INITIATION AMONG VICTIMS BY THREAT OF PROPERTY VICTIMIZATION CONTROLLING CONFIDENCE IN POLICE (POLICE OPERATIONS) *

Report by Victim	Confidence in Police Operations Threat in Percent				Lack of Confidence in Police Operations Threat in Percent				Total	
	00-20	25-45	50-70	75-100	00-20	25-45	50-70	75-100		
No	73.5	73.5	52.8	54.5	73.7	53.7	60.3	50.0	62.0	59.8
Yes	26.5	26.5	47.2	45.5	26.3	46.3	39.7	50.0	38.0	40.2
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	102	102	176	101	38	41	58	32	481	169
Percent Col.	21.2	21.2	36.6	21.0	22.5	24.3	34.3	18.9	100.0	100.0
Total of Table Total										

Gamma = .28** z = 2.62
 **significant at p = .05, one-tailed test

Gamma = .19*** z = 1.07
 ***not significant at p = .05

* Confidence indicated by disagreement with statement: "The police seem to spend much of their time going after people who have done little things and ignore most of the really bad things that are happening." Agreement or indecision indicates a lack of confidence in the police.

TABLE 6: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SANCTION INITIATION AMONG VICTIMS BY THREAT OF PROPERTY VICTIMIZATION CONTROLLING FOR CONFIDENCE IN POLICE (POLICE PERSONNEL) *

Report by Victim	Confidence in Police Personnel Threat in Percent					Lack of Confidence in Police Personnel Threat in Percent					Total
	00-20	25-45	50-70	75-100	Total	00-20	25-45	50-70	75-100	Total	
No	74.3	69.4	54.1	56.2	62.0	70.0	59.1	56.0	38.1	57.9	
Yes	25.7	30.6	45.9	43.8	38.0	30.0	40.9	44.0	61.9	42.1	
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
N	101	121	185	112	519	40	22	50	21	133	
Percent Col.	19.5	23.3	35.6	21.6	100.0	30.1	16.5	37.6	15.8	100.0	
Total of Table Total											

Gamma = .31*** z = 1.57
 ***not significant at p = .05

Gamma = .24** z = 2.33
 **significant at p = .05, one-tailed test

* Confidence indicated by disagreement with statement: "You would probably have to replace half the police force in order to get a really good police force." Agreement or indecision indicates lack of confidence in the police.

Two observations about these two tables: First, the row totals indicate that sanctioning decisions are not influenced by attitudes victims have about the effectiveness of the police. Thus campaigns to improve the image of local police departments may be ineffective in increasing the reporting of criminal victimization. These findings do not support conjecture of Biderman and Reiss that "current attempts at improving police-community relations conceivably could produce sharp 'paper increases' in some classes of crime . . ." (1967: 7). Second, the conditional clause of our hypothesis seems unnecessary; those threatened by property victimization are more likely to report victimization regardless of confidence in police. People "up tight" about crime invoke formal sanctioning procedures even though they lack confidence in these social control agents. Lack of confidence in police might be seen as influencing one's perception of threat; however, the column totals of Tables 5 and 6 do not suggest such an influence.

For the relationship of sanctioning and threat-to-person, controlling confidence in the police did not significantly alter the original weak relationship. We must conclude that our conditional phrase was not needed in the first hypothesis. Threat of property victimization influences sanction initiation regardless of the level of confidence in the police. When someone needs a cop, they are likely to call him even if they hold negative attitudes toward the police.

Occupational Rule Enforcement and Sanction Initiation

Occupational rule enforcement was positively related to type of occupation and to education, suggesting that the indicator has face validity. Non-manual occupations had a greater proportion of individuals who said some of their time was devoted to rule enforcement ($\gamma = .20, z = 1.87$). Similarly, those with over a high school education were more likely to have occupations where rule enforcement was involved ($\gamma = .27, z = 3.06$).

Table 7 indicates that involvement in rule enforcement in one sphere (occupation) did not affect sanctioning behavior in another (criminal victimization). The introduction of various test factors did not locate any conditions under which the original relationship attained significance.

Apparently behavior in an occupational role was not salient to the victim in his decision to initiate sanctions. One possible reason, suggested by Becker, is that the actor must be aware of the correspondence between two actions if the side bet is

TABLE 7: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SANCTION INITIATION AMONG VICTIMS BY EXTENT TO WHICH RESPONDENT'S OCCUPATION INVOLVES RULE ENFORCEMENT

Report by Victim	Amount of Time Involving Rule Enforcement			Total
	None	Under Half	Over Half	
No	61.0	59.1	64.6	61.1
Yes	39.0	40.9	35.4	38.9
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	485	88	77	650

Gamma = -.01 z = .09

to assure a consistent line of action (1960: 36). This suggests that reactive norms (Gibbs, 1966) do not transfer across role sets. Responsibility for norm enforcement in the occupation sphere did not generalize to the victimization setting.

Images of Man and Sanction Initiation

Our third hypothesis proposed that individuals who perceived human action as being largely determined (as opposed to an exercise of free will) would be less likely to sanction acts of others. Table 8 shows that this hypothesis was not supported; attitudes about free will/determinism had no effect on decisions to sanction.

TABLE 8: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SANCTION INITIATION AMONG VICTIMS BY DETERMINISM ATTRIBUTED TO HUMAN BEHAVIOR

Report by Victim	Determinism				Total
	00-20	25-45	50-70	75-100	
No	61.7	57.8	63.1	60.6	61.4
Yes	38.3	42.2	36.9	39.4	38.6
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	47	83	282	236	648

Gamma = .00 z = .00

The failure of this hypothesis can perhaps be seen as a consequence of its abstract level. Attitudes on free will/determinism at the very general level do not appear to translate into behavior—a finding consistent with previous studies of words and deeds (Deutscher, 1966).

Discussion

Police depend on citizen initiation for most of their work assignments. While many calls to the police station are to request "services" rather than to report a crime (Cumming,

et al., 1965), the majority of criminal cases handled by the police are initiated by citizens. In this sense, "crime detection may be understood as a largely *reactive* process" (Black, 1970: 735). With the exception of proactive or aggressive patrols such as vice squads and narcotics details, the victim is the key to law enforcement. Black (1970: 736) found that 76 percent of crime situations known to the police were from citizens calling the station, 6 percent from citizens walking into the station, and 5 percent from those who flagged down police in the streets. Only 13 percent of the 5,713 incidents observed were police initiated. Victim reporting defines in large part the boundaries of law enforcement. Moreover, the wishes of the complainant can influence the probabilities of arrest and conviction (Black, 1970). Consequently the study of the victim and his reaction to crime is a central part of the study of social control. Indeed a concern with differential law enforcement would include citizen discretion as well as police discretion.

In trying to explain why some people report victimization and others ignore it, we found that threat of victimization is important. We also found that calling on the police when victimized was not contingent upon a favorable attitude toward the police. If our goal is to increase the reporting of law violations, then programs designed to improve the image of the police will probably not increase the rate of sanction initiations.

One conclusion which could be drawn from our results is that reporting could be increased by increasing the threat of crime. This seems absurd when stated as a tactic which might rationally be adopted. However, it is perhaps what is happening through various scare campaigns, educational programs about the risks of crime, law and order political speeches, increasing official crime rates, etc. These educational programs may indeed reduce the opportunity for crime in a society by making people more cautious and by increasing the protective measures utilized. To the extent such programs also increase the threat of crime, they may increase the reporting of victimization when it does occur. One might hope, however, for a strategy which would increase reporting without the potential "psychic costs" of increased threat of crime.

Such a strategy is suggested by the responses of those who did not report victimization. When victims who did not report were asked to provide reasons for their inaction, a majority indicated there was little or no payoff in reporting the offense to the police: 33 percent took a fatalistic outlook saying that

nothing could be done; another 29 percent indicated that they did not want to get involved, *i.e.*, too much time and trouble were involved in reporting the incident. This suggests that programs which would increase the potential return on investment for reporting might increase sanction initiations (Schafer, 1968; Geis, 1969). Recent legislation providing for the compensation of victims of violent crimes by the state may be one means of increasing the proportion of crimes against persons which are reported. Although the legislation was not specifically designed to increase the use of formal sanctioning procedures (it was probably designed to placate constituents who demanded something be done about crime), it will probably increase the reporting of such crimes. Compensation programs might eventually be expanded to include property offenses.

Victim compensation plans will have to deal with the victim/offender relationship. Since many crimes of violence are victim-precipitated (Wolfgang, 1957; Schafer, 1968), courts may be called on to decide the role which the victim played in his victimization and adjust compensation accordingly. Research by social scientists on the victimization setting may aid the court in this task.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 312 addresses did not produce interviews for the following reasons: 123 were "inaccessible"—no one home after five or more interviewer attempts; 175 addresses were either vacant or the address had been changed since the city directory survey was completed; 14 were non-residential addresses inadvertently included.
- 2 The refusal rate was about 25 percent (489 cases of 1890 contacts). The refusal rate was high for two reasons: First, the interview was quite long and interviewers had to request about one hour of the respondent's time; although respondents were promised a summary of the findings in return for cooperation, many did not have the time. Second, interviewing commenced two days before Robert F. Kennedy's assassination and this produced increased rates of refusals, *e.g.*, professional polling agencies reported refusal rates as high as 40 percent in the week following the events in California (see Auchinclass, *Newsweek*, July 8, 1968: 23-27).
- 3 Victimization was assessed by describing ten traditional categories of criminal acts, *e.g.*, burglary, robbery, etc., and asking each respondent if he had been the victim of such offenses in the past twelve months. Thus victimization in this paper refers to the respondent's perception rather than a legal definition, *i.e.*, what police would define as victimization upon investigation. Our data are not directly comparable to Biderman, *et al.*, or Ennis since they were concerned with comparing self-reported victimization to official rates and consequently some data were thrown out of their analyses. Since our concern is with perception and subsequent sanctioning behavior, the data were not rated by "judges" to determine the legal legitimacy of each instance of perceived victimization.
- 4 In cases where the respondent was victimized more than once in the past year, he was asked to provide details on the incident he saw as the most serious.
- 5 The reportability proportions for the various offense categories used in our inventory were: Burglary, .58; Robbery, .43; Larceny (including auto theft), .38; Victim of another's careless or reckless driving, .34;

Vandalism, .31; Threats and intimidation, .29; Assault, .23; Sex offenses (including rape), .22; and Other, .17.

⁶ The relation between frequency of victimization in past year and perceived threat was not significant ($\Gamma = .14$, $z = 1.62$).

⁷ Magnitude of loss was dichotomized; incidents where there was no personal injury or where estimated loss was less than \$100 were coded "minor," if personal injury or monetary loss over \$100 was sustained, the incident was coded "major." 82 percent of the cases were minor and 18 percent major. Magnitude of loss was not related to decisions to report victimization, e.g., for incidents of burglary, larceny, and vandalism:

	Magnitude of Loss	
	major (N=57)	minor (N=367)
Report Yes	33%	30%
Report No	67%	70%

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