KENTUCKY CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTER

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RESEARCH BULLETIN

Promoting Crime Precaution Measures Among Victims As An Insufficient Fear-Reducing Strategy

Summary

In this study, we assess the use of "self-help" precaution measures among crime victims (those affected directly or indirectly by crime) as an effective "fear-reducing" strategy. The crime precaution measures may have been initiated individually or in conjunction with formal crime prevention programs (i.e., Operation Identification, Neighborhood Watch, Crime Prevention Special Assistance program).

This assessment was based on data from the Kentucky SAC's 1986 crime estimation program. These data were collected by a telephone survey of a random sample of adults (18-year-olds and older) from 376 households interviewed at two points in time six months apart. Respondents of households touched by crime within six months prior to the first interview were considered crime victims. The key findings are as follows:

- A majority of Kentuckians reported, in varying degrees, being fearful of crime; fear of property crime was most prevalent, fear of being robbed or attacked was second most prevalent, and domestic violence was the least prevalent fear. Significantly more victims than nonvictims reported fear of being victimized.

- Kentuckians who reported being victimized by crime between January and June, 1986, were found to be more fearful than nonvictims six months later.

- About the same percentage of crime victims and nonvictims reported asking a friend or neighbor to keep an eye on their home, asking a neighbor or friend to pick up their mail, leaving their lights on at night, using locks on the doors of their home, using locks on the doors of their car, asking a repair person for identification, having antiburglary stickers on their windows, and having a burglar alarm. More victims than nonvictims reported using deadbolt locks and engraving their valuables.

- About the same percentage of crime victims and nonvictims initiated "self-help" precautionary measures in collaboration with formal crime prevention programs: Operation ID, Neighborhood Watch and crime prevention special assistance programs.

- Compared to nonvictims and other victims, victims practicing high crime precaution after a crime were no less fearful within one year after being victimized.

- Compared to nonvictims and other victims, crime victims using "self-help" precaution measures implemented in collaboration with a formal crime prevention program after a crime were no less fearful up to one year after being victimized.

- Very few Kentuckians reported participating in police-sponsored Neighborhood Watch programs or using the assistance of crime prevention specialists; therefore, the impact of these programs could not be assessed independently in this study.

These findings suggest that the effectiveness of "self-help" precautionary measures implemented independently by citizens are insufficient as a fear-reducing strategy among crime victims. This is consistent with the findings of a 1987 Kentucky SAC study, "The Effect of Self-Help Precautionary Measures on Criminal Victimization

and Fear." The findings of this study further suggested that initiating the policy of promoting precaution measures among victims, even in conjunction with particular formal crime-prevention programs, would be an insufficient fear-reducing strategy.

As alternatives it is recommended that state funds be targeted for victim-specific demonstration projects in various cities across the Commonwealth that replicate fear-reducing strategies that have been found to be successful in the general population, e.g., problem-oriented policing. Further, the state of Kentucky should support demonstration projects that have not been rigorously evaluated, e.g., programs designed to restructure the urban environment with special attention given to reducing the fear of crime among victims. Finally, a demonstration project is needed in which crime specialists' assistance is provided to a group of victims and nonvictims under experimental conditions and is evaluated as a fear-reducing strategy.

Introduction

Criminal victimization and the fear of being victimized are well-known threats to the quality of life in communities nationwide.[1] Public officials have responded to these fears in recent years by sponsoring initiatives that focus not only on the person committing the crimes but also on the victims and potential victims of those crimes. The victim's movement has burgeoned into a major social force, stimulating the development of programs and legislation affecting victims and potential victims of crime.

This public policy shift from concern about offender rehabilitation and defendants' rights to concern about victim rehabilitation and rights has taken place at all levels of government. In the 1970s and 1980s, the U.S. Department of Justice supported a number of crime victim initiatives having implications for the entire nation.[2] State and city officials have also initiated a variety of crime- and fear-reducing initiatives involving the police, individual citizens, and entire communities. Additionally, some 40 states have enacted victim compensation programs, and 17 states have also enacted victim Bills of Rights.

The study being presented addresses the efficacy of only one of the many initiatives launched as solutions to the threats of fear of crime: the promotion of "self-help" prevention measures among citizens. (See the methodological note section for the method and procedures of the study and a profile of the sample.) Many crime-prevention programs, as one facet of their total effort, encourage citizens to take deliberate precautionary measures such as installing deadbolt locks and alarm systems, marking property, checking for identification, or making sure their automobiles are locked at all times when not occupied. It is the purpose of this research to examine the effects of these types of self-help measures on the fear of crime victims, not only when initiated independently, but also when initiated in collaboration with formal crime prevention programs.

It should be noted that the effectiveness of promoting self-help precaution measures as a victimization reducing strategy is not addressed in this study. Results that address the use of crime precaution measures as victimization-reducing strategies are forthcoming in a later publication.

Crime Victims and Their Fear

Fear is one of the most common and lasting reactions victims suffer from the experience; this prolonged fear among crime victims is particularly important in promoting precaution as public policy. The process of coping with victimization has been described as one of rebuilding the assumptive world, with the belief in "personal invulnerability" as one of the most critical assumptions affected by victimization. Recent studies have found evidence that victims of more severe crimes remained more fearful than do victims of less severe crimes for at least four months following the incident (the last measurement point), although the more general trend was for effects of victimization on psychological distress to cease by the end of four months.[3]

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[1] American Psychological Association, Task force on the victims of crime and violence Final report (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1984); and U.S. Department of Justice, Report to the nation on crime and justice, the data (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1983).

[2] See Bureau of Justice Statistics Annual Report Fiscal 1986 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1986); United States President's Task Force on Victims of Crime, Final Report (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1982); and National Institute of Justice, "Research in Brief" (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1986).

[3] See Cook, R., Smith, B., & Harrell, A., Helping crime victims: Levels of trauma and effectiveness of services (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, 1987); Janoff-Bulman, R., & Frieze, I., A theoretical perspective for understanding reactions to victimization Journal of Social

Rape victims, specifically, have been found to be quite fearful. In particular, one team who interviewed rape victims and matched controls six times over a one-year interval, concluded that fear reactions were among the longest lasting of all problems experienced by rape victims. These symptoms still differed between groups at the end of the study. Other aspects of social and psychological adjustment were initially poor among victims but generally returned to levels comparable to those of the controls.[4] In Kentucky, it was found that victims in a statewide sample had more fear than nonvictims for considerably more than a year after the incident, although the depressive symptoms present in the first few months had dissipated by that time. The difference in fear levels was stronger between victims of violence and victims of property crime than between property crime victims and nonvictims.[5]

Although the severity of the crime experienced is an important determinant of the intensity of the fear experienced, these studies, taken together, indicate that fear may be among the most lasting consequences of victimization. Thus, if promoting precaution through the use of self-help measures is a viable fear-reduction strategy, prior victims again would seem to be an important target group.

Crime-Prevention and Fear-Reduction Strategies

Concern over crime and the fear of crime has prompted the development of diverse programs and strategies in our nation. To our knowledge, these crime prevention strategies have not singled out victims as a special target population, but have treated them as part of the general population.

The effects of innovative police practices, environmental design, citizen participation, and citizen-initiated preventive measures appear to have been studied most often. The results of attempts to reduce crime or fear through innovative police practices have been mixed. In a Kansas City experiment, preventive patrols designed to increase the visibility of the police had no effect on either the actual amount of crime or on the fear of crime, but foot patrols were found to reduce the fear of crime in another study. The COPE (Citizen-Oriented Police Enforcement) project found directed patrol to be of little value for reducing fear of crime, but contacts between the police and citizens aimed at solving specific neighborhood problems showed considerable promise. Recent experiments in Houston, Texas and Newark, New Jersey, found that an aggressive program of expanded contacts between police and citizens can reduce overall fear of crime.[6]

There have also been mixed findings on the effects of Neighborhood Watch programs, which are known most for promoting citizen involvement in protecting their own communities. Although there have been numerous evaluations of Neighborhood Watch programs that have reported reductions in crime, and occasionally, reductions in fear of crime, nearly all of the program evaluations were found to have been seriously flawed. Of the two programs that have been rigorously evaluated, the well-known Seattle evaluation yielded positive results showing a reduction in residential burglary in the target areas relative to the control areas. In contrast to the Seattle evaluation, another team found evidence in their evaluation of a Chicago Neighborhood Watch program of an increase in a variety of social problems, including fear of crime and vicarious victimization.[7]

Issues 39 (1983): 1-17; and Skogan, W., Public policy and the fear of crime in large American cities In J. A. Gardner (Ed.), Public law and public policy (New York: Praeger, 1977).

[4] See Burgess, A., & Holmstrom, L., Rape trauma syndrome American Journal of Psychiatry 131 (1974): 981-986; and Kilpatrick, D., Veronen, L., & Resick, P., Assessment of the aftermath of rape: Changing patterns of fear Journal of Behavioral Assessment 1 (1979): 133-148.

[5] Calhoun, K., Atkeson, B., & Resick, P., A longitudinal examination of fear reactions in victims of rape Journal of Counseling Psychology 29 (1982): 655-661; Johnson, K., Norris, F., & Burgess, L., Criminal victimization in Kentucky: A longitudinal study (Louisville: Urban Studies Center, Kentucky Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center, University of Louisville, 1986).

[6] For a discussions on the impact of police patrol, see Cordner, G., Fear of crime and the police: An evaluation of a fear- reduction strategy Journal of Police Science and Administration 14 (1986): 223-233; Kelling, G., Pate, T., Dieckman, D., & Brown, C., The Kansas City preventive patrol experiment: A technical report (Washington, DC: Police Foundation, 1974); Pate, A. M., Wycoff, M. A., Skogan, W. G., & Sherman, L. A., Reducing fear of crime in Houston and Newark: A summary report (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, Police Foundation, 1986); and Police Foundation, The Newark foot patrol experiment (Washington, DC: Police Foundation, 1981).

[7] For discussions on the effects of these citizen precaution programs, see Cirel, P., Evans, P., McGillis, D., & Whitcomb, D., Community crime prevention: An exemplary project, Seattle, WA: National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal

"Crime prevention through environmental design" and "defensible space" designate yet another set of strategies promoted as effective approaches in reducing crime and fear. These programs seek to reduce opportunities for actual crime and thereby reduce fear by restructuring the urban environment. Poor lighting, blind spots, and people traffic patterns are examples of physical attributes of the environment that may combine to produce a high risk of victimization and high level of fear. While evaluations of environmental design programs are somewhat sparse, Oscar Newman's well-known research of the early 1970s concerning defensible space strongly suggested that crime in public housing could be reduced by introducing physical changes in the dwellings. In the early 1980s, an evaluation of the Hartford project examining the effects of a number of physical changes that were implemented along with other changes in policing the neighborhood and in involving citizens in neighborhood activities, was somewhat less conclusive. The results showed some overall reductions in the levels of crime and fear, but no effects could be attributed directly to the program, particularly to its efforts to redesign the environment.[8]

Of all crime-prevention strategies, the promotion of citizen-initiated precautions or "self-help" measures has been one of the most common public policy responses. Its popularity stems in part from proponents' claims that reductions in the probability of being victimized and in the level of fear are both viable results. Self-help measures are also inexpensive to implement. Possibly as a result of widespread promotion, self-help measures are used widely in American households. Nationally, it has been reported that one in four nationwide has had valuables engraved. Statewide surveys reported that a large majority of citizens take self-help measures such as leaving their lights, radios, or televisions on when away from home and asking for identification from service and delivery personnel.[9]

Like other crime-prevention strategies, the effectiveness of campaigns that promote self-help measures is far from conclusive, primarily because these measures have been implemented along with other preventive measures. In an evaluation of a Monterey County, California program where a burglary prevention program that heavily emphasized self-help preventive measures was instituted, a time series analysis yielded results showing that the program failed to affect crime rates. In contrast, evaluations of programs in cities such as Seattle, Washington and Minneapolis, Minnesota, in which self-help measures were promoted along with other strategies, showed that such programs can produce reductions in crime and/or the fear of crime.[10]

Results of the Study

In this study, households touched by crime within six months prior to the first interview were considered crime victims. Therefore, crime

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Justice. (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977); Lindsay, B., & McGillis, D., Citywide community crime prevention: An assessment of the Seattle program, In D. P. Rosenbaum (Ed.), Community crime prevention: Does it work? (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1986); and Lurigio, A. J., & Rosenbaum, D. P., Evaluation research in community crime prevention: A critical look at the field, In D. P. Rosenbaum (Ed.), Community crime prevention: Does it work? (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1986).

[8] For discussions on the strategies for reducing the opportunities for crime, see Fowler, F., & Mangione, T., Neighborhood crime, fear, and social control: A second look at the Hartford program (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1982); Henig, J., & Maxfield, M., Fear of crime: Strategies for intervention Victimology: An International Journal 3 (1978): 297-313; Jeffery, C. R., Crime prevention through environmental design (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1971); and Newman, O., Defensible space: Crime prevention through urban design (New York: MacMillan Press, 1972).

[9] For discussions of programs and research on self-help measures, see Duncan, J. T., Citizen crime prevention tactics (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1980); Johnson, K. & Hardyman, P., A crime estimation program for Kentucky: Description and preliminary analysis (Louisville: Urban Studies Center, Kentucky Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center, University of Louisville, 1987); Johnson, K., Norris, F., & Burgess, L., Criminal victimization in Kentucky: A longitudinal study (Louisville: Urban Studies Center, Kentucky Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center, University of Louisville, 1986); Lavrakas, P., Citizen self-help and neighborhood crime prevention policy, In L. Curtis (Ed.), American violence and public policy (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985); and Whitaker, C., Crime prevention measures (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1986).

[10] See Cirel, P., Evans, P., McGillis, D., & Whitcomb, D., Community crime prevention: An exemplary project. Seattle, WA: National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice. (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977); Johnson, K., A multifaceted evaluation of the Monterey County burglary prevention unit (Fairfax, VA: International Training, Research, and Evaluation on Council, 1980); and Kaplan, H. M., Palkovitz, L. E., & Pesce, E. J., Crime prevention through environmental design: Final report on residential demonstration, Minneapolis, Minnesota (Arlington, VA: Westinghouse Electric Corporation, 1978).

victims were defined as those affected directly or indirectly by crime. It was assumed that crime may affect other persons who live in the same household as the direct victim. Addressed were five policy questions that should be relevant to public officials of Kentucky:

1. Are citizens who have experienced a recent crime more fearful than citizens who have not experienced a recent crime incident?

2. Is there a difference in crime victims and nonvictims in their level of fear six months to one year later?

3. Are there differences in crime victims and nonvictims as to the extent to which they use "self-help" crime precaution measures and participate in crime prevention programs?

4. To what extent are "self-help" crime precaution measures effective in reducing fear among crime victims?

5. To what extent are the use of crime precaution measures that are implemented in collaboration with a formal crime prevention program effective in reducing fear among crime victims?

Table 1

Level of Fear Among Victims and Nonvictims of Crime in Kentucky

Fear Question	Victim %	Nonvictim %	Total N	Total %
Do you feel safe in your own neighborhood during the day?				
Very safe	72	77	328	76
Somewhat safe	23	17	79	18
Very or somewhat unsafe	5	3	13	3
Do not walk alone in day	3	0	11	3
* Do you feel safe in your own neighborhood during the night?				
Very safe	27	32	132	31
Somewhat safe	39	36	157	37
Very or somewhat unsafe	28	18	87	20
Do not walk alone in night	6	15	55	13
***Does fear stop you from doing what you want to do?				
Often	20	6	39	9
Sometimes	29	24	109	25
Rarely or never	51	70	282	66
* Do you think about being robbed or attacked when you leave your house?				
Very often	19	12	58	13
Sometimes	30	23	104	24
Rarely or never	57	66	270	63
* Do you think about your home being vandalized while you are away?				
Very often	32	20	95	22
Sometimes	34	35	151	35
Rarely or never	35	45	186	43
***Do you feel afraid of being attacked/assaulted by a relative, neighbor, or acquaintance?				
Very often	6	1	7	2
Sometimes	8	7	28	7
Rarely or never	86	93	396	92

* Significant difference between victims and nonvictims at p.<.05
*** Significant difference between victims and nonvictims at p.<.001

Crime Victims and Their Level of Fear

The first step toward understanding fear of crime among victims of crime was to examine the prevalence of fear among residents of Kentucky and then to break this down according to whether or not the individual had been victimized (Policy Questions 1 and 2). Table 1 presents Kentuckians' responses to six questions about their fear of crime. A majority of residents feel safe in their own neighborhoods during the day (76% very safe and 18% somewhat safe). This was true for both victims and nonvictims of crime (72% and 77% feel very safe, respectively). However, the feeling of being unsafe increases dramatically with nightfall; only 31 percent of these responding felt very safe in their own neighborhood at night. Among victims of crime, the percentage that felt very unsafe increased from 5 percent during the day to 28 percent during the night. The percentage increase among nonvictims was less dramatic; 3 percent felt very unsafe during the day and 18 percent felt unsafe at night. (See Table 1.)

Another question asked in the telephone interview concerned the extent that fear stops citizens from participating in activities. The results indicate that 34 percent of Kentucky residents were stopped often (9%) or sometimes (25%) from doing what they wanted to do.

There were significantly more crime victims than nonvictims who reported that fear often stops them from doing what they want (victims, 20%; nonvictims, 6%).

Crime victims reported thinking about being victimized more than nonvictims did. Only 35 percent of the nonvictims thought often (12%) or sometimes (23%) about being robbed or attacked compared to 49 percent of the victims (19% often and 30% sometimes). Furthermore, victims were more preoccupied with property crimes; 32 percent of the victims thought often about their homes being vandalized, another 34 percent think about it sometimes. Finally, there were significant differences between crime victims and nonvictims in their fear of being assaulted by relatives, friends, or neighbors. Six percent of the victims were often very afraid of family or acquaintances; another 8 percent were sometimes afraid. In contrast, only 1 percent of the nonvictims were often afraid while 7 percent reported being sometimes afraid of family members, friends, or neighbors. These differences were statistically significant at the $p<.001$ level.

To examine the effects of criminal victimization on fear six months to one year later, a multiple classification analysis (MCA) was conducted using a fear of crime index. (See methodological note for a description of this index and its construction.) This analysis compares mean levels of fear among victims and nonvictims differing in their levels of precautions and crime prevention program participation. The procedure allowed group means to be adjusted for any differences between groups in variables (i.e., prior fear of crime, sex, employment status, residency (city vs. rural), and victimization during the second six months) found in earlier correlational analyses to be related

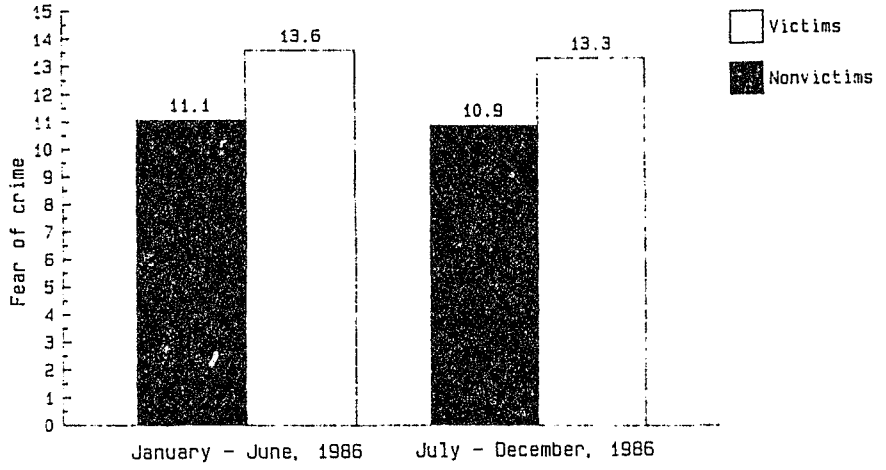

Figure 1: Fear of crime among victims and nonvictims*
*Controlled for prior fear, sex, employment status, residency and revictimization.

to the fear of crime within one year of the incident.

Figure 1 shows that when controlling for prior fear and key vulnerability factors, criminal victimization effects the level of fear of Kentuckians. At the time of the first interview, the average fear-of-crime score of respondents in households touched by crime was 13.6, whereas that of nonvictimized households was 11.1. Six months later, the mean were 13.3 and 10.9 respectively. The difference between these means was significant ($p<.001$).

Crime Victims and Their Use of Self-Help Precaution Measures

Table 2 presents a comparison of crime victims and nonvictims use of crime precaution measures and participation in crime prevention programs. This table provides answers to Policy Question 3, do victims and nonvictims practice different types and amounts of crime precaution? Asking a friend/ neighbor to keep an eye on one's home while away is the self-help measure most frequently practiced by Kentucky residents. Nearly nine out of ten (89%) Kentucky residents reported asking someone to keep an eye on their home while they were away. Other measures frequently reported were asking a friend/neighbor to pick up the mail (79%) and leaving the lights on when away at night (73%). Locking the doors of their homes, deadbolting the doors of their homes, and locking the doors of their car were also common tactics practiced by Kentucky residents (64%, 60%, and 60%, respectively). It appeared that very few homes (7%) had a burglary alarm.

Significant differences in the use of precaution measures of victims and nonvictims were found for only two precaution measures. As shown in Table 2, 73 percent of the crime victims use deadbolt locks on their doors as compared to only 56 percent of the nonvictims, and 57 percent of the victims engrave valuables while only 38 percent of the nonvictims use this precaution measure.

Overall participation in formal crime prevention programs by Kentucky residents was low. (See Table 2.) The program in which the largest percentage of residents participated was Operation ID; 16 percent reported engraving their valuables through Operation ID. Ten percent obtained antiburglary stickers from Operation ID. Very few participated in police-sponsored

block watches (4%) or sought advice from crime prevention specialists (3%). Crime victims and nonvictims did not vary significantly on their participation in formal crime prevention programs.

Precaution as a Fear-Reducing Strategy

Our assumption was that "self-help" crime precaution measures would be more effective in reducing fear among crime victims than among nonvictims (Policy Question 4). We further assumed that participation in formal crime prevention programs would produce even greater effects among victims than nonvictims (Policy Question 5). (The reader is reminded that this study focuses on citizens whose households were victimized between January and June, 1986; nonvictims are those citizens whose households did not experience an incident of crime during that period.) These results are presented in Figures 2 and 3. The results were produced using the multiple classification analysis (MCA) procedure described earlier.

The covariates included in these analyses were (a) fear of crime during first six months, (b) sex, (c) employment status, (d) residence in city vs. rural area, and (e) victimization during second six months. Figures 2 and 3 show that the levels of fear among crime victims and nonvictims were not affected by their levels of "self-help" precautionary behavior nor by their participation in crime prevention programs. Further, the findings show that victims who had practiced high precaution after the incidents or had participated in some formal crime prevention program abandoned their fear no more rapidly than victims who had not. Because of the small number of respondents who reported ever participating in a formal Neighborhood Watch program or using the assistance of a crime prevention specialist, the independent effects of these programs could not be assessed.

Table 2

Use of Self-Help Precaution Measures
Among Crime Victims and Nonvictims in Kentucky

Utilization of Self-Help Measures	Victim %	Nonvictim %	Total N	Total %
Ask friend/neighbor to keep eye on home	89	89	383	89
Ask neighbor/friend to pick up mail	77	80	341	79
Leave lights on at night	79	71	311	73
Use locks on doors of home	69	63	278	64
**Use deadbolts on doors of home	73	56	257	60
Use locks on doors of car	66	56	233	60
**Engrave valuables	57	38	179	42
Ask repair person for identification	40	40	172	40
Have antiburglary stickers on windows	18	14	63	15
Have burglar alarm	10	6	29	7
Participation in Formal Programs				
Engrave valuables through Operation Identification	13	17	68	16
Antiburglary stickers for Operation Identification	13	9	42	10
Participation in police sponsored Neighborhood Block Watch	4	4	17	4
Sought advice from crime prevention specialists	5	2	11	3

**Significant difference between victims and nonvictims at p.<.01

Policy Implication: Alternative Strategies

The results of this study clearly demonstrate that there are many Kentucky residents who are fearful of being a victim of crime, and that crime victims are more likely than other citizens in Kentucky to be fearful. Furthermore, within one year of the incident fear is greater among crime victims than among other citizens. Apparently, state and local officials have to focus increased attention on strategies to reduce the fear of crime.

The results of this study also reinforce previous Kentucky SAC research that the policy of promoting "self-help" preventive measures would have to be judged as an insufficient solution to the problems of the fear of crime. There was evidence that victims were more fearful than nonvictims up to one year later. However, no evidence was found that more cautious victims fared better psychologically in the long run than did less cautious victims. These 'no significant effects' were found even when including "self-help" precautions measures that were left out of the earlier study, e.g., use of deadbolt locks.

Perhaps a previous claim was correct in that strictly individualized precaution measures do

little to promote a sense of security. They may make the home secure, but they do not decrease the level of local danger. Rather than reduce fear, they actually may remind the occupants of the danger that lurks outside. Alarms, locks, and the like simply make the threat of crime more salient.[11]

In addition to replicating the findings of an earlier SAC study, this study found that victims who were using "self-help" crime precaution measures in collaboration with a formal crime prevention program after the first incident were no less fearful than nonvictims or other victims who did not participate in a crime prevention program. The particular programs that were included in the present study were Operation ID, Neighborhood Watch, and Crime Prevention Specialists Assistance. Unfortunately, the effects of the Neighborhood Watch and professional assistance programs could not be assessed because of their limited use. There have been reports that perhaps crime prevention programs designed to increase caution may inadvertently increase fear. The conclusions of one study in particular suggested that if the reduction of fear is the goal of an intervention, information about the need for security measures must be coupled with reassurance that the recommended behaviors do in fact reduce one's vulnerability to crime.[12]

The inability of individuals to create a safe environment for

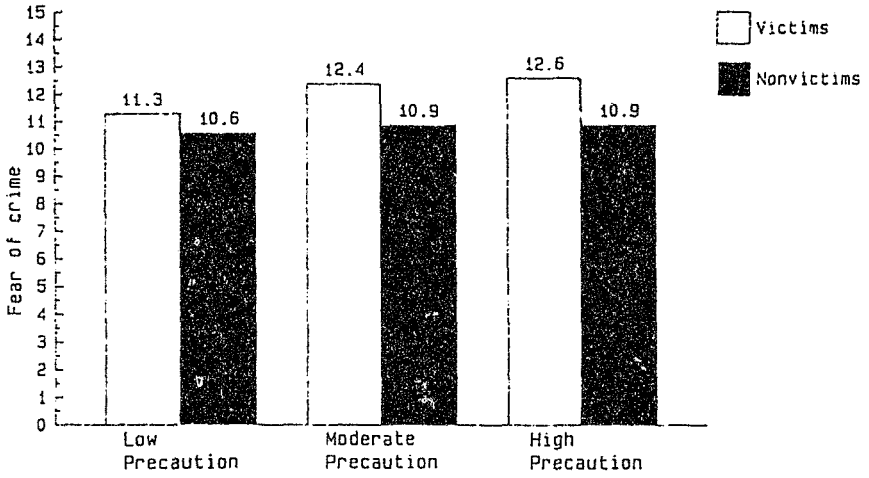

Figure 2: Effect of crime precaution measures on fear of crime among victims and nonvictims*

*Controlled for prior fear, sex, employment status, residency, and revictimization.

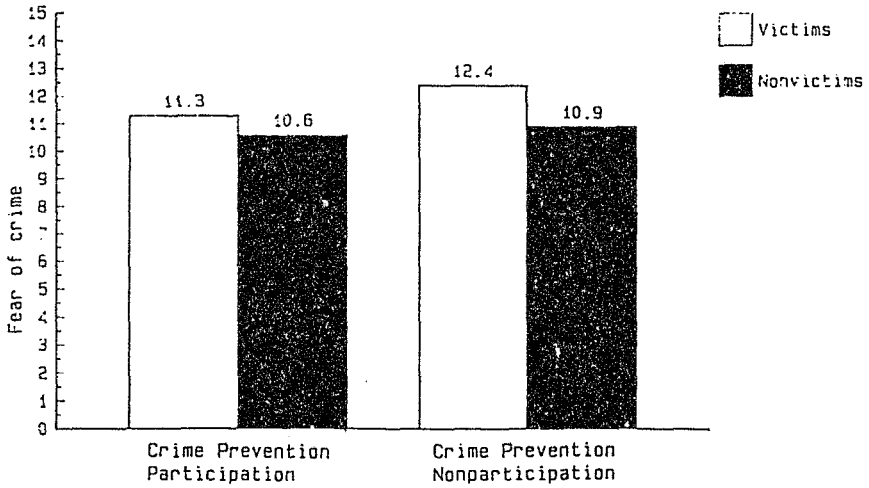

Figure 3: Effect of formal crime prevention programs on fear of crime among victims and nonvictims*

*Controlled for prior fear, sex, employment status, residency, and revictimization.

themselves points to a need to focus their attention on alternative fear-reducing strategies. Two strategies proposed by the earlier SAC report bears repeating: "community building" and "physical rebuilding"--concepts that have been discussed for years in criminal justice. In general, these strategies attack the problems of fear of crime at the neighborhood or community level rather than at the personal or household level.

The former strategy of "community building" refers to efforts, primarily police practices, that attempt to enhance social cohesion in an urban environment. Previous research has shown that fear of crime is less prominent where persons are concerned about others, are confident that others are concerned about them, or are simply acquainted with one another. Projects promoting a sense that the police care or involving the police and residents in solving neighborhood problems appear to be effective descendents of the earlier "team-policing" concept designed to overcome police-resident isolation. More recently, the National Institute of Justice has sponsored experiments focusing on problem-oriented policies that required closer working

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[11] See Kidder, L., & Cohn, E., Public views of crime and crime prevention, In I. H. Frieze, D. Bar-Tal, & J. Carroll (Eds.), New approaches to social problems (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., 1979).

[12] Norton, L., & Courlander, M., Fear of crime among the elderly--The role of crime prevention programs Gerontologist 22 (1982): 388-393.

relationships between the police and the community.[13]

The National Crime Prevention Council cites strategies that heighten the role of the police in information sharing and interagency cooperation. Law enforcement agencies in Jacksonville, Fla., and Clifton, N.J., are two that are engaging in comprehensive program development focusing on crime prevention through interagency communication and cooperation.[14]

The latter strategy of "physical rebuilding" (improving lighting, removing blind spots, establishing communal areas, and promoting the circulation of people) is believed to reduce not only crime but also fear of crime in urban areas. People also respond with fear to signs of poverty and deterioration (e.g., abandoned housing); eliminating such symbols may be effective in reducing the perceived danger of urban environments.[15]

These strategies are not independent. Alterations of the physical environment may enhance social cohesion. One research team evaluated the impact of physical changes on an urban neighborhood such as cul-de-sacs and new traffic patterns and found that residents used the neighborhood more often, intervened on behalf of one another more often, and were more likely to perceive their neighbors as a resource. Although change could not be attributed to the intervention, fear of crime in this neighborhood was significantly lower than would be expected given citywide trends.[16]

Conclusions

As presently practiced, self-initiated precaution measures do little to reduce the level of the fear of being victimized. This is the second Kentucky SAC study that has produced this result. Moreover, programs whose aim is, in part, to promote the use of self-help measures appear to show little promise of becoming a sufficient policy response to the issue of fear of crime. It is true that campaigns to increase protective measures at the individual or household level are the easiest "crime-prevention" programs to carry out. It is also true that, compared to many other strategies, they take little time, money, or coordinated effort. But we found that they do nothing to reduce the perceived danger of an environment in which crime victims reside.

We advise caution in interpreting these findings, particularly as they relate to the specific "self-help" measures. We are not recommending that people stop using deadbolt locks. We are recommending that criminal justice officials thoughtfully and critically reevaluate their current crime-prevention policies and programs. These findings appear to justify, if not demand, the allocation of additional funds for design and experimentation with alternative fear-reducing strategies, with special attention being given to crime victims. In particular, state funds should be targeted for victim-specific demonstration projects in various cities across the Commonwealth that replicate fear-reducing strategies that have been found to be successful in the general population, e.g., problem-oriented policing. Further, the state of Kentucky should support demonstration projects that have not been rigorously evaluated, e.g., programs designed to restructure the urban environment with special attention given to reducing the fear of crime among victims. Finally, demonstration projects are needed in which crime specialists' assistance is provided to groups of victims and nonvictims under experimental conditions and are evaluated as fear-reducing strategies.

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[13] For further discussions on community building, see Angell, J. E., The democratic model needs a fair trial: Angell's response Criminology 12(4) (1975): 379-384; Cordner, G., Fear of crime and the police: An evaluation of a fear-reduction strategy, Journal of Police Science and Administration 14 (1986): 223-233; Henig, J., & Maxfield, M., Fear of crime: Strategies for intervention Victimology: An International Journal 3 (1978): 297-313; National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Task force on police (Washington, DC: Department of Justice, 1976); Pate, A. M., Wycoff, M. A., Skogan, W. G., & Sherman, L. A., Reducing fear of crime in Houston and Newark: A summary report (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, Police Foundation, 1986); Spelman, W. & Eck, J. E., Newport News tests problem-oriented policing (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1987); and Waller, I., Victim research, public policy, and criminal justice Victimology 1 (1976): 240-252.

[14] For discussions of these crime prevention programs, see National Crime Prevention Council, Catalyst March, 1988; National Crime Prevention Council Catalyst, April, 1988.

[15] See Jeffery, C. R, Crime prevention through environmental design (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1971); Kidder, L., & Cohn, E., Public views of crime and crime prevention, In I. H. Frieze, D. Bar-Tal, & J. Carroll (Eds.), New approaches to social problems (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., 1979); and Newman, O., Defensible space: Crime prevention through urban design (New York: MacMillan Press, 1972).

[16] See Fowler, F., & Mangione, T., Neighborhood crime, fear, and social control: A second look at the Hartford program (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1982).

Methodological Note

This study was a secondary data analysis of the data collected as part of the Kentucky SAC Crime Estimation program (CREST). This crime statistics program was implemented to provide continuously updated information on criminal justice topics---victimization, mental health, government and citizen crime prevention initiatives, and citizen opinions relating to special current public safety issues.

Methods and Procedures

Data were collected from July, 1986 to June, 1987 on potential crime incidents, fear of crime, and crime prevention tactics experienced during 1986. At the outset of data collection, the sample was divided into six equal groups. The first group, for example, was called in July and asked to report incidents of crime that occurred between January and June of 1986. The second group was contacted in August and asked about crimes that had occurred between February and July of 1986. The third group was contacted in September and asked about crimes occurring between March and August, 1986. This process was repeated until each of the six sample groups had been contacted and questioned twice about crime incidents occurring in the previous six months. The first wave of data reflects crime incidents, fear of crime, and use of precaution measures reported between July and July, 1986 (Harm1, Cfear1, and Caution1, respectively); the second wave of data reflects crime incidents, level of fear, and use of precaution measures reported between January and June, 1987 (Harm2, Cfear2, and Caution2, respectively).

This system, patterned after the Bureau of Justice Statistics' National Crime Survey (NCS) method, controlled for the effects of forgetting by focusing on a recent, bounded time period. Although these procedures require that data must be collected for a longer period of time before crime estimates can be made, they were intended to minimize recall error.

Telephoning of the citizens occurred during the evening hours (6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.) and weekends (11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.), as well as on weekday mornings and afternoons. The total number of completed interviews (460) was divided by the total residences contacted (747) to yield a response rate of 62 percent. The termination and refusal rates were .01 percent and 5 percent, respectively. During the second wave of data collection, 376 of the original 460 respondents were located (82%). The length of the interviews ranged between 7 and 34 minutes; the overall average was 10.8 minutes per interview. If the respondents reported a recent crime incident, however, the average interview lasted 13.2 minutes.

The raw data were compared with the projected 1986 demographic characteristics of Kentucky residents as compiled by the Urban Studies Center. The analyses suggested that the percentages obtained for race were comparable to those in the census data. However, there appeared to be an oversampling of females and persons over 30 years of age. To correct this imbalance, the estimates have been adjusted through post-stratified weighting procedures.

The victimization data reflect both the prevalence and seriousness of violent and property crime; for example, information was collected on the type of incident (e.g., was the individual assaulted or his/her home burglarized?), as well as the circumstances surrounding the criminal act (e.g., was the victim injured?). Respondents were asked to report the experiences of all members of their household as well as their own over the previous six months. A series of screener questions was first asked to determine whether the household had been exposed to any crime or other potentially illegal event that was followed by detailed questions designed to reveal the specifics of each of the incidents reported. This battery of questions was based upon the questionnaire developed for the NCS.

One or more crimes were reported in 27 percent of Kentucky's households (weighted data) during 1986. During the first six months, 21 percent of the households were touched by crime and 11 percent of the households experienced crime during the second half of the year. (Some of the households reported a crime in both waves of data.) The above-average rate of crime for the first half of 1986 is the result of telescoping, i.e., reporting crimes beyond the specified six month period. While this common problem can affect crime estimating, it is not a problem in analyzing the effects of crime on fear.

Construction of criminal victimization measures entailed computing a crime severity index (based on the 1985 work of Wolfgang, Figlio, Tracy, and Singer) for incidence of crime occurring during the first six months of 1986 (Harm1) and scores for crime incidents occurring in the second half of that year (Harm2). This is a weighted score based on the extent of injury, forcible sexual intercourse, forced entry to premises, stolen motor vehicles, and property damage. The average score for Harm1 severity was 1.1 and ranged from 0 (no crime) to 59.6. The average Harm2 severity scores was 1 and ranged from 0 to

84. For the multiple classification analyses, victimization was coded as the presence (1) versus absence (0) of a recent incident of crime experienced by the household.

In addition to the victimization questions, the individuals were asked a series of six questions related to the fear of crime that proved to be valid and reliable measures of fear in previous studies of Kentucky residents. (See the Kentucky SAC report # 3 Criminal Victimization: A Statewide Survey for a detailed discussion of the scale construction.) These fear of crime questions focused on how safe the respondents felt, both within and outside of their local neighborhoods during the day and the night, and on how often they thought about the potential of being attacked, robbed, or vandalized. To tap the impact of fear on their lives, each was also asked whether fear of being a victim prevented them from participating in any activities.

Citizens' use of crime precaution measures was also surveyed---both those steps initiated by individual citizens and those sponsored by state and local government crime prevention programs. Specifically, citizens were questioned about their use and the presence of ten precaution measures. For example, respondents were asked if they had deadbolt locks on the doors of their houses and if they keep the doors and windows locked while they were at home. Also surveyed was the use of automobile locks, home burglar alarms, antiburglary decals on doors and windows, and advice from professionals. In regards to formal crime prevention programs, the residents were asked whether they participated in Neighborhood Watch programs or if neighbors informally watched one another's homes and property. Participation in Operation Identification was assessed by noting how many citizens obtained antiburglary decals and/or had their valuables engraved through this program.

Factor analyses were attempted on both the ten precaution items and the five items relating to formal programs. The analyses indicated correlations among a few of the precaution items, for example, using antiburglary stickers and engraving valuables ($r = .42$). Despite these correlations, a reliable factor structure was not identified among either the 10 precaution items or the 5 formal program items. Given the results of the factor analyses, two summary indices were constructed. The precaution index (Caution1) was constructed by summing the responses to individual precaution items. Each measure was equally weighted; thus, the precaution scores ranged from 0 to 10. The mean score was 5.3. Similar to the precaution scale, the formal participation scale (Profaid1) was constructed by summing the responses from the five formal crime prevention programs. The scale ranged from 0 to 5; the mean was .34.

For the multiple classification analysis, precaution was defined as low use of 0 to 3 precaution measures, moderate precaution was use of 4 to 6 precaution measures, and high precaution, 7-10 measures. These categories were based on 1/2 standard deviation above and below the mean.

Sample Profile

The demographic profile of the respondents reporting for the household in the weighted sample was white (94%) female (53%), of whom a little over half (59%) lived in an urban area of the Commonwealth. A little less than half of the respondents were full-time employees or students (48%), the remaining 52 percent were employed part-time, disabled, retired, or housewives. The ages of the respondents ranged between 18 and 94 years. Twenty-one percent were under 21 years of age, 10 percent between 25 and 29 years of age, 32 percent were between 30 and 39 years of age, 32 percent were between 40 and 64 years of age, and 16 percent were 65 years or older. The level of education achievement reported by the respondents indicated that most did not have a college education; 15 percent had less than nine years of formal schooling, and 54 percent had between nine and 12 years of schooling. A quarter of the respondents (25%) had attended college or business school but only 5 percent had attended graduate school.

Authors' Note

Dr. Knowlton Johnson, principal author, directed this secondary analysis of data collected as part of the Kentucky SAC crime estimation program. Dr. Johnson, a former police officer, is Director of the Urban Studies Center and co-director of the Kentucky Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center. The computer analysis was conducted by **Dr. Patricia Hardyman**, coauthor. Dr. Hardyman, principal investigator for Kentucky's Crime Estimation program, is the criminal justice researcher for the Urban Studies Center. Both authors made essentially equal contributions to the study regarding the development of its measures, the interpretation of the data, and the writing of this research bulletin. The authors wish to thank Mr. Timothy Crowe, Director of the National Crime Prevention Institute, for serving as external reviewer of the bulletin. We wish to thank Drs. Ted Koebel and Fran Norris of the Urban Studies Center for serving as internal reviewers. Much of the

literature review of this bulletin appears as part of a publication (in press); Norris, F. and K. Johnson, "The Effects of "Self-Help" Precautionary Measures on Criminal Victimization and Fear" Journal of Urban Affairs . Volume 10 (2).

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