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CRIME PREVENTION COMPETENCE AMONG ELDERLY PERSONS:  
PERSPECTIVES FROM A NATIONAL SURVEY

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## CRIME PREVENTION COMPETENCE AMONG ELDERLY PERSONS: PERSPECTIVES FROM A NATIONAL SURVEY

Previous research on how elderly persons view and think about crime in their everyday lives has generally emphasized a seeming incongruity: While the rate of criminal victimization among the aged is clearly lower than that for other adults, the elderly appear more fearful of crime. Below we will review earlier findings with respect to both actual victimization rates and perceptions of the elderly about crime. We will then use data from a recent national sample survey of the aged to attempt to reconcile the seeming paradox between lower victimization and higher fear. We will also discuss the means by which the elderly cope with crime, utilizing a framework of crime prevention competence, and strategies for increasing that competence.

### VICTIMIZATION OF THE ELDERLY

National Crime Survey data (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1981-85) and interpretations of it by numerous researchers (cf. Antunes et al., 1977; Cook et al., 1978; Hochstedler, 1981; Cook and Skogan, 1984; Yin, 1985) generally indicate that the rate of victimization for citizens 65 and over is comparatively lower than for other adults, and particularly lower than for persons aged 12 to 25. The rate of violent crime (assault, robbery, rape) among the aged has been only about a fifth of the rate against younger persons. However, of major concern is that the elderly are quite distinctive in being particularly prone to crime motivated by economic gain including an element of theft. The elderly have the highest rates for crimes involving personal larceny with contact (pocket picking and purse snatching), and are about as likely as other adults in urban areas to be robbed (Hochstedler, 1981).

#### The Hochstedler Urban Victimization Study

Hochstedler (1981) provides the most complete -- albeit somewhat dated -- description of victimization patterns among elderly persons. Utilizing 1974-75 National Crime Survey data from 26 central city areas (a component of the NCS since discontinued), Hochstedler found that the aggregate personal crime victimization rate for persons age 65 and over was decidedly lower than that for the younger population. Moreover, the elderly had the lowest rates of any age group for rape, robbery and assault, but the highest rates for personal larceny with contact (purse snatching and pocket picking). While for the total population only 52 percent of personal crimes involved theft, 83 percent of all such crimes against the aged did. Gender played an important role

in distinguishing between elderly and non-elderly victims. Elderly males were victimized more often by robbery and assault, but less often by personal larceny with contact, than were elderly females. However, elderly males were much less likely to have confronted crimes involving force than were younger males, while the distribution of crimes against elderly females generally matched that of the adult population as a whole.

Persons over 65 were also more likely than others to be victimized during the day (when in fact three-fourths of such incidents occurred). About half of victimizations involving the aged took place in open public places, with another fourth in public commercial buildings and the remaining in or around their homes. They were slightly more likely to be victimized in or around their residences than were younger persons. These findings are in keeping with the life-styles of aged persons, their being more apt to be out and around during the day, as well as at home more often.

Hochstedler also found that elderly persons were more often victims of strangers (84 percent of the time) than were other individuals (64 percent of the time). Black victims of all ages and elderly white victims were more often preyed upon by black offenders; there were no differences in the ages of offenders involved in the victimization of elderly vs. younger persons. These results are not surprising given the greater incidence of crimes involving theft among the elderly and that those crimes have higher proportions of both strangers and blacks committing them.

Hochstedler notes that the salience of the element of theft in crimes against the aged also likely accounts for their being more often accosted than other population members by more than one offender (typically two), and their being more often alone when victimized than were younger persons.

Also, the elderly less often than other persons:

- \* Were confronted with a weapon;
- \* Suffered physical attacks or sustained injuries;
- \* Made efforts to protect themselves or foil the offender;
- \* Were involved in attempted but incompleated crimes, particularly those involving offenders who were strangers.

Victimizations of persons 65 and over were reported to the police less often than those of persons between 35 and 64, but more often than victimizations of younger individuals. However, a larger proportion of serious victimizations (robbery and aggravated assault) were reported for elderly persons than for victims under 65. Younger individuals were more apt to say a crime was not reported because the matter was a personal one, but

regardless of age the most common reason given for non-reporting was that the victim felt there was insufficient proof. The next most frequently given reason was that the victim did not feel the incident important enough to report.

While actual amounts of money lost by elderly persons in thefts tend to be lower than for other adults, Yin (1985) has pointed out that as a proportion of their total finances it is apt to be relatively higher. Also, Yin has noted that when injuries are suffered they can take longer to heal, and may be more costly.

#### National Crime Survey Studies

Hochstedler's urban sample findings with respect to rates of victimization are generally supported by a 1973-80 trend study based on national sample NCS data (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1981). Apart from the advantage of being generalizable to the total U.S. elderly population, the study also provides data on household sector victimization, including burglary, household larceny and motor vehicle theft. As in Hochstedler's analysis, the rates of victimization for persons 65 and over were substantially lower than those of other individuals for every type of crime except personal larceny with contact. The most substantial differences over the full eight-year period were for robbery and assault, where the rates for aged persons were each approximately 87 percent lower than those of persons age 12 to 64. Robbery was 48 percent lower among the elderly, burglary 49 percent, household larceny 60 percent, and motor vehicle theft 75 percent lower. Except for a moderate and unexplained dip in 1979, the trend analysis indicates a relatively constant pattern in crime rates among aged persons over the period studied.

The most recent NCS annual report -- for the 1983 data set -- portrays rather congruent findings, with a few noteworthy exceptions. Following general trends, slight decreases were found in the robbery, assault and household crime rates among the aged, but the rates were rather constant for other types of theft. There was more of a tendency than previously for elderly persons to report having been injured in robberies as opposed to assaults.

It should be noted that the aged may also be more susceptible to other forms of crime not reported in the NCS, including fraud, harassment by youth, and vandalism (Malinchak and Wright, 1978; Elmore, 1981). Moreover, while the NCS data are doubtless the most valid baseline available, they are based upon self-reports of citizens with regard to their own victimization experiences. Elaborate sampling and interviewing measures to a large extent mitigate against many of the possible biases, but factors such as embarrassment, concern about offender retribution, and simple forgetting remain causes for concern in interpreting the data.

## PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES ABOUT CRIME

The contention that the elderly are more fearful of crime than are younger adults has been supported in a host of previous studies (cf. Jaycox, 1979; Braungart, Hoyer and Braungart, 1979; Finley, 1982; Lee, 1982; Yin, 1982; 1985). Skogan and Maxfield (1981) offer some of the most compelling evidence in their sample study of adults in three urban areas. Forty-one percent of the persons aged 60 and over reported feeling "very unsafe" alone on the streets of their neighborhoods at night, as compared to 22 percent of those aged 50 to 59 and less than 10 percent of those under 50. Elderly blacks were more fearful than their white counterparts, and as other studies have indicated (Lebowitz, 1975; Lee, 1982), women more so than men. Other work has indicated that such fear is related to actual risks in urban areas (Sundeen and Mathieu, 1976; Janson and Ryder, 1983). Elderly rural and smaller city residents have been found to exhibit less fear as well (Lee, 1982; Mullen and Donnermeyer, 1985).

What is much less clear are the reasons underlying such fear, given the lower victimization rates among the aged. Factors which have been considered at various times in the above studies have included such demographic ones as living alone, lower income, the higher proportion of females among the elderly, and living in inner-city transitional neighborhoods. However, while these factors may enhance fear among the aged, they by no means account for the overall higher level.

Largely untested have been several more physiological, psychological and sociological factors which may help explain increased fear among the elderly. For example, while generally decreased physical prowess is a fact among the aged, the perception of or reaction to diminished capabilities may be equally or more important in increasing fear of criminal encounters and their possible consequences. The psychological threat of decreased ability to cope with crime -- whether physically, emotionally or economically -- needs to be taken into account more as well (Lawton, Nahemow, Yaffee, and Feldman, 1976; Teski, 1981, Yin, 1985). General feelings of well-being, sense of control, and life satisfaction may be pertinent variables as well (Yin, 1982; 1985). Yin (1985) has also offered a predictive model of fear of crime which includes personal vulnerability and environmental peril as the two key determinants, followed by both personal and vicarious victimization experiences.

The way in which fear of crime has been predominantly conceptualized and measured has been problematical as well. As Skogan and Maxfield (1981) point out, there are several conflicting and/or overlapping definitions of fear of crime, ranging from perceived threat to oneself, to sense of

vulnerability, to general concern with crime as a social issue.

By far the most used operational measure in surveys of crime fear has been how safe one would feel being out alone in one's neighborhood at night. This item is of course predisposed toward the one type of victimization which the elderly are disproportionately prone to: street larceny with contact. Thus the greater incidence of fear reported by the aged as measured by that item might be quite realistically grounded. Given that street crime is more common in urban areas, it is noteworthy that Lee (1982) found that elderly persons in larger cities were more likely than those in more rural areas to report greater fear of being out alone at night. Moreover, Lee found that both groups responded about equally to a scale of more general, pervasive anxiety about victimization. Comparisons of fear of crime between the elderly and younger age groups using other than the "safety alone at night" item have been lacking, thus disallowing more valid discriminations of fear between young and old across a variety of possible dimensions.

O'Keefe and Reid-Nash (1985) provide a groundwork for relating fear of crime to various forms of crime prevention attitudes and behaviors among the elderly. Using national sample survey data comparing persons age 65 and over with individuals in other age groups, it was found that: (1) While the elderly felt less safe along outdoors at night, they also perceived themselves less at risk from burglary, robbery and assault; (2) Aged persons were as interested in crime prevention as other citizens, but believed they knew less about it, felt less capable of engaging in it, and felt less responsible for doing so; (3) The elderly differed somewhat from others in the extent to which they engaged in various types of preventive actions, particularly in that they were less likely to take assertive measures and more likely to use avoidant and surveillant ones; and (4) Among the aged greater fear was associated with less confidence in being able to protect oneself, but unrelated to perceived knowledge about preventive methods, or about how effective such techniques were.

#### METHODOLOGY

The methodology included personal at-home interviews with a national probability sample of 1,308 persons over age 59, using a questionnaire specifically designed for this study. Field work was contracted to the Gallup Organization. The population studied included civilian non-institutionalized U.S. residents age 60 and over. The sample design called for 1,300 completed interviews. A one-call design was used, based upon Gallup's standard replicated national sample of over 300 small geographic areas (census blocks, rural township segments, etc.). The sample design included stratification by seven levels of size of community, followed by substratification into four geographic regions of the

country. Within each community size-regional stratum, the population counts for the smallest geographic units from the 1980 Census were arrayed in geographic order and zoned into equal sized groups of sampling units. Pairs of localities were selected in each zone, with probability of selection of each locality proportional to its population, producing two replicated samples of localities.

Within the selected localities with reported population data, subdivisions were drawn with the probability proportionate to size of population. In all other localities, small definable geographic areas were selected with equal probability. Within each subdivision or area for which block statistics were available, a sample of blocks or clusters was drawn with probability of selection proportional to the number of dwelling units. In other subdivisions, blocks or segments were drawn at random with equal probability.

The sampling areas were divided into several strata based upon the percentage of the 1980 populations in each that was aged. Different sampling rates were assigned to the strata so that those with the greatest percentage of population 60 and older were overrepresented. As a consequence of this design, the selection probabilities were unequal. The selection probabilities were calculated for each respondent, and the sample data weighted by a factor proportionate to the inverse of the selection probabilities. This created a weighted sample equivalent to that produced by an equal probability sample design. Interviewers followed a prescribed interviewing route within each area, with sex quotas assigned to represent the gender split among the over 59 age group. A times-at-home weighting procedure was used to correct for the underrepresentation in a one-call sample design of persons infrequently at home.

The interviews were conducted from March 8 to April 3, 1985, with a total of 1,308 completed. Average interviewing length was 45 minutes.

#### FINDINGS

In an effort to overcome some of the above problems, the questionnaire included not only the "safety alone at night" item, but others ascertaining how dangerous they thought their neighborhoods were compared to other areas, and what they thought their chances were of being burglarized, attacked, or robbed. In addition, respondents in the Elderly Sample were asked how much they worried about being burglarized, robbed or attacked, and how safe they felt out in their neighborhoods during the day. They were also asked whether they believed that the elderly were more likely victims of crime.

## Feelings of Safety When Out Alone

Nearly a third of the national sample of elderly persons reported feeling unsafe when out of doors alone at night. The respondents were specifically asked, "How safe do you feel or would you feel being out alone in your neighborhood at night -- very safe, reasonably safe, reasonably unsafe, or very unsafe?" A parallel item was asked for "during the day," and as expected the results differed substantially. Seventeen percent reported feeling very unsafe out alone at night, and another 15 percent said they felt reasonably unsafe. On the other hand, only five percent in total said they felt "very" or "reasonably" unsafe during the daytime hours.

The general profiles of elderly persons indicate that those who felt less safe either during the day or at night were substantially more likely to include women, lower income persons and residents of more rundown neighborhood areas (Figure 1). Employed persons also felt less safe, likely due to their having to be out and around more in environs perhaps not of their own choosing. Residents of multiple story buildings felt less safe as well. Those in less good health, with less trust in other people, and with a greater sense of fatalism and less control over their lives likewise sensed greater danger when outside.

A key discriminator between those who felt less safe during the day versus at night was that the former had significantly less interpersonal contact with family, friends and neighbors. This in turn could yield an increased sense of isolation, perhaps coupled with greater suspicion of others.

## Neighborhood Danger

In addition to ascertaining sense of safety when out in one's neighborhood, it is also important to discover how dangerous one views one's neighborhood as being as compared to others. People may or may not see their own safety as being compromised regardless of how dangerous they perceive the environs as being in general. An elderly person might feel quite protected in an unseemly area because he or she knows the turf and is in turn well-known. On the other hand, another may for various experiential reasons feel very threatened walking alone in the best of neighborhoods.

This perspective is borne out by the finding that only four percent of the elderly thought their neighborhoods were any more dangerous than other areas in their communities, and in fact two-thirds called their environs less dangerous. Only nine percent of those who said they felt unsafe out alone at night reported their neighborhoods as any more dangerous than others; contrarywise, 35

percent who felt unsafe called their environs less dangerous. This suggests that at least among aged persons fear of crime is determined by much more than their perceptions of the conditions of their neighborhoods. It may well also depend in part on their perceptions of how vulnerable they are when exposed alone out of doors to potential offenders.

Poorer neighborhood conditions and a prevalence of multi-unit housing were the primary predictors of perceived neighborhood danger; also significant were lower income, poor health, lower trust in people and greater sense of fatalism with less perceived control (Figure 1).

### Concern about Burglary

Despite their preoccupation with their safety on the streets, there is little indication that the elderly see their chances of victimization through such specific crimes as burglary as being unrealistically high. Thirty-seven percent of those in the national elderly sample said they thought it was at least "somewhat likely" that their residences would be broken into or burglarized within a year, and 10 percent thought it to be "very likely." Obviously, one's definition of "very likely" varies a great deal, but it is instructive to note that upwards of ten percent of all persons in this age group nationally suffered household theft-related victimizations in each of the years immediately prior to this study, according to the NCS findings discussed above. The perceptions of risk of burglary among the elderly therefore seem fairly accurately based rather than overstated as previous work would suggest. Forty-eight percent said they worried about the possibility of being burglarized at least somewhat, and 14 percent said they worried about it a great deal.

Burglary was of more concern to the "younger" old, particularly those under 75 (Figure 2). This is a pattern we will see repeated for many aspects of crime and crime prevention: Rather distinct differences often appear between those in their mid-70s and older and those younger. Somewhat surprisingly, gender, education and income were unrelated to concerns about burglary. However, the environmental condition of the residence was predictive, with those living in less well-kept units both worrying more and seeing their chances of victimization as greater. Higher concern also was expressed by elderly persons with more people living in their households, perhaps as a function of more coming and going in and out of the household. Higher density housing could portend more contact with strangers as well. As might be expected, those in poorer health, the more fatalistic, and the less trusting of other people saw their chances of burglary as greater.

## Concern about Physical Attack and Robbery

While the actual chances of persons over 60 being physically assaulted or robbed within a 12 month period are somewhat less than one percent, four percent of the elderly sample believed it "very likely" that one or the other would happen to them within a year. Again, while the term "very likely" is open to interpretation, this finding indicates an only slightly greater perceived risk of violent crime than the NCS statistical data suggest is realistically called for. Another 28 percent believed being robbed or attacked within a year to be somewhat likely.

Perceived risk of being burglarized correlates significantly with perceived risk of more violent crime ( $r = .41$ ), and worry about the two forms of victimization correlate even more strongly ( $r = .59$ ) (Table 1). It is therefore not surprising that both kinds of concerns are generally predicted by the same array of factors, including living in more rundown neighborhoods, being in poorer health, and being more fatalistic about life (Figure 2). Perhaps the only distinction between the two worth noting is that elderly women worry more than men about being physically attacked (although they do not think it more likely that it will happen to them).

## Beliefs about the Elderly as Victims

Despite their rather modest beliefs about their own chances of victimization, the vast majority of the respondents agreed with the statement that "people over 60 are more likely than other people to become victims of crime." Seventy-three percent agreed, with 29 percent "strongly" agreeing. Only 15 percent disagreed with the statement. The incongruity of this with their own perceptions of risk to themselves has a strain of "it won't happen to me" thinking. "Other elderly may be helpless in the face of crime, but not me," a refrain might go.

But it also bespeaks an underlying and pervasive belief within society that the aged are indeed more vulnerable. That this belief should be so strong even among the elderly themselves is quite striking. However, it also suggests that one avenue for instilling at the least a more realistic view of the crime problems of the elderly rests in part upon dispelling the prevalent mythology that they are indeed more likely to be victimized. Fortunately, there is adequate information on hand to attempt to do this.

The potential importance of this belief on the part of the elderly is emphasized by the associations presented in Table 1. The belief is significantly associated with nearly all of the indicators of fear of crime. Once again, this is not to say that the fears are highly unwarranted, but to the extent that they may

be the misperception of the aged being more victimized is suspect as a root cause.

Those particularly more likely to agree that aged people were more likely victims include the less educated; those in lower upkeep areas and multiple-story residences; the less healthy, and the more fatalistic (Figure 2).

#### Crime Prevention Competence among the Elderly

There is little previous evidence that the elderly are any more or any less involved than other citizens in crime prevention activities, nor are there any clear indications of their prevention-related knowledge, attitudes, sense of confidence, or motivations. As in earlier work, we have organized crime prevention-related orientations and activities around the concept of crime prevention competence (O'Keefe, 1986; O'Keefe and Reid-Nash, in press). The specific components of competence include a collection of variables often identified in communication effects and persuasion studies (cf. McGuire, 1985; Percy and Rossiter, 1980). To the extent that citizens are more crime prevention competent, they:

- (1) Are more aware of and knowledgeable about appropriate preventive techniques;
- (2) Hold more positive attitudes concerning: (a) their own responsibilities for helping to reduce crime, (b) the effectiveness of citizen-based preventive actions;
- (3) Feel more capable of carrying out preventive actions to reduce the risk of themselves and others being victimized;
- (4) Are more concerned about and motivated toward protecting themselves and others; and
- (5) Are more engaged in positive actions aimed at reducing crime.

Our previous work has demonstrated the utility of the concept in evaluating the impact of the early stages of the National Crime Prevention Campaign and in recommending strategies for subsequent promotional efforts (O'Keefe, 1985; 1986).

As we have used the term, competence is distinct from more typical persuasion process models in that it deals with levels of effect in a non-linear way. It assumes that individuals can, for example, be behaviorally competent while not necessarily being attitudinally or informationally competent with respect to a given topic, situation or role. The research on the effects of the "McGruff" campaign, for example, found that it had attitudinal effects on some individuals without necessarily increasing their information levels. For other people, it stimulated behavioral changes without bringing about changes in

attitudes.

Prevention Knowledge. Asking citizens what they know about reducing their chances of being victimized by particular kinds of crimes is problematical because: (1) They may think they know more -- or less -- than they actually do; and (2) What they actually know may be to some degree erroneous. Nonetheless, such a question has value for our purposes here because it provides a profile of those types of crimes which citizens feel they know the most or least about, and that allows us to direct promotional strategies toward their self-perceived informational strengths and weaknesses.

The overall results presented in Table 2 indicate that elderly persons generally admit to knowing fairly little about how to protect themselves from the more serious types of crime, i.e. those involving potential physical injury. Upwards of half or more of the respondents said they knew "very little" about how to reduce their chances of being victimized by physical assault, being held up at gun or knife point, harassment by youths, and being abused by those close to them.

On the other hand, burglary was the type of crime elderly persons saw themselves as being most knowledgeable about. Indeed, only 24 percent admitted to knowing "very little" about how to protect themselves from it. This is not surprising given that it and other types of theft are the crimes with which citizens of all age groups are likely to have the most experience. Moreover, it appears to be the type of crime that prevention campaigns, neighborhood watch programs and the like are apt to provide the most specific information on. More importantly, the types of steps that can be followed to at least make homes more secure are fairly straightforward and common sense, e.g. locking up and leaving on lights. Similarly, the elderly felt relatively knowledgeable about preventing vehicle break-ins and thefts, as well as protecting themselves from purse snatching and having their pockets picked. Most also felt more informed about how to avoid fraud. Responses were generally mixed on knowing what to do to prevent vandalism, however.

Elderly men reported knowing significantly more than women across nearly all crime categories (Figure 3). Women appeared about as knowledgeable as men about fraud and street larceny. (Purse snatching may be a crime which elderly women -- particularly those in urban areas -- have especially heightened awareness of.) As might be expected, the more educated believed they knew more about all types of crime as well, with the exception of being held up. And, even controlling for education, those earning higher incomes also reported being more knowledgeable in nearly all areas. There appears to be something of a "class bias" operating here in that the more upscale elderly think themselves

to be the more knowledgeable about these issues.

This trend carries over somewhat into environmental factors. Aged persons in less well-kept surroundings tended to think they knew less about protecting themselves from crimes of theft (i.e. burglary, robbery, larceny and fraud), as well as abuse. However, they did not differ from their counterparts in "better" neighborhoods in perceived knowledge of assault, harassment, and vandalism. However, as noted above these are the types of crimes which elderly persons as a group are generally least knowledgeable about. Other characteristics of one's residence did not seem particularly relevant with respect to prevention knowledge, although home owners believed themselves to know more about burglary, vandalism and vehicle theft.

Aged persons with more interpersonal contacts typically saw themselves as more knowledgeable. Married individuals scored higher than single ones for most types of crimes, as did those with closer contact with family and friends. Acquaintanceship with neighbors was interestingly not related to knowledge about any type of crime, however. (One might expect greater neighborhood interaction to yield benefits of shared knowledge about such property crimes as burglary.) Membership in organizations was a significant predictor of reported knowledge about burglary, larceny and fraud.

With respect to more personal attributes, the two best predictors of perceived knowledge about self-protection were level of activity and adaptability to change. Those with more active lifestyles reported the greater knowledge for all crimes except burglary. Whether this is somewhat necessitated by their being out and around in more potentially threatening situations, or by their perhaps being exposed to more sources of information or both, is unclear at this point. Those more adaptable to change also thought they knew more, likely as a function of their being more open to multiple sources of information and influence.

Overall, the condition of one's neighborhood and other status-related factors appear to have a strong influence on how much elderly people think they know about how to protect themselves. And, it is those aged persons in the lower educational, economic and environmental strata who think they know the least. These are also, of course, the individuals typically more at risk from crime. More socially isolated, as well as less active, individuals also believed themselves less knowledgeable.

Prevention Attitudes, Capabilities and Motivations. While knowledge of how to act appropriately is perhaps the most necessary component of competence, it is by no means sufficient for action. Attitudes, sense of capability, and motivation are key ingredients for competence as well.

Attitudes with respect to crime prevention examined here included how personally responsible individuals felt for helping prevent crime, how effective they thought citizen-initiated preventive efforts were, how fatalistic they were with respect to the occurrence of crime, and how they evaluated the performance of various components of the criminal justice system.

Nearly two-thirds of our sample of the elderly believed that individual citizens had at least equal responsibility with the police for helping to prevent crimes in their neighborhoods. This bodes fairly well for those who advocate that the police can do little in preventive efforts without active citizen involvement. Moreover, 19 percent thought citizens actually had more of a responsibility than the police.

The sense of responsibility diminishes with age within the elderly cohort as well (Figure 4). Notably, home owners and those with greater contact with their neighbors are significantly more likely to feel such responsibility. Having personal property to protect and a sense of informal community may well be important considerations here.

Elderly persons were also optimistic with respect to how effective citizen anti-crime involvement was. Thirty-five percent said that if citizens like themselves took more precautions to protect themselves, that would help reduce the crime rate "a great deal." Another 47 percent said it would help reduce it "somewhat," while only 14 percent thought "hardly at all."

Equally important, virtually the same proportions of aged citizens expressed confidence in the effectiveness of neighborhood groups in helping to reduce crime. Thirty-seven percent called them "very effective," 44 percent "somewhat effective," and only nine percent "hardly effective at all."

Individuals with more contact with their neighbors, and members of formal groups or organizations, tended to rate both personal and group involvement as more effective (Figure 4). Moreover, the more active rated group measures higher, while those with greater trust in other people gave higher marks to personal preventive measures.

Beliefs in the general efficacy of individual and group prevention efforts may not always translate into a sense of personal control over crime, however. Less encouraging was that nearly half of the elderly respondents (46 percent) agreed with the statement, "There is not much use in trying to protect yourself against crime these days -- if criminals want you, they'll get you." Those in agreement were more likely to be lesser educated and earning lower incomes. They were less likely to belong to organizations, were more fatalistic in general, and had less of a sense of control over their lives.

Elderly persons gave generally high ratings to other people in their neighborhoods and to their local police for helping prevent crime. The court system and elected officials did not fare so well, however. Around two-thirds of the sample said that their neighbors and police were doing either a "good" or "very good" job of preventing or reducing crime, and only six percent called the performance of either group "poor".

On the other hand, 29 percent rated the performance of their local courts in preventing or reducing crime as poor, with another 29 percent giving them only a "fair" rating. Only 27 percent called their performance "good." Similarly, Only a little over a third gave good marks to their local elected officials, with 33 percent calling their efforts fair and 16 percent poor.

Support for the police among the aged is particularly strong among the more educated, and those with more interpersonal and organizational contacts (Figure 5). Those in better-condition residential environs, and with greater trust in people and less fatalism, also are more supportive of the police. Most of these same characteristics are also found among elderly persons who think their neighbors are doing a good job of preventing crime. Those most critical of the courts and public officials tend to be among the "older old," but in nearly every other respect greatly resemble those who are also praiseworthy of the police and their neighbors. This pattern suggests a rather cohesive grouping of elderly persons who are at once both supportive of police and critical of the judiciary and lawmakers, rather than a partial division between one group supportive of justice system components and another group opposed. Twenty-one percent of the national sample said they felt "highly capable" of protecting themselves and their property from crime, while 50 percent felt "somewhat capable" and 28 percent "not too capable."

Elderly persons who called themselves more capable were most readily distinguished by the personal characteristics of being in significantly better health, lower in fatalism, and higher in sense of control and adaptability to change (Figure 4). One gets the feeling that these individuals might well generally feel more capable about most other aspects of their lives as well. Demographically, they were younger and likelier to still be employed. Somewhat curiously, however, they were lower in educational level. They also had more interpersonal and organizational contacts.

The motivational component of crime prevention competence was assessed here by asking the respondents how concerned they were, compared to most other people, about protecting themselves from crime. Eighteen percent said they were more concerned, 60 percent about as concerned, and 21 percent less concerned. The lesser educated indicate greater concern as well, as do those in less

well kept residential areas. Those in poorer health and with less trust in people also report being more concerned.

The key components of prevention competence generally correlated quite highly with one another. Sense of individual responsibility for helping reduce crime was significantly correlated with positive attitudes toward the effectiveness of individual and group preventive actions, as well as with capability for self-protection (Table 3). The weakest correlate in the mix was the motivational one. Concern among the elderly with crime prevention did not necessarily translate into or follow from a sense of self-capability, or with a perception of groups being effective in fighting crime. The near-zero correlation in these instances suggests a sizeable proportion of aged persons who are high in concern, yet who feel themselves quite incapable of doing much about it. Concern about prevention is also only modestly related to sense of self-responsibility for prevention.

The more aged people think they know about protecting themselves from specific types of crime, the more prevention-competent they feel with respect to each of the other dimensions (Table 3). Perceived knowledge is most closely tied to sense of capability. More positive evaluations of the crime prevention performance of police and neighbors is also tied to increased crime prevention competence across nearly all dimensions, the only exception being prevention concern. The extent to which elderly individuals are concerned about prevention makes little difference in terms of how positively or negatively they rate the performance of others. Court and lawmaking performance evaluation is less tied to the competence factors in general. Overall, the more competent share a strongly positive view of police and their neighbors, while having a somewhat positive view of the judiciary and of legislative bodies.

#### Crime, Fear, and Prevention Competence

Prevention Knowledge. Feelings of safety when out of the home are clearly related to level of knowledge about preventing specific types of crimes (Table 4). The less elderly persons thought they knew about vehicle theft, robbery, harassment, assault and burglary, the more unsafe they felt out alone at night. Feeling unsafe during the day was associated with lesser knowledge about vehicle theft, assault and burglary. Somewhat oddly, knowledge about what to do to prevent pocket picking and purse snatching was unrelated to feeling unsafe out of doors. These types of crimes may have a lower priority or may arouse less fear than one might suspect. Persons with lesser knowledge about burglary and vehicle theft perceived their neighborhood to be more dangerous in general.

The more the aged thought they knew about protecting themselves

from burglary, the less chance they thought they had of being burglarized (Table 5). Similarly, greater perceived knowledge of avoiding assault and robbery were tied to perceptions of lesser risk from those crimes. In fact, increased knowledge about nearly all crimes was associated with feelings of being less at risk from burglary or assault/robbery. Knowing more about burglary protection also led to somewhat less worry about burglary. Oddly, however, greater knowledge was generally unrelated to the extent of worry overall, and no relationships were found between knowledge about avoiding more violent crimes and the extent of worry about them. For many elderly persons, assault and robbery may be the types of crime for which no amount of information is going to reduce the extent of their worry about. Overall, knowledge about self-protection methods seems effectively related to a reduced sense of risk, but much less related to how much the aged worry about such victimizations.

Attitudes. The relationships between crime orientations, fear, and the attitudinal aspects of prevention competence among the elderly turn out to be quite mixed and complex. Those with a heightened sense of responsibility for preventing crime felt somewhat safer when out alone, but curiously also saw themselves as more at risk from both burglary and assault or robbery (Table 6. Worry, however, was unrelated to sense of responsibility. A highly tentative inference here may be that taking such responsibility includes an assessment of greater risk, but a lesser degree of fear or worry.

While those who believed individual prevention actions to be more effective also saw greater risk, they were more worried about victimization as well. Perceptions of group effectiveness were positively associated with greater risk perception, but unrelated to fear. Perceptions of prevention effectiveness in general were unrelated to feelings of safety when out alone.

Overall, those elderly who held more positive attitudes with respect to citizen involvement in crime prevention also appeared to be the ones who saw themselves more at risk personally.

Capability. A more distinct picture emerges for those who feel more capable about protecting themselves and their property. These persons clearly feel much more safe when out alone, day or night, and view their neighborhoods as being less dangerous as well. In addition, they worry less about burglary and assault/robbery. However, sense of capability is unrelated to risk perception. The more capable do not see themselves any more or any less at risk than the less capable. Capability here appears much more related to fear and sense of safety than to what the chances are of victimization.

Motivation. Those more concerned about crime prevention are definitively the ones who feel less safe, more at risk, and who

worry more. Such concern on its own rather clearly stems from these fear-related elements. The issue becomes one of how and when concern combines with other aspects of competence to produce actions which may help dispel such fears when they are inappropriate.

#### Crime Prevention Activity

For the sake of simplification and to avoid duplication, a group of the eight most representative activities were chosen based upon factor loadings and frequency for more extensive analysis from O'Keefe and Reid-Nash (1985). They include the following:

1. Locking doors even when at home. Two-thirds of the elderly said they "always" did this, with eight percent saying they "never" did. The practice was fairly universal across all subpopulations. Women, however, were significantly more likely to do it than men, and residents of multiple-story units reported a higher-than-average frequency of doing so (Figure 6)

2. Leaving on indoor lights when away from home at night. Again, nearly two-thirds of the sample (63 percent) reported always doing this, with only 21 percent saying "once in a while" or "never." Women again were significantly more likely to leave lights on, as were more highly educated and upper income persons. Those in higher-rise units also did so more often. Personal factors played some role also, albeit for unclear reasons. The more active left on lights more often, as did those with greater adaptability to change, the less fatalistic, and those trusting other people less.

3. When away for more than a day or so, having a friend or neighbor watch your residence. A somewhat surprisingly high 71 percent reported always requesting such assistance, and another 13 percent said they did so most of the time. Having greater contact with neighbors and home ownership were two primary determinants of such surveillance. The more educated and urban residents were likelier to do so as well. In addition, the more active, those with greater sense of personal control, and those with organizational ties asked for such help more frequently.

4. Keeping a helpful watch on neighbors and their property. Forty-six percent of the respondents said they consistently kept such a watch, with 22 percent saying they did once in a while or never. Demographics did not distinguish at all well between those who did and did not, the only exception being that elderly persons under their mid-70s were more active in keeping an eye out. The main determinant was ongoing interpersonal contact: Those who had more interaction with neighbors, family and friends were more attentive.

5. Getting together with neighbors in various activities aimed at preventing crime. Only 12 percent said they did this even most of the time, and 67 percent reported never doing so. Such more formal contact remains relatively rare among the aged, as indeed with other age groups. Those who were more involved naturally had more ongoing contact with neighbors, family, friends and organizations. Multiple-story unit residents tended to be more active as well. Elderly persons who were more active in general and who had more trust in other people participated more as well.

6. Avoiding certain places in your neighborhood. Behavioral restrictions proved to be common among a sizeable minority of the elderly. Seventeen percent said they always avoided certain places in their neighborhoods, and another 12 percent said they did most of the time. Thus over a quarter of the sample habitually engaged in such avoidance. Fifty-eight percent indicated never doing so. Those more likely to so restrict their behavior tended to be women, lower income persons, and those in poorer condition property surroundings. High-rise residents avoided areas more often as well. Avoiders scored higher in fatalism, trusted people less, and were in less good health.

7. Avoiding going outdoors alone because of crime. Perhaps a more serious issue is that 26 percent of the sample said they avoided going outdoors alone because of crime most of the time, including 11 percent who said they did so all the time. This is a fairly substantial group to place what seems to be a highly restrictive mode on their activities. Only a little over half (53 percent) said they never did so. Once again, women were far more likely to avoid going out alone, as were single people. Residents of multiple-story units restricted themselves more as well. Expectedly, those in poorer health, the more fatalistic, and those seeing themselves less in control also avoided going out alone more.

8. Taking something along with you when going out that could be used as protection against being attacked, assaulted, or robbed. Twelve percent said they took a protective device along with them all the time when they went out, and seven percent said most of the time. There were no demographic trends to identify these individuals, but they were significantly more likely to at once be more active and be more fatalistic. They also had more contact with family and friends. The nature of the devices was not specified, and they could range from firearms to knives to tear gas to perhaps even police whistles. What is more important here is the perspective that a sizable minority of the elderly feel the need for such devices.

## Crime, Fear and Prevention Activity

How do elderly persons' perceptions of crime and fear of it relate to the kinds of preventive actions they take? The findings below suggest that in at least some ways many of the aged could be taking more effective steps to cope with their crime-related concerns.

For instance, those who feel unsafe out alone at night appear at best quite ambivalent about neighborhood surveillance or group activity programs (Table 7). Such actions are virtually unassociated with fear of being out at night, or during the day for that matter. In fact, fear of safety when out during the day is negatively correlated with either asking neighbors to watch residences or in turn watching their homes. Similarly, those who perceive their neighborhoods as more crime-ridden are significantly less likely to ask neighbors to keep watch, and are slightly less inclined to watch their neighbors property.

An encouraging sign here is that these individuals are somewhat more likely to get together with neighbors for specific preventive activities. The suspicion is that in those higher-crime neighborhoods where the means of cooperation are in place, e.g. semi-formalized neighborhood watch programs, participation is more likely to happen. However, less structured activities such as asking a neighbor to keep watch when one is out probably occur less because either: (1) As the findings in Ch. 3 indicate, people are less apt to interact with their neighbors in such areas; or (2) They may know their neighbors "all too well," and distrust them. The data at the least make a modest case for somewhat formalized intervention procedures among the elderly in such neighborhoods.

On the other hand, the preferred activity mode for those persons who fear for their safety in their neighborhoods is restriction in the form of avoiding certain areas or not going out altogether. Those who perceive more danger are also more inclined to carry protective devices, and keep their residences locked when home. Curiously, leaving on the lights when out is unrelated to concerns about how dangerous the neighborhood is; however, those who feel unsafe at night tend to leave lighting on more frequently.

Those who see themselves at higher risk from burglary, and who worry about it more, engage more often in all forms of preventive behavior, from locking up to deterrence to surveillance to avoidance (Table 8). Concern about more violent forms of victimization leads to a different pattern of activity, though. Those persons who see more risk from and worry more about assault and/or robbery more frequently carry out all activities except surveillance. The reason for this is not readily apparent, since as we saw previously concerns about violent crime and

burglary are roughly similar in neighborhoods perceived as higher in crime, and among persons who feel unsafe out in them. There may be a perception that violent crimes are more likely to occur away from home where surveillance may be a less effective coping tool.

Respondents who believed the elderly to be likelier victims locked up more, used lighting more often, and tended slightly more to restrict their behaviors. However, these associations were rather modest when compared to the correlations discussed above, and whether or not aged persons believe their peers to be more likely victims does not seem a pronounced factor in the kinds of preventive measures they take.

### Prevention Knowledge and Activity

What elderly persons think they know about crime prevention is closely related to the kinds of actions they take to protect themselves. In general, the more they know about any one kind of crime, the more preventive actions they take overall (Tables 9 and 10). Particularly instructive is a finding that the more respondents knew about preventing crimes across the board, the more they practiced surveillance and cooperative behaviors.

There are some curious anomalies, however. For one, the practice of avoiding going out for fear of victimization is unrelated to perceived knowledge about any type of crime, except for being negatively associated with knowledge about vehicle theft. Such avoidance appears almost as a coping mode of its own, with little relationship to cognitions about crime. Whether an individual knows a great deal about self-protection or relatively little seems to have little impact upon this avoidance behavior.

Those who see themselves more knowledgeable about burglary and vandalism engage more in all activities, with no one in particular seemingly taking precedence. Those more cognizant of assault self-protection do likewise, except for being no more or less likely to lock up and somewhat more inclined to carry protective devices. The more knowledgeable about harassment follow the same pattern of activity. Knowing more about the theft crimes of robbery, street larceny and vehicle theft yields the same kinds of activities, except for the somewhat unexpected finding that those individuals are no more likely to avoid certain areas. They may associate such avoidance more with physical assault risks than theft, although theft with assault would seem an obvious risk in many of the ill-reputed areas people typically shy away from.

## Prevention Attitudes, Capability, Concern and Activity

Positive attitudes toward citizen involvement in crime prevention were strongly related to preventive activities, especially those involving working with neighbors. Aged persons with a greater sense of personal responsibility for helping prevent crime primarily exhibited it in being more involved with watching out for their neighbors and getting together with them in preventive activities (Table 11). They were also more inclined to ask others to watch over their property. They were also slightly less likely to avoid going out, and to use lights as a deterrent.

Those who viewed individual crime prevention actions as more effective acted in much the same way. While they were slightly more likely to avoid undesirable areas, they mainly distinguished themselves by participating in surveillance and group actions. In much the same way, those who believed group preventive activity to be effective engaged more frequently in all activities, save restrictive ones.

A greater sense of capability to protect oneself was also manifested in activity with neighbors, but also by a greater likelihood of carrying a protective device. These individuals were also significantly less likely to avoid going out alone, or to avoid areas in their environs because of crime. Finally, the more concerned or motivated with respect to crime prevention carried out all activities more frequently. As noted in the previous chapter, concern does not correlate well with capability, and emphasis on either of these two dimensions of competence at the expense of the other can result in possibly erroneous conclusions with respect to preventive behaviors. The more concerned -- regardless of sense of capability -- are basically motivated to pursue all avenues of self protection, including restrictive ones. However, when the concern is tempered with a certain degree of confidence in one's actions, restrictive behaviors become less prominent.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

It is important to emphasize at this point that it would be too easy and very risky to downplay the salience of crime prevention to the elderly given their substantially lower rates of victimization. Such a "by the numbers" approach to social policy belies the complexity of the factors underlying victimization, the varying ability of citizens of different age groups to cope with it, and the varying psychological, social, and economic costs of crime to people of different age groups. As Yin (1985) notes, while elderly victim rates are relatively "low", they may still be considered too high in terms of social values. It has long been established that the elderly as a group have unique

needs in terms of health, economics, and general life style; crime is regarded by many as a distinctive issue for the aged as well. The increasing numbers of citizens moving into the post-50s age group over the next two decades will exacerbate the demand for attention to such matters.

As Yin (1985) has contended, the elderly may well suffer more from victimization in the sense of being harder hit by even relatively small losses to theft. Such losses do account for proportionately more of their household incomes than in the case of younger adults (Cook et al., 1978), and their typically fixed-income status may make it more difficult to recoup. Similarly, when victimization does result in physical injury, the healing and recovery process can take longer and be more expensive. There appears to be no evidence available as to whether victimization is more psychologically traumatic for the elderly than for other adults.

As we will discuss more fully below, it is also likely that at least some of the reduced victimization rate among the elderly is a consequence of avoidant and restrictive actions they take out of fear of it. Such patterns can be disruptive to a satisfactory quality of life, and deserve close attention.

(Of course, all this is not to say that the issue of crime and the elderly should be overemphasized at cost to other pressing crime-related issues, including the abysmally high violent crime victimization rate at the other end of the age spectrum among young adults and teens, particularly those in minority groups. As Cook et al. (1978) and Cook (1981) have called attention to, misperceptions of inflated victimization rates among the elderly in earlier years may have contributed to undue public focus on the issue at the policy level, possibly at the expense of attention to other concerns of the aged.)

In line with the above, factors which accelerate or reduce risk in any population are complex and interwoven. A host of life style, health, environmental and psychological variables come into play here. It would be a mistake to give an impression that elderly persons are less at risk simply because of their age. Rather, it is likely that some factors associated with age reduce risk (e.g., less mobility) while others may well increase it (e.g., physical frailty).

More detailed data are needed on the types of victimization various subgroups among the aged encounter, and the circumstances of those. While the Hochstedler data cited in Chapter 3 are quite thorough, they deal only with central city areas and are over a decade old as well. The NCR annual studies do not include enough cases of elderly victimization for reliable scrutiny, and effort should be made to compile such data over a longer period to achieve for national samples the descriptive power of the

Hochstedler study.

We have demonstrated that the issue of fear and concern about crime among the elderly is a far more complex one than earlier data suggested, and that it is a multi-dimensional issue with several unresolved components. In some respects their perceptions are congruent with reality: They rather accurately judge their chances of burglary and assault to be low, lower than other adults do. In other respects their views are obviously divergent: They feel less safe than other citizens out alone at night, although statistically their risks are less. They also believe that people their age are more likely to be victimized, presumably generalizing to the experiences of others their age rather than their own, and doing so erroneously.

The above findings are also highly intercorrelated and may also be logically intertwined. The more fearful may hold a belief that their personal chances of burglary or assault are low because they are afraid of going out alone at night, and, according to our activity data to be discussed below, in fact don't go out as often as younger adults for fear of crime. Moreover, if elderly people went out alone in greater numbers at night, their rates of robbery, assault and eveningtime break-ins could well be expected to rise (although not likely to the heights of younger age groups).

As Yin (1985) and many others have speculated, the reduced crime rate among the aged is likely in part a consequence of less mobile lifestyles regardless of fear of crime. Retirement is one reason for not being outdoors as often, and less participation in more active physical and social pursuits would be expected to diminish their chances of contact with criminals outside the home. And, being home more reduces their risk of burglary.

A look at the sheer numbers of people in both age groups affected by fear is also instructive. Within the 1985 Elderly Sample, 32 percent felt unsafe out alone at night. In the Comparison Sample, the percentage for those 65 and over was 38, versus 25 percent for those under 65. While Yin has suggested that differences on this order are not large, they have substantial statistical significance and, we would aver, they are "meaningful" in the sense that they involve lives in the millions. Projecting from our data, over 10 million citizens 60 and over express such fear.

Whether the specific feeling of danger dealt with here is realistic raises some interesting problems as well. Given actual street victimization rates, the numbers of persons of any age afraid of being out obviously seem astronomically high. But as Yin notes, it is difficult to accumulate the annual victimization rates over time -- over one's lifetime, say -- and compute a "likelihood" of being confronted by a criminal under those circumstances. Perhaps more importantly, when citizens say they

feel unsafe at night and act on that sense of danger by avoiding going out, taking a friend, etc., the dynamics of victimization probabilities change dramatically. If fewer citizens were cautious about going out alone at night, more of them would be putting themselves at risk, there would be more targets for offenders which might well draw more of them into that modus operandi, etc. The growth in nighttime street crime could well become logarithmic. (On the other hand, one could assert that with more people out and about in their neighborhoods, greater cohesion might result and the crime rate might actually decline.)

The point is that it is exceptionally difficult to demonstrate that the fact that upwards of a third of all citizens feel unsafe in those circumstances is unrealistic, given our current knowledge about how victimization works. However, this should not turn us away from finding such a statistic to be an appalling one in terms of public interest. The problem is of course particularly acute for the elderly if for no other reason than that the physical limitations imposed by advancing age make them most vulnerable to out-of-doors victimization at night. Less physical strength for self-defense or escape, diminished ability to see or hear predators, and the knowledge by offenders that the aged can be easier marks all contribute to their greater risk.

The elderly stand out from other adults in believing themselves to be less knowledgeable about crime prevention and less capable of protecting themselves. They also feel less personal responsibility for doing so. This is a troubling mix of attitudes from a prevention strategy viewpoint. Informational and promotional efforts would naturally be most effective in addressing the "knowledge gap" issue by targeting to the aged messages which would build their knowledge about those crimes they are the most concerned about. And, a rise in knowledge would be expected to benefit their sense of confidence as well. But, whether increased knowledge and confidence would move to boost personal responsibility as well is a more open question.

If lesser willingness to take responsibility derives from lack of knowledge, fear, and/or sense of diminished capability of doing much about the situation, then building on those determinants is likely to increase responsibility. On the contrary, though, if lesser responsibility derives more from a perspective that "It's the job of the police" to prevent crime, such an attitude could constrain interest in even paying attention to information about citizen-based preventive efforts. Lesser responsibility was negatively correlated with perceived need for information about crime. Earlier generations may have perceived crime as being more a job for the police, and that could translate into the stronger support voiced for law enforcement agencies by the elderly. This is of course speculative, but it is a consideration to be kept in mind in explaining the lesser responsibility

problem. Fortunately, the majority of citizens of all ages have largely positive attitudes toward such responsibility.

The perplexing issue of restrictive or avoidant behaviors was discussed somewhat in terms of fear of crime above, and needs to be re-examined here. Elders are significantly more likely than other adults to go out with someone or by car at night to avoid victimization. That can likely be viewed as a positive step, provided the fears stimulating such inconvenience are reasonable. Such behaviors should probably be reinforced for individuals in higher crime-prone surroundings.

However, the finding that over a quarter of the elderly populace avoid going out "most of the time" because of crime requires effort at clear remedial action. Unfortunately, ways of alleviating the situation are not necessarily easy to either recommend or accomplish. The target audience is dominated by women, those who live alone, in less good health, and who feel less control in general. These persons have higher fear of crime, are not particularly knowledgeable about prevention, and are less apt to cooperate with their neighbors for preventive purposes. They appear fairly isolated, and a large part of the solution would seem to be to provide them with tools for more effectively coping with their situations.

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Figure 1 : Neighborhood Safety: Regression Summary

<u>Demographics</u>	<u>Night Unsafe</u>	<u>Day Unsafe</u>	<u>Neigh. Danger</u>
Gender	w	w	
Education		-	-
Age	-		
Employed	-	-	
Income	-		
<u>Environmental</u>			
Property condition	-	-	-
Community Size			
Multi-unit Residence			+
Own Home	+		
Multi-Story Residence	+	+	+
<u>Interpersonal</u>			
# adults in household			
Married	-	-	-
Contact with neighbors	-	-	-
Contact family/friends		-	
Organiz. membership		-	-
Percent elderly in neigh.			
<u>Personal/psychological</u>			
State of health	-	-	-
Level of activity			
Trust in people	-	-	-
Fatalism	+	+	+
Adaptability to change			
Sense of control	-	-	-

Figure 2.: Personal Vulnerability Risk: Regression Summary

	<u>Burg.</u> <u>Prob.</u>	<u>Burg.</u> <u>Worry</u>	<u>Vio.</u> <u>Prob.</u>	<u>Vio.</u> <u>Worry</u>	<u>Elder</u> <u>Victim</u>
<u>Demographics</u>					
Gender				w	
Education				-	-
Age	-	-			
Employed					
Income					
<u>Environmental</u>					
Property Condition	-	-	-	-	-
Community Size					+
Multi-Unit Residence	-	-		+	
Own Home	+				
Multi-Story Residence		+		+	+
<u>Interpersonal</u>					
# adults in household	+	+		+	
Married				-	
Contact with neighbors	-		-		
Contact family/friends					
Organiz. membership			+		
Percent elderly in neigh.					
<u>Personal/psychological</u>					
State of health	-	-		-	-
Level of activity					
Trust in people	-		-	-	
Fatalism	+	+	+	+	+
Adaptability to change				-	
Sense of control					

Figure 3a : Crime Prevention Knowledge:  
Regression Summary

<u>Demographics</u>	<u>Burglary</u>	<u>Assault</u>	<u>Harassment</u>	<u>Robbery</u>
Gender	m	m	m	m
Education	+	+	+	
Age				
Employed				
Income	+	+	+	+
<u>Environmental</u>				
Property condition	+			+
Community Size				
Multi-unit Residence			-	
Own Home	+			
Multi-Story Residence				
<u>Interpersonal</u>				
# adults in household	-			-
Married	+	+		+
Contact with neighbors				
Contact family/friends		+	+	
Organiz. membership	+			
Percent elderly in neigh.				
<u>Personal/psychological</u>				
State of health				
Level of activity		+	+	+
Trust in people				
Fatalism	-			
Adaptability to change	+	+	+	+
Sense of control	+			

Figure 3b : Crime Prevention Knowledge:  
Regression Summary

<u>Demographics</u>	<u>Van-</u> <u>dalism</u> m	<u>Street</u> <u>Larceny</u>	<u>Fraud</u>	<u>Abuse</u> m	<u>Theft</u> m
Gender					
Education		+	+	+	+
Age				-	-
Employed					
Income	+	+	+	+	
<u>Environmental</u>					
Property condition		+	+	+	
Community Size	+	+			+
Multi-unit Residence					
Own Home	+				+
Multi-Story Residence					
<u>Interpersonal</u>					
# adults in household	-			-	-
Married	+		+		+
Contact with neighbors					
Contact family/friends	+	+	+		+
Organiz. membership		+	+		
Percent elderly in neigh.					
<u>Personal/psychological</u>					
State of health				+	+
Level of activity	+	+	+	+	+
Trust in people					
Fatalism	-	-	-		-
Adaptability to change	+	+	+	+	+
Sense of control		+	+		+

Figure 4a : Crime Prevention Competence Factors:  
Regression Summary

<u>Demographics</u>	<u>Concern</u>	<u>Respon- sibility</u>	<u>Perceived Effectiveness</u>
Gender			
Education	-		-
Age	-	-	
Employed			
Income			
<u>Environmental</u>			
Property condition	-		
Community Size			
Multi-unit Residence			
Own Home		+	
Multi-Story Residence		-	
<u>Interpersonal</u>			
# adults in household			
Married			
Contact with neighbors		+	+
Contact family/friends			
Organiz. membership			+
Percent elderly in neigh.			
<u>Personal/psychological</u>			
State of health	-		
Level of activity			
Trust in people	-		+
Fatalism			-
Adaptability to change			
Sense of control			

Figure 4b : Crime Prevention Competence Factors:  
Regression Summary

<u>Demographics</u>	<u>Perceived Capability</u>	<u>Group Effectiveness</u>
Gender		w
Education	-	
Age	-	
Employed	-	
Income		
<u>Environmental</u>		
Property condition		+
Community Size		
Multi-unit Residence		
Own Home		
Multi-Story Residence		
<u>Interpersonal</u>		
# adults in household		
Married	+	-
Contact with neighbors		+
Contact family/friends	+	-
Organiz. membership	+	+
Percent elderly in neigh.		
<u>Personal/psychological</u>		
State of health	+	
Level of activity		+
Trust in people		
Fatalism	-	-
Adaptability to change	+	
Sense of control	+	

Figure 5 : Crime Prevention Performance Evaluations:  
Regression Summary

<u>Demographics</u>	<u>Police</u>	<u>People</u>	<u>Courts</u>	<u>Public Officials</u>
Gender				
Education	+		-	
Age			+	+
Employed				
Income			+	
<u>Environmental</u>				
Property condition	+	+	+	+
Community Size				
Multi-unit Residence				
Own Home				
Multi-Story Residence	-	-		
<u>Interpersonal</u>				
# adults in household	-			-
Married				
Contact with neighbors	+	+	+	+
Contact family/friends	+	+		
Organiz. membership	+			+
Percent elderly in neigh.			+	
<u>Personal/psychological</u>				
State of health				
Level of activity				
Trust in people	+	+	+	+
Fatalism	-	-	-	-
Adaptability to change				
Sense of control				

Figure 6a : Crime Prevention Activities:  
Regression Summary

<u>Demographics</u>	<u>Lock Doors</u>	<u>Indoor Lights</u>	<u>Friend Watch</u>	<u>Protect. Device</u>
Gender	w	w		
Education		+	+	
Age				
Employed				
Income		+		
<u>Environmental</u>				
Property condition		+		
Community Size			+	-
Multi-unit Residence		-		
Own Home		+	+	
Multi-Story Residence	+	+		
<u>Interpersonal</u>				
# adults in household		+	-	
Married	-		+	-
Contact with neighbors			+	
Contact family/friends				+
Organiz. membership		+	+	
Percent elderly in neigh.				
<u>Personal/psychological</u>				
State of health			+	
Level of activity		+		+
Trust in people		-		
Fatalism		-		+
Adaptability to change		+		
Sense of control			+	

Figure 6b : Crime Prevention Activities:  
Regression Summary

<u>Demographics</u>	<u>Avoid Places</u> w	<u>Neigh. Coop.</u>	<u>Avoid Going Out</u> w	<u>Watch Neigh.</u>
Gender				
Education				
Age				-
Employed				
Income	-			
<u>Environmental</u>				
Property condition	-			
Community Size				
Multi-unit Residence				
Own Home				+
Multi-Story Residence	+	+	+	
<u>Interpersonal</u>				
# adults in household	+			+
Married	-		-	
Contact with neighbors		+		+
Contact family/friends		+		+
Organiz. membership		+	-	
Percent elderly in neigh.				
<u>Personal/psychological</u>				
State of health	-		-	
Level of activity		+	+	
Trust in people	-	+		
Fatalism	+		+	
Adaptability to change				
Sense of control			-	



Table 2

Knowledge of Self-Protection for  
Specific Crime

<u>Crimes</u>	<u>Great Deal</u>	<u>Some Things</u>	<u>Very Little</u>
Having your home broken into or burglarized	31%	43%	24%
Being physically assaulted or attacked	13	35	47
Being harassed or bothered by youths	14	33	46
Being held up by someone with a knife or gun	9	25	59
Having your property vandalized	21	41	34
Having your pocketbook, wallet, or purse grabbed from you	27	40	29
Being defrauded or cheated out of your money	33	34	29
Being physically or mentally mistreated or abused by people close to you	20	23	46
Having a car broken into or stolen	24	37	31

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Table 3

## Prevention Knowledge, Attitudes, and Motivation

Crime Prevention:

	Respon- sibility	Indiv. Effect.	Group Effect.	Capa- bility	Concern
<u>Knowledge of:</u>					
Burglary	.11c	.10c	.13c	.22c	.12c
Assault	.10c	.11c	.15c	.26c	.09c
Harassment	.10c	.13c	.14c	.23c	.10c
Robbery	.12c	.10c	.13c	.25c	.11c
Vandalism	.11c	.13c	.13c	.19c	.13c
Street Larceny	.17c	.15c	.17c	.16c	.10c
Fraud	.13c	.09c	.15c	.13c	.12c
Abuse	.10c	.07b	.11c	.15c	.04
Vehicle Theft	.15c	.08b	.17c	.09c	.07b
<u>Evaluations of:</u>					
Police	.06a	.12c	.12c	.12c	.00
Neighbors	.12c	.18c	.20c	.14c	.04
Courts	.02	.10c	.06a	.02	.04
Elected Officials	.05	.13c	.14c	.12c	.04

Table 4

## Prevention Knowledge by Neighborhood Fear

	<u>Night Unsafe</u>	<u>Day Unsafe</u>	<u>Neigh. Danger</u>
<u>Knowledge of:</u>			
Burlary	-.05a	-.07b	-.06a
Assault	-.05a	-.06a	.02
Harassment	-.06a	-.04	.03
Robbery	-.09c	-.04	.02
Vandalism	-.01	-.03	.02
Street Larceny	-.02	-.04	-.03
Fraud	.00	-.08b	-.03
Abuse	-.04	-.01	.00
Vehicle Theft	-.16c	-.15c	-.05a

Table 5

## Prevention Knowledge by Perceived Risk, Worry

	Burglary Prob.	Burglary Worry	Violence Prob.	Violence Worry
<u>Knowledge of:</u>				
Burglary	.09c	.05a	.04	.04
Assault	.09c	.00	.07b	.00
Harassment	.12c	.02	.09c	.02
Robbery	.06a	-.03	.09c	-.03
Vandalism	.07b	.06a	.05a	.04
Street Larceny	.08b	-.02	.07b	-.03
Fraud	.03	.00	.05a	-.01
Abuse	.09b	-.05a	.04	-.02
Vehicle Theft	.12c	-.01	.09c	-.08b

Table 6

## Prevention Competence by Crime Orientations

Crime Prevention:

	Respon- sibility	Indiv. Effect.	Group Effect.	Capa- bility	Concern
Night Unsafe	-.05a	-.03	.00	-.19c	.18c
Day Unsafe	-.06a	-.05	-.04	-.17c	.20c
Neigh. Danger	-.04	-.02	-.05a	-.06a	.18c
Burg. Prob.	.10c	.08b	.10c	.01	.20c
Burg. Worry	.00	.05a	.02	-.08b	.33c
Vio. Prob.	.11c	.05a	.10c	.02	.14c
Vio. Worry	.00	.06a	-.01	-.13c	.33c
Elder Victim	.04	.06a	.04	-.04	.06a

Table 7

## Prevention Activities by Neighborhood Fear

	Night Unsafe	Day Unsafe	Neigh. Danger
Lock Doors	.21c	.14c	.09c
Indoor Lights	.09c	.01	-.01
Neigh. Watch	.04	-.06a	-.07b
Take Device	.09c	.16c	.11c
Avoid Places	.30c	.27c	.19c
Neigh. Joining	.01	.04	.06a
Avoid Going Out	.37c	.30c	.24c
Watch Neigh.	-.03	-.08b	-.04

Table 8

## Prevention Activities by Perceived Risk, Worry

	Burg. Prob.	Burg. Worry	Vio. Prob.	Vio. Worry	Elder Victim
Lock Doors	.07b	.20c	.08b	.21c	.10c
Indoor Lights	.12c	.16c	.08b	.10c	.08b
Neigh. Watch	.09c	.08b	.01	.04	.02
Take Device	.12c	.07b	.11c	.13c	.00
Avoid Places	.12c	.20c	.15c	.29c	.06a
Neigh. Joining	.09c	.08b	.08b	.13c	.01
Avoid Going Out	.09c	.19c	.11c	.31c	.06a
Watch Neigh.	.08c	.07b	.01	.05	.00

Table . 9

## Prevention Activities by Prevention Knowledge (I)

	Lock Doors	Indoor Lights	Watch Neigh.	Take Device
<u>Knowledge of:</u>				
Burglary	.11c	.14c	.13c	.11c
Assault	.01	.07b	.07b	.22c
Harassment	.02	.07b	.10c	.19c
Robbery	.04	.07b	.09c	.22c
Vandalism	.08b	.13c	.10c	.16c
Street Larceny	.03	.13c	.06a	.14c
Fraud	.05a	.12c	.11c	.11c
Abuse	.02	.04	.05a	.14c
Vehicle Theft	.00	.13c	.13c	.07b

Table 10

## Prevention Activities by Prevention Knowledge (II)

	<u>Avoid Places</u>	<u>Neigh. Joining</u>	<u>Avoid Going Out</u>	<u>Watch Neigh.</u>
<u>Knowledge of:</u>				
Burglary	.06a	.12c	-.03	.13c
Assault	.06a	.13c	-.03	.11c
Harassment	.06a	.17c	.01	.12c
Robbery	.04	.18c	-.03	.13c
Vandalism	.08b	.14c	.01	.12c
Street Larceny	.03	.08b	.01	.08b
Fraud	.03	.05	-.03	.09c
Abuse	.08b	.10c	-.02	.11c
Vehicle Theft	-.02	.07b	-.11c	.13c

Table 11

## Prevention Activities by Prevention Competence

Crime Prevention:

	Respon- sibility	Indiv. Effect.	Group Effect.	Capa- bility	Concern
Lock Doors	-.01	.04	.11c	-.04	.18c
Indoor Lights	.05a	.04	.11c	.04	.08b
Neigh. Watch	.11c	.11c	.17c	.09c	.06a
Take Device	-.01	.04	.07b	.13c	.16c
Avoid Places	.00	.05a	.01	-.05a	.16c
Neigh. Joining	.11c	.09c	.16c	.11c	.09c
Avoid Going Out	-.05a	.03	.01	-.13c	.19c
Watch Neigh.	.13c	.11c	.17c	.17c	.10c