

Crime and the Elderly: Their Perceptions and Reactions

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Prepared for
Department of Police
Montgomery County, Maryland

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We are particularly indebted to the elderly of Silver Spring who so graciously provided the data for this report. We dedicate this report to them.

The opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed in this report are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of the Police Department or any other agency.

Jon E. Burkhardt
Lee Norton

CRIME AND THE ELDERLY: THEIR PERCEPTIONS AND REACTIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

This project was undertaken to assist the Montgomery County Police Department in their delivery of criminal justice services to the elderly in Silver Spring. This area has relatively high portion of the County's elderly and of crimes against the elderly. Major objectives of this project include reducing crimes against the elderly, decreasing the fear of crime among the elderly, and increasing the reporting of crimes against the elderly.

Personal interviews were conducted in the respondent's home with 178 elderly residents of Silver Spring who were chosen to be statistically representative of all non-institutionalized elderly in Silver Spring. Subjects discussed during the interview included individual and family characteristics, attitudes about crime, experiences (if any) as victims of crime, attitudes about police protection, and the effects of crime on their lives.

THE TARGET AREA

The elderly residents of Silver Spring are much like elderly residents of Montgomery County, who are wealthier, better educated, and more often own cars than the average elderly person in the United States. Elderly persons in Silver Spring are younger and less often own their own homes than the average elderly person in Montgomery County. On these two measures, the average Silver Spring elderly person is more like his or her national counterpart than like his or her County counterpart. Substantial variations in demographic and urban characteristics exist within the Silver Spring Police District, some of which are related to crime. The southern portion of this area (which contains almost 60 percent of the elderly in Silver Spring) is older and densely settled with mixed land uses, while the northern part is typified by recent, low-density, residential developments with some clusters of older homes.

VICTIMS OF CRIME

Twenty-four percent of those interviewed had been the victim of at least one actual or attempted crime (robbery, larceny, assault, aggravated assault,

fraud, vandalism, rape, or burglary) within the past five years. The crimes of larceny and vandalism accounted for the greatest number of victims. Thus, the typical victim rarely suffers physical injury; monetary loss (which may be very serious for an older person) is far more frequent.

In Silver Spring, there is really no such thing as a "typical" elderly victim of crime except that victims are more likely to reside in the older, more urbanized portion of the area than elsewhere. This lack of a victimization pattern supports the contention that "anyone could be a victim" and underscores the necessity of precautionary measures for all the elderly. Elderly victims of crime are not very different from elderly non-victims with respect to attitudes or behavior, with several exceptions: (1) victims are more likely to rate their neighborhood as unsafe; (2) victims are more often deterred from activities they would enjoy by the fear of crime; and (3) more victims have taken protective measures against crime.

THE FEAR OF CRIME

The elderly in Silver Spring are only one-sixth as likely as the elderly across the U.S. to feel that crime is a serious personal problem for them. Thus, the elderly person in Silver Spring is less fearful than the average. In Silver Spring, twelve percent of the elderly could be called extremely fearful and fifteen percent are fearless.

Women, non-whites, the least educated, those living alone, and those who live in apartments are more fearful of crime than their counterparts. Some measures of fear increase with increasing age but others decrease. Persons who have been victimized and those who consider their neighborhood unsafe are much more likely to be fearful than others. In Silver Spring, those who live in the older, more urbanized portion of the area are more likely to be afraid.

THE EFFECTS OF FEAR ON BEHAVIOR

Most of the elderly who are afraid to go out are specifically afraid of going out at night, and they simply refuse to go out at night. They forego theaters, social activities, and events at friends' houses if these occur at night. Even the elderly who say they are not afraid do not travel at night

unless by car. The lack of travel at night is the most significant effect of fear in the behavior of the elderly. Travel during the day is apparently not restricted by the fear of crime.

The elderly who are fearful are more likely to take protective measures than those who are not.

DETERRENTS TO CRIME

The elderly look to social solutions instead of their personal efforts to deter crimes against the elderly. More police protection and stricter punishment for criminals were favored more than twice as often as any other solution. The need for stronger laws and punishment was strongly expressed by many persons.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The elderly in Silver Spring are different from the average elderly person in the U.S. on a variety of measures, including exposure and reactions to crime. Fewer crimes are committed against the elderly, fewer violent crimes are committed, crimes are more often reported, and the elderly are less fearful.

Still, a substantial amount of fear exists. The main effect of this fear is to curtail activities that occur at night, although some persons also restrict their activities during the day. Reliable, personalized night-time transportation is required to enable the elderly without cars to participate in social events that occur at night.

Despite the level of fear shown, most of the elderly do not take measures to prevent their victimization until after they have experienced a crime. Furthermore, most elderly persons think that they are safer than they really are in their own neighborhood. This fact, in conjunction with the finding that (in Silver Spring) any type of person could be a victim, shows the need for appropriate precautions. Public awareness of techniques to decrease victimization should be increased by educational programs designed specifically for the elderly.

Therefore, if assistance is to be provided to the elderly, it should focus on both the reduction of fear and the prevention of crime.





OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE PROGRAM TO PREVENT CRIMES AGAINST THE ELDERLY

INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a survey of elderly persons. The survey is the first portion of the research component of a pilot project aimed at improving the delivery of criminal justice services to the elderly (60 years of age and older) residing in that portion of Montgomery County, Maryland known as Silver Spring. This project is operated by the Crime Prevention for Seniors Unit of the Police Department of Montgomery County.¹

Major objectives of this project include reducing crimes against the elderly, decreasing the fear of crime among the elderly, and increasing the reporting of crimes against the elderly. To demonstrate that such effects have occurred, home interview surveys will be conducted before and after a program designed to decrease crimes and fear and to increase reporting. In addition to testing the program's effectiveness, these surveys also provide much needed detailed data concerning crimes against the elderly in Montgomery County, data which substantially increase general knowledge of crime against the elderly derived from the few studies conducted to date.

¹An Advisory Council exists to guide the project and represent the elderly in Montgomery County. The Advisory Council includes senior community leaders as well as members of the County's Division of Elder Affairs, Department of Social Services, and the Department of Police.

The report you are now reading describes the results of the survey conducted prior to the implementation of the pilot program to reduce crime and fear.

BACKGROUND

Elderly persons are often the victims of crime, and knowledge of this fact creates a substantial fear of potential crime among the elderly. (Studies indicate that at least 23% of the elderly feel that crime is a very serious problem for them personally.)² Fear of crime among the elderly manifests itself in modes of behavior which are detrimental both socially and psychologically. Avoidance behavior initiates a pattern commencing with withdrawal from socially beneficial activities, leading to increasing isolation and diminished community involvement. Isolation creates detrimental habits with respect to inappropriate nutritional intake, which creates potential health problems. In turn, potential psychological damage may occur in reduced feelings of selfworth, in negative feelings about self and capacity of the community to care or respond.

Paradoxically, in juxtaposition to the potential modes of behavior described above, there are many elderly who are victims of crime due to their lack of awareness which can and does lead to a false sense of personal security.

The general attitudes mentioned above create a lack of confidence in community response and especially the law enforcement bodies. It has been estimated that a large percentage of crimes against the elderly go unreported, perhaps as many as 50%.³ The failure to report crime (among the elderly) is attributed to the individual's feelings of entrapment (can't escape from their environment) and a fear of reprisal from the accused or associates. Additionally, one often expressed reason for non-reporting is the feeling that "The police can't do anything anyway!"

The recognition of such problems supports the new emphasis in criminal justice on the problems of the victim of crime. The understanding and prevention of crimes against the elderly have become high-priority issues within the Law Enforcement

²For example, see The Myths and Reality of Aging, National Council on the Aging, Inc., 1975.

³Ernst, Jodry, and Friedsam, Reporting and Non-Reporting of Crime by Older Adults, Center for Community Services: North Texas State Univ., Denton, Texas (1976).

Assistance Administration (LEAA), and comprehensive state planning for the prevention of crimes against the elderly is now required as an amendment to the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1970.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The following objectives of the pilot program are addressed by the survey described in this volume:

- Reduce the fear of crime among the elderly in the target population through educational approaches.
- Improve the rate of reporting of crimes against the elderly.
- Reduce actual victimization of the elderly in the target area.
- Develop instruments that reliably measure the effectiveness of various program components.
- Increase the knowledge of the Police about problems of the elderly related to crime.
- Increase the awareness of the elderly and the community as a whole concerning possible actions they can take to reduce crime.

PROPOSED APPROACH FOR REDUCING CRIME AND FEAR⁴

The approach proposed to the problem as stated above is to develop a Criminal Victimization Response Team, comprised of two police officers. The duties of this team include

- 1) an educational and public relations effort designed to reduce crime against the elderly,
- 2) a capacity for responding immediately to a victim in ways which restore the victim to a level of functioning approximating their capacity to function prior to the crime, and
- 3) an ability to research, analyze and measure team and program effectiveness in improving the delivery of criminal justice services to the elderly.

Education

The educational and public relations effort focusses on crime prevention, which is the anticipation, recognition and appraisal of some crime risk, and the initiation of some action to remove or to reduce crime.

⁴Greater detail is available in the initial grant application from Montgomery County to the Maryland Governor's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice, March, 1975.

Perhaps the most effective means of preventing the commission of crime upon the elderly is to educate the elderly in the most efficient and reasonable methods for discouraging the possibility of being attacked. In essence, what is to be done is to remove the elderly person from the potentially dangerous situation through his or her own recognition of the existence of possible hazards.

Education is to be used to increase the awareness and to raise the level of consciousness of the elderly population with respect to their susceptibility to crime and their security, both of the physical body and the domicile. It is not the intent to increase the fears of these individuals, but instead to provide factual information.

Assistance to Victims

The second function of the Criminal Victimization Response Team is to assist persons who have been victimized. Depending upon the nature of the crime and its degree of personal violence upon the victim, needs may vary from loss of cash, credit cards, medicare/medicaid cards to injuries requiring immediate medical attention, disorientation and or trauma requiring counseling by a trained social worker, psychologist or psychiatrist. Loss of cash, while not representing what many would consider a significant loss, may induce significant anguish to the elderly person who, living on a fixed income, has carefully budgeted his/her minimum income.⁵

Research

The research component of this project has several objectives. The first is to substantially increase knowledge of crimes against the elderly for the purpose of preventing such crimes in Montgomery County. The Police Department has instituted data collection procedures that differentiate between elderly and non-elderly victims of crime. Offense characteristics that are being analyzed include type of crime, location, date and time. In addition, the applicability of existing studies to Montgomery County is being analyzed.

⁵Jack Goldsmith and N.E. Thomas, "Crimes Against the Elderly: A Continuing National Crisis", Aging, June-July 1974, pp. 10-13.

The second major component is an assessment of the educational campaign to reduce fear, increase knowledge, and increasing reporting of crime. This assessment will be accomplished through on-site monitoring and through home interview surveys of the elderly before and after the implementation of the educational program. These surveys also support the informational objective described above. This volume reports the results of the first survey, which was designed according to the concepts of the initial grant application in March 1975.

Staff Organization

The Project Director is the Commander of the Crime Prevention Section of the Montgomery County Department of Police who is responsible for project coordination and for developing and meeting the project objectives. The police officers of the elderly Criminal Victimization response team are assigned to the Crime Prevention Section. Their role is to enhance the already ongoing efforts of the Crime Prevention Section. A primary responsibility will be to develop the necessary expertise for dealing specifically with elderly victims of crime as well as large groups of older citizens. The staff of the Research and Planning Division of the Police support the officers in the interpretation of data and the development of educational materials. The Advisory Council (described on page 1) provides guidance for the project.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

In order to accurately assess the findings presented here, one must possess an understanding of the environment in which they occur. Montgomery County cannot be considered typical of the rest of the nation's 3,067 counties. Reasons for this are apparent from a brief look at statistics for the county as a whole and the target area in particular.

General⁶

Montgomery County is an integral part of the Washington (D.C.) metropolitan area. It has more people (590,000 in 1976) than five states, a land area as large as Houston, Texas (506 square miles), and governmental expenditures greater than those of the state of Nevada (\$472 million in 1976). It is the wealthiest of the heavily-populated counties of the U.S., and has a higher proportion of professional workers than any metropolitan area in the country. The percent of residents over 25 years of age that have gone to college is almost three times the national average. Ninety-five percent of the population is white. The county was among the fastest-growing areas of the country in the 1950's and 1960's, and only in the last five years has the growth rate slowed somewhat.

Persons over 60 years of age comprise 12.5 percent of the County's population.⁷ Fifty-two percent of those over 60 were, in fact, 70 years old or older. Sixty percent of the elderly are female. The elderly have many of the characteristics of other county residents: high median incomes and educational levels are particularly noteworthy. At the same time, the problems of the elderly in Montgomery County who need assistance reflect problems of the elderly living in other areas: isolation, lack of transportation, and not enough money to make ends meet.

⁶See Statistical Profile of Montgomery County, Maryland: 1977 Supplement, Office of Economic Planning and Research, Rockville, July 1977.

⁷Jon E. Burkhardt, et al., The Status and Needs of Montgomery County's Senior Citizens, prepared for the Office of Community Development and the Division of Elder Affairs by Ecosometrics, Incorporated and Westat, Inc. (March, 1977).

Specific Target Area

That portion of Montgomery County served by the Silver Spring Police Department District was chosen as the geographic focus for this program. (See Figure 1-1.) There were several reasons for this choice, among them

- an elderly population density that is very high for Montgomery County,
- a higher than average crime rate for this area as compared to the County as a whole, and
- the existence of on-going crime prevention programs.

Thus, this area qualifies as a high-priority area for the type of program contemplated.

It should be noted that substantial variations exist within the Silver Spring Police District. The southernmost portion, the part contiguous to Washington, D.C., has the greatest population density, the largest concentration of elderly, the lowest income, and the greatest amount of crime. Population is declining slightly in this area. This area is characterized by older apartments and mixed land uses. The central portion of the district is typical of suburban housing developments of the late 1950's and early 1960's. The northern portion of the district is less densely settled, has much newer homes, and is generally typical of recent suburban developments.

The target area has a land area of approximately 25 square miles, a population of 71,200 and an elderly population (persons over 60 years of age) of approximately 14,600. It thus contains five percent of Montgomery County's area, 12 percent of its people, and 21 percent of its elderly.

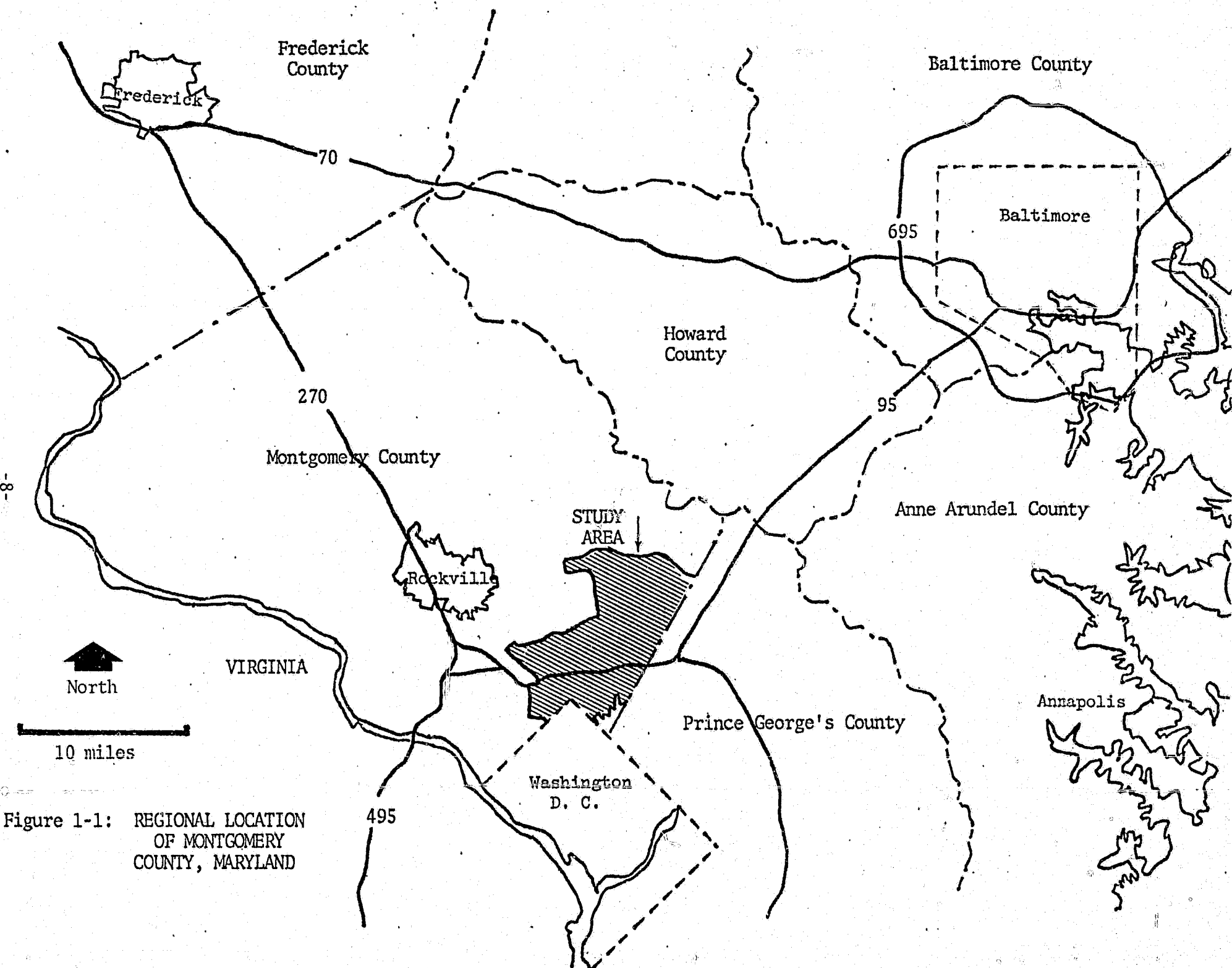
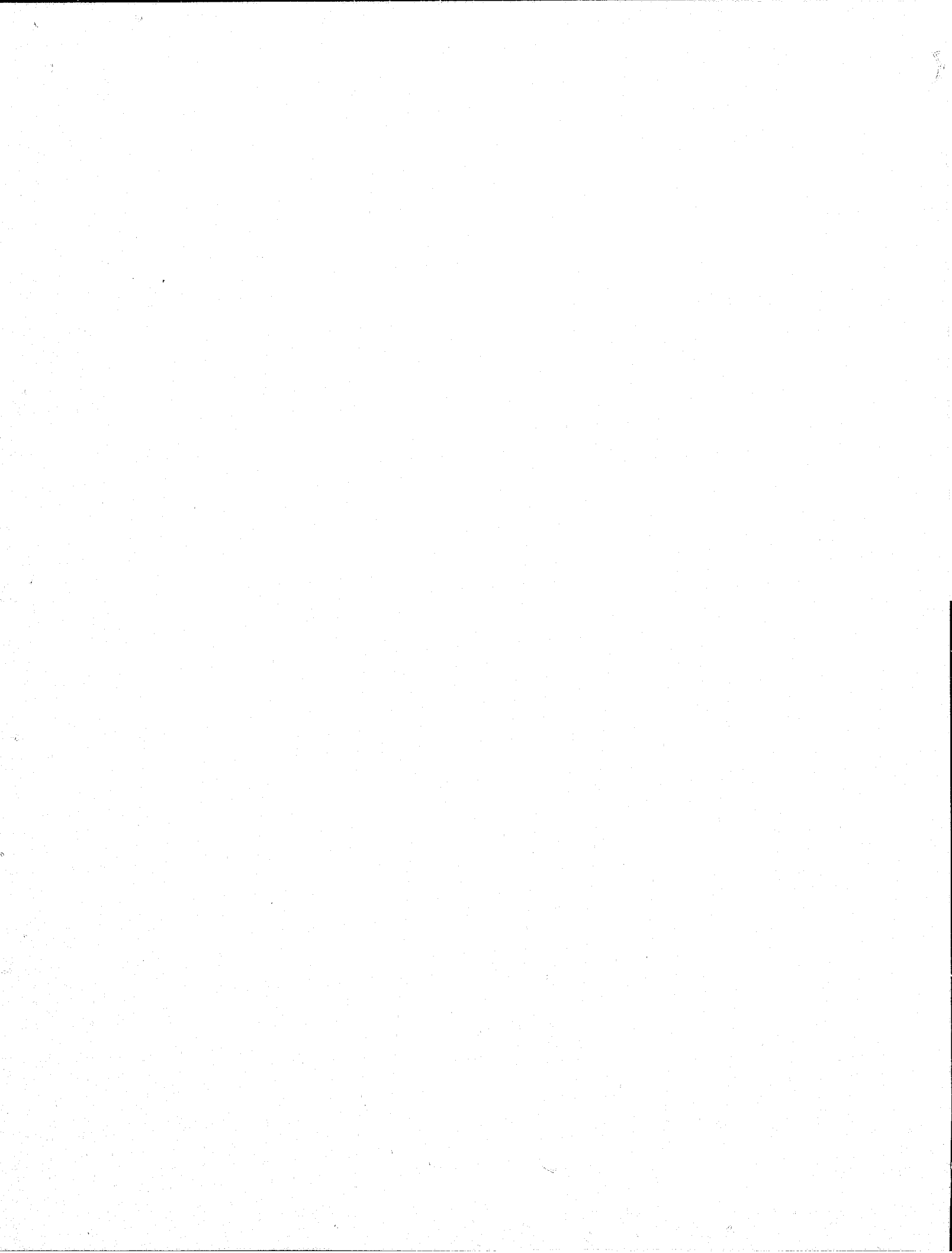


Figure 1-1: REGIONAL LOCATION OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND



SUMMARY OF SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The results described in this report are based on analyses of 178^{8,9} 20-minute home interviews. Respondents were randomly selected to be a statistically representative sample of the elderly in the Silver Spring Police District through the use of a telephone screening procedure known as random-digit dialing. Nursing homes were excluded from the sample.

The results of this survey are consistent with all other demographic information now available, leading to the conclusion that the 178 respondents can provide a statistically valid representation of all elderly in Silver Spring.¹⁰ Thus, in the following chapters, the words "respondent" and "resident" are often used interchangeably.

Interviewing was performed by criminology students from the University of Maryland during August and September of 1976.

Additional survey details are presented in Appendices A, B, and C.

⁸Responses to specific questions may be less than 178 due to non-response or not applicable questions.

⁹The 178 respondents represent approximately 1.2 percent of the 14,624 elderly persons (aged 60 years and older) living in Census tracts comprising the Silver Spring Police District. The total elderly count is based on 1975 projections by the Montgomery County Planning Board.

¹⁰In nine out of ten cases, the true value of all statistics presented will be within six percent of that reported by our respondents. For questions where the responses are sharply divided (e.g., 15 percent "yes" and 85 percent "no"), the true value will be within five percent of that reported by this survey in 19 out of 20 cases.

2

STATUS REPORT OF THE ELDERLY IN SILVER SPRING

INTRODUCTION

Analysis of the results of the survey of the elderly in Silver Spring provides a concise picture of the characteristics and status of the elderly, with a major focus on crimes against the elderly. This chapter is divided into six sections which include: (1) the population characteristics (or demographic variables) of the elderly respondents; (2) the neighborhoods in which the elderly live, and how they feel about these areas; (3) the means of transportation used by the elderly; (4) contacts the elderly have had with the police; (5) the number of victims of crime and the number of crimes committed against those victims; and (6) actions taken by the elderly related to their exposure to crime. Each section consists of the presentation of data for each of the variables, followed by a discussion of the interaction between those variables. Later chapters will look further into the relationships between these variables and the level of fear among the elderly in Silver Spring.

The three most useful variables for summarizing the status of elderly residents of Silver Spring are location, age and sex, with location being the variable most often explaining the variation in other factors. With the Silver Spring Police District divided into three separate areas (see Figure 2-1), the Southern Silver Spring area has a greater percentage of females, a greater proportion of elderly residents between seventy and eighty-four years of age, a larger percentage of those that live alone, a greater proportion of the apartment dwellers and those with lower incomes, a lower percentage of married individuals

and a higher proportion of widowed individuals, a lower educational level among its residents, and a lower percentage of employed individuals than among the elderly residents in Central and Northern Silver Spring. The residents of Southern Silver Spring feel less safe in their neighborhoods, walk more and drive less than their counterparts further out in the suburbs, have had less contact with the police, give a lower rating to the police protection in their area, and have a higher rate of crime and a greater number of victims per capita than the elderly residents of Central and Northern Silver Spring.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS OF ELDERLY RESIDENTS IN SILVER SPRING

The population characteristics of elderly residents in Silver Spring that are discussed in this section include:

- location,
- age,
- race,
- sex,
- living arrangements (people),
- living arrangements (housing),
- income
- marital status,
- level of education, and
- employment status.

Each of these characteristics will be looked at individually, followed by a discussion of interrelationships between the characteristics.

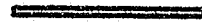
Location of the Elderly in the Silver Spring Police District

The Silver Spring Police District was divided into three sections (see Figure 2-1): (1) Southern Silver Spring — extending from the District of Columbia line northwest to the Capital Beltway and northeast to Sligo Creek; (2) Central Silver Spring — extending from the Beltway northwest to Plyers Mill Road, and, South of the Beltway, from Sligo Creek northeast to Northwest Branch Park to the Prince Georges' County line; and (3) Northern Silver Spring — extending from Northwest Branch Park north to Randolph Road.

Figure 2-1: THE SILVER SPRING STUDY AREA



North



one mile

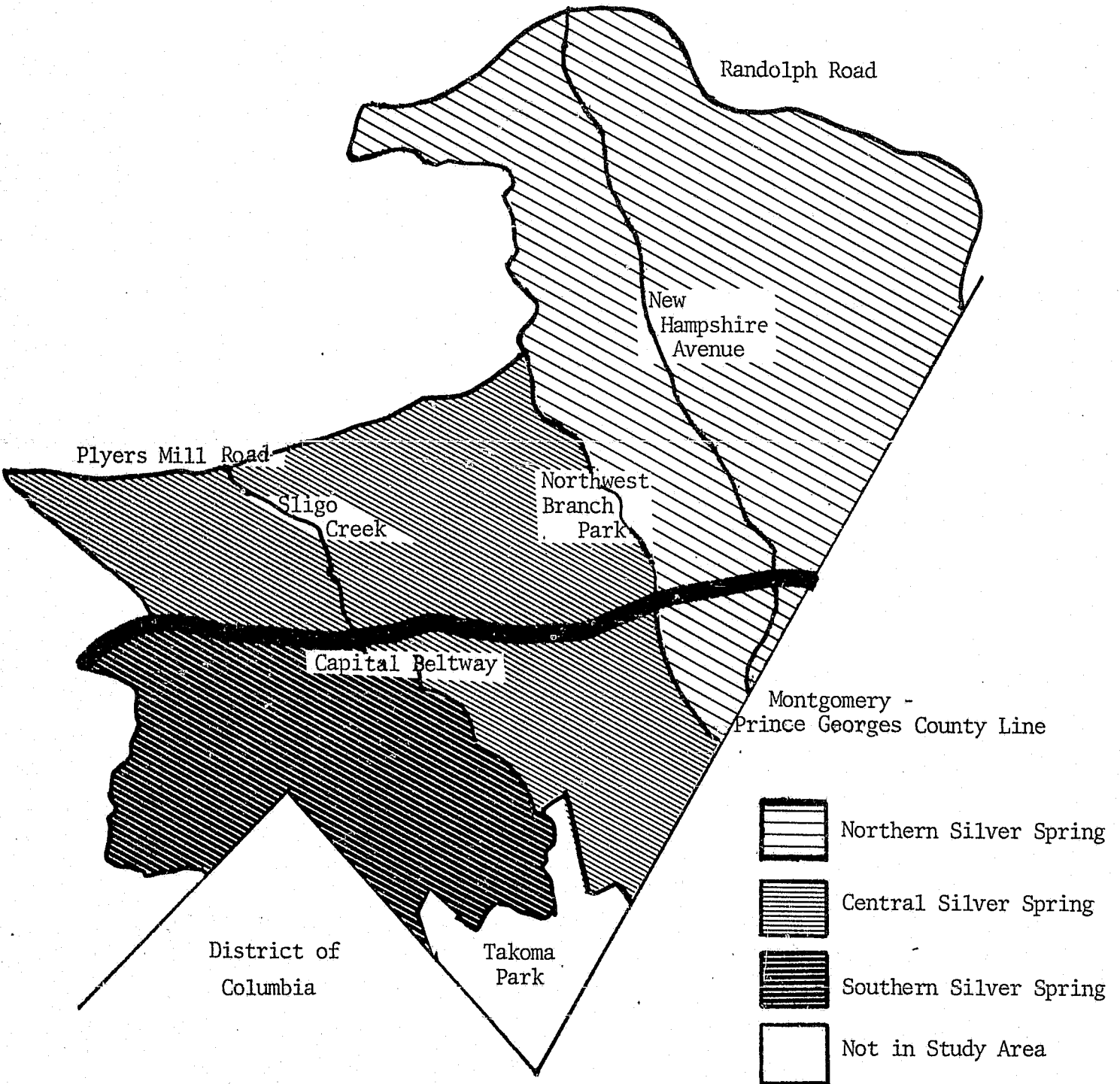


Table 2-1 shows that almost 60 percent of the elderly respondents reside in Southern Silver Spring. Almost twice as many elderly reside in Southern Silver Spring as reside in Central Silver Spring, and the rate of residence in Southern Silver Spring is five times that of Northern Silver Spring.

Table 2-1
LOCATION OF THE ELDERLY RESIDENTS IN SILVER SPRING

Area	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Southern Silver Spring	104	58.4
Central Silver Spring	54	30.3
Northern Silver Spring	<u>20</u>	<u>11.2</u>
	178	99.9

Age, Race, Sex of the Elderly in Silver Spring

The respondents were classified into four age categories, 60-64, 65-69, 70-74 and 75-84 years of age. Approximately 55 percent of the elderly respondents were between 60 and 69 years of age, and 45 percent were between 70 and 84. None of the respondents was over the age of 84. Race or ethnic background was divided into four categories including white, black, Spanish descent and other descent. Over 92 percent of the elderly residents in this sample were white. Sixty-three and one-half percent, or almost two-thirds of the sample respondents were female.¹

Living Arrangements of the Elderly in Silver Spring

The living arrangements of the elderly in Silver Spring can be taken to mean with whom the elderly live or in what kinds of housing they live. Both

¹The elderly in Silver Spring are somewhat younger than the elderly throughout Montgomery County. The racial and sexual compositions of the area approximate those for the county as a whole. See Jon E. Burkhardt, et al., The Status and Needs of Montgomery County's Senior Citizens, op. cit.

kinds of questions were asked.

Over 50 percent of the elderly respondents live with their spouses. Thirty-two percent live alone, and eighteen percent live with their children. Twelve percent live with other persons.²

Fifty-five percent of the respondents live in a single family homes. Forty-one percent of the respondents live in privately owned apartments. Fifty-two percent of the elderly respondents own or are in the process of buying their own home.

Income, Martial Status, Education, Employment Status of the Elderly in Silver Spring

Twenty-five percent of the respondents refused to reveal or did not know what their income was. Of those persons that responded, 25 percent have personal incomes between \$1,000 and \$5,999 per year. Twenty percent have between \$6,000 and \$9,999, 30 percent are between \$10,000 and \$19,999 and 25 percent have annual personal incomes of \$20,000 or above.³

Over 50 percent of the respondents are married. Just over 33 percent are widowed and 7 percent have never been married. Thirty percent of the respondents have less than a high school degree, approximately 33 percent or one-third have a high school degree or a business or trade school equivalent, and 37 percent have at least some college education. Approximately 25 percent of the elderly respondents are employed, meaning that they are working at a job with a salary for 30 hours or more per week. Seventy-five percent of the elderly respondents are retired.

Interaction of Demographic Variables

This section will look at the significant relationships between the population characteristics that were previously discussed.

²It is possible for the respondent to answer yes to more than one of the responses. If the respondent lives with his or her spouse and their children for example, then that respondent would have answered yes to two categories. Therefore the responses to this category will total more than 100 percent.

³The survey was designed to obtain information on annual personal income. However, because of a little ambiguity in the question, some persons may have reported household instead of personal income. Despite this possible problem, the best information available indicates that the respondents reported personal income and not household income.

The Influence of Age on Other Variables

Almost 50 percent of the elderly residents between the ages of 70 and 84 are living alone, compared to less than 20 percent of those between the ages of 60 and 69. Almost 70 percent of those between 60 and 69 live with their spouses, compared to only 30 percent of those between 70 and 84. In addition to living alone more often, the elderly residents between 70 and 84 also tend to live in apartments more often than the elderly between 60 and 69. Sixty-seven percent of the 60 to 69 year old elderly residents live in single family homes. Over 50 percent of the 70 to 84 year old elderly residents live in apartments.

Almost three times as many 60 to 69 year old elderly residents are employed as are 70 to 84 year old elderly residents. Just over 50 percent of the 60 to 69 year old elderly respondents are female, while 75 percent of the 70 to 84 year old elderly respondents are female. Seventy-three percent of the elderly 60 to 69 years of age are married, compared with 29 percent of the elderly between 70 and 94. Over 50 percent of the elderly aged 70 to 84 are widowed, compared to less than twenty percent widowed among the elderly aged 60 to 69.

The Influence of Sex on Other Variables

Forty-six percent of the female respondents live alone, compared to only eight percent of the males. Almost 90 percent of the males live with their spouses, compared to less than 33 percent of the females. Over 70 percent of the males live in single family homes, while almost 50 percent of the female respondents live in apartments. Almost 90 percent of the male respondents are married, compared to less than 33 percent of the females. Almost 54 percent of the females are widowed. Of those respondents with incomes of \$1,000 to \$5,999 per year, 83 percent are female. In the \$6,000 to \$9,999 income category, 74 percent are female. Of the respondents in the \$10,000 to \$19,999 income bracket, 55 percent are female and in the \$20,000 and over bracket, only 25 percent are female.

The Influence of Location on Other Variables

Forty-five percent of the elderly respondents in Southern Silver Spring are between the ages of 60 and 69; in Central Silver Spring, 61 percent are in that age group, and in Northern Silver Spring, 85 percent are in that age group. Seventy percent of the Southern Silver Spring respondents are female, compared with 59 percent female in Central Silver Spring and 40 percent female in Northern Silver Spring. Forty-three percent of those respondents living in Southern Silver Spring live alone, compared to only 18 percent of the elderly in Central Silver Spring and 15 percent of the elderly in Northern Silver Spring. Forty-four percent of those residing in Southern Silver Spring live with their spouses, compared to 61 percent in Central Silver Spring and 70 percent in Northern Silver Spring living with their spouses.

Thirty-nine percent of the Southern Silver Spring residents live in single family houses, compared to 76 percent living in single family houses in Central and Northern Silver Spring. Fifty-six percent of the Southern Silver Spring residents live in privately owned apartments, compared to 21 percent living in privately owned apartments in Central and Northern Silver Spring. Forty-five percent of those living in Southern Silver Spring are married, compared to 61 percent married in Central Silver Spring, and 70 percent married in Northern Silver Spring.

NEIGHBORHOOD

The elderly residents of Silver Spring, for the most part, seem to be very comfortable in the areas in which they live. Most of them have lived in their neighborhoods for a long period of time (10 years or more), and, in general, seem to feel quite safe. Most feel that the police are doing a good job in terms of protection, and most feel there is less crime and very few unsafe places in their neighborhoods. However, only 46 percent of the respondents felt that they could recognize at least one-half of the people in their neighborhood.

Basic Characteristics

Years Lived in Neighborhood

Sixty-four percent of the respondents have lived in their present neighborhoods for at least 10 years. Only 14 percent have lived in their present neighborhoods for five years or less, as shown in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN LIVING IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD?

Number of Years	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 1	7	4.0
1-2 years	4	2.3
2-5 years	14	7.9
5-10 years	38	21.5
10-20 years	46	26.0
20+ years	62	35.0
All my life	6	3.4
	<u>177</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Neighborhood Safe

Just under 70 percent of the respondents feel that their neighborhood is safe, as shown in Table 2-3.

Table 2-3

DO YOU THINK THAT THIS IS A SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD IN WHICH TO LIVE?

Neighborhood Safe?	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	123	69.5
Not particularly	31	17.5
No	<u>23</u>	<u>13.0</u>
	<u>177</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Proportion of People Recognized

Fifty-four percent of the elderly felt that they could not recognize at least one-half of the people in their neighborhood. Table 2-4 gives a breakdown on the proportion of people recognized by the elderly in their neighborhood.

Table 2-4

WHAT PROPORTION OF THE PEOPLE AROUND THIS NEIGHBORHOOD DO YOU KNOW OR AT LEAST RECOGNIZE?

Proportion Recognized	Number of Respondents	Percentage
No one	5	2.8
Less than 25%	59	33.2
25-50%	32	18.0
50-75%	29	16.3
Greater than 75%	28	15.7
Everyone	<u>25</u>	<u>14.0</u>
	178	100.0

Rating of Police Protection

Three-fourths of the elderly respondents feel that the police are doing at least a good job of protecting the neighborhood and the people within it. Thirty-two percent feel the police are doing an excellent job, as shown in Table 2-5. The distribution of the ratings of police protection is generally the same in the three sub-sections of Silver Spring. Twenty-five of the respondents (fourteen

Table 2-5

RATING OF POLICE PROTECTION IN NEIGHBORHOOD

Rating	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Excellent	49	32.0
Good	67	43.8
Fair	31	20.3
Poor	<u>6</u>	<u>3.9</u>
	153	100.0

percent of the survey sample) did not feel that they could answer the question of rating the police protection in their neighborhoods, because they did not have any recent contact with the police on which to base a judgement.

The ratings of police protection by many of the elderly depended on the visibility of the police. Comments such as "I always see police cars patrolling" or "I'm glad to see the police checking my property" accounted for 43 percent of the reasons why good or excellent ratings for protection were given. On the other hand, comments like "I never see them" account for 39 percent of the negative ratings of police protection. Other negative comments included, "The police were in a reporting position instead of trying to remedy the situation".

Safer with Foot Patrolmen

One-half of the elderly feel that their neighborhoods would be safer with policemen patrolling the area on foot, as shown in Table 2-6. Almost seventy percent of those who want foot patrolmen live in Southern Silver Spring. In addition, a greater proportion of persons living in Southern Silver Spring than in the other sections want foot patrolmen.

Table 2-6

WOULD YOU FEEL SAFER IN YOUR HOME IF THE AREA WERE
REGULARLY PATROLLED BY POLICE OFFICERS ON FOOT?

Would feel safer	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	88	50.3
No	<u>87</u>	<u>49.7</u>
	175	100.0

More Crime Here

Only five percent of the respondents felt that there was more crime in their neighborhoods than in others, and almost 85 percent felt that there was less crime (Table 2-7). Thus, the elderly tend to have an overly optimistic view of their own neighborhood. Almost half of those who felt that their own neighborhood has less crime than average are wrong in that their opinions do not agree with the crime statistics they provided in this survey.⁴ Persons who thought there was more crime in their neighborhood were likely to live in Southern Silver Spring, and a greater percentage of respondents in Northern Silver Spring than in the other areas thought that their neighborhood had less crime.

Table 2-7

DO YOU THINK THAT THIS NEIGHBORHOOD HAS
MORE OR LESS CRIME THAN OTHER PLACES?

Amount of Crime	Number of Respondents	Percentage
More	7	4.9
Same	15	10.5
Less	<u>121</u>	<u>84.6</u>
	143	100.0

⁴These statistics only refer to Silver Spring. It is possible that some respondents were using a frame of reference that included other jurisdictions.

Unsafe Places in the Area

Three-fourths of the elderly respondents felt that there were no unsafe places in their neighborhoods, as shown in Table 2-8. Overall, respondents in Southern Silver Spring felt the least safe and respondents in Northern Silver Spring felt the safest.

Table 2-8

ARE THERE PLACES IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD
WHERE YOU FEEL ESPECIALLY UNSAFE?

Unsafe Places	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Everywhere	6	3.4
Some places	38	21.5
Nowhere	<u>133</u>	<u>75.1</u>
	177	100.0

Interaction Between Neighborhood Variables

This section will look at the significant relationships between the neighborhood variables previously discussed.

Years Lived in the Neighborhood

The longer a respondent has lived in his neighborhood, the greater the proportion of people that he recognizes. Those who have lived in their neighborhoods ten years or less recognize far fewer people in their areas than those who have resided ten years or more in their neighborhoods (Table 2-9). Those respondents who have lived in their neighborhoods ten years or less said they would feel safer with police officers patrolling their area on foot. Residents who have lived ten years or more in their neighborhoods are comfortable in those areas and feel less of a need for foot patrolmen.

Table 2-9

LONG-TERM RESIDENTS RECOGNIZE MORE OF THEIR NEIGHBORS

Years Lived in Neighborhood	No one	50% or less	More than 50%	Everyone	Row Total
0-5	4.0 (25.0)	72.0 (19.8)	20.0 (8.8)	4.0 (4.0)	(14.1)
5-10	2.6 (25.0)	50.0 (20.9)	34.2 (22.8)	13.2 (20.0)	(21.5)
10-20	4.3 (50.0)	60.9 (30.8)	17.4 (14.0)	17.4 (32.0)	(26.0)
20+	.0 (.0)	38.2 (28.6)	45.6 (54.4)	16.2 (44.0)	(38.4)
Column Total	2.3	51.4	32.2	14.1	100.0

Base = 177 respondents

NOTE: In each cell, the top number is the row percentage (e.g., the percent of all those in one victimization category who are of a particular age) and the bottom number (in parentheses) is the column percentage (the percent of all those in one age category who have or have not been victims of an actual or attempted crime). A similar convention will be followed in subsequent tables. Row totals indicate the proportion of all respondents in each category in the far left column. Column totals indicate the proportion of all respondents in each category across the top of the table.

Proportion of the People Recognized

The greater the proportion of people a resident recognizes, the safer he feels his neighborhood is. Fifty percent of those persons who recognize no one in their neighborhood felt their neighborhood was safe; in contrast, 88 percent of those who recognized everyone in their area felt their neighborhood was safe. (Table 2-10). The greater the proportion of people recognized, the greater the percentage of people who felt there were no unsafe places in their areas. Similarly, only 50 percent of those persons said they recognized no one felt there were no unsafe places in their areas; in contrast, 80 percent of those who recognized everyone felt there were no unsafe places in their area. (Table 2-11).

Table 2-10

THE ELDERLY FEEL THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD IS SAFER
WHEN THEY RECOGNIZE THEIR NEIGHBORS

Proportion of People Recognized	Neighborhood Safe? *		Row Total
	Yes	No	
No one	50.0 (1.6)	50.0 (3.7)	(2.3)
50% or less	70.3 (52.0)	29.7 (50.0)	(51.4)
More than 50%	61.4 (28.5)	38.6 (40.7)	(32.2)
Everyone	88.0 (17.9)	12.0 (5.6)	(14.1)
Column Total	69.5	30.5	100.0

Base = 177 respondents

*"No" responses shown in this table are a combination of the "no" and "not particularly" responses in Table 2-3.

Table 2-11

THE ELDERLY SEE FEWER UNSAFE PLACES IF
THEY RECOGNIZE THEIR NEIGHBORS

Proportion of People Recognized	Unsafe Places in Area			Row Total
	Everywhere	Some Places	Nowhere	
No one	25.0 (16.7)	25.0 (2.6)	50.0 (1.5)	(2.3)
50% or less	1.1 (16.7)	22.0 (52.6)	76.9 (52.6)	(51.4)
More than 50%	5.3 (50.0)	22.8 (34.2)	71.9 (30.8)	(32.2)
Everyone	4.0 (16.7)	16.0 (10.5)	80.0 (15.0)	(14.1)
Column Total	3.4	21.5	75.1	100.0

Base = 177 respondents

Rating of Police Protection

Those respondents who have a high opinion of police protection feel much safer in their neighborhoods. Seventy-seven percent of those rating police protection in their neighborhood good or excellent said their neighborhoods were safe, compared with 49 percent that felt the neighborhoods were safe among those rating the police fair or poor (Table 2-12).

Table 2-12
FEELINGS OF NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY AGREE WITH
RATINGS OF POLICE PROTECTION

Police Protection	Neighborhood Safe?*		Row Total
	Yes	No	
Excellent	79.6 (36.4)	20.4 (21.7)	(32.0)
Good	74.6 (46.7)	25.4 (37.0)	(43.8)
Fair	48.4 (14.0)	51.6 (34.8)	(20.3)
Poor	50.0 (2.8)	50.0 (6.5)	(3.9)
Column Total	69.9	30.1	100.0

Base = 152 respondents

*See footnote, Table 2-10.

TRANSPORTATION

Most of the respondents seem to have access to an automobile, because they most often travel by either their own car or that of a friend or relative.⁵ Almost 75 percent most often travel by car in the daytime. Seventeen percent walk alone or with someone else in the daytime, and less than ten percent use public transportation (buses) or taxis. Less than two percent of the respondents don't go out at all in the daytime.

⁵Over 80 percent of the elderly in Montgomery County live in households that own cars, according to the Status and Needs... report (Ibid, p. 30). Figures from the 1970 Census indicate that among all households in the U.S. headed by persons aged 65 years and older, 55.5 percent of these households owned an automobile. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Consumer Buying Indicators, Current Population Reports, Series P.65, No. 40, 1972 Table 1. While these figures are not directly comparable to those for Montgomery County, they do suggest that the elderly in Montgomery County (and in Silver Spring) are more mobile than the average elderly person in the U.S.

Nighttime transportation shows a marked difference from that used in the daytime. First of all, 13 percent of the elderly respondents don't go out at all at night. Of those that do go out at night, 95 percent drive their own car or ride with a friend or relative. Just over three percent walk alone or with someone else and just under two percent go places by taxi. None of the respondents take buses at night. Tables 2-13 and 2-14 give a breakdown of the most frequent means of transportation in the daytime and nighttime.

Table 2-13

MOST FREQUENT MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION DURING THE DAY

Most frequent means	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Walk alone	27	15.4
Walk w/someone else	3	1.7
Drive a car	85	48.6
Ride w/friend or relative	45	25.7
Take a bus	7	4.0
Take a taxi	8	4.6
	<u>175</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Table 2-14

MOST FREQUENT MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION AT NIGHT

Most frequent means	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Walk alone	2	1.3
Walk w/someone else	3	1.9
Drive a car	69	44.5
Ride w/friend or relative	78	50.3
Take a bus	0	0.0
Take a taxi	3	1.9
	<u>155</u>	<u>99.9</u>

CONTACTS WITH THE POLICE

Just over 45 percent of the elderly respondents have had a recent direct contact with the police (within the past five years). Of those that have had a recent direct contact, 30 percent said that contact was the result of their being a crime victim. (See Table 2-15.) Three-fourths of those who had had a recent direct contact were very satisfied with the police response. Only 11.5 percent were very dissatisfied, as shown in Table 2-16. Of the 80 persons who had recent direct contacts, 75 were with the Montgomery County Police. Persons whose most recent police contact was with the Montgomery County Police were more likely to be satisfied than persons whose most recent contact was with other police forces.

Table 2-15

HOW THE MOST RECENT CONTACT WITH POLICE OCCURRED

Contact because	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Crime victim ⁶	24	30.0
Accident	19	23.8
Public Service	3	3.8
Other Reason ⁷	<u>34</u>	<u>42.5</u>
	80	100.0

Table 2-16

HOW SATISFIED WERE YOU WITH THE POLICE RESPONSE?

Satisfaction Level	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Very satisfied	58	74.4
Somewhat satisfied	9	11.5
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	1	1.3
Somewhat dissatisfied	1	1.3
Very dissatisfied	<u>9</u>	<u>11.5</u>
	78	100.0

⁶The difference between the 24 crime victims reported here and the 43 crime victims reported on page 26 is due to the nature of this particular question (even though they have been a victim, their most recent contact with the police was not necessarily as the victim of a crime).

⁷"Other reasons" included crimes or harrassments to others in the neighborhood, noise or disturbances, looking for a missing person, and a variety of unique situations.

VICTIMS OF CRIME

Types of Crime

The elderly respondents in this survey were asked if they had been a victim of any of eight different crimes: robbery, larceny, assault, aggravated assault, fraud, vandalism, rape and burglary. Of the 178 respondents, 43 or just under one-fourth (24%) had been the victim⁸ of at least one attempted or actual crime. These 43 individuals have been the victims of 87 separate incidents of attempted or actual crime. Of these 87 incidents, 25 or roughly 29 percent have been attempted (the crime was in process but was not completed), and 62 or about 71 percent have been actual (the crime was completed). The crimes of larceny and vandalism had the greatest number of victims with 14 apiece, followed by burglary with 10 victims and robbery which had nine. Surprisingly, fraud victims numbered only two, and both were attempted but not actual. Rape and aggravated assault did not claim any victims, and only one individual was the victim of an assault, that one being an attempt. When the nine robbery victims are added, the total of violent crime victims (robbery, assault, aggravated assault and rape) comes to 10 out of a total number of 43 victims, which is less than one-fourth. Out of all the elderly respondents, less than six percent have been the victim of a violent crime. The 43 victims were victimized recently a total of fifty times, meaning that some victims were the victims of two or possibly even three different crimes or incidents. Table 2-17 gives a breakdown on the 50 most recent victimizations across these 43 victims, including both attempted and actual crimes.

Table 2-17
RECENT VICTIMIZATIONS

Crime	# of most recent victimizations	# Tot. pop. victimized	# Attempted	# Actual
Robbery	9	5.1	5	15
Larceny	14	7.9	6	25
Assault	1	0.6	1	0
Aggravated Assault	0	.0	0	0
Fraud	2	1.1	2	0
Vandalism	14	7.9	8	14
Rape	0	.0	0	0
Burglary	10	5.6	3	8
	50	24.2	25	62

⁸If an individual has been victimized more than once, they are counted only once as a victim.

Rate of Reporting

As was mentioned earlier, it has been ascertained that a large percentage of crimes against the elderly go unreported, perhaps as many as 50 percent.⁹ Of the 50 most recent victimizations (across 43 victims), 36 or 72 percent were reported to the police. This would leave 28 percent of the crime unreported, suggesting that the elderly in Silver Spring report crimes more often than their counterparts elsewhere. However, this figure could be higher for two reasons. First, the elderly do not always know when they have been victimized, particularly in the case of fraud, and thus would not report such an incident. Secondly, there could possibly be individuals who did not admit to being victims to the interviewer. If an individual did not wish to report a victimization to the police, it is certainly possible that they would not want to report it to a stranger (interviewer), perhaps for the same reason. This would be understandable, particularly in the case of rape, where the embarrassment and anguish would make the reporting of such a crime to an interviewer unthinkable, and in the case of fraud, where the individual's embarrassment at being "taken" by a swindler would probably cause him not to report it to a stranger (interviewer). Table 2-18 shows the reporting for the 50 most recent victimizations of the elderly respondents.

Table 2-18

RATE OF REPORTING FOR THE MOST RECENT VICTIMIZATIONS

Crime	# Recent Victimizations	# Reported	% Reported
Robbery	9	7	77.8
Larceny	14	11	78.6
Assault	1	0	0.0
Aggravated assault	0	--	---
Fraud	2	0	0.0
Vandalism	14	8	57.1
Rape	0	--	---
Burglary	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>100.0</u>
	50	36	72.0

⁹ Ernst, Jodry, and Friedsam, op. cit.

ACTIONS RELATED TO EXPOSURE TO CRIME

This section looks at the day-to-day actions of the elderly, in terms of whether they go out or not, and how often they go out. It also looks at their actions when they admit to being afraid of a certain situation or place, and it looks at the protective measures, if any, the elderly have taken to avoid crime in their homes or apartments and on the street.

Going Outside

Ninety-nine percent of the elderly respondents do go outside in the daytime. At night the figure drops to 87 percent. Of those that do go out after dark, 40 percent do so very frequently (two to five times a week), with approximately 30 percent each going out once or less per month and two to four times per month.

Fear of Particular Situations

The respondents were asked if there were times when they were afraid to go outside. Of those that responded that there were times when they were afraid, seventy-five percent said that they would stay inside, or that the fear would deter them from going out. (See Table 2-19.) The respondents were also asked if they felt there were any unsafe places in their area. Of those that felt there were unsafe places, 84 percent said that they would avoid them, again showing that the fear does deter them (Table 2-20). Thirty-seven percent of the respondents reported that fear of crime does keep them from doing things they would like to do at least sometimes (Table 2-21), and one-fourth said there were times in the past year that they wanted to go somewhere but did not do so because they thought it would not be safe. (Table 2-22).

Table 2-19

WHEN AFRAID TO GO OUT, I USUALLY . . .

When afraid, I	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Usually go out	10	15.9
Sometimes go out/ sometimes stay in	6	9.5
Usually stay in	47	74.6
	63*	100.0

*114 people were not afraid to go out at any time.

Table 2-20

DO YOU AVOID UNSAFE PLACES IN THE AREA?

Do you avoid?	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	37	84.1
No	<u>7</u>	<u>15.9</u>
	44*	100.0

*134 people do not feel there are any unsafe places in their areas.

Table 2-21

DOES FEAR OF CRIME KEEP YOU FROM DOING THINGS YOU'D LIKE TO DO?

How often activities are curtailed	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Quite often	18	10.2
Sometimes	48	27.1
Never	<u>111</u>	<u>62.7</u>
	177	100.0

Table 2-22

HAVE THERE BEEN TIMES IN THE PAST YEAR THAT YOU WANTED TO GO SOMEWHERE BUT DECIDED NOT TO BECAUSE YOU THOUGHT IT WOULD NOT BE SAFE?

Didn't go out, it wasn't safe	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	45	25.4
No	<u>132</u>	<u>74.6</u>
	177	100.0

Taken Protective Measures

Just over one-half of the elderly respondents have taken protective measures to avoid crime in their homes or apartments and on the street. (See Table 2-23.) The most frequent protective measure used is that of security locks. Over one-third of the respondents have security locks¹⁰ on the doors and windows in their homes or apartments. Almost one-third turn their lights on when their residence is vacant. One-fourth use caution when they are outside, but others... "No, no specific measures," said one lady in her eighties, "they'd just take one look at me and run."

Table 2-23

SPECIFIC PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN

Specific Protective Measure	Yes/ Have taken	% of all Respondents ¹¹ (177)
Installed security locks. ¹²	61	34.5
Not carry money when go out	15	8.5
Avoid going out at night	45	25.4
Carry a weapon or have one at home	15	8.5
Marked property for identification	16	9.0
Attended meeting on crime prevention	12	6.8
Turn lights on when residence vacant	56	31.6
Got a dog or installed an alarm system	8	4.5
Use caution when outside	43	24.3

¹⁰Security locks are required by County law in apartment buildings with more than four units. In private homes, the decision whether or not to install such locks rests with the homeowner. The proportions of renters and of homeowners with security locks are nearly identical: about one-third of the respondents in each group.

¹¹An individual had the option of answering yes to all measures, and therefore the percentages will more than add to 100 and there will be a greater number of yes responses than the number of individuals who have taken measures.

¹²Security locks may have been installed by the managers of some apartment buildings even though the locks were not requested by the elderly themselves. See footnote number ten.

3

ELDERLY VICTIMS OF CRIME

INTRODUCTION

As discussed in the previous chapter, we found that approximately one-quarter of our sample (24 percent) had been the victim of an actual or attempted crime^{1,2} during the previous five years. Nine percent had been victims in 1975 or 1976. (In the Status and Needs Survey of the Elderly in Montgomery County, nine percent reported that they had been the victim of a crime within the past year.) Eighty-one percent of the victims of actual crimes had been victimized only once; forty-five percent of the victims of actual or attempted crimes had been victims (or attempted victims) only once. The most frequent crimes (not counting obscene phone calls) were larceny, vandalism, robbery, and burglary.

This chapter discusses in depth the characteristics of elderly persons who had been victimized to determine if any particular patterns of criminal victimization are evident. Do the victims tend to live in particular areas? Are they particularly younger or older than non-victims? Are they mostly women? And what happens to victims — are they more fearful after having been victims? Do they stay in more now or go out the same amount as before? These and other questions will be answered on the pages that follow.

¹Obscene phone calls were deleted from this calculation because it was found that their inclusion would distort some of the statistics concerning more serious crimes.

²Three percent were victims of attempted crimes only and twenty-one percent were victims of actual crimes. Conversely, 76 percent were not the victim of either an actual or attempted crime. These victimization rates are lower than those reported for other areas. (See Rifai, Older Americans' Crime Prevention Research Project, p. 27).

CHARACTERISTICS OF ELDERLY VICTIMS

Age

No clear-cut pattern emerges from the analysis of age versus victimization, although some interesting facts are observable. Victims were more likely to be in the 70-74 year age group than in any other — 33 percent of those in that group had been victims. The next age group most likely to be victimized was 60-64. Persons over 75 years of age were least likely to be victimized — less than eleven percent of them had been victims. Twenty-four percent of all elderly interviewed had been victimized. (See Table 3-1.)

Table 3-1
CRIMINAL VICTIMIZATION VARIES WITH AGE

Victim?	Age Categories				Row Total
	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-84	
No	28.4 (69.1)	23.9 (78.0)	16.4 (66.7)	30.6 (89.1)	(76.1)
Yes	40.5 (30.9)	21.4 (22.0)	26.2 (33.3)	11.9 (10.9)	(23.9)
Column Total	31.3	23.3	18.8	26.1	100

Base: 175 respondents

NOTE: In each cell, the top number is the row percentage (e.g., the percent of all those in one victimization category who are of a particular age) and the bottom number (in parentheses) is the column percentage (the percent of all those in one age category who have or have not been victims of an actual or attempted crime). A similar convention will be followed in subsequent tables.

Income

Once again, no simple pattern of victimization is discernible. The median personal income of those interviewed was \$11,000. Persons with income between \$4,000 and \$8,000 per year were more likely to be victims, as were those with incomes over \$20,000. Persons in the \$10,000 - \$15,000 range were only half as likely to be victims as the total elderly population of Silver Spring. This complex pattern suggests that there may be several causal factors working at the same time: perhaps the low income elderly are victimized more frequently because they tend to live in high-crime areas, and perhaps the high-income elderly are considered to be "good targets" by criminals. Not having these attributes, the middle-income elderly would be victimized less frequently.

Sex

Whether an elderly individual in Montgomery County is male or female makes no difference whatsoever in their propensity to be a victim of crime. (However, the types of crime vary.)

The combination of age and sex does appear to influence victimization: some age/sex groups are more likely to be victims than others. In other words, female victims tend to be older than male victims. Age categories of high victimization are 60-64 for males and 70-74 for females. (See Tables 3-2 and 3-3.) Ninety percent of all male victims were less than 70 years of age (while those under 70 comprised 69 percent of the males interviewed). Females under seventy accounted for 44 percent of the female victims and 46 percent of the female population.

Race

As expected, our figures show that non-whites are more likely than whites to be victims of crime. Thirty-three percent of the non-whites were victims, in contrast to 25 percent of the white respondents. However, due to the small number of non-whites interviewed (15 persons or 9.1 percent of our sample),³ the difference is not statistically significant.

³This is the proportion of non-white respondents expected from analyzing U.S. Census data.

Table 3-2
AGE VS. VICTIMIZATION FOR MALES

Victim?	Age Categories				Row Total
	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-84	
No	24.0 (60.0)	38.0 (76.0)	12.0 (85.7)	24.0 (100.0)	(76.9)
Yes	53.3 (40.0)	40.0 (24.0)	6.7 (14.3)	.0 (.0)	(23.1)
Column Total	30.8	38.5	10.8	18.5	100

Base = 65 male respondents

Table 3-3
AGE VS. VICTIMIZATION FOR FEMALES

Victim?	Age Categories				Row Total
	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-84	
No	31.0 (74.3)	15.5 (81.3)	19.0 (61.5)	34.5 (85.3)	(75.7)
Yes	33.3 (25.7)	11.1 (18.8)	37.0 (38.5)	18.5 (14.7)	(24.3)
Column Total	31.5	14.4	23.4	30.6	100.

Base = 111 female respondents

Living Arrangements

Contrary to popular belief, this survey shows that whether or not an elderly person is living alone does not make any difference as to their propensity to be a victim of crime. Thirty percent of the victims lived alone, and 32 percent of all elderly interviewed (victims and non-victims) lived alone. (The difference between 30 and 32 percent is not statistically significant for our sample because of the limited number of respondents).

Women living alone were victimized at the same rate as women living with someone else. Our figures show that men living alone are less likely to be victims than men living with someone else.⁴

Location

The elderly who live in the southern portion of Silver Spring — the oldest, most urban, most densely settled part of the study area — are much more likely than persons living in the other two areas to have been victims of crime. The southern portion contains 58 percent of the respondents but 70 percent of the victims. (It only contains 55 percent of the non-victims). Twenty-nine percent of those in the southern section have been victims in recent years versus five percent in the most northern section.

Years in the Neighborhood

Although the differences are not large, it appears that persons who have lived in the same neighborhood for the longest time are more likely to be victims of crime than those who have more recently moved. (See Table 3-4.) Several factors could account for this. Persons living in a neighborhood for a very long time could see substantial social and economic changes there but might not be able to

⁴Because of the small number of men living alone in the sample, this difference is not statistically significant.

to afford to move. Conversely, persons who have lived in the same place for a long time might have a false sense of security about the area, whether or not it has recently changed. More research is needed to determine the exact cause of the observed relationship.

Table 3-4
YEARS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD VS. VICTIMIZATION

Victim?	Years in the Neighborhood		Row TOTAL
	Less than 10	10 or more	
No	34.4 (84.1)	65.6 (71.0)	(75.7)
Yes	23.3 (15.9)	76.7 (29.0)	(24.3)
Column Total	35.6	64.4	100.

Composite Profile of the Elderly Victims

In Montgomery County, there really is no such thing as a "typical" elderly victim of crime. There is no particular combination of demographic characteristics that would make an elderly person more or less likely to be a victim of crime. This is not to negate the findings of the previous pages, but to say that there is no statistically valid combination of these individual characteristics that significantly influences one's probability of victimization.⁵

This has several implications. First, it supports the contention that "anyone could be a victim." Second, it shows that crimes against the elderly do not follow any particular pattern with regard to victims — e.g., elderly women in downtown Silver Spring are not more likely to be attacked than other elderly persons. Thus, precautionary measures are prudent for all the elderly.

⁵ This finding agrees with that reported by Rifai in Oregon. See Marlene A. Y. Rifai, Older Americas Crime Prevention Research Project, Multnomah County, Division of Public Safety, Portland, Oregon (December, 1976)

WHAT HAPPENS TO ELDERLY VICTIMS AFTER THE CRIME?

Being the victim of a crime can be a potentially traumatic experience. Besides direct economic losses and physical or mental pain, being a victim can have a profound effect on attitudes and actions. For example, victims might be more afraid of crime than others, and this could influence the protective measures they take around their own homes and their actions when they leave their homes. Victimization and the response of police officers could affect attitudes toward the police and our criminal justice system. This section explores these and other factors.

Effects on Attitudes

Ease of Victimization

Despite their first-hand experience as victims of crime, those who have been victims were no more likely than those who had not been victimized to feel that "I could easily be the victim of a crime." Overall, seventy percent of the respondents felt that they could easily be the victim of a crime.

Prevalence of Crime

Most people feel that "this neighborhood has less crime than other places" — more than two-thirds of the respondents answered in this fashion. No significant variation in the respondents' ratings of their neighborhood can be attributed to victimization — 67 percent of the victims felt that their neighborhood had less crime than other places, while 69 percent of the non-victims felt this way; five percent of the victims felt that their neighborhood had more crime, while four percent of the non-victims felt this way.

Safety of the Immediate Neighborhood

Persons who have been victims of a crime have (statistically) significantly different opinions of the safety of their neighborhood than those who have not been victimized. As shown in Table 3-5, over 50 percent of those who have been victims feel that their neighborhood is safe but 75 percent of those who have not been victims feel safe.

This suggests that two apparently similar questions — "Is this neighborhood safe?" and "Does this neighborhood have more or less crime than other areas?" — are in fact, quite different. The question about neighborhood safety evidently provides more useful information.

Table 3-5

VICTIMS OF CRIME FEEL LESS SAFE IN THEIR OWN NEIGHBORHOODS

Victim?	Is This Neighborhood Safe?		Row Total
	Yes	No	
No	75.4 (82.1)	24.6 (61.1)	(75.7)
Yes	51.2 (17.9)	48.8 (38.9)	(24.3)
Column Total	69.5	30.5	100.

Base = 177 respondents

Perceptions of Police Protection

Whether or not a person has been a victim of a crime apparently does not influence their perception of the police protection in their local area. Almost the same proportion of victims as non-victims see police protection as good or excellent.

Fear of Going Out

The elderly who have been victims are not more afraid of going out than are non-victims. This finding would be very unusual were it not for two important facts: the elderly in Montgomery County are not often the victims of violent crimes, and the overall level of fear expressed by this variable is not great.

The Probability of Elderly Being Victims

The majority of elderly persons feel that persons over 60 are more likely to be victims of crime than are younger persons. This feeling does not vary by victimization; the same proportion of victims and non-victims feel that the elderly are more likely to be victims.

Effects on Behavior

Walking Alone

Whether or not a person has been a victim of a crime makes a little difference in walking behavior, but not much. Persons who have been victims are more likely than the non-victim to never walk alone during the day (42 percent to 32 percent). However, victims are less likely than non-victims to never walk alone at night (70 percent to 87 percent). Of all the elderly, 34 percent never walk alone during the day and 83 percent never walk alone at night.

Travelling After Dark

While being a victim of a crime does not appear to reduce an elderly person's frequency of travel after dark, greater travel after dark may increase the probability of being a victim. Of those who go out after dark less than once a month, 16 percent have been victims of a crime; while of those who go out after dark more often than twice a week, 39 percent have been victims. (See Table 3-6.)

Table 3-6
THOSE WHO TRAVEL MORE OFTEN AFTER DARK
ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE VICTIMS

Victim?	Frequency of Travel After Dark				Row Total
	Less than Once a Month	1-4 Times per Month	Once a Week	More than Twice Every Week	
No	18.6 (84.0)	25.7 (78.3)	21.2 (77.4)	33.6 (61.2)	(72.4)
Yes	9.3 (16.0)	18.6 (21.6)	16.3 (22.6)	55.8 (38.8)	(27.6)
Column Total	16.0	23.8	19.9	39.7	100.

Base = 156 respondents

Fear of Crime Immobilizing

A major hypothesis of this and similar studies is that some persons are so fearful of crime that they forego a host of activities in which they would like to participate. When asked "Does fear of crime keep you from doing things you would like to do?", sixty-five percent of the non-victims said that it never did, versus 54 percent of the victims. Thus, according to this measure, victims say that they are more fearful and behave differently than non-victims. (As noted above, frequency of travel after dark is evidently not among the behavior pattern that change due to victimization.)

Protective Measures

Persons who have been victims of crime are much more likely to have taken protective measures to prevent crime than non-victims. Sixty-three percent of the victims have taken protective measures, while only forty-six percent of the non-victims have. (See Table 3-7). The protective measures most frequently used are adding security locks, leaving lights on when leaving the house, and not going out at night.

Table 3-7
PROTECTIVE MEASURES VS. VICTIMIZATION

Victims	Taken Protective Measures?		Row Total
	Yes	No	
No	46.3 (69.7)	53.7 (81.8)	(75.7)
Yes	62.8 (30.3)	37.2 (18.2)	(24.3)
Column Total	50.3	49.7	100.

Base = 177 respondents

Cancelling Planned Activities

Respondents were asked if there were times in the past year when they wanted to go somewhere but decided not to because they thought it would not be safe. Non-victims cancelled activities almost as often as victims because of fears of safety. In fact, the difference between victims and non-victims is so small that it is not statistically significant.

Summary

The crimes that have occurred against the elderly in Montgomery County in recent years have not frequently been violent crimes. Perhaps for this reason, the elderly in Montgomery County who have been victims of crimes are not very different from non-victims in their attitudes or behavior, with several exceptions. Persons who have been victims are likely to rate their neighborhood as less safe than non-victims. More of the victims say that fear of crime keeps from from doing things they would like to do, and more victims than non-victims have taken protective measures against crime.

4

THE FEAR OF CRIME AMONG THE ELDERLY

THE CURRENT LEVEL OF FEAR

Although much has been written about the fear of crime, none of the literature reviewed was very explicit about precisely how one might measure the amount of fear that an elderly person might have. For that reason, we used several questions to elicit multiple measures of fear. As in other studies, there is some question whether the measurement of fear is properly a measurement of attitudes or of behavior. Without conclusive evidence either way, we have used both attitudinal and behavioral measures.

Measures of Fear

We used the following questions to measure the fear of crime among the elderly:

- Are there times when you are afraid to go outside?
- Do you feel that you could easily be the victim of a crime?
- Do you feel that persons over 60 years of age are more likely to be victims of crime than younger persons?
- Does fear of crime keep you from doing things you would like to do?
- Have there been any times in the past year that you wanted to go somewhere but decided not to because you thought it would not be safe?

As can be seen, the first three questions are primarily attitudinal in nature, while the last two focus more on actual behavior. These questions are supported by a variety of other questions that deal less directly with fear but focus on related attitudes and behavior.

The five fear measures indicate that from one quarter to three-quarters of the elderly are fearful. This variation occurs because the five measures discuss different aspects of fear. The measures of fear are shown in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1

MEASURES OF FEAR OF CRIME AMONG THE ELDERLY

Measure	Percent Yes
Sometimes afraid to go outside	33.3
Could easily be a victim	70.2
Elderly more likely to be victims	77.2
Fear of crime curtails activities	37.3*
Didn't go out, not safe	25.4

*Yes responses included "quite often," 10.2%; "sometimes," 27.1%. All other questions involved simple yes/no responses.

The Details of Fear

What do each of these measures really mean? We asked the respondents probing questions about each of their responses.

Afraid of Going Out

Those who were afraid to go out were asked when they were afraid to go out. More than 80 percent of those who are fearful are afraid to go out at night. Several persons said, "I wouldn't even go mail a letter at night." In addition, five percent of those who are afraid are afraid to go out alone and five percent are afraid to go out anytime.

When asked why they were afraid to go out, 27 percent of those afraid said that it was just not safe in general, 16 percent said that it was not safe to be alone, and 13 percent said that there was more crime at night. Several persons cited stories of "things happening" or of warnings from the media about crime.

Could Easily be a Victim

When asked why they thought they could be a victim, 58 percent said that anyone can be a victim these days. Fifteen percent said that the elderly are

more susceptible to crime. Some persons are very pessimistic about being able to escape victimization — several gave comments such as "crime just seems to be a way of life these days."

Of those who thought that they could not easily be a victim, 35 percent said this was because they were careful and didn't take chances. Thirteen percent said they had taken special precautions, (see for example, page 30), and ten percent felt that they had nothing worth stealing.

Elderly More Likely Victims

Among persons who felt that the elderly were more likely to be victims, 72 percent said that this was because the elderly were weaker. Nine percent attributed the higher probability to criminals considering the elderly as "good targets" and six percent said that it was because the elderly had more money these days. Some persons say they had read in newspapers that the elderly are more likely victims (and some persons say they have read that the elderly are not more likely victims; these conflicting stories confuse some of the elderly).

Among persons who felt that the elderly were not more likely to be victims, 43 percent said this was because crime could happen to anyone and 16 percent said this was because the young are not as careful as the elderly where they go and when.

Fear Curtails Activities

The most common restriction on activities is not going out at night; 40 percent of those restricting their activities did not go out at night. Eighteen percent do not go into the District of Columbia at night, and 13 percent do not go there at all because of fear of crime. Twelve percent of the elderly do not go out alone.

Didn't Go Out, Not Safe

Of times the elderly didn't go out because of fears of safety, the most frequent occasions (41 percent of such responses) are declining invitations to go out at night to a theater or other entertainment. Eleven percent would not go to their friends' houses. Some persons specifically avoid events that will end late at night.

Different Aspects of Fear

As previously noted, the five variables express somewhat different attributes of fear. Several techniques were employed to see if these measures were truly independent or if some combination of the measures was possible.

Table 4-2 shows a correlation matrix of the five fear measures. The correlation coefficients shown are measures of one's ability to accurately predict the response to one question (for example, "Are there times when you are afraid to go outside?") by knowing the response to another question (for example, "Do you feel that you could easily be the victim of a crime?"). As can be seen from the table, the overall correlations among the measures are not high, indicating that the measures do provide somewhat unique indicators of fear. The strongest association is among the two variables that discuss behavior modification as a result of fear, the curtailment of planned activities due to fear and the lack of travel due to fear. It is interesting to note the negative correlation between feelings of being afraid to go outside and perceptions of the elderly as more likely victims. This indicates that the elderly's vulnerability to crime is accepted without much effect on individual attitudes or behavior.

Table 4-2

CORRELATIONS* AMONG FEAR MEASURES

Measure	Afraid to go outside	Easily be a victim	Elderly likely victims	Fear curtails activities	Didn't go out, not safe
Afraid to go outside	1.000		-.126		
Easily be a victim		1.000	.148	.149	.161
Elderly likely victims	-.126	.148	1.000		
Fear curtails activities		.149		1.000	.587
Didn't go out, not safe		.161		.587	1.000

*Correlations shown are those that could have occurred by chance alone less than 5 percent of the time. In other words, we are fairly sure that the numbers shown are accurate.

The interrelationships of the fear measures were also explored through factor analysis. The factor analysis created three factors to explain the common dimensions of the five measures. Again, a very strong relationship between fear curtailment activities and not going out because of fear of safety was observed.

These two variables are the major components of a factor that explains 70 percent of the variance of the fear variables. The second factor is primarily comprised of perceptions of the elderly as more likely victims and the fear of going out. A person's feeling that he or she could easily be a victim is a factor that is apparently independent of the other measures of fear.

Overall Fear of Crime

We created a simple index of overall fear by adding positive responses to the four fear questions that seemed to be related to each other according to the factor analysis:

- Does fear of crime keep you from doing things you'd like to do?
- Have there been any times in the past year that you wanted to go somewhere but decided not to because you thought it would not be safe?
- Are there times when you are afraid to go outside?
- Do you feel that you could easily be the victim of a crime?

A person responding positively to all four questions would be judged highly fearful and a person responding negatively to all questions would be judged fearless. We found 12 percent of the sample to be very fearful and 15 percent to be fearless. Twenty-six percent could be called moderately or highly fearful and 54 percent could be called a little fearful or fearless. These responses are displayed in Figure 4-1.

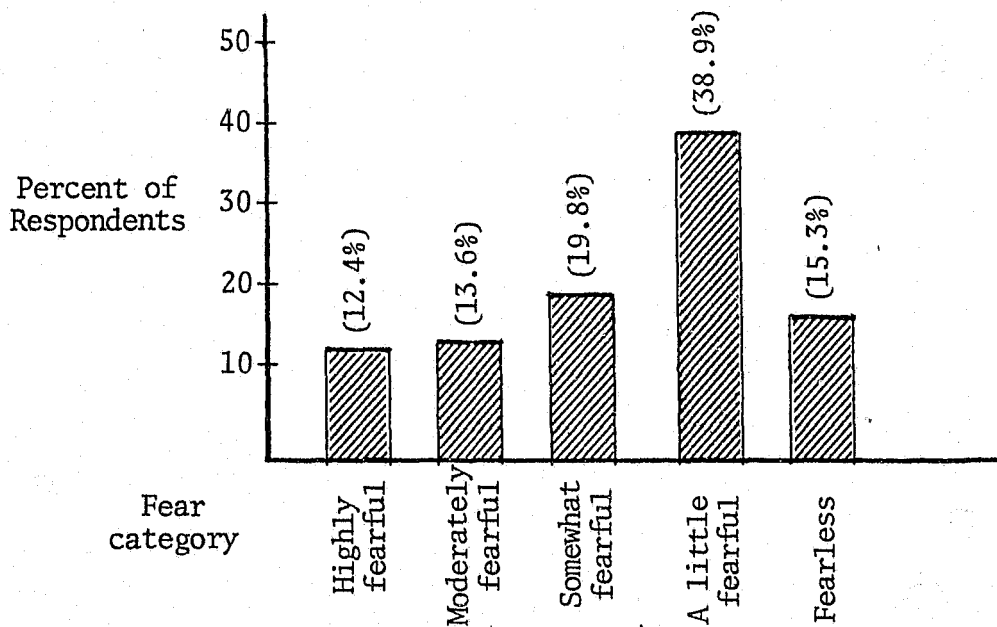


Figure 4-1: COMPOSITE LEVEL OF FEAR

WHO IS AFRAID?

In this section, we focus on the characteristics of persons who are fearful as they contrast to the elderly in general. While we will consider all of the five fear variables in the analysis, this discussion will, according to the results of the previous section, focus on two measures: being afraid to go outside and curtailing activities due to fear.

Persons Who are Afraid to Go Outside

Age

There is a very strong, highly significant relationship between age and fear of going out. The oldest of the elderly are more fearful than the youngest by a substantial amount. However, the least fearful are those between 65 and 74 years of age, as shown in Table 4-3.

Table 4-3

THE FEAR OF GOING OUT VARIES WITH AGE

Afraid to go out?	Age of Respondent				Row Total
	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-84	
Yes	29.8 (30.9)	17.5 (24.4)	15.8 (27.3)	36.8 (45.7)	(32.4)
No	32.2 (69.1)	26.3 (75.6)	20.3 (72.7)	21.2 (54.3)	(67.0)
Column Total	31.3	23.3	18.8	26.1	

Base = 175 respondents.

Sex

Women are much more fearful of going out than men (or, at least they admit it more often). The relationship shown in Table 4-4 is extremely strong. Also, males are more likely than females to be employed, and persons who are employed are less likely to be afraid than persons who are not employed. (Elderly males are more likely to be employed than elderly females because they are more often still of a working age and because, among persons born before 1917, a much higher proportion of women than men have never worked.)

Table 4-4
WOMEN ARE MORE OFTEN AFRAID TO GO OUT

Afraid to go out?	Sex of Respondent		Row Total
	Male	Female	
Yes	15.3 (14.1)	84.7 (44.2)	(33.3)
No	46.6 (85.9)	53.4 (55.8)	(66.7)
Column Total	36.2	63.8	100.0

Base = 178 respondents

The concept that elderly women are more afraid of crime is also supported by statistics concerning activities curtailed due to fear: 42 percent of the women have curtailed activities versus only 28 percent of the men. Similarly, women more often reported that there were times during the past year that they didn't go out than did men (29 percent to 19 percent). But before we convince ourselves that women are much more fearful of crime than men, there are two more interesting statistics to note: elderly men were as likely as elderly women to believe that they will personally be the victim of a crime, and elderly men were more likely than elderly women to believe that the elderly are more likely to be victims of crime than are the non-elderly (85 percent to 73 percent among those with a definite opinion). (See Table 4-5 for a complete breakdown of responses.) How can the apparent contradictions in these responses be resolved?

First it is possible that elderly men more often have the view of the elderly as more likely victims of crime because these men are, for the first time in their lives, vulnerable to attack. They have less strength, agility, and perception than in their youth, and this reduction in physical capabilities could heighten their fears for their personal safety or for the defence of their spouse. Elderly women, on the other hand, may have felt physically vulnerable to crime throughout their lives and, thus, would not have experienced any recent increase in fear.¹

Table 4-5
 ELDERLY MEN MORE OFTEN SEE THE ELDERLY
 AS LIKELY VICTIMS OF CRIME

Elderly more likely victims?	Sex of Respondent		Row Total
	Male	Female	
Yes	40.3 (80.0)	59.7 (68.1)	(72.5)
No	23.7 (13.8)	76.3 (25.7)	(21.3)
Don't Know	36.4 (6.2)	63.6 (6.2)	(6.2)
Column Total	36.5	63.5	100.0

Base = 178 respondents

¹This interpretation is consistent with the concept of projection or transference in survey research, which is that a respondent's true opinion may be more accurately ascertained by asking him or her the opinion of a group of persons similar to the respondent than by asking the respondent's own opinion. Thus, elderly men would be seen as more "honest" when speaking of other elderly men than when speaking of themselves. An alternative explanation is that elderly men know that a majority of the elderly are women, and see elderly women as highly vulnerable to crime. Even if this later interpretation were to be accepted, it should be noted that elderly women do not, to the same extent, share this view.

A second possibility is that elderly males may tend to behave as if they are not afraid even when they feel afraid. Whether this be called courage, *machismo*, or foolishness, it does appear to occur some times. For example, when persons who said they were sometimes afraid to go out were asked "What do you do when you are afraid - go out, stay in, or sometimes go out and sometimes stay in?" 40 percent of the men and 80 percent of the women said they would stay in. Thus, at least on this one indicator, feelings of fear are much more likely to influence the behavior of women than the behavior of men.

Race

Non-whites are substantially more afraid to go outside than whites: thirty-three percent of all persons are afraid to go outside but 47 percent of non-whites are afraid. However, because of the small number of non-whites in the sample, these results should be used with caution.

Location

Persons in the southernmost portion of Silver Spring are substantially more afraid than those further north, and fear decreases in proportion to the distance from Washington. Forty-four percent of those in the southern area are afraid, which is almost double the amount of the next area, and nine times as much as the northern portion. (See Table 4-6.) This distribution of responses also occurs with respect to the respondent's feeling that he or she could easily be a victim, with this feeling strongest in the southern section. The feeling that the elderly are more likely to be victims does not vary with location in Silver Spring.

Table 4-6

FEAR OF GOING OUT VS. LOCATION

Location	Afraid to go outside		Row Total
	Yes	No	
Southern Silver Spring	43.7 (76.3)	56.3 (49.2)	(58.2)
Central Silver Spring	24.1 (22.0)	75.9 (34.7)	(30.5)
Northern Silver Spring	5.0 (1.7)	95.0 (16.0)	(11.3)
Column Total	33.3	66.7	100.0

Base = 177 respondents.

Education

Education has some influence on the fear of going outside, but the pattern is not a simple one. Looking at the extremes of the educational scale, the least educated more fearful. Of those with less than an eight grade education, 42 percent are afraid to go out; of those with at least some college, 28 percent are afraid. However, some persons in the middle of the educational scale (high school graduates and those who have attended business school) are nearly as afraid as the least educated. This may suggest that elderly persons with less of an education are more in need of information about crime and crime prevention than the more likely educated elderly. If this is true, it has implications for both the content and the media of such informational efforts.

Income

Among the persons in our sample, we could not show a statistically significant relationship between a respondent's income and their fear of going outside. Because income and education are highly correlated, one would expect these characteristics to associate in the same fashion with fear measures; the fact that education is associated with fear, but income is not, is important in the development of programs to reduce fear.

Years in the Neighborhood

Persons who have lived in an area the shortest and the longest tend to have the greatest fears of crime. This is even more pronounced for personal feelings about being a victim and for feeling that the elderly are more likely victims than for fears of going outside. Persons who have lived in an area for a long time are not more fearful than average but persons who have lived there a very short amount of time are afraid. (See Figure 4-2.) This is probably due to the proportion of neighbors recognized, because we also find that persons who recognize most or all of their neighbors are much less likely than others to feel that there are unsafe places in the neighborhood. This is a very strong relationship.

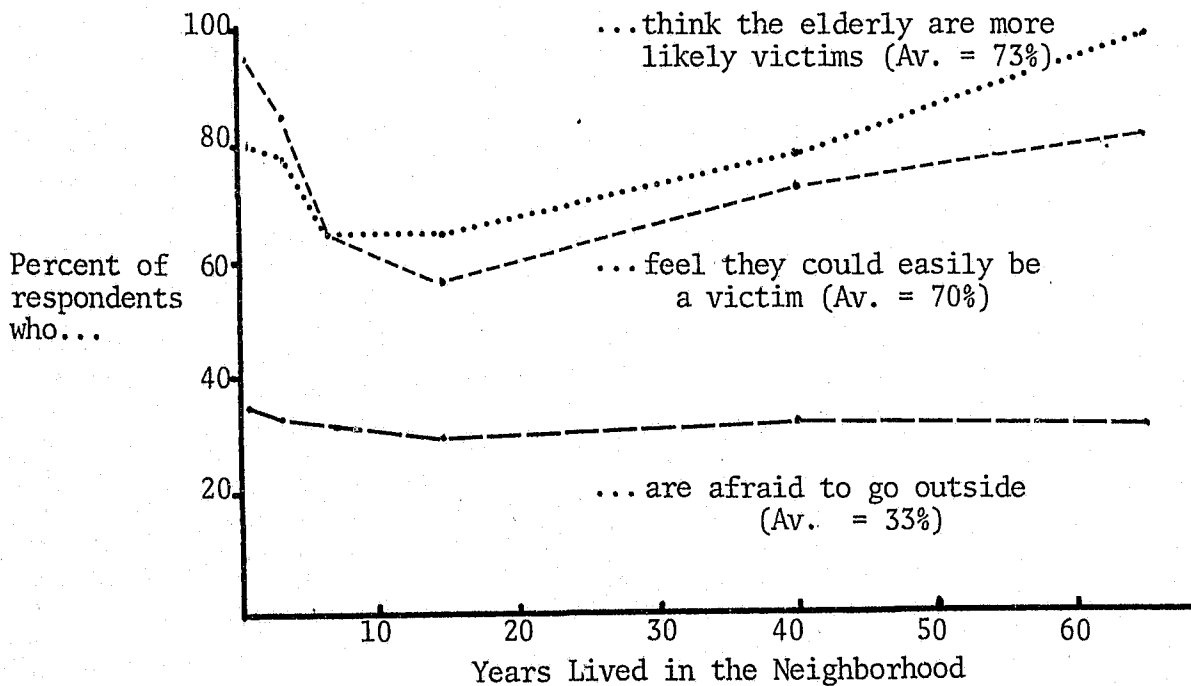


Figure 4-2: THE EFFECT ON LENGTH OF RESIDENCY ON FEAR OF CRIME

Living Arrangements

Persons who live alone are much more likely to be afraid to go outside than persons who do not live alone. This relationship, which is very strong, is shown in Table 4-7. Persons who live with their spouse or children tend to be unafraid.

Table 4-7

FEAR OF GOING OUT VS. LIVING ALONE

Live Alone	Afraid to go outside		Row Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	47.4 (45.8)	52.6 (25.4)	(32.2)
No	26.7 (54.2)	73.3 (74.6)	(67.8)
Column Total	33.3	66.7	100.0

Base = 177 respondents.

Other Associations

Persons who live in single-family houses and those who own their own homes are less likely to be afraid to go out than others. Those who are married and those who have never been married are less likely than persons in other categories to be afraid.

As previously mentioned, there is no association between being a victim and being afraid to go outside. However, the victims of certain types of crime — larceny and vandalism — less frequently reported that they were afraid to go out than persons who were not victims of these crimes.² These unexpected results may be due to the fact that there were so few actual victims in our sample. On the other hand, it is possible that persons who have experienced these crimes felt that the crime was not as bad as they expected it to be. If this is true, it might be because the victim was not physically injured by the crime, suggesting that their greatest fear is for their person and not their property. (But see page 55.)

²The Pearson Correlation Coefficients of fear of going outside are -.40 and -.35 with victim of larceny and victim of vandalism, respectively. Both relationships are statistically significant at the .001 level.

Persons Who Curtail Their Activities

While the previous discussion focussed on attitudes concerning fear, curtailing planned activities is more of a behavioral measure of fear. Nonetheless, a few of the observed associations are similar to those noted with the fear of going out.

Looking at the fear of crime as expressed in terms of curtailing activities, we find few strong associations with characteristics of the elderly. There is a relationship of sorts with location but it is not a simple one. Persons in the southern Silver Spring area are significantly more fearful than other persons. Those least fearful live in the central Silver Spring area, and those living in northern Silver Spring are between the two groups in their degree of fear. Thus, this fear variable does not have a simple relationship with distance from the central city. (This same pattern is borne out by the responses to a similar question: Have there been any times in the past year that you wanted to go somewhere but decided not to because you thought it would not be safe?)

There is also no simple relationship between curtailing activities and age, although some relationship apparently exists. The most fearful of the elderly are those between 65 and 69 years of age; 46 percent of them say that fear of crime keeps them from doing things they would like to do, while only 37 percent of all elderly say this. In contrast, the oldest of the elderly -- those over 75 years of age -- show the least fear; only 26 percent of them have curtailed activities. The other two age groups (60-64 and 70-74) show average amounts of fear. This suggests that some assistance for the elderly is required to adjust to certain life changes as they get older (in particular, retirement can be somewhat traumatic). Once a person has gotten used to being old, with the reduced physical capabilities that may be implied by aging, their level of fear seems to diminish. In addition, there is some evidence that persons who live to age 75 and beyond develop a "survivor mentality" which provides them with an unusual emotional strength with which to face their problems.

The relationship between sex and activities curtailed because of fear is stronger than for any other demographic/fear combination. On this fear measure, women are much more likely than men to be afraid, as shown in Table 4-8.

Other demographic characteristics do not cause variations in the degree to which activities are curtailed. In particular, living arrangements, type of housing, race, length of time in the neighborhood, employment status, education, mode of transportation, and income do not explain variations in this fear measure.

Once again, while there is no statistical relationship between being a victim and curtailing activities, certain types of crime make a difference. In this case, victims of vandalism more frequently reported curtailing activities than persons who were not victims of vandalism. Thus, they are at least somewhat fearful for their property. With the results of the fear of going out, this suggests that victims of vandalism are less fearful but also go out less often than non-victims of vandalism. While this combination is possible, it is difficult to rationalize, and suggests that these results pertaining to vandalism should be interpreted with the utmost care.

Table 4-8
WOMEN ARE MORE LIKELY TO CURTAIL THEIR ACTIVITIES

Fear of crime keeps you from desired activities?	Sex of Respondent		Row Total
	Female	Male	
Yes	72.7 (42.5)	27.3 (28.1)	(37.3)
No	58.6 (57.5)	41.4 (71.9)	(62.7)
Column Total	63.8	36.2	100.0

Base = 177 respondents.

A Composite Profile of the Fearful Elderly Person

Previous sections have described how specific measures of fear relate to individual attributes of the elderly. In this section, we continue the explanation of who is afraid by looking at multiple explanatory factors.

Fear of Going Out

Who is sometimes afraid to go out? We find that no particular combination of demographic variables explains this attitude. Any one group of elderly is no more or less likely to be afraid to go out than any other group.

However, we did find that fear of going out could be explained rather well by a combination of events, attitudes, and personal characteristics. We created an equation that is able to explain 55 percent of the variance in fear of going out at a high level of statistical validity using just four variables:

- recent direct contacts with the police,
- sex of the respondent,
- the number of times that person has been victimized, and
- the perceived safety of the neighborhood.

A person was more likely to be afraid if they had recent direct contacts with the police. Since 30 percent of all contacts resulted from the respondent being the victim of a crime and another 42 percent were often related to a crime or potential or suspected crime nearby, the relationship between police contacts and fear is not surprising. (The fact that three-quarters of those who contacted the police were very satisfied with the police's response and another 12 percent were somewhat satisfied lends further credence to the notion that it is the reason behind the call for the police and not the police contact itself that generates fear.) Men are less likely to be afraid to go out than women. This supports the simple fear vs. sex results reported earlier. Persons who have been victims are more afraid to go out than those who have not. Those who have been victims several times are more fearful than those who have been victims once. This is to be expected. Finally, persons who feel that their neighborhood is not safe are much more likely to be afraid to go out than those who feel their neighborhood is safe.

While these variables explain 55 percent of the variance of fear of going outside, an additional five percent can be explained by adding the following relationships:³

- persons in single-family houses are more likely to be afraid;
- persons who are employed are less likely to be afraid;
- persons who are younger are more likely to be afraid; and
- persons in the urbanized, older portions of Silver Spring are more likely to be afraid.

³ These relationships are not necessarily true all by themselves, but only with the combined influence of all variables shown.

Therefore, the composite picture of someone who is afraid to go out would be a person who

- has recently contacted the police,
- is female,
- has been a victim before,
- thinks the neighborhood is not safe,
- lives in a single-family house in Southern Silver Spring,
- is from 60 to 70 years old, and
- is not employed.

Activities Curtailed

Who curtails their activities because of a fear of crime? Not much of the variation in curtailed activities can be explained through demographic and locational characteristics. The combination of unsafe places in the neighborhood (leading to greater fear), to income (persons with higher incomes are more fearful), and the age of the person (the younger of the elderly are more fearful) explains 12 percent of the variation in curtailed activities.

While it is not possible to explain very much of variation in curtailed activities by any of the variables,⁴ it is important to note that major concerns with the immediate environment are substantial factors. That is, whether or not a person feels safe in their neighborhood has more to do with explaining whether or not they forego some planned activity than do other factors such as age, sex, or location. The two environmental factors that come into play are unsafe places around here and neighborhood safety. Other important factors are whether or not a person is widowed (presumably, widows are recently on their own without the support and protection of their former spouse) and if that person has been a victim of vandalism (if they have, they are more fearful).⁵ Thus, of the four factors contributing to the explanation of variations in curtailing activities in a statistically significant fashion, two have to do with the environment, one with the person's demographic characteristics, and one with their own experiences with crime.

Thus, if there is a typical person who has curtailed activities due to fear, that person

- thinks there are unsafe places in the neighborhood,

⁴ In this case, only 24 percent of the variation in curtailing of activities can be explained.

⁵ The finding that vandalism generates a substantial amount of fear is supported by the findings in Governor's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice, Crime and the Criminal Justice System in Maryland, Opinion Survey II, prepared for the Commission by RMH Research, Inc, November 1976

- is a widow,
- feels that the neighborhood in general is not safe, and
- has been the victim of vandalism.

However, this profile does not include a large portion of those persons who have curtailed activities.

Overall Fear Index

In general, the same variables explain the overall fear index as explain the specific fear measures previously discussed. Attitudes about the safety of the neighborhood, income, location, and age contribute most of what little variance (18 percent) of the overall fear index that can be explained.

Looking at the proportion of the variance explained and other factors, we have concluded that this particular overall index of fear does not add much to our understanding of who is afraid. Therefore, the following section on the effects of fear will focus on the more detailed measures of fear.

THE EFFECTS OF FEAR ON THE ELDERLY'S BEHAVIOR⁶

It has been hypothesized that the fear of crime restricts the activities of the elderly, even to an extent that is severely detrimental to that individual's well-being. To what extent is this true? This section explores a variety of relationships.

Is Fear of Crime Immobilizing?

What do people do when they are afraid? Of those who said that they were sometimes afraid to go out (one-third of all respondents), 76 percent (24 percent of the total sample) said that they usually do not go out when they feel this way. Fifteen percent of those who are afraid go out anyway, and nine percent sometimes go out and sometimes stay in. Thus, about one quarter of the elderly often restrict their activities due to fear.

Similarly, of those respondents who said that fear of crime has curtailed their activities, 80 percent said that they usually stay in when afraid to go

⁶We also investigated relationships between fear and attitudes. We find some very significant relationships, but there is a classical problem of causality here: do certain attitudes lead to increased fear, or does fear lead to certain attitudes? We suspect that it is the attitudes that lead to fear, based on other factors associated with these attitudes. Particularly strong attitudinal relationships include perceptions of danger in the neighborhood associated with fear and perceptions of unsafe buildings (homes). Persons critical of police protection are somewhat more apt to be fearful.

outside. Among those who say that their activities are not curtailed, two-thirds of them would stay in if they were afraid. (See Table 4-9). Also, 80 percent of those who said that fear curtails their activities said that there have been times in the past year that they wanted to go somewhere but decided not to due to a fear of crime. (See Table 4-10). This is an extremely strong relationship. Thus, the fear of crime is immobilizing for a significant proportion of older persons.

Table 4-9

EFFECT OF FEAR ON BEHAVIOR: I

When afraid, I usually....	Fear curtails activities?		Row Total
	Yes	No	
Go out	50.0 (12.8)	50.0 (20.8)	(15.6)
Sometimes go, sometimes don't	50.0 (7.7)	50.0 (12.5)	(9.4)
Stay in	66.0 (79.5)	34.0 (66.7)	(73.4)
Column Total	60.9	37.5	100.0

Base = 64 respondents.

Table 4-10

EFFECT OF FEAR ON BEHAVIOR: II

Were there times you didn't go out because it wasn't safe?	Fear curtails activities?		Row Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	80.0 (54.5)	20.0 (8.1)	(25.4)
No	22.7 (45.5)	77.3 (91.9)	(74.2)
Column Total	37.3	62.7	100.0

Base = 178 respondents.

Protective Measures

Those who are afraid are more likely to have taken protective measures than those who are not. The relationship between fear curtailing activities and protective measures is shown in Table 4-11.

Table 4-11
THOSE WHO ARE AFRAID ARE MORE LIKELY
TO TAKE PROTECTIVE MEASURES

Fear curtails activities?	Have you taken any protective measures?		Row Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	60.6 (44.9)	39.4 (29.5)	(37.3)
No	44.1 (55.1)	55.9 (70.5)	(62.7)
Column Total	50.3	49.7	100.0

Base = 177 respondents.

Specific protective measures taken vary substantially according to fear level. The most frequent means of protection was security locks, followed by avoiding going out at night, using caution when going out, and leaving the lights on when no one is in the house. Of these measures, avoidance of travel at night is statistically associated (at a high level of significance) with both the attitudinal and behavioral measures of fear. Seventy-six percent of those who are afraid to go out and have taken protective measures avoid going out at night, while only 29 percent of those not afraid avoid going out at night. Sixty-eight percent of those who have curtailed their activities and have taken protective measures avoid going out at night, while only 37 percent of those not afraid avoid nighttime travel. Persons who now go out less frequently due to fear of crime are more likely to leave lights on at home when they go out. Persons who are afraid to go out do not leave lights on more or less frequently than those who are not afraid to go out. Security locks and the use of caution when going out do not vary with either the attitudinal or behavioral aspects of fear.

Persons who have taken protective measures are more likely to live in southern Silver Spring. Half of all the elderly have taken protective measures, but 56 percent of those in southern Silver Spring have, 46 percent of those in central Silver Spring have, and only 30 percent of those in northern Silver Spring have.

Persons who have been victims of crimes or whose close friends have been victims of crimes are more likely than others to have taken protective measures.

Effects on Travel

Travel During the Day

Fear of crime does not appear to have any effect on how often an elderly persons walks alone. This is true for both attitudinal and behavioral measures of fear.

Fear of crime appears to have some influence on an elderly person's most frequent travel mode during the day. Persons who are more fearful are more likely to take a bus or walk with someone else; they are less likely to drive a car if afraid to go out and are less likely to ride with friends and relatives if fear curtails their activities.⁷

⁷It appears that there may be a problem of the direction of causality here; while it is plausible that those who are fearful would walk with someone else or take a bus if afraid, we would suspect that they would also drive cars and ride with friends more frequently because of their fears, since these should be perceived as relatively safe modes. Since this is not the case, we hypothesize instead that there may be little choice in the most frequent travel mode and that it is the travel mode that influences fear instead of vice versa. This would be logical with respect to buses, since many of the elderly interviewed expressed great fear of crime associated with travelling by bus. The theory that mode influences fear does not adequately explain the association of trips with a friend with increased fear, but this result may occur due to sampling error in the very small number of respondents in this category. Thus, the hypothesis that mode influences fear appears to be more reasonable — in terms of travel during the day — than does the hypothesis that fear influences the choice of mode of travel.

Travel at Night

Persons who are afraid to go outside very seldom go out after dark. Conversely, most of those who go out after dark are not afraid. This is a strong relationship, with a high degree of statistical significance. Specific results are shown in Table 4-12.

Table 4-12
THOSE WHO ARE NOT AFRAID TRAVEL MORE OFTEN AT NIGHT

Afraid to Go Out?	FREQUENCY OF TRAVEL AT NIGHT						Total
	Less Than Once a Month	Once a Month	2-4 Times per Month	Once a Week	2-4 Days Per Week	5-days a Week	
Yes	23.5 (48.0)	17.6 (42.9)	11.8 (37.5)	19.6 (32.3)	23.5 (23.1)	3.9 (20.0)	(32.7)
No	12.5 (52.0)	11.5 (57.1)	9.6 (62.5)	20.2 (67.7)	38.5 (76.9)	7.7 (80.0)	(66.7)
Column Total	16.0	13.5	10.3	19.9	33.3	6.4	100.0

Base = 156 respondents

Persons who are afraid to go out almost never walk alone at night. Those who are not afraid do go out sometimes, although not much more often than those who are afraid. (83 percent of all the elderly in Montgomery County never walk alone at night, and 75 percent of those who are not afraid never walk alone at night.) A greater than average proportion of those who have curtailed their activities never go out at night; most of those who go out at night do not find their activities restricted by fear of crime.

The only means of transportation that are used frequently by the elderly at night in Montgomery County are driving a car and riding with family and friends. Together, these two modes account for more than 95 percent of all travel at night. None of the respondents reported using the bus at night. The fact that modes of transportation used by the elderly during the day are hardly used at all at night is a strong testimonial to the effects of fear. Evidently those elderly without access to a car — either personally or through friends — simply do not go out at night at all.

Summary of Effects of Fear on Behavior

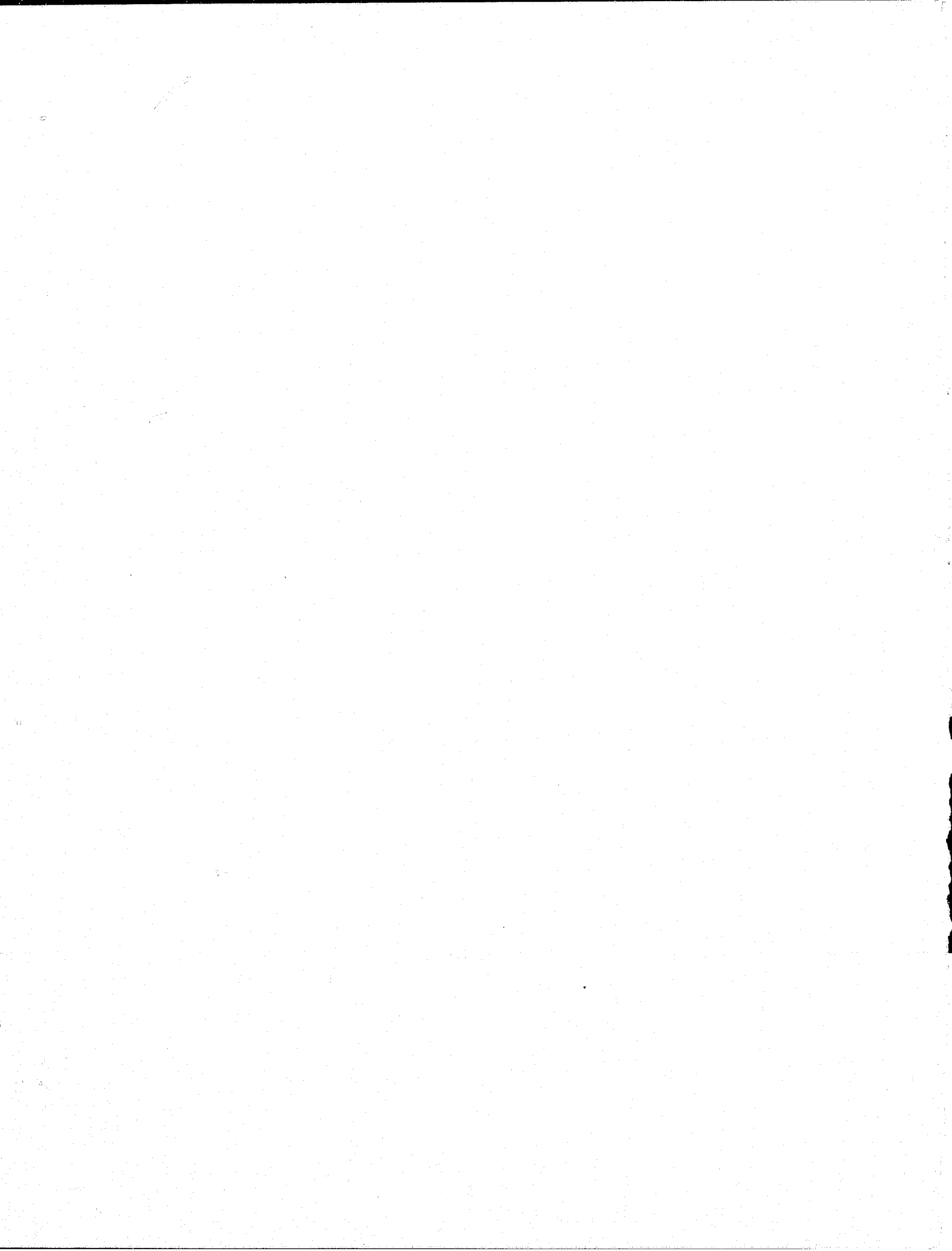
Fear of crime does restrict the behavior of the elderly. Its most significant effect is to keep the elderly in their homes at night, unless they can travel by car to their destination. The elderly who are afraid are more likely to take protective measures to combat crime.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ELDERLY

We asked the elderly what they thought could be done to reduce the number of crimes against the elderly. Two responses were offered more than twice as often as any others: more police protection (25.3 percent of the respondents mentioned this) and stricter punishments for criminals (21.3 percent). The next most frequent suggestions were don't go out at night (10.1 percent), more police patrols (10.1 percent), stay in the house (9.0 percent), and don't go out alone (7.3 percent). Thus, grouping similar responses, more police protection is the elderly's most frequently mentioned means of combatting crime.

When asked for additional comments about crime or safety, the elderly were critical of the criminal justice system. Thirty-nine percent favored stronger laws and punishment, often feeling that judges are too lenient and that "The policeman's hands are tied." One lady described "a revolving door: the police catch them and the courts let them go." Twelve percent favor capital punishment, apparently as often for its punitive aspects as for its use as a deterrent to crime.

Improvements to society were also seen as important. "A substantial reduction in unemployment" was called for by several of the elderly. Another person said that we all must "teach our children that we cannot allow poverty to grow the way it is growing now [or crime will grow]." Allowing Social Security checks to be directly deposited in an elderly person's bank account was seen as a significant advance, because the checks were often stolen from the mail before or the elderly were robbed after they cashed the checks. Finally, it was suggested that "all emergency (911) telephone calls be free from pay telephones because you might not have change in an emergency." (The telephone company says that that all new pay phones have this feature but that it will be several years before 911 calls are free from all pay phones.)



APPENDIX A

SURVEY METHODOLOGY



APPENDIX A

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW

The Montgomery County Crime Assessment Survey was conducted as part of an effort aimed at improving the delivery of criminal justice services to the elderly (60 years of age and over) residing in Silver Spring, Maryland. This survey will assess the level of fear and the rate of crime among the elderly in Silver Spring, so that this information can be used as part of a total program to decrease crime and fear of crime among the elderly.

The interview process for this project began in the first week of August and was completed by mid-September, 1976. The survey yielded 178 completed interviews with elderly residents in Silver Spring.

The interviewers, who were hired in late July, were able to start the interview process, after training and a pretest of the instrument, with an established case list of 150 names. These names were those of elderly residents in the Silver Spring Police District which were drawn from the larger list of names of elderly residents in Montgomery County used in the Montgomery County Elderly Status and Needs Assessment Survey. A random digit dialing technique had been used in selecting the elderly persons on the Status and Needs Survey list and this method was also used to generate additional names of elderly residents in Silver Spring for interviewing.

The instrument used for the interviews was developed through the joint efforts of a social worker and research analysts in the Montgomery County Police Department, Division of Research and Planning, and the director of the Division of Elder Affairs in Montgomery County, Maryland, and contains questions which cover the behavior patterns and attitudes of the elderly, the crime and victimization situation and the reporting of such, as well as demographic data. This

enabled researchers to look at a wide range of relationships, including those between population characteristics and attitudes and behavior patterns, population characteristics and crime, victimization and reporting, and attitudes and behavior patterns related to crime and victimization.

SAMPLING PROCEDURES: SAMPLE SIZE AND METHODS

An established case list of 150 names was taken from a larger established list used for the Montgomery County Status and Needs Assessment Survey of the Elderly. These 150 names were of elderly residents in the Silver Spring Police District which is the target area of this study. An additional 96 names were generated for interviewing by telephone screeners in the month starting in mid-August and ending in mid-September of 1976. This is the same procedure used in the Status and Needs Survey and consists of dialing a random sample of telephone numbers, with telephone exchanges in Montgomery County.

Random Digit Dialing selects four digits at random and matches them with telephone exchanges known to exist in the area. Only one elderly person was interviewed in each household. If a man and woman were together in one household, the man was interviewed because a representative sampling of males was needed and there are fewer males in the elderly population living alone.

FIELD PROCEDURES

Questionnaire Design

This project used a questionnaire developed through the joint efforts of a consultant working with a social worker from the Department of Social Services, research analysts in the Montgomery County Police Department, Division of Research and Planning, and the director of the Division of Elder Affairs in Montgomery County. The instrument was pretested by the social worker and by the interviewers.

Hiring of Interviewers

Criminology students from the University of Maryland, with a heavy research background, particularly in interviewing, were hired to conduct this survey.

Pretest of the Instrument

The purpose of a pretest is twofold: (1) test the content of the instrument in terms of ambiguity of questions, relevance of response categories to the purpose of the study, the wording or sequence of questions, and the length of the instrument; and (2) test the interviewer's understanding of the procedures which will be used during the full scale survey.

The interviewers were all well trained, having gone through an intensive research program in Criminology at the University of Maryland in College Park. All interviewers had completed previous research evaluations of their own. The pretest was conducted first among the interviewers (pretesting the instrument on one another) and was then conducted on elderly residents in the Wheaton area (in Montgomery County). Problems which arose during pretesting were recorded and assessed as input into the final survey instrument.

Analysis of the Pretest and Questionnaire Revision

A meeting was held between representatives from the Police Department, a representative from Ecosometrics, Incorporated, the research firm handling the analysis, and the interviewers to discuss the problems that had arisen during pretesting. The following points were discussed and the accompanying resolutions were made:

Interviewer's Initial Contact - It was found that the elderly residents wanted to be contacted by telephone first and have an interview set up as opposed to having the interviewer just show up in person. It was agreed that interviewers would set appointments to interview the elderly residents.

Questionnaire Contact - The pretest showed that the questionnaire worked well. Five items were discussed and the following changes made in the questionnaire: (1) Question one was rephrased to ask the respondent if he or she could please tell me how old you were on your last birthday as opposed to just asking for their age. (2) On question four, it was decided to ask for their race or ethnic background only if it was not obvious. (3) Question five was rephrased to ask the elderly how far they went in school as opposed to asking them their educational level. (4) On question eleven, the rating of police protection, the rating of excellent was added to good, fair and poor. (5) It was decided that

the length and time of the interview were fine. It took approximately 20 minutes to complete the interview.

Supervision of Interviewers

The management of the data collection effort was the responsibility of the project manager. After the first two days of interviewing all interviewers brought their completed interviews to a meeting with the purpose of discussing the first two days experience and obtaining feedback from one another on that interviewing experience. Each night phone contact was made to all interviewers by the project manager in order to totally monitor the entire interviewing stage of the analysis. The interviewers met once a week for discussion and feedback and to turn in interviews.

Operational Results: Response Rate

By the end of the interviewing period a total of 178 interviews had been completed. A detailed description of the reasons for interviews not being completed with the rest of the 246 elderly persons is presented in Tables A-1 and A-2.

Data Preparation

Coding -- Much of the questionnaire was precoded; however, some coding was necessary to cover the open-ended questions.

Keypunching and Verifying -- Data cards were keypunched directly from the coded questionnaires. Coders were instructed to enter the appropriate codes in red pencil in the right margin of each page of the questionnaire. The instruments were then keypunched and verified.

The computer facility utilized for the project was the University of Maryland Computer Science Center, located in College Park.

Further Edit Procedures -- All cards in the keypunched deck were run through a machine which lists every digit punched on every card. This list was checked against the questionnaires and all errors were corrected. This completed the data collection phase and the next steps included the tabulation and analysis of the data, and the submission of a final report.

Table A-1

FINAL STATISTICS

Response Rate = Completed interviews ÷ (attempted interviews - certain noncompletions*)

$$= \frac{178}{246 - 30*} \times 100 = \frac{178}{216} \times 100 = 82.4\%$$

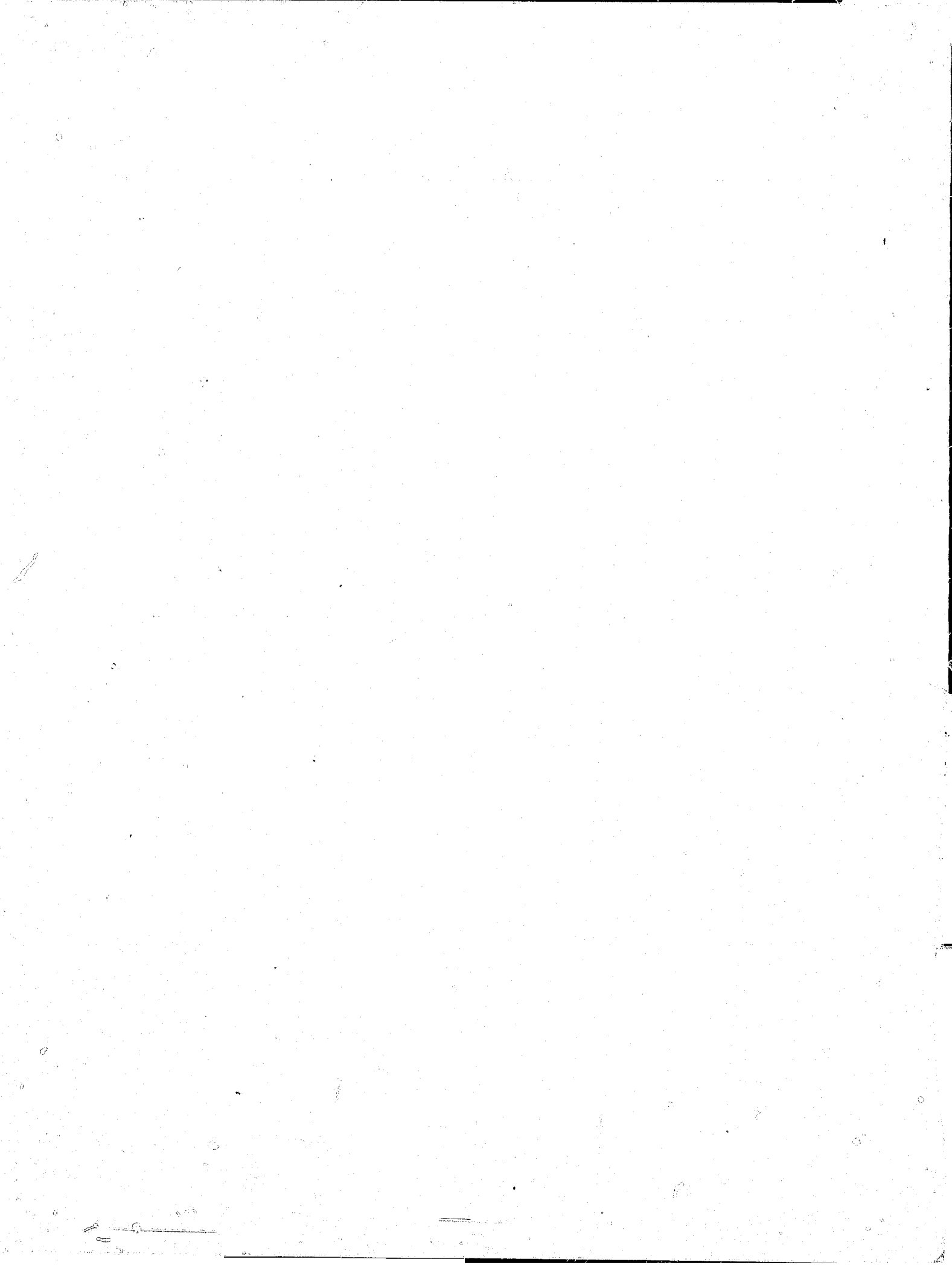
Completion Rate = $\frac{178}{246} \times 100 = 72.4\%$

*This includes the moved and cannot locate + respondent too ill + respondent on vacation + no answer at respondent's residence + subject deceased.

Table A-2

STATISTICS ON FAILURES TO COMPLETE INTERVIEWS

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Complete Interviews	178	72.4
<u>Reasons for Failure to Complete Interviews</u>		
Refused	38	15.4
Respondent on vacation	10	4.1
No answer (vacant home)	10	4.1
Cannot locate	3	1.2
Moved	3	1.2
Respondent too ill	3	1.2
Subject deceased	<u>1</u>	<u>0.4</u>
	246	100.0



APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

Two questionnaires were used in this survey. The instrument shown is the complete instrument. It was administered to all persons who had not been interviewed recently. The other instrument was administered to persons who had been recently interviewed by the Montgomery County Status and Needs Assessment Survey of the Elderly, which discussed many other subjects as well as crime. That instrument did not include certain demographic questions. The necessary data were obtained by merging the two data files.



ID NUMBER

YEAR

DAY

ID

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Col 8	M	T	W	Th	F	S	SU	9
						6		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
CRIME ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Interview Date: / /
 10 11 12 13 14 15

Time Started:

 a.m.
 p.m.

Interviewer: _____

16
17

Time Finished:

 a.m.
 p.m.

Interview Number: _____

18
19
20Respondent's Address: _____

(zip)

Location Code: _____

21 22 23 24 25 26



MONTGOMERY COUNTY
CRIME ASSESSMENT SURVEY

1.	Could you please tell me how old you were on your last birthday?	_____ years	27- 28-
2.	Who lives here with you? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)	Live alone Live with spouse Live with children Live with brothers or sisters Live with other relative(s) Live with friend(s) Live in rooming house, boarding house or hotel Live in institution Other (SPECIFY) _____	29-1 30-1 31-1 32-1 33-1 34-1 35-1 36-1 37-1
3.	(CODE, OR IT NOT OBVIOUS, ASK) Do you live in a	Single family house (detached) Single family townhouse or other Privately owned apartment Privately owned housing for seniors Government subsidized housing for seniors Government subsidized general housing Other (SPECIFY) _____	38-1 39-1 40-1 41-1 42-1 43-1 44-1
3a.	Do you own or rent your home, or is your rent provided free?	Own or am buying Rent Rent free	45-1 46-1 47-1
4.	(ASK ONLY IF NOT OBVIOUS) What is your race or ethnic descent?	White, not of Spanish descent Black/Negro Oriental American Indian Spanish descent Other (SPECIFY) _____	48-1 49-1 50-1 51-1 52-1 53-1

5. How far did you go in school? (DON'T READ CHOICES, CIRCLE PROPER RESPONSE)	8th grade or less	54- 55-04
	Some high school	-10
	Technical or vocational instead of high school	-11
	Completed high school	-12
	Post high school business or trade school	-13
	Some college	-14
	Completed college	-16
	Advanced degree or advanced degree work	-19
	Don't know	-00

6. Are you currently working at a job with pay?	Yes (GO TO Q.6a.)	56-1
	No (GO TO Q.6b.)	-2

6a. Is that a full time or a part time job?	Full time (GO TO Q.7)	57-1
	Part time (GO TO Q.6b.)	-2

6b. Are you retired?	Yes	58-1
	No	-2

7. What is your marital status now? Are you . . .	Married	59-1
	Divorced	60-1
	Separated	61-1
	Widowed	62-1
	Never married	63-1

Now, I'd like to ask you some questions about your home and this neighborhood (area).

8. How long have you been living in this neighborhood (area)?	Less than 1 year	64- 65- 66-001
	1 year to less than 2 years	-003
	2 years to less than 5 years	-007
	5 years to less than 10 years	-015
	10 years to less than 20 years	-030
	20 years or more	-050
	"All my life"	-140
Don't know	-000	

9. Do you think that this is a safe neighborhood in which to live?	Yes	67-1
	Not particularly safe or unsafe . . .	-2
	No	-3

9a. Why? _____ 68-

_____ 69-

_____ 70-

_____ 71-

9b. (SKIP IF RESPONDENT OWNS A SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING) Do you think the management of this building is concerned about your safety?	Yes	72-1
	No	-2

9c. Why is that? _____ 73-

_____ 74-

_____ 75-

_____ 76-

10. What proportion of the people around this neighborhood do you know or at least recognize? (DON'T READ RESPONSES)	"Everyone"	77-8
	More than 75%	-7
	50% - 75%	-5
	25% - 50%	-3
	Less than 25%	-1
	"No one"	-0
	Don't know	-9

11. Would you say that the police protection in this area is...	Good	78-1
	Fair	-2
	Poor	-3

11a. Why do you think so? _____ 79-0

_____ 80-1

CARD 2 BEGINS/COL 1-9 ID

10-

11-

12-

13-

14-

Now I'd like to ask a few questions about how and when you go places.

12. When you want to go somewhere in the daytime, how often do you... (READ LIST. CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- Walk alone 15-
- Walk with someone else 16-
- Drive a car 17-
- Ride with a friend or relative . . . 18-
- Take a bus 19-
- Take a taxi 20-
- Other (SPECIFY) 21-
- Don't go out at all (DON'T READ) . . 22-
(SKIP TO Q.13)

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Walk alone	4	3	2	1	0
Walk with someone else	4	3	2	1	0
Drive a car	4	3	2	1	0
Ride with a friend or relative	4	3	2	1	0
Take a bus	4	3	2	1	0
Take a taxi	4	3	2	1	0
Other (SPECIFY)	4	3	2	1	0
Don't go out at all (DON'T READ)	4	3	2	1	0

12a. (IF MORE THAN ONE, ASK) Which do you do the most?

- Walk alone 23-1
- Walk with someone else -2
- Drive a car -3
- Ride with a friend or relative -4
- Take a bus -5
- Take a taxi -6
- Other -7

12b. Do you feel safe when you _____ ? (RESPONSE FROM 12 OR FROM 12a. IF MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE TO Q. 12)

- Yes 24-1
- Sometimes yes, sometimes no -2
- No -3

12c. Why? Could you please explain?

_____ 25-

_____ 26-

_____ 27-

_____ 28-

13. When you go somewhere at night,
how often do you

Walk alone	29-
Walk with someone else	30-
Drive a car	31-
Ride with a friend or relative	32-
Take the bus	33-
Take a taxi	34-
Other (SPECIFY)	35-
<hr/>	
Don't go out at all (DON'T READ).	36-
(SKIP TO Q.14)	

Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
4	3	2	1	0
4	3	2	1	0
4	3	2	1	0
4	3	2	1	0
4	3	2	1	0
4	3	2	1	0
4	3	2	1	0
4	3	2	1	0

13a. (IF MORE THAN ONE, ASK)
Which do you do the most?

Walk alone	37-1
Walk with someone else	2
Drive a car	3
Ride with friend or relative	4
Take the bus	5
Take a taxi	6
Other	7

13b. Do you feel safe when you
? (RESPONSE FROM
13 OR 13a. IF MORE THAN
ONE)

Yes	38-1
Sometimes yes, sometimes no	2
No	3

13c. About how often do you go
out after dark?

5 days a week or more	39- 40- -42
2 - 4 days a week	-24
Once a week	-08
2 - 4 times a month	-06
Once a month	-02
Less than once a month	-01

14. Are there times when you are afraid to go outside? Yes (GO TO Q. 14a) 41-1
No (GO TO Q. 16) -2

14a. When is that? _____ 42-

_____ 43-

_____ 44-

14b. Would you briefly explain why? _____ 45-

_____ 46-

_____ 47-

_____ 48-

15. When you feel afraid to go out, do you stay in the house or do you go out anyway? Usually go out 49-1
Sometimes go out, sometimes stay in 2
Usually stay in 3

16. Do you sometimes sit outside — in a park, in front of your home or elsewhere? Yes (GO TO Q. 16a) 50-1
No (GO TO Q. 16c) 2

16a. Do you feel safe when you do? Yes (GO TO Q. 17) 51-1
No (GO TO 16b) -2

16b. Why not? _____ 52-

_____ 53-

_____ 54-

_____ 55-

16c. Is that because... You don't like to 56-1
There's no where to sit -2
You don't feel safe -3
Too many children around -4
Any other reason? -5

I would like to ask you some questions about the police in this area.

17. Have you had any direct contacts with the police in the past five years? Yes (GO TO Q.17a) 57-1
 No (GO TO Q.18) -2

17a. Was the most recent contact in Montgomery County? Yes 58-1
 No -2

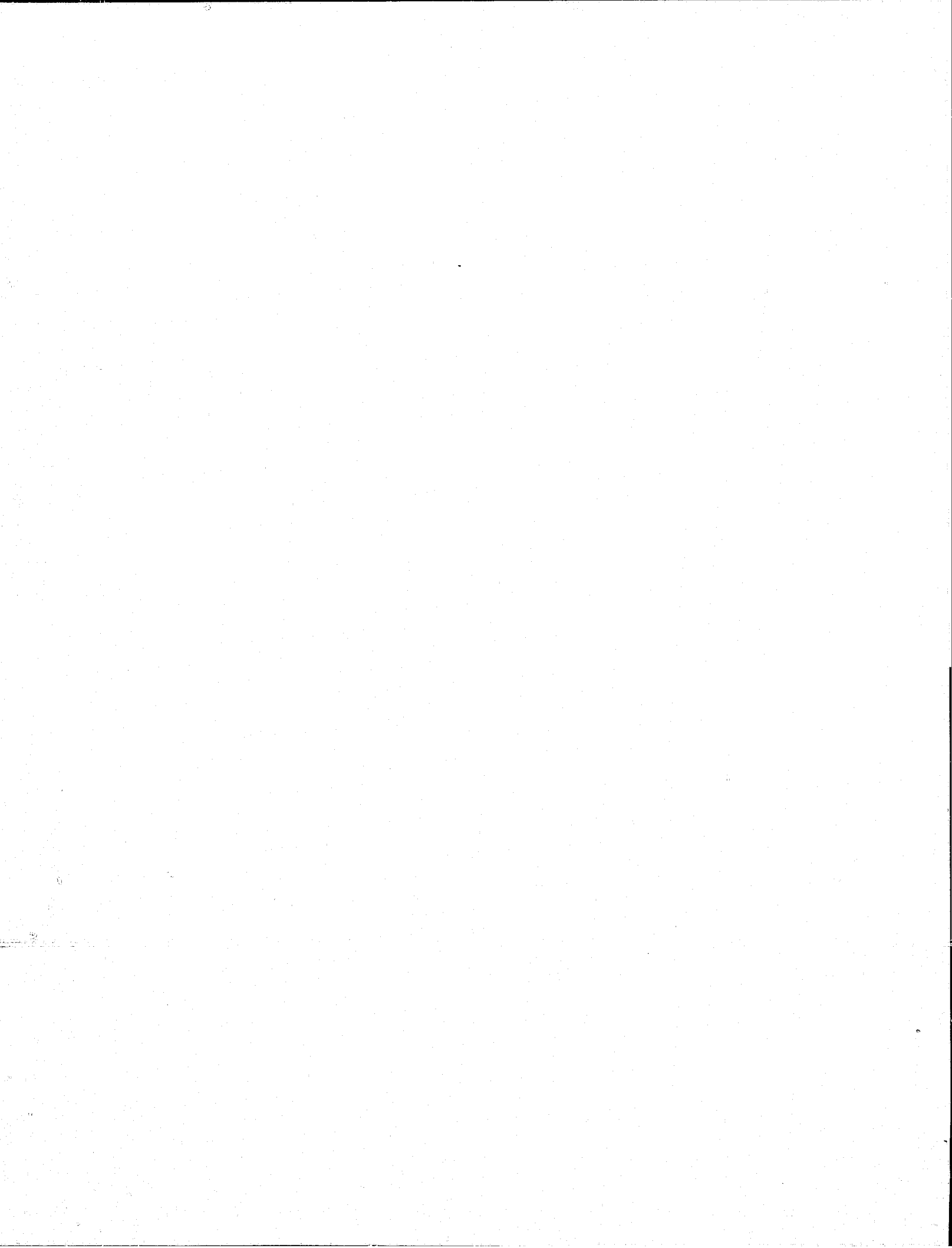
17b. How did this contact occur? (WRITE RESPONSE VERBATIM)
 Being the victim of a crime 59-1
 Illness -2
 Accident -3
 Public service -4
 Other (SPECIFY) -5

17c. How satisfied were you with the police's response to your situation? Were you...
 Very satisfied 60-1
 Somewhat satisfied -2
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied -3
 Somewhat dissatisfied -4
 Very dissatisfied -5

17d. Would you mind explaining that?
 _____ 61-
 _____ 62-
 _____ 63-
 _____ 64-

18. Do you know about the Crime Prevention for Seniors Program of the Montgomery County Police Department? Yes (GO TO 18a) 65-1
 No (GO TO 19) -2

18a. How did you find out about it?
 Victimization assistance provided 66-1
 Attended a presentation -2
 Saw printed material -3
 Media messages -4
 Other (SPECIFY) -5

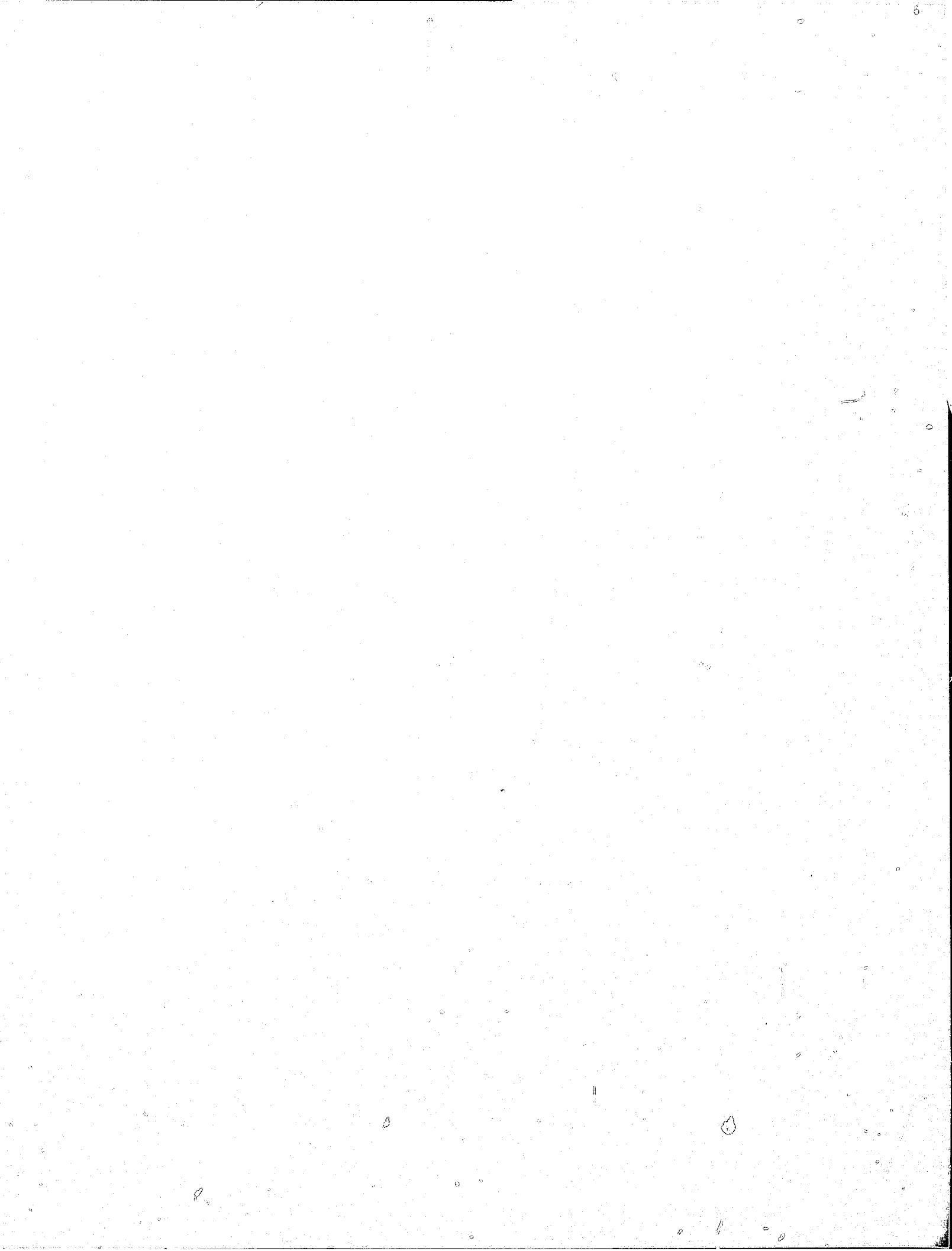


CONTINUED

1 OF 2

19. Would you feel safer in your home if the area were regularly patrolled by police officers on foot?	Yes	67-1
	No	-2

20. Do you think that this neighborhood has more or less crime than other places?	More	68-1
	About the same	-2
	Less	-3
	Don't know	-4



21. I'm going to read to you some descriptions of possible crimes. This is a very important part of our research so we'll go through this section in great detail. I would like to ask you if you have been the victim of a crime or an attempted crime. I will read a definition of particular crimes and then ask you about each.
(READ FIRST DEFINITION AND ASK)

21a. Since 1971, have you been a victim of an actual or attempted _____? IF NO, GO TO THE NEXT CATEGORY (IF YES, ASK) How many times were you victim of an attempted _____?

21b. How many times were you victim of an actual _____?

21c. What year was that? (IF MORE THAN ONE, REFER TO MOST RECENT ONLY)

21d. What time of day did this occur?

21e. Where was that?

21f. Did you report this crime?

80-2
CARD 3 BEGINS
COL. 1-9 ID

Type of Crime	Victim?	How many Times Attempted?	How many Times Actual?	Year	Time	Location	Reported?	(IF NO) Why not?
Robbery	Yes	69-1					Yes	76-1
	No	-2 70-	71-	72 73	74-	75-	No	-2 77-
Larceny	Yes	10-1					Yes	17-1
	No	-2 11-	12-	13 14	15-	16-	No	-2 18-
Assault	Yes	19-1					Yes	26-1
	No	-2 20-	21-	22 23	24-	25-	No	-2 27-
Aggravated Assault	Yes	28-1					Yes	35-1
	No	-2 29-	30-	31 32	33-	34-	No	-2 36-
Fraud	Yes	37-1					Yes	44-1
	No	-2 38-	39-	40 41	42-	43-	No	-2 45-
Vandalism	Yes	46-1					Yes	53-1
	No	-2 47-	48-	49 50	51-	52-	No	-2 54-
Sex Offense	Yes	55-1					Yes	62-1
	No	-2 56-	57-	58 59	60-	61-	No	-2 63-
Rape	Yes	64-1					Yes	71-1
	No	-2 65-	66-	67 68	69-	70-	No	-2 72-
Burglary	Yes	10-1					Yes	17-1
	No	-2 11-	12-	13 14	15-	16-	No	-2 18-

DEFINITIONS: TO BE READ BEFORE ASKING ABOUT EACH TYPE OF CRIME.

ROBBERY — Theft with force used.

LARCENY — Theft without force.

ASSAULT — Attempt to injure in some manner but falling short of completing act.

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT — Physical attack causing serious injury.

FRAUD — Confidence games, getting money through trickery.

VANDALISM — Destruction of property.

SEX OFFENSE — Offense against one's person, such as obscene phone calls; indecent exposure, etc.

RAPE — Same as sex assault except intercourse is attempted.

BURGLARY — Illegal entry into a business or residence.

80-3
CARD 4 BEGINS
COL. 1-9 ID

22. Have any of your close friends or relatives been victims of crime in the past five years? Yes 19-1
No -2

23. Do you feel that you could easily be the victim of a crime? Yes 20-1
No -2

23a. Why is that? (PROBE) _____ 21-

_____ 22-

_____ 23-

_____ 24-

24. Are there places in this neighborhood where you feel especially unsafe? Yes, everywhere 25-1
Yes, some places -2
No (GO TO Q.25) -3

24a. What are they? _____ 26-

_____ 27-

_____ 28-

_____ 29-

24b. Do you avoid them? Yes (GO TO Q.25) 30-1
No -2

24c. Why not? _____ 31-

_____ 32-

_____ 33-

_____ 34-

25. Does fear of crime keep you from doing things you'd like to do?	Quite often	35-1
	Sometimes	-2
	Never (GO TO Q.26)	-3

25a. Would you explain? (PROBE)		36-
		37-
		38-
		39-

26. In the past 2 years, have you done anything in particular to protect yourself or your home from a possible crime?	Yes	40-1
	No	-2

26a. (IF YES) What have you done? (DON'T READ LIST UNTIL RESPONDENT GIVES ALL ANSWERS HE /SHE CAN; THEN PROBE BY READING LIST. CODE "1" FOR ALL RESPONSES GIVEN UNAIDED AND "2" FOR RESPONSES TO SPECIFIC PROBES.)	Installed security locks on the doors or windows	41-
	Not carry your wallet, money or purse	42-
	Avoid going out at night	43-
	Carry a weapon or have one at home	44-
	Marked property for identification	45-
	Attended meeting on Crime Prevention	46-
	Turn lights on when residence is vacant	47-
	Got a dog or installed an alarm system	48-
	Use more caution when outside	49-
	Other (SPECIFY)	50-

27. If you felt afraid about your own personal safety, who would you call? (DON'T READ RESPONSES)	Relative	51-
	Friend or neighbor	52-
	Building manager	53-
	Police	54-
	Other (SPECIFY)	55-

Some persons act in ways that can be impolite or even unsafe for others around them, even though these activities are not illegal.

28. Has anyone caused trouble for you or harrassed you in such ways recently?	Yes	56-1
	No	-2

29. Have there been anytimes in the past year that you wanted to go somewhere but decided not to because you thought it would not be safe? Yes 57-1
No -2

29a. (IF YES) Please describe _____ 58-
_____ 59-
_____ 60-
_____ 61-

I am going to read out loud some possible situations that a person might encounter. Please listen carefully and tell me what you would do if the same situation happened to you.

30. It is Friday evening. You are all dressed to attend a play in D.C. that you've had tickets to for one month. You and your friend walk out to the car and find you have a flat tire and no spare. There is no other car for you to use. There is a bus that runs one block from your house and goes directly to where you are going.

What would you do? (PROBE) _____ 62-
_____ 63-
_____ 64-
_____ 65-

31. You are walking home. Suddenly, a man approaches you from behind, grabs your purse (wallet) and runs. (PROBE - IMMEDIATE RESPONSE, AND WOULD THEY NOTIFY POLICE - WHEN?)

What would you do? (PROBE) _____ 66-
_____ 67-
_____ 68-
_____ 69-

32. You are waiting for the bus. About 50 feet away, two men are arguing loudly. One stabs the other with a knife and flees in the opposite direction from you.

What would you do? (PROBE) _____ 70-

_____ 71-

_____ 72-

_____ 73-

32a. Would you report it? Yes 74-1
No (SKIP TO Q.33) -2

32b. Who would you report it to? _____ 75-
_____ 76-
_____ 77-
_____ 78-

32c. How would you contact them? _____ 10
_____ 11
_____ 12
_____ 13

33. Do you feel that persons over 60 years of age are more likely to be victims of crime than younger persons? Yes 14-1
No -2

33a. Why? _____ 15
_____ 16
_____ 17
_____ 18

34. What do you think could be done to decrease the number of crimes against the elderly? (WRITE RESPONSE VERBATIM)	Don't go out at night	19-
	More police protection	20-
	Don't go out alone	21-
	Stay in house	22-
	Don't go to dangerous places	23-
	More police patrols	24-
	Other (SPECIFY)	25-

35. Do you have any more comments about crime or safety which you would like to tell me? (WRITE RESPONSE VERBATIM)	Favors capital punishment	26-
	More police protection	27-
	Stronger laws and punishment	28-
		29-
		30-
		31-

36. Now just one more question (GIVE CARD). Would you mind telling me which letter is closest to your monthly or annual income?

<u>Annual</u>		<u>Monthly</u>	
Under \$ 1,000	A	Under \$ 83	32- 33-01
1,000 - 1,999	B	\$83 - 166	-03
2,000 - 2,999	C	167 - 249	-05
3,000 - 3,999	D	250 - 333	-07
4,000 - 4,999	E	334 - 416	-09
5,000 - 5,999	F	417 - 499	-11
6,000 - 7,999	G	500 - 666	-14
8,000 - 9,999	H	667 - 833	-18
10,000 -14,999	I	834 - 1,249	-25
15,000 -19,999	J	1,250 - 1,666	-35
20,000 -29,999	K	1,667 - 2,499	-50
30,000 & Over	L	2,500 & Over	-80
	Don't Know		-00
	Refused		-99

THANK RESPONDENT AND LEAVE. THEN COMPLETE NEXT PAGE.

INTERVIEWER:

37. Was respondent... Male 34-1
Female 35-1

38. Did respondent have any of the following conditions? Difficulty Seeing 36-1
Blind -2
Difficulty Hearing -3
Deaf -4
Difficulty getting around -5
Unable to walk -6

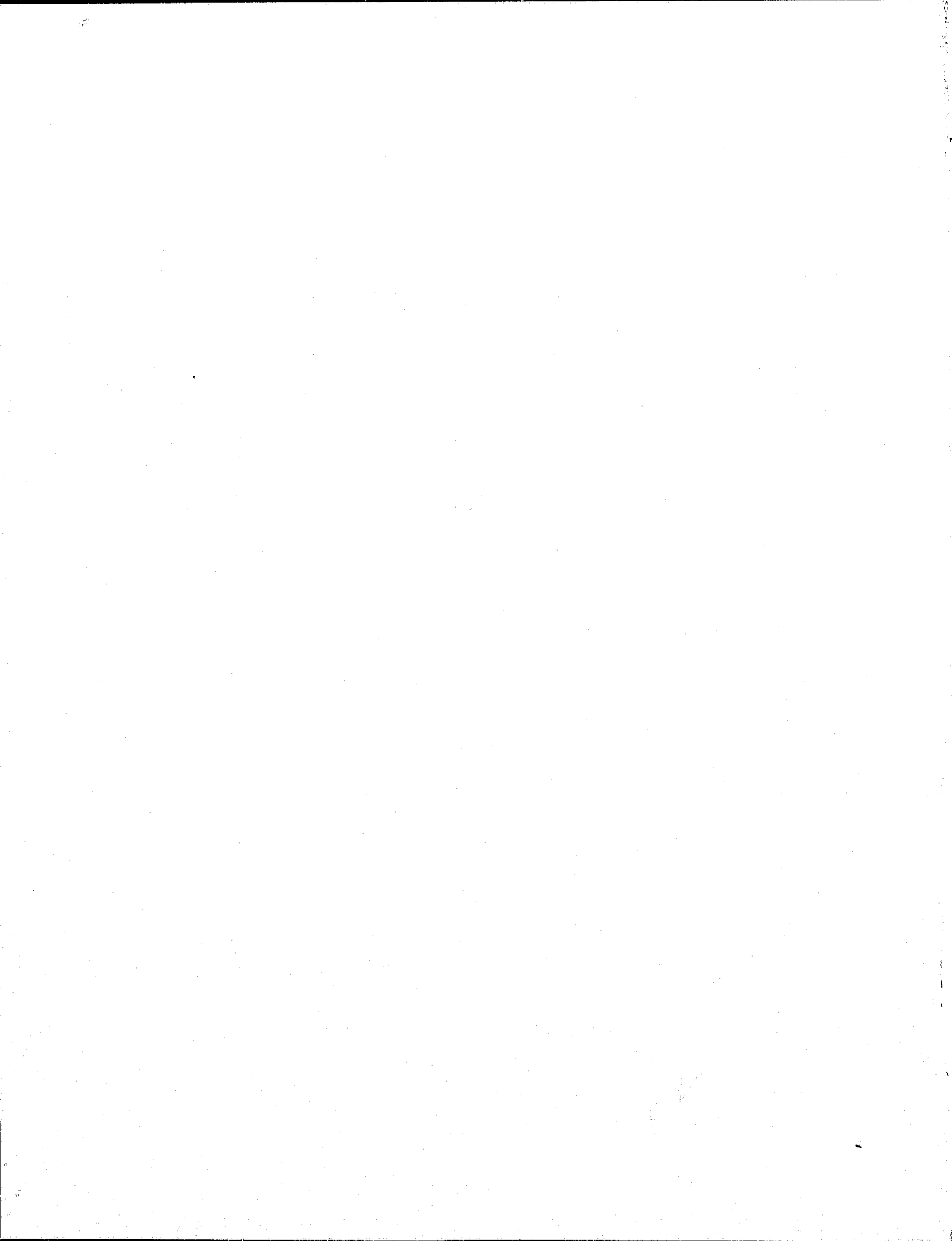
39. Did the respondent have significant difficulty in understanding or responding to the questions? Yes 37-1
No -2

39a. (IF YES) Why? _____ 38-

_____ 39-
_____ 40-

40. Was there anything unusual about the respondent or the responses that we should know about?

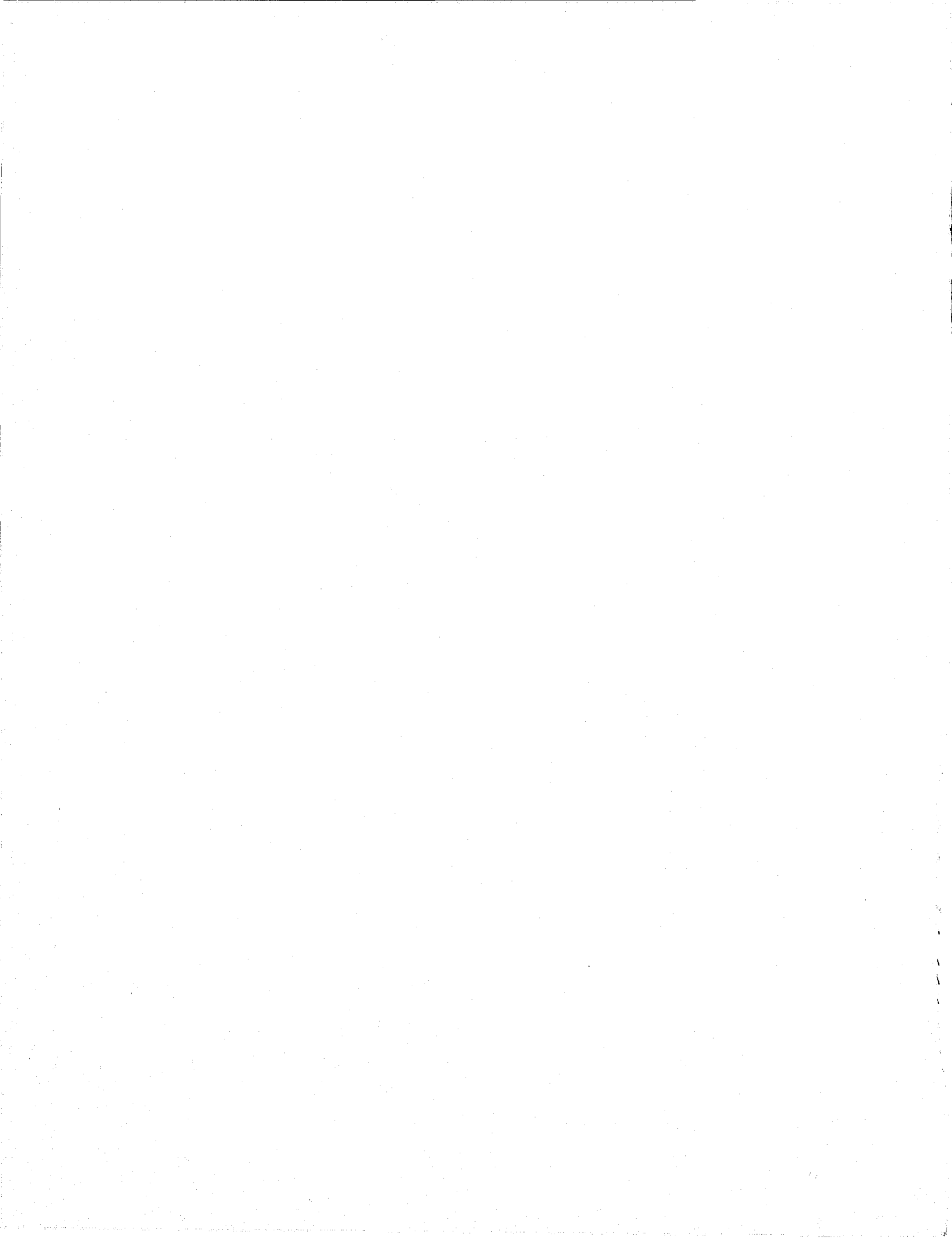
_____ 41-
_____ 42-
_____ 43-
_____ 44-



APPENDIX C:

ADDITIONAL SURVEY MATERIALS

- Telephone Screening Instrument
- Letter Introducing Interviewer
- Interviewer's Introduction to Respondent



ELDERLY FEAR-LEVEL SURVEY:
TELEPHONE SCREENING INSTRUMENT

Hello, is this _____?
(Telephone Number)

Yes (Continue)
No (Terminate)

This is _____ from Montgomery County Government, Commission on Aging in Rockville, Maryland. We are currently doing a study of senior citizens in the Silver Spring area. The study is being conducted to obtain information which the County Government will use for planning purposes. Your number was selected at random from all telephone numbers in the Silver Spring area and I would like to ask you just a few questions about your household composition:

- A. How many people in this household are under 25 _____? Between 25 and 30 _____? Between 40 and 59 _____? 60 and over _____? (IF THERE ARE PERSONS 60 YEARS OR OLDER CONTINUE, OTHERWISE TERMINATE).
- B. Have you lived at your present address for less than 5 years?
- C. Let me tell you a little more about our study. We are specifically interested in individuals who are over 60 and since you told me that you are over 60 (or that someone in your household is over 60) we are especially interested in having you (them) participate in this special study if you also live within the Silver Spring area. Do you live within this area?

IF NO

Thank you very much for your cooperation in answering my questions. Goodbye.

IF YES

Since you do live in the Silver Spring area if you give me your name and address, one of our interviewers will be contacting you to set up an appointment at your convenience. This individual will only take approximately 35 minutes of your time.

- D. Thank you very much. Mr./Mrs _____
(NAME OF ELDERLY PERSON)
one of our interviewers will be contacting you very soon.



Division of Elder Affairs
Area Agency on Aging

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

14 MARYLAND AVENUE, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850 • 301 279-1487/1480

August 9, 1976

[LETTER INTRODUCING INTERVIEWER]

This letter is to introduce Stephanie Hong, a University of Maryland student, who is administering a survey under the auspices of the Montgomery County Department of Social Services and the Montgomery County Police Department. This project is sponsored by the Division of Elder Affairs (Area Agency on Aging). This survey is being given to gather information on your feelings about your community and public safety. The information that is learned will be used in developing programs for the elderly in this County and the rest of the State as well as improving on the efficiency and effectiveness of existing programs.

We appreciate your cooperation in participating in this interview. If you should have any further questions about this, please feel free to contact either Miss Debbie Fine, Montgomery County Police Department, 279-1587, or Mrs. Jeanette Cumberbatch, Montgomery County Department of Social Services, 279-1748.

Sincerely,

Don Wassmann

Don Wassmann, Chief
Division of Elder Affairs *DW*

DW/bw

INTERVIEWER'S INTRODUCTION TO RESPONDENT

Hello, my name is _____

I am conducting a survey for the Montgomery County Government concerning public safety. I would like to talk to you about your experiences and the needs of older citizens in Montgomery County.

Everything you tell me will be held in the strictest confidence and your name will not appear in connection with any information you give me. This interview takes about 35 minutes to complete.

If the persons says no ----- respond with

Perhaps I can stop back at a more convenient time. In the meantime, you can contact *(only if apprehension is apparent)*

Debby Fine 279-1587

Jeanette Cumberbatch 279-1711 (next week)

if you have any questions concerning the survey.

