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CRISIS INTERVENTION:

Investigating
the Need for New Applications

Blair B. Bourque, Gary B. Brumback, Robert E. Krug, and Louis O. Richardson

MARCH 1978

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Within the past few years, the National Institute for Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (NILECJ) has sponsored the development and evaluation of crisis intervention techniques for police to use in handling domestic disturbances. To NILECJ, the apparent success of these techniques suggested the possibility of their adaptation to a variety of crimes, and specifically to homicides, robberies and burglaries.

We interpreted NILECJ's interest in terms of two general questions. First, does a problem exist in the three types of crimes for which crisis intervention by the police is a solution? Second, if a need for crisis intervention is demonstrated, how can we take advantage of the principles and techniques already developed for intervention in family disturbances? The present study addresses the first of these two questions.

Posing the two questions reflected an appropriate open-mindedness about the subject at the outset. For while it is plausible that crisis is precipitated to varying degrees by the three types of crime, it is by no means clear that police need to do or can do anything differently than they are now doing. Further, the characteristics which are shared by domestic disturbances on the one hand and homicides, robberies and burglaries on the other are not known.

B. The Meaning of Crisis

A frequently cited definition of crisis is that of Caplan (1964) who summarizes it as involving

> "a relatively short period of psychological disequilibrium in a person who confronts a hazardous circumstance that for him constitutes an important problem which he can for the time being neither escape nor solve with his customary problem-solving resources" (p. 23).

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Crisis is generally regarded as a temporary condition, lasting at the longest from four to six weeks. Crisis effects reported in the literature (e.g., Halpern, 1973) include feelings of tiredness and exhaustion, helplessness and inadequacy, anxiety and confusion, physical symptoms of distress, and disorganized interpersonal functioning.

The alleviation of crisis depends on its severity. In mild cases, self-help is normally sufficient. The person usually regains his or her equilibrium and finds a way to resolve the problem that is not maladaptive. In slightly more pronounced conditions of crisis, intervention by others may require nothing more than emotional support and simple forms of assistance. It is perhaps only in the most severe cases which reach what Caplan (1964) calls the fourth and last stage of crisis that professional mental health care is warranted. In these cases, the person has been unable to cope, and the resulting disequilibrium builds to the point of a likely breakdown.

C. Homicides, Robberies and Burglaries Viewed as Crisis Precipitating Events

According to the definition of crisis cited above, homicide, robbery and burglary can certainly be viewed as events with the potential for precipitating crisis reactions. These crimes may not always trigger crisis, nor are they necessarily high on the list of all possible crisis-producing situations. But at least they are conceptually within the boundaries of crisis theory. Scientific data on the extent and nature of crisis in these three types of crimes, however, are almost non-existent, with two notable exceptions. Syvrud (1967) conducted a mail questionnaire survey of 218 robbery victims. Immediate and extreme psycho-physical reactions to the offense were reported by anywhere from two percent to 37 percent of the victims depending on the particular reaction. The reactions correspond to the behavioral symptoms of crisis mentioned above. The reaction most frequently reported by the victims was a feeling of helplessness. The crisis-related reactions were relatively short-lived. About one-third of the victims said they recovered almost immediately after their initial reactions, and by one month or so, 85 percent of the victims had returned to a normal life.

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In the other study (Cohn, 1973), a very subjective analysis was made of interviews with 35 robbery victims in Israel. It appeared that victims exhibited varying reactions. Some of the victims exhibited what the author referred to as neurotic behavior symptoms. A few of the victims made significant changes in their life such as moving to a different area. It was further reported that "many" of the victims thought the police were ineffective and indifferent. The author neither tabulated the number of victims with similar reactions nor attempted to assess the level of crisis of each victim.

Intuitively, one would think that crisis is a frequent condition among relatives of homicide victims. And there is an indirectly related piece of research which supports this notion. Lindemann (1944), in a pioneering study which is credited with laying the groundwork for crisis theory, analyzed relatives of victims of a holocaust. A common syndrome was observed which included feelings of exhaustion and weakness, high level of tension, respiratory and digestive disturbances and a sense of unreality.

Burglary would seem to be the least likely of the three types of crimes to precipitate crisis. A life is neither lost nor threatened or physically harmed. Property loss can often be recouped through insurance. Yet, there may be unusual or bizarre instances of burglary which do indeed precipitate a crisis. A burglarized home in which there has been wanton destruction or other inexplicable acts, for instance, may be especially shocking and terrifying to the victim.

D. The Possible Significance of Crisis for Police

If crisis is a prevalent consequence of the specified crimes, several important implications for the police are possible: the victim may need special help from the police; how the crisis is handled may affect the victim's attitude toward the police; and the crime fighting capability of the police may be impaired by the crisis.

Considering the crisis theory and research cited above, the most likely reaction of a victim following the offense is a feeling of helplessness. Other crisis-related symptoms will probably occur also, but the

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individual's immediate need for assistance and emotional support may predominate. This need places a demand on the police, especially if the victim is alone when they arrive. The nature of the demand on the police presumably depends on the level of crisis, but whether special skills must be learned in order for the police to assist the victim remains to be determined. Assuming that police are sensitive to the victim in the first place, all that may be required is for the police to manifest the normal coping skills which the victim has temporarily lost.

Going beyond the immediate needs of the victim at the time of the offense, his perception of how he was handled by the police may influence his overall satisfaction with their services as well as his intention to cooperate further. It is in the interest of the police to avoid antagonizing victims, and instead to encourage their continued cooperation throughout the entire course of the investigation and prosecution. Little is known empirically about whether police achieve these objectives, either with victims in general or with those in a state of crisis. Regarding the two relevant studies previously mentioned, Cohn's (1973) study is too qualitative to permit any conclusions, and Syvrud (1967) did not investigate victim reaction to the police. Two additional studies suggest that police are not insensitive to victims in general. In a follow-up survey (Black and Regenstreif, 1977) of 300 victims of unspecified crimes, the investigators concluded that victims generally were quite satisfied with the police, although black victims tended to be less satisfied. A similar result was reported by Bideman and Johnson (1967) who found that previous victimization appeared not to affect the victim's pro police attitude unless the victim was a black male.

The third possible significance of crisis for police is that the probability of identifying and apprehending a suspect may be diminished. We emphasize the probabilistic nature of this outcome because there are countless cases in which there is little or no expectation of making an arrest in any event. The odds against the police are overwhelming, regardless of the victim's condition. Nonetheless, the odds are probably improved when two conditions exist: when the police are notified immediately and thus can

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get to the scene of the crime faster, and when the victim can give a quick and accurate account of what happened so that any suspect-related information can be radioed to other police units.

A victim in a state of crisis may not think of calling the police right away or, more likely, will seek out friends for emotional support and assitance before calling. In either case, there is a delay in notifying the police. But even if the police are notified immediately and arrive promptly, the victim may be unable to give a coherent account until his composure is regained and/or unless the police can effectively interview the victim while also being supportive and helpful. The police must also be concerned that they may obtain distorted or completely inaccurate information as a consequence of the victim's confused state.

E. The Relevance of Police Training in Family Disturbances

The idea that police training in handling family disturbances might be adapted to homicide, robbery and burglary situations is a debatable one even assuming it can be demonstrated that police should be handling these crimes differently than they now are. An examination of police training manuals on family disturbances suggests to us that conflict management rather than crisis intervention principles and techniques are primarily being taught. NILECJ's Training Guide (1975) recognizes this distinction quite explicitly by noting that in some family disturbances conflict among members is a way of coping with a crisis when ordinary problem-solving mechanisms have failed. In other family disturbances, which are probably the typical ones, the conflict is a habitual form of interaction among the members. In either kind of situation, however, one of the police officer's first objectives is to reduce the hostility between disputants before serious injuries result.

To illustrate these points, consider the police officer when he responds to a family disturbance call. He cannot know in advance whether he will be encountering a family crisis or a more prosaic family fight, but he does know he is about to walk into a potentially explosive situation. He is familiar with the statistics on injuries to police during family disturbance calls; he knows that even if he does not get hurt, he can easily end up as the scapegoat for all parties to the conflict; and he knows further that if

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he fails to produce a cessation of hostilities, he may very well have to make a return call during the same shift. For all these reasons, which are in addition to a general desire to keep the peace and protect the citizenry, conflict management has high utility for the police officer as well as for the disputants.

Contrast that situation with the same police officer responding to a radio call about a robbery or a burglary. When he arrives, the victim may or may not be in a state of crisis. The victim is not engaged in a physical or emotionally charged dispute with someone else. And any intense anger the victim may feel is unlikely to turn into an assault on the police officer. Conflict management has no utility in these situations because there is no conflict. Whether and to what extent different means of intervention by the officer is warranted is another issue under study here.

F. Research Objectives

The present research study was intended to meet the following objectives:

1. determine the absence or presence of crisis and assess its level among cases of homicide, robbery and burglary. This objective includes the development and application of scaling procedures for reliably judging the level of crisis;

2. assess the impact of levels of crisis upon police operations, especially the investigative capability;

3. assess police sensitivity to varying levels of crisis;

4. determine whether victim satisfaction with the police depends on the level of crisis and the degree of police sensitivity to it;

5. determine whether better approaches are needed by the police to handle crisis in the specified crimes; and

6. assess the residual effects of crisis upon the victim or relative's life.

II. PROCEDURES

A. Site Selection

Three law enforcement agencies were selected as data collection sites. They were: Birmingham, Alabama; Fort Worth, Texas; and Rochester, New York.

The selection of these sites resulted from a careful search for medium to large size police departments which were actively interested in the project and where homicide, robbery, and burglary rates were high enough to provide the number of cases required. The primary objective of this search was to locate agencies that recognized the potential value of the research and would as a consequence extend the support required to make the data collection effort successful.

Nineteen medium to large size law enforcement agencies were initially contacted regarding the project. The purpose of these contacts was to make a preliminary assessment of each agency's interest in the project and receptivity to serving as a data collection site. The list of agencies contacted was compiled from recommendations made by LEAA and project consultants as well as agencies which had cooperated with AIR in prior research efforts. A list of these agencies is contained in Appendix A.

Six agencies appeared to be the most promising and were subsequently visited by project staff. These were: Birmingham, Alabama; Dade County, Florida; Kansas City, Missouri; Newark, New Jersey; Rochester, New York; and San Diego, California. These were selected primarily on the basis of agency interest in the project and willingness to consider participation in the project further. Some consideration was also given to size, location, and crime rates.

The purpose of the site selection visits was to give agencies a more complete understanding of what would be involved should they elect to participate and to gather information for staff use in formulating recommendations regarding agency participation. Staff focused particularly on certain indicators which were felt to be important. These were:

o Recognition of the need to conduct an exploratory research of this nature;

o A willingness to examine the interaction between police officers and crime victims to determine whether problems exist;

o A high level of interest in crime victims and a willingness to consider the implementation of a later demonstration program, should such be warranted; and

o Commitment of the following agency resources:

-- services of an in-house project coordinator;

-- access to crime reports with provisions for making copies of cases selected for analysis;

-- availability of patrol officers and detectives for as many as 60 interviews of 45 minutes to one hour each; and

-- working space for project staff while on site for three weeks.

During these visits, presentations were made to the command staffs. These presentations described the purpose and scope of the project, what the outcomes might be, and what benefits an agency might realize from participation. The level of agency commitment was also made quite clear as was the extent to which agency resources would be required. The record keeping system in each agency was examined and discussions held concerning the arrangements required to set up interviews with patrol officers and detectives. Each agency was asked to consider participation in the project and to inform AIR of the outcome of their deliberations.

During this period, an additional agency (Fort Worth, Texas) was added to the list of those most promising.* The project was discussed with agency officials there and necessary information regarding the agency acquired by telephone.

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* The Chief of Police in Fort Worth was asked to be a member of the project advisory panel. When contacted, he expressed an interest in having Fort Worth included as a data collection site.

Birmingham, Fort Worth, and Rochester responded almost immediately indicating that they wanted to participate and that they would fully commit agency resources and support to the project. Of the remaining four, two declined* and two agreed to participate, but with certain stipulations.**

The final step in the site selection process was consideration by the project advisory panel. A meeting was convened shortly after completion of the site selection visits. Results of the process were presented and the panel agreed that the agencies most suitable for participation as data collection sites were Birmingham, Fort Worth, and Rochester. Figure 1 provides a comparison of these agencies on several key dimensions.

B.   Development of Instruments and Procedures

Instruments were required to determine (1) <u>whether a problem exists</u> in relation to police interactions with relatives of homicide victims and victims of robberies and burglaries and (2) <u>whether the application of crisis intervention techniques</u> by the police might be an effective solution to such a problem.

Three primary data sources were identified. They were: (1) the crime victim or relative; (2) the responding patrol officer; and (3) the detective conducting the follow-up investigation. Information provided by these primary sources was to be supplemented with data contained in crime reports and case files. The information to be elicited from these data sources included:

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*   A recent attitudinal survey in one agency revealed that officers there felt "over-researched." It was consequently felt that participation would not be in the best interest of the project or the agency. The other agency was likewise involved heavily in research efforts, and it was felt the overlap would not be good.

**   One agency wanted to be reimbursed for staff time. The other wanted to be able to review the research results and have final approval over what was said regarding the agency.

	BIRMINGHAM	FORT WORTH	ROCHESTER
1. Population of Jurisdiction	306,000	407,000	292,000
2. Number of Employees			
a. Total	850	885	770
b. Sworn Officers	660	659	650
c. Nonsworn	190	226	120
3. Offenses Reported in 1975			
a. Homicide	89	78	29
b. Robbery	1,555	1,207	1,163
c. Burglary	6,855	15,993	7,278
4. Police Officer Level of College Education			
a. 2 yr. college	160	97	152
b. 4 yr. college	56	74	34
c. Over 4 yr. college	26	3	2
5. Police Operations			
a. Patrol	Decentralized: 5 precincts	Centralized*	Decentralized policing: patrol sections
b. Criminal Investigations	Centralized: Crimes against persons Decentralized: Crimes against property with investigators assigned to each precinct.	Centralized* *Fort Worth has since implemented team policing concepts under which patrol and most elements of criminal investigations have been decentralized.	Centralized: Crimes against persons (physical crimes) Decentralized: Crimes against property with investigators assigned to each section.

Figure 1. Comparison of Participating Law Enforcement Agencies

o how the crime happened;

o how the victim reacted during the crime and immediately thereafter (prior to arrival of the first police response unit);

o what happened during the interaction between the victim and the initial responding police officer and the detective (if contact was made during a follow-up investigation);

o long term effects of the crime on the victim;

o whether there was anything that someone could have done to make things easier for the victim after the crime; and

o whether the victim intends to assist in the prosecution of the offender if apprehended.

More specifically, we were seeking information regarding:

o how the victim reacted emotionally to the crime;

o whether this reaction in some way affected police operations;

o how the police responded to these emotional reactions;

o whether victims were satisfied with police performance;

o how sensitive the police were to victim needs; and

o what impact the crime had on the victim's life.

The plan which unfolded was to use semi-structured interviews to collect the data. Draft instruments were developed and reviewed by project consultants. Several features were incorporated to make data collection a rigorous process:

o extensive interview guides were developed so that each interviewer would cover the same key points or areas of inquiry;

o interviewers were to be carefully selected. All were full-time members of AIR staff whose backgrounds included the conduct of interviews of this nature; and

o interviews were focused on incidents of behavior which were observable and important enough to be remembered by interviewees.

Procedures which were designed to fit within the complex environs of law enforcement agencies and the individual lives of respondents were also outlined and reviewed by project consultants. As a matter of necessity, these procedures contained a high degree of flexibility. However, certain events had to occur in a rather set sequence: (1) cases to be analyzed would be selected; (2) victim cooperation would be obtained; and (3) patrol officers and detectives would be interviewed.

Once the instruments and procedures had been reviewed by consultants and the necessary revisions incorporated, arrangements were made for a data collection pretest. Only six person-weeks had been allotted to data collection in each of the three agencies and there was little margin for error or significant adjustment once things got underway. Consequently, a pilot data collection effort was launched in the Arlington County, Virginia Police Department. The instruments and procedures were subsequently refined on the basis of our experience in this "real world" setting and the data collected were used to test the feasibility of the preliminary data analysis plans.

Finally, the instruments and procedures were reviewed by the project advisory panel, which was convened prior to the commencement of field work. Inputs from the group served to further mold what had been developed into workable and effective instruments and procedures.

The instruments and procedures which emerged from this process were those used in the full-blown data collection effort. Figure 2 lists the instruments and describes how they were used. Figure 3 outlines the general procedures which guided the data collection effort. Copies of the instruments are contained in Appendix B.

C. Selection of Samples

In sampling, the strategy was to select cases with the best chances of the robbery or burglary victim or the relative of a homicide victim having experienced a crisis reaction as a result of the crime.* Accordingly,

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* The choice of sampling procedure always represents a trade-off. A random sample would provide the best estimate of the frequency of crisis in the total population. We chose to sample purposively because our primary requirement was to obtain a sufficient number of examples of crisis reactions to adequately describe the phenomenon.

Figure 2. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Instrument	Purpose	Data Source(s)
1. Case File Abstract	*Record relevant information for use by project staff in scheduling and conducting interviews.*	° *Crime reports* ° *Patrol division work schedules* ° *Criminal investigation division case assignment records and work schedules.*
2. Victim Interview Data Facesheet	*Record data regarding victims.*	° *Crime reports* ° *Victim interviews*
3. Victim Interview Guide	*Guide the interviewer in conducting victim interviews to make sure all key points were covered.*	° *Victim interviews*
4. Police Officer Interview Data Facesheet	*Record data regarding patrol officers and detectives.*	° *Crime reports* ° *Patrol officer interviews* ° *Detective interviews*
5. Police Officer Interview Guide	*Guide the interviewer in conducting patrol officer and detective interviews to make sure all key points were covered.*	° *Patrol officer interviews* ° *Detective interviews*

Figure 3. Outline of General Data Collection Procedures

Step 1. Determine cases to be analyzed.

    a. Review crime reports (homicides, robberies, and burglaries).

    b. Rate cases according to the level of crisis reaction likely to have been experienced by the victim or relative.

    c. Select cases to be analyzed.

Step 2. Prepare to conduct victim interviews.

    a. Make copies of crime reports.

    b. Complete victim portion of case file abstract forms.

Step 3. Conduct victim interviews.*

    a. Make initial contact with victims, ask for cooperation, and, if agreed, arrange a convenient time to conduct the interviews.

    b. Conduct the interviews and record responses.

    c. Complete the victim interview data facesheets.

* Note: It was originally intended that victim interviews would be conducted face-to-face. It was decided, however, to explore the feasibility of talking with victims by telephone. Consultant views and results of the pre-test supported use of the telephone. It proved to be successful.

Step 4. Prepare to conduct police officer interviews.

    a. Identify patrol officers and detectives to be interviewed.

    b. Complete police officer portion of case file abstract forms.

    c. Arrange an interview schedule.

Step 5. Conduct police officer interviews.

    a. Conduct the interviews and record responses.

    b. Complete the police officer interview data facesheets.

Step 6. Review cases to make sure that they were complete.

burglary and robbery crime characteristics were identified which have the highest presumptive likelihood of eliciting a victim crisis response. These crime characteristics were identified through literature searches, telephone interviews with 10 practitioners in victim-witness assistance programs, and discussions with police officers in the Arlington County pretesting of instruments and procedures. The two crisis inducing characteristics of robberies identified were:

o robbery with bodily harm to the victim; or

o robbery with a threat of danger to the victim involving either weapons, intimidation (assault with no victim injury), or multiple offenders.

Characteristics of burglaries associated with victim crisis were:

o burglary with a loss of sentimental possessions;

o burglary with a high loss (set at $1,000 or more in cash or property loss) or an explicit notation that the loss was high relative to a particular victim's income;

o burglary with malicious destruction or defacing of property;

o burglary with the victim present in the residence during the progress of the crime;

o burglary with ransacking;

o burglary of a residence which has been previously burglarized;

o burglary with highly unusual characteristics such as the loss of victim underwear only; offender defecation on the property; or the offender contacting and threatening the victim following the crime.

In each city, burglary and robbery crime reports for the first four of the most recent six weeks* were screened for crisis-related crime characteristics. These characteristics, the victim age, sex, and race, and the crime location and time of occurrence were recorded on 5x8 cards for each case. Cards for burglaries and robberies were then sorted into two groups: (1) all unfounded cases and those with none of the listed crime characteristics, presumably those with the least chance of a victim crisis reaction; and (2) those cases with at least one of the listed crime characteristics. It was intended to subdivide this latter group on the basis of evidence of some victim emotional reactions, but since such evidence was rarely recorded on the crime reports, the division was made according to informal judgments of crime severity and probability of crisis reactions. The final sample was selected from the 217 cases judged to be the most severe and the most likely to provide victim emotional reactions,** but as is evident in Figures 4 and 5 this group hardly differs from that composed of the less severe cases.

After clearance was obtained from each police department on the cases which looked reasonable to investigate, two interviewers began telephoning victims. Contacts were made with 110 of these potential cases; of these, 87 (79%) were interviewed. Very few victims refused (7%) or avoided (13%) being interviewed. The breakdown of the 217 cases is shown in Table 1 below.

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* Although recency of the crime was important for interviewee recall of events, the crime reports from the most recent two weeks were not used to allow detectives adequate time to interview victims and file a report. Dates of sampled burglary and robbery crime reports in each city were: Ft. Worth, all robberies and even-numbered burglaries only for 1/1-1/31/77; in Rochester, all robberies and burglaries for 1/16-2/16/77; and in Birmingham, all robberies and burglaries for 2/15-3/15/77.

** For convenience, the three groups are labeled high probability of victim crisis, moderate probability of victim crisis, and low probability of victim crisis in the figures and tables.

Figure 4. PROPORTION OF ROBBERY CASES WITH VARIOUS CRIME CHARACTERISTICS

Legend:
- High probability of victim crisis (n=112)
- Moderate probability of victim crisis (n=189)
- Total robberies (n=301)*

Study Classification of Robbery Cases (in percent)

Crime Characteristic — 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70

- Bodily harm to the victim
- Use of a weapon
- Assault with no injury
- Multiple offenders
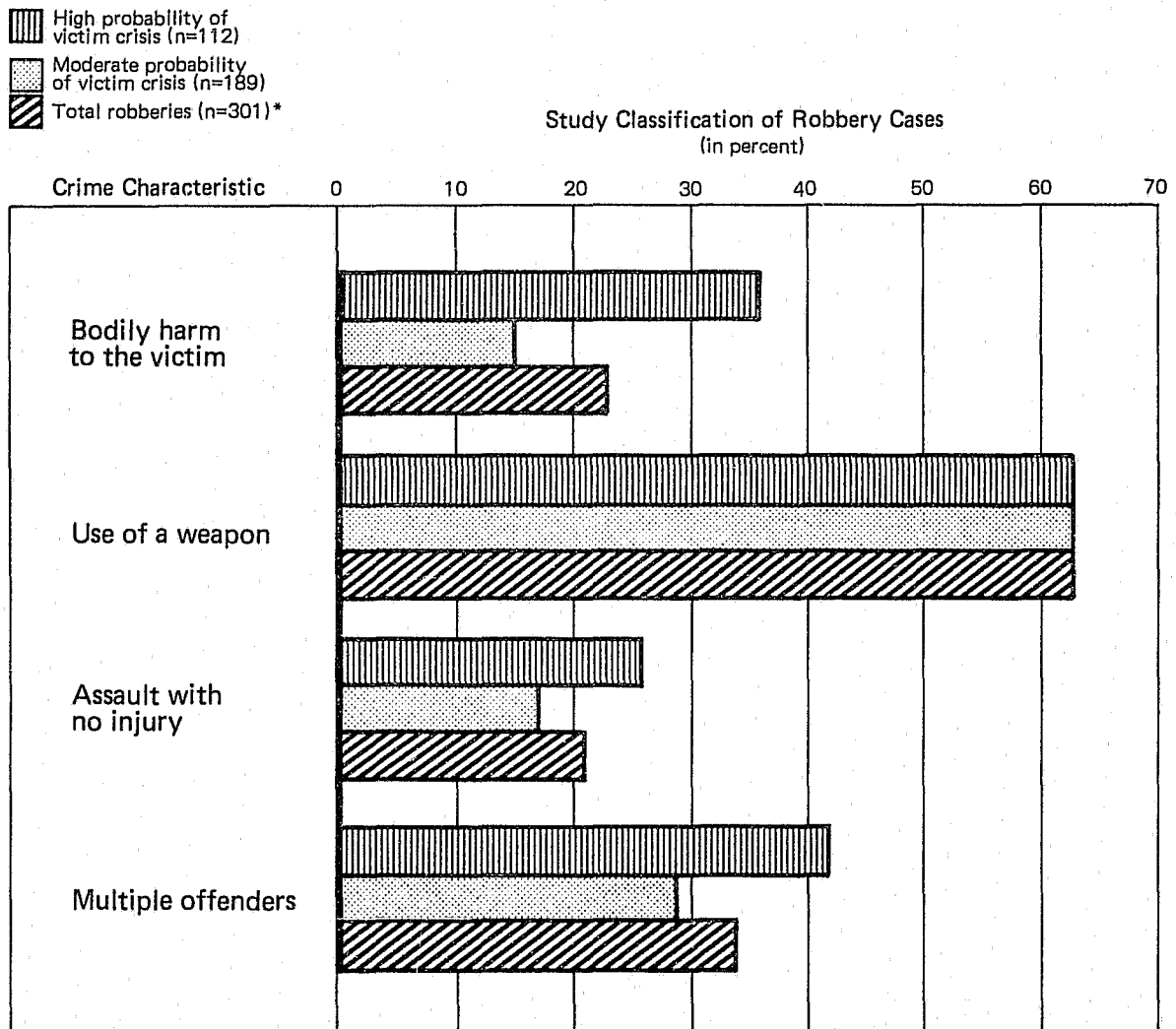
* All robberies were classified as high or moderate probability of victim crisis. 301 represents the total number of robberies occuring in Fort Worth, Rochester and Birmingham over a 30-day period.

Figure 5. PROPORTION OF BURGLARY CASES* WITH VARIOUS CRIME CHARACTERISTICS

Study Classification of Burglary Cases
(in percent)

Crime Characteristic
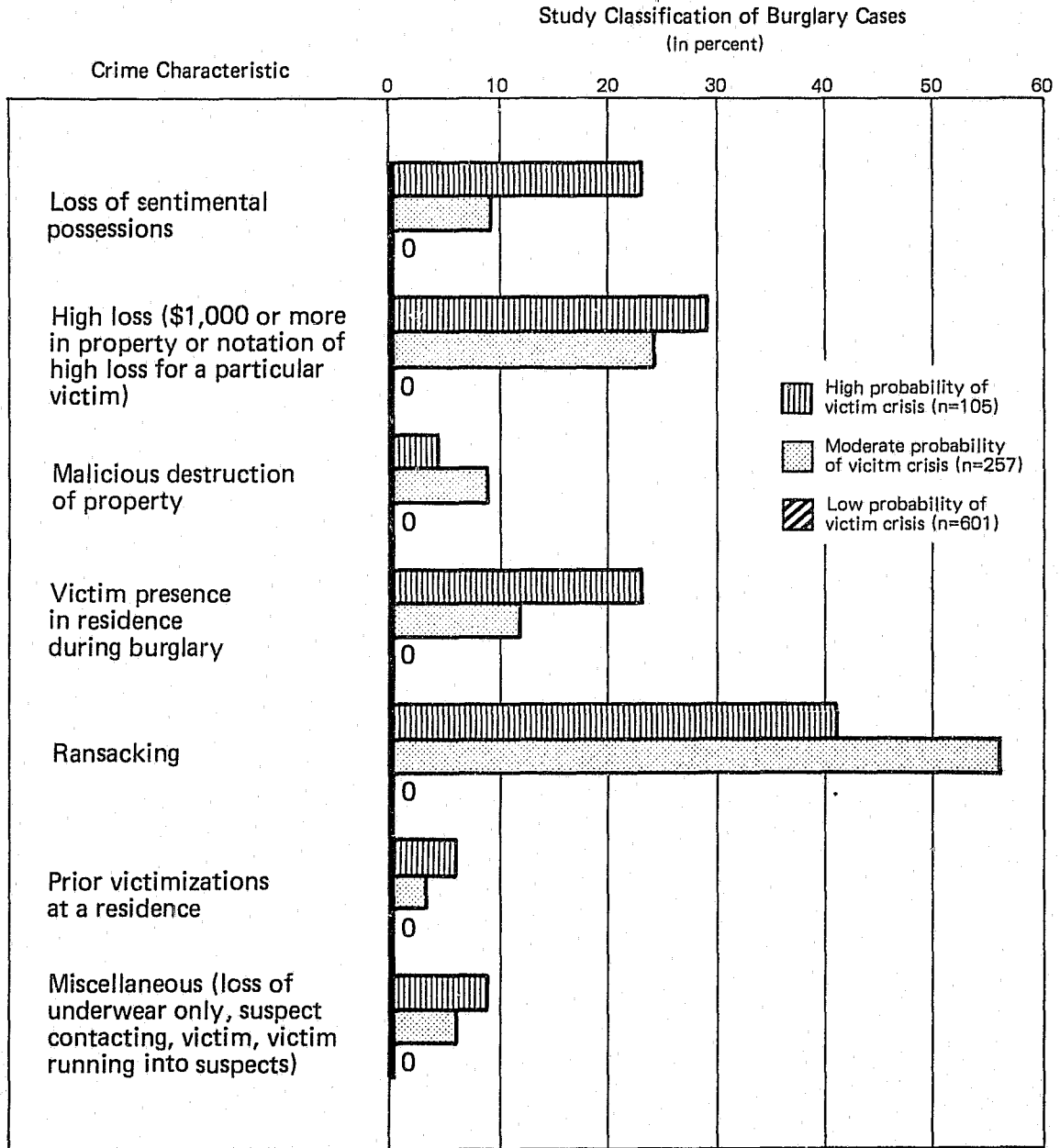
* Total number of burglaries occuring in Rochester and Birmingham and one-half
the burglaries occuring in Fort Worth over a 30-day period.

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Table 1. Disposition of Potential Cases

Contact made   110

      Interview completed   87

      Victim refused   8

      Victim missed interview   9

      Unable to schedule   6

No contact made   107

      No answer at listed no.   24

      Telephone unlisted   8

      No attempt at contact   75

Homicide cases were included in the sample if the report men-
tioned that a relative of the victim had some personal contact with either
the patrol officer or detective.   Records of the most recent three months
were screened in each city to identify 12 cases with relative-police of-
ficer interaction.   Two of these relatives were contacted with the intent
of interviewing them, but on the basis of their reactions relative inter-
views were discontinued.   Police officer interviews, then, were the only
data source for homicide cases.

D. Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with robbery and burglary
victims, the patrol officers who took the original reports, and the detec-
tives assigned to each case (see Appendix B for Victim and Police Officer
Interview Guides). A total of 248 interviews were conducted in Birmingham,
Fort Worth, and Rochester (see Figure 6). The number of different persons
interviewed, however, was only 228 as some police officers and detectives
were interviewed on more than one case. Two person-weeks per site were
required for data collection.

Figure 6. NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED* WITH VICTIMS,
PATROL OFFICERS AND DETECTIVES
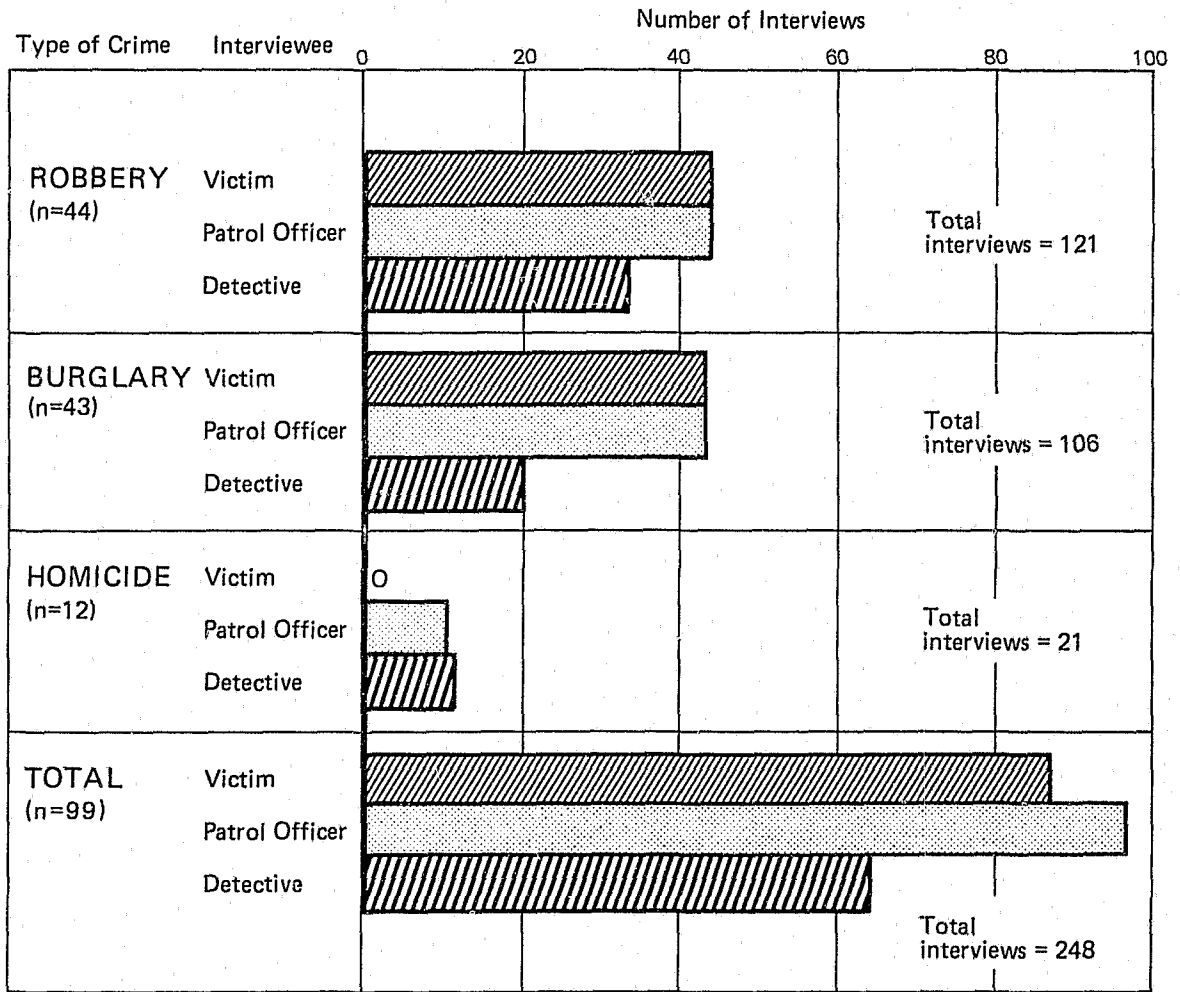
* Numbers represent interviews conducted, not persons, as some police officers
were interviewed on more than one case.

Eighty-seven victim interviews of approximately one hour each were completed.* Two interviewers conducted all the interviews by telephone.** Ninety-seven patrol officer and 64 detective interviews lasting from 20 to 90 minutes were conducted in person at the central police department buildings or precinct stations on the officer's regular time shifts. There were four interviewers. Only 93 different patrol officers were interviewed since four officers were interviewed on two cases each. Likewise, 11 detectives were interviewed on more than one case, bringing the total number of different detectives interviewed to 46.

The final victim sample was composed of an almost equal number of males and females, but almost twice as many non-blacks as blacks (see Figure 7).*** Victims ranged in age from 18 to 79, the greater proportion falling in the 31-64 age bracket. Victims were fairly well distributed across four income ranges, with slightly fewer victims reporting $0-5,000 incomes and more reporting $5,000-10,000. In drawing the sample, attempts were made to keep the proportions of robbery versus burglary victims fairly equal in each of the age, sex, and race categories. This was not possible for victim sex; sample robbery victims were predominately male, whereas burglary victims were predominately female. This was not the case in the larger group of victims from which the sample was drawn; there were more male than female robbery and burglary victims in this group. There were also proportionately fewer elderly victims in the total group of victims than there were in the study sample.

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* The actual dates for collecting data were: Fort Worth, 2/1-2/18/77; Rochester, 2/28-3/18/77; and Birmingham, 3/28-4/15/77.

** Telephone interviews were used because they are faster. There was some evidence that they may also be preferable for recent crime victims as they are less threatening.

*** "Non-blacks" includes Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, and Chinese. The racial distinction was used as it was the only racial breakdown available from the crime reports in the three cities.

Figure 7. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF VICTIMS IN THE STUDY SAMPLE
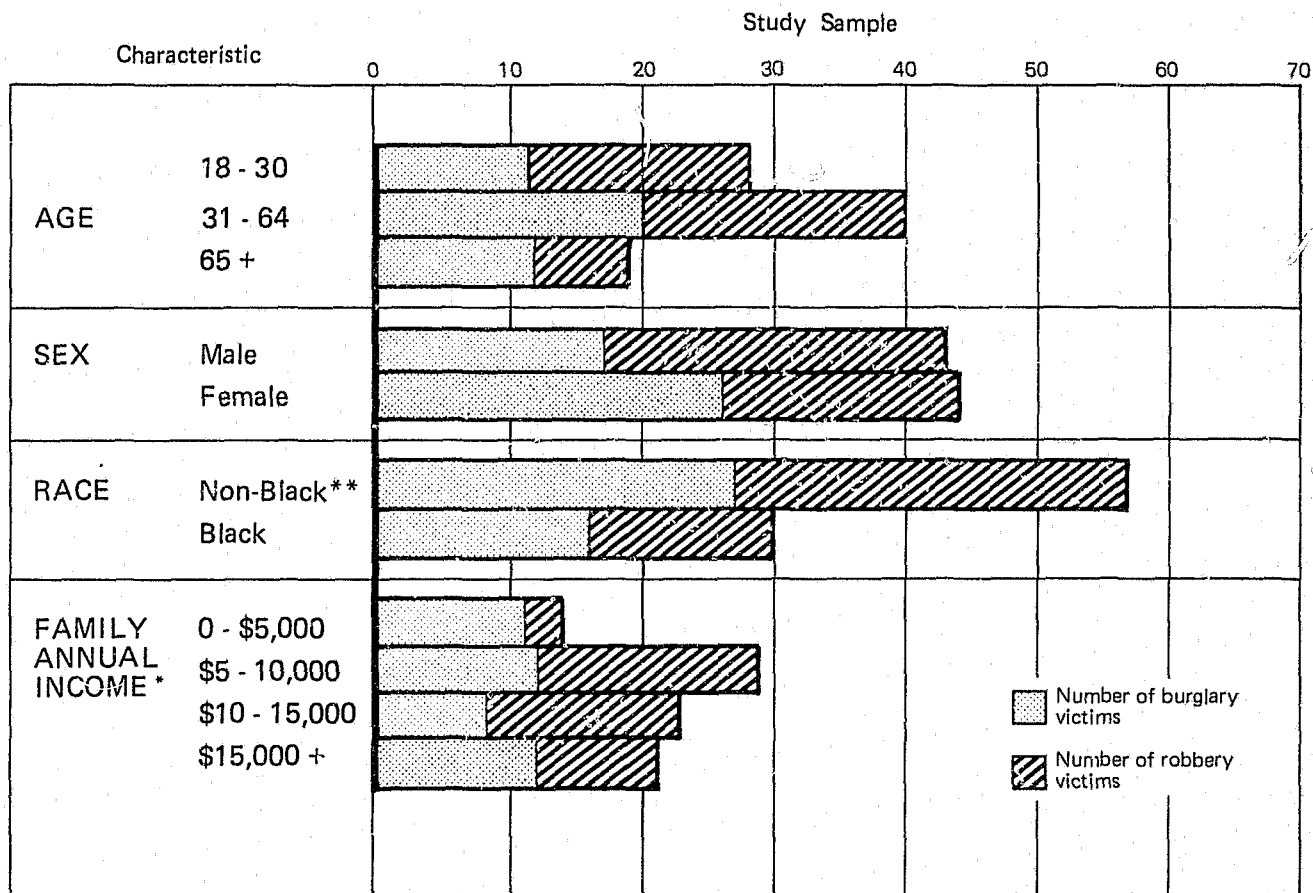
* Annual Family Income data are based on self-reports of victims interviewed.

** The "Non-Black" racial category includes Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, Chinese, as there was no distinction made between Whites and any minority group except Blacks in the three cities.

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Police officers in the study sample were predominately male and white (see Figure 8). For the most part, they were young (aged 22-30) but experienced, having been in police work from 2 to 27 years. Detectives were older and more experienced than patrol officers.

According to police officer descriptions of the areas where the sample crimes occurred, most of them happened in residential areas with high or moderate crime rates, inhabited by a poor, predominately minority population (see Figure 9). Both sample robberies and burglaries occurred in middle to lower income areas, but only burglaries occurred in the higher socio-economic areas.

E. Analytic Procedures

As described in the preceding section, the basic data consisted of 99 cases, each represented by at least two interviews and most represented by three. In this section our primary attention will be to the 87 cases of robbery and burglary, each of which is represented by an interview of the victim and the responding patrol officer and most of which are represented by an interview of the investigating detective. Our first concern was to demonstrate that the degree of crisis represented by a particular set of victim responses could be reliably judged. This demonstration proceeded through the following steps.

Step 1: Representing cases by bits of behavior. Twenty cases were randomly selected from the sample of 87. From all available interview material,* discreet bits of behavior were abstracted and an individual bit placed on a 3x5 card. Examples of bits are such things as:

o the victim was crying and trembling;

o I vomited right after the robber left;

o I couldn't remember a thing that happened; and

o the victim seemed confused, almost in a state of shock.

The twenty cases produced 354 such descriptive bits.

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* Interviews with victim, patrol officer, and detective.

Figure 8. CHARACTERISTICS OF POLICE OFFICERS IN THE STUDY SAMPLE

Study Sample

Characteristic	Patrol Officers (n = 93)	Detectives (n = 46)	Total Police Officers (n = 139)
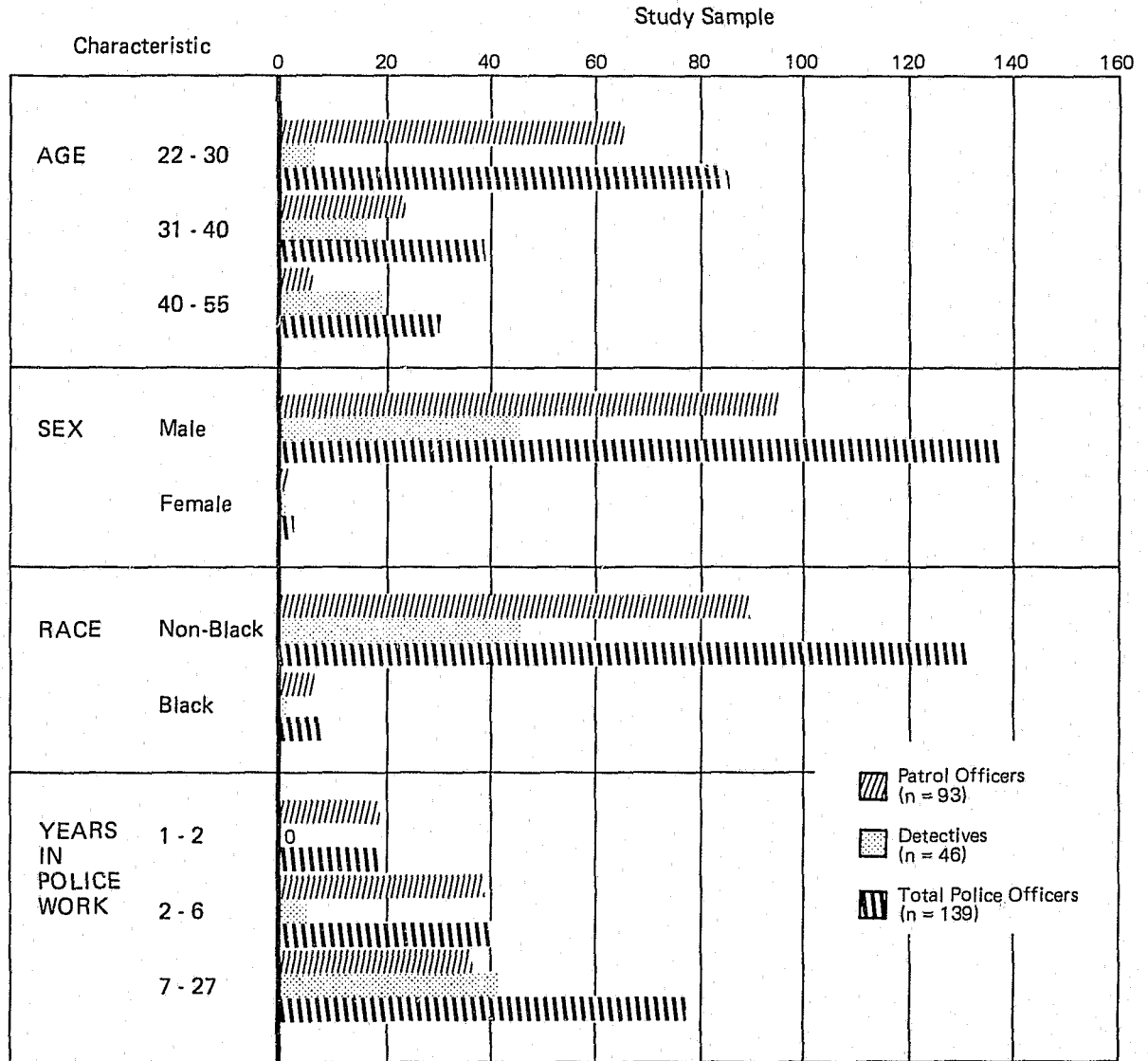
Figure 9. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AREA WHERE THE
SAMPLE CRIMES OCCURED
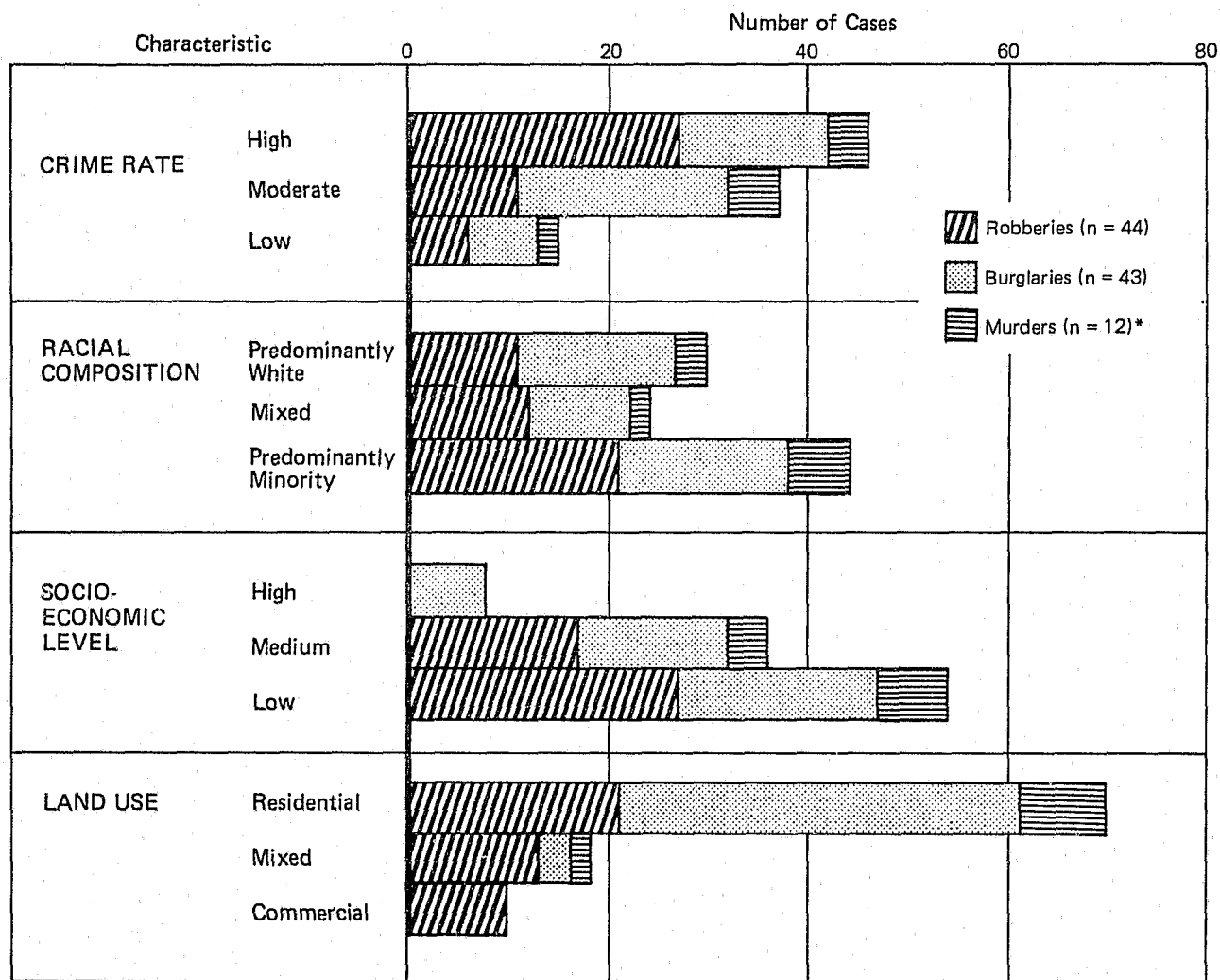
* No data on crime area were available for one of the sample murders.

Step 2: Rating the individual behavioral bits. Three raters (members of the AIR staff) independently rated the description on each 3x5 card on a 5 point scale extending from 1 = no evidence of crisis to 5 = extremely high evidence of crisis (see Figure 10 following). In the process of rating, the rater did not know the case from which the bit came and could estimate the source only if a pronoun such as "I" or "he" were used. The inter-rater correlations were computed, and the average inter-rater r was .82. Extension via the Spearman-Brown formula produces an estimate of reliability of .90 for a mean rating of two raters.

Step 3: Reconstitution of cases from bits. The 3x5 cards were then reassembled into the cases from which they were derived. Each case was thus represented by some number of bits, each of which had been rated for degree of crisis shown. The cases were then represented by the mean score for all of the bits constituting the case. The average rank-difference correlation for the three raters was .85, producing a reliability estimate of .92 for a score based on two raters. It was concluded that (a) bits could be rated reliably and (b) cases could be reliably placed on the basis of their constituent bit ratings.

Step 4: Global ratings of cases. For the same 20 cases used in Steps 1-3 above, 3 additional raters (AIR staff members) read all of the interviews associated with a case and made an overall judgment of degree of crisis on the same 5-point scale used in rating the bits. The average correlation between raters (rank difference) was .86, which leads to a reliability coefficient of .92, for an overall rating taken as the mean rating assigned by two raters. It was concluded that global, or overall ratings, were also a reliable procedure for assessing the degree of crisis involved in a particular case.

Step 5: Comparison of bit and global ratings. Since 3 raters rated bits and 3 made global ratings, there are 9 correlations of the bit x global ratings. The average of these 9 is .84, producing a reliability estimate of .91 for a score based on the mean of two ratings, one based on the overall case and one based on the bits. Since it is obviously more convenient to make overall ratings than to use the approach represented by

Figure 10. SCALES USED FOR DATA ANALYSIS RATINGS

Scale 1. PRESENCE/ABSENCE OF CRISIS IN VICTIMS

5	4	3	2	1
Extremely High	High	Medium	Low	None

Scale 2. IMPACT OF CRIME-RELATED CRISIS ON VICTIM'S LIFE

5	4	3	2	1
Extremely Severe Impact	High Impact	Moderate Impact	Little Impact	No Impact

Scale 3. IMPACT OF VICTIM REACTION ON POLICE OPERATIONS

5	4	3	2	1
Extreme Impact	Significant Impact	Moderate Impact	Slight Impact	No Impact

Scale 4. PATROL OFFICER/DETECTIVE SENSITIVITY TO VICTIM

5	4	3	2	1
Highly Sensitive	Sensitive	Neutral	Insensitive	Highly Insensitive

Scale 5. VICTIM SATISFACTION WITH POLICE ACTIONS

5	4	3	2	1
Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Strongly Dissatisfied

Scale 6. EXTENT TO WHICH POLICE OFFICERS THINK POLICE ROLE SHOULD INCLUDE ALLEVIATION OF VICTIM EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

5	4	3	2	1
Extremely High	High	Medium	Low	None

bits, the decision was made to rate all 87 cases by reading all materials and making an overall judgment. Two raters independently rated the 87 cases. The inter-rater correlation was .83. The mean of the two ratings was taken as the score to represent the case in all subsequent analyses. The reliability estimate for this score is .91.

Having demonstrated that the presence of crisis could be reliably judged, we next considered the other five scales shown in Figure 10. We made only a very cursory examination of the use of bits for these five scales. We examined but 10 cases. For some scales no more than 70 bits were generated, while for others as many as 170 were produced. The raw correlation between ratings varied from .55 for Scale 2 to .85 for Scale 3. We then proceeded to make global ratings for all 87 cases using the same two raters involved in Step 6 above. The resulting correlations and reliability estimates for the five scales are as follows:

Scale	Inter-rater correlation	Reliability
2	.76	.86
3	.72	.84
4	.83	.91
5	.83	.91
6	.84	.91

The above data indicate that the interview materials can be used to develop measures which satisfy psychometric standards of reliability. The measures can therefore be used to investigate substantive relationships among scales, and between scale scores and other variables. But before doing so, it may be helpful to convey some of the flavor of the material which occupies various scale points. Figure 10A following, presents examples of case material which occupy the extreme positions on the six scales.

Our next concern was to consider the dimensions or components of victim response to a criminal event. This investigation proceeded as follows.

The 354 bits described in the preceding section were sorted into piles using an "alike-not alike" frame of reference. In other words, any bit which described crying went into a single pile. A bit which stated "I

Figure 10A. Examples of Cases Receiving Extreme Ratings

Mean Rating > 4	Mean Rating < 2
Scale 1. Presence or absence of crisis.	
"Was shaking all over; lost control of kidneys in front of suspect; couldn't remember anything about suspect or crime except that gun was in her side with hammer back..."	"Not scared at all; used to crime as it happens all the time; nonchalant and calm; thought it was rather funny..."
Scale 2. Impact on victim.	
"Went to pieces for a week; still cannot talk about it, even with friends; moving to apartment; has stopped going out; afraid to leave bedroom at night; no longer goes to morning mass..."	"Crime had no effect, really; no more scared (in store) than before; would not be afraid to confront suspect in court..."
Scale 3. Impact of victim reaction on police operations.	
"Was unable to give officer any information; too upset to even remember how it happened; was unable to describe suspects..."	"Called police immediately; kept witnesses there till police arrived; had very accurate, detailed description of suspect..."
Scale 4. Police sensitivity.	
"Officer seemed interested; offered victim water and cigarette; calmed her down before questioning; reassured victim that she was not in danger; told her she had handled things just right; stayed with her till friend arrived..."	"Officer did not seem interested; said he knew who did it but offered no explanation; while talking to him; officer got call on radio and left with no explanation; officer told him he was lucky that he wasn't in the house or he'd have had his brains beat out.." Officer described victim as "wallowing in self pity."
Scale 5. Victim satisfaction.	
"Was very, very satisfied; police arrived quickly; was courteous and very nice; did everything perfectly, did all the right things; now feels that he and police are a team..."	"Dispatcher asked him to come to station to report street crime; was mad and scared to go back downtown where crime had occurred; officer was not interested in looking at jacket which suspect had dropped; asked officer about stolen credit cards and was told "just get new ones"; feels police will not help him, so he is all alone..."
Scale 6. Police view of police role in alleviating victim distress.	
"These are my people so I feel it's important that we go as far as we can in helping victims; I sometimes get over involved; we should identify with victims and let them know we understand how they feel-- even if it takes a long time..."	"Victim needs is not a police concern; police job is to concentrate on suspect; police should let victims work out their problems on their own; if it's really serious, police should call an ambulance and get the victim to a hospital..."

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coūld feel the tears welling up" was put in the same pile. Since "crying and trembling" were often combined in a single bit, the above pile came to be defined by crying, shaking, and crying and shaking.

Eight categories emerged from this classification exercise. The 20 cases from which the bits were derived were then scored (plus or zero denoting presence or absence) on each of 8 categories. The resulting pattern of plusses suggested that the 9 categories might form a scale in the Guttman sense. This possibility was therefore investigated. All 87 cases were scored on each of the 8 categories with the summary results shown in Figure 11 below. It is obvious that the marginals are consistent with the hypothesis that a scale exists. A scalogram analysis was therefore conducted with the results as shown in the Figure. While the 8-item scale is quite good in an empirical sense, the rationale for including anger as a dimension of crisis seems weak. Anger is logically different from the other categories represented. Consequently, the scale characteristics of a 7-category scale which omitted anger were also investigated. The results are again presented in Figure 10. It would appear that anger should be dropped from the scale on both empirical and logical grounds.

Our conclusion was that seven categories of behavior offered a potentially convenient and simple method for assessing the degree of crisis manifest by a victim.

The above scale should be positively related to the overall case ratings, though the two measures obviously are not identical. The two sets of scores were correlated; the obtained r was .77.

In the following chapter, we report the analyses made of the scores described above.

Figure 11. PERCENT OF CASES SHOWING INDICATED SYMPTOMS
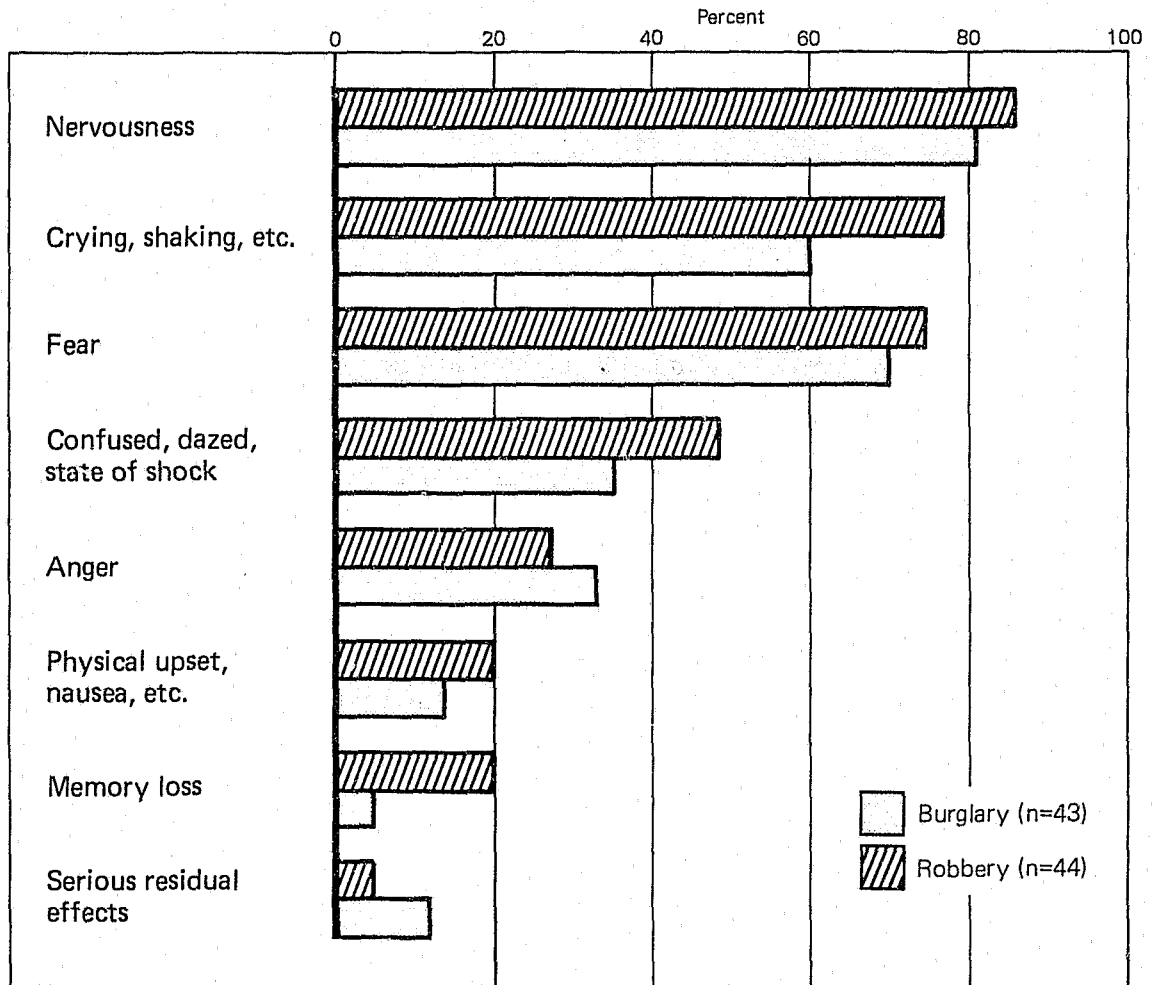
SCALOGRAM ANALYSIS OF VICTIM SYMPTOMS

	Eight Item Scale (nk = 696; e = 57)	Seven Item Scale (nk = 609; e = 29)
Coefficient of reproducibility	.918	.952
Minimum marginal reproducibility	.414	.430
Percent improvement	.504	.522
Index of scalability	.860	.916

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III. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

A. The Presence of Crisis

One of the questions which prompted the study was, "do victims of robbery and burglary frequently manifest evidence of crisis?" In answering this question, we will depend largely on the material summarized in Figure 11 preceding. The reader should keep in mind the fact that our data base is quite small, consisting essentially of 87 cases of burglary (N = 43) and robbery (N = 44).

Figure 11 displays the percentage of cases showing each of eight types of response. For reasons given earlier, a response of anger will be ignored in the analyses which follow. The seven remaining items form a scale, in the Guttman sense, ranging from some form of nervousness to serious residual effects which persist weeks after the precipitating event. Where on this scale might one plausibly argue that the victim is manifesting crisis behavior?

Before offering an answer to the questions, two facts should be noted. First, all definitions are in some sense arbitrary, and a "scale-point definition" is no exception to this rule. Second, it is not evident that "crisis" is the most appropriate label for the dimension represented by the seven scale-points. If there were no literature on crisis or crisis intervention, our inclination might be to label the scale "degree of psychological disturbance." But there is a literature on crisis and our scale points are relevant to the descriptions of crisis found in that literature.

It can be argued that a victim who manifests extreme physical upset or memory loss or serious residual effects (scale points 5, 6, and 7) is showing a crisis reaction. A more stringent definition might limit the crisis label to victims suffering memory loss or severe and persistent residual effects (scale points 6 and 7). Or one might advance a more inclusive definition by adding scale point 4 (confused, dazed, state of shock) to the list of symptoms encompassed by the crisis label. The effect of these alternative definitions is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Frequency of Crisis by Four Definitions

	Per Cent of Sample Cases		Population Estimates	
Scale Point	Robbery	Burglary	Robbery	Burglary
7	5	12	02-03	05-07
6-7	23	16	09-13	06-09
5-6-7	27	21	10-15	08-12
4-5-6-7	50	42	19-28	16-24

By the most restrictive definition, only 5% of robbery victims would be classed as demonstrating crisis reactions; by relaxing the definition, we could include 23% or 27% or 50% of the victims in the crisis category. On rational grounds, we favor a definition which uses scale points 5, 6, and 7.

As previously noted, we selected a sample of cases which we believed to have promise for showing crisis response.* A lower-bound estimate of the prevalence of crisis reaction in the population of reported crimes can be derived by assuming that we were so competent in making our selection judgements that there were no crisis reactions at all in the 62% of the cases which we discarded. If we multiply our selection ratio (.38) by the empirical percentages in Table 2, we obtain the first figure in the two right-hand columns of the table. The lower bound estimate is that crisis responses occur in 10% of all robbery cases and in 8% of all burglary cases. The second set of numbers in the two right-hand columns is based on the assumption that we might find crisis response to be half as frequent in the discarded cases as in the selected sample. We believe the boundaries of 10 to 15% for robbery and 8 to 12% for burglary are plausible as estimates of crisis response.

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* In the three cities, 963 burglaries and 301 robberies were reported during the 30-day period that we examined. We selected 38% of these (362 burglaries and 112 robberies) for potential use in the study. The selection was based entirely on what was written in the crime report; many reports gave no basis at all for estimating the likelihood of crisis.

B. The Victims of Crisis

In this and succeeding sections, we will present some antecedents, con-
comitants, and consequences of robbery and burglary, oriented to the degree
of crisis attendant to the crime. In these analyses, crisis will typically
be characterized as low, medium, or high, based on the overall case rating
described in Chapter II, Section E. The 87 cases were trichotomized on the
basis of the mean score of two raters, so as to produce approximately equal
numbers in the three categories. The 30 cases with scores above 3.7 are
classed as High crisis; the 30 with scores between 3.1 and 3.6 as Medium,
and the 27 with scores of 3.0 or less as Low crisis. For the two crime
categories, the cases are distributed as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Level of Crisis Among Crime Victims

	Low	Medium	High
Burglary	17	17	9
Robbery	10	13	21

The difference between robbery and burglary is evident in Table 3, and
is confirmed by statistical test. The mean score for burglary cases is
3.12, for robbery 3.52. The difference is significant at the .01 level
($t = 2.68$; $d_f = 85$)

Crisis responses are more frequent among women victims than among men,
as shown in Table 4. The difference is even more pronounced than appears
to be the case, since women are more often victims of burglary in our
sample. For the data of Table 4, $\chi^2 = 6.96$; $d_f = 2$; $p < .05$.

Table 4. Crisis and Sex of Victim

	Low	Medium	High
Female	10	19	21
Male	17	11	9

There is some tendency for crisis to be less frequent among Black victims, but the difference does not meet usual standards of significance. The data are presented in Table 5. For these data, $\chi^2 = 3.01$; $d_f = 2$;

Table 5. Crisis and Race of Victim

	Low	Medium	High
Black	12	9	7
Non-black	15	21	23

$p < .30$.

Finally, the elderly are no more likely to show crisis behavior than young or middle-aged victims. In this case $\chi^2 = .13$; $d_f = 2$; $p < .95$.

Table 6. Crisis and Age of Victim

	Low	Medium	High
18-59 years	20	21	22
60+ years	7	9	8

C. The Effects of Crisis

As reported in Chapter II, all cases were rated on a 5-point scale reflecting the impact which the crime had on the subsequent life of the victim. Not surprisingly, lasting impact is related to the degree of crisis behavior observed at the time of the crime; the overall correlation between the two scales is .54. This general relationship is evident in Table 7, which gives the mean score on Scale #2 for cases at the three levels of crisis. The 30 cases of high crisis have a mean impact score of 3.53 while

Table 7. Crisis and Subsequent Life Impact

	Low	Medium	High
Burglary	2.83	3.41	3.86
Roberry	2.13	2.82	3.39

the 27 low crisis cases have a mean of 2.57. But a second relationship is evident in Table 7 and it is not one which we expected to find. While

impact increases as a function of crisis for both robbery and burglary cases, impact scores are consistently and significantly ($t = 2.04$, $p < .05$) higher for victims of burglary. The correlation between crisis and impact is therefore greater than the .54 reported above, which combines all cases. When correlations are computed separately for robbery and burglary, values of .67 and .62 are obtained.

This is contrary to the conventional wisdom which would hold that events which involve a direct threat against life, the possibility of injury, and confrontation with a deadly weapon should have more lasting effects than events which involve none of these features and which, in fact, involve no direct contact between victim and offender. In the vast majority of our burglary cases (35 out of 43) the victim never saw the offender. Why should such events produce lasting impact?

If the effects were limited to such things as installing better locks or checking to see that windows were secured, a "so what" response would suffice. But precautions of this type did not lead to high scores on impact. On the contrary, impact is associated with such victim statements as:

o I can _feel_ that person in my house all the time; when I
    enter the house I _know_ he's there;

o since the burglary, I never enter my front door without
    a gun in my hand;

o I'm going to sell my house, I just can't live in it
    anymore; and

o I just can't get over the fact that he touched my
    personal belongings.

Far from being viewed as a "crime against property," many burglary victims view the crime in a highly personalized way. It is an invasion of _my_ territory, a tampering with _my_ belongings, a violation of _me_. These feelings are most pronounced in cases where ransacking, or willful destruction, or defacement has occurred. Loss of items which have low intrinsic value but high sentimental value to the victim also contributes to a sense of personal violation. After reading our cases, we are convinced that _from the_

<u>victim's point of view</u>, burglary is often a crime against the person. In a later section we will consider some of the implications of this finding.

We next consider the effect of crisis on the conduct of police operations. In the interviews with police officers*, we asked if the emotional state of the victim (in the case being discussed) affected the accuracy, timeliness, or completeness of the information supplied by the victim. The responses were then scored on the 5-point scale described in Chapter II. Table 8 presents the mean scores on this scale for the three levels of crisis. The first obvious fact is that all of the scores are low in an

Table 8. Effect of Crisis on Police Operations

	Low	Medium	High
Burglary	1.17	1.27	1.73
Robbery	1.39	1.39	2.47

absolute sense; scale point 1 is defined as no impact, scale point 2 as slight impact, and scale point 3 as moderate impact. Only one value in the table is in the slight-to-moderate ranges. For robbery, high crisis cases have significantly greater effect than low crisis cases (t = 3.85, p < .001) but even for these cases, the practical effect is not severe.

D. <u>The Police Response to Crisis</u>

In our interviews, victims were asked to describe the behavior and apparent attitude of the patrol officers and detectives who were involved in their case. These responses were then scaled in terms of the degree of sensitivity shown by the officer to the victim as a person under some degree of distress. The scaled scores then become the basis for examining police sensitivity as a response to crisis. Table 9 presents mean sensitivity scores for the three levels of crisis. The most obvious feature of these

Table 9. Police Sensitivity to Crisis

	Low	Medium	High
Burglary	3.41	3.26	3.23
Robbery	3.61	3.23	3.77

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* Refers to patrol officers only; detective interviews are excluded.

data is that there is no simple relationship between the two variables. For burglary, there is a decrease in police sensitivity as crisis behavior increases (the decrease is not statistically significant). For robbery, police are quite sensitive to both high and low crisis cases, but less so to medium levels (the high-medium difference is significant at the .02 level). For high crisis cases, police are more sensitive to robbery victims than to burglary victims (t - 2.60, p. < .02).*

We believe that the differential response to high crisis victims of robbery and burglary stems from the quite different perceptions which the police (and the public) have of the two crimes. When a police officer encounters a victim who has just been held at gun point, has had his life threatened, and has perhaps been roughed up by an armed robber, he can understand and sympathize with the emotional distress of the victims. It is "reasonable" to be badly shaken by such an experience. But when the victim is someone who has not encountered a criminal, who was never under any threat, and who has lost nothing of value, it is "unreasonable" to be hysterical about the matter.** Hence, the police appear to be less sensitive to the distressed burglary victim because the two actors view the event from radically different perspectives.

One consequence of the above state of affairs is that victim satisfaction with police performance varies directly with perceived sensitivity, so that emotionally distressed burglary victims are the least satisfied group while emotionally distressed robbery victims are the most satisfied. These data are shown in Table 10. The mean scores for satisfaction show

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* This difference is even more pronounced for detectives. High crisis robbery has a mean sensitivity score of 3.54; the corresponding figure for high crisis burglary is 2.63.

** Police could probably understand and be tolerant of an emotional reaction to a very large dollar loss in a burglary. But in our cases, it is not dollar loss which triggers the extreme emotional response. The police simply do not understand the distress represented by the illustrative statements given on page 35. As noted earlier, we do not suppose that police differ from the general public in this respect.

Table 10: Victim Satisfaction with Police Performance

	Low	Medium	High
Burglary	3.28	3.14	3.03
Robbery	3.53	3.29	3.59

an identical pattern to the sensitivity scores in Table 9. The overall correlation between the two scales is .82 though they refer to quite different segments of the victim interviews. The typical high crisis victim statements are:

o for robbery: he did everything he could do; I'm very satisfied with the police;

o for burglary: he was very matter-of-fact; I'm not convinced that the police did all they could do.

The robbery victim believes that the police officer has treated him/her as an individual; the burglary victim feels that he/she was treated as just another case of something that happens all the time.*

Victim satisfaction is unrelated to victim age, sex, or race. It is also unrelated to the amount of time the police officer spends with the victim (r = .05).

E. Other Findings

1. While much has been written about the multiple offender, it appears that multiple victimization also deserves attention. In our sample, 41% of burglary victims and 50% of robbery victims had been either robbed or burglarized at some earlier date. There was no significant relationship between prior victimization and level of crisis.

2. There is ample evidence that some victims of robbery and burglary warrant specialized follow-up assistance. Whether such assistance should be provided by police or some other agency is not obvious and is dependent on many factors which will vary from one locale to another. Both police and victims most often cite persons that victims know well and trust (e.g., relatives, friends, clergy, etc.) or police officers as preferred sources.

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* But in absolute terms, victims are more satisfied than dissatisfied with the police; our comparative statements should not obscure the fact that victims do not give the police low marks.

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3.   Police feelings about their role and their operating constraints
do not seem to be reflected in their behavior. The extent to which the
police feel their role should include alleviating victim emotional distress
does not appear to affect patrol officer or detective sensitivity to rob-
bery and burglary victims. Scales for police sensitivity to victims and
police perceptions of their role were not correlated for patrol officers
($r = .05$) or for detectives ($r = .08$). Neither did police perceptions
of their role affect victim satisfaction; satisfaction and role perception
scales were uncorrelated for both police and detectives (-.06 and-.01).
Neither police sensitivity nor victim satisfaction are affected by police
perception of factors which might constrain their interactions with vic-
tims.

4.   The vast majority of robbery and burglary victims _intend_ to assist
in the prosecution of offenders. Eighty-six percent of the sample victims
claimed they would prosecute were the suspect apprehended, 14% were unde-
cided and none claimed they would not prosecute. But only one member of
our sample was in a situation where prosecution was highly likely.

5.   Surprisingly, relatives of homicide victims did not exhibit serious
crisis responses while talking with patrol officers and detectives. The
mean crisis rating of the twelve homicide victims' relatives included in
the sample was only 2.98, indicating medium to low crisis. Their emotional
states had almost no impact on detective or patrol officer operations
(mean scores of 1.4 and 1.8). Both patrol officers and detectives were
sensitive to relatives; mean ratings of patrol officer and detective sensi-
tivity were 3.39 and 3.6 respectively.*

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*   We have no confidence in any conclusion based on our 12 cases of homicide.
    Homicide is such an idiosyncratic event that a very large sample ($N \sim 1000$)
    would be required to examine the variable "crisis behavior among rela-
    tives of homicide victims."

IV. SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

A. Methodological Findings

1. The presence of crisis responses on the part of victims can be judged reliably from interview data provided by victims, police officers, and investigative officers. Reliability coefficients are consistently in the .88 to .95 range.

2. Seven observable indicators of crisis from a Guttman scale; the index of scalability is .92.

3. Scales of (a) impact of crisis on victim's life, (b) impact of victim reaction on police operations, (c) police sensitivity to victim, (d) victim satisfaction with police, and (e) police perception of role in victim assistance were also derived form interview data. Reliabilities range from .84 to .91.

4. For most departments, the crime report filed by the first officer on the scene does not provide the descriptive data needed to assess the degree of crisis behavior exhibited by the victim. The seven item scale noted in item 2 above might serve to make the reports more useful.

B. Substantive Findings

1. Serious crisis responses are estimated to be present in 10-15% of robbery cases and 8-12% of burglary cases. These estimates are very tentative since they are based on a small sample. The estimates are also influenced by the necessarily arbitrary definition of "serious."

2. While crisis is more frequent in robbery (as expected), burglary appears to have a greater impact on the victim's subsequent life than does robbery.

3. For burglary, police operations are not affected by crisis responses; serious crisis does interfere with the effectiveness of police response to robberies, but the interference is seldom severe.

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4. The police performance is generally viewed as satisfactory by victims. Victims of burglary are less satisfied than are victims of robbery. For burglary victims, the higher the degree of crisis response, the lower the satisfaction with the police.

5. The more sensitive police officers are, the more satisfied robbery and burglary victims are with police performance. Sensitivity and satisfaction correlate .82 in our sample.

6. Police are significantly more sensitive to crisis behavior in victims of robbery than in victims of burglary; hence the dissatisfaction with police among burglary victims noted in 4 above. It is suggested that police do not understand the emotional impact of some types of burglary.

7. Police feelings about their role and their operating constraints do not seem to affect their behavior. The extent to which the police feel their role should inlcude alleviating victim emotional distress does not appear to affect police sensitivity to robbery and burglary victims or victim satisfaction with police performance. Likewise, neither police officer sensitivity nor victim satisfaction are affected by whether police officers perceive that there are constraining factors which bear on police/ victim interactions.

8. Whereas most patrol officers feel no time constraints in dealing with crime victims, nearly all detectives feel their interactions with victims are hampered by heavy workloads and other time related constraints.

9. The vast majority of robbery and burglary victims say that they intend to assist in the prosecution of offenders. Although a few victims are uncertain as to whether they would prosecute, no victims claim they definitely will not.

10. While much has been written about the multiple offender, it appears that multiple victimization also deserves attention. In our samples, over 40% of our victims had been victimized at some earlier time. Our data do not support the notion that the victim is to blame for this. Rather, it is the victim's situation (his neighborhood, place of employment, etc.) which accounts for the repeated crimes against him.

11. Some victims of robbery and burglary warrant specialized follow-up assistance. Insofar as victim emotional distress is concerned, police officers and victims most often cite persons that victims know well and trust (e.g., relatives, friends, clergy, work associates, etc.) or police officers as sources of aid.

V. SOME IMPLICATIONS

A. Implications for Police Action

As background to this discussion, it must be stated that the victims in our sample awarded pretty good marks to the police officers who responded to their calls for assistance. In general, the responding officer was _not_ insensitive to victim needs; was not heavy-handed or matter-of-fact in his treatment of the victim; did not suggest explicitly or implicitly that the victim was to blame for the criminal event. Most of our victims reported that the responding officer was patient, helpful and sympathetic; they were generally pleased with the way they had been treated.

Obviously, there were exceptions to the above generalization. It was probably not helpful, and certainly not very sensitive for a patrol officer to tell a distraught victim of burglary, "it's lucky you weren't home lady, you'd probably have been raped." But in the three cities in which we worked, such events were rare; they represented exceptions, not the rule. In the following, we make some suggestions for consideration by police agencies, to improve various facets of the police/victim interaction. That we see areas where improvement is possible, does not challenge the general finding of overall satisfaction with the police expressed by our sample of victims.

1. Response to the emotionally upset victim of burglary.

Police appear to be quite competent observers of the "state of the victim," but in their processing of this observational data, they may apply a criterion of "reasonableness." Since many police officers view an hysterical reaction by burglary victims as "unreasonable," they do not show the same sympathetic understanding that they give to victims of armed robbery. It seems worth noting that while the percentage of burglary victims showing a serious crisis response is significantly smaller than for the case of robbery, the _number_ of burglary victims is much larger. The absolute number of burglary victims is such that police agencies must be concerned with them as a potential source of community dissatisfaction with the police.

It does not appear that extensive training programs in human relations are required, nor are crisis intervention techniques appropriate. What is required is for police officers to understand that some "crimes against property" may not be so conveniently classified from the point of view of the victim. When a burglary victim is obviously upset, is crying, confused, seemingly incapable of focused thought or action, the police officer should respond <u>as he would if he confronted the same symptoms in a victim of robbery</u>. No new responses are required, only a transfer to a new set of circumstances.

How this might best be brought about will vary with the agency. In some, little more than making the information known will be required. The underlying dynamics do not seem complex or difficult to understand; we believe that most police officers would understand a straightforward explanation. A short handout, perhaps a two-to-four page brochure on the <u>Treatment of the Burglary Victim</u> might be produced for wide distribution.

2. The police as a referral agency.

If, as we believe, the police are competent observers of emotional distress, and if the police are not to create a victim-assistance unit (as most departments will not), then the police might consider their role to be one of referral.

For any such role to become routinized, the first essential requirement is that the responding officer's observations be recorded. We would <u>not</u> propose to add another report form to the already over-burdened system. We <u>would</u> suggest that a simple six-item checklist be attached (or over-stamped in the margin) to the crime report form currently in use. The checklist might consist of the first six items on the scale which was developed in this project (the seventh item could not be known at the time of the report) and the responding officer would place a check mark by any indicator which described the victim's behavior.

The referral agency or agencies, and the referral procedure would depend on the resources available. In some cities, a referral card might be left with the victim. In another, a telephone call might be made to the responsible agency, giving the relevant information about the victim and his/her

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need for assistance. In another, written exchanges (or a xerox of the pertinent portions of the report) might be preferred. Issues of confidentiality and right to privacy would have to be resolved in each locale, but these would not appear to constitute formidable obstacles to referral for assistance. For a very large number of citizens, the police are the only possible referral agency, since no one else routinely contacts victims of crime.

3. Case management and the distraught victim.

Most burglaries are not solved; the typical case offers so little in the way of useful information that it would be an obvious misuse of police resources to make a serious effort toward solving it. Faced with this reality, police agencies assess the solvability of a case and make a rational decision as to what resources, if any, should be committed. Often, the only reasonable decision is that barring some unforeseen event (a stolen item is recovered in the course of some other investigation) the crime should not be actively pursued. In time, the victim will receive a letter indicating that no additional information has been developed, and that unless something new comes to light, the investigation is being suspended.

The above practice is both rational and honest; it informs the victim that nothing is being done and that it is very unlikely that his property will be recovered or the offender apprehended. But it happens to be an additional source of dissatisfaction to those victims who were most upset by the crime itself.

We are not certain that most police departments can do much about this unfortunate circumstance, but it may be worth some thought. Several types of action are conceivable; one may be appropriate to some departments, and none may fit others. Each is probably in practice somewhere.

One action is to leave with the victim, immediately after the crime, as much information as possible about how cases are managed. A handout which makes explicit the obstacles to apprehension and recovery might alter the victim's expectations and reduce dissatisfaction with the ultimate outcome.

People do <u>not</u> know what to expect and might profit by more immediate information on the realities of the matter.* While printed matter would have considerable advantage over an oral explanation (it could be re-read later), either would be better than neither.

A second action would be a follow-up visit, not for investigative purposes, but to give advice concerning how similar crimes might be prevented in the future. A willingness to invest in target-hardening is probably at its peak, and there is public relations value also. Some departments make such follow-ups to neighbors as well as victims.

A third would be to add to the solvability analysis, an indicator of the victim's readiness for more bad news. For a subset of victims, the "investigation suspended" message might be delayed by going through some intermediate stage.

4. <u>Issues of policy, procedures, and training</u>.

A few ambiguities were revealed in our cases; none are of earth-shattering importance, but may merit some consideration by police agencies.

The first concerns presumably factual information given to victims by responding officers and/or detectives. Some victims are told to take extra precautions because "the burglar will be back." Others are told not to worry because "he won't come back to the same place." There were no facts presented in the crime report, nor were any obtained in interviews which made either of the above statements a reasonable prediction for the case at hand. What are the facts, and what should victims be told? We believe that explicit policy and procedures should be formulated, so that information given to victims will not depend on the personal belief system of the officer.

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*
They do expect the police to take fingerprints <u>always</u>; and they are dubious at the failure to take them. A little explanation might be helpful.

The second is the view frequently expressed by officers, that their police training had emphasized the hazards of getting "over involved" in situations, to not allow sympathy for the victim to interfere with their primary mission. As a consequence, the officer is sometimes uncertain as to what he "should" do in situations where victims are very upset.* Again, a carefully worded policy statement might reduce this area of ambiguity.

B. Implications for Research and Development

The following thoughts are offered with some diffidence. We have not discovered problems of such overpowering importance as to demand immediate attention. We have encountered some gaps in available knowledge; four of these are described below.

1. Longitudinal study of victims.

Very little is known about the long-term residual effects of victimization. In our study, we found some victims displaying very serious effects four to six weeks after the event; in most such cases our prediction would be that the behaviors would continue for a considerable period of time. The major victimization surveys also suggest that some changes in behavior--fear of going out at night, for example--are long lasting. But systematic knowledge is lacking. A long-term, large-scale study of victims could have several important benefits. First, it could provide quantitative estimates of the number of victims in need of assistance, of both short- and long-term nature. Second, it could systematically examine the relationship between residual effects (and other victim-centered variables) and victim assistance in prosecution (and other law enforcement-centered variables).

2. Creation of large-scale data base.

The incidence of crisis responses to robbery and burglary could be estimated with considerable precision from a large sample study of victims

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* What he generally does is to respond as he thinks he should, by extending help and sympathy; but he's not certain that this is what the department wants him to do.

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which used the crisis scale developed in the current project. The required
data might be obtained at very low cost. From discussion with the members
of our Advisory Panel, it appears likely that many police agencies would
be willing to use the scale and could make good use of the data for their
own purposes. If LEAA would collect and process such data from ten to
twenty departments, a very large-scale data base could be assembled in a
short period of time.

3. Synthesis of victim assistance efforts.

If it is not already being done, it would be very useful to review
the many different programs which are in existence throughout the country.
A careful review of what is being done, under what circumstances, with what
outcome, could provide models for adoption elsewhere.

4. Systematic studies of burglary.

We are concerned over the paucity of systematic studies of bur-
glary. There appears to be a great deal of knowledge about this type of
crime, but most of it exists as informal wisdom held by police officers
and detectives. For example, very informed judgments can be made, as to
whether a particular burglary was committed by a professional or an amateur
and whether it was a crime of opportunity or planned in advance. But there
are few analyses of such judgments; we do not "know" that in a particular
neighborhood, most burglaries are committed (1) by juveniles, (2) as crimes
of opportunity, (3) in late afternoon. Intervention strategies appropriate
to this profile are thus not introduced. We believe that the necessary
data exist (in the file cabinets and personnel) in the police departments
across the country; we suggest that analytic studies of these data would be
of benefit.

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APPENDIX A

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES CONTACTED
REGARDING PROJECT PARTICIPATION

Arlington County, Virginia, Police Department
Birmingham, Alabama, Police Department
Boston, Massachusetts, Police Department
Dade County, Florida, Department of Public Safety
Dallas, Texas, Police Department
Denver, Colorado, Police Department
Kansas City, Missouri, Police Department
Lakewood, Colorado, Department of Public Safety
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
Madison, Wisconsin, Police Department
Minneapolis, Minnesota, Police Department
Newark, New Jersey, Police Department
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Police Department
Portland, Oregon, Police Department
Rochester, New York, Police Department
San Antonio, Texas, Police Department
San Diego, California, Police Department
San Jose, California, Police Department
Washington, D.C., Police Department

APPENDIX B

INSTRUMENTS AND INTERVIEW GUIDES

POLICE CRISIS INTERVENTION: INVESTIGATING THE NEED FOR NEW APPLICATIONS
AIR CASE FILE ABSTRACT

Project Case No.: _____   Case Status:

.Police Agency: _____   Active
                                                          Closed
Crime: _____

Crime location: _____

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Victim: _____

Address: _____

Telephone No.:   _____
                              Home

                      _____
                              Business

Contacts: (1) _____

           (2) _____

           (3) _____

Date/time for interview: _____

_____

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Reporting Officer(s): (1) _____

                       (2) _____

Patrol schedule: Week 1 _____

                  Week 2 _____

                  Week 3 _____

Detective: _____

Schedule: Week 1 _____

           Week 2 _____

           Week 3 _____

Interview Date: _____

POLICE CRISIS INTERVENTION

INVESTIGATING THE NEED FOR NEW APPLICATIONS

Air

VICTIM/RELATIVE INTERVIEW
DATA FACEHEET

Project Case No.: _____   Interviewer: _____

Type of Case: _____   Date: _____

Police Agency: _____

Interviewee Name: _____ Project ID No.:

Address: _____ _____

_____

Telephone: _____

Residence: _____

Business: _____

Race: _____

Sex: _____

Age: _____

Marital Status: _____

No. Persons Living in Residence: _____

No. of visits to (from) adult kin weekly: _____

Family Income: _____ 0-$5,000

_____ $5,000-10,000

_____ $10,000-15,000

_____ $15,000 & over

Occupation: _____

Prior Victimizations (R-reported to police; NR-not reported to police)

1. _____
   Date   Type of Crime   R or NR

2. _____
   Date   Type of Crime   R or NR

POLICE CRISIS INTERVENTION:

INVESTIGATING THE NEED FOR NEW APPLICATIONS

Prior Victimizations (R-reported to police; NR-not reported to police) (continued)

3. _____   _____   _____
            Date   Type of Crime   R or NR

Current Victimization

Familiarity with place of victimization: _____

No. of victims: _____

No. of witnesses: _____

POLICE CRISIS INTERVENTION: *INVESTIGATING THE NEED FOR NEW APPLICATIONS*

VICTIM/RELATIVE INTERVIEW GUIDE - KEY POINTS TO BE COVERED

Instructions: Begin the interview with a brief statement regarding the study. So as not to bias the interviewee's response, describe the study in terms of police officer/victim interactions rather than the applicability of crisis intervention techniques. Explain that the interviewee is one of many victims and police officers who will be interviewed and that she/he was selected because we are interested in that particular type of crime. Also, explain that the interview is confidential and will have no bearing on police, or court involvement in the interviewee's case. Emphasize that the victim is under no obligation whatsoever to either AIR or the police department to participate in this study.

Key points to be covered in the interview are provided below in the the sequence that seems most appropriate. Where more detail is required, a checklist of important items follows. All points and checklist items must be covered, but both the ordering and specific phrasing of items can be changed according to the course of each interview. Notes must be carefully recorded and related to each key point and checklist them.

Key Points:

1. How the crime happened.

   a. _____ *activity prior to occurrence of crime.*

   b. _____ *anticipation of crime.*

2. V/R's immediate reaction to what occurred (before the arrival of the police).

   a. _____ *V/R actions.*

   b. _____ *V/R emotional reactions.*

   c. _____ *Account of time lapse between crime and police contact.*

   d. _____ *V/R reaction to dispatcher (if V/R called).*

3. What happened while talking with the initial responding police officer (detective).

   a. _____ *V/R's perception of officer's attitude.*

   b. _____ *Officer actions deemed helpful/not helpful by V/R.*

   c. _____ *V/R's satisfaction with police interventions.*

   d. _____ *How V/R felt during the interview.*

(1) *Behaviors associated with feelings.*

(2) *Onset and degree of emotional reaction.*

(3) *Effect of V/R emotional reaction on interview.*

(4) *Confusion about details of the crime such as his/her own behavior during the crime, time, location, witnesses, etc.*

4. Long term effects of the crime on the V/R.

   a. _____ *Specific behavioral effects. (e.g., shopping habits, leisure activities, investments in protective devices, etc.)*

   b. _____ *Non-behavioral effects. (e.g., level of fear, opinion of area in which crime occurred, feelings about the offender, other potential assailants)*

   c. _____ *Attitude toward the police.*

   d. _____ *Persistence of effects.*

5. Whether there was anything that someone (relative, clergyman, policeman, friend, etc.) could have done to make things easier for the V/R.

   a. _____ *Most effective point of intervention.*

   b. _____ *From whom the intervention would have been most readily received.*

   c. _____ *Differential efficacy of immediate and delayed interventions.*

6. Whether V/R will (or is) assist in prosecution of the offender(s) if apprehended.

   a. _____ *Reasons for assisting or not assisting in the prosecution.*

   b. _____ *Perceived mistrust of the LE/CJ system/futility of effort required.*

   c. _____ *Fear of retaliation or continued intimidation by offender(s).*

7. Whether the V/R had contact with police officers other than the initial responding officer and the circumstances surrounding these contacts.

   a. _____ *V/R's perception of the utility of follow-up contacts initiated by the police.*

   b. _____ *Whether V/R later recalled or notified the police about additional information.*

   c. _____ *What happened during follow-up contacts.*

   NOTE: If warranted by the extent of subsequent interaction with other police officers, key point No. 3 should be covered for each of the other officers involved in the case. Other officers should be identified if possible.

POLICE CRISIS INTERVENTION:

INVESTIGATING THE NEED FOR NEW APPLICATIONS

POLICE OFFICER INTERVIEW
DATA FACESHEET

Project Case No.: _____   Interviewer: _____

Type of Case: _____   Date: _____

Agency: _____

Interviewee Name: _____   Project ID No.: _____

Rank: _____

Job Assignment: _____

Education Summary: _____

_____

_____

Training Summary: _____

_____

_____

Length of Service: _____

Race: _____

Sex: _____

Age: _____

Estimated time with victim: _____

Contacts with victim: (1) _____
                          (Date)   (Type of Contact)   (Purpose)
                      (2) _____
                          (Date)   (Type of Contact)   (Purpose)

Contacts with victim (cont'd):   (3) _____
                                     (Date)   (Type of Contact)   (Purpose)
                                 (4) _____
                                     (Date)   (Type of Contact)   (Purpose)

Comments: _____

            _____

            _____

            _____

            _____

POLICE CRISIS INTERVENTION: *INVESTIGATING THE NEED FOR NEW APPLICATIONS*

<u>POLICE OFFICER INTERVIEW GUIDE</u> - KEY POINTS TO BE COVERED

Instructions: Begin the interview with a brief statement regarding the study.
So as not to bias the interviewee's response, describe the study
in terms of police officer/victim interactions rather than the
applicability of crisis intervention techniques. Explain that
the interviewee is one of many victims and police officers who
will be interviewed and that she/he was selected because we are
interested in that particular type of crime. Also, explain that
the interview material is confidential, and will be used only
for research purposes.

Key points to be covered in the interview are provided below in
the sequence that seems most appropriate. Where more detail is
required, a checklist of important items follows. All points and
checklist items must be covered, but both the ordering and speci-
fic phrasing of items can be changed according to the course of
each interview. Notes must be carefully recorded and related to
each key point and checklist item.

Key Points:

1. How the crime happened.

2. V/R's immediate reaction to what occurred (up to police arrival).

    a. _____   *V/R actions. (as reported by victim or witnesses)*

    b. _____   *V/R emotional reactions. (as reported by victim or witnesses)*

3. What happened while with the V/R.

    a. _____   *Perception of V/R.*

    b. _____   *Attitude toward V/R involvement in the crime.*

    c. _____   *Accomplishment of police officer objectives in the interview.*

    d. _____   *V/R emotional state during the interview.*

        (1) *Behavioral signs of distress.*

        (2) *Officer response to V/R distress.*

        (3) *Officer feeling about his/her training and ability to
            deal with V/R stress.*

        (4) *Effect of V/R emotional state on accuracy and completeness of
            information provided.*

    e. _____   *V/R emotional state at time of departure.*

4. Subsequent effects of the crime on the V/R.

   a. _____ *Specific behavioral effects reported by the V/R (e.g., shopping habits, leisure activities, investments in protective devices, etc.).*

   b. _____ *Non-behavioral effects reported by the V/R (e.g., level of fear, opinion of area in which crime occurred, feelings about the offender, other potential assailants).*

   c. _____ *Duration of effects.*

5. Whether there was anything that someone (relative, clergyman, policeman, friend, etc.) could have done to make things easier for the V/R.

   a. _____ *Officer's feelings about the police role vis-a-vis alleviation of V/R stress.*

   b. _____ *Officer's judgement regarding how and by whom V/R crises can best be resolved.*

6. Whether police officer thinks V/R will assist in prosecution of the offender(s) if apprehended. (If already apprehended, whether V/R is assisting.) Why/Why not.

   a. _____ *Officer's perception of V/R willingness to cooperate.*

   b. _____ *Importance of V/R continued cooperation to the officer.*

7. Departmental policies/procedures, supervisor expectations, informal peer norms, or officer values bearing on the interaction.

   a. _____ *Those affecting initial interactions (e.g., extent to which patrol officer conducts preliminary investigation, expected time out of service for call, etc.).*

   b. _____ *Those affecting subsequent interactions (e.g., systematic recontact with V/R, assignment of cases to investigators, etc.).*

END