

CRIMINAL VICTIMIZATION IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS:  
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS<sup>1</sup>

by

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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on the results of a criminal victimization survey in Benton County, a predominantly agricultural community in North Central Indiana. The paper examines the distribution of crime by type committed against Benton County residents. It also compares the personal and household victimization rates with the results from a National Crime Panel victimization study. The paper concludes that (1) a greater proportion of crime experienced by rural residents is of a less serious nature than offenses experienced by residents of urban areas; (2) the volume of crime occurring within rural areas is generally equivalent to that of non-metropolitan areas of 50,000 or less, but not as high as for metropolitan areas of 50,000 or greater; and (3) the proportion of victimizations experienced by rural residents in urban areas, or outside the county is higher than the proportion of victimizations experienced by urban residents when outside of the urban area.

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## CRIMINAL VICTIMIZATION IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS:

### A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

#### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research is to examine what may be called an "emergent social problem": the volume of crime in rural America. The study of rural crime has heretofore been a largely neglected subject matter area for two interrelated reasons. First, official data, such as the FBI crime rate index of major offense categories, as well as the arrest records of law enforcement agencies, usually have revealed that urban areas exhibit rates of crime disproportionately higher than the rates for rural areas. For example, Table 1 reveals that the FBI total crime index rate (per 100,000 persons) of offenses known to the police is substantially different for urban and rural areas. On a national basis, the rate of crime reported to law enforcement agencies within SMSA's is nearly three times higher than the crime rate for rural areas. The urban crime rate is substantially higher than the rural crime rate for all seven offense categories contained within the FBI crime index. Consequently, the city (or the environment thereof) has been long considered by law enforcement officials, criminal justice planners, and criminologists, to be "criminogenic": a "breeding ground" for crime. Second, because official statistics in the past have revealed a greater crime problem in urban areas, criminological theory has, throughout its development, concentrated on urban crime to the exclusion of the analysis of rural crime.

[Table 1 about here]

Recent events, however, have caused a reassessment of the predominately urban orientation to the study of crime. For instance, since 1973, FBI statistics reveal that the total crime index for SMSA's has increased approximately 2.5%. During this same period, the total crime index rate for rural areas has risen nearly 40%. Since 1970, arrest rates for serious crimes have been increasing in non-urban areas, with the most dramatic increase occurring in the violent crime categories. Between 1970 and 1974, the average annual increase in arrest rates for violent crimes by juveniles was 7.6% for urban areas, and 19.2% for non-urban areas (Behavior Today, 1977: 2). Rural residents, particularly farmers, are also reporting substantial increases in property theft. California Farm Bureau officials estimated that the state's farmers would suffer losses of at least \$30 million in 1977 (Footlick, 1977:101).

A series of national public opinion polls by the Gallup organization illustrates the increased concern of rural residents regarding the crime problem. In 1972, the 1500 respondents to a national sample were asked: "Is there more crime in your area now than a year ago, or less?" Forty percent of the respondents residing in cities of 500,000 or more said that crime had increased in the past year, compared to only 27% of the respondents from rural areas and towns of less than 2,500. In 1977, this same question was repeated among another representative sample of persons in the United States. The percent of respondents from major metropolitan areas who perceived an increase in crime had declined slightly to 38%. In contrast, the

percentage of rural respondents who indicated an increase in crime in their area had climbed dramatically to over 46%.

Suburbanization, better transportation systems, consolidation of rural schools, the increased price of farm machinery and other production inputs, the relative isolation of many rural residents, inadequate law enforcement resources, as well as other factors, may all be hypothesized as contributing to an increase in rural crime. However, an explanatory model of rural crime is premature because there is so little data available on rural crime. Notable exceptions include Clinard (1942, 1944, 1960), Eastman (1954), Dinitz (1973), Gibbons (1972), Phillips (1975, 1976), and Beran and Allen (1975).

#### DEVELOPMENT OF VICTIMIZATION SURVEYS

A recent development in the field of criminology is the utilization of the victimization survey to measure the volume of crime. Historically, criminologists relied almost exclusively on crime rate data made available by law enforcement agencies to examine trends and to delineate differences between specific geographic areas. However, there are several major drawbacks to exclusive use of this kind of data, two of which are most pertinent to the focus of this paper. First, official statistics (e.g., court cases, crimes known to the police, arrest records) are incapable of measuring the total volume of crime. For example, the FBI crime rate index consists only to crimes "known to the police," over 80 percent of which are reported to law enforcement by the private citizen as victim (Black and Reiss, 1967). However, a sizeable proportion of crimes are never reported to law enforcement by the victim. For instance, in only about 25% of all personal and household larcenies, will the victim notify law

enforcement personnel. Although a greater proportion of serious crimes tend to be reported, one-half of all rapes and non-commercial robberies (theft by force) are never reported. Consequently, police statistics do not reflect the total volume of crime within a given geographic area, and it may be difficult to determine whether or not a change in the "official" crime rate is due to an actual change in the volume of crime, or instead due to a change in the proportion of incidents reported to law enforcement.

A second drawback of police statistics is that there is a paucity of information on situational events surrounding the criminal incident. For instance, there are only limited data on the demographic characteristics of the victim, the extent to which the victim may have contributed or increased his vulnerability, and the victim-offender relationship.

The victimization survey is an alternative data collection tool which estimates the extent of crime through statistically representative sampling within a specified geographic area, and in which information on specific criminal incidents within a predefined time frame are recorded directly from the sample respondents. It has the capability to record criminal incidents which have not been reported to law enforcement, and to determine the reasons why types of incidents remain unreported. The victimization survey may also be used to collect information on the situation surrounding the criminal event from the perspective of the victim, as well as elicit post-event effects on the victim.

## PURPOSE

The paper examines the extent of crime in a rural area, and compares the volume and rate of rural and urban criminal victimization. The research was conducted in Benton County, Indiana, an agricultural community in the northwest quadrant of the state. Major foci include: (1) the type of criminal activity most likely to occur, (2) the total volume of crime, and (3) the proportion of criminal incidents occurring to residents inside or outside the county of residence. Second, the study compares the rate of criminal victimization in this rural area with national averages, and with the rates of various metropolitan areas, as derived from the National Crime Panel surveys conducted under the auspices of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (U.S. Department of Justice, 1976). In the final section, an outline for a research agenda on crime in rural areas is proposed.

## RESEARCH METHOD

A stratified proportionate sample of residents in the county was obtained using an area probability sampling technique. Based upon the political and legal mechanisms by which crimes are reported, a county was perceived to have the most distinct governmental boundaries through which law enforcement and the processing of crime occurs. Three defining characteristics of a rural county were used in the selection process: (1) a total county population of no more than 30,000 persons; (2) an average density of fewer than 50 persons per square mile; (3) no greater than one-third of the county population meeting the United States Census Bureau's definition of "urban"

(i.e., an incorporated area of 2,500 or more). Conjointly, the first and third criteria eliminate counties with cities of 10,000 or more.

Benton County, Indiana meets each of these criteria. It is located in northwest Indiana, and is roughly equidistant from Chicago and Indianapolis (100 miles). Lafayette, Indiana, 25 miles southeast, is the nearest metropolitan area. Benton County itself had an estimated 1975 population of 10,828 persons. Fowler, the County seat, has a population of 2,643. There are several smaller towns in the county, all with populations of less than 500.

The victimization study was modeled after previous National Crime Panel research which employed a tripartite analysis of household victimizations, personal victimizations, and business victimizations. This paper will discuss only the results of the first two.

Data for the household and personal victimization survey were collected through an area probability sample. The County was divided into three strata: (1) town, (2) village, and (3) open-country. The town stratum included the County seat of Fowler. The village stratum included all other unincorporated and incorporated places of 50 or more persons. The open country stratum consisted of all other households outside the first two strata.

The location of the households in the open country stratum was obtained from the Benton County Atlas and Directory (1976), and was checked for accuracy against United States Geological Survey maps. This procedure was supplemented by a visual inspection along county roads. Households in the town and village strata were counted by visual inspection of dwelling units. Each unit was marked on street

maps. This procedure proved economical given the relatively small size of the towns and villages in Benton County.

Sampling blocks of approximately 20 dwelling units were drawn up. There were 3,608 dwelling units in Benton County at the time of the survey. These units were divided into 181 sampling blocks. There were 41 blocks within the town stratum, 79 village blocks, and 61 open country blocks.

A stratified proportionate sample of blocks was identified to reflect the proportion of the population residing in each stratum. Forty sampling blocks were randomly selected. A random starting point was selected for each block, after which every fourth dwelling unit was included in the sample.

Household victimization questions could be answered by any adult in that household (over age 18). Personal victimization questions were asked individually to each member of the household age 12 and over.

Both the household and personal victimization sections consist of a series of specific "screen" questions which determine whether a crime has occurred. For each incident indicated by the respondent, a follow-up Crime Incident Report was administered in order to obtain indepth information about events surrounding the incident.

Four hundred eighty-one respondents from 222 households were interviewed for the household and personal victimization sections of the study. Seventy-eight extra dwelling units were substituted in the survey because the originally selected units could not be interviewed. Approximately one-half of the substitutions were refusals; the other half were due to irregular working hours of the



respondents, vacations, scheduling conflicts between the respondent and interviewer, or for medical reasons.

The survey instrument for the household and personal victimization study was divided into five parts: (1) household information, (2) personal information, (3) household screen questions, (4) personal screen questions, and (5) the crime incident report.

The household screen questions consisted of a set of eight questions on whether property had been stolen from the home or yard, and whether the home had been burglarized, vandalized, or an automobile stolen. The personal screen items were asked to each person in the household age 12 and over and included questions about rape, robbery, assault, and personal larceny. The respondents were queried only about crimes that had occurred in a one year period: from June 1, 1977 to May 31, 1978.

Every attempt was made to maintain conceptual similarity between the Benton County rural crime study and the National Crime Panel victimization surveys. The same screen questions were employed for the Benton County study, as well as the identical definitions of crime types.

The classification scheme of criminal incidents utilized for the national victimization surveys is not identical, but remains similar to the FBI crime index classification. Personal crimes in the victimization survey included violent crimes: (1) rape; (2) robbery or theft by force; (3) aggravated assault with injury; (4) attempted aggravated assault with a weapon; (5) simple assault with injury; and (6) attempted simple assault without a weapon. Two non-violent crimes are also included under the personal crime grouping:

(1) personal larceny with contact (such as purse snatching or pocket picking); and (2) personal larceny without contact. Larceny without contact involves the theft of personal property from a place other than the respondent's house or yard and does not include automobile theft.

Household victimizations are of three types: (1) burglary or unlawful breaking and entering; (2) household larceny or the theft of property from the yard or from the inside of the home if there was no forcible entry; and (3) motor vehicle theft. Household burglary was further subdivided into: (a) forcible entry; (b) unlawful entry without force; (c) attempted forcible entry.

Victimization rates are measures of the probable occurrence of specific criminal incidents among population groups. For crimes in the personal sector, (i.e., against the person) the rate is the number of victimizations per 1,000 residents age 12 and over. For crimes in the household sector, the victimization rate was derived from the number of incidents per 1,000 households. There is a difference between the two rates because the personal sector rate reflects the number of victimizations while the household sector is based on the number of victimization incidents. A single criminal incident may involve multiple victims or persons and would therefore be considered as more than one victimization.

## RESULTS

Distribution Of Offenses. Table 2 shows the distribution of reported victimizations. An additional question on vandalism was also included in the Benton County study based on the results of a nine county study by Phillips (1975) in rural Ohio which found that

vandalism represented 38% of all criminal victimizations. The results here indicate that 30 incidents of vandalism were reported. This is 20.3% of all total incidents, which is below the proportion from the Ohio findings. However, it does indicate that vandalism is one of the primary types of criminal offenses to which the rural population is vulnerable. Since vandalism has not been included in other victimization surveys, it is impossible to determine whether this pattern is similar to the volume of vandalism in urban areas.

[Table 2 about here]

There were 73 personal victimizations experienced by respondents in the sample. This is nearly half of all crimes reported by the survey respondents. Over 70 percent of these offenses involved personal larceny without contact, which was the most frequently mentioned type of crime. Included in this category would be theft of personal property while at work (or at school among school-age respondents), as well as the theft of item from a motor vehicle when away from the place of residence. Personal larceny without contact would exclude the theft of personal property away from the home and yard, and as well, would exclude automobile theft.

There were 20 violent crime victimizations reported by the sample respondents, 15 of which were classified as simple assault. Simple assault may be distinguished from aggravated assault by the degree of injury. An aggravated assault involves an attack or attempted attack with a weapon, or an attack without a weapon that resulted in serious injury such as broken bones, loss of teeth,

internal injuries, loss of consciousness or any injury requiring at least two days of hospitalization. In contrast, simple assault is limited to an attempted attack without a weapon or to an attack resulting in minor injury such as bruises, a black eye, cuts, scratches, swelling or undetermined injury requiring less than 2 days of hospitalization. The vast majority of simple assaults were of the attempted variety. There were also four reported cases of aggravated assault two of which resulted in serious bodily injury.

Household victimizations accounted for 30.4% of all reported victimizations. Burglary was the most frequently mentioned incident in the household sector. Burglary includes forcible entry, unlawful entry without force, and attempted forcible entry. Although intent to commit theft is, in most states, required in the legal definition of burglary, victimization research must make certain assumptions regarding the intent of offenders. The classification of burglaries reported among the Benton County respondents reveals a fairly even distribution among forcible entry, entry without force, and attempted entry.

Household larceny involves theft or attempted theft from the yard or property of a household member, but does not include attempted, forcible, or unlawful entry. There were 17 reported cases of household larceny, or 11.5% of all reported incidents.

Location And Rate Of Victimization. Table 3 presents two methods of calculating victimization rates for the Benton County study. The first column shows the victimization rates for each of the three crime sectors: personal, household, and vandalism. These rates are based upon all offenses occurring to the sampled residents. The

second column refers only to victimizations that occurred within Benton County to the sampled residents.

[Table 3 about here]

Within the personal sector, there is a considerable difference in the two sets of figures. The total personal sector rate for all victimizations occurring to Benton County residents is 151.8 per 1,000 persons. In contrast, the victimization rate for incidents which have occurred within Benton County is 89.4 per 1,000 persons. This latter rate is only 58.8% of the former and demonstrates that a substantial proportion of personal victimizations experienced by Benton County residents take place outside the County. An examination of specific rates within the personal sector reveals that most of the differential is due to personal larceny without contact. The total victimization rate for personal larceny without contact, regardless of where the incident took place was 108.2. Adjusting the personal larceny without contact rate for incidents occurring within Benton County cuts this rate in half (54.1 per 1,000 persons).

Most of the personal larcenies without contact experienced outside of Benton County occurred in Tippecanoe County. Tippecanoe County is an adjacent metropolitan county with a population of approximately 110,000. It functions as a service and trade center for a seven county area including Benton County. A second research project of the adult population (N=300) of Benton County (independent of the crime study), which was administered soon after completion of the victimization survey, focused on the retail shopping patterns and

over-all satisfaction with local recreational, medical, educational, and social facilities and services. The data indicated that most household-related retail items, including groceries, furniture, clothing, and sundries, purchased by rural residents were bought outside Benton County. For instance, 90% of the respondents did most of their Christmas shopping-related purchases in Tippecanoe County at one or another of its shopping malls (Donnermeyer, 1979). In other words, Benton Countians are a highly mobile group who travel frequently outside the county for many services, especially those in the retail sector.

The authors suggest, although there is no direct data to support this hypothesis, that the Benton County residents maintain some of their "rural" norms and expectations when traveling to urban areas. The Lafayette area is not comparable in size with an Indianapolis or Chicago, and so it may not be perceived by Benton County residents as being particularly "crime-ridden." For instance, they may not change their habits with respect to keeping car doors unlocked while parked at one of the shopping malls.

The victimization rates for household sector offenses reveal little difference by location. The victimization rate for all household sector victimizations was slightly more than 200 per 1,000 households. When only offenses occurring within Benton County are utilized, the adjusted victimization rate is 180.2 per 1,000 households. Those victimizations within the household sector which did not take place within Benton County were associated with vacations or temporary places of residence (i.e., hotels, motels, homes of relatives or friends).

National Crime Panel surveys have found that among urban populations, fewer victimizations take place outside of the metropolitan area in which they reside. Generally, the percentage of victimizations of this nature has been less than 10% (U.S. Department of Justice, 1975). The Benton County survey results indicate that a substantially higher proportion of crimes occur to the population while outside the County. Approximately one-fourth of the victimizations experienced by the County residents occurred in cities of 10,000 or greater.

Rural-Urban Victimization Rates. How does the rate of victimization in Benton County compare to the rates found in urban areas? Tables 4 and 5 include the results of the National Crime Panel study for personal and household sector crimes respectively for 1976. The tables provide a national victimization total, as well as the rates of metropolitan areas of 50,000 to places of one million residents or greater. Also included are the victimization rates for "Nonmetropolitan Areas" which include all unincorporated areas of 50,000 or less.

Among the personal sector crimes, the victimization rates for Benton County are approximately equivalent to the United States average. The violent crime victimization rate for Benton County residents was 41.5 (all victimizations occurring to Benton County residents) compared to the United States rate of 32.6. The Benton County violent crime victimization rate when adjusted for those crimes occurring within Benton County remains slightly below the rates for the three

larger groupings of metropolitan areas, but is substantially higher than the rate for nonmetropolitan areas.

[Table 4 about here]

However, the types of violent crime occurring to Benton County residents are generally less serious than those reported in the national survey. Three-fourths of all violent crime victimizations in the rural survey involved simple assault compared to 46.7% in the National survey.

The personal theft victimization rate for Benton County residents is proximate to the 1976 National Average. However, the personal theft victimization rate for offenses occurring within Benton County is well below the rate for nonmetropolitan areas.

The overwhelming proportion of personal crimes of theft in Benton County involved personal larcenies without contact. This same pattern may be found in the National Crime Panel study where personal larceny without contact accounted for nearly 96% of all personal crimes of theft in 1976.

A comparison of the household sector victimization rates in Benton County with the National Crime Panel results shows that there is a higher rate of burglary, but a lower rate of household larceny and motor vehicle theft in Benton County than the National average (Table 5). The Benton County burglary rate for all incidents occurring to residents was 126.1 per 1,000 households. This compares to a United States average of 88.9. The Benton County burglary rate is higher than the rate for all sizes of metropolitan areas, and is nearly double the rate of 64.6 per 1,000 households for nonmetropolitan areas.



[Table 5 about here]

A breakdown of the burglary rate into its three sub-types reveals that the largest differential between Benton County and the United States averages resides in the attempted forcible entry category. The Benton County rate was 40.5 per 1,000 households, compared to a National average of only 20.8. The actual volume of forcible entry in Benton County was nearly identical to the National average and there was a much smaller differential with respect to unlawful entry without force, than with forcible entry.

We suggest three possible explanations for the higher burglary rate in Benton County. First, the large discrepancy between Benton County and the National average with respect to attempted forcible entry may be due in part to a differential level of community tolerance toward crime, (i.e., a tendency to increase the seriousness of an offense by rural residents). Second, rural farm residents present a greater opportunity for burglary because of the presence of barns, tool sheds and other structures related to the farm operation. A third set of factors which may explain the burglary rate is the low population density of Benton County (i.e., relative isolation of open country households), and the previously mentioned fact of the high volume of commuting to urban areas for retail shopping. Low density and a high absenteeism from the residence would combine to create a situation of high vulnerability for many residence in the county.

The household larceny rate among the Benton County sample was 76.6 per 1,000 households. This is considerably less than the National average and is even lower than the rate of 91.5 for nonmetropolitan

areas. There were no reported incidents of motor vehicle theft by the respondents in the Benton County study. This is significant because motor vehicle theft is usually committed by a professional thief or theft ring. The rate of motor vehicle theft according to the National Crime Panel study shows a steady decrease with population size from 25.8 per 1,000 households for metropolitan areas of 1,000,000 or more, to only 6.7 per 1,000 households for nonmetropolitan areas.

The total victimization rate for all household sector crimes for Benton County is lower than the National average, and for each category of metropolitan area. However, the Benton County total household sector victimization rate is slightly higher than the nonmetropolitan rate.

#### THE PATTERN OF RURAL CRIME

This paper suggested earlier that crime in rural areas may represent an "emergent" social problem. The purpose of this paper was to compare the volume of crime for one rural area, Benton County, Indiana with previous National Crime Panel research and determine the comparability in the level and type of crime between urban and rural areas of the United States.

The results from the Benton County victimization study lead to several tentative generalizations about the level and type of crime in rural areas.

1. A GREATER PROPORTION OF CRIME EXPERIENCED BY RURAL RESIDENTS IS OF A LESS SERIOUS NATURE THAN OFFENSES EXPERIENCED BY RESIDENTS OF URBAN AREAS.

The robbery and aggravated assault rates were lower in Benton County than the rates for metropolitan areas of all sizes. In addition, motor vehicle theft, generally associated with the professional thief or gang, was not reported by any respondents in the Benton County sample. The rate of simple assault and personal larceny without contact were significantly higher for the Benton County sample than the National figures.

In this respect, the results of the Benton County study are similar to the general conclusions of both Gibbons (1972) and Phillips (1977), i.e., that crime in rural areas is of a less serious nature than in urban areas. Gibbons (1972) went so far as to characterize the type of crime in rural Oregon as "folk crime" (i.e., petty theft, fish and game violations, public drunkenness). The data from both Ohio (Phillips, 1977) and Benton County clearly do not lend support to the strength of Gibbon's typification, but do suggest the generally less serious nature of the rural crime pattern.

2. THE VOLUME OF CRIME OCCURRING WITHIN RURAL AREAS IS GENERALLY EQUIVALENT TO THAT OF NONMETROPOLITAN AREAS OF 50,000 OR LESS, BUT NOT AS HIGH AS FOR METROPOLITAN AREAS OF ABOVE 50,000 PERSONS.

The victimization rate for crimes occurring within Benton County were generally equivalent to the nonmetropolitan category from the National Crime Panel study. One major difference was the burglary rate, and in particular, the attempted forcible entry rate. Factors associated with the tolerance level, mobility patterns, low population density and presence of farm-related structures may account for this difference.

3. THE PROPORTION OF VICTIMIZATIONS EXPERIENCED BY RURAL RESIDENTS IN URBAN AREAS, OR OUTSIDE OF THE COUNTY OF RESIDENCE, IS HIGHER THAN THE PROPORTION OF VICTIMIZATIONS EXPERIENCED BY URBAN RESIDENTS WHEN OUTSIDE OF THE URBAN AREA IN WHICH THEY RESIDE.

The personal larceny without contact victimization rate for the rural survey suggests that rural residents who travel to service centers located in urban areas for basic or "routine" retail purchases, greatly enhance their chances of being criminally victimized.

#### RESEARCH AGENDA

In conclusion, our research suggest that rural areas no longer fit the stereotype of a social system characterized by little or no crime. The Benton County victimization study is a case study, and as such the generalizations derived from it are limited by unique or situational factors associated with the study area. However, this research, as well as other preliminary studies by Beran and Allen (1974), Dinitz (1973), and Phillips (1975), illustrates the need for expansion of the data base on rural crime.

Rural criminal justice officials have had little evidence on which to formulate policy and the administration of rural criminal justice. Future reserach on rural crime should be focused upon several key problem areas.

1. The Pattern Of Victimization In Rural Areas. In addition to continued measurement of the total rate of criminal victimization, and by type of victimization, there is a need for information on the pattern of crime in rural areas. Newman (1973) and Phillips (1976) suggest the importance of ecological factors to the probability

of victimization. Such factors would include distance from a metropolitan area, proximity to a public road, visibility of the house to neighbors, and the arrangement of farm buildings on the farm operation. Another important line of inquiry in this respect is the examination of demographic, economic, and social class differentials between victims and non-victims. A third area of research on the pattern of crime would include the effect of opportunity reduction techniques on victimization. For example, is there a difference between victim and non-victim households (or persons) by the proportion with a security guard light, burglar alarm system, type of door and window locks, presence of a watchdog, possession of a gun, and other security devices and practices? A final line of inquiry on the pattern of rural victimization should focus on victim response. For instance, was the incident reported to law enforcement, and if not, for what reason(s) were the police not notified? What is the relationship of the victim to the offender (i.e., is the offender an employee, friend, neighbor, or even relative?). What are the psychological and behavioral consequences of victimization to all household members?

2. The Development Of Theoretical Perspectives Regarding Rural-Urban Differentials. Warren (1978:53-54) has outlined seven "great changes" that have occurred in American communities, the gist of which is that there has been "an increasing orientation of local community units toward extracommunity systems of which they are a part, with a corresponding decline in community cohesion and autonomy." These changes have cut across both rural and urban communities.

Future research particularly must be concerned with the construction of sampling designs for comparative analyses of the volume and type of crime occurring to persons and households from different types of rural areas, and of course, with metropolitan areas. Factors which may be operative in explaining rural and urban differentials include many of the "great changes" outlined by Warren (1978). Illustratively, such variables as urbanization, proximity to metropolitan areas, the type and size of farm operations, the travel patterns of local residents, etc. may be important explanatory factors. A second line of inquiry would include analysis of changing norms and attitudes in rural areas. For instance, assuming vandalism is largely a youth crime committed by local persons, what has been the effect of mass media channels of communication, and the increased influence of the peer group as the result of rural school consolidation, on normative definitions of property destruction, illegal drug use, etc.

3. Evaluative Research Examining The Effect Of Increasing Urbanization On Rural Criminal Justice Agencies. The rising crime rate in rural America will affect law enforcement and the court system alike. How will the law enforcement departments of small towns and rural counties react to an increased volume of crime? How will rural offenders be processed through the local court system? In this respect, one important research question is the examination of the social and economic cost effectiveness of expanding law enforcement and criminal justice systems to meet a rising crime problem? In contrast to a more punitive, formal system of

response, are there viable non-punitive, and informal solutions? For instance, would "Neighborhood Watch", "CB Patrols" and other response programs which directly involve the private citizen, be an effective response for reducing crime in rural areas? If so, should rural law enforcement officials be sensitized more to the principles of community structure and organization in their training programs?

Crime increasingly will become a "public issue" of concern to persons in small towns and the open-country. A greater understanding of the social forces underlying this trend, and how rural areas will adjust to it, is necessary.

Table 1. FBI Part 1 Offense Rates for Rural and Urban Areas of the United States, 1976 (Per 100,000 Persons)<sup>1</sup>

Offense Category <sup>3</sup>	Area <sup>2</sup>		
	SMSA	Other Cities	Rural
Crime Index Total	6,037.4	4,374.0	2,047.5
Total Property Crime	5,523.1	4,108.1	1,877.7
Burglary	1,645.9	1,013.8	768.1
Larceny-Theft	3,322.8	2,888.5	1,002.3
Motor Vehicle Theft	554.4	205.8	107.3
Total Violent Crime	550.3	265.0	169.8
Murder and Non-Negligent			
Manslaughter	9.5	5.3	7.8
Forcible Rape	31.3	13.4	13.0
Robbery	254.9	51.0	21.2
Aggravated Assault	254.7	196.2	127.9

<sup>1</sup>Source: Table 1-Index of Crime-United States, 1976, pp. 36-37, in Crime in the United States, 1976. Uniform Crime Report, issued by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.

<sup>2</sup>SMSA area represents all law enforcement agencies within Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas as defined by the Bureau of Census. Other cities are all urban places outside an SMSA. An urban place may be less than the Census definition of 2,500 persons if it is incorporated or is a suburb contiguous to a larger urban place. Rural areas include all parts of all counties lying outside of an SMSA not within the jurisdiction of the law enforcement agency of an incorporated place.

<sup>3</sup>Burglary is the breaking or unlawful entry of a structure with the intent to commit a felony or theft, and includes attempted forcible entry. Larceny-theft is the unlawful taking or leading away of property from the possession of another which is not taken by force, violence, the threat thereof, or fraud. It does not include motor vehicle theft. Motor vehicle theft is the unlawful taking of a self-propelled vehicle, but does not include boats, construction equipment, or farm equipment. Criminal homicide is willful homicide and does not include death resulting from negligence. Forcible rape is carnal knowledge of a female, forcibly and against her will. Robbery is theft by force or threat thereof. Aggravated assault is assault with intent to kill or for the purpose of inflicting severe bodily injury.



Table 2. Number and Percent of Victimizations Occurring to Residents of Benton County by Sector and Crime Type (Estimated: June 1, 1977-May 31, 1978).

Sector and Type of Crime	Number of Victimizations	Percent of All Crimes
I. PERSONAL SECTOR	73	49.3
A. <u>Crimes of Violence</u>	20	13.5
Rape	1	.7
Robbery	0	----
Assault	19	12.8
Aggravated Assault	4	2.7
With injury	2	1.3
Attempted assault with a weapon	2	1.3
Simple Assault	15	10.1
With injury	4	2.7
Attempted assault without a weapon	11	7.4
B. <u>Crimes of Theft</u>	53	35.8
Personal larceny with contact	1	.7
Personal larceny without contact	52	35.1
II. HOUSEHOLD SECTOR		
A. <u>Burglary</u>	28	18.9
Forcible entry	8	5.4
Unlawful entry without force	11	7.4
Attempted forcible entry	9	6.1
B. <u>Household Larceny</u>	17	11.5
C. <u>Motor Vehicle Theft</u>	0	----
III. VANDALISM SECTOR	30	20.3
TOTAL	148	100.0

Table 3. Victimization Rates for all Victimitizations Occurring to Benton County Residents and Victimitizations Occurring Only Within Benton County (Estimated: June 1, 1977-May 31, 1978).

	Victimization Rates: Total Victimitizations Occurring to Benton County Residents	Victimization Rates: Victimitizations Occurring Within Benton County
I. PERSONAL SECTOR (per 1,000 persons)	151.8	89.4
A. <u>Crimes of Violence</u>	41.5	35.3
Rape	2.1	2.1
Robbery	----	----
Assault	39.5	33.3
Aggravated Assault	8.3	8.3
With injury	4.2	4.2
Attempted Assault without a weapon	4.2	4.2
Simple Assault	31.1	24.9
With injury	8.3	8.3
Attempted Assault without a weapon	22.8	16.6
B. <u>Crimes of Theft</u>	100.3	54.1
Personal Larceny with contact	2.1	----
Personal Larceny without contact	108.2	54.1
II. HOUSEHOLD SECTOR (per 1,000 households)	202.7	180.2
A. <u>Burglary</u>	126.1	117.1
Forcible Entry	36.0	31.5
Unlawful entry without force	49.5	45.0
Attempted forcible	40.5	40.5
B. <u>Household Larceny</u>	76.6	63.1
C. <u>Motor Vehicle Theft</u>	----	----
III. VANDALISM SECTOR (per 1,000 households)	135.1	126.1

Table 4. Personal Crimes: Victimization Rates for Persons Age 12 and Over, by Place of Residence, Type of Crime, 1976 (Per 1,000 persons), United States\*.

Place of Residence	Type of Victimization									Total Personal Victimization Rate
	Total Violent Crime Victimization Rate	Rape	Robbery	Assault			Total Theft Rate	Personal Larceny		
				Total	Aggravated	Simple		With Contact	Without Contact	
United States	32.6	0.8	6.5	25.3	9.9	15.4	96.1	2.9	93.2	128.7
Metropolitan Areas of 1,000,000 or More	42.9	0.6	13.1	8.8	29.1	11.7	103.8	6.4	97.4	146.7
Metropolitan Areas of 500,000 to 999,999	39.2	1.8	8.5	29.4	11.7	17.7	118.5	3.9	114.6	157.7
Metropolitan Areas of 250,000 to 499,999	38.2	1.3	6.4	30.2	12.0	18.3	109.4	3.1	106.2	147.6
Metropolitan Areas of 50,000 to 249,999	33.1	0.8	4.9	27.3	9.4	17.9	104.4	1.9	102.4	137.5
Non-metropolitan Areas	20.6	0.5	2.6	17.5	7.2	10.3	69.6	0.9	68.6	90.2

\*Source: Table 7, Personal Crime: Change in Victimization Rates for Persons Age 12 and Over, by Place of Residence and Type of Crime, 1975 and 1976. Pp. 35-36 in Criminal Victimization in the United States: A Comparison of 1975 and 1976 Findings. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, U.S. Department of Justice.

Table 5. Household Crimes: Victimization Rates by Place of Residence and Type of Crime, 1976  
(Per 1,000 households), United States\*.

Place of Residence	Type of Victimization						
	Burglary				Household Larceny	Motor Vehicle Theft	Total Household Victimization Rate
	Total Burglary Rate	Forcible Entry	Unlawful Entry	Attempted Forcible Entry			
United States	88.9	30.4	37.7	20.8	124.1	16.5	229.5
Metropolitan Areas of 1,000,000 or More	91.4	35.7	32.6	23.8	114.2	25.8	231.4
Metropolitan Areas of 500,000 to 999,999	104.7	39.3	38.6	27.0	144.4	25.4	274.5
Metropolitan Areas of 250,000 to 499,999	105.2	36.8	42.5	26.8	166.6	20.1	291.9
Metropolitan Areas of 50,000 to 249,999	101.6	33.9	45.0	21.8	128.0	14.2	243.8
Non-metropolitan Areas	64.6	18.4	33.4	12.8	91.5	6.7	162.8

\*Source: Table 12, Household Crimes in Victimization Rates, By Place of Residence and Type of Crime, 1975 and 1976. Pp. 43-44 in Criminal Victimization in the United States: A Comparison of 1975 and 1976 Findings. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, U.S. Department of Justice.

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