

Fall 1987

## Contributions of Victimization to Delinquency in Inner Cities

Jeffrey Fagan

Elizabeth S. Piper

Yu-Teh Cheng

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/jclc>

 Part of the [Criminal Law Commons](#), [Criminology Commons](#), and the [Criminology and Criminal Justice Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Jeffrey Fagan, Elizabeth S. Piper, Yu-Teh Cheng, Contributions of Victimization to Delinquency in Inner Cities, 78 J. Crim. L. & Criminology 586 (1987-1988)

This Criminology is brought to you for free and open access by Northwestern University School of Law Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology by an authorized editor of Northwestern University School of Law Scholarly Commons.

# CRIMINOLOGY

## CONTRIBUTIONS OF VICTIMIZATION TO DELINQUENCY IN INNER CITIES\*

JEFFREY FAGAN\*\*  
ELIZABETH S. PIPER\*\*\*  
YU-TEH CHENG\*\*\*\*

### INTRODUCTION

The relationship between victimization and criminality has been widely cited in recent years. Early thinking and public perceptions about crime intuitively presumed that criminals were distinct from their victims. Crime control policies resulted which promoted the physical separation of victims from predatory offenders through "target hardening" and "defensible space."<sup>1</sup> Such distinctions, however, ignored the empirical evidence on the considerable overlap between offender and victim profiles<sup>2</sup> and distorted the reality of events in which persons are labelled as victims or victimizers based only on the consequences of the event. Given the homogeneous relation between victim and offender, theories of crime that treat

---

\* This research was supported by Grant 85-JN-AX-C001 to the URSA Institute from the National Institute for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions are those of the authors. The authors are grateful for the cooperation of the four neighborhood organizations in the conduct of this survey research.

\*\* Senior Research Fellow, New York City Criminal Justice Agency. Ph.D., State University of New York at Buffalo, 1975; M.S., State University of New York at Buffalo, 1971; B.E., New York University, 1968.

\*\*\* Research Associate, UCLA Public Health Study, Department of Psychology, University of California at Los Angeles. Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, 1983; M.A., University of Pennsylvania, 1979; B.A., Colby College, 1975.

\*\*\*\* Senior Research Associate, Center for Law and Social Policy, URSA Institute, San Francisco, California. M.S., University of California at Berkeley, 1983; B.S., National Taiwan University, 1980.

<sup>1</sup> Singer, *Homogeneous Victim-Offender Populations: A Review and Some Research Implications*, 72 J. CRIM. L. & CRIMINOLOGY 779 (1981).

<sup>2</sup> Reiss, *Foreward: Towards a Revitalization of Theory and Research on Victimization by Crime*, 72 J. CRIM. L. & CRIMINOLOGY 704 (1981).

victimization and offending as independent behaviors may have inherently weaker explanatory power.

Recent evidence has suggested that the experience of being victimized increases the propensity for offending. Being a victim of crime has been shown to contribute to violent juvenile crime,<sup>3</sup> adult criminality,<sup>4</sup> and adult violence toward family members, including wives and children.<sup>5</sup> Singer found that self-reported victimization is a significant predictor of the seriousness of an adult career and that being shot or stabbed is the best predictor of serious violence.<sup>6</sup> Among juveniles, victimization appears to discriminate chronically violent offenders from general urban youth.<sup>7</sup> In a comparison of victims and offenders, it appears that they may have homogeneous characteristics and that the characteristics of victimization are also associated with the correlates of offending.<sup>8</sup>

Given the similarities between victims and offenders, Reiss pointed to social, situational, and environmental explanations of both victimization and crime.<sup>9</sup> Prior research has suggested that victims and offenders tend to have similar social, structural, and demographic characteristics, including age, sex, race, and income level. The survey conducted by the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence found that "[t]he victims of assaultive violence in the cities generally have the same characteristics as the offenders: victimization rates are generally highest for males, youths, poor persons, and blacks."<sup>10</sup> Fifteen years later, the 1983 Report to the Nation on Crime and Justice found that in victimization surveys "men, blacks, and young people face the greatest risk of violent crime by strangers."<sup>11</sup>

Accordingly, the link between victimization and offending may

---

<sup>3</sup> Fagan, Hansen & Jang, *Profiles of Chronically Violent Delinquents: An Empirical Test of an Integrated Theory*, in *EVALUATING JUVENILE JUSTICE*, (J. Kleugal ed. 1983).

<sup>4</sup> McCord, *A Forty Year Perspective on Effects of Child Abuse and Neglect*, 7 *CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT* 265 (1983); Singer, *Victims of Serious Violence and Their Criminal Behavior: Subcultural Theory and Beyond*, 1 *VICTIMS & VIOLENCE* 61 (1986).

<sup>5</sup> Fagan & Wexler, *Family Origins of Violent Delinquents*, — *CRIMINOLOGY* — (1987)(forthcoming).

<sup>6</sup> Singer, *supra* note 4.

<sup>7</sup> Fagan, Piper & Moore, *Violent Delinquents and Urban Youths*, 24 *CRIMINOLOGY* 439, 442 (1986).

<sup>8</sup> Gottfredson, *On the Etiology of Criminal Victimization*, 72 *J. CRIM. L. & CRIMINOLOGY* 714, 726 (1981).

<sup>9</sup> Reiss, *supra* note 2, at 711.

<sup>10</sup> National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, *Violent Crime: Homicide, Assault, Rape, Robbery*, in *TO ESTABLISH JUSTICE, TO INSURE DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY* 17, 24 (1969).

<sup>11</sup> Bureau of Justice Statistics, *REPORTS TO THE NATION ON CRIME AND JUSTICE* 21 (1983).

be confounded by the convergence of correlates of criminal events and offenders in urban areas. The probabilities of both victimization and criminal behavior increased with urbanization and the concentration of social structural factors associated with higher rates of violent and property crime.<sup>12</sup> "High risk coordinates" in which victimization is likely to occur have been identified in prior studies. For example, Braithwaite and Biles found that victim and offender characteristics reflected the demographic and socio-economic makeup of "high crime" neighborhoods, with high concentrations of youth, poverty, and minority populations.<sup>13</sup>

Despite the consistency in these findings, previous research has not described the processes by which persons become victims or offenders. Residents of high crime neighborhoods were routinely and non-randomly exposed to the risks of victimization based on the amount and type of interactions within these neighborhoods.<sup>14</sup> Cohen and Felson argued that routine activities bring victims and offenders into close and frequent interaction.<sup>15</sup> Jensen and Brownfield tested the routine activities approach to victimization and offending among high school students and found that involvement in criminal activity was related to victimization, but not to non-criminal routine activities.<sup>16</sup> Also, Jensen and Brownfield related victimization to non-criminal routine activities. They concluded that

[e]ven without a demonstration of a causal order, we can propose that the relations between background characteristics such as gender and personal victimization can be explained by the same variables that explain the relationships between these characteristics and offense behavior. Moreover, . . . [w]e can propose that for personal victimizations, those most likely to be the victims of crime are those who have been most involved in crime; and the similarity in characteristics of victims and offenders reflects that association.<sup>17</sup>

Block suggested that what are actually precautionary behaviors to prevent victimization and victim reactions to their experiences may

---

<sup>12</sup> M. HINDELANG, M. GOTTFREDSON & J. GAROFALO, *VICTIMS OF PERSONAL CRIME: AN EMPIRICAL FOUNDATION FOR A THEORY OF PERSONAL VICTIMIZATION* 259 (1978).

<sup>13</sup> Braithwaite & Biles, *Victims and Offenders: The Australian Experience*, in *VICTIMIZATION AND FEAR OF CRIME: WORLD PERSPECTIVES* 3 (R. Block ed. 1984).

<sup>14</sup> Gottfredson, *supra* note 8.

<sup>15</sup> Cohen and Felson, *Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach*, 44 *AM. SOC. REV.* 588 (1979).

<sup>16</sup> Jensen & Brownfield, *Gender, Lifestyles and Victimization: Beyond Routine Activity*, 1 *VIOLENCE & VICTIMS* 85 (1986).

<sup>17</sup> *Id.* at 97-98 (emphasis omitted).

instead be seen as criminal events.<sup>18</sup> Anderson and Rodriguez found that juveniles in high crime neighborhoods become affiliated with gangs in response to or in anticipation of victimization.<sup>19</sup> This included criminal activity as well as protective measures such as carrying a weapon. In other words, there may be attributes of victims' behaviors which contribute to their exposure to victimization or even place them in contexts in which the risks of harm are normative. Black viewed some violent acts as responses to victimization—a form of social control.<sup>20</sup>

To date, the homogeneity of victims and offenders has been tested only by Singer.<sup>21</sup> Analyzing data from the Philadelphia Cohort Follow-Up Study of 1945, Singer determined the probability of self-reported and official crime among those reporting victimization as an adult or juvenile. He found that victims of serious assaults were likely to become offenders and that the propensity of violent crime increased for victims.<sup>22</sup> Singer's retrospective study, however, did not establish causal linkages. Furthermore, the age of the interviewees in the study was 26, thus requiring the subjects to recall victimization events that occurred as juveniles (before age 18) and as adults (ages 18-25). Thus, the probability of respondent error increased.

The analyses combined data from several social milieux and thus risked confounding the social structural and routine activities lifestyles of their residents. Finally, Singer's analysis used a binary measure of criminality to assess the probability (log odds) of being an offender if one was or was not a victim. Singer overlooked important distinctions between one-time and persistent offenders, despite their obvious theoretical importance.<sup>23</sup> In sum, though Singer's research supported the notion of homogeneity between victim and offender, it did not explain why that homogeneity existed.

Because neither victimization nor offending are normally distributed across the general population, theoretical propositions about the relationship between victimization and offending should be tested with samples in which exposure to the risks of crime and

---

<sup>18</sup> Block, *Victim-Offender Dynamics in Violent Crime*, 72 J. CRIM. L. & CRIMINOLOGY 743 (1981).

<sup>19</sup> Anderson & Rodriguez, *Conceptual Issues in the Study of Hispanic Delinquency*, 7 RES. BULL. 2 (Hispanic Research Center, Fordham University 1984).

<sup>20</sup> Black, *Crime as Social Control*, 48 AM. SOC. REV. 34 (1983).

<sup>21</sup> Singer, *supra* note 1.

<sup>22</sup> *Id.* at 785.

<sup>23</sup> See, e.g., D. HAMPARIAN, R. SCHUSTER, S. DINITZ, & J. CONRAD, *THE VIOLENT FEW: A STUDY OF DANGEROUS JUVENILE OFFENDERS* (1978); L. SHANNON, *ASSESSING THE RELATIONSHIP OF ADULT CAREERS TO JUVENILE CAREERS* (1981).

the urban correlates of offending are normative. In other words, sampling from urban neighborhoods will determine whether the association is spurious. To sort out these effects, however, research should examine the social context of interactions between victims and offenders. Prior studies have merely reinforced the association of victimization experiences with offending, with each type of event measured over the subject's lifetime. Few studies have examined the victimization and offending patterns in the same cohort, controlling for neighborhood influences in "high risk" areas. Furthermore, there is little empirical evidence of the patterns of victimization among offenders, and the relative contributions of victimization and other presumed causal factors to subsequent offending. Though victim and offender characteristics may be isomorphic, there is little evidence to determine whether similar social processes contribute to both behaviors. The primary purpose of this Article, accordingly, is to strengthen recent theoretical advances by including victimization as an explanatory construct.

## II. VICTIMIZATION AND CRIME: EXPLANATIONS AND THEORIES

The homogeneity of victim and offender characteristics has generated a variety of explanations. The causal mechanisms to link victimization and criminal behavior derive from competing theories, as well as from separate disciplines. The contemporary explanations of the relationship between victimization and subsequent offending include routine activities approaches, a subcultural theory, and theories of aggression.

A routine activities or "lifestyle exposure" model may explain victimization and support a hypothetical link to offending.<sup>24</sup> The conducting of basic activities in areas with high crime rates increases the probabilities of coming into contact with situations that have a high victimization risk. This is equally true for victims and offenders and exposes offenders to the same risks of crime as non-offending victims. People with these characteristics spend time in public places. Accordingly, they are exposed to risks more frequently than others who maintain privacy through a restricted schedule of routine activities. Gottfredson suggested that the social processes that enhance or decrease exposure to crime may be similar to the processes which explain criminality.<sup>25</sup> If victim and offender popu-

---

<sup>24</sup> See M. HINDELANG, M. GOTTFREDSON & J. GAROFALO, *supra* note 12, at 241-74; Braithwaite & Biles, *supra* note 13; Gottfredson, *supra* note 8.

<sup>25</sup> Gottfredson, *supra* note 8.

lations are isomorphic, then the influence of these processes may also occur for subsets of these groups.

Subcultural theory also supports the phenomenon of victim-offender homogeneity.<sup>26</sup> Studies of subcultures and gang delinquency show that gang members and their victims are a product of a similar lower class culture and the same environment and often have similar values. Delinquency theories lend support to the notion that victims and offenders can be similar. For example, Shaw and McKay found that certain sections of urban areas are characterized by lower social class groups and high delinquency rates.<sup>27</sup> They suggested that diverse systems of values exist in these areas and that youth are exposed to delinquent as well as conventional activities. Delinquency, therefore, may be transmitted from one generation to the next, and crime is viewed as the means to acquire idealized economic and social values.

That violence and criminality are learned in subcultural settings and reinforced is a consistent theme in criminology. The idea that behavior is learned from a particular environment has been elaborated in the differential association theory<sup>28</sup> and further refined by Burgess and Akers as social reinforcement.<sup>29</sup> Each contended that criminal behavior is learned through interaction with others, though the precise mechanisms may vary. Braithwaite and Biles suggested that the characteristics of victims and offenders are associated with specific behavior patterns and attitudes, such as a propensity to risk-taking, a propensity to violence, and alcohol consumption.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, it is possible that the experience of victimization teaches and reinforces criminal behavior.<sup>31</sup> According to Short and Strodtbeck, the victimization-offending relationship is a reciprocal pattern which is a part of the social ecology of high crime neighborhoods, and criminality is often an anticipatory or protective measure within peer groups.<sup>32</sup>

Some studies have applied social learning theories to explain intergenerational family violence patterns. Researchers investigating domestic violence have found that victims of child abuse often

---

<sup>26</sup> M. Wolfgang & F. Ferracutti, *The Subculture of Violence* 95-185 (1967).

<sup>27</sup> C. Shaw & H. McKay, *Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas* (1942).

<sup>28</sup> E. Sutherland & D. Cressey, *Principles of Criminology* (1966).

<sup>29</sup> Burgess & Akers, *A Differential-Association-Reinforcement Theory of Criminal Behavior*, 14 *Soc. Prob.* 128 (1966); see also M. Wolfgang & F. Ferracutti, *supra* note 26; J. Short & F. Strodtbeck, *Group Processes and Gang Delinquency* (1965).

<sup>30</sup> Braithwaite & Biles, *supra* note 13.

<sup>31</sup> Burgess & Akers, *supra* note 29.

<sup>32</sup> See J. Short & F. Strodtbeck, *supra* note 29, at 199-216.

abuse their own children or spouses.<sup>33</sup> Walker has proposed a "cycle of violence" theory,<sup>34</sup> and other researchers have documented higher rates of violent delinquency among persons who have been victims of abuse or exposed to domestic violence.<sup>35</sup> According to Walker<sup>36</sup> and Steinmetz,<sup>37</sup> evidence supports the utility of a "cycle of violence" theory. Specifically, the use of physical punishment by parents has been related to higher rates of child abuse as adults, and marital violence in later years has been found to be related to an experiencing of violence as a teenager.<sup>38</sup>

Finally, sociopsychological theories have also suggested that violence may be learned through experiencing it as a victim.<sup>39</sup> Megargee set forth an "algebra of aggression" in which he explained aggressive behavior in terms of four components: instigation (internal motivations), habit strength (patterns of violent behaviors), inhibitions against aggression, and stimulus factors or environmental factors which facilitate or impede aggressive behavior. Aggression resulted from the complex interplay of these dynamics. Situational factors are elements in the environment which may influence the situation; these factors include the availability and presence of weapons, the behavior of peers, the behavior of persons in the situations, and architecture. For present purposes, it is important to note that Megargee's theory supported a notion that aggressive or violent behavior can be learned either through personal or vicarious experience or through observation. Such events have relatively high probabilities of occurrence within neighborhoods with high crime rates and concentrations of the socioeconomic correlates of violent delinquency.

In sum, complementary theories support explanations of the relationship between victimization and delinquency. Subcultural and learning theories suggest that offending may be a strategic decision motivated by either observation or experience with violence. This

---

<sup>33</sup> See, e.g., M. PAGELOW, *FAMILY VIOLENCE* (1984).

<sup>34</sup> L. Walker, *THE BATTERED WOMAN* 55-70 (1979). The "cycle of violence" theory finds a casual connection between parental violence and subsequent violence by children which creates a never-ending cycle.

<sup>35</sup> See, e.g., Fagan, Hansen & Jang, *supra* note 3, at 117; Lewis, Shanok, Pincus & Glaser, *Violent Juvenile Delinquents: Psychiatric, Neurological, Psychological, and Abuse Factors*, 18 *AM. ACAD. CHILD PSYCH.* 307 (1979).

<sup>36</sup> L. Walker, *supra* note 34.

<sup>37</sup> S. Steinmetz, *THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE: ASSERTIVE, AGGRESSIVE, AND ABUSIVE FAMILY INTERACTION* (1977).

<sup>38</sup> White & Straus, *The Implications of Family Violence for Rehabilitation Strategies*, in *NEW DIRECTIONS IN THE REHABILITATION OF CRIMINAL OFFENDERS* 255 (1980).

<sup>39</sup> Megargee, *Psychological Determinants and Correlates of Criminal Violence*, in *CRIMINAL VIOLENCE* 81-170 (1982).



motive will most likely operate in situations such as gang warfare and domestic violence. The individual may wish to retaliate against the offender or may displace his anger onto someone else. Theories of aggression have also suggested that being a victim of crime may lead to a desire for revenge. Another possible explanation for the relationship between victimization and delinquency is the learning of the use of violence as a means of interaction with others through repeated victimization or exposure to victimization. This theory could apply to domestic violence as well as to general delinquency. The risk exposure model suggests that similar processes which place an individual in situations in which the risk of victimization is high may also produce criminal offending.<sup>40</sup> An understanding of the processes of victimization may lead to a better comprehension of the processes of becoming delinquent.

#### A. PRESENT STUDY

Current theories have overlooked the possible reciprocal relationship between victimization and offending. Crime may precede victimization and lead to a reciprocal process in which participation in crime leads to exposure to victimization. In such instances, the restraints on crime may also limit exposure to victimization. This Article will examine the prevalence and incidence of victimization and offending in a general youth population in four high-crime neighborhoods. The central hypothesis will assume that the populations of victims and offenders are isomorphic and that the social psychological correlates of victimization resemble the correlates of offending within the sample. Accordingly, the restraints on offending will also appear as the restraints on victimization.

The theoretical framework is an integration of control and social learning theories.<sup>41</sup> Control theory supports the proposition that the weakening of social bonds such as attachment to family and school and/or work integration and involvement in conventional activities or beliefs in conventional values, and the influence of peer delinquency leads to delinquency.<sup>42</sup> Control theorists also suggest that victimization is less likely if social and personal bonds remain strong, since this would reduce individuals' exposure to victimization by minimizing interactions with people and the situations in which crimes occur.<sup>43</sup> Conversely, interactions with delinquent

---

<sup>40</sup> Gottfredson, *supra* note 8.

<sup>41</sup> See, e.g., Elliott, Ageton & Canter, *An Integrated Perspective on Delinquent Behavior*, 16 J. RES. CRIME & DEL. 3 (1979).

<sup>42</sup> T. Hirschi, *CAUSES OF DELINQUENCY* 3, 16 (1969).

<sup>43</sup> Gottfredson, *supra* note 8.

peers increase opportunities for victimization. This study will examine the hypothesis that association with delinquent peers contributes both to delinquency and victimization. Social learning theorists assert that violence is learned through repeated victimizations (e.g., child abuse or peer experiences) or exposure to violence (e.g., spouse abuse, high crime neighborhoods).<sup>44</sup> Both conceptual frameworks lead to another hypothesis: that victimization should be a strong contributor to the frequency and severity of delinquent behavior.

### III. DATA AND METHODS

#### A. SAMPLES AND DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected as part of a federally sponsored research and development program on violent delinquency.<sup>45</sup> A general urban youth sample was drawn from students in four inner city, high crime neighborhoods.<sup>46</sup> Students were chosen from randomly selected classrooms from all grades in each school. The survey questionnaire, which included demographic items, delinquency measures, victimization items, and attitudinal measures, was administered in the spring of 1983 and the fall of 1984. The survey items

---

<sup>44</sup> M. Pagelow, *supra* note 33; Burgess & Akers, *supra* note 29.

<sup>45</sup> The Violent Juvenile Offender Research and Development Program was initiated in 1980 to develop prevention programs for violent delinquency in "high crime" urban neighborhoods and treatment methods for chronically violent juvenile offenders. Both components utilized variants on the integrated theory described by Elliott, Ageton & Canter, *supra* note 41. For a complete description of the program origins and design, see Fagan & Jones, *Toward an Integrated Theory of Violent Delinquency*, in *VIOLENT JUVENILE OFFENDERS: AN ANTHOLOGY* 53 (1984).

<sup>46</sup> Bronx, New York (northwest Bronx); Dallas, Texas (West Dallas); Miami, Florida (Liberty City); Chicago, Illinois (North Lawndale). Preliminary analyses were conducted to determine the homogeneity of each urban area with respect to its ecological characteristics. This procedure was necessary to correct the problems in prior research with general adolescent population samples of confounding urbanism and other social area characteristics. It was also necessary in order to determine whether samples from different cities could be aggregated. The census tract for each respondent's neighborhood was recorded, and ten variables were extracted from 1980 census data. These variables represented the domains identified by Laub and Hindelang, *Juvenile Criminal Behavior and Its Relation to Neighborhood Characteristics*, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (1981), as sources of social area effects which explained the differences in serious juvenile crime: demographic, labor force, poverty, and housing characteristics. Two validation checks were made. First, the results of analysis of variants (ANOVA) comparisons for each variable showed that the social area characteristics for the two samples were comparable for six of every ten variables; subjects resided in poorer neighborhoods with lower median incomes, higher poverty rates, and housing density. Overall, the poverty indicators suggested equivalent rates of poverty in the neighborhoods for each sample. The results were reported in detail by Fagan, Piper & Moore, *supra* note 7, at 450-62.

were read aloud by the field researchers while the subjects read them on the survey form. In addition, four to five proctors per class from local neighborhood organizations walked through the classrooms to answer students' questions, provide other assistance, and randomly spot check for errors such as out-of-range codes. Surveys were completed by 342 male students and 324 female students in grades ten through twelve. Sample characteristics are set out in Appendix C.<sup>47</sup>

## B. MEASURES

The interview items for all samples included explanatory and behavioral measures corresponding to the integrated theory. The self-reported delinquency (SRD) items were derived from the National Youth Survey items<sup>48</sup> and included questions about delinquent behavior, alcohol and drug use, and other "problem" behaviors. The original forty-seven-item scales were modified in two ways. First, because the surveys were designed for youths in high crime, inner city neighborhoods, adjustments to eliminate trivial offenses were necessary. Many behaviors in inner city areas may be violative of the law, but would either evoke no official action or are not perceived by local youth as illegal.<sup>49</sup> For example, the removal of pipes from an abandoned building is not considered illegal activity in several urban areas and is instead viewed as a legitimate economic opportunity. These adjustments resulted in the refinement and specification of items regarding weapons use, the specification of victims (i.e., teacher, student, other adult), and the elimination of items such as "ran away from home" or "made obscene phone calls." The modified and retained items were those which measured "high consensus" deviance<sup>50</sup> and only included acts which harm, injure, or do damage.

Second, at the request of the school officials, certain items in the original scales were collapsed, eliminated, or modified. For ex-

---

<sup>47</sup> The sample excluded dropouts, though dropping out may be related to both victimization and delinquency. However, Fagan, Piper & Moore, *supra* note 7, analyzed data including dropouts together with these samples and found that self-reported victimization did not differ significantly, nor did the victimization coefficient in combined student-dropout models have stronger explanatory power than student-only models in discriminant analyses comparing violent delinquents and other youth. Accordingly, the exclusion of dropouts from the sample did not alter the relative contributions of victimization and other variables in explaining violent behavior.

<sup>48</sup> See generally, Elliott & Ageton, *Reconciling Race and Class Differences in Self-Reported and Official Estimates of Delinquency*, 45 AM. SOC. REV. 95 (1980); Elliott & Huizinga, *Social Class and Delinquent Behavior in a National Youth Study*, 21 CRIMINOLOGY 149 (1983).

<sup>49</sup> Anderson & Rodriguez, *supra* note 19.

<sup>50</sup> A. Thio, *DEVIANT BEHAVIOR* (2d ed. 1983).

ample, items on family violence and others deemed by school administrators to be "sensitive" or "intrusive" were eliminated. Others, such as varying degrees of theft or minor assault, were collapsed to shorten administration time, again at the request of school officials. Still other items were eliminated due to their reference to "excessive" violence or self-incrimination for capital offenses: homicide and sexual assault.

The prevalence of SRD items within the past 12 months was measured dichotomously, and incidence was measured simply by asking those who reported "yes" how many times they had committed that act. Offense-specific scales were constructed for narrow homogeneous crime types parallel with Uniform Crime Reports categories, patterned after Elliott and Huizinga.<sup>51</sup> The scale measures were derived by summing the reported prevalence scores for non-overlapping items within the scale. Also, offense-summary scales were constructed to measure broader categories of behavior. These scales increased the range of seriousness of each domain and preserved the homogeneity of behavior. These general scales, such as violence or property, capture broader behavioral trends and retain validity with respect to type of behavior. Finally, general scales were constructed as summary scales for all types of behavior. Appendix A sets out the item-scale sets which matches items to behavioral domains.

In addition, a typology of delinquent involvement was developed for further analyses of the contributions of victimization to the severity of delinquent involvement. The typology is a hierarchy based on increasing severity of delinquent behaviors. The categories range from petty acts (e.g., going to school "high" or drunk) to multiple index felonies. The types are similar to those from recent validated efforts in delinquency typology construction.<sup>52</sup> The categories include:

- *multiple index offenders*—those reporting at least three index offenses (felony assault, robbery, or felony theft) within the past year;
- *serious delinquents*—those reporting one or two index offenses (felony assault, robbery, or felony theft) within the past year or three or more incidents in the past year of extortion or weapons offenses;
- *minor delinquents*—those reporting no index offenses and one or two

---

<sup>51</sup> Elliott & Huizinga, *supra* note 48.

<sup>52</sup> See, e.g., D. ELLIOTT & D. HUIZINGA, THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR AND ADM PROBLEMS, 26 National Youth Survey Report (Behavioral Research Institute 1984); B. JOHNSON, E. WISH, J. SCHMEIDLER & D. HUIZINGA, THE CONCENTRATION OF DELINQUENT OFFENDING: THE CONTRIBUTION OF SERIOUS DRUG INVOLVEMENT TO HIGH DELINQUENCY RATES (National Institute of Justice 1986); Dunford & Elliott, *Identifying Career Offenders Using Self-Reported Data*, 21 J. RES. CRIME & DEL. 57 (1984).

incidents in the past year of extortion or weapons offenses or four or more incidents in the past year of minor theft, minor assault, vandalism, or illegal services (buying or selling stolen goods, selling drugs);

- *petty delinquents*—those reporting no index offenses and three or fewer incidents in the past year of minor assault, minor theft, vandalism, or illegal services (buying or selling stolen goods, selling drugs).

The distribution of victimization within each type was analyzed separately and in conjunction with other explanatory variables. To measure victimization experiences, a scale was constructed based on self-reported victimization experiences within the past year (see Appendix B). Respondents were asked whether they had been victims of each of four property crimes and three violent acts. The truncated recall period did not examine incidents more than one year in the past, but minimized recall errors which may have biased previous studies in this area.<sup>53</sup> Thus, while the information on victimization may represent an incomplete history, estimates of the contributions of victimization to delinquency are likely to be conservative, due to the minimal measurement. Whether subjects were victimized in childhood or early adolescence is beyond the scope of this study, and the prospective contributions of early victimization experiences have not been analyzed. The contributions of recent victimizations to current behaviors and their reciprocal patterns are the focus of this study. This is consistent with the theoretical interpretation of the similar processes underlying both delinquency and victimization.

Explanatory variable sets were derived from the integrated theory described earlier. Scales measuring internal (personal) bonds and external (social) bonds within each salient domain (i.e., school, family, work, peers, and community) were constructed. For example, social bonds within school were measured as school integration, while social bonds to friends were measured as peer integration. Internal bonds included constructs such as attitude toward violence and conventional values. Measures of the social environment were also constructed for the same domains and represented the perceived social learning contingencies of the respondent's social world. For example, measures of family supervision practices included maternal supervision, and normative crime or violence within families was measured by neighborhood family violence. Peer delinquency included associations with delinquent peers. Additional variables were included to measure psychosocial domains,

---

<sup>53</sup> See, e.g., Singer, *supra* note 4.

such as locus of control (i.e., internal-external impulse control), problematic substance use, and social competence.

These measures have been shown to have strong explanatory power in both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies of serious delinquency under a variety of sampling conditions.<sup>54</sup> However, the measures have yet to be thoroughly tested under conditions with oversampling at the extremes of the distribution of SRD behaviors or in social milieus in which the correlates of serious delinquency are concentrated. Elliott and Huizinga suggested that serious and violent offenses are disproportionately present in lower social class youth, but they failed to test the explanatory power of their predictor variables controlling for social class.<sup>55</sup> This study will address the limitations in prior samples, albeit with cross-sectional data.

It is important to note that each of these variables is measured from the viewpoint of the adolescent, and no cross-validation was attempted. Fagan and Wexler analyzed interviews with families and youth from the violent delinquent sample in this study and found that reports of family conflict, violence, and normlessness were underreported by the adolescents when compared to both parental reports and official records.<sup>56</sup> Accordingly, the estimates of family contributions are likely to be conservative. Moreover, the net effects of family are likely to be observed in the attenuated bonds among delinquent youth within an adolescent population of this age.<sup>57</sup>

#### IV. RESULTS

##### A. THE PREVALENCE OF VICTIMIZATION

Table 1 shows the prevalence of victimization among high school students in the inner city neighborhoods. For violent crimes, approximately half of the males and three of every eight females have been victimized in the past year. The patterns were consistent across age groups. For property crimes, females were victims more often than males (72% compared to 64%), and, again, no age-specific patterns were detected. Both males and females reported a high prevalence of victimization for any crime (71% and 77% respectively), with some variation by age. The trend, however, reverses for victimization by both types of crime. As in violent

---

<sup>54</sup> See, e.g., Dunford & Elliott, *supra* note 52; Fagan, Piper & Moore, *supra* note 7.

<sup>55</sup> Elliott & Huizinga, *supra* note 48, at 159.

<sup>56</sup> Fagan & Wexler, *supra* note 5.

<sup>57</sup> Patterson & Dishion, *Contributions of Families and Peers to Delinquency*, 23 *CRIMINOLOGY* 63 (1985).

crime, males reported a higher victimization rate for both types (43%, compared to 32% for females).

**TABLE 1**  
**PREVALENCE OF VICTIMIZATION IN PAST YEAR BY AGE AND SEX**  
**(N=666)**  
**(PERCENT VICTIMIZED)**

Victimization	Age								Total	
	14 or less		15		16		17+			
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Violent Crime	52.1	34.3	56.6	41.8	41.0	34.6	52.3	36.8	50.6	37.0
Property Crime	64.6	71.4	68.7	75.9	60.2	71.2	62.5	69.8	63.7	71.9
Any Crime	66.7	74.3	80.7	81.0	63.9	77.9	71.9	72.6	71.3	76.5
Both Types	50.0	31.4	44.6	36.7	37.3	27.9	43.0	34.0	43.0	32.3
N	48	35	83	79	83	104	128	106	342	324

The fact that these rates of victimization are so high suggests that these youths live in high crime neighborhoods and are probably subject to higher risks of victimization at school. Victimization rates appear to be slightly higher in the early adolescent years. The general attrition of school dropouts after the ninth and tenth grades may account for the reduced victimization rates in the older groups. Overall, though, there is little difference in victimization patterns on the basis of a respondent's age. It would seem, therefore, that these youths may be victimized at any time during their adolescent years.

The incidence of delinquent behaviors among victim groups and the prevalence and frequency of each type of behavior for those reporting each type of victimization are analyzed in Table 2. Of the 244 males (71% of the sample) reporting at least one victimization experience, 59% reported committing at least one delinquent act in the past year, with an average of 15.10 acts each. For females, 248 (77% of the sample) were victimized, and 45% committed at least one delinquent act, though with a far lower average of 6.65 acts. Non-victims (98 males and 76 females) reported lower incidence and prevalence of total SRD, with 40% of the males and 28% of the females committing at least one delinquent act. The incidence and prevalence rates varied by type of delinquency. School crimes were the most prevalent and frequent type for both females and males, and robbery was the least frequent offense type. Sex differentials were consistent for all delinquent behaviors except weapons: more female victims reported carrying weapons.

The prevalence of SRD types varied little by type of victimiza-

tion, but the incidence rates were generally higher for victims of violent crime. This trend was especially evident for juveniles who had been victims of robbery, minor assault, and felony theft. This pattern is shown for both females and males. For less serious offenses, the type of victimization mattered little in the SRD rates. Being a victim of both types resulted in little difference in SRD rates.

The results illustrate the general association between victimization and delinquency. Among non-victims, prevalence rates were consistently lower than for victims, but incidence rates were consistently higher, though among males only. Only for vandalism (property damage, which is generally a school-based crime for adolescents) did this trend vary. In general, therefore, it appears that violent victimization is related more to violent delinquency than it is to property delinquency.<sup>58</sup> One interpretation of this result is that there is a small group of high-rate offenders who avoid victimization through their own aggressive behaviors and who raise the incidence rates for each crime type. Victims are more likely than non-victims to engage in each type of delinquent behavior, but they do not necessarily do so more often.

#### B. SOCIAL CONTROL AND LEARNING THEORY EXPLANATIONS OF VICTIMIZATION AND DELINQUENCY

If victimization and criminal behaviors are the results of similar social processes, their correlates should overlap. This hypothesis was tested with ordinary least squares regression models of both SRD and victimization. The offense-summary SRD scales in Table 2 served as measures of the frequency of each domain of behavior. In the previous analyses, victimization was a dichotomous variable. In the following analyses, however, it is a scalar based on a summative score of the items in Appendix B. Accordingly, victimization in these analyses represents the types of victimization experienced by respondents over the past twelve months. Separate models were constructed for the total sample and for males only, the latter because of the higher rate of violent victimization among males.

The explanatory variables weakly predicted victimization for both the total sample and males only. None of the models explained more than 13.2% of the variance. The models for males consistently had slightly stronger explanatory power, but the rela-

---

<sup>58</sup> Due to the nature of the data collection for this study, it is impossible to make causal interpretations of the relationship between delinquency and victimization. Also, the results have been analyzed retrospectively, not causally (e.g., we determine how many self-reported delinquents there were, how many have been victimized).



**TABLE 2**  
**PERCENT VICTIMIZED WHO COMMITTED OFFENSE-SPECIFIC**  
**SELF-REPORTED DELINQUENCY AND MEAN NUMBER OF OFFENSES**  
**IN PAST YEAR BY TYPE OF VICTIMIZATION AND SEX**

Self-Reported Delinquency		Type of Victimization						Non-Victims			
		Any Crime		Violent Crime		Property Crime		Both Types			
		%	(Mean)	%	(Mean)	%	(Mean)	%	(Mean)	%	(Mean)
Felony Assault	M	13.3	(.41)	12.9	(.42)	14.0	(.44)	13.8	(.46)	7.4	(2.90)
	F	6.6	(.18)	7.8	(.23)	6.6	(.18)	7.9	(.24)	4.1	(.06)
Minor Assault	M	7.0	(.40)	8.1	(.27)	6.0	(.11)	6.8	(.12)	12.6	(2.22)
	F	3.2	(.06)	4.2	(.08)	3.4	(.06)	4.8	(.09)	5.4	(.20)
Robbery	M	7.4	(.44)	9.3	(.60)	5.5	(.23)	6.8	(.32)	5.3	(3.84)
	F	2.9	(.05)	3.4	(.06)	3.1	(.05)	3.9	(.06)	1.4	(.08)
Felony Theft	M	7.0	(.51)	8.1	(.64)	6.9	(.27)	8.2	(.31)	5.2	(4.12)
	F	4.0	(.05)	6.7	(.08)	4.3	(.05)	7.6	(.09)	0	0
Minor Theft	M	18.2	(1.16)	20.5	(1.03)	19.4	(1.25)	22.8	(1.14)	8.3	(7.46)
	F	12.2	(.53)	14.3	(.62)	12.6	(.55)	15.4	(.68)	5.5	(.20)
Property Damage	M	17.3	(2.37)	20.9	(2.62)	18.4	(2.32)	23.3	(2.60)	8.3	(2.46)
	F	6.5	(.52)	10.8	(1.00)	6.4	(.55)	11.4	(1.13)	2.8	(.05)
Extortion	M	13.6	(.84)	15.7	(1.13)	12.9	(.72)	15.1	(1.00)	11.6	(4.58)
	F	6.6	(.26)	8.5	(.36)	6.6	(.27)	8.8	(.40)	2.7	(.03)
Weapons	M	13.9	(2.09)	13.3	(2.27)	14.2	(2.23)	13.6	(2.50)	9.5	(1.26)
	F	15.4	(.82)	17.6	(.76)	16.0	(.87)	19.2	(.86)	8.2	(.18)
School Crime	M	20.2	(3.66)	21.6	(3.19)	21.6	(3.65)	24.1	(3.09)	12.0	(7.01)
	F	11.6	(1.33)	3.0	(.99)	12.3	(1.42)	14.9	(1.14)	5.6	(.48)
Total SRD	M	58.6	(15.10)	59.5	(13.73)	60.6	(14.96)	62.6	(13.28)	39.8	(41.07)
	F	45.2	(6.65)	49.2	(7.28)	46.4	(7.00)	52.4	(8.13)	27.6	(1.56)
Total Victimized	M	244		173		218		147		98	
	F	248		120		233		105		76	

tive contributions of predictor variables were consistent for both males and the total sample. The total victimization model had stronger explanatory power than either of the models for specific types of victimization. In addition, the explanatory variables varied between the models of violent and property victimization.

In the violent victimization model, peer delinquency and neighborhood family violence (which is a measure of perceived conflict and violence within families living nearby) were strong contributors. For property victimization, additional predictors included: maternal supervision, law-abiding attitudes, and weak attachments to peers. The model for total victimization incorporated explanatory variables from both the violent victimization and the property victimization models.

In Table 3, comparisons between the theoretical predictors for violent and property victimization suggest that the factors which ex-

plain victimization vary slightly by the type of victimization. Social learning influences seem to be stronger contributors to violent victimization, while both learning and control influences contributed equally to property victimization. Regardless of the strength of the relationship between the explanatory variables and the dependent variables, the explained variance of these models is relatively weak. Obviously, there are most likely other factors which are more relevant to the explanation of victimization.

**TABLE 3**  
**STANDARDIZED REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS FOR VICTIMIZATION**

Social Development Variable	(Total Sample and Males Only) a,b,c					
	Type of Victimization					
	Violent		Property		Total	
	Beta	r	Beta	r	Beta	r
Peer Delinquency	.23 (.21)	.25 (.22)	.16 (.14)	.17 (.16)	.23 (.21)	.25 (.22)
Neighborhood Family Violence	.10 (.19)	.13 (.21)	.15 (.16)	.19 (.20)	.15 (.20)	.20 (.24)
Maternal Supervision			.12 (.18)	.16 (.21)	.08 (.16)	.11 (.19)
Attitudes Toward Law			.10 (.12)	.13 (.14)	.09	.11
Peer Integration			(-.15)	(.14)		
Drinking Problems	(-.12)	(-.08)			(-.11)	(-.07)
R square	.071 (.095)		.085 (.126)		.103 (.132)	
F	25.5	(11.8)	15.3	(9.7)	19.0	(12.8)
P	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)

a. Coefficients for Males only in parentheses

b. Blank coefficients indicate variable did not enter equation

c. N (total) = 666, N (males) = 342

The regression models for SRD are shown in Table 4. Overall, the models for the total sample and for males only are weak. The models do not have stronger explanatory power than the victimization models in Table 3; they explain no more than 10.7% of the variance for the total sample and explain less for the males. As in the victimization models, peer delinquency is the strongest contributor to each SRD type. Drinking problems, which are indicators of alcohol-related problems at home, in school, or in social interac-

tions, contribute modestly to the property and general models. Several other variables contribute weakly to individual models.

**TABLE 4**  
**STANDARDIZED REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS FOR OFFENSE CATEGORY**  
**SRD FREQUENCIES, CONTROLLING FOR VICTIMIZATION**

Social Development Variables	(Total Sample and Males Only) a,b,c					
	Self-Reported Delinquency					
	Violence		Property		General	
	Beta	r	Beta	r	Beta	r
Peer Delinquency	.13 (.14)	.12 (.12)	.13 (.15)	.18 (.17)	.17 (.18)	.20 (.18)
School Integration					-.11	-.17
Social Competence	.10	.09				
Drinking Problems			.10	.13	.16 (.16)	.23 (.21)
Drug Problems					.10 (.11)	.20 (.18)
Attitude Toward Law			-.11 (-.12)	-.13 (-.13)		
Conventional Values	-.08	-.07				
Victimization	-.06 (-.09)	-.03 (-.06)	-.05 (-.05)	(.04) (.01)	-.02 (-.06)	.03 (-.02)
R squared (w/o Victimization)	.029 (.015)		.055 (.043)		.107 (.082)	
R squared (Victimization)	.003 (.007)		.002 (.002)		.002 (.003)	
R squared (Total)	.032 (.022)		.057 (.045)		.109 (.085)	
F	5.47*** (3.88)*		9.58*** (5.03)**		15.83*** (7.83)***	

a. Coefficients for Males only in parentheses

b. Blank coefficients indicate variable did not enter equation

c. N (total) = 666, N (males) = 342

\* p < .05

\*\* p < .01

\*\*\* p < .001

The contributions of problematic substance use to self-reported delinquency are consistent with earlier studies of general adolescent populations.<sup>59</sup> These factors were thought to represent deficits in social development related to situational decision making or the disinhibiting influence of drugs or alcohol. Their presence,

<sup>59</sup> See, e.g., Elliott & Huizinga, *supra* note 48.

in conjunction with weaker social bonds and normative influences which reinforce delinquent behaviors, appears to be the strongest contributor to the incidence of a broad range of severity of both violent and property crimes. In general, by examining the patterns across different behavioral domains, the balanced contributions of social bonds (e.g., school integration), personal bonds (e.g., conventional values), social environment influences (e.g., peer delinquency), and developmental influences (e.g., problem substance use) illustrate the validity of an integration of control and learning theories.

To examine the additional explanatory power of victimization experiences for SRD, partial regressions were constructed by introducing victimization on the last iteration of the regression model. Table 4 shows that victimization adds little (less than 1% of the variance) to explained variance for the models. The models remain generally unimpressive.

By comparing the victimization and delinquency models, it appears that peer delinquency contributes both to victimization and delinquent behavior. This lends partial support to the hypothesis that similar social processes contribute to offending and being a victim. The parallel contributions of delinquent peers to each set of models supports explanations based on social learning and control factors. However, the victimization and SRD models have comparably poor explanatory power. The hypothesis that social control and learning theories explain both victimization and delinquency is not supported by the results. The overall weakness of the SRD and victimization models, together with the introduction of additional explanatory factors in the SRD models, discourages conclusions that victims and offenders are participants in reciprocal social processes or even shared social networks. Factors unrelated to this social control framework contribute to both SRD and victimization since the explained variance for each is quite low. Moreover, victimization is only weakly correlated with these measures of offending. It may be that victimization and the incidence of delinquency are neither the result of similar processes nor overlapping in theoretical explanation.

These results also may be due to the measurement of delinquent behaviors. The offense-summary scales reflect the frequency of a broad range of serious and non-serious behaviors within a sample, irrespective of their relative seriousness. Accordingly, a respondent who engages in numerous minor fights will weigh higher on this scale than a one- or two-time armed robber. It may be more appropriate to conclude that victimization only weakly explains the

frequency of delinquent behaviors. These SRD scales measure the incidence of each behavior type within the sample or the incidence of individuals' tendencies to commit various crime types. They do not examine the relationship between victimization and the patterns or severity of individuals' involvement in delinquency. To determine this relationship, a typology of delinquent behavior based on a hierarchy of severity must be examined.

### C. CONTRIBUTIONS OF VICTIMIZATION TO THE SEVERITY OF DELINQUENCY

Singer suggested that violent crime is best predicted by violent victimization and that the overrepresentation of blacks in violence is a result of their higher victimization rates.<sup>60</sup> Yet, the patterns of victimization within delinquent types, as distinguished by their severity of delinquent involvement, is still unknown. Table 5 shows the incidence and prevalence of victimization within the four delinquent types.

**TABLE 5**  
**INCIDENCE AND PREVALENCE OF VICTIMIZATION BY SRD TYPE**

Type of Victimization	Delinquent Type							
	Petty		Minor		Serious		Multiple Index	
	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%
Violent#, +	0.59	(35.9)	0.90	(55.0)	0.94	(56.9)	1.41	(64.9)
Property#, +	1.12	(61.2)	1.51	(78.6)	1.69	(81.4)	1.84	(70.3)
Total#, +	1.71	(67.7)	2.41	(83.2)	2.63	(84.9)	3.24	(83.8)
N (%)	412	(61.9%)	131	(17.7%)	86	(12.9%)	37	(5.3%)

# Incidence: ANOVA  $p < .000$

+ Prevalence: Chi Square  $p < .000$

Both the incidence and prevalence (victimizations in the past year) of each type of victimization increase with the severity of delinquent involvement. The incidence rate of violent victimizations was more than two times higher for multiple index offenders than for petty delinquents. For property victimizations, incidence rates also increased with more serious delinquent involvement. But the rates differed little between minor and serious delinquents for both types

<sup>60</sup> Singer, *supra* note 4.

of victimization. Differences in prevalence rates were highest between petty delinquents and all others.

Although victimization is related to delinquency, the more important factor in explaining the severity of delinquent involvement is the frequency or severity of victimization. This distinction, however, may be a function of the generally high rate of both delinquency and victimization in the study milieu. Nearly two of every three petty delinquents, including many non-delinquents, were victims of property crime. The differential results for property and violent victimization suggested that the social experience of violent victimization has different and stronger associations with delinquent involvement than does more commonplace theft. Also, the ability to avoid violent victimization has stronger implications for avoidance of serious delinquency than does immunity from property crimes.

The contributions of victimization and other theoretical control factors to differences between delinquent types is reflected in the figures in Table 6. Discriminant analyses were used to determine the contributions of victimization to the severity of delinquent involvement.<sup>61</sup> The three models compare petty delinquents with all others (any delinquent involvement), petty and minor delinquents with all others (minor versus serious delinquency), and multiple index offenders with all others (involvement in chronic serious delinquency).<sup>62</sup>

The three models suggest that the importance of victimization in explaining delinquency decreases for more serious delinquent involvement. The models are strong and significant (at least 70% classification success). In the models using only males, victimization is the strongest contributor in the model which compares petty delinquents with others. For the total sample models, however, victimization contributes almost equally with peer delinquency. For the other models, the factors associated with delinquent subcultures—peer delinquency and attitudes toward law—are consistently stronger contributors. These trends are even stronger for males only.

The models suggest that the discriminants of delinquent involvement differ in a comparison of minor and more serious types. Drinking and drug problems distinguish petty delinquents from others but not from more serious delinquents. Maternal supervi-

---

<sup>61</sup> W. Cooley & P. LOHNES, *MULTIVARIATE DATA ANALYSIS* (1971); W. KLECKA, *DISCRIMINANT ANALYSIS* (1980).

<sup>62</sup> The three models discriminate between any delinquent involvement (petty vs. others), minor vs. serious delinquency (petty and minor vs. others), and involvement in chronic serious delinquency (multiple index v. others).

**TABLE 6**  
**DISCRIMINANT FUNCTION COEFFICIENTS FOR SRD TYPOLOGY**  
**DIFFERENCES**

(Total Sample and Males Only) (a,b)						
	Petty Delinquents vs. Others		Petty & Minor vs. Others		Multiple Index vs. Others	
Peer Delinquency	.56	(.47)	.65	(.68)	.51	(.73)
Victimization	.46	(.52)	.35	(.35)	.41	(.33)
Peer Integration	.22	(.38)	.21	(.40)	.20	(.18)
Attitude Toward Law	-.30	(-.32)	-.39	(-.46)	-.31	(-.37)
Attitude Toward Violence	.14	(.19)		(.19)		
Drinking Problems	.22	(.23)	.14	(.20)		
Conventional Values						(-.24)
School Integration	-.25	(-.31)			-.37	
Social Abilities	.20		.24	(.17)	.39	(.38)
Neighborhood Family Violence			.14			
Maternal Supervision				(-.14)	-.24	
Drug Problems		(.20)				
Group Centroids: (c)						
Group 1	-.38	(-.47)	-.22	(-.31)	-.09	(-.11)
Group 2	.61	(.56)	.98	(1.05)	1.47	(1.30)
Wilkes Lambda	.81	(.79)	.82	(.76)	.89	(.87)
Canonical Correlation	.43	(.46)	.42	(.49)	.33	(-.36)
Classification Success (%); (c)						
Group 1	75.5	(73.3)	77.5	(78.9)	79.8	(78.4)
Group 2	62.6	(67.1)	63.4	(71.4)	81.1	(74.1)
Total	70.6	(70.5)	74.9	(77.2)	79.9	(78.1)

a. Coefficients for males only in parentheses

b. Blanks indicate variable did not enter equation

c. Group 1 is the group with fewer serious (index) offenses

sion contributes to the most serious delinquent involvement, but not to other group differences. Also, the models for males differ in several areas.

The results suggest that the contribution of victimization to explaining the severity of delinquency is greater in distinguishing less serious delinquents from others. Whereas the prevalence rate of victimization is similarly high for minor, serious, and multiple index offenders, it is much lower for petty delinquents (83%-85% vs. 68%). For distinguishing more serious delinquent involvement, victimization is only one of several factors which typically constitute a portion of subcultural explanations. Thus, it appears likely that the victimization experience itself may differ across groups. For more serious delinquents, victimization may be a consequence of their delinquent activities or even a response to contingent events (e.g., an assault). For petty or minor delinquents, victimization may be a ran-

dom occurrence, but not necessarily part of a sustained pattern of events and behaviors. Moreover, the avoidance of victimization appears to occur with the avoidance of serious delinquency. The impact of victimization on delinquent behavior is weaker for more serious and injurious delinquency, in which other explanations contribute more to understanding criminal behavior.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study support some of the hypotheses derived from prior studies, yet they also reflect the need for causally oriented research. In particular, future research should focus on the contextual aspects and situational factors which might explain the relationship between victimization and delinquency. Victimization appears to be a significant factor in relation to the severity of delinquency, but the direction of this relationship is uncertain. Although the data show that victimization rates are exceedingly high in inner cities, victimization does not contribute to the explanation of delinquency rates.

The results indicate that even though the characteristics of victims and offenders overlap, the social processes which produce both events are not identical. The results suggest that, contrary to the hypothesis of Jensen and Brownfield,<sup>63</sup> the processes which produce adolescent victims and offenders may differ substantially. The isomorphism between victims and offenders may be due to the aggregate characteristics of the neighborhoods where each group concentrates or to normative social processes among inner city youth. Thus, etiological theory should more closely examine the sequences of events and the intervening effects of exogenous events such as victimization on normative developmental processes.

Subcultural and control theories offer partial explanations of victimization rates. The lack of support for the hypothesized homogeneity of victims and offenders, however, attacks the credibility of some of the subculture of violence proposition.

Strong bonds do not appear to reduce the risk of exposure to victimization. However, victimization risk is increased through association with delinquent peers. On the other hand, subcultural and control theories are supported by the data on the severity of delinquent involvement. Moreover, the effects of violent victimization are stronger than other victimization events, thereby lending support to explanations of delinquency, which combine learning and control perspectives. The data here cannot establish causal links be-

---

<sup>63</sup> Jensen & Brownfield, *supra* note 16.



tween victimization and crime. Further development of theories which specify the role of victimization in delinquency should describe the situational contexts in which victimization occurs, the circumstances and actions of victim and offender, and the social significance of the actions in the normative context of the neighborhood.

Finally, the results of this research provide future directions for delinquency prevention and control policies. Because violent victimization is related to serious delinquency, it would appear that reducing rates of victimization and responding to young victims to offset the adverse consequences of victimization may lessen the severity of crime in central cities. However, reducing victimization rates cannot be approached using principles of social learning and social control theory. Social policy must look to the causes of victimization which may be related to social ecology or urbanization. Delinquency prevention and control strategy should rely not only on social control and social learning influences on individual offending, but also on the reduction of victimization of individuals who otherwise are disposed to delinquency.

## APPENDIX A

### OFFENSE-SPECIFIC AND OFFENSE-TYPE SCALES

---

**Felony Assault**

- Beat someone up so badly they probably needed a doctor
- Shot at someone

**Minor Assault**

- Hit an adult

**Robbery**

- Grabbed a purse and ran with it
- Used physical force to get money, drugs, or something else from someone
- Used a weapon to get something from someone

**Felony Theft**

- Bought stolen goods
- Taken things from a store worth more than \$50
- Broken into a car to get something
- Broken into a building and taken something
- Taken a stranger's car without permission

**Minor Theft**

- Taken something from somebody's wallet or purse
- Stolen money from parents or other family members
- Stolen something at school

**Property Damage**

- Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to your school
- Purposely damaged or destroyed property not belonging to you or your family or your school

**Drug Abuse**

- Smoked marijuana
- Used angel dust (PCP), downers (barbiturates), speed (amphetamines), coke (cocaine), or heroin

**Alcohol use**

- Drunk whiskey, gin, vodka, or other hard liquor
- Driven a car while high or drunk
- Gone to school high or drunk

**Drug Sales**

- Sold weed (marijuana), angel dust, downers, speed, coke, or heroin

**Extortion**

- Threaten to hurt someone unless given something
- Threaten an adult

**Weapons**

- Carried a weapon with the intention of using it in a fight
- Threatened an adult with a weapon
- Used a weapon to get something from someone

**School Crime**

- Gone to school high or drunk
- Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to your school
- Stolen something at school

**Illegal Services**

- Sold angel dust, downers, speed, coke or heroin
- Sold something you had stolen
- Bought stolen goods

## General

Used angel dust, downers, speed, coke or heroin  
Sold angel dust, downers, speed, coke or heroin  
Drunk whiskey, gin, vodka or other hard liquor  
Driven a car while high or drunk  
Gone to school high or drunk  
Damaged a neighbor's property  
Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to your school  
Bought stolen goods  
Grabbed a purse and ran with it  
Sold something you had stolen  
Taken something from someone's wallet or purse  
Taken things from a store worth over \$50  
Broken into a building and taken something  
Taken a stranger's car without permission  
Broken into a car to get something  
Stolen money from your parents or other family members  
Stolen something at school  
Threatened to hurt someone unless given something  
Threatened an adult  
Hit an adult  
Beat someone up so badly they probably needed a doctor  
Used physical force to get money, drugs or something else from someone  
Carried a weapon with the intention of using it in a fight  
Threatened an adult with a weapon  
Used a weapon to get something from someone  
Shot someone

---

**APPENDIX B**  
**VICTIMIZATION ITEMS**

---

“Sometimes bad things happen to a person. Please tell us if any of the following things happened to *you* or to *anyone you know* in the past year”.

Has anyone tried to take something by force or by threatening to hurt you?

Has anyone attempted to steal a bicycle, motorcycle, or car from you?

Has anyone taken any of your things from a car, motorcycle, or bicycle (such as hubcaps, books, packages, clothes)?

Have any of your things been stolen from a public place (such as a school cafeteria or park)?

Have you been attacked with a weapon (such as a gun, knife, bottle, or chair) by someone who is *not* your relative (not your mother, father, brother, sister, cousin)?

Have you been beaten up (or threatened with a beating) by someone who is not your relative?

Has anyone broken into your home?

---

**APPENDIX C**  
**SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**  
**BY DELINQUENT TYPE ( $\alpha$ )**

Demographic & Socio-Economic Characteristics	Delinquent Type								
	Total Sample		Petty		Minor		Serious		Multiple Index M (%)
	M	%	M	%	M	%	M	%	
<b>Sex###</b>									
Male	342	(51.4)	187	(45.4)	78	(59.5)	50	(58.1)	26 (72.2)
Female	324	(48.6)	225	(54.6)	53	(40.5)	36	(41.9)	10 (27.8)
<b>Ethnicity</b>									
Anglo	11	(1.7)	5	(1.2)	3	(2.3)	2	(2.3)	1 (2.9)
Black	459	(69.5)	272	(66.5)	96	(73.8)	66	(76.7)	24 (70.6)
Latino	157	(23.8)	109	(26.7)	25	(19.2)	14	(16.3)	9 (26.5)
Other	33	(5.0)	23	(5.6)	6	(4.6)	4	(4.7)	0 0.0
<b>Age</b>									
LE 14	83	(12.5)	49	(11.9)	11	(8.4)	14	(16.3)	8 (22.2)
15	162	(24.3)	100	(24.3)	30	(22.9)	23	(26.7)	9 (25.0)
16	187	(28.1)	122	(29.6)	39	(29.8)	18	(20.9)	8 (22.2)
GE 17	234	(35.1)	141	(34.2)	51	(38.9)	31	(36.0)	11 (30.6)
<b>Family Composition</b>									
Birth Parents	189	(28.4)	127	(30.8)	32	(34.4)	21	(24.4)	8 (22.2)
Parent/Step-Parent	57	(8.6)	28	(6.8)	13	(9.9)	11	(12.8)	5 (13.9)
Single Parent	372	(55.9)	223	(54.1)	83	(63.4)	47	(54.7)	19 (52.8)
Other	48	(7.2)	34	(8.3)	3	(2.3)	7	(8.1)	4 (11.1)
<b>Parent Employment#</b>									
None	178	(26.7)	120	(29.1)	35	(26.7)	16	(18.6)	7 (19.4)
Either	178	(26.7)	109	(26.5)	42	(32.1)	15	(17.4)	12 (33.3)
Both	310	(46.6)	183	(44.4)	54	(41.2)	55	(64.0)	17 (47.2)
<b>Parent Education</b>									
LT HS Grad	289	(43.4)	186	(45.1)	55	(42.0)	29	(33.7)	19 (52.8)
HS Grad	194	(29.1)	125	(30.3)	40	(30.5)	22	(25.6)	6 (16.7)
Some College	183	(27.5)	101	(24.5)	36	(27.5)	35	(39.1)	11 (30.6)

### Chi Square:  $p < .001$ ## Chi Square:  $p < .01$ # Chi Square:  $p < .05$ 

(a) Percentages do not equal 100% due to rounding.