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MEDIA CONSUMPTION EFFECTS ON COLLEGE STUDENTS' PERCEIVED RISK
OF VICTIMIZATION AND FEAR OF CRIME: DOES THE USAGE OF SOCIAL
MEDIA POLICE SCANNERS ALTER PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY?

By

David Y. Kim
B.A., Washington State University, 2011
M.A., Washington State University, 2013

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of the
College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Louisville
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in Criminal Justice

Department of Criminal Justice
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

May 2023

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A Dissertation Approved on 4/4/2023

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Dissertation Chair

Dr. Thomas Hughes

Dr. Kristin M. Swartz

Dr. Robert Carini - External Reviewer

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Daniel & Roy. If you believe in yourselves, anything and everything is possible. Never give up. Always believe.

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ABSTRACT

MEDIA CONSUMPTION EFFECTS ON COLLEGE STUDENTS' PERCEIVED RISK OF VICTIMIZATION AND FEAR OF CRIME: DOES USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA POLICE SCANNERS ALTER PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY?

David Y. Kim

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Although there is a robust body of research examining various predictors of fear of crime, there are still predictors of one's perceived safety that have not been thoroughly assessed. Using primary data collected from a sample of college students (N = 662) enrolled at five universities in the United States the main objective of the study was to identify the factors more likely to predict variations in fear of crime, which is viewed here as a bidimensional concept that includes the affective side of fear (worries about becoming a victim) and the cognitive dimension of fear (i.e., personal judgment of safety). The study is informed by theoretical explanations of fear of crime (Ferraro, 1995; see Hale, 1996) and by Gerbner's (1969) cultivation theory. In addition to frequently used predictors of fear of crime, such as social vulnerability, crime victimization experience, and public attitudes toward the police, this dissertation explores the impact of traditional and social media consumption on one's perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime. The study also assessed the effect of membership in social media police scanner groups on variations in perceived safety. Those who are members of a social media police scanner groups can view and read about various types of violent and property crimes before the public is informed. Yet, to the

author's knowledge, the potential effect of police scanner membership/subscription on fear of crime has not been examined in the literature and research assessing the impact of social media on perceived risk of victimization is limited. By examining the effect of novel predictors of fear of crime (e.g., social media consumption; police scanner usage), the dissertation expanded fear of crime research. The data were analyzed using a simple mediation analysis that used perceived risk of victimization as a mediator. Results show that those who worry more about becoming victims of violent crime also tend to feel unsafe in their neighborhoods. As hypothesized, victims of crime, females, younger respondents, and students belonging to racial/ethnic minority groups tend to worry significantly more about becoming victims of violent crime and report higher levels of perceived unsafety. Conversely, those with positive perceptions of the police are less likely to fear victimization. While traditional media consumption does not appear to influence variations in perceived risk of victimization and/or perceived safety, social media consumption as well as membership in social media police scanner groups indirectly increase one's fear of crime. The study limitations and the implications of the findings are also discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

Fear of crime is a multifaceted phenomenon, and even though a universal definition does not exist, the concept is often described “as an emotional reaction characterized by a sense of danger and anxiety about the potential for physical harm in a criminal victimization” (Garofalo, 1981, p. 854). As Ferraro (1995) stressed, “to produce a fear reaction in humans, a recognition of a situation as possessing at least potential danger, real or imagined, is necessary” (p. 4). Recent surveys conducted on nationally representative samples indicate that many Americans perceive their environments as being dangerous. Since 2002, Gallup polls indicate that most Americans have consistently acknowledged an increase in crime compared to the preceding year. In October 2022, 78% of the survey respondents said that there was more crime in the U. S. than it was in 2021 and, 54% of Americans considered crime to be an extremely serious or a very serious problem in the country (Gallup, n. d.). In 2022, only 38% of the respondents said they never worried about being murdered, the lowest percentage since 2000 (Gallup, n. d.). Statistical information also indicates that Americans’ fear of crime has increased steadily since 2020. The results of a Gallup poll conducted in March 2022, show that more than half of Americans (53%) worry a “great deal” about crime and violence in the United States, while a decade ago, four out of ten Americans expressed similar concerns (Brenan, 2022).

Fear of crime can negatively impact one's quality of life and can have larger undesirable societal consequences. Warr (2000) indicated that a limited degree of fear is necessary so that potential victims would use caution and avoid risk-taking behaviors. However, when the level of fear of crime becomes excessive, then it becomes a cause for concern. Research has found that increased fear of crime has negative psychological effects (i.e., anxiety, depression, emotional distress, stress, lack of confidence, and sleep deprivation) on individuals (Burt et al., 2022; Kodjebacheva et al., 2014; Lorenc et al., 2012; Pearson & Breetzke, 2013; Stafford et al., 2007). Furthermore, fear of crime may lead to avoidance behaviors, which may limit interpersonal interaction, resulting in poorer mental health (Kodjebacheva et al., 2014; May et al., 2010; Rader et al., 2020; Stafford et al., 2007;). Moreover, increased fear of crime may result in restricting one's participation in outside activities such as walking and/or exercising resulting in higher Body Mass Index (BMI) and poor physical health (Kodjebacheva et al., 2014; Lorenc et al., 2012; Loukaitou-Sideris, & Eck, 2007). Overall, individuals who perceive themselves as potential victims, are less likely to socialize with others and engage in outside activities.

Fear might lead to interpersonal distrust and alienation from social life and could lower the communities' cohesion. Because less cohesive communities would have a diminished capacity to exercise informal social control, fear of crime could indirectly contribute to crime increases (Jackson, 2007). Lower social cohesion in communities due to fear of crime may lead to higher residential instability or turnover (Lee et al., 2021; Skogan, 1986). Individuals or families who reside in a community seek out residences with lower crime rates and are perceived safe. However, if there is an elevated fear of crime, this may lead to an increase in residential instability, resulting in diminishing efforts to

increase community cohesion. Furthermore, lower social cohesion and trust within communities may lead to a progressive decline in the social and physical environment of the neighborhood, which may favor increases in crime (Stafford et al., 2007). Higher crime rates have been found to have negative economic consequences on hotels and businesses (Greenbaum & Tita, 2004; Hipp et al 2019). An increase in crime at the neighborhood level is often linked to higher fear of crime among individuals. An increase in fear of crime may have negative economic consequences as well. Individuals who are fearful tend to withdraw from society resulting in less capital spending. With the reduction in capital spending, local and neighborhood businesses are economically impacted (Fisher, 1991). Hence, reduced investments into the neighborhood would occur which would reduce property values and closure of businesses.

Similar to that of the general population, fear of crime has deleterious effects on the mental and physical health of college students (Hibdon et al., 2016; Hignite et al., 2018; Kohm et al., 2012). Studies have found that mental health disorders are high among college students (Downs et al., 2017; Rader et al., 2020). Students who express higher emotional and physical distress are more likely to indicate higher levels of fear and perceived risk of victimization. Students who had elevated fear of crime were more likely to participate in risk-avoidance tactics and had higher levels of stress-related symptoms such as anxiety, sleeping difficulties, and lacking confidence (Hibdon et al., 2016; Hignite et al., 2018; Morrall et al., 2010).

Once fear of crime started to be seen as a serious social problem in the 1960s, international research on fear of crime has continued to expand and grow. As a result, our knowledge about the causes and consequences of the fear of crime has increased steadily

during the past decades. Fear of crime is, however, a complex social phenomenon and as Garofalo (1981) noted, “from a purely scientific standpoint, research on the fear of crime can continue indefinitely” (p. 839).

In Ferraro’s (1995) view, fear of crime is influenced by individuals’ “knowledge and experience of criminal realities, environmental context, and biographical features” (p. 5). Using as a theoretical framework Ferraro’s (1995) risk interpretation model as well as the main theoretical perspectives that informed prior studies of fear of crime (see Hale, 1996), the dissertation focuses on the media’s role in shaping one’s perceived risk of victimization and perceptions of safety. The analysis will provide a partial test of Gerbner’s (1969) cultivation theory, a theory that informed prior research seeking to assess the media consumption effect on fear of crime. Different from most prior studies that examined solely the impact of exposure to traditional media on fear of crime, the study also assesses the impact of social media consumption on perceived safety. With few exceptions (Chadee et al., 2019; Intravia et al., 2017; Näsi et al., 2021), research has given little attention to the potential effect of social media on fear of crime. Moreover, the study seeks to determine if one’s access to live crime updates via social media police scanners is associated with higher levels of fear of crime. Live crime posting(s) have been utilized by various social media communities. In addition, live crime statuses are available in various formats such as social media or smartphone apps. Yet, to the author’s knowledge, no prior study has examined so far, the impact of social media police scanners on the public’s perceived victimization risk and fear of crime. By determining whether membership in live crime posting groups (also known as police scanner groups), has an impact on individuals’ level of fear of crime, the

dissertation will expand the line of research that explores the social media impact on fear of crime.

Furthermore, in response to calls for improvement in the fear-of-crime measurement made by several scholars (Ferraro, 1995; Ferraro & LaGrange, 1987; Hale, 1996; see also Hart et al., 2022), the dissertation uses two separate measures that will consider both the cognitive and the affective¹ dimensions of fear of crime. The study explores the potential differential effect of the selected predictors on fear of crime (i.e., 1. worrying about becoming a victim; 2. feeling unsafe when walking alone in the neighborhood during the day and at night). By making a distinction between the two sides of the concept and by assessing the simultaneous effect of the selected predictors on two distinctive measures of fear, the dissertation will contribute to methodological developments of future research studies.

This quantitative study is based on primary data collected in 2021 from a sample of college students enrolled at five institutions of higher education (N=662) in the United States. These institutions are located in the West, Midwest, and the South. A recent systematic review based on 547 studies of fear of crime published since 1996 shows that only 11% of these studies used samples of college students (Hart et al., 2022).

The dissertation intends to address current gaps in the literature. The study main research questions are: (1) Are perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime affected by the same factors (i.e., exposure to traditional and social media; victimization experiences; public attitudes toward the police; and, perceived social vulnerabilities)? (2)

¹ Cognitive fear of crime refers to a judgment one makes regarding the likelihood of being victimized, while affective fear refers to the emotional response/reaction to factors that are related to crime (Chataway et al., 2019).

Does media consumption increase fear of crime? (3) Is social media a predictor of fear of crime? (4) Does social media police scanner use impact fear of crime? (5) Is perceived procedural justice of police a predictor of fear of crime?

FEAR OF CRIME VS. RISK OF VICTIMIZATION

The debate about the conceptualization and operationalization of fear of crime started more than five decades ago and continues nowadays (Hart et al., 2022). Yet the scholars' concern regarding the measurement of fear of crime has been more pronounced since the mid-1990s (Ferraro, 1995; Hale, 1996; May & Dunaway, 2000; Mesch, 2000; Rader, 2004; Rountree & Land, 1996; Warr & Ellison, 2000; Warr & Stafford, 1983; Williams, et al., 2000).

Early scholarly work on fear of crime focused on the perception of safety (Hale, 1996). The concept of fear of crime was typically operationalized based on one questionnaire item asking respondents to indicate how safe they felt walking alone in their community/neighborhood at night (Ferraro & LaGrange, 1987; Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Hollis, et al., 2017; Lytle et al., 2020; Weitzer & Kubrin, 2004). Other researchers, however, noted that a distinction should be made between fear of crime and perceived risk of victimization and contended that the concept of fear is bidimensional (LaGrange & Ferraro, 1989; LaGrange et al., 1992; Rountree & Land, 1996). LaGrange et al. (1992), for instance, argued that the one-item standard measure of fear of crime (i.e., How safe do you feel walking alone at night....) used in National Crime Surveys (NCS) is more likely to measure perceptions of risk than fear of crime. The authors operationalized fear of crime by using a composite measure based on 10 questionnaire items that asked respondents how afraid

they are of being raped, murdered, having their car stolen, etc. The risk of crime was also a composite measure based on 10 questions that asked respondents to rate the chance that a particular criminal act (murder, rape, their car being stolen, etc.) would happen to them during the coming year. Following LaGrange et al.'s (1992) operationalization of fear of crime, several authors also measured fear of crime by asking respondents to indicate how afraid they are of becoming a victim of a particular crime, such as murder, robbery, or assault (Callanan, 2012; Callanan & Rosenberger, 2015; Chiricos, et al., 2000; Kohm, et al., 2012; Lane & Meeker, 2003; Pryce, et al., 2018).

While several studies made a distinction between the emotional and the judgmental (cognitive) sides of fear (Chiricos, et al., 1997; LaGrange, et al., 1992; Rountree & Land, 1996). Conversely, other scholars considered that fear of crime and the perceived risk of victimization refer in fact to the same phenomenon and used the concepts interchangeably (Chadee, et al., 2019; Jackson, 2009; Rader, 2004; Smith & Torstensson, 1997). The authors of a recently published mixed-methods study that used a theory of emotions to develop a fear of crime scale found that people did use the terms fear, concern, and worry interchangeably when describing feelings about crime (Etopio & Berthelot, 2022).

The operationalization of the fear-of-crime concept was further expanded to include temporal and geographic reference points. This enabled researchers to examine people's perceptions of neighborhood crime and identify geographic areas characterized by high disorder and crime. However, this measurement of fear of crime was seen as problematic by researchers because it did not capture one's emotional reaction to danger (Dubow et al., 1979; Callanan, 2012; Callanan & Rosenberger, 2015; Chiricos, et al, 2000; Ferraro & LaGrange, 1987; Hale 1996; Kohm, et al., 2012; Lane & Meeker, 2003; Pryce, et al., 2018).

More recently, scholars have provided new measurements of fear of crime, which included behavioral actions that individuals take to protect themselves (Henson & Reys, 2015; Lane, 2014; May, et al., 2010).

A recent systematic review of the literature (N = 547) published in the last 25 years on fear of crime (Hart et al., 2022) concluded that “there is no single, universal definition of fear of crime within the established literature” (p. 1). However, despite differences in conceptualization, scholars seem to agree that fear of crime is a “multidimensional construct, consisting of interconnected affective, behavioral, and cognitive responses to an immediate, and perceived threat of crime” (p. 1). The review also showed that almost all studies included in the analysis (98%) measured fear of crime using multiple indicators, with response options generally coded on a 4-point scale. Additionally, most studies (85%) used retrospective indicators to measure fear of crime. The authors noted that about 45% of the fear of crime indicators captured the personal emotion of fear, while 37% referred to personal judgments and 8% tapped into the behavioral (7%) and psychological (1%) dimensions of fear (e.g., precautionary behaviors; physiological markers of stress).

MAIN THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS OF FEAR OF CRIME

According to Hale (1996), there are three main theoretical perspectives that frame the study of fear of crime. These are: the vulnerability perspective, the experience with victimization perspective, and the ecological perspective. The ecological perspective or the social integration perspective, as it is often termed (Gibson et al., 2002; Kanan & Pruitt, 2002), focuses on contextual factors that could impact one's perceptions of safety.

The Vulnerability Hypothesis

The vulnerability model postulates that there are individuals who tend to perceive themselves as being more vulnerable to victimization in comparison to others. When imagining a potential attack, these individuals believe they would be unable to protect themselves or their property due to limited physical prowess or resources (Hale, 1996). The three broad groups that are usually included in analyses that test the vulnerability hypothesis are the women, the elderly, and those who are socially and economically disadvantaged.

Although there are inconsistencies in measuring fear of crime, the relationship between fear of crime and various sociodemographic factors is generally consistent throughout the literature. An overwhelming number of studies found that females are more fearful than males (e.g., Dobbs et al., 2009; Franklin & Franklin, 2009; Lee & Hilinkski-

Rosick, 2012; León et al., 2020; Pryce et al., 2018). A meta-analysis conducted by Collins (2016) also concluded that women's level of fear of crime is consistently higher than the males' fear of crime. Studies based on samples of college students reached a similar conclusion (Barberet et al., 2003; Fox et al., 2009; Jennings et al., 2007; Pryce et al., 2018; Tandogan & Topcu, 2018).

According to the vulnerability model, older individuals are expected to display higher levels of fear. As previously noted, the elderly would fear victimization more than their younger counterparts because due to limited physical abilities, they would be unable to escape a potentially dangerous situation. Additionally, if victimized, their mental and physical recovery would take longer. Consistent with the theoretical predictions, several studies found that fear of crime tends to increase with age (Fox et al., 2009; Toseland, 1982). However, studies that examined the predictors of fear of crime using samples of college students have found a negative relationship between age and fear of crime (Fisher & Cullen, 2000; Gover, et al., 2008; Jennings et al., 2007; Lee & Hilinksi-Rosick, 2012; Leon et al., 2020; Pryce et al., 2018). Researchers argued that younger students may be more fearful because they might be exposed to a new environment they might perceive as dangerous because it could involve activities, such as underage drinking and substance misuse, which usually increase one's risk of victimization.

According to the vulnerability model, people belonging to social minority groups would be more afraid of being victimized as well. Hale (1996) explained the ethnic minorities' fear of crime level in terms of environmental and contextual factors. According to Hale, people belonging to certain ethnic/racial minority groups are more likely to live in communities that lack resources and where incivilities, disorder, and crime levels are

higher. As noted by Skogan and Maxfield (1981), racial/ethnic minorities may be more fearful because they are more frequently exposed to criminal behaviors within their community. When examining race and fear of crime, several studies have indicated that non-white individuals have indeed higher levels of fear of crime (Chiricos, et al., 1997; Chiricos, et al., 2000; Lee & Hilinski, 2012; Shi, 2018; Taylor, et al., 2009).

The Victimization Perspective

According to the “victimization perspective” persons who directly and/or indirectly experienced victimization would be more fearful than those who have not been victims of crime. Most statistical models that attempt to explain variations in perceived safety include experience with victimization among the important predictors of fear of crime. Regarding the link between victimization and fear of crime, results are, however, mixed. Several scholars have found that respondents who have prior victimization experiences had higher levels of fear of crime (Andreescu, 2015; Callanan, 2012; Callanan & Rosenberger, 2015; Kort-Butler & Hartshorn, 2011; Nasi et al., 2021; Smith & Hill, 1999; Skogan, 1987; Weaver & Wakshlag, 1986). Yet, other researchers have found that the relationship victimization – fear of crime was affected by the type of crime victimization (e.g., violent or property crime) a person experienced (Miethe & Lee, 1984). Moreover, other studies did not find victimization to be a significant predictor of fear of crime (Intravia et al., 2017; Van den Bulck, 2004; Weitzer & Kubrin, 2004). In addition, there have been studies that have found non-victims to have higher fear of crime levels than persons who experienced victimization (Chiricos et al., 1997; Eschholz, et al., 2003).

Hale (1996) has also included the consumption of media as part of the victimization experience. Witnessing violent events on television, for instance, can be seen as a form of

vicarious victimization. Although studies that explored the effect of watching crime-related shows, or TV violence did not necessarily refer to the indirect victimization effect of violence in the media, several researchers concluded that exposure to violent content in the media was positively linked to fear of crime (Callanan & Rosenberg, 2015; Dolliver, Kenney, Reid, Prohaska, 2018; Dowler, 2003; Eschholz, Chiricos, & Gertz, 2003; Pryce et al., 2018; Shi, 2018; Shah et al., 2020). Moreover, Gerbner and colleagues (1979) regarded violence on television as a form of social control, as a symbolic demonstration of the unequal distribution of power by gender and race in the American society. “More violence would mean more fear, and more support for law-and-order approaches to managing society” (Signorielli et al., 2019, p. 6).

The Ecological Perspective: Contextual Factors Influencing Public Perceptions of Crime and Safety

The contextual factors included among the predictors of fear of crime were social disorder, incivilities, neighborhood characteristics, social cohesion, perceptions of crime, and also public perceptions of police. In her meta-analysis based on 61 studies that included neighborhood-level data, Collins (2016), for instance, found that the odds of worrying about becoming a victim increased significantly with perceived incivilities at the neighborhood level and decreased significantly when respondents were living in communities characterized by collective efficacy. This means that residents who perceived their communities as being more cohesive would feel safer because these communities would have a higher capacity to informally control crime. Using this argument and because fear of crime cannot be disconnected from the citizens’ perceived level of crime, several researchers examined the role played by public attitudes toward the police when examining

the correlates of fear of crime. Law enforcement officers are agents of formal social control and when people trust the police and believe they are fighting crime successfully, citizens should feel safer. Some researchers, for instance, argued that increasing police visibility and community interaction with the police could change public beliefs about crime and decrease the residents' fear of crime. Henig and Maxfield (1978) called this process *symbolic reassurance*.

Yet, regarding the link between public perceptions of police and fear of crime, it is not very clear which variable is the cause and which one is the effect. As Skogan (2009) noted, fear of crime might negatively affect the public's confidence in the police, but a low level of trust in the police often predicts a high level of fear of crime. Although exceptions exist (Andreescu, 2013, 2015), several studies found a negative association between trust in the police and fear of crime (Alda et al., 2017; Box et al., 1998; Kim et al., 2021; Sindall et al., 2012).

Nonetheless, despite the ambiguity of the relationship between public views of the police and perceived safety, over the past two decades, many researchers tried to determine what aspects of policing and what kind of public attitudes toward the police are more consequential for fear of crime. For instance, some researchers estimated the impact of perceived visibility of the police (Cordner, 1986; Hauser & Kleck, 2016; Kelling 1977; Roh et al., 2013; Salmi et al., 2004) and the frequency of public contact with the police on fear of crime (Intravia, et al., 2020; Menifield et al., 2001) or if perceived effectiveness of the police made people feel safer (Bolger & Bolger, 2019; Hauser & Kleck 2016; Roh et al., 2013). Moreover, several researchers explored the impact of satisfaction with the police (Dukes & Hughes 2004; Lai & Zhao 2010; Lytle et al., 2020; Lytle & Randa 2015; Payne

& Gainey, 2007; Wu & Sun, 2009), or perceived procedural justice of the police (Boateng & Boateng, 2017; Greenwood et al., 2022) on fear of crime.

A brief review of the previously cited literature indicates that research findings lack consistency. For example, some researchers found that people who expressed satisfaction with the police were less likely to report fear of crime (Lytle & Randa, 2015; Scheider et al., 2003), while other researchers concluded that when controlling for other factors, satisfaction with the police was not a significant predictor of fear of crime (Scarborough et al., 2010). While some researchers documented a significant negative relationship between confidence in the police and fear of crime (Alda et al., 2017; Box, et al., 1998; Kim et al., 2021; Sindall et al, 2012), in other studies the public confidence in the police and fear of crime were not significantly related (Andreescu, 2013, 2015; Dowler, 2003; Lai & Zhao, 2010). Moreover, when respondents were asked to indicate how much they worry about becoming a victim of a particular type of crime, their confidence in the police affected fear of crime differently. For instance, Sindall and colleagues (2012) found that people's confidence in the police did not impact one's fear of becoming a victim of violent crime but significantly decreased the perceived risk of victimization associated with property crimes.

However, it should be noted that differences in the operationalization of confidence/trust in the police might explain differences in findings. While respondents are generally asked to rank their level of trust using an ordinal scale, Lai and Zhao created a composite measure of trust based on questionnaire items that are not found in other studies. For instance, the authors asked the study participants to indicate if in their opinion police (i.e., Houston Police Department) would fairly investigate citizen complaints and if police

officers would be held accountable for the unauthorized use of tasers (Lai & Zhao, 2010). Other scholars have measured confidence in the police using questionnaire items that are usually used to measure police efficiency. For example, some scholars used as indicators of trust in the police questions that asked respondents if they believed the police were doing a good job solving crimes, or if police patrolling was efficient (Dukes and Hughes, 2004; Kim et al., 2021; Kutjanik 2008).

Nevertheless, studies that explicitly explored the impact of perceived police effectiveness on fear of crime produced mixed results as well. While some studies documented a significant negative relationship between perceived police effectiveness and fear of crime (Abbott et al., 2020; Baumer, 1985; Boateng & Boateng, 2017; Dowler, 2003; Hawdon et al., 2003), Fernandes (2018) did not. Using the Seattle police department database, the author measured police effectiveness by counting the total number of violent crimes (murder, rape, assault, and robbery) that resulted in an arrest out of the total number of crimes recorded in a particular category. Fernandes (2018) found that when police were more efficient (i.e., made more arrests for violent crimes), fear of crime was increasing. Fernandes (2018), however, relied on official data to measure police efficiency, while prior research that did document a significant relationship between perceived police effectiveness and perceived safety used subjective assessments to measure the concept (e.g., respondents were asked to rank the police ability to solve crimes, offer adequate protection to the public, or provide timely response when help was solicited). It can be argued again that a lack of uniform measurement of police effectiveness contributed to inconsistent findings.

Perceived procedural justice of police and fear of crime

Police procedural justice refers to policing procedures that the public view as procedurally fair (Tyler, 2011). Following Thibaut and Walker's (1975) pioneering work on procedural justice, Tom Tyler (1990) published the first major text (*Why People Obey the Law*) that explored the relationship between citizens' perceptions of procedural justice and their view of legal authorities as legitimate (Bennett et al., 2018). Tyler argued that police legitimacy is a product of procedural justice, which encompasses fairness in decision making (i.e., neutral, and nondiscriminatory behavior by the police when they are exercising their regulatory authority) and fair, respectful, and courteous treatment of people during police-citizen interactions (Tyler, 2011, pp. 257-260).

For the past three decades since Tyler's (1990) groundbreaking work has been published, a robust body of research has indicated that when people feel they are treated fairly and justly by the police they are more likely to show trust and confidence in the police and to comply with the law because they perceive the institution as a legitimate enforcer of social control (Donner et al., 2015; Gau et al., 2012; Koster et al., 2016; Mazerolle et al., 2013; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). Moreover, the authors of a systematic review and meta-analysis of 41 empirical studies concluded that police procedural justice is indeed effective in improving citizen satisfaction, confidence, and cooperation with police, as well as compliance with the law (Mazerolle et al., 2013).

It can be argued that when citizens recognize the legitimacy of police as a product of procedural justice, people may feel safer not only because they would trust the police to be effective in fighting crime in their communities but also because they might believe more citizens would comply with the law. And when there are more law-abiding citizens,

crime levels would decrease, and people's perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime should decrease as well. Recently, a small number of researchers (Boateng & Boateng, 2017; Greenwood et al., 2022; Renauer 2007) tried to determine if there is a link between perceived procedural justice and the individuals' perceived risk of victimization and/or fear of crime.

Renauer (2007) examined fear of crime and procedural justice using a 10-district survey administered in Portland, Oregon. Respondents had to indicate how afraid they were of becoming a victim of five types of violent crime and two types of property crime. The seven questions were summed to create a fear of crime index. Procedural justice was measured using two questions that captured two aspects (i.e., fair decision making; respectful treatment) of procedural justice (i.e., "how much do you worry about being stopped by the police for doing nothing wrong?" and "how much do you worry about police treating you disrespectfully?"). The analysis concluded that procedural justice was negatively related to fear of crime. In other words, the analysis found that respondents who anticipated they would be fairly and respectfully treated in hypothetical encounters with the police worried less about becoming crime victims.

Boateng and Boateng (2017) examined the predictors of fear of crime using a sample of college students. Fear of crime was a composite indicator based on four questions that asked respondents to indicate how afraid they were to walk on campus during the daytime and at nighttime, if they felt safer to stay outside the campus than to stay on campus, and if they feared being attacked on campus. Procedural justice was measured using five items. Respondents had to indicate if the police decisions were fair, if the police treated people fairly and equally, whether the police accurately understood and applied the law,

and if the police decisions were based on facts, and not on police officers' personal biases or opinions. Different from Renauer's (2007) results, Boateng and Boateng (2017) did not find a significant relationship between perceived procedural justice and fear of crime.

More recently, a study conducted by Greenwood and colleagues (2022) assessed the impact of perceived procedural justice of campus police on perceived safety and fear of victimization among college students as well. The procedural justice measure was an index based on 10 questionnaire items asking respondents if the campus police were helpful, knowledgeable, fair, respectful, professional, if they provided services promptly, etc. The dependent variables were each based on a single question that asked respondents how safe they feel while "attending or spending time at any university campus" and how much they "fear becoming a victim of crime while attending or spending time at any campus" (Greenwood et al., 2022, p. 214). Findings of the multivariate statistical analyses showed that when controlling for several variables, perceived procedural justice did not have a significant effect on perceived safety, but had the anticipated effect on perceived risk of victimization. With an increase in the perceived procedural justice of campus police, the perceived risk of victimization decreased significantly.

Although two of the three studies reviewed here indicate that procedurally just policing might lower people's fear of victimization, additional research is needed to reach a reliable conclusion regarding the impact of the perceived police procedural justice on fear of crime. The proposed dissertation intends to contribute to the limited literature that expanded the application of the procedural justice concept to fear of crime.

CULTIVATION THEORY

In the first chapter of his book *Fear of Crime: Interpreting Victimization Risk*, Ferraro (1995) noted that Americans are constantly “under a siege of criminal activity” due to vivid and frank depictions of violence and property crime by the print and electronic media. Like other scholars before him, Ferraro acknowledged that “this shower of crime news” individuals are exposed to on a regular basis would affect the way people “interpret criminal realities and victimization potential around them” (Ferraro, 1995, pp. 1-2). One of the theories that attempted to explain why and how people’s feelings of safety are influenced by mass media is Gebner’s (1969) cultivation theory.

Cultivation theory is rooted in the *Cultural Indicators Project* initiated by George Gebner in the 1960s in response to increasing concerns about “television violence”, which was documented by the pioneering studies published by Smythe and Head in 1954 (Signorielli et al., 1995). In 1968, Gerbner conducted a content analysis of the portrayal of violence in two broadcast television seasons (fall 1967 and fall 1968). The Cultural Indicators Project hosted Gerbner’s analysis of the nature and frequency of violence in subsequent seasons of network television programs and generated an annual *Violence Profile* until the mid-1980s, with occasional reports in the 1990s (Signorielli et al., 2019). The systematic analysis of television violence served as the main source of Gerbner’s (1969) initial formulation of the cultivation theory, as well as of its later theoretical developments.

In short, cultivation theory asserts that television-viewing “cultivates” distorted perceptions of the “real world” (Hirsh, 1981, p. 3).

The concept of *cultivation*, posited by Gerbner focuses on the “collective context within which, and in response to which, different individual and group selections and interpretations of messages take place” (Gerbner, 1969, p.137). According to Gerbner, cultivation is composed of two constructs, *cultivation indicators*, and *television exposure*. Gerbner focused on the impact of television exposure because as Nielsen reports showed, television was at the time, the most frequently used media source. Cultivation indicators refer to how messages are interpreted based on cultural values. As indicated by Gerbner (1969), “we need to know what general terms of collective cultivation about existence, priorities, values, and relationships are given in collectively shared public message systems before we can reliably interpret facts of individual and social response” (p. 141). According to Gerbner (1969), it is important to understand the messages being dispersed in conjunction with the type of culture, priorities, and backgrounds to accurately interpret how individuals will respond to them. Gerbner proposed four questions to measure and assess public message systems concerning cultural indicators: “1) “*what is* (i.e., what exists as an item of public knowledge),” 2) “*what is important* (i.e., how the items are ordered),” 3) “*what is right* (or wrong, or endowed with any qualities, or presented from any point of view),” and 4) “*what is related to what* (by proximity or other connections).” Based on this model, Gerbner examined the effect of media content on individuals’ perception of reality.

First, using prime-time broadcasts, Gerbner and associates examined what individuals observed when exposed to media and assessed the media impact on the respondents’ perceived reality. Second, researchers conducted a *message system analysis*

and identified thematic trends in the media consumption. Gerbner and Gross's (1976) methodology was further utilized in cultivation analysis. The purpose of the project was to track and assess media content and the messages that were relayed from the content.

In sum, the cultivation theory posits that increased media consumption would alter one's perceptions of social reality. The distorted perception of reality is based on the messages and themes portrayed by the media. Viewers would be impacted by the way messages are dispersed in the media and by the length of exposure to media content. An increase in television exposure would increase the cultivation impact, which would eventually alter the viewers' perception of reality, their beliefs about crime, and their assessment of victimization risks (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Gerbner et al., 1978; Gerbner et al., 1979).

Empirical Tests of the Cultivation Theory

Cultivation theory research has focused on three entities: institutions, messages, and the public. The institutional process focuses on how organizations develop and process messages (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). According to cultivation theory, the institutions that oversee mass communications and disperse messages they deemed to be necessary are particularly important because through these messages, viewers/ audiences are persuaded. And if the media focus on the idea that crime is increasing, viewers would believe that crime in their community is on the rise and fear of criminal victimization would increase. Extensive media exposure to this type of media content could also lower the public trust in institutions of social control, such as the government and the police. According to the

theory, cultivation effects will not be detected among viewers with low media consumption (Gerbner & Gross, 1976).

Initial tests of the cultivation theory (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Gerbner et al., 1977a; 1977b; 1978a; 1978b) provided empirical support for the theory. These studies found that with an increase in one's exposure to media content that focused on violence and crime, viewers were more likely to overestimate violent crime levels in their communities. Gerbner and colleagues (1977a; 1977b) also found that those individuals who consumed heavy amounts of television tended to reproduce messages included in tv broadcasting and also displayed lower levels of interpersonal trust.

Further studies by Gerbner et al. (1978a; 1978b) also found support for the cultivation theory. Similar to the Gerbner's (1977a; 1977b) prior research findings, researchers noticed that heavy media consumers were more likely to have higher levels of fear of crime (i.e., were more fearful to walk alone in the city), to display avoidance behavior, and to express lower levels of interpersonal trust. These viewers were also more likely to reproduce media content (i.e., "television answers") and to indicate that retaliatory violence is justified (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Gerbner et al., 1977a; 1977b; 1978a; 1978b). More recent applications of Gerbner's theory to the study of fear of crime continued to show support for the cultivation theory (Callanan, 2012; Callanan & Rosenberg, 2015; Chiricos et al., 1997; Dolliver, et al., 2018; Dowler, 2003; Eschholz, et al., 2003; Pryce et al., 2018; Shi, 2018; Shah et al., 2020). Overall, research documented a positive and significant relationship between the amount of media consumption and fear of crime.

For instance, Chiricos et al. (1997) examined predictors of fear of crime using survey data collected in Tallahassee, Florida. The study assessed the validity of the

cultivation theory assumption that an increase in the frequency of media usage would increase fear of crime. The authors used as a dependent variable an index that measured the respondents' perceived risk of becoming a victim of three crimes (robbery, assault, and burglary). For media consumption, the authors asked the study participants how often they used the following media sources during a typical week: newspapers, magazines, tv news, and radio news. The results of the statistical analysis suggested that the frequency of watching television news and listening to radio news increased the respondents' fear of being victimized.

Callanan's (2012) study on the effect of media consumption on fear of crime produced results similar to Chiricos et al.'s (1997) findings. Using data collected from a randomly selected sample of California residents, the author found that respondents who reported higher levels of exposure to local TV news also reported higher levels of fear of crime. The same finding was reported by Callanan and Rosenberger (2015).

Nonetheless, not all research studies that were theoretically informed by the cultivation theory found empirical support for its tenets (Doobs & MacDonald, 1979; Hirsch, 1980, 1981; Hughes, 1980). Doobs and MacDonald (1979) examined the relationship between television viewing and fear of victimization using neighborhood crime data. The authors planned to determine if the estimated causal relationship between media consumption and fear of crime was spurious. They used data gathered in Toronto and examined the media effects on fear of crime in two neighborhoods with high assault rates and in two neighborhoods with low rates of assault. The two areas with high rates of crime were within the city of Toronto and the neighborhoods with low assault rates were two suburban areas. The four areas differed in terms of various socioeconomic indicators.

For instance, the high-crime areas were part of downtown commercial/entertainment district, had a public housing sector, and had a high number of low-income households. The low-crime areas included expensive houses and high-income households. Interviews were conducted utilizing a commercial survey company. Each respondent had to complete a 37-item questionnaire. The survey asked respondents to estimate their likelihood of becoming a victim of crime and their neighbors' likelihood of becoming victims of crime. Other questions asked respondents if in their view crime is increasing, if the police force in the city is increasing in size, if respondents feel necessary to arm themselves, etc. A bivariate analysis showed that in the overall sample there was a significant positive correlation between television consumption and perceived risk of victimization. Yet, when controlling for the actual incidence of crime in the neighborhood, the relationship became insignificant. Thus, Doobs and MacDonald (1979) concluded that TV consumption was not a direct cause of fear of crime.

Hirsch (1980) used the General Social Survey (GSS) to test the cultivation hypothesis. The author conducted a multivariate analysis and examined the relationship between television consumption and fear, anomie, alienation, suicidal ideation, reaction to strangers, and physical violent victimization. Hirsch found that although light viewers showed more cultivation effects than nonviewers, extreme viewers showed less cultivation effects than heavy viewers, suggesting a curvilinear effect. Hirsch (1980) identified discrepancies in the items, samples, and coding categories employed by Gerbner and his colleagues, and showed that when controls were applied simultaneously there was no linear relationship between amount of viewing and the provision of "television answers." The author concluded that "the cultivation hypothesis lacks empirical support and that the very

data presented in its support argue strongly for rejecting the assertion that it has any scientific basis in fact” (p. 403).

Hughes (1980) was another critique of the cultivation theory. Similar to Hirsch (1980, 1981), Hughes examined the applicability of the cultivation theory to explain variations in fear of crime. When examining and testing the cultivation theory, Hughes indicated that Gerbner et al. (1978a) did not control for variables that may produce spurious relationships. Using GSS data, the author found that when controlling for several sociodemographic variables (i.e., sex, race, education, age, hours worked per week, income, number of voluntary associations, church attendance, and size of the neighborhood), the effect of media consumption on fear of crime was no longer significant.

The cultivation theory has been criticized due to various issues related to the concept of cultivation and cultural indicators, methodological flaws, and analytical procedures used to test the theory (Hirsch, 1980, 1981; Hughes, 1980; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Potter & Chang 1990). In response to these criticisms, Gerbner and associates indicated that the introduction of new concepts, such as “mainstreaming” and further clarification of the theory would help alleviate these issues (Gerbner et al., 1980; Gerbner et al., 1981). “Mainstreaming” refers to individuals who are heavy consumers of televisions and who are expected to be affected differently by media exposure than light viewers. In other words, the cultivation effect of the media would be more pronounced among heavy media users (Gerbner & Gross, Morgan & Signorielli, 1980b).

“Resonance” is another theoretical concept introduced later by Gerbner and colleagues (1980, 1981); it stated that if media messages resembled an individual's direct experiences, it would reinforce the cultivation effect of the media. According to this

theoretical reformulation, heavy viewers in subgroups portrayed on television as being most victimized would perceive the world as “more mean” or “scarier” than light viewers in the same subgroups (Hirsch, 1981, p. 3). Although Hirsch (1981) continued to question the logical adequacy of the cultivation theory’s developments, other researchers did not share his opinion. With the incorporation of the two concepts (i.e., mainstreaming and resonance), cultivation theory has been generally supported by research findings. For instance, in support of “mainstreaming” effects, several researchers found that heavy media users have higher levels of fear of crime (Callanan & Rosenberger, 2015; Chiricos et al., 1997; Chiricos et al., 2000; Escholz, et al., 2003; Lytle et al., 2020; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Morgan, et al., 2017; Rosenberger, 2015; Weaver & Wakshlag, 1986). Moreover, researchers detected a “resonance” effect and found that those who experienced criminal victimization tended to have higher levels of fear of crime if they increased their media consumption (Chiricos et al., 2000; Chiricos et al., 1997; Eschholz et al., 2003; Weaver & Wakshlag, 1986). In addition to “mainstreaming” and “resonance”, another newly introduced theoretical concept was “perceived realism,” which stated that frequent media consumers would have a distorted perception of crime. Several authors found that frequent media users tended indeed to overestimate crime rates (Callanan, 2012; Heath, 1984).

Yet not all tests of the updated form of the cultivation theory showed empirical support. O’Keefe and Reid-Nash (1987), for instance, examined the effects of television and newspaper consumption on citizens’ perceptions, attitudes, and behavior as they relate to crime and crime prevention. The study was mainly focused on the social reality component of the cultivation theory. Using a secondary data set (N=1,049) of adults from Buffalo, Denver, and Milwaukee, the authors examined one’s perceived risk of

victimization, crime prevention perceptions, and crime prevention behaviors. Using hierarchical regression analysis, the authors found that individuals who paid greater attention to televised news about crime were more fearful of crime. However, the study found that the frequency of media consumption did not have a significant effect on fear of crime. It should be noted that the measurement of media consumption might have affected the results. Although the authors asked respondents how much time they spent watching television on a weekly basis, the response categories (i.e., very often, sometimes, or hardly ever) were not specific. Results might have been different if a ratio-level measure would have been used instead.

Lane and Meeker (2003) used a random sample of California residents to examine the mass media influence on perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime. Using a structural equation model, the authors concluded that media consumption had only indirect effects on fear of crime through perceived risk of victimization. Results also varied among ethnic groups. A limitation/issue with this study was the measurement of fear of crime. Fear of crime was a composite measure based on eight questions asking respondents how afraid they were of certain crimes (graffiti, home invasion robbery, drive-by or random gang-related shooting, physical assault by gang member, harassment by a gang member, carjacking, burglary, and rape/sexual assault). As noted by the researchers, most of these crimes were gang-related and did not represent a more general description of fear of crime (Lane & Meeker, 2003).

Kort-Butler and Hartshorn (2011) tried to see if different types of media programs impacted fear of crime, using media consumption as a mediator. The analysis was based on the 2007 Nebraska Annual Social Indicator Survey. The results indicated that

individuals who viewed more non-fiction crime shows were more fearful of being victimized. Yet, contrary to the theoretical expectation, news viewership was not significantly associated with fear of crime. A limitation of the study was that the survey was based on data collected only in one state. Consequently, results do not generalize to residents living in other US states. In addition, the researchers indicated that the respondents in Nebraska had lower proximity and exposure to crime compared to residents living in the neighboring states. The authors argued that, possibly, media consumption did not have the anticipated cultivation effect because Nebraska respondents lived in safer areas and had lower levels of fear of crime than people living in other areas of the country.

In summary, even though findings are mixed, the number of studies indicating that media consumption, especially exposure to violent content, and fear of crime are linked is not negligible. The misperception of reality and an overestimation of crime level were significant predictors of fear of crime and/or perceived victimization risk in several studies. Nonetheless, further exploration is warranted (Morgan et al., 2015).

Social Media and Fear of Crime

When Gerbner formulated the cultivation theory in the 1960s, television was still a novel mass medium, and many empirical tests of the theory focused on its impact on viewers' perceptions of reality. Even though "media technologies, research methodologies, and social policies have undergone enormous transformations" since, what Signorielli, Gerbner, and Morgan (1995, p. 278) noted almost three decades ago, continues to be valid nowadays:

...as we approach the end of the 20th century, the amount of violence in our current television and entertainment seems remarkably reminiscent of the levels suggested by those early studies two generations ago. The proliferation of new channels and new delivery systems only makes symbolic violence more pervasive, more normal, and more invisible.

However, what Signorielli and her colleagues (1995) did not anticipate at the time was that in the 21st century, individuals' reliance on traditional media sources to get information diminished considerably. Currently, most people use the internet to obtain news, and since the mid-2000, social media sites have become alternative sources of information about current events. Based on 2021 data reported by the Pew Research Center, seven in ten Americans currently use social media (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). Yet only a small number of studies focused so far on the impact of social media consumption on fear of crime. In part, this might be caused by the difficulty of isolating the impact of social media from the impact of traditional mass media when examining the individuals' perceptions of crime and safety. While many people are currently social media users, it is unlikely that they get information about social facts solely from social media. Moreover, it is not known how much of the social media content a person is accessing is actually related to crime. For instance, a recent analysis of over 32 million tweets recorded over 70 days in 18 Latin American countries showed that only 1.5% of these tweets referred to crime. The authors found, however, that the social media crime-related content was strongly influenced by crime news depicted by traditional media and also that crime-related tweets were more likely to focus on violent crimes. Results also showed that, in general, countries with higher murder rates and higher levels of fear of crime were more likely to have crime-related, violence-related, and murder-related tweets (Curiel et al., 2020). Although less

than a handful of studies did explore the impact of social media usage on fear of crime (Chadee et al., 2019; Intravia et al., 2017; Näsi et al., 2021), a reassessment of the validity of the cultivation theory is needed (Morgan et al., 2015).

Intravia, Wolff, Paez, and Gibbs (2017) examined the influence of social media usage on fear of crime in a sample of college students. The authors hypothesized that increased usage of social media would increase fear of crime. For the most part, the study found support for the cultivation theory (i.e., social media consumption increased fear of crime). Findings, however, might not apply to the general population. The sample included a highly educated segment of the population and about 90% of the respondents were 25 years old or younger.

Using a nationally representative sample of Finnish residents, Näsi, Tanskanen, Kivivuori, Haara, and Reunanen (2021) assessed the effect of traditional and social media consumption of crime-related news on fear of street violence, when controlling for interest in violence-related news, prior victimization, and several socioeconomic indicators. The authors found that most Finnish respondents (63%) relied solely on television and radio news to get information about violent crime in the country, while 21% of the respondents used both traditional and social media to get crime news. Results of the multivariate analysis showed that the more sources of information about violent crime a person used, the stronger the effect on fear of violent victimization was. While those who accessed news about violent crime using traditional media sources of information were significantly more fearful than those who did not access information about violent crime, the cultivation effect of media usage on fear of violent victimization was stronger for respondents who used both traditional and social media sources of information. Additionally, respondents who had a

high interest in news about violent crimes had a significantly higher level of fear than those with a low interest in violence-related news.

However, not all studies that verified the applicability of the cultivation theory when the effect of social media was included among the predictors of fear of crime found support for the theory. Using a representative sample of residents from Trinidad (N = 3,003), Chadee, Smith, and Ferguson (2019) examined the cultivation effect of media (i.e., exposure to reality TV shows about crime, crime drama shows, newspapers, and radio news about crime, and news about crime on the internet and social media sites) on fear of crime and perceived risk of victimization. The authors found that respondents who believed that fictional characters in TV crime shows resemble real-life offenders and victims were more likely to have a higher level of perceived victimization risk. Fear of crime, however, was not influenced by any of the variables that measured the media effects. The authors concluded that no cultivation effects were identified in their study. However, based on the operationalization of the independent variables meant to measure media effects and the statistical models presented, it is difficult to not question the authors' conclusions. For instance, the authors did not differentiate between sole users of traditional media, users of both traditional and social media, and those who never accessed news about crime. Moreover, the separate effect of social media usage cannot be determined because the authors combined in a single measure the frequency of access to internet and social media sites (i.e., using an ordinal-level scale, respondents were asked how often they read or looked at crime-related news/ articles/ videos on the Internet and social media sites).

In summary, it is unclear if exposure to social media impacts or not one's fear of crime and/or crime victimization risk. Only a limited number of studies explored the effect

of social media on perceived safety and methodological differences among these studies prevent readers to reach a reliable conclusion. Nonetheless, additional research is needed to determine if exposure to social media content affects variations in fear of crime.

Current Study

The current dissertation aims to address three concerns and recommendations expressed by some researchers who examined the correlates of fear of crime. First, the study will make a distinction between fear of crime and the perceived risk of victimization. Fear of crime will be operationalized using measures commonly used in the literature and will refer to the cognitive dimension (personal judgment of risk) of the concept (Ferraro & LaGrange, 1987). Perceived risk of victimization will capture the affective (worries about becoming a victim) side of fear (Chataway & Hart, 2016; Farrall & Gadd, 2004; Innes, 2014; Jackson 2004, Jennings et al., 2007; Rader, 2004; Warr & Stafford, 1983). These indicators will be measured using different variables and will not be used interchangeably.

Second, the research will examine whether an individual's perception of police procedural justice is a predictor of fear of crime. Although several studies found a significant relationship between fear of crime and public attitudes toward the police (i.e., confidence in the police, police effectiveness, police satisfaction, and police presence/visibility), limited research examined the effect of perceived procedural justice of police on fear of crime. Using Tyler's (1990) model of procedural justice, the study will examine this relationship and will contribute to research on procedural justice and research on fear of crime.

Third, the proposed dissertation will conduct a partial empirical test of the cultivation theory. Specifically, the study will examine the effect of traditional and social media consumption on fear of crime and perceived risk of victimization. Moreover, the study will explore the potential impact on fear of crime of exposure to police scanner messages. Police scanners or individuals listening to police communication can be dated back to the 1930s (Poli, 1942) and currently, various police departments have utilized social media to inform the public regarding the status of investigations or protests (Davis III, et al., 2014). Research surrounding police scanner messaging focused on police transparency and new ways used by police to inform the public, discussed the legality of police scanner devices used by members of the public, and addressed the digital vulnerability associated with police scanner usage (Davis III, et al., 2014; Lichtenstein & Johnson, 2009; Vargas, et al., 2019). However, to the author's knowledge, no study examined so far, the link between social media usage of crime-related information distributed by the police and fear of crime.

Currently, various neighborhoods have social media groups that allow subscribers to read or listen to live crime feeds. The crime feeds refer to crimes, traffic, and community-related issues. Police departments such as Boston PD, have used social media to provide live crime updates (Davis III, et al., 2014). And nationwide, police departments are utilizing social media to communicate with the public. Although not all police departments provide live crime updates to their communities, various private groups of social media users distribute this information. Although prior research has focused on the impact of social media or the usage of social media on fear of crime, there is a gap in the literature on how social media is used. Thus, examining the various usages of social media that are

either crime-related or police-related in predicting fear of crime needs to be further examined. The dissertation seeks to determine whether individuals who are members or subscribers of police scanner groups that provide live crime updates differ in terms of fear of crime from individuals who do not use this social media platform.

In accordance with the theoretical tenets and prior research on fear of crime, the following research hypotheses are proposed:

H1: In accordance with the cultivation theory, traditional media consumption is expected to increase one's perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime.

H2: It is hypothesized, that higher consumption of social media will increase one's perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime.

H3: It is anticipated that those who accessed police scanner pages on social media sites will have a higher level of fear of crime and will report higher perceived victimization risks than those who never accessed police scanners.

H4: Respondents who express positive attitudes toward the police (i.e., trust the police and perceive the police as being fair and just) are expected to feel safer and worry less about becoming a victim of crime.

H5: It is hypothesized, that students who have been victims of crime will have a higher level of fear of crime and will report a higher risk of victimization.

H6: Fear of crime and perceived risk of victimization will vary by gender, age, and race. In accordance with the vulnerability hypothesis, females, younger students, and ethnic/racial minority students are expected to report higher levels of fear of crime and victimization risk than those who do not identify as females, are older, and are non-Hispanic white students, respectively.

H7: It is hypothesized that people who worry frequently about being a crime victim will be more likely to feel unsafe (i.e., perceived risk of victimization is expected to be positively linked to fear of crime).

METHODOLOGY

Data & Methods

The study is based on primary survey data collected between January 2021 and May 2021 from a convenience sample of college students. The online survey platform Qualtrics was used for data collection. The survey was administered to students attending five universities in the West, Midwest, and the South. Students were asked to complete the survey voluntarily and were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. The author received the approval of the Institutional Review Board at the University of Louisville (IRB Number: 21.0269) to conduct the study. Due to the fact that the initial number of students invited to participate in the study at each institution is unknown, the response rate could not be calculated.

Participants in the study (N = 662) were actively enrolled in the participating universities' criminal justice and general education courses. More than half of the respondents were enrolled at universities in the Midwest (54.6%), 38.4% attended an institution of higher education in the West, and 46 students (6.9%) were enrolled at a university located in a southern state.

Measures

Dependent and mediating variables

The dependent variable, *fear of crime*, is based on two questionnaire items (“How safe would you feel walking alone during the day in your neighborhood?” and “How safe would you feel walking outside and alone in your neighborhood at night?”). Answers to each question vary from “very safe” (coded 1) to “very unsafe” (coded 4). The two indicators of fear of crime are strongly correlated (Kendall’s tau-b = .654). A mean score was calculated, with higher scores indicating a higher level of fear of crime. The measure is reliable (Spearman-Brown coefficient = .822)² and has a relatively normal distribution (Skewness = .324; Kurtosis = -.605).

The analysis uses as a mediator *perceived risk of victimization*. Three questions were used to create this composite measure (“How frequently do you worry about being murdered?”, “How frequently do you worry about being robbed on a street, with a gun?”, and “How frequently do you worry about homes being broken into and things being stolen?”). For each question, responses vary from 1 (never) to 4 (very frequently). The index is based on mean scores, with higher values indicating a higher level of the perceived risk of victimization. The measure is unidimensional and has good internal consistency (alpha = .809).

The following measures have been used as independent variables:

Media consumption. The variable is a composite measure based on the mean scores obtained at five questions. Respondents have been asked how many hours per day they consume the following media “national televised news,” “internet news feeds”, “locally

² The Spearman-Brown coefficient is recommended to be reported for a two-item scale (Eisinga et al., 2013).

televised news”, “crime drama”, and “crime documentaries”. The measure is reliable (alpha = .871) and unidimensional. When PCA was conducted only one factor with an Eigenvalue higher than one was obtained (Eigenvalue = 3.848; variance explained = 64.12%).

Social media usage. This measure is based on one questionnaire item (“How many hours per day do you use social media?”). The variable takes values from zero to 24. *Police scanner* - This measure is based on one questionnaire item (“Have you ever joined any social media police scanner page?”). Respondents who answered “yes” have been coded 1 and those who answered “no” have been coded zero. It should be noted that in order to access a police scanner page, a person needs to have a social media account and also needs to be a registered member of a police scanner group.

Procedural justice. The variable is a composite measure based on the mean scores obtained at eight questions. Respondents have been asked how the police treat residents in the community (i.e., “treat people with dignity and respect”, “treat people politely”, “treat people fairly”, “treat everyone equally”, “respect people’s rights”, “listen to people before making decisions on a case”, “clearly explain the reasons for their actions”) and had to also rank their level of confidence in the police. The index is based on mean scores, with higher values indicating a higher perception of procedural justice. The measure is reliable (alpha = .950) and unidimensional (Eigenvalue = 5.891; variance explained = 73.64%; factor loadings vary from .746 to .899).

Victimization. The variable is dichotomous. Respondents who reported being a victim of a crime during the 12 months preceding the interview have been coded 1. Those who did not report direct victimization have been coded zero.

Gender is a dichotomous variable coded 1 if the respondent was a female and zero otherwise. *Race/ethnicity* is a binary variable as well and is coded zero if the respondent was non-Hispanic White and 1 if the respondent belonged to an ethnic/racial minority group. *Age* is a continuous variable that represents the respondent's age at the time of the interview.

Analytic Strategy

Univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analyses have been conducted. The univariate analysis provides descriptive statistics for the variables used in the multivariate analysis. Second, bivariate correlations among the variables used in the multivariate analyses are presented. Third, a path analysis with the bootstrapping method is conducted using SPSS 28 and PROCESS macro version 4.3. Model 4 of the Process macro was used to conduct a simple mediation analysis (Hayes, 2022, p. 81) and determine whether the effects of the selected predictors were mediated by perceived risk of victimization.

Because the estimated model considers that the effect of the selected predictors on fear of crime is mediated by one's emotions (worries about becoming a victim), the perceived risk of victimization will be regressed first on the selected independent variables. The mediating effect of perceived victimization risk will be then assessed. The estimated statistical model (Figure 1) will present the direct, indirect, and total effects of traditional and social media consumption, attitudes toward the police (i.e., perceived procedural justice), victimization, and measures of social vulnerability on fear of crime.

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), in order to establish mediation four conditions need to be met.

1. The key independent variable should be correlated with the outcome variable.

2. The key independent variable should be correlated with the mediator.
3. The mediator should be a statistically significant predictor of the dependent variable while controlling for the effect of the independent variable.
4. When controlling for the effect of the mediator, the effect of the key variable on the outcome should be zero.

Most analysts agree that Baron and Kenny's (1986) first condition does not need to be satisfied to determine mediation effects (see Hayes, 2009, for a discussion; MacKinnon et al., 2007). Also, the fourth condition should be met only when a full mediation is anticipated (Kenny et al., 1998). The mediation analysis conducted by Process uses bootstrapping, a non-parametric method based on resampling with replacement. Process macro produces bootstrap confidence intervals to statistically test mediation effects. Bootstrapping provides a more powerful test than Sobel's (1982) test for inference about indirect effects because the Sobel test is based on the unrealistic assumption that the sampling distribution of the indirect effect is normal, when in fact it tends to be asymmetrical. Bootstrapping provides a test of indirect effects that does not require the normality assumption to be satisfied (Hayes, 2009). Bootstrapping is also able to overcome issues that may arise when the sample size is relatively small (Preacher & Hayes, 2004; Stine, 1989).

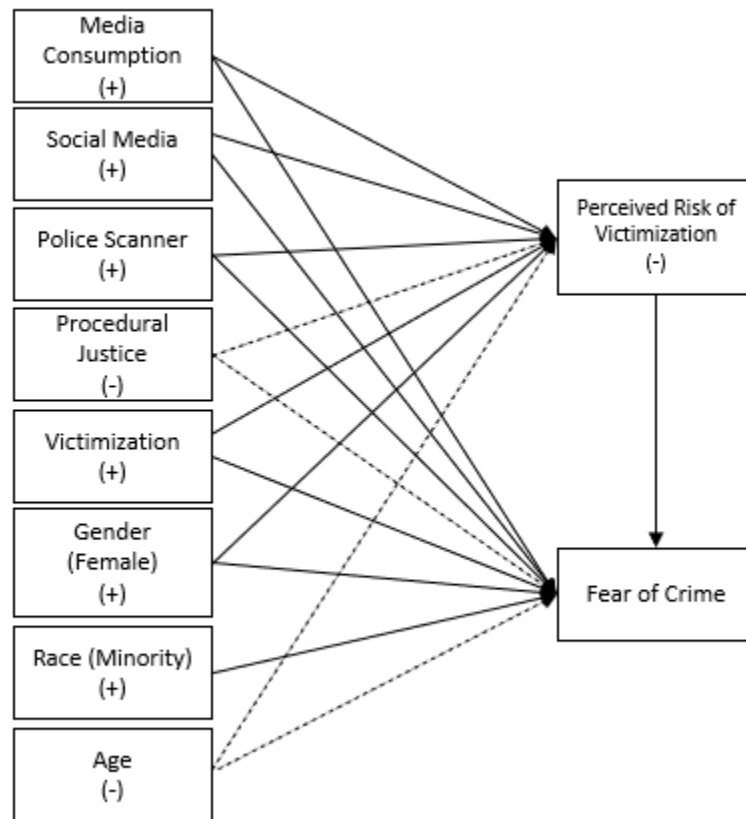
Missing values

The statistical model includes 10 variables. With one exception, the percentage of missing cases varied from 0% to 4.4%. Due to the large number of "no answers" for daily consumption of traditional media (approximately 50%), linear interpolation was used to replace the missing values. Linear interpolation uses the last valid value before the missing

value and the first valid value after the missing value. A missing value will not be replaced when the first or last case in the series has a missing value (IBM, n. d.). Linear interpolation may be used to replace missing values if there is a linear relationship between the predictor and the dependent variable (IBM, n.d.). This assumption was met. There is a linear relationship between fear of crime and media consumption.

Through listwise deletion, only cases with complete information for the variables of interest were included in the analysis. Listwise deletion effectively limits Type I error (i.e., rejecting the null hypothesis when it is true) and may be used when the amount of data discarded is tolerable (Allison, 2002). Bennett (2001) argued that a statistical analysis is likely to be biased when more than 10% of data are missing. In the overall sample, 8.76% (N = 58) of the cases had missing information and have been excluded from the analysis. After the usage of linear interpolation as a missing data replacement procedure and listwise deletion, the final sample size was 604.

Figure 1. Analytical model



Note: The direction of each effect is hypothesized to be the same when perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime are regressed on the selected predictors. Traditional and social media consumption, membership in social media police scanner groups, and victimization experience are expected to be positively related to the mediator and the dependent variable. While females and ethnic/racial minority students are expected to worry more about being victimized and to have a higher level of fear, positive perceptions of police and age are expected to be negatively related to the mediator and the dependent variable, fear of crime.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values) for the variables included in the statistical models. It can be noticed that on average, the study participants are more like to feel safe and not worry about becoming victims of violent crime. On a scale from 1 to 4, the average level of fear of crime (Mean = 2.05; SD = .75) as well as the perceived risk of victimization (Mean = 2.10; SD = .77) are both below the mid-point of the scale interval, which is 2.5. Only 16.1% of students indicated that they felt unsafe and very unsafe walking alone in their neighborhood during the day and evening. In addition, 15.2% of students stated that they worry frequently and very frequently about being a victim of a particular crime.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max	α
Fear of crime	652	2.05	.751	1	4	.888
Risk of victimization	652	2.10	.769	1	4	.809
Media consumption (hours/day)	659	8.45	3.314	0	12	.871
Social media consumption (hours/day)	633	5.36	3.693	0	24	
Police Scanner Member	662	.16	.371	0	1	
Procedural Justice	656	2.95	.708	1	4	.950
Victimization	654	.11	.313	0	1	
Gender (female)	644	.67	.467	0	1	
Race/ethnicity (minority)	654	.30	.459	0	1	
Age	652	25.03	8.234	18	64	

Results also show that 67% of the respondents are females and 30% of the interviewed students belong to racial/ethnic minority groups. Although there is a large variation in the respondents' age, an examination of the frequency distribution shows that 71% of study participants are 25 years old and younger. About 11% of the students reported being a victim of crime in the 12 months preceding the survey. On average, respondents spent about 8.45 (Median = 9.00) hours per day consuming traditional media (i.e., news, crime shows documentaries). Approximately 1.4% of students indicated that they never consumed traditional media. On average, 5 hours per day are spent on social media. In the sample, 53% of sample spent 4 hours or less consuming social media. Furthermore, 2.8% of the sample stated that they do not consume any social media. In the sample, about 16% of students indicated that they subscribed to a police scanner group on a social media platform. The mean score for procedural justice was 2.95, indicating that on average students perceived police officers to be procedurally just.

Bivariate Correlations

Table 2 shows the results of the bivariate correlations for the overall sample. Apart from traditional media consumption and police scanner membership, all the predictors were significantly related to fear of crime and perceived risk of victimization. As hypothesized, perceived risk of victimization is positively correlated with fear of crime ($r = .404, p < .001$), indicating that students who worry about being victimized are less likely to feel safe walking in their neighborhood.

Social media consumption is positively and significantly related to both fear of crime ($r = .187, p < .001$) and perceived risk of victimization ($r = .168, p < .001$). Frequent

users of social media are more likely feel unsafe and worry more about becoming a victim of a crime. As predicted, perceived procedural justice of police is negatively and significantly correlated to both fear of crime ($r = -.325, p < .001$) and perceived risk of victimization ($r = -.245, p < .001$). Students who perceive the police as being procedurally just tend to feel safer and worry less about being victimized.

Table 2. Bivariate Correlations

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Fear of Crime	1									
2. Risk of Victimization	.404***	1								
3. Media Consumption	.076	.015	1							
4. Social Media Consumption	.187***	.168***	.351***	1						
5. Police Scanner Member	-.025	.076	.001	.056	1					
6. Procedural Justice	-.325***	-.245***	-.031	-.060	.064	1				
7. Victimization	.150***	.176***	-.045	-.016	.031	-.089*	1			
8. Female	.375***	.184***	.062	.130***	-.046	-.224***	.064	1		
9. Race (minority)	.129***	.147***	.150***	.155***	-.126	-.176***	-.039	.055	1	
10. Age	-.290***	-.082*	-.143***	-.279***	.034	.065	.028	-.094*	-.004	1

* $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$, 2-tail test.

Results also show that victimization is positively and significantly related to both fear of crime ($r = .150, p < .001$) and perceived risk of victimization ($r = .176, p < .001$). This indicates that students who have been a victim of a crime are more likely to feel unsafe and to worry about becoming a victim again than those who have not been victimized. As hypothesized, female students have higher levels of fear of crime ($r = .375, p < .001$) and perceived risk of victimization ($r = .184, p < .001$) than their male counterparts. Similarly,

students belonging to ethnic/racial minority groups expressed higher levels of fear of crime ($r = .129, p < .001$) and perceived risk of victimization ($r = .147, p < .001$) than white students. Finally, as predicted, age is negatively and significantly related to both fear of crime ($r = -.290, p < .001$) and perceived risk of victimization ($r = -.082, p < .001$). This indicates that younger students have a higher fear of crime and are more likely to worry about becoming a victim. The correlation matrix suggests that multicollinearity will not be an issue in the multivariate analyses (i.e., the highest inter-item correlation equals .404).

Multivariate analyses

This section of the dissertation presents the results of the multivariate analysis. As anticipated by the results included in the correlation matrix, multicollinearity diagnostics indicate that multicollinearity is not an issue. For instance, the highest value for the variance inflation factor (VIF) was 1.272. As previously noted, the analytic model estimates the potential mediating effect of perceived risk of victimization when the effect of the selected predictors on fear of crime is examined. First, perceived risk of victimization is regressed on the selected predictors. Table 3 presents the results of the OLS regression analysis examining the effects of traditional media consumption, social media consumption, police scanner membership, and perception of police procedural justice on perceived risk of victimization when controlling for experienced victimization and demographic characteristics. The unstandardized coefficients, standard error, and standardized coefficients are shown.

With an F-value of 12.546 ($p < .001$), the estimated regression model is found to be statistically significant. Approximately 14.43% of the variation in perceived risk of

victimization is explained by the estimated model. Except age and traditional media consumption, the rest of the selected predictors have significant effects in the anticipated direction.

Table 3. Perceived risk of victimization regressed on the selected predictors

Variable	b	SE	Beta	VIF
Traditional media consumption	-.0154	.0095	-.0063	1.156
Social media consumption	.0255**	.0090	.1215	1.272
Police scanner membership	.2101**	.0792	.1027	1.043
Procedural justice	-.2078***	.0434	-.1902	1.095
Victimization	.3630***	.0952	.1456	1.014
Gender (female)	.1994**	.0656	.1198	1.080
Race (minority)	.2306***	.0670	.1367	1.097
Age	-.0030	.0039	-.0307	1.110
Constant	2.5115 ***	.1985		
F (df1 = 8; df2 = 596)	12.5469***			
R ²	.1443			
N = 604				

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001. b = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE = standard error; Beta = standardized regression coefficient.

With an increase in social media consumption, the perceived risk of victimization increases significantly (b = .0255, p < .01). This result suggests that with each hour of social media consumption, the perceived risk of victimization increases by .03, when controlling for the other variables in the model. Students who are members or subscribers of police scanner groups worry significantly more about becoming crime victims (b = .2101, p < .01) than students who are not members of these social media groups. In addition, with an increase in perceived procedural justice of police, the students' perceived risk of victimization decreases significantly (b = -.2078, p < .001). As hypothesized, students who have been victimized recently worry more about becoming a victim of violence than

students who did not experience recent victimization ($b = .3630, p < .001$). As anticipated, female students ($b = .1994, p < .01$) and minority students ($b = .2306, p < .001$) worry significantly more about becoming victims of violent crimes than male and White students, respectively.

Table 4 shows the direct and indirect effects of the selected predictors on fear of crime. The estimated model explains about 34% of the variation in the dependent variable. As hypothesized and consistent with the theoretical predictions, those who worried more about becoming victims of violent crime were also more likely to feel unsafe when walking alone in their neighborhoods. Contrary to the cultivation theory assertions (Gerbner, 1969), traditional media consumption did not increase significantly one's fear of crime and/or one's perceived risk of victimization, as the prior analysis (see Table 3) indicated. This suggests that increased exposure to local and/or national news, as well as crime shows, did not significantly increase the students' fear of crime and their perceived risk of victimization.

On the other hand, indirectly, social media consumption increases one's fear of crime ($b = .0068; p < .01$). This finding provides evidence that students who consume more social media are more likely to fear crime because they tend to worry more about becoming a victim of violence. It should be noted that the effect of social media consumption on fear of crime is fully mediated by the perceived risk of victimization.

Although membership in police scanner groups does not directly affect one's perceived safety, results show that, indirectly, membership in these social media groups increases fear of crime ($b = .0563, p < .05$). The effect of this variable on fear of crime was also fully mediated by the perceived risk of victimization. Results suggest that subscribers

of the police scanner groups are more likely to have an elevated level of fear of crime because they are worried about becoming a victim of a violent crime.

Table 4. Direct, indirect, and total effects of the selected predictors on fear of crime

Variable	b	SE	Beta	LLCI	ULCI
Perceived Risk of Victimization / PRV (DE)	.2677***	.0346	.2810	.1997	.3357
Media Consumption (DE)	.0011	.0080	.0050	-.0146	.0168
Media Consumption -> PRV (IE)	-.0041	.0027	-.0184	-.0096	.0006
<i>Total effect</i>	-.0030	.0084	-.0134	-.0195	.0135
Social Media Consumption (DE)	.0059	.0076	.0293	-.0090	.0209
Social Media Consumption -> PRV (IE)	.0068**	.0026	.0338	.0019	.0122
<i>Total effect</i>	.0127	.0079	.0631	-.0028	.0283
Police Scanner Member (DE)	-.0365	.0673	-.0185	-.1687	.0957
Police Scanner Member -> PRV (IE)	.0563*	.0246	.0755	.0087	.1053
<i>Total effect</i>	.0198	.0701	.0265	-.1180	.1575
Procedural Justice (DE)	-.1612***	.0373	-.1531	-.2345	-.0878
Procedural Justice -> PRV (IE)	-.0556***	.0146	-.0528	-.0864	-.0293
<i>Total effect</i>	-.2168***	.0384	-.2059	-.2922	-.1414
Victimization (DE)	.1739*	.0814	.0724	.0141	.3337
Victimization -> PRV (IE)	.0972***	.0309	.1304	.0415	.1598
<i>Total effect</i>	.2711**	.0843	.3637	.1056	.4366
Gender/female (DE)	.4308***	.0558	.2686	.3211	.5404
Gender /female -> PRV (IE)	.0534***	.0198	.0716	.0173	.0941
<i>Total effect</i>	.4841***	.0581	.6496	.3701	.5982
Race /minority (DE)	.0541	.0572	.0333	-.0582	.1663
Race /minority -> PRV (IE)	.0617**	.0204	.0828	.0224	.1045
<i>Total effect</i>	.1158	.0593	.1554	-.0007	.2323
Age (DE)	-.0211***	.0033	-.2262	-.0276	-.0147
Age -> PRV (IE)	-.0008	.0010	-.0085	-.0028	.0011
<i>Total effect</i>	-.0219***	.0034	-.2347	-.0287	-.0152
Constant	2.1393***	.1888			
F (df1 = 9; df2 = 594)	34.6596***				
R ²	.3443				

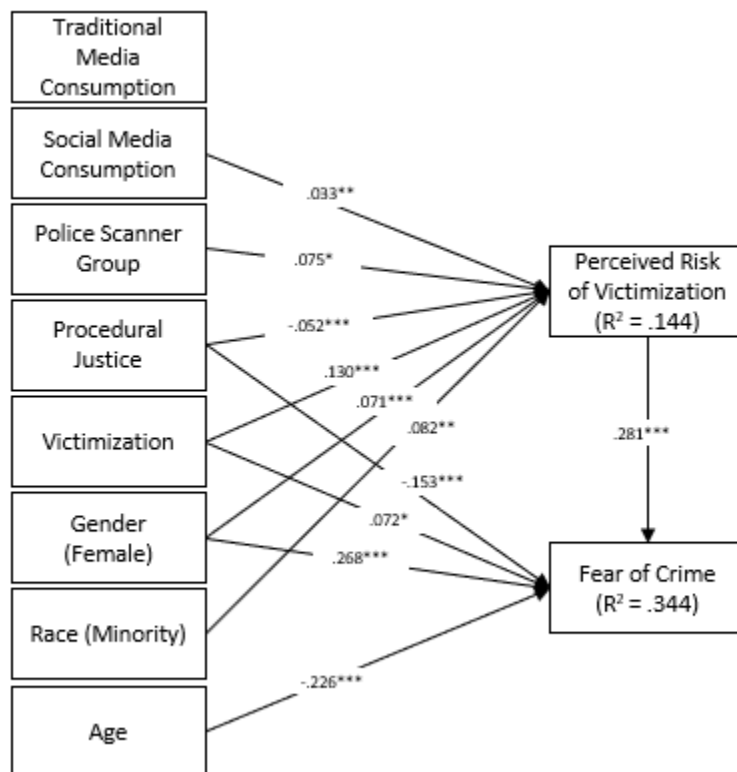
*p< .05; **p< .01; ***p< .001. b = unstandardized regression coefficient; Beta = standardized regression coefficient; SE = standard error of the estimate and boot standard error for the indirect effect; DE = direct effect; IE = indirect effect. The indirect effect is tested using nonparametric bootstrapping. LLCI =lower limit of the confidence interval; ULCI = upper limit of the confidence interval. The number of bootstrap samples for the 95% bias corrected bootstrap confidence intervals (CI) = 1,000.

The vulnerability hypothesis (see Hale, 1996) postulates that individuals belonging to certain social groups would be more fearful because they perceive themselves as being more vulnerable to victimization. Consistent with the vulnerability hypothesis, results indicate that female students were more likely to feel unsafe than their male counterparts ($b=.4308$, $p<.001$). Analyzing the indirect effects, results reveal that perceived risk of victimization partially mediates the relationship between gender and fear of crime ($b=.0534$, $p<.01$). In sum, directly and indirectly gender significantly affects variations in fear of crime. Even though race/ethnicity does not appear to directly influence variations in fear of crime, it does so indirectly. The effect of race/ethnicity on fear of crime is fully mediated by one's perceived risk of victimization ($b=.0617$, $p<.001$). While students belonging to ethnic/racial minority groups do not report significantly higher levels of perceived unsafety, they worry more about being victimized than White students do.

Based on prior research that examined the correlates of fear of crime among college students, the study hypothesized that fear of crime would decrease with age. Findings support this hypothesis. Although older students do not worry about being victimized significantly less than younger students do, older students tend to feel much safer when walking alone in their neighborhoods than their younger peers do ($b= -.0211$, $p<.001$). The victimization perspective postulates that direct and indirect victimization may elevate an individual's fear of crime. Results show that victimization experience positively predicts fear of crime ($b=.1739$, $p<.05$). Results reveal that perceived risk of victimization partially mediates the relationship between victimization experience and fear of crime ($b=.0972$, $p<.01$). In sum, directly and indirectly via perceived risk of victimization, victimization experience significantly increases one's feelings of unsafety.

According to the ecological perspective, the people’s perceptions of their social environment would influence their feelings of safety. Specifically, this study explored the potential impact of public perceptions of the police on fear of crime. As anticipated, respondents who had higher levels of trust in the police and perceived the institution as being fair and just, were less likely to worry about being victimized and to feel unsafe. In summary, directly ($b = -.1612, p < .001$) and indirectly via perceived risk of victimization ($b = -.0556, p < .001$) perceived procedural justice of police significantly decreased one’s fear of crime. Figure 2 presents the path diagram that summarizes the results of the multivariate analysis. Only significant paths are included.

Figure 2. The estimated path model predicting the college students’ fear of crime



Note: Included are the standardized regression coefficients for variables significantly related to perceived risk of victimization and the standardized path coefficients for the significant direct effects on fear of crime.
 * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Informed by Ferraro's (1995) fear of crime model and Gerbner's (1969) cultivation theory, the dissertation sought to identify factors predicting perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime. Using a sample of college students, the dissertation had five main objectives: 1) Examining whether perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime are affected by the same factors; 2) Explore the potential impact of traditional media consumption on one's perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime; 3) Explore the potential impact of social media; 4) Explore whether one's involvement or membership in social media police scanner groups impacts one's perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime, 5) Determine if public perception of police procedural justice significantly influences perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime.

Following prior research that questioned the common operationalization of the fear of crime concept as a unidimensional construct (Chadee, et al., 2019; Chiricos, et al., 1997; Ferraro, 1995; LaGrange, et al., 1992; Jackson, 2009; Rader, 2004; Rountree & Land, 1996; Smith & Torstensson, 1997) this study regarded fear of crime as a bidimensional indicator, which includes an emotional or an affective side (worrying about being victimized) and a cognitive side, which allows individuals to make judgments and assess the safety of the environments they live in. In accordance with this view, it has been hypothesized that one's emotions regarding the risk of violent victimization would influence a person's feelings of

safety. And consistent with prior research (Hinkle, 2015; Krulichova, 2019; LaGrange & Ferraro, 1989; Schafer et al., 2006; Tseloni & Zarafonitou, 2008), results showed that persons who worry more about being victimized also tend to feel less safe when walking alone in their neighborhoods.

The study provided a partial empirical test of Gerbner's (1969) cultivation theory, which posits that increased exposure to media and news about violence and crime alters individuals' perceptions of reality making them perceive the world as a dangerous and frightening place. In accordance with the theoretical tenets, it was hypothesized that traditional media consumption would increase one's perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime. Yet, different from prior research that found empirical support for the cultivation theory (Callanan, 2012; Callanan & Rosenberg, 2015; Chiricos et al., 2000; Dolliver, et al., 2018; Dowler, 2003; Eschholz, et al., 2003; Intravia et al., 2017; Shah et al., 2020), consumption of traditional media did not appear to significantly influence one's perceived risk of victimization and/or perceived safety. This finding is congruent with prior research that also documented the nonsignificant effect of media consumption on fear of crime (Kort-Butler & Hartshorn, 2011; Lane & Meeker, 2003; O'Keefe & Reid-Nash 1987; Shi, 2018). However, it should be noted that while Gerbner and his colleagues (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Gerbner et al., 1978a, 1978b) focused on the impact the television or "violence on the screen" might have on one's views of reality, the present study did not refer solely to exposure to TV news about crime or TV crime shows. The study used a more inclusive measure to assess one's exposure to traditional media,³ which might have

³ Respondents were asked how many hours per day they consume "national televised news," "internet news feed", "locally televised news", "crime drama", and "crime documentaries". The questions used to create the indicator (traditional media consumption) could not differentiate between viewers who focus on crime news

affected the results. Moreover, the present study was based on a convenience sample of college students and was not representative of the adult population in the United States. For instance, prior research that documented a positive relationship between media consumption and fear of crime was conducted on nationally representative samples (e.g., Callanan 2012; Callanan & Rosenberg, 2015; Chiricos et al., 2000; Dolliver, et al., 2018; Dowler, 2003; Eschholz, et al., 2003).

Even though exposure to traditional media did not appear to influence variations in fear of crime, social media consumption did. The hypothesis stating that higher usage of social media will increase one's perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime was found to be true. Results showed that social media consumption had a positive significant relationship with perceived risk of victimization. In addition, it was found that perceived risk of victimization fully mediated the relationship between social media and fear of crime. Results indicate that students who have increased exposure to social media worry more about becoming a victim of violent crime, which in turn makes them feel less safe when walking alone in their neighborhoods. This finding is consistent with prior research (Intravia et al., 2017; Näsi et al., 2021) that also documented a positive relationship between social media consumption and fear of crime.

Moreover, this study showed that respondents who acknowledged membership in social media police scanner groups (16% of the sample) also reported elevated levels of fear of victimization. To some extent, this finding is consistent with the cultivation theory predictions. As previously noted, in response to criticisms of the earlier version of the theory, Gerbner and his colleagues further developed the theory and included new concepts,

and those who do not. Additionally, it is not known how much time viewers dedicated to news about crime or how much time they spent watching fictional and/or reality shows about violence and crime.

such as “resonance” and “mainstreaming” to better explain the cultivation effect of media consumption (Gerbner et al., 1980; Gerbner et al., 1981). According to the cultivation theory, mainstreaming (i.e., heavy consumption of TV crime and violence) would impact differently the viewers’ fear of crime. In addition, several studies found that compared to light viewers, heavy consumers of crime news had indeed higher levels of fear (Callanan & Rosenberger, 2015; Chiricos et al., 1997; Chiricos et al., 2000; Esccholz, et al., 2003; Lytle et al., 2020; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Morgan, et al., 2017; Rosenberger, 2015; Weaver & Wakshlag, 1986).). Although the survey used in this study did not explicitly ask respondents why they joined a police scanner social media group, it can be argued that persons who seek membership in these groups have a lot in common with the heavy consumers of crime news in general. Even though obtaining real-live crime reports and/or dispatch information has occurred since the 1930s, the formation of police scanner groups is a relatively new phenomenon. Using social media platforms such as Facebook or Twitter, various communities have created private groups to provide real-time crime reports to residents in various communities. These groups receive real-crime data from individuals who regularly or frequently listen to police dispatch. The information distributed refers to traffic and/or crime incidents, location of the incidents, and police actions (e.g., when police are dispatched and when they leave the location). Only group members and followers of these groups have access to the posts. Given the group members’ high interest in crime news, it is not surprising that respondents interested in receiving updated information about violence and crime in their communities also worried more about becoming victims of violence than non-members and those not aware of the existence of the police scanner social media groups. Even if the analysis did not identify a direct

relationship between membership in police scanner groups and fear of crime, the indirect effect on perceived safety via perceived risk of victimization was significant and positive. In summary, although future research should verify the stability of this finding, results suggest that students who access information provided by police scanner groups have higher levels of fear of victimization than their peers who did not subscribe to these social media groups.

In addition to the empirical test of the cultivation theory, the dissertation was informed by the main theoretical explanations (vulnerability hypothesis, victimization perspective, and ecological perspective) of fear of crime identified by Hale (1996). In accordance with the vulnerability hypothesis, females, younger students, and ethnic/racial minority students were expected to report higher levels of fear of crime and victimization risks. The findings included in the dissertation showed empirical support for the vulnerability hypothesis. Consistent with prior research based on community samples (Collins, 2016; Dobbs et al., 2009; Franklin & Franklin, 2009; Lee & Hilinkski-Rosick, 2012; León et al., 2020; Pryce et al., 2018) and studies based on samples with college students (Barberet et al., 2003; Fox et al., 2009; Jennings et al., 2007; Pryce et al., 2018; Tandogan & Topcu, 2018) results showed that compared to their male counterparts, female students worried significantly more about becoming crime victims. Directly and indirectly via perceived risk of victimization, female students are more likely to feel unsafe in their communities when walking alone.

As other studies that surveyed college students also found (Fisher & Cullen, 2000; Gover, et al., 2008; Jennings et al., 2007; Lee & Hilinksi-Rosick, 2012; Leon et al., 2020; Pryce et al., 2018), results showed that fear of crime decreases with age. Although age does

do not appear to differentiate students who worry about being violently victimized from those who do not share such concerns, results suggest that younger students are more likely to feel unsafe in their neighborhoods than their older counterparts. Similarly, students belonging to ethnic/racial minority groups tend to express higher levels of fear of crime than White students, as other studies also found (Chiricos, et al., 1997; Chiricos, et al., 2000; Lee & Hilinski, 2012; Shi, 2018; Taylor, et al., 2009). Specifically, the results of this study show that ethnic/racial minorities worry much more about being victimized than their White peers. The perceived risk of victimization fully mediated the relationship between race/ethnicity and fear of crime.

Even though victims of crime do not always report higher levels of fear of crime than non-victims (e.g., Lee & Ulmer, 2000; Wu & Wen, 2014), the results of this analysis indicate that college students who experienced direct victimization were more fearful, as the victimization perspective would predict (see Hale, 1996). Directly and indirectly, victimization was significantly and positively associated with fear of crime. Students who have been victimized in the past worried more about being revictimized and were less likely to feel safe when walking alone in their neighborhoods. Results are congruent with prior research findings (Callanan, 2012; Callanan & Rosenberger, 2015; Kort-Butler & Hartshorn, 2011; Näsi et al., 2021; Smith & Hill, 1999; Skogan, 1987; Weaver & Wakshlag, 1986).

The ecological perspective focuses on various contextual factors that might impact the individuals' fear of crime and perceived risk of victimization. Among these factors several studies examined the relationship between public perceptions of police and fear of crime. Prior research shows that when citizens trust the police and are satisfied with their

performance, they tend to worry less about crime, feel safer, and express lower levels of fear of crime (Alda et al., 2017; Bolger & Bolger, 2019; Box et al., 1998; Cordner, 1986; Dukes & Hughes 2004; Hauser & Kleck, 2016; Kelling 1977; Kim et al., 2021; Lai & Zhao 2010; Lytle & Randa, 2015; Lytle et al., 2020; Payne & Gainey, 2007; Roh et al., 2013; Salmi et al., 2004; Sindall et al, 2012; Wu & Sun, 2009). Following this line of research, it has been hypothesized that when the police are perceived as fair and just, the public will report lower levels of perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime. As anticipated and consistent with the limited research that examined the impact of perceived procedural justice of police on fear of crime (Greenwood et al., 2022; Renauer 2007), findings show that students who trust the police and see law enforcement officers as respectful, fair, and just agents of formal social control, worry less about being victimized and also tend to feel safer in their communities. In sum, directly and indirectly, perceived procedural justice of police significantly reduced the respondents' fear of crime.

Study limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The study has several limitations that future research on fear of crime should overcome. Although the study is based on recent primary data, results are not generalizable to the population of adults in the United States. Even though the study contributes to the limited literature on college students' fear of crime (see Hart et al., 2022), findings may not apply to all college students in the country. The study used survey data collected from a convenience sample of students enrolled at five public universities located in five different states (Indiana, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Utah) that are not representative of all the regions in the country. Moreover, more than half of the respondents

were criminal justice majors (53%) or students enrolled in criminal justice courses. Thus, findings might not apply to students in other disciplines, to students attending private universities, or to international students attending colleges and universities in the US. A recent study, for instance, found that international students were much more fearful of being victimized in the United States than they were in their home countries (Shi, 2018). Although international students enrolled in US institutions of higher education represent only 4.6% of the student population, there are currently over one million international students in the country (Open Doors, 2022). Future research on fear of crime among college students should try to determine if inter-group differences exist when American and international students are compared in terms of fear of crime and perceived risk of victimization.

When operationalizing the mediator and the dependent variable the author tried to capture both the emotional and the cognitive dimensions of fear of crime. Yet, the index used to measure fear of crime relies only on two variables that asked respondents to assess their perceived safety. Even if the survey questions used to form the fear of crime indicator are frequently used in this format in national polls, some critics may argue that the measure's ability to capture one's assessment of threat is limited. Nonetheless, social scientists should make sustained efforts to develop and validate a measure of fear of crime that could be universally used.

Moreover, even if the index that measured traditional media consumption was unidimensional and had good internal consistency, the construct did not allow the researcher to determine the amount of exposure to crime news one had. This might explain why the effects of this predictor on perceived risk of victimization and fear of crime were

not significant. Future research may overcome this limitation by also asking respondents how much time they spend daily watching crime news or reading online about crime in general and violent crime in particular. Furthermore, when exploring variations in fear of crime, future research should also control for one's general perception of crime (nationally and locally) and for contextual factors, such as neighborhood characteristics and environmental symbols a person may associate with crime (Ferraro, 1995; Jackson, 2006).

Additionally, this is a cross-sectional study and causal inferences cannot be made. For instance, it is not known if social media consumption of crime news or public attitudes toward the police are actually causing fear or a sense of safety. The usage of experimental or quasi-experimental designs might help researchers to clearly determine if exposure to a particular stimulus (e.g., access to police scanner feeds) would alter significantly one's sense of safety.

The data collected relies extensively on students' retrospective reports regarding traditional and social media usage, which may be biased. Furthermore, most of the data were collected during the Covid-19 pandemic, which restricted direct human interaction, affected people's daily routines, and might have affected public perceptions of safety and victimization risks. Longitudinal data would be beneficial to examine overtime changes in fear of crime, as well as assessing the effects of several predictors of fear of crime, such as traditional and social media usage.

Study Implications

Despite its limitations, the study has several implications for theory, research, and practice. Several years ago, Jonathan Jackson (2006) made a call for more interdisciplinary research on public perceptions of crime and the risk of crime, which would

contribute to the development of *risk perception theory*. The author also noted that researchers should try to determine if emotion and cognition as they relate to fear of crime interact or operate independently to form an individual's appraisal of threat (Jackson, 2006). In response, the study's results show that the two dimensions of fear of crime are moderately related ($r = .40$; $p < .001$). While the two variables share common predictors (e.g., gender, victimization experience, public perceptions of police), a specific set of factors appeared to influence solely one's emotions but had no apparent direct impact on a person's assessment of threat. In this analysis, people who worried more about crime were women, victims of crime, and persons with low trust in the police, but also social media consumers and persons with a higher interest in criminal developments and police responses to crime. By showing that fear of crime is a complex concept that includes two inter-related facets and by identifying the factors that affect each component of the fear of crime, this study made a small contribution to the development of the risk perception theory.

Additionally, this dissertation advances research by expanding the list of contextual factors that may impact fear of crime. As previously noted, only a limited number of studies explored the social media impact on people's feelings of safety and security, and to the author's knowledge, no study examined yet the impact on fear of crime of membership in social media police scanner groups. In this sense, the current study opened new avenues for research that intends to empirically test the cultivation theory. In an era dominated by the internet, future research should explore more often the impact of alternative sources of information people access when they want to know more about crime and when they evaluate potential threats to their safety. Future studies should continue to explore the

impact of social media consumption on fear of crime. Due to its rise in popularity, social media may become the main media source of information for individuals of all ages. In 2005, 5% of Americans used at least one social media platform, in 2021, 72% of Americans used social media to connect with one another, engage with news content, share information, and/or entertain themselves. Among young adults (18-29 years old), the percentage of social media users (84%) is even higher (Pew Research Center, 2021). Future research should continue to explore the wide array of social media usages that may be related to crime and fear of crime and should expand the operationalization of “mainstreaming” (Gerbner et al., 1978) by identifying other social media groups that in addition to police scanner groups have an elevated interest in crime news.

This dissertation also informs evidence-based programming and interventions aimed at reducing fear of crime. Although this study was not able to determine if actual crime rates and/or perceptions of crime influence fear of crime, the study found that college students who were victims of crime were more concerned about their own safety and feared violent victimization more often than non-victims did. This indicates that policies meant to reduce crime on college campuses and in cities that host colleges and universities should be implemented more rigorously. Moreover, policy makers and university administrators should focus more effectively not only on crime control, but also on comprehensive crime prevention strategies.

Following a social ecological model, researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed a comprehensive campus-based prevention strategy that addresses violence in general and sexual violence in particular. At the individual level, CDC recommends the implementation of multi-session interventions

targeting incoming students. These evidence-based strategies should encourage bystander intervention, the creation of healthy relationship skills, and the diffusion of positive norms about gender, sexuality, and violence. The proposed program should include coach-implemented strategies for male athletes, as well as dorm-based interventions meant to reinforce positive norms and skills related to bystander behavior and healthy sexuality. The mapping and monitoring of unsafe campus hot spots and the implementation of measures meant to reduce the students' excessive alcohol use should be part of the program as well (Dill et al., 2016). Although several institutions of higher education in the US have recently implemented variants of the CDC program meant to create a protective environment for students, systematic evaluations of the effectiveness of these violence prevention programs are lacking.

Results also showed that the study participants who expressed positive attitudes toward the police were more likely to feel safe in their communities and were less likely to worry about becoming violent crime victims. This indicates that law enforcement can play an important role in reducing the citizens' fear of crime, as other studies have also found (Skogan, 2009; Lytle & Randa, 2015; Alda et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2021). One of the strategies that showed promising results is community-oriented policing. Community-oriented policing (COP) emphasizes community involvement in crime prevention efforts and the police departments' focus on community-oriented goals (Gill et al., 2014). While there is limited empirical evidence showing that community-oriented policing effectively reduces crime, several studies contended that the program contributed to positive changes in the public attitudes toward the police. For instance, the authors of a systematic review and meta-analysis based on 25 studies that assessed the impact of community-oriented

policing interventions concluded that most of these studies found that COP increased the public satisfaction with the police and police legitimacy. Out of 18 studies that examined the effect of COP on fear of crime, eight found the program to be effective (Gill et al., 2014). Another review of 50 studies concluded that increased police presence reduced fear of crime in 62% of the studies included in the review. Additionally, programs that combined integrated proactive measures with community-oriented strategies had an even higher likelihood of reducing fear (Zhao et al., 2002, cited in Cordner, 2010).

Noting that “one-size-fits-all solutions are rarely effective” Cordner (2010, p. 45) recommended *personalized policing* as a fear-of-crime reduction strategy. The author argued that police efforts aimed at reducing fear of crime would be more successful when they are targeted. In this respect, police agencies should adopt a problem-oriented approach to reduce the citizens’ fear of crime. The strategy should include four elements: *scanning* (determine if fear of crime is a problem in a community; identify neighborhoods where it is more acute; identify the characteristics of the people that report higher levels of fear); *analysis* (identify the potential causes of fear at the community level; conduct environmental visual audits to identify locations and conditions that make people feel unsafe; overtime changes in fear); *responses* (tailored and targeted to the jurisdiction’s specific problems); and, *assessment* (outcome evaluation of the measures taken to reduce fear of crime). Although Cordner’s recommendations are valid, implementing them could be a costly endeavor that smaller police departments might not be able to undertake. Furthermore, not all police departments might view fear of crime as a serious social problem that needs to be solved. Nonetheless, the author also made a recommendation that can and should be implemented. According to Cordner (2010), police agencies should

conduct targeted communication with the public in support of fear reduction, by “publicizing the facts” (p. 57).

This dissertation found that frequent social media users as well as members of social media police scanner groups tend to worry more about being victimized, probably, because they are exposed more to crime events than non-users. Yet, even if police scanners provide real-time information, that information is always unverified. Police should inform the users that anyone tuning into a live scanner feed should be aware that not everything they hear on the scanner is accurate. In its 2015 report, the *President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing*, specifically cited technology and social media as tools that law enforcement agencies can leverage to build community engagement and trust. The report also stated that the information shared by the police on social media must be current and accurate (Finklea, 2022). Although the police cannot directly influence the people’s interpretation of crime realities, when law enforcement agencies clearly and timely inform residents of the *facts* surrounding local criminal activities that receive extensive coverage in the news and/or on social media platforms, “they may be able to head off rumors, misinformation, and subsequent exaggerated fears in the community” (Cordner, 2010, p. 57).

Conclusion

Fear of crime has been and probably will continue to be a popular research topic among criminologists and other social scientists. Fear of crime is not a constant. It may fluctuate and the consequences of fear may change as well (Cordner, 2010). That is why social scientists should continue to study this social phenomenon, which can be seen as a

reflection of social cohesion at the community level and as a social indicator of the general well-being of a population group at a point in time.

The dissertation sought to advance the scholarship on fear of crime by addressing several gaps in the literature. The present study contributed to the contemporary knowledge about fear of crime in a segment of the young adult population, whose feelings of safety are not often examined. The dissertation also contributed to theory and research by expanding the list of predictors that may be used to account for variations in fear of crime. The study also demonstrated that the operationalization of the fear of crime concept can influence results. Until the measurement of fear of crime will be standardized and researchers will reach a consensus regarding the definition of fear of crime, studies should continue to employ a measure that would capture both the emotional and the cognitive aspects of fear of crime as this study attempted to do.

For the most part, results showed that the characteristics of American college students who fear victimization resemble the characteristics of those in the general population who also tend to express concerns about crime and have low levels of perceived safety. As research based on community samples shows, students who worry more about crime and/or tend to feel unsafe are more likely to be former victims of crime and female, younger, and ethnic/racial minority students.

In response to Chadee and Ferguson's (2019) recent call, this study examined the cultivation effects of both traditional and social media usage. Although, in this sample, consumption of traditional media did not appear to influence variations in fear of crime, results showed that increased exposure to social media content may have negative effects on a person's general well-being. Even though the findings of this study may not generalize

to middle-age or older individuals, results indicate that young adults who are involved in social media groups, that have a high interest in crime news, and actively follow police responses to crime in their communities also tend to worry more about their own safety and have higher levels of fear. Yet the analysis presented here indicates that police actions may influence the public perceptions of reality as they relate to crime and may appease one's anxieties, especially when law enforcement agents are perceived as being trustworthy, professional, and fair and just decision makers.

Even if the college students included in this analysis did not show elevated levels of fear and most of the respondents indicated they never or seldomly worried about being victimized, campus-based crime prevention efforts should continue, and anti-violence effective strategies should be identified and disseminated. Moreover, police departments should focus on building positive relationships with the communities they serve. This would not only increase citizen satisfaction and institutional trust but would also encourage the public to obey the law and cooperate with the police to solve crimes. As Gill et al. (2014) noted, "the adoption of a community-oriented philosophy by police departments, combined with highly-focused, place- and problem-specific crime prevention strategies, could be the precursor to creating long-term improvements and healthy communities" (p. 423).

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APPENDIX A



Human Subjects Protection Program Office
 MedCenter One – Suite 200
 501 E. Broadway
 Louisville, KY 40202-1798

DATE: April 08, 2021
TO: Kristin M Swartz, Ph.D.
FROM: The University of Louisville Institutional Review Board
IRB NUMBER: 21.0269
STUDY TITLE: Media impact on student perceptions
REFERENCE #: 723579
IRB STAFF CONTACT: Jackie Powell, CIP 852-4101 jspowe01@louisville.edu

This study was reviewed and approved with changes on 04/07/2021 by the Chair of the Institutional Review Board. The resubmitted changes were approved administratively on 04/08/2021. This study was approved through Expedited Review Procedure, according to 45 CFR 46.110(b), since this study falls under Category 7: Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies

This study now has final IRB approval from 04/08/2021 through 04/07/2024.

This study was also approved through 45 CFR 46.116 (C), which means that an IRB may waive the requirement for the investigator to obtain a signed informed consent form for some or all subjects.

The following items have been approved:

Submission Components			
Form Name	Version	Outcome	
Submit for Initial Review	Version 1.0	Approved as Submitted	
Review Response Submission Form	Version 2.0	Approved as Submitted	
Review Response Submission Form	Version 1.0	Approved as Submitted	
IRB Study Application	Version 1.2	Approved as Submitted	
Study Document			
Title	Version #	Version Date	Outcome
Recruitment email	Version 1.0	04/08/2021	Approved
Research Protocol	Version 1.0	03/29/2021	Approved
Survey Instrument	Version 1.0	03/16/2021	Approved
Unsigned consent document	Version 1.0	03/29/2021	Approved

IRB policy requires that investigators use the IRB “stamped” approved version of informed consents,

assents, and other materials given to research participants. For instructions on locating the IRB stamped documents in iRIS visit: <https://louisville.edu/research/humansubjects/iRISSubmissionManual.pdf>

Your study does not require continuing review per federal regulations. Your study has been set with a three-year expiration date following UofL local policy. If your study is still ongoing at that time, you will receive automated reminders to submit a continuing review form prior to the expiration date. If you complete your study prior to the expiration date, please submit a study closure amendment.

All other IRB requirements are still applicable. You are still required to submit amendments, personnel changes, deviations, etc... to the IRB for review. Please submit a closure amendment to close out your study with the IRB if it ends prior to the three year expiration date.

Human Subjects & HIPAA Research training are required for all study personnel. It is the responsibility of the investigator to ensure that all study personnel maintain current Human Subjects & HIPAA Research training while the study is ongoing.

Site Approval

Permission from the institution or organization where this research will be conducted **must** be obtained before the research can begin. For example, site approval is required for research conducted in UofL Hospital/UofL Health, Norton Healthcare, and Jefferson County Public Schools, etc...

Privacy & Encryption Statement

The University of Louisville's Privacy and Encryption Policy requires identifiable medical and health records; credit card, bank account and other personal financial information; social security numbers; proprietary research data; and dates of birth (when combined with name, address and/or phone numbers) to be encrypted. For additional information: <http://louisville.edu/security/policies>.

Implementation of Changes to Previously Approved Research

Prior to the implementation of any changes in the approved research, the investigator must submit modifications to the IRB and await approval before implementing the changes, unless the change is being made to ensure the safety and welfare of the subjects enrolled in the research. If such occurs, a Protocol Deviation/Violation should be submitted within five days of the occurrence indicating what safety measures were taken, along with an amendment to revise the protocol.

Unanticipated Problems Involving Risks to Subjects or Others (UPIRTSOs)

A UPIRTSO is any incident, experience, or outcome, which has been associated with an unexpected event(s), related or possibly related to participation in the research, and suggests that the research places subjects or others at a greater risk of harm than was previously known or suspected. The investigator is responsible for reporting UPIRTSOs to the IRB within 5 working days. Use the UPIRTSO form located within the iRIS system. Event reporting requirements can be found at: <http://louisville.edu/research/humansubjects/lifecycle/event-reporting>.

Payments to Subjects

Full Accreditation since June 2005 by the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs, Inc.



In compliance with University policies and Internal Revenue Service code, payments to research subjects from University of Louisville funds, must be reported to the University Controller's Office. For additional information, please call 852-8237 or email control@louisville.edu. For additional information: <http://louisville.edu/research/humansubjects/policies/PayingHumanSubjectsPolicy201412.pdf>

The committee will be advised of this action at a regularly scheduled meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact: Jackie Powell 852-4101 jspowe01@louisville.edu

Peter M. Quesada, Ph.D., Chair
Social/Behavioral/Educational Institutional Review Board
PMQ/jsp

We value your feedback; let us know how we are doing: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCLHXRP>

APPENDIX B:

Media and Student's Perception Survey

Police Perception

1. Please answer the following questions on how the police treat you in your community:				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Treat people with dignity and respect				
Treat people politely				
Treat people fairly				
Treat everyone equally				
Respect people's rights				
Takes time to listen to people before making decisions on a case				
Clearly explain the reasons for their actions				
You should support the decisions made by police officers even when you disagree with them				
You should do what the police tell you even if you do not understand				
You should do what the police tell you to do even if you do not like how they treat you				

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have great respect for the police				
I have confidence in the police				
Police do their job well				
I am satisfied with services provided by police				
I am satisfied with police appearance in the street				

Police are concerned about respecting a citizens' individual rights				
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Police performance:				
For the following questions, answer whether you agree or disagree with the following objectives of the police.				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Police reduce crime				
Police reduce victimization				
Police reduce fear of victimization				
Police interact with the community				
Police solve community problems				
Police maintain order				
Police protect public				
Police respond in a timely manner				

Contact with the police

2. Have you ever had any face-to-face contact with the police
 - a. No
 - b. Yes
3. In the past 12 months, how many personal contacts have you had with your local police department?
 - a. Number:
4. The quality of the MOST RECENT contact was: Choose one
 - a. Had no contact
 - b. Poor
 - c. Fair
 - d. Good
 - e. Excellent
5. During the recent contact

- a. Police shouted at me
 - i. No
 - ii. Yes
 - b. Police cursed at me
 - i. No
 - ii. Yes
 - c. Police threatened to use force against me
 - i. No
 - ii. Yes
 - d. I was physically injured by the police
 - i. No
 - ii. Yes
6. In the past year, have you been treated in an unjustly or discriminatory manner by the police?
- a. No
 - b. Yes
7. In the past year, has any of your family members or friends been treated in an unjustly or discriminatory manner by the police?
- a. No
 - b. Yes

Media consumption

8. Do you want to join a social media page that displays crimes in real-time?
- a. No
 - b. Yes
9. Have you ever joined any social media police scanner page? A police scanner page is a page that updates real-time crime dispatch calls to the police.
- a. **No (skip to question 19).**
 - b. Yes
 - c. If yes, indicate from which social media accounts (Select all that apply)
 - 1. Facebook
 - 2. Instagram
 - 3. Twitter
 - 4. Youtube
 - 5. Snapchat
 - 6. Tiktok
 - 7. Etc: name:
10. If you joined a police scanner page from multiple social media accounts, which is the **MAIN** social media account that you use? (Choose one)
- a. Facebook
 - b. Instagram
 - c. Twitter
 - d. Youtube
 - e. Snapchat
 - f. Tiktok
 - g. Etc (name):
11. How frequently do you see updates from the police scanner page?
- a. Not very frequently

- b. Not frequently
 - c. Frequently
 - d. Very frequently
12. How many times in a day do you check the police scanner page?
- a. Number:
13. Is the scanner page updated in real-time?
- a. No
 - b. Yes
14. What types of crimes have you seen in the scanner page? (can choose or or more)
- a. Violent
 - b. Property
 - c. Sexual
 - d. Etc
15. Have you liked, commented or shared a post from the scanner page, onto your own social media account?
- a. No
 - b. Yes
16. Are the posts, feeds, etc from the scanner page useful for you?
- a. Not useful
 - b. Slightly useful
 - c. Moderately useful
 - d. Very useful
17. Approximately how often do you read feeds posted from the scanner page (daily basis)?
- a. Number:
18. How many crimes do you see posted, on average, on a daily basis?
- a. Number:
19. Have you ever joined or followed an anti-police page on social media?
- a. No
 - b. Yes
 - c. If yes, indicate from which social media accounts (one or more)
 - i. Facebook
 - ii. Instagram
 - iii. Twitter
 - iv. Youtube
 - v. Snapchat
 - vi. Tiktok
 - vii. Etc: name
20. The quality of the MOST RECENT contact was: Choose one
- a. Had no contact
 - b. Poor
 - c. Fair
 - d. Good
 - e. Excellent

In a typical week, on how many days do you do each of the following

21. Look at news stories involving police misconduct (shootings, excessive force, brutality) toward racial minorities on Internet news websites (e.g. yahoo, cnn, fox, nytimes)
- a. Number

22. Look at news stories involving POLICE misconduct (eg. Shootings, excessive force, brutality) toward racial minorities on social media websites (facebook, twitter, Instagram)
 - a. Number
23. In a typical week, on how many days do you do each of the following
 - a. Watching television
 - i. Number
 - b. Watch local tv news
 - i. Number
 - c. Watch national tv news
 - i. Number
 - d. Use internet
 - i. Number
 - e. Watch crime show programs
 - i. Number
24. How many hours per day do you consume for the following media (hours per day)
 - a. Nationally televised news
 - i. Hour
 - b. National newspaper
 - i. Hour
 - c. Internet news feed
 - i. Hour
 - d. Locally televised NP
 - i. Hour
 - e. Crime drama
 - i. Hour
 - f. Crime doc
 - i. Hour
 - g. Social media
 - i. Hour
25. Have you ever attended protests, rallies, gatherings, etc. following incidents of police-related violence?
 - a. No
 - b. Yes

Police news engagement

26. How often do you participate in the discussion of police related violence following incidents of police related violence
 - a. Never
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Often
27. How often did you read, share or post on social media following incidents of police-related violence
 - a. Never
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Often

28. How frequently do you worry about each of the following situations?				
	Very frequently	Somewhat frequently	Seldom	Never
Being murdered				
Being robbed on a street with a gun				
Being beaten up because of race/ethnicity				
Homes being broken into and things being stolen				
Domestic/intimate partner violence				
Dogs running at-large				
Drunk drivers on the road				
People drinking to excess in public				
Groups of teenagers or others hanging out and harassing people				
Youth gangs are present				
People using drugs				
Vandalism				
Rape/sex crimes				
Child abuse				
Noise				
Traffic problems				
Garbage/litter				

29. How safe would you feel walking alone during the day in your neighborhood?

- a. Very unsafe
- b. Unsafe
- c. Safe
- d. Very safe

30. How safe would you feel walking outside and alone in your neighborhood at night?

- a. Very unsafe
- b. Unsafe
- c. Safe
- d. Very safe

31. In the past 12 months (1 year), have you been a victim of a crime?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Demographics

32. What is your age?
33. Indicate your race/ethnicity
 - a. White
 - b. Black
 - c. Hispanic/Latino
 - d. Asian
 - e. Etc.
34. Gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
 - c. Other
35. Level of education
 - a. College:
 - i. Freshman
 - ii. Sophomore
 - iii. Junior
 - iv. Senior
 - v. Graduate student
36. Political orientation
 - a. Liberal
 - b. Conservative
 - c. Neither
37. Are you majoring in Criminal Justice or Criminology?
 - a. No
 - b. Yes

CURRICULUM VITAE

David Kim
School of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indiana University East
2325 Chester Boulevard
Richmond, IN 47374
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EDUCATION

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 2018 - 2023 (exp.) | PhD Criminal Justice
University of Louisville |
| 2013 | MA Criminal Justice
Washington State University |
| 2010 | BA Criminal Justice; (Minor: Political science)
Washington State University |

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 2023 (August) | Assistant Professor (tenure-track), Department of Criminal Justice
Austin Peay State University, TN |
| 2017 - Present | Lecturer (Full-time), School of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Indiana University East, IN |
| 2018 – Present | Curriculum Assessment Coordinator, Department of Criminal Justice &
Political Science |
| 2016 - 2017 | Online lecturer, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice,
Arizona State University |
| 2013 - 2017 | Adjunct Lecturer, Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice,
University of New Haven, CT |
| 2013 – 2017 | Research Assistant, Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice,
University of New Haven, CT |
| 2011 - 2013 | Teaching Assistant, Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology,
Washington State University, WA |

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 2018 – 2019 | Quality Matters certification |
|-------------|-------------------------------|

AWARDS, HONORS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2019 Fellowship, Center for Faculty Development, Indiana University East
2013 – 2017 Research assistantship, Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice and Forensic Sciences, University of New Haven
- 2010 – 2013 Teaching assistantship, Department of Criminal Justice & Criminology, Washington State University

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Andreescu, V., & **Kim, D.** (2022). Drivers of police agencies' resistance to body-worn camera adoption. *International Journal of Police Science & Management*, 24(4), 437-452.

Lee, H., Reyns, B., Maher, C., & **Kim, D.** (2022). Fear of sexual assault for oneself and others: A gendered perspective from five states. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, 68(2), 100521.

Lee, H., Boateng, F., **Kim, D.**, & Maher, C. (2021). Residential stability and fear of crime: Examining the impact of homeownership and length of residence on citizens' fear of crime. *Social Science Quarterly*, 103(1), 141-154.

Lee, H., Reyns, B., **Kim, D.**, & Maher, C. (2020). Fear of crime out west: Determinants of fear of property and violent crime rates in five states. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 64(12), 1299-1316.

Lee, H., Boateng, F., **Kim, D.**, & Binning, C. (2019). Residential stability and trust in the police: an understudied area of police attitudinal research. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 45(1), 88-101.

Lee, H., Cao, L., **Kim, D.**, & Woo, Y. (2018). Police contact and confidence in the police in a medium-sized city. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, 56, 70-78.

Lee, H., **Kim, D.**, Woo, Y., & Reyns, B. (2017). Determinants of citizen support for community-oriented policing. *Police Practice and Research: An International Journal*, 20(1), 34-47.

Works in progress

Clamme, S., **Kim, D.**, Mier, C., Parker, M., & Whitehead., S. Squeeze-worthy Juice: Procedures for identifying situationally effective teaching pedagogies in higher education. To be submitted to *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*.

Kim, D., Clamme, S., Mier, C., Parker, M., & Whitehead, S. Indi-wrecked Assessment: Maximizing the effectiveness of exit surveys as indirect assessments in higher education. To be submitted to *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*.

Andreescu, V., & **Kim, D.** Media consumption effects on college students' perceived safety. To be submitted to *Deviant Behavior*.

Kim, D. & Andreescu, V. Media consumption effects on perceived police legitimacy: Examining racial/ethnic differences in attitudes toward the police in a sample of college students. To be submitted to *Policing: An International Journal*.

Kim, D., Andreescu, V., & Lee, H. D. Social media effects on college students' fear of victimization: Does membership in police scanner groups alter public perceptions of safety? To be submitted to *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*

Other publications

Korean Society of Criminology in America (KOSCA) Newsletter (2022). Managing Editor
Korean Society of Criminology in America (KOSCA) Newsletter (2021). Managing Editor
Korean Society of Criminology in America (KOSCA) Newsletter (2020). Managing Editor
Korean Society of Criminology in America (KOSCA) Newsletter (2019). Managing Editor

PRESENTATIONS

Conference and Poster Presentations (since 2015)

David Kim and Heeuk Lee. Fear of crime: Real-time crime data impact on college students. Annual Meeting of American Society of Criminology, Atlanta, GA. November 15-19, 2022

Heeuk Lee, David Kim, and Matthew Armocida. Participation in the discussion of police violence on the internet among criminal justice students. Annual Meeting of American Society of Criminology, Atlanta, GA. November 15-19, 2022.

David Kim and Viviana Andreescu. Media consumption effects on perceived police legitimacy: Examining racial/ethnic differences in attitudes toward the police in a sample of college students. Indiana Academy of Social Sciences, Gary, IN. October 7, 2022.

Viviana Andreescu and David Kim. Gender and Race/Ethnic Differences in Media Consumption Effects on College Students' Perceived Risk of Victimization and Fear of Crime. ACJS Conference, Las Vegas, NV. March 15-19, 2022.

David Kim and Heeuk Lee. Live-Crime Update: An Examination of Police Scanner on Fear of Crime. Annual Meeting of American Society of Criminology, Chicago, IL. November 17-20, 2021.

Heeuk Dennis Lee, David Kim, and Rhiannon Hopes. Investigating the Effects of Media Engagement on Confidence with the Police. Annual Meeting of American Society of Criminology, Chicago, IL. November 17-20, 2021.

David Kim. COVID-19 Outbreak, Police-Citizen Conflict, and Police Reform in the United States. 1st KOSCA Virtual Conference 2020. November 13, 2020.

David Kim and Heeuk Lee. The perpetual impact of citizen-police contact: further exploration of distributive justice. Annual Meeting of American Society of Criminology, San Francisco, CA. November 13-16, 2019.

David Kim and Viviana Andreescu. Factors influencing police agencies' adoption of video recording technology. Indiana Academy of Social Sciences, Valparaiso, IN. October 11, 2019.

David Kim and Heeuk Lee. The impact of citizen-police encounter on citizens perception of injustice. Annual Meeting of American Society of Criminology, Atlanta, GA. November 15-17, 2018.

David Kim, Heeuk Lee, Moonki Hong and Samuel Helsloot. The effects of neighborhood views on fear of crime. Annual Meeting of Western Society of Criminology, Long Beach, CA. February 1-February 3, 2018.

Heeuk Dennis Lee, David Kim and Youngki Woo. Context and Public Perception of Police. Annual Meeting of American Society of Criminology, New Orleans, LA. November 16- November 19, 2016.

Heeuk Dennis Lee, David Kim, and Youngki Woo. Police-Citizen Contact and Community Oriented Policing. Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences 53rd Annual Meeting, Denver, CO. March 29-April 2, 2016.

Heeuk Dennis Lee, David Kim, Youngki Woo, and Jacob Day. Voluntary Citizen Contact with Police and Support for Community Oriented Policing. Annual Meeting of American Society of Criminology, Washington D.C. November 18-21, 2015.

Heeuk Dennis Lee and David Kim. Determinants of Citizen Support for Community Policing. Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences 52th Annual Meeting, Orlando, Fl. March 3-7, 2015.

Roundtable participant

Policing Practice in response to Hate Crime against Asian American (Organized by Korean Society of Criminology in America (KOSCA). Annual Meeting of American Society of Criminology, Chicago, IL. November 19, 2021.

Policing in America: International Scholars' Insights and their Dilemma to Study, Educate, and Train Current and Future Criminal Justice Professionals. Annual Meeting of American Society of Criminology, San Francisco, CA. November 13-16, 2019.

Invited Media Presentations & Interviews.

Indiana Daily Student article. 'We still have a lot of work to do': IU experts reflect on Derek Chauvin trial. April 22, 2021.

News and Tribune article. Scholars say Chauvin verdict could be "wake-up call" for police departments. April 20, 2021.

Post-Tribune Newspaper article. Do police departments in Northwest Indiana need armored vehicles? Officials tout their value, but perception of militarization lingers. July 13, 2020.

All IN discussion on police reform, BLM, policing research. Radio Interview: All IN. June 9, 2020.

Discussion of mass shootings: statistics and legislations surrounding mass shootings. Radio Interview: 101.7 The Point. August 12, 2019.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Society of Criminology

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences

The Korean Society of Criminology in America (KOSCA)

Research Interests

Comparative Policing
Citizens' Perception of the Police
Community Policing
Fear of Crime
Experiential Teaching
Active Learning
Innovative Teaching Pedagogy

TEACHING (S= Spring; F = Fall; SU = Summer)

Teaching Interests

Introduction to Criminal Justice
Introduction to Criminological Theory

Research Methods
Police and Crime Control
Criminal Procedures and Evidence I
Criminal Procedures and Evidence II
Quantitative Data Analysis

Undergraduate Teaching Experience

Washington State University

CRMJ 101 – Introduction to the Administration of Criminal Justice (F12)
CRMJ 201 – Introduction to Criminological Theory (S13)

University of New Haven

CJST 2250 – Introduction to Research Methods (F15, S15, F16)
CJST 2217 – Criminal Procedures I and Evidence (S17)
CJST 2218 – Criminal Procedures II and Evidence (S16)
CJST 3312 – Police and Crime Control (S16)

Arizona State University

CRJ 302 – Introduction to Research Methods (Online) (F16, S17)

Indiana University East

CJUS P100 – Introduction to Criminal Justice (Online & on campus) (F17, S18, SU18,
F18, S19, SU19, F19, S20, SU20, F20,
S21, SU21, F21, SU22, F22, S23)

CJUS P200 – Theories of Crime and Deviance (Online) (SU22)

CJUS P295 – Criminal Justice Data, Methods, and Resources (Online) (F20, F21, F22)

CJUS P300 – Specialty Topic (Serial Killers) (Online) (F17)

CJUS P301 – Police in Contemporary Society (Online & on campus) (F17, S18, F18,
S19, SU19, F19, SU20, F20, S21, SU21,
F21, S22)

CJUS P320 – Criminal Investigation (Online) (F18, F19, F20, F21, F22)

CJUS P330 – Criminal Justice Ethics (Online) (S18)

CJUS P370 – Criminal Law (Online & on campus) (S20, S21)

CJUS P372 – Evidence (Online) (S18, S20, S22)

CJUS P376 – Procedural Criminal Law (Online) (S19)

CJUS P422 – Crime in the Mass Media (Online) (S19)

CJUS K300 – Techniques of Data Analysis (Online) (F17, SU18, F18, F19, S20, S21,
S22, S23)

CJUS P470 – Senior Seminar in Criminal Justice (Online) (S23)

SERVICE

Departmental Service

Criminal Justice Assessment Coordinator (2018 – present)

Service to the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and the University

Faculty Athletic Representative (2019 – present)

Service to Community

Developed De-escalation course for Indiana Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA). 2021
Last update November 20, 2022