The Nature and Extent of Criminal Victimization
Integrate Crime Victims’ Issues Into University and College Curricula

The project is designed to:

- Broaden college and university students’ awareness of crime victims’ issues and knowledge of appropriate responses.
- Increase the number and diversity of students exposed to and educated in crime victims’ issues.
- Give victim issues a new level of prominence in university and college curricula.
Resources for Students

Campus resources to list typically include:

- Counseling.
- Health services.
- College chaplain/Faith community.
- Dean of students.
- Women’s centers.
- Campus police.
Local community resources to list typically include:

- Rape crisis center.
- Domestic violence shelter agency.
- Local or county victim-witness office (often a part of the prosecutor’s office).
National Resource Information

Student Handout
Direct Victims

Direct victims are those directly harmed by criminal activity.

Crimes with direct victims include:

- Crimes of violence.
- Property crimes.

Crimes without direct victims include:

- Illegal possession of narcotics.
- Gambling.
Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Uniform Crime Report (UCR) provides data on crimes reported to police.

Collects information on eight types of crime:

- Homicide
- Robbery
- Rape
- Aggravated assault
- Burglary
- Theft
- Motor vehicle theft
- Arson
Limitations of the UCR include:

- Only covers eight categories of offenses.
  - Example: Includes aggravated assaults but not simple assaults.
- Only provides information on offenses reported to police.
  - More than half of crimes are not reported to the police.
- Under-reports crimes known to the police because of the FBI’s hierarchy rule, which requires police to report only the highest offense committed in a single incident.
- Does not provide specific information on incidents.
  - Characteristics of victim and offender, and injuries received are not included in UCR.
National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) is an enhancement of the UCR:

- Provides details about 46 types of crimes.
- Specific information about each incident is included.
- Even though participation is increasing, there is not enough yet to make it a reliable source for crime estimation.
Victimization Data Sources

- Collected by the National Crime Victim Survey (NCVS).
- Designed to complement UCR.
- Interviews victims anonymously about crimes committed against them.
- Each year roughly 45,000 households are interviewed comprising between 75,000-95,000 persons age 12 and older.
Victimization Data Sources

- Interviews are used to determine frequency, characteristics, and consequences of criminal victimization in U.S.
- Survey reports likelihood of victimization of the population for rape, sexual assault, robbery, assault (both aggravated and simple), theft, household burglary, and motor vehicle theft.
- Breaks the population into segments: women, elderly, members of various racial groups, city dwellers, and other groups.
1. Criminal Homicide

Criminal Homicide is the one crime that we can use UCR and NIBRS data for accounting for victimization because:

- Nearly all homicides are reported to police.
- UCR has homicide reports that provide detailed information about incident.
- Standard victimization surveys cannot be used, because the victim is deceased.
1. Criminal Homicide

An examination of UCR data shows that the criminal homicide rate rose steadily to a peak of 10.2 homicides per 100,000 population in 1980 and has declining somewhat steadily since then.
In 2008:

- 16,272 people were victims of murder and non-negligent manslaughter.
- A rate of 5.4 homicides per 100,000 population down considerably from the peak rate of 10.2 in 1980.
- 78.2% of victims were male. 90% of offenders were male.
- 49.0% of victims were white, 48.6% black, and 2.3% were from other races.
In 2008:

- 51.5% of offenders were black, 46.2% were white, and 2.4% were from other races.
- 23.3% of victims were slain by family members, 22.0% were murdered by strangers, and 54.7% were killed by acquaintances (neighbor, friend, boyfriend, etc.).
- 71.9% of the homicides involved firearms.
- Handguns comprised 88.3% of identified firearms.
2. Other Crimes of Violence

- Rapes and other offenses are not often reported to police.
- NCVS surveys are relied on heavily for information.
- These surveys cover:
  - Rape and sexual assault.
  - Robbery.
  - Assault (both simple and aggravated).
  - Data do not cover victims under age 12.
2. Other Crimes of Violence

Like homicide, all categories of other violent offenses show a decline from the 1980s. This has occurred for both male and female victims.
NCVS Data From 2008 Show:

- Males experienced higher victimization rates than females, for all types of violent crime except rape and sexual assault.
- Blacks experienced higher victimization rates than other races, for all types of violent crime except simple assault.
- Victimization rates decreased with age.
NCVS Data From 2008 Show:

- Male victims knew the offenders in half of all aggravated and simple assaults against them; female victims knew the offenders in approximately 70% of assaults against them.
- Strangers committed 61% of robberies against men and 45% of robberies against women.
- Divorced or separated persons and never married persons experienced similar rates of overall violence.
- A gun, knife, or other object was used as a weapon in an estimated 20% of all incidents of violent crime.
Additional Analyses Revealed:

- Males are more likely to be the victims of violent crime, females are more likely to be victimized by family violence.
- Workplace violence accounted for 18% of all violent crime between 1993 and 1999.
- Police officers, correctional officers, taxicab drivers, private security workers, and bartenders had the highest rates of victimizations of the occupations examined.
Additional Analyses Revealed:

- About 32% of students ages 12-18 reported in 2007 being bullied at school within the past 6 months.

- Age-adjusted rates of nonfatal violent crimes against persons with disabilities are 1.5 times higher than the rates for persons without disabilities.

- Victims of violent crimes perceived their assailants to be gang members in 5% of crimes that occurred in 2008.
3. Property Crimes

NVCS data cover the following property crimes:
1. Household burglary
2. Theft
3. Motor vehicle theft

Property crimes show a decline from the 1980s, but in 2008 there were still over 16 million people who were the victims of property crimes.
NCVS Data From 2008 Show:

- Lower income households had higher rates of property crime.
- Differences between property crime rates for households in the lowest and highest income groups were smaller for theft than for burglary.
- Larger households experienced higher rates of property crime than smaller households.
- Those in the highest income bracket ($75,000 or more) are most likely to experience identity theft.
Limitations

- Does not include children under age 12.
- Only includes cases reported to interviewers.
- Does not have third party assessment of facts as in police reports.
- Has screening questions that are not always state of the art.
- Does not assure privacy for respondents.
- Is a survey of addresses, not people.
Fear vs. Reality

- Women tend to be more fearful than men of becoming victims of crime, but men have higher rates of victimization.
- The elderly have the least risk of victimization, but fear criminal victimization the most.
- Fear of victimization may lead to limiting activities thus lowering risk of victimization.
- Media gives an erroneous representation of crime, making it seem like crime is more prevalent/serious than it actually is.