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Adolescent and Young Adult Homicide Victimization in Milwaukee:

1992-1993

Section I

INTRODUCTION

Elevated homicide frequency and subsequent rising levels of risk of victimization represent an unusual set of circumstances in the city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Prior to 1980 the annual number of homicides seldom exceeded 80. If we go back as far as 1965 we find this former premier manufacturing center recording only 23 homicides (see Walinsky, 1995). The year 1989 marked a sharp break with the past, in terms of homicide frequency in Milwaukee, as the number of victimizations began to climb. Since 1990, the city has experienced more than 100 homicides each year, reaching a high of 168 in 1991 and again in 1993. A new equilibrium now seems to have been reached in which the annual number of victimizations ranges between 130 and 160. Thus, in the last decade of the 20th century, Milwaukee seems to have moved from the column of safe American cities to the column of incipiently dangerous ones.

It is the goal of this report to demonstrate a better understanding of why Milwaukee was unable to stave off rising levels of risk and what it might do to lower the range of the risk equilibrium. What has become increasingly clear, during the prior decade, is that urban centers that make up the national

urban system are much more vulnerable to macrostructural forces than they were a generation ago. The globalization of the economy has forced individual urban places to make a variety of adjustments to sustain themselves in spite of far reaching shifts occurring in the character of their local economies. Milwaukee, like its American manufacturing belt neighbors, made widespread adaptations that enabled them to overcome the negative feedback associated with globalization. Unfortunately not all segments of the city's workforce were able to rebound with equal ease, setting the stage for the rise in risk levels denoted above.

Changes in the Composition of The City's Population

Demographic shifts in Milwaukee's population during the 1980s led to a modest overall population decline (1.1 percent), but considerable changes in its race/ethnic mix. Whites continued to leave the city at a rapid clip, whereas blacks, Hispanics and Asians were experiencing rapid population growth as a function of high fertility levels and substantial net migration (see Table 1). The city lost more than 60,000 non-Hispanic whites during that one ten-year interval. The growth of black, Hispanic and Asian populations was substantial, but not enough to prevent a modest population loss. The age structure dynamics, in this instance, when combined with the growth of extreme poverty neighborhoods, set the stage for the upturn in violence that was witnessed from 1989-1993.

Table 1
 Changes in the Composition of Milwaukee's Population
 During the 1980s

Population Composition

	White	% change	Black	% change	Hispanic	% change	Asian	% change
1980	442,000		147,000		21,000		4,200	
1990	382,000	-13.6	191,000	+30.0	39,000	+85.6	11,000	+137.0
absolute change	-60,000		+44,000		+18,000		+6,800	

Source: General Characteristics of the Population, Wisconsin, 1980 and 1990.

Youth, the Segment of the Population At Greatest Risk

Those most at risk of victimization were persons born in 1970 and later, especially those born between 1975-1979. These were persons who were ages 15-19 in 1990, the cohort that constituted the largest number of victims of any five-year age group in 1992-1993, the two years in which our primary focus was youth violence.

In 1980, whites ages 15-29 totaled almost 140,000 persons, but by 1990 that group included only 99,000 persons. This was a decline of more than 40,000, or two-thirds of the total loss in white population during the decade. Blacks, the second largest segment of the city's population, had a young adult population that was approximately one-third the size of the white population in the base year, but by 1990 had reached one-half the size of

the white population. This ratio shift occurred despite the fact that this segment of the black population experienced only modest growth during the decade. The demographic process underway led to aging the city's white population, moving it toward the upper reaches of the age structure, whereas blacks and other minorities were being concentrated in the lower reaches of the age structure. This can best be demonstrated by comparing the size of the city's juvenile population across race/ethnic identity in 1990.

Table 2
The Size of the City's Juvenile Population by
Race/Ethnic Status, 1990

Age	Total Population	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
13	8318	3728	3834	823	199
14	7961	3526	3662	789	203
15	8103	4381	3775	749	216
16	7921	4006	3675	748	197
17	8043	3862	3839	693	198
Total	40,346	19,453	18,785	3,802	1,013

Source: General Characteristics of the Population, Wisconsin, 1990

By 1990 more than half of the city's juveniles were blacks, Hispanics and Asians, with blacks comprising 47.5 percent of the city's juvenile population. It is this population, along with those only slightly older, that was to play a substantial role in the ongoing upsurge in victimization.

In this report our central, but not exclusive, focus is on the city's juvenile population. While most juvenile offenders have victimized other juveniles, others were involved in altercations with older victims. The juvenile victimization rates in the nation are normally low, but they have been growing rapidly since 1987 (see Finkelhor, 1997). Black and Hispanic teens are more often engaged in risky behavior than others and, according to Finkelhor (1997), the observed victimizations appear to be an extension of the adult homicide problem, such that "Adolescent homicide rates have reached the highest levels in history" (Hechinger, 1994). Yet, Finkelhor (1997) has noted that 56 percent of teen killings are said to be gang related, while another 15 percent have been identified as drug related. Given that these are activities that are more likely to involve minority youth, especially minority males, we would expect our juvenile risk pool to be overwhelmingly drawn from the more than 11,000 minority males present in the population in 1990.

Tracking Homicide Victimizations in Milwaukee

The investigators in this study have tracked homicide victimizations in the city of Milwaukee since 1989. The data collected extend over a period of five years, terminating in 1993 (see Figures 1, 1A & 1B). But only in the last two years of that interval were youthful victims and offenders singled out for

Figure 1
1989-1993 Juvenile Victims and Offenders

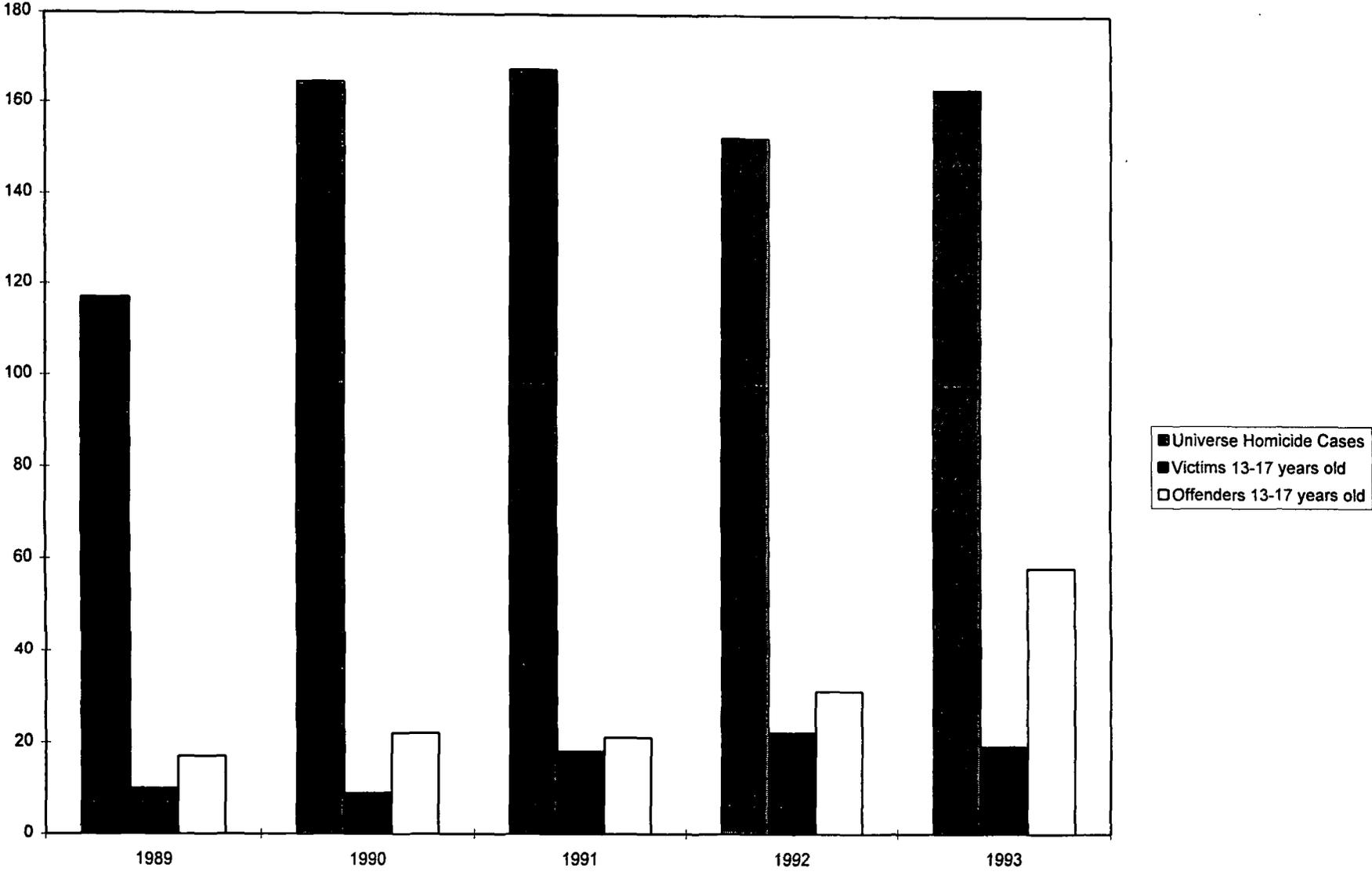


Figure 1A

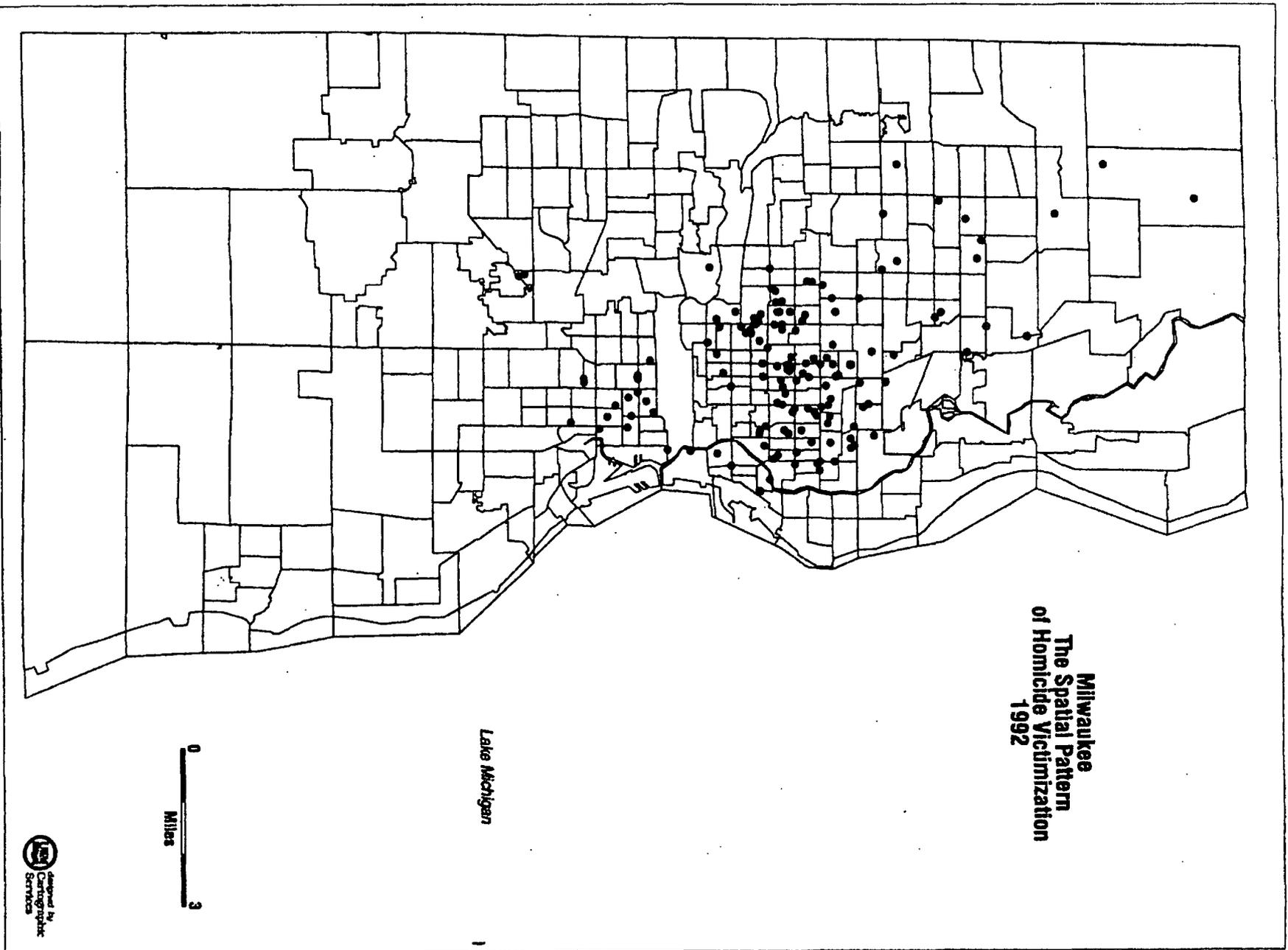
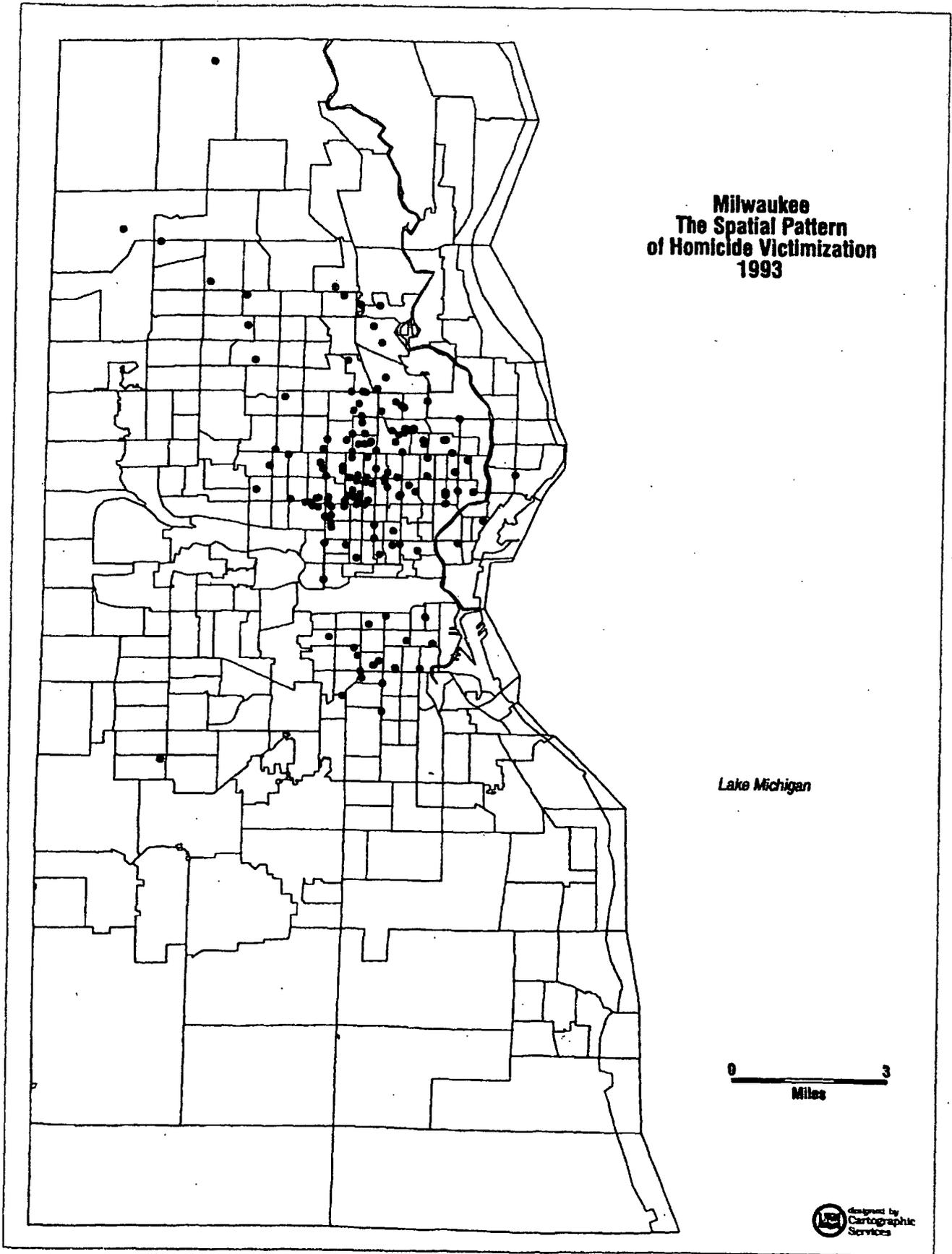


Figure 1B



special treatment. Total victimizations reached an initial peak in 1991 and peaked again in 1993. The proportion of youthful victimizations to total victimizations varied across the interval under review. Juvenile victimizations as a share of total victimizations increased over time, but what was more dramatic was the sharp upsurge in the number of youthful offenders during the interval. This phenomenon was linked to an increase in multiple offender events. However, the number of offenders involved in a single event increased over time as well.

The Age Distribution of Juvenile Victims and Offenders

Focusing specifically on the last two years of the interval, when juvenile victimizations peaked, the investigators developed a detailed description of the age structure of victimization. In 1992, a bi-modal distribution was observed in which ages 14 and 16 were the ages at which the largest number of deaths occurred. But in 1993, age 15 represented the modal age. On the other hand, juvenile offenders tended to be somewhat older than victims. The modal age of offenders was 16 in 1992 and 17 in 1993. This essentially conforms to the modal age of offenses committed by a national sample of juveniles engaged in the commission of acts of serious violence reported by Elliot (1994).

While all juvenile victimizations were observed to be increasing, homicides that were occurring at the upper end of the 15-19 year old age group were increasing in larger numbers. This

older teenage group was heavily responsible for the escalating numbers from 1989-1993, but they were increasingly being assisted by younger proteges.

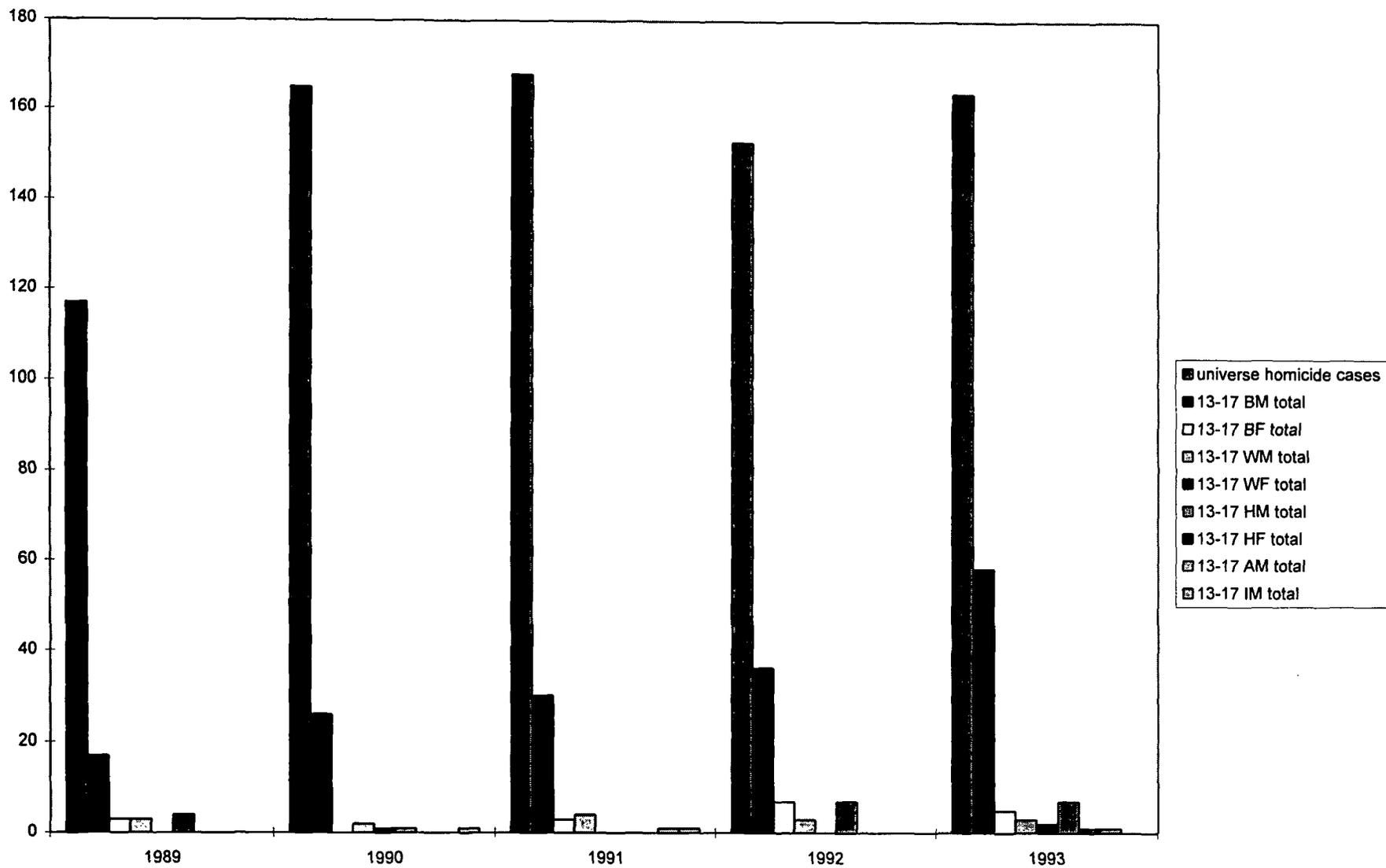
Gender and Race/Ethnic Differences

Among juvenile victims and offenders males were far more likely to be involved than were females, although in 1992 female victims made up 35 percent of the total. Offenders, however, were overwhelmingly male in both years (91 percent and 100 percent respectively). Half of the victims in both years were black males, but this group constituted almost three-quarters of the offenders in both years. Young Hispanic males ranked second among offenders, and like young black males, were less likely to be victims than offenders. These two groups constituted 65 percent of the victims and 91 percent of the offenders during 1992 and 1993 (see Figure 2).

The Focus of the Present Investigation

The present investigation will focus on those attributes of victims and offenders which appear to have elevated their risk of becoming involved in actions leading to death. Both selected attributes at the individual level, as well as environmental characteristics, will be examined to assist us in gaining an enhanced understanding of the combination of forces which seem to

Figure 2
Total Victimizations and Juvenile Victimizations By Race, Ethnicity and Gender: 1989-1993



ratchet up homicide levels. Most investigations of actions leading up to homicide tend to focus attention on either the victim or the offender, but seldom both. Our understanding of this phenomenon is largely based on the work of psychologists, sociologists and health care professionals who view the process from the perspective of individual and/or group behavior. In our study attention will be directed at both victims and offenders, as well as the environmental niche which they occupy.

We think to ignore the environment in which most homicides occur is to omit a substantial part of the puzzle of the social and cultural processes that abet the risk of violent victimization, and thus to compromise our understanding of the complete picture. The consequences of omitting this element of the puzzle are reflected in the works of Harries (1980; 1990); Sampson, Raudenbush and Earls, 1997; Gabarino, 1993; Rose and McClain, 1990. The environment serves as a contextual effect that is said to exert an independent influence in stimulating acts of violence.

The Role of Micro Environments and Often Overlooked Phenomena

In this report we will be primarily concerned with the elements of the micro-environment which includes neighborhoods and assemblages of neighborhoods. We are not unaware of, or insensitive to the impact of macro-environmental influences (i.e., globalization of the economy, national policy, etc.) on

neighborhoods, but in this instance we have chosen to direct our attention to those environments in which the risk of victimization is elevated.

It has been demonstrated that at the level of individual cities homicides are non-randomly distributed. Earls (1994), in addressing the recent sharp increase in the incidence of homicide in Washington, D.C., pointed out that most of those victimizations were confined to a few census tracts. Harries (1990), too, has demonstrated that the largest number of homicides in the nation's capital were confined to a small number of neighborhoods. It has been observed that most neighborhoods in which risk of victimization is elevated are experiencing severe economic deprivation (Sampson, 1997). These neighborhoods have been described by a number of scholars as underclass neighborhoods. This suggests that the conditions observed can be attributed to the behavior of the neighborhood residents or simply to the inability of householders to make positive adaptations to the economic, social and cultural changes going on around them. Of course the above suggestions are overly simplistic.

Neighborhoods that are most often shown to represent sites of elevated victimization are those in which 40 percent, or more, of all families live at the poverty level. Such neighborhoods are usually described as concentrated or extreme poverty neighborhoods (see Wilson, 1987, Jargowsky, 1996; Massey, 1993).

Yet Jargowsky (1996) is quick to note that the majority of the residents of such neighborhoods fail to exhibit the characteristic behaviors that some scholars attribute to the underclass. Moreover, Mincy (1994) makes a distinction between residence in concentrated poverty neighborhoods and underclass neighborhoods. We, too, have noted that some concentrated poverty neighborhoods are characterized by elevated homicide risk levels, while others are not. Thus, economic deprivation, while being an important contributor to elevated risk, is not the only one. There are other neighborhood traits that also contribute to or facilitate escalating risk.

Neighborhood Surrogates

Census tracts are employed as neighborhood surrogates in this investigation. While they may not constitute genuine neighborhoods it is generally concluded, as a rule, that they constitute neighborhood scale units. By employing census tracts we are able to tap into an objective data set that will enable us to examine the spatial pattern of extreme poverty, while at the same time examining a series of social and economic variables that are thought to impact levels of violence. In order to lend credence to the process we have manipulated a set of census variables, through the use of principal factor analysis, to produce an array of neighborhood stress scores and economic opportunity scores in those neighborhoods where risk levels are

usually found to be highest, i.e., in predominantly black and Hispanic communities. It is in poor black and Hispanic neighborhoods nationally that the largest share of all homicides occur. Yet, differential levels of violence prevail in these two ethnic communities, even when holding socio-economic conditions constant.

Victimization: The Environmental Context

In Milwaukee, as in most of the nation's larger urban centers, the recent epidemic of homicide victimizations has been essentially concentrated in that set of neighborhoods that make up the city's black community. But, within that community the spatial pattern of victimization is highly skewed toward those neighborhoods in which poverty is concentrated. At the surface, however, it appears that within these neighborhoods risk of victimization is also influenced by land use patterns, predominance of vacant residential and commercial structures, and the general growth and development of a street culture.

Moreover, Gabarino and Others (1991) tend to associate elevated risk of victimization with high rise public housing structures, e.g., Chicago's Robert Taylor Homes, which they contend are isolated from the mainstream. Mincy (1994) associates increases in violent crime with the growth of an oppositional culture.

Still others contend that concentrated poverty neighborhoods impact children's developmental processes (Brooks-Gunn and Others, 1993). Children growing up in these neighborhoods are said to take on selected behavioral traits ranging from withdrawal to manifesting signs of immunity from danger (see Gabarino and Others, 1991), neither of which are viewed positively.

In our study we will have an opportunity to ascertain if the generalizations made by other scholars regarding violence-inducing traits and violent outcomes apply to Milwaukee during the interval under review. We are especially interested in detecting the relative importance of concentrated poverty neighborhoods in determining risk of victimization and the resulting incidence of victimization involving juveniles and youth. Are these neighborhoods both the sites of victimization and the propagating grounds of violent offenders or have they in fact been oversold in terms of their role in adding to the urban homicide count? For instance, there are urban places that have experienced a recent surge in homicide rates, but have not been characterized by a sharp increase in the prevalence of concentrated poverty neighborhoods. In a nutshell, we will attempt to provide greater insight in understanding the contribution neighborhoods make toward heightening the incidence of violent victimization.

Concentrated Poverty Neighborhoods in the City of Milwaukee

In the City of Milwaukee the number of concentrated poverty neighborhoods rose from 15 in 1980 to 53 in 1990. This represented the most rapid growth of such neighborhoods in a large urban place in America during that decade (Jargowsky, 1996). The central question is, were these the neighborhoods in which risk was escalating and, if so, to what extent did they abet the victimization of young adults and juveniles? Most concentrated poverty neighborhoods were those in which black populations predominated. The city's fast growing Hispanic community was the site of additional concentrated poverty neighborhoods. If the code of the street (see Anderson, 1994), as well as the evolution of other developmental traits assumed to engender behavior in which the violent resolution of conflict is found to be more commonplace, is associated with the growth of extreme poverty neighborhoods, it is in these neighborhoods that we should initially concentrate our attention.

On reviewing homicide frequencies for the years 1992 and 1993, one finds that concentrated poverty neighborhoods did in fact account for the largest share of the total victim count. Since most of these neighborhoods are embedded within the city's black community it is not surprising that they are the site of the majority of the victimizations since more than three-quarters of the victims are black. What is surprising is that most victimizations and especially those of 15-24 year old black

males, who currently constitute the most prevalent group of both victims and offenders, are confined to about one-third of all neighborhoods experiencing extreme poverty.

In only ten percent of the non-concentrated poverty neighborhoods was there evidence of elevated risk. These were usually neighborhoods that bordered concentrated poverty neighborhoods. Thus, during the years 1989-1991 elevated risk of victimization, as well as high frequency of incidents, were confined to a small number of contiguous neighborhoods. This was especially true of incidents young black male victims who engaged in violent confrontations with their same aged peers. For the first time both 15-19 year old victims and offenders had begun to surpass their 20-24 year old peers in accounting for the largest share of victims within five year age groups.

Risk and Count as Indicators of Neighborhood Dangerousness

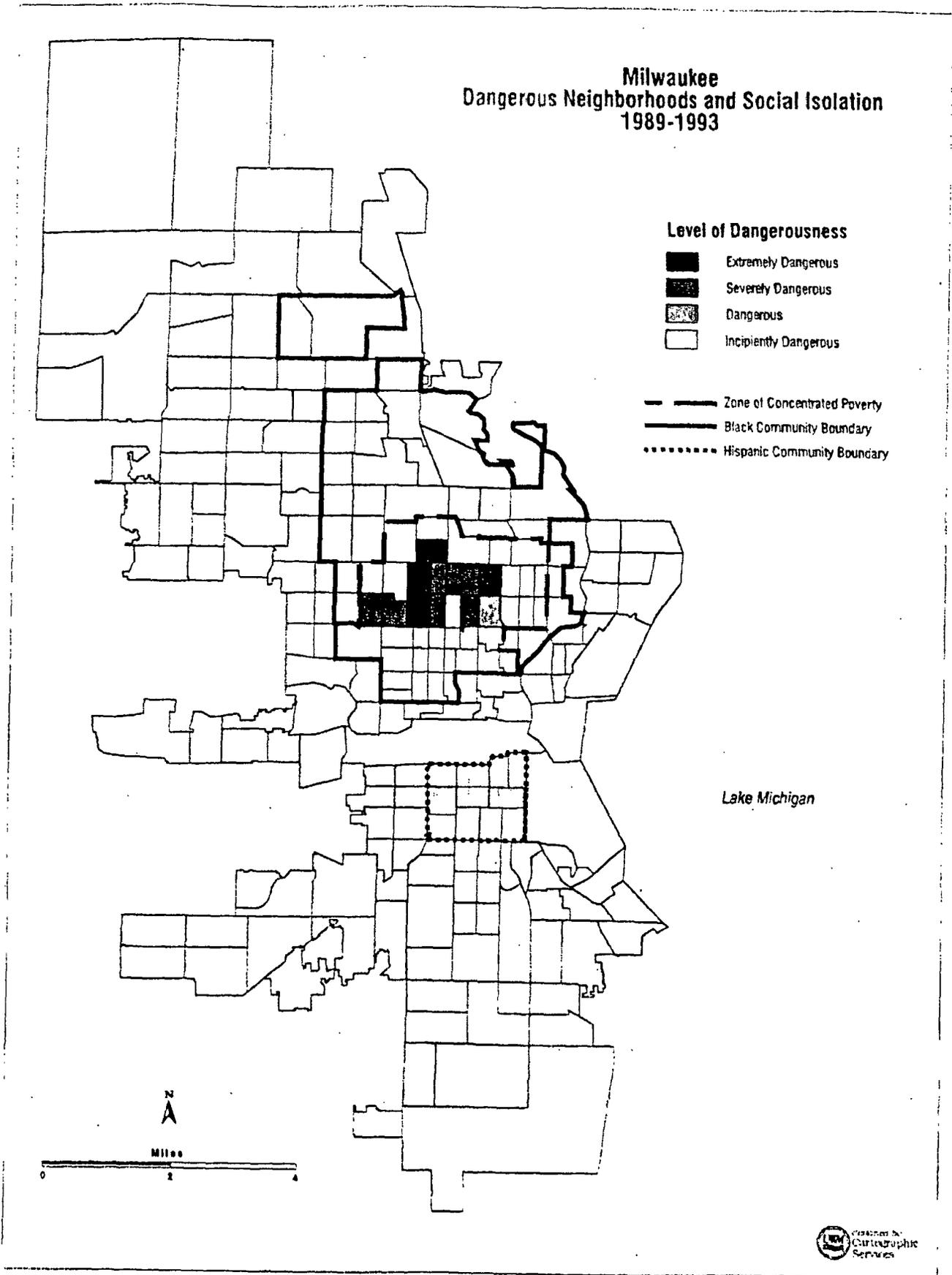
Since our current interest is in juvenile victimization, we will look into the earlier identified neighborhoods in which risk was elevated to ascertain if they continue to constitute that set of microenvironments characterized by high risk. Absolute risk levels were computed based on a three-year mean homicide level. That is, the mean number of homicides by tract were summed and divided by the size of the population multiplied by 100,000. This formula allows us to identify neighborhoods that experience varying levels of danger.

In order to identify a surrogate measure of risk, for the 1992-1993 period, it will be necessary to substitute homicide frequencies or counts for absolute risk levels. This measure has been called a measure of apparent risk (Rose, 1994). By accumulating frequencies over time, on a neighborhood basis, we are able to gauge what residents perceive as actual levels of risk. The frequencies can be partitioned by age group allowing us to determine if juveniles and young adults are being victimized in neighborhoods that we previously labeled dangerous, severely dangerous or extremely dangerous (see Fig. 3, Map of Dangerous Neighborhoods).

The number of juvenile victims increased substantially from the first three years (27) to the last two years (34). In the last two years more than ten percent were juveniles, whereas they registered just six percent of the total in the first three years. The increase of juvenile offenders was even more pronounced. The group of juvenile offenders totaled more than 70 individuals in the latter years, outstripping victims by a ratio of 2:1.

The central issue here, however, is, do the neighborhoods that were described as dangerous during the initial three years, continue to represent sites in which the largest share of juvenile victimizations were occurring in 1992-1993? In 1993 eleven neighborhoods were the locations of 35.3 percent of the city's homicides. But 28.2 percent of the homicides occurred in

Figure 3



just seven neighborhoods, i.e., census tracts. This is strong evidence supporting the theory that a limited number of neighborhoods serve as the site of a disproportionate share of all victimizations when one considers that there are only 207 census tracts in Milwaukee.

Juvenile victimizations, as is true of more mature victimizations, more often occurred in a series of contiguous extreme and high poverty neighborhoods. The same neighborhoods throughout the five-year period were loci of both mature victimizations and juvenile victimizations. In the last two years, there is evidence of the rise of an additional incipient enclave of escalating victimization. This enclave was the site of many fewer victimizations, but should be kept under observation. This emerging set of violent neighborhoods is one in which poor Hispanic youth are concentrated (see Fig. 3).

The neighborhoods, that, as a rule, had been the predominant sites of victimization during the initial three observation years remained environments of elevated risk. At the same time, however, a small number of additional neighborhoods were becoming high apparent risk neighborhoods. These were generally neighborhoods that bordered on earlier high absolute risk neighborhoods. Approximately one-third of the city's total victimizations in the last two years of the study occurred in neighborhoods that could be described as high apparent risk neighborhoods. The rest were diffused over a larger area in the

city's black and Hispanic communities.

While total victimizations during this period could be generally described as concentrated, juvenile victimizations were extremely concentrated. Eighty-five percent of the 34 juvenile victimizations occurring during this interval occurred in 19 dangerous neighborhoods (see Fig. 3), with more than half taking place in just four neighborhoods. Thus, juvenile homicide events were confined to a much more restricted geographical area than incidents involving young adult and/or mature victims. What is there about these neighborhoods that separates them so dramatically from the rest?

Core Juvenile Victimization Neighborhoods

The four neighborhoods that constituted the primary sites of juvenile victimization were generally the sites of elevated total victimizations during the interval. Three of these neighborhoods were among the more disadvantaged in the city's black community, as measured by neighborhood stress levels and economic opportunity scores. Thus, youth in these neighborhoods, like their late teen and young adult peers, were already involved in activities which were known to abet risk, e.g., gang involvement, drug selling, street assaults and gun carrying. These were neighborhoods in which drug houses proliferated and gang activity was widespread. Thus, a younger cohort of victims and offenders were learning to negotiate a difficult environment at a very

early age, employing the guidelines that had already been established by their slightly older peers.

The fourth highest apparent risk neighborhood was substantially better off than the neighborhoods previously described, both in terms of stress levels and economic opportunity, and would therefore rationally not be expected to be included among this group. But the one factor that distinguished it from the previously described dangerous neighborhoods its much larger number of resident juveniles. Though objective conditions distinguished it from the others, we conjecture that the diffusion of a juvenile peer culture across a short distance enhanced the likelihood for the number of victimizations to increase. This represents a situation in which the correlation between apparent risk and absolute risk is modest at best.

Efforts to Model Victimization Outcomes

The question of why some neighborhoods were much more dangerous than others even when their objective status did not differ substantially is not easily answered. This is not to say that observed differences in risk were unrelated to stress levels or economic opportunity scores for this was simply not the case. When efforts to explain variations in risk, at the neighborhood level in the city's black community were made through the use of a series of ordinary least squares regression models, the models

results were generally statistically significant at the .05 level. Needless to say, the models' usefulness in explaining observed levels of risk in neighborhoods previously labeled extremely dangerous or severely dangerous was poor. These are neighborhoods that were often identified as outliers. The predicted levels of victimization were most often underestimated. This suggests that other variables were needed to assist in reducing the magnitude of expected victimization from that of observed victimization.

Independent Variables Used in Regression Model

The models employed in the previously described exercises used the following variables as independent variables in a regression format: stress scores, vacancy rates, median family income, percent male high school graduates, percent females divorced or separated, a poverty dummy, median rent and percent recent migrants. Because a number of variables were highly correlated, they were not included in the same model runs. Among the highly correlated variables vacancy rate turned out to be the most significant. Vacancy rates and stress scores accounted for .49 percent of the variance in explaining interneighborhood differences in black homicide rates in the city's black community. But in no instance was this fairly successful model able to closely predict the observed level of victimization in dangerous, severely dangerous and extremely dangerous

neighborhoods.

Model Results When Attempting To Explain Young Black Male
Victimization Rates

When the model was employed to explain variations in young black adult male victimizations it performed less successfully than it had in the above case. In this instance an adjusted R^2 of only .20 was derived using a five variable format. While the vacancy rate was the strongest independent variable when total black risk levels served as the dependent variable, in this instance stress scores (sig .0002) superceded vacancy in accounting for neighborhood differences in risk among young adult males. Vacancy rates, which represented the second strongest explanatory variable, failed to reach significance at the .05 level. Although efforts to model neighborhood variations in young black male victimizations were less successful than that employing the total black population, one commonality was the inability of the models to come close to predicting the observed levels of victimizations in the previously identified group of dangerous neighborhoods. The one characteristic; that the most seriously dangerous neighborhoods possess in common is that they are bisected by what were earlier major commercial thoroughfares.

At this point one can only conjecture that neighborhoods which include streets on which commercial activity is present tend to attract persons to a variety of sites that provide them

both an opportunity to socialize and to consume a desired range of products. The congregation of individuals at these sites, depending on their motivation, may well account for some part of the higher observed victimization rates than those which exist in similarly situated neighborhoods that lack the draw of commercial and social activity.

Since stress was the predominant independent variable employed to explain neighborhood victimizations among young adult black males, this may suggest that where stress levels are highest mothers lose control of their sons, to the streets, at an early age. These youths may be expected to spend a good part of their days and nights hanging out on commercial thoroughfares where they engage in activities that abet an increase in risk of victimization. The responses of juvenile and young adult offenders and the victims' next of kin to a series of questions included on our life history questionnaire may serve to assist in verifying or negating the above conjecture.

A Reiteration of The Importance of A Neighborhood Focus

Neighborhoods, it appears, play a strong role in providing an environmental context in which violence is an accepted response to a variety of patterns of individual and group interactions. Too often, however, the role of the neighborhood contribution to escalating levels of violence is overlooked or at least downplayed. In this investigation the role of the

neighborhood is given prominence. What we will do as we proceed to uncover those forces that promote juvenile, young adult and older victimizations is to place them within the environmental context in which they occur.

With the exception of the Chicago study currently being conducted by Earls and others, most studies in which homicide is singled out for investigation focus almost exclusively upon victims or offenders. In this investigation emphasis will be placed upon both victims and offenders and how they interact with their environments. While victims and offenders negotiate a variety of environments, we believe that it is crucial that we gain a better understanding of neighborhoods if we are to fashion an appropriate set of strategies to assist in lowering levels of juvenile and young adult risk.

Data, Methods and Approaches Employed in the Present Investigation

The present investigation represents an attempt to gain a more complete understanding of those forces responsible for the growing number of homicides occurring in the city of Milwaukee since the late 1980s, but with a special emphasis on the contribution of juveniles and young adults on the observed heightened levels of victimization. A variety of data sources were tapped in order to undertake this investigation. Among the

data sources upon which we relied heavily were Milwaukee Police Reports, FBI Supplemental Homicide Reports, Medical Examiner's Reports, and Court Reports.

The above sources, while providing base data, also added other vital social characteristics which assisted in making sense of important individual traits and/or the nature of the circumstances surrounding the demise of the victim. While each of the above data sources provided invaluable information, most of the information provided was static. In an effort to elicit a more dynamic description of the persons involved in the homicide incident a life history questionnaire was constructed.

The Life History Questionnaire

The life history questionnaire used to survey the next of kin of victims and offenders drawn into our 1992-1993 sample represented a modification of the instrument employed in our 1989-1991 sample. A modification was necessary as the earlier survey instrument had been fashioned to apply to a more mature population. In keeping with our current emphasis on juveniles and young adults some of the earlier questions were modified, some were deleted and new questions were added (see Appendix A and B). By altering the original life history questionnaire we were able to develop an instrument more appropriate for the current sample, while at the same time allowing us to compare the earlier sample with the new sample across most questionnaire items.

The Sample

Homicide incidents are generally described as rare events; thus, in order to capture an adequate number of cases from a small universe, a large sampling fraction is necessary. A large sampling fraction will enable us to comfortably generalize to the universe. But the problem is more complex than the previous statement suggests. Black male victims and offenders are predominant among the universe of victims and offenders (see Table 3). Only this group has numbers large enough to permit sampling to take place. The universe of victims and offenders is utilized for all other race/ethnic/gender groups. This unfortunately does not allow us to generalize about the characteristics and experiences of persons other than black males.

As in the previous three years (1989-91), a sampling fraction of 40 percent was employed with reference to black male victims and offenders. For each of the remaining race/ethnic/gender groups, the universe of victims and offenders were identified as potential participants in our life history survey. One might question why we did not sample white male victims (N=47), but we concluded that while they constituted the third largest number of victims, this number was too small to be subjected to sampling. The number of black male offenders exceeded the second largest group of offenders (Hispanic males) by a ratio of almost 8:1. Thus the small number of all other

Table 3
The Universe of Victims and Offenders by Race,
Ethnicity and Gender

	Black Male Victims	White Male Victims	Hispanic Male Victims	Asian Male Victims
1992	91	23	6	1
1993	100	24	8	0
total	191	47	14	1
	Black Female Victims	White Female Victims	Hispanic Female Victims	Asian Female Victims
1992	25	10	4	0
1993	27	13	0	0
total	52	23	4	0
	Black Male Offenders	White Male Offenders	Hispanic Male Offenders	Asian Male Offenders
1992	140	12	14	1
1993	171	10	26	2
total	311	22	40	3
	Black Female Offenders	White Female Offenders	Hispanic Female Offenders	Asian Female Offenders
1992	19	3	0	0
1993	18	1	0	0
total	37	4	0	0

Source: FBI Supplemental Homicide Report 1992-1993, Milwaukee Police Department Reports 1992-1993

race/ethnic offenders likewise did not favor the use of sampling. Our sample then is based on selecting 40 percent of 191 black male victims and 311 black male offenders.

Stratifying the Sample

Since we are primarily interested in juvenile and young adult male participants in acts of lethal violence, but only because it is they who are driving increased levels of risk, we were compelled to draw a disproportionate share of that group into the sample. Although we employed a sampling fraction of 40 percent, the sample was weighted in such a way that 50 percent of the pool of eligibles would represent 15-19 year olds. Once the weighting process had been performed, persons were randomly identified and stratified by age.

One final condition further reduced our pool of eligible offenders. Only incarcerated offenders were deemed eligible to participate in the survey. Thus slightly more than one-quarter of an original sample was excluded as they were not incarcerated. Of the 123 incarcerated felons, 86 agreed to be interviewed for a response rate of almost 70 percent. All interviews were conducted by members of our interview team at the facilities where the offenders were held.

Our success rate at contacting next of kin of victims was lower than that with offenders. One hundred six persons constituted our next of kin pool. Out of that pool 57 interviews were completed for a response rate of 53.7 percent. We were unable to establish contact with 27.3 percent of the individuals in the next of kin pool. Only 15.0 percent of the potential respondents actually refused to be interviewed. Our interviews

with next of kin were predominantly with parents or other kin of victims aged 15-24 years old (65.0 percent). Slightly more than 30 percent were conducted with the kin of juveniles. Our weighting process in both instances allowed us to tap into the life histories of the groups of primary interest, juveniles and young adults. As a result of the differential response rate for offenders and next of kin of victims, we ended up with an ever larger share of 15-19 years olds among offenders than victims (57.3 percent vs. 36.6 percent).

A Barrier to the Interview Process

The project itself was slowed by our inability to initiate the prison interviewing at an earlier scheduled date. This phase of the project was delayed for six months, as we tried to get approval from the University's Human Subjects Review Committee. The prisoners' representative on the University's Human Subjects Review Committee was opposed to our interviewing prisoners. Only when the Prisoner representative supported our request and the overall Committee was reconstituted the following Fall were we finally granted approval to begin the interview process.

Each prisoner was granted a \$15.00 stipend for participating in the interview process. All prisoners signed an Acknowledgement of Informed Consent and we assured them that their identities would remain confidential. The same procedure was followed with the next of kin of victims. The information amassed through the

life history interviews constitutes a substantial data source that provides us with a series of snapshots of each individual across time.

The Use of Court Reports

The use of self report data and surrogate self report data, i.e., next of kin of victims, when combined with data from juvenile and adult courts, victim and offender financial and social service data from Milwaukee County Department of Human Services, police reports, medical examiner records, death certificates and mental health data provides us with valuable insight into the lives of individuals caught up in acts of lethal violence. In order to make the best use of court records a survey-like format was employed to facilitate the extraction of specific information that would give us a clearer picture of events leading up to the eventual outcome. This format also enabled us to identify a number of problem behaviors and social characteristics, e.g., gang membership, prior drug and alcohol-related problems and mental health problems, of participating individuals to help explain their vulnerability and propensity to engage in acts of violence.

In each event we were able to place individuals possessing the traits of interest in neighborhoods in which their earlier and later socialization took place. One very important additional piece of information drawn from records in both juvenile and

adult courts was the number of previous contacts that the participating individuals, victims and offenders, had had with the criminal justice system.

Changing Activity Patterns of Juvenile Victims and Offenders

The current epidemic of heightened violence in the nation's larger inner cities essentially differs from that of a generation ago by its more extensive involvement of juveniles and young adult males as both victims and offenders. The greater participation of youth in acts of violence is frequently attributed to increased gang involvement (Meehan and O'Carroll, 1992; Bjerregaard and Lizotte, 1995; Short, 1996), increased involvement by youth in the sale and distribution of drugs (Altschuler and Brounstein, 1991; Prothrow-Stith, 1992), and finally the growing demand for firearms by youth who perceive themselves to be in need of self protection (Prothrow-Stith, 1992; Zimring, 1995; Blumstein, 1995). Thus, Gangs, Drugs and Guns often provide the easy answer to the sudden upsurge in violence across the nation's cities. This may be too easy an answer, but we will nevertheless keep it in the forefront of our thinking as we attempt to explain the level of homicide victimizations in the city of Milwaukee during the last two years of a five-year period in which homicide levels were tracked. It is true that during the last two years of the interval a marked

increase in juvenile victimizations, and an even more abrupt increase in juvenile offenses, were taking place.

The Code of The Streets

It is said that a code of the streets has evolved among the current generation of youth growing up in poor inner cities in which the use of violence or the threat of the use of violence is pervasive (see Anderson, 1994; Anderson, 1997). More recently Wilkinson and Fagan (1996) have pursued this notion among a group of inner city youth in a low income New York City neighborhood. They found guns to play an important role in the scripted behavior that young black males, in particular, brought to street corner confrontations. More precisely they say, "Adolescent gathering locations are "hot spots" of violence where weapons are part of the scenario of fighting" (p. 82).

While only a small percentage of adolescent males constitute the core of the emerging street culture, the demand for guns on the part of youths who are residents of these neighborhoods is more widespread. That demand in part is fueled by the need for protection, but the symbolism associated with gun ownership is also believed to be important (Wilkinson and Fagan, 1996). We will attempt to measure indirectly how widespread the street culture is among our juvenile victims and offenders by assessing the prevalence of gang membership, the prevalence of

gun killings and the prevalence of drug and alcohol use among youthful victims and offenders.

Gang Membership

The growth of gangs is said to have proliferated nationally during the 1980s (Klein, 1995) moving from larger to smaller urban places across the nation. The motivation for gang growth does not appear to be well understood other than that gangs seem to provide a source of both protection and a feeling of belonging among male youths, particularly those who have grown up in poor neighborhoods in which nuclear family households constitute a substantial minority. Jankowski (1991) has said that gangs tend to attract defiant personalities, those who appear to have a weak commitment to mainstream norms. In neighborhoods with a strong gang presence, neighbors must frequently adapt to the gang presence as a means of providing themselves some protection from the violence that pervades the neighborhood (Puntenney, 1997). While gangs are generally viewed as a negative force in communities in which they are found, there is evidence of cooperation between gangs and other households in some poor neighborhoods (Venkatesh, 1997). It is not known if that is an isolated phenomenon confined to neighborhoods in which life is extremely difficult.

The Growth of Gangs in Milwaukee

Milwaukee, like other large urban centers located in the shadow of an even larger urban center with a history of a substantial gang presence, has seen the growth of its own gangs in recent years. During the 1950s gangs were known to be present in Milwaukee, but on a limited scale. Hagerdorn (1988) and Moore and Hagerdorn (1988) provide us with the most thorough understanding of gang formation in Milwaukee that is available in the literature. The dramatic growth of gangs in the early 1980s provided evidence that there was an incipient gang presence in the city. Thus, the growth of gangs in Milwaukee partially parallels the rise of homicide victimizations, especially those involving young black males. Gang lifestyles involving drug use and fighting lend themselves to involvement in acts of lethal violence. We will now attempt to learn just how important the presence of gangs has been in promoting acts of lethal violence in the city in 1992 and 1993.

Fifty-four gang members were involved in the juvenile fatal confrontations taking place in 1992-93. Thirteen of those individuals were victims; 41 were offenders known to have gang ties based on information taken from court records. Fewer than two-fifths of the victims were reported to have gang affiliations whereas more than four-fifths of the offenders were identified in the official files as holding gang memberships. These data demonstrate a relatively broad affiliation on the part of street gang members in interactions that led to death, but especially

among those who have been charged as offenders. These data, however, do not necessarily demonstrate that the acts in which the victims and offenders engaged were gang related. They do suggest, however, that persons having gang affiliations are prone to engage in acts of violence, even when the circumstances and motivation do not seem to be gang-related.

The Ethnic Composition of Milwaukee Gang Membership

In the ethnic breakdown of gang members where 13-17 year old black males predominate, followed by same age Hispanic males. Given the differences in the sizes of the above two populations, the data suggests an equilikely probability of affiliation with groups designated as gangs or at least with gang-related homicides. Two black female gang members were victims, while white and Asian males were more likely to be offenders. Black males were four times as likely to be offenders than victims, while Hispanic males were slightly more likely to be offenders than victims. At this point we are not able to determine the motivation of these gang affiliated killings, a topic we will address later.

A similar pattern of gang affiliations is associated with those aged 18-19 and 20-24. Young adults, like their juvenile peers, also seemed to have developed an affinity for gangs. Black and Hispanic male predominance holds in the older age groups just

as it did in the younger group. It is only at ages 25 and older that gang affiliation sharply diminishes. In the 20-24 age group the gap between black and Hispanic male gang memberships narrows to the point at which there is a slight Hispanic male predominance.

Gang affiliation is something that is strongly associated with youth and, as our records show, persons having such identities were widely involved in killings taking place in 1992-93 in Milwaukee. Most such individuals were offenders engaged in multi-offender victimizations.

Gang Related Homicides

Based on official sources it is evident that persons affiliated with gangs were involved in homicide victimizations among both juveniles and young adults. This suggests that the circumstances associated with victimization may differ sharply among the younger age groups and older age groups. Among the explanations offered for the recent upsurge in victimization is the larger role of gang involvement. A growing number of such homicides are described as gang related. The definition of gang related killings varies across jurisdictions, often making it difficult to compare the phenomena from place to place.

A recent article by Hutson and Others (1995) demonstrates the changing prevalence of gang-related killings in Los Angeles

County over a 15-year period. These authors show that gang related killings moved from 18.1 percent of the total at the beginning of the period to 43.0 percent of the total by the end of the period. Their definition of gang-related killing, however, is based on whether either party, victim or offender, was known to hold a membership in a gang.

The above definition is very liberal and might best be labeled gang-affiliated homicide. A more precise definition would be one that showed that gang membership was directly or indirectly associated with the motivation for the offense. The data that we drew upon does just that.

From the court records we were able to extract information that described in some detail the circumstances leading to death. From our life history survey we were able to secure information from offenders which described the motivation for their action. Thus we found a smaller percentage of victimizations attributed to gang-related actions than were found by Hutson and Others in Los Angeles County.

Gangs and Juvenile Killings

Gang-related killings accounted for more than three-fifths of the juvenile homicides taking place in 1992 and 1993. Clearly then gang-related killings represent the single most important subgroup in the juvenile homicide count. Young black males were the primary targets followed by Hispanic males and black females.

The circumstances surrounding these killings seem to be both expressive and instrumental. Retaliatory strikes against rival gangs, turf wars, and conflicts arising in social settings, e.g., parties, tend most often to represent the circumstances out of which the resulting killings occur. Retaliatory strikes often were associated with drive by shootings leading to the killing of an innocent bystander.

Gang Killings At Older Ages

The second largest group of victims were 18 and 19 years old. Few victims were found among those 20-24 years old. Only one victim was older than 25. Offender ages basically mirrored those of the victims, but were more than twice as numerous. Most gang-related homicides involved multiple offenders with ages similar to those of the victims. A gun was employed in each of the killings. The official data often show that each of the persons charged with the killing was carrying a gun, although most often one individual was identified as the shooter. Guns then represent an important tool of gang members. Bjerregaard and Lizotte (1995) recently concluded that "Gangs appear more likely to recruit from juveniles who already own guns" (p. 53).

The Gang-Drug Connection

Gang-drug connections are reported as widespread both by the media and among academics as well. But there was almost no

evidence linking gang violence to drug sales or distribution among our observed gang-related victimizations. This is not to suggest that gangs are not involved in drug-related activity as Hagerdorn (1995) has demonstrated that they are. But he is careful to point out that those gang members he interviewed were more often freelance distributors of drugs, rather than sellers representing a collectivity.

Not since the demise of the Brothers of Struggle (BOS), in 1989, has gang involvement in the drug trade been found to be extensive. Thus, in the early years of the decade we found little evidence that conflicts growing out of drug disputes were associated with gang-related killings. On the other hand, gang-related killings at this juncture appear far more likely to be associated with gang rivalries and vendettas for previous attacks or threats. Also, since gang members tend to be well armed and on occasion are observed to fire wildly into crowds, non-gang members, or bystanders, are likely to be victimized.

Gang Victimizations and Neighborhoods of Offending

As with juvenile victimizations in general, gang-related killings often took place in the poorest neighborhoods in the city. Only two of the twenty-one juvenile victimizations in our sample occurred outside of concentrated poverty neighborhoods. Two-thirds of these victimizations took place in poor black

neighborhoods, while one-third occurred in poor Hispanic neighborhoods. If gang-related killings are a good indicator of the location of juvenile gang activity, it becomes clear that serious gang problems exist in some of the poorer black and Hispanic neighborhoods. Extreme poverty neighborhoods tend to predominate in both instances. The question that now arises is, do those involved in gang-related killings live in the neighborhood in which the incident takes place, in nearby neighborhoods or in neighborhoods remote from the site of the victimization? The answer to this question may provide additional insight into understanding gang-related killings.

The Victimization Neighborhood and Neighborhood of Residence

Most victims of gang-related victimizations were killed in the neighborhoods where they resided or in nearby neighborhoods. Offenders too tended to come from adjacent or nearby neighborhoods. Occasionally though, the victim's residence was remote from the site of the victimization. What was also striking in the two cases involving a mixed ethnic group of offenders, i.e., black and Hispanic males, was that the mixed group of offenders resided in their own ethnic-specific enclaves. Only a single victim did not reside in the city, but was a resident of Chicago. The general nearness of residence between victims and offenders suggests that they at least on occasion could have had contact with one another.

Circumstances of Gang-Related Killings

A review of the circumstances associated with our gang related killings suggest that more than half of these confrontations were intentional. That is, offenders sought out rival gang members, either as identifiable individuals or any member of a rival group, to extract a measure of vengeance. Retaliation for some previous affront or attack often constituted the basic motivation for the lethal attack. On some occasions, however, rival gang members unintentionally came together on the street or as one group passed another group while passengers in automobiles, at which time a shootout occasionally occurred. Other contacts between rival gangs were less clear cut, occurring over a range of circumstances, e.g., attending common parties. Since gang members tend often to carry guns any confrontation between rival gang members possesses the potential for violence.

To this point we have essentially drawn upon court records in gathering insight into the circumstances associated with gang related killings. A number of the offenders involved in gang related killings participated in our life history survey and responded to questions that sought to elicit directly from them the circumstances that led up to the victimization; if they were long or short term residents of their pre-incarceration neighborhoods; if they were employed or in school at the time of the incident; were they drug dependent and/or regular users; and finally what was the image they largely held of themselves.

Likewise, the next of kin responses to the same or similar questions enabled us to gain some measure of how victims and offenders differed from one another. Victims who themselves were not gang members, we would hypothesize, would differ more from offenders than would victims who were also gang members.

Gang-related killings were identified through a review of court records describing the actions of the parties involved. The descriptions provided by those records were generally unambiguous regarding the circumstances leading up to death. But we thought it important to have the offender state in his own words the circumstances and/or motivation for the killing. Unlike the project reviewer, the offender often cited multiple circumstances and/or motivations, leading us to raise questions regarding which of the perceived circumstances was paramount.

Gang-Related Offenders' Perception Of Motivation Leading to Death

Of 20 respondents, only 10 interpreted the killing as gang motivated, and even then additional motivations were cited in more than half of the responses. The offenders tended to view the situation which led up to death as more complex than did project classifiers. It appears that the emotions and/or actions immediately preceding the act (e.g., anger, argument) often defined the event from the offenders' perspective. What is more problematic is that half of the offenders failed to identify gang conflict at all among the circumstances or motivations cited.

Three indicated that an argument was primarily responsible for the outcome, while an additional two respondents cited drug activity as the motivation. One indicated that the motivation was robbery, while still another reported he did not know.

These latter responses do not summarily negate our original categorizations, but they certainly do suggest that in the mind of some offenders other motivations transcend gang involvement in importance when trying to account for the circumstances leading up to death. For instance, offenders would often report that they were at the wrong place at the wrong time, a response that suggests the fatal act was a function of fate.

Migrants As Offenders

The mobility characteristics of individuals is often employed to define them in terms of their cultural origins, degree of assimilation and fit with the neighborhood of residence. In our life history survey questions of origin, length of residence, neighborhood mobility, and perceptions regarding neighborhood characteristics were raised. Based on the offender responses to these questions we should be able to address the role mobility plays in directing individuals into specific cultural and/or social niches. Likewise the issue of migrant status and its impact on one's world and/or cultural predilections will also be addressed. For instance, earlier upturns in urban homicide rates have been attributed to the

impact of a regional culture of violence and/or subculture of violence (see Wolfgang, M. and Ferracuti, 1967; Loftin, C. and Hill, R., 1974; Huff-Corzine, L., Corzine, and Moore, D.C., 1986). While the debate over the validity of the subculture of violence continues (see Cao and Jensen, 1997) it seems still unresolved. Therefore, we will examine the migrant patterns of those offenders identified with gang related killings as a means of ascertaining if migrants differ from non-migrants.

Migrants made up almost two-thirds of the offenders associated with gang related killings, with 53.0 percent of those originating in the Chicago metropolitan area. Other large urban centers identified as migrant source locations were Miami and Memphis. A number of small urban places also served as points of origin, all of them small Midwestern centers. Only one migrant was of foreign origin. Most migrants arrived in Milwaukee as juveniles or young children. They were almost equally divided among persons who had lived in the city for more than five years, but less than ten years. The question is, did migrant origins play any role on their involvement in gang activity and do they tend to differ in any substantial way from their offending peers who had lived all of their lives in Milwaukee?

We have already established that all of our offenders resided in extreme poverty neighborhoods. Now we know that most of the offenders associated with gang-related killings lived elsewhere before their families took up residence in some of

Milwaukee's poorer neighborhoods. Some were primarily socialized elsewhere (those arriving in Milwaukee as early or late teens, while others were socialized in local neighborhoods. What we wanted the offenders to tell us was, had the neighborhoods in which they resided at the time of the incident changed during the previous five years and if so, how had they changed?

Neighborhoods Undergo Change

Most respondents indicated that the neighborhood they resided in at the time of the incident had changed for the worse in the previous five years, leading them to be viewed as unsafe. When asked how the neighborhoods had changed, they cited rising levels of violence associated with increased drug and gang activity. The perceived negative changes were attributed almost twice as often to drug activity as to gang activity. Respondents also reported an increase in random shootings. The perceptions of neighborhood change could not be distinguished based on migrant status. Migrants were as likely as non-migrants to report evidence of neighborhood deterioration.

School and Employment Status

Since most respondents were juveniles or young adults we sought information that would denote their school or employment status. The literature that addresses issues of urban poverty informs us that adults residing in extreme poverty neighborhoods

have a weak attachment to the labor force (see Wilson, 1987), and it is not unusual to find more than 50 percent not in the labor force (Jargowsky, 1996). At the same time we are informed that school dropout rates in such neighborhoods are high. This is often employed as evidence of underclass behavior (see Ricketts and Sawhill, 1988) and suggests that some residents in extreme poverty neighborhoods find the underground economy more attractive and lucrative than the formal economy.

Given that almost one-half of the offenders were juveniles, one might logically assume that a substantial share would still be enrolled in school. On the contrary, most had withdrawn from school. Of these, most withdrew between grades nine and eleven; one person withdrew prior to entering high school. The pattern among young adults differed little from that of juveniles, although two young adults reached the twelfth grade before dropping out. Only one of the reporting offenders stated that he had completed high school.

Drug Related Victimizations

In the period since the mid-1980s a growing drug traffic involving youth, especially black males, has received widespread attention. The growth of drug trafficking has been adjudged by a wide variety of professionals and lay persons alike as the chief contributor to the observed increase in killings. The

primary culprit in this new wave of violence is often identified as crack cocaine, a transformed product derived from powder cocaine, that first appeared in some local markets as early as 1984 (Massing, Oct. 1, 1989). The transformed product was inexpensive to process and thus opened up new markets for those engaged in cocaine distribution. Cocaine, which had served as the drug of preference of the middle classes in the late 1970s and early 1980s, was now available to the poor at a fraction of the earlier cost. Crack was said to have replaced heroin as the drug of choice of the poor and thus new crack cocaine markets were being developed across the breadth of the nation (Massing, Oct. 1, 1989).

Youth Involvement In Drug Markets

Youth became heavily involved in the business as low level suppliers who were able to earn more through their participation in the illicit economy than from participation in the formal economy given their limited investment in human capital (Fagan, 1992). Some local communities were devastated by the new drug's arrival as demand began to skyrocket and youth fought over the control of favored distribution territories and local sale sites (Massing, 1989; Goldstein and Others, 1990; Jones, 1992). Several urban centers with large poor populations were early to engage in the development of drug markets, e.g., Los Angeles, Washington, D.C. and New Orleans, with the latter two soon to become sites of

dramatic increases in the number of homicide victimizations. The question becomes, how important have new drug markets been in elevating homicide levels in Milwaukee and to what extent have drug related killings added substantially to the city's homicide count in the early 1990s? Moreover, how do drug related killings differ from gang related killings in terms of the prevalence of juvenile and young adult involvement.

Among identified victims and offenders in Milwaukee, drug use was widespread. A larger number of offenders had a record of drug use than did victims. More than four fifths of the offenders (81.8 percent) had a prior record, whereas only 43.0 percent of victims had a history of drug use. But at the time of death only 22.4 percent of victims tested positive for drugs ingested shortly before death. Of those testing positive, the drug that showed up most often was cocaine.

Offenders were somewhat more likely to have reported the use of marijuana than cocaine, although victims displayed a slight preference for cocaine. What was revealing was that only a limited number of victims and offenders admitted to using crack cocaine. We are uncertain if this means that crack cocaine had not penetrated the local drug market or if cocaine users simply failed to distinguish cocaine in the powder form from that in the smokeable form. The failure of the record to generally distinguish powder cocaine users from crack cocaine users makes it difficult to estimate the strength of demand for crack cocaine

in local drug markets.

The ratio of drug users among victims to those among offenders increased with age. Juvenile victims were less than one-fourth as likely to report a record of drug use as were juvenile offenders. A similar ratio held true for 18 and 19 year old victims and offenders. Twenty to twenty-four year old victims were about half as likely to exhibit a history of drug use as offenders. But victims and offenders aged 25 years and older were equally likely to demonstrate a history of drug use.

The prevalence of drug use among victims and offenders also differed. That difference was most magnified between juvenile victims and offenders than in other age groups (see Table 4). Fewer than one-third of juvenile victims had a history of drug use, whereas juvenile offenders had a prevalence rate of 70.0 percent. This difference may in part represent the higher percent of females among victims than among offenders. None of the juvenile females in the sample had a history of drug use. Among victims drug use rises with age through age 20-24, after which it declines. Among offenders, however, Table 4 reveals little difference in the history of drug use across the four age groups identified above. Does this suggest that victims and offenders are drawn from different populations? At this point that question cannot be answered.

The involvement of individuals in drug-related killings has been shown to be widespread. What we have demonstrated is a

demand for drugs by drug users. Given the characteristics of the primary community of socialization, i.e., extreme poverty

Table 4
The Drug History Prevalence Rate Among
Victims and Offenders by Age Group

<u>Age</u>	<u>Prevalence Rates</u>	
	<u>Victim</u>	<u>Offender</u>
13-17	32.3%	70.0%
18-19	56.2%	72.9%
20-24	70.0%	73.0%
≥25	59.1%	67.8%

Source: Information derived from Milwaukee County Court Records

neighborhoods, it should come as no surprise that drug use among youth is high.

In such communities many parents and other mature adults have a high propensity for drug use. Thus, youngsters are frequently exposed to the drug-using habits of members of their families, as well as those of their neighbors. Yet it has been reported that youth have been less attracted to crack cocaine than have their older age neighbors. The most frequently stated aversion to crack cocaine, by youth, is its negative impact on one's physical being, as well as its ability to produce early addiction. This knowledge has not seemed to dampen the eagerness of youth to sell the product, even when they decline to join the

legion of users.

Drug Sellers

In neighborhoods in which jobs have disappeared and where remaining low paying service jobs are disdained by prospective entrants to the labor force, jobs in the informal economy often have added appeal. What we will do here is detail the extent to which offenders were engaged as sellers of illegal drugs. The focus on offenders is simply a function of available data. When we asked offenders how they spent their waking hours prior to incarceration they often reported holding jobs in the formal and informal economies. Those identifying themselves as participants in the informal economy stated that they engaged in the sale and distribution of drugs. These responses were extracted from our life history survey. The description that follows will show how pervasive this group's participation was in the local drug economy.

Fortified drug houses began to appear in Milwaukee in 1988. They were distributed broadly throughout the city's black community. While most were located in extreme poverty neighborhoods, others were found outside these neighborhoods. The greatest concentrations, however, were in some of the city's poorest neighborhoods. Neighborhoods of high absolute risk for homicide were among those in which drug houses were more often found. These drug houses were established before crack cocaine

became a drug of substantial importance in the local market. By 1993, however, crack cocaine had begun to challenge powder cocaine for dominance, if we can use the ratio of felony arrests for possession of these two drugs as an indicator, i.e., 1,900 powder cocaine arrests to 1,100 crack cocaine arrests. Most of these arrests were made in concentrated poverty neighborhoods, but by 1993 such arrests were being made beyond the boundary of such neighborhoods.

It has been reported that as youth become more widely involved in drug selling and drug using their involvement in criminal activity in general increases, but especially in acts of violence. Altshuler and Brounstein (1991) found that juveniles from one of Washington, D.C.'s poorest neighborhoods, who reported that they had used or sold drugs during the past year, were also highly likely to report that they carried a concealed weapon, i.e., used drugs only, 31 percent, sold drugs only, 71 percent. Thus, the potential for violence was shown to escalate as drug sales became commonplace in individual neighborhoods.

In the above study it was reported that 31.0 percent of the sellers had seriously attacked another individual during the previous year and that 14.0 percent of the sellers had shot, stabbed, or killed someone. Prothrow-Stith (1992) in describing one New York City public housing project which had become the site of crack cocaine trafficking said, "the Castle Hill projects had been over-run by crack dealers who had sucked the sense of

safety and security from the daily existence of project residents. Gunfire had become common at the project" (p. 112). More recently, Baumer (1994) has specifically demonstrated a statistically significant association between the prevalence of crack use and city homicide rates in a sample of 24 cities that just failed to reach statistical significance.

While we are uncertain how important crack cocaine is in the local market place, we know it was gaining ground on powder cocaine in 1993. While there were fewer juvenile victims in 1993 than in 1992, the converse was true of juvenile offenders, which increased by 72.0 percent over the two years under review. The actual number of drug-related killings occurring during the above interval, i.e., involving individuals in the sample, was 16, or slightly fewer than one-fifth of the total sample victimizations. Young adults (11) were somewhat more likely to become targets of victimization than were juveniles (5), whereas in gang-related killings juveniles (10) just slightly outnumbered young adults (9) in terms of total victimizations. Drug-related killings less often involved multiple offenders as had been the case in gang-related killings.

The Circumstances Of Drug-Related Killings

Drug-related killings like gang-related killings grow out of a variety of circumstances. Almost a decade ago Goldstein and Others (1989) formulated a framework for identifying the

circumstances out of which drug-related killings occur. That framework suggested that all drug related killings could be defined as belonging to one of three categories: 1) psychopharmacological; 2) economic compulsive; 3) systemic. The first two categories reflect the influence of drugs on individual behavior and the crimogenic behavior of individuals who are attempting to satisfy their drug needs. The former two classes of drug related violence were more commonplace in the 1970s when heroin constituted the drug of choice (see Haberman and Baden, 1978). The third category, systemic, constitutes the category with which most recent drug related killings are associated. Systemic killings are primarily associated with conflicts that grow out of sales and distribution of cocaine. Goldstein and Others (1989) demonstrated, utilizing New York City data, that most systemic killings grow out of territorial disputes, robbery of drug dealers, assaults to collect debts, and disputes over drug thefts. We use the above motivations in describing the drug-related killings taking place in Milwaukee in 1992-1993.

Our sample for 1992-93 included 16 drug victimizations. These were cases identified as drug-related after a review of court records describing the circumstances of death. All but one of the cases reviewed clearly fell into one or more of the categories identified above. In one case the decision to include it in the above group required a judgment call. One case appears to fall in the category of psychopharmacological. This represents

an instance in which a boyfriend and girlfriend were visiting a drug house and the girlfriend attempted to convince her boyfriend to purchase additional drugs for her consumption. His failure to comply with this request led her to inform him that she was leaving him, at which time he shot her. All of the other cases clearly fit within Goldstein's definition of systemic killings.

The specific motivations associated with systemic killings are detailed as follows. The robbery or attempted robbery of drug dealers accounted for the largest share of all of the observed drug-related killings (37.5 percent). The second largest number of such killings were associated with robbery or attempted robbery of drugs from a drug house. Interpersonal conflict occurring between persons regarding their share of the available drug ranked third. All other systemic motives accounted for less than seven percent each among the remaining categories.

The Site of Drug Killings

The above victimizations were largely divided between drug house killings and street killings. A small number of persons were killed while seated in an automobile, usually in an alley. Persons accused of stealing from dope houses were almost always killed while visiting a dope house. Attempted robberies of drug dealers occurred at all of the possible sites. What came as a surprise was the relative unimportance of territorial conflict. We are unsure if this reflects stability in drug markets or the

calm before the storm. We say this because of what appears to represent only a modest penetration of crack cocaine into the local drug market. Perhaps the most vicious of all of the drug killings during this two-year period was one in which turf issues were at stake. In this instance three juvenile girls, who were visiting one of the girl's boyfriend at a rival drug house were execution style killed.

A Comparison of Drug and Gang-Related Killings

Drug-related victims were generally older than the victims of gang-related killings. Their average age was 22.3 years and juvenile victims accounted for fewer than one-third of their total number. This represents a logical expectation considering the mean age of the operators of drug houses. Yet, on the other hand, offenders in these drug-related killings tended to be somewhat younger than their victims (\bar{x} =19.8 years). Juveniles 17 years of age or younger were involved in acts of drug-related violence in almost equal percentages as victims (33.0 percent) or offenders (34.7 percent).

There was a noted gender difference in terms of the role of victims and offenders in these killings. As it turned out all offenders were male, but more than one-fifth of the victims were female. It should be noted, however, that the extent of female involvement was essentially elevated by a single event in which

three juvenile females were killed. In no instance were females involved in the drug trade, but were innocent bystanders, who, in all but one case, were caught up in a retaliatory strike. This is not to say that local females are never involved in drug trafficking; Sikes (1997) reminds us of the exploits of Lady Sheik, a well known activist in the drug trade, who was the victim of a drug-related killing in 1991. But more commonly as young females seek the companionship of males active in the drug trade they increase their potential risk for victimization.

Most drug-related killings took place in extreme poverty neighborhoods, but a few such killings occurred in neighborhoods that were remote from such locations. While most victims and offenders were highly likely to reside in extreme poverty neighborhoods, a small number in each group had established residence outside the above cluster. Offenders rather than victims were more likely to venture into these zones to engage in drug-related activity, but only by a small margin. Thus, both drug killings and gang killings were largely confined to high risk extreme poverty neighborhoods. The former group, more so than the latter, would on occasion engage in acts of lethal violence outside these high risk areas. Because our observations are based on small numbers, we are not certain what accounts for the minor observed variations in the pattern of victimization neighborhoods.

Perpetrators of drug-related killings, like those associated

with gang killings, almost solely relied on guns as the weapon of choice. In only a single instance was something other than a gun employed in the act of killing someone who had offended the perpetrator. In that instance the perpetrator used body force. In both groups a broad range of guns were used, based on caliber, but with edge being given to high caliber weapons. Long guns were only utilized by those associated with drug-related killings. The mean number of perpetrators was larger in gang-related incidents than drug-related incidents, suggesting that a larger number of weapons were present at the site of gang-related killings.

The Role of Guns On Increasing Rates of Victimization

Gang-related killings and drug-related killings among our study subjects were almost exclusively associated with gun availability. Since most of these victimizations were thought to be instrumental in nature it is only logical that guns would constitute the weapon of choice. The issue which we are attempting to resolve, however, is, were guns less readily available, would the level of victimization have been lower? We have attempted to tie this issue to Anderson's (1994) acknowledgement of the existence of a code of the streets, which is believed to be most highly developed within extreme poverty black neighborhoods. The code, as it were, appears most often to be embraced by young black males who view its tenets as a blue

print for survival in dangerous environments. Wilkinson and Fagan (1996) have gone even further by suggesting that young men residing in these neighborhoods have developed scripts that guide their responses to the carrying and use of weapons. Beyond the perceived instrumental value of owning or having access to a gun, guns are also said to have a symbolic value. On this issue Wilkinson and Fagan (1996) expressly state "They had a symbolic meaning in addition to their instrumental value, and generally represented a threshold of commitment to street life" (p. 68).

Street life in the 1990s is undergirded and perpetuated by perceptions among adolescents that the formal economy provides them with insufficient financial rewards to enable participation in burgeoning consumer markets. The ever-growing array of desirable status-producing goods seems out of reach to them. This theme was recently advanced by Nightingale (1993) who states the following: "...kids' craving for things has gotten more persistent, and demands for now outrageously expensive symbols of belonging and prestige have begun earlier in life" (p. 153). There is growing evidence a small segment of this population rejects many mainstream values other than those that emphasize material consumption (see Donaldson, 1993; Derber, 1996; Haymes, 1995).

The contention here is that the environments of extreme deprivation, where a minority of parents of adolescents have themselves fallen victim to their surroundings, children both

seek an alternative to the lives of their parents, and at the same time, inadvertently follow in their footsteps. Thus, gangs are sometimes described as families, filling the roles of failed parents. Involvement in the drug economy represents the second leg of this stool, as it provides the monetary resources that allows participation in the consumer economy. It allows members of the low-wage service economy to acquire otherwise unavailable status-conferring consumer products. But in order to become a regular participant in either or both of the above described activities, a gun is a required tool.

Blumstein (1995) is of the opinion that the drug trade initially stimulated the demand for guns, which was followed by a diffusion of excess guns across a broader segment of the youth population. Likewise Bjerregaard and Lizotte (1995) contends that black inner city youth perceive a need to own guns for protection, but that known owners are then recruited by gangs. The primary thrust of this discussion is that adolescent and young adult participation in varying aspects of street life has intensified the demand for guns and as access has increased so has the frequency of gun use and consequently the number of gun deaths.

What we will do now is to draw upon our primary data resources, i.e., life history surveys and court records, to determine how well the previous generalized description assists in explaining the heightened frequency of victimization among

juveniles and young adults in Milwaukee during 1992-93. A loosely defined street culture was employed as a way to address the latest iteration of youthful proclivities toward non-mainstream lifestyles. We could have rationally included robbery-related homicide among this group, but because it came to prominence a generation earlier we did not include it in this discussion. Thus, we will now have an opportunity to compare victimizations growing out of involvement in gangs and drug related activity with that associated with other arguments, e.g., interpersonal conflict, robbery, child abuse and accidental killings. Some of the latter victimizations, too, will involve actions associated with street life, but we anticipate that they will less often involve juveniles and a street orientation that shows a strong antipathy toward mainstream culture will be less prevalent.

The nature of the two previously described street activities is thought to have stimulated the demand for guns by those who participate in these activities. Sheley and Wright (1995), using a survey response, recently found that adolescents in their sample carried guns extensively when they were members of structured gangs and/or involved in drug sales. The above findings are largely replicated in our own findings relative to gang and drug related killings.

Since our concerns are more narrowly focused than those of Sheley and Wright, an even higher percentage of gun use and assumed gun carrying characterized offender behavior. More than

said just how much time the offender should have been given. Yet almost one-fifth (19.0 percent) were in favor of the offender receiving the death penalty. The views of the next of kin varied substantially by homicide type. Next of kin of victims associated with a drug-related killing were the strongest supporters of a life sentence (60 percent), while robbery-related kin were the least supportive of this sentence. The strongest supporters of the death sentence were next of kin of victims involved in other argument homicides (20 percent), followed by robbery-related victims' kin (16.6 percent). While offenders as a rule thought the sentences they received were excessive, the next of kin of victims generally found them too lenient. If the views of the next of kin had carried any weight almost one-fifth of the offenders would be sitting on death row.

How Do We Go About Lowering The Incidence of Homicide and Subsequently Homicide Risk

The current homicide epidemic, that got underway in the late 1980s and peaked in the early 1990s, is thought to have run its course in the nation's larger urban areas (Monkkonen, Los Angeles Times, Nov. 30, 1997). There is evidence, however, that the decline has not yet begun in a number of intermediate size places (Janofsky, New York Times, Jan. 15, 1998). The observed decline has been attributed to a variety of actions and attitudes, mostly conjectural. Among the most often cited reasons are innovative

police strategies and declining interest in crack cocaine as the drug of preference. Although annual numbers of homicides are down from their peak levels, have they bottomed out at a higher level than that which existed prior to the beginning of the upturn? If this is the case we may well expect the next cycle to reach still higher peak levels. To guard against that possibility it would seem reasonable to begin to plan now for the purpose of lowering new equilibrium levels as a means of reducing the height of subsequent peaks. In order to achieve this goal a robust effort will be required of all those agencies that have as their primary objective the promotion of public safety and development of safeguards to public health.

Efforts to prevent and intervene in actions that lead to violent death have begun to receive increased attention. But at the moment these efforts are diffuse and their effectiveness questionable. The primary agencies upon which we rely to assist us in reducing risk levels are associated with the criminal justice system and the public health establishment; the latter are relative newcomers to this action arena. Numerous secondary and tertiary agents are involved, but there is seldom cooperation among these entities, as the primary goal varies substantially among agencies. Yet each is able to contribute to devising risk lowering mechanisms. What is required, if we are to be able to pinpoint what works best, is cooperation between these various agencies toward the objective of lowering homicide risk. There is

some evidence of multi-agency cooperation in the Boston Gun Project (see Kennedy, Braga and Piehl, 1996).

But in order to effectively promote the above goal we must establish a base risk to serve as an upper limit of acceptability. We must then agree to engage in appropriate action to prevent risk from reaching or exceeding that critical level. The target base level is likely to vary from community to community as an outgrowth of the complexity of the forces responsible for promoting observed existing levels and the subsequent financial cost required to keep risk below the target level. If the lives of all citizens are equally valued, then we should be as willing to invest in reducing the loss of life by homicide as we are to invest in new prison facilities. If we are effective in lowering homicide risk, the demand for new penal facilities could be reduced by a factor of x.

As a result of the growing number of multiple offender homicides in Milwaukee and the subsequent high conviction rate, each victimization leads to a minimum of two incarcerations. Over a five year period we might expect the observed 766 victimizations to lead to in excess of 1,200 incarcerations. We did not use a multiplier of 2, as some persons charged with homicide were not convicted and some cases were never cleared. Thus, an effort to lower homicide risk levels just might be cost effective in reducing the pain and disruption in the lives of loved ones whose sons and daughters are the victims of senseless

acts of violence.

Having observed the pattern of homicide occurring in Milwaukee during a five year interval, with emphasis on the last two years, we see that homicide does not represent a randomly occurring event. It disproportionately targets black male adolescents and young adults. This is not to say that all lives lost are not equally valuable, but to simply note that if the lowering of risk is the primary goal, persons possessing the above traits represent the key to lowering risk. Other groups are secondary contributors to elevated risk. Rosenfeld and Decker (1993), who recently proposed a risk prevention strategy for the city of St. Louis, also noted that an effective risk reducing strategy should target those groups at highest risk of victimization. In St. Louis the target group was represented by black males, 15-29 years old. Thus, attention should be focused on groups at highest risk, but groups constituted by individuals at secondary risk should not be overlooked. This could be easily done if we simply utilize the annual number of victims as the sole measure of risk, as opposed to the number of victims per 100,000.

Homicide is not only non-randomly distributed among population subgroups, but is non-randomly distributed among locations of occurrence as well. In our earlier discussion of this issue we noted that two neighborhood clusters accounted for a disproportionate share of all the city's homicides throughout

the period under review. It appears that extreme high risk or dangerous neighborhoods, besides being characterized by extreme poverty, are also marked by a set of unique traits that sets them apart from other poor neighborhoods. We noted that high vacancy rates and the presence of commercial thoroughfares seem to distinguish between poor neighborhoods labeled dangerous and those that were not. Apparently this tentative conclusion requires further verification, but it does provide a set of clues that could enable us to establish a strategy that would allow us to continuously monitor established dangerous neighborhoods, while at the same time keeping an eye out for emerging dangerous neighborhoods. This should lead to cost effectiveness, in human as well as financial terms, as we attempt to alter the physical and socio-economic character of those neighborhoods of persistent elevated risk. Thus, any effort to sharply reduce risk should begin by identifying those neighborhoods in which risk is persistently high.

Efforts at homicide prevention have begun to pick up steam as more and more researchers and practitioners are beginning to render suggestions on how the problems might be approached. These recommended approaches are diverse, emanating as they do from a variety of academic disciplinary orientations and/or practitioner interests. Among the more common, however, are those that tend to be associated with efforts at crime prevention (see Bratton, 1997, Kelling and Coles, 1996) and/or efforts at peer mediation

and conflict resolution (see Prothrow-Stith, 1991; Rosenfeld and Decker, 1993). The latter efforts represent only a part of the arsenal often associated with the efforts of the public health establishment to contribute to a violence reduction strategy. Crime prevention approaches are generally more popular as the American public responding to the fear of possible victimization tend to be more supportive of these approaches. For instance, quality of life policing strategies have been hailed for making a major contribution toward lowering the homicide rate in New York City between 1994 and 1995. Bratton (1997) reported that the homicide level was lowered 31 percent during this interval. Nevertheless, public health approaches have gained ground in terms of acceptance after less than two decades of advocacy. Advocates of this approach view violence as a public health issue and one in which health related practitioners should be involved (see Rosenberg, 1996).

The Public Health Approach

The public health approach, as a formal effort to reduce violence was said to have been initiated in 1979 (Prothrow-Stith, 1991) with the strong advocacy of the Surgeon General. The primary operational arm of this approach is centered at the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta. In order to accommodate this approach the CDC added a unit that was designated The National Center for Injury Control and Prevention. The Center's

director expressed the belief that the problem of violence could not be effectively addressed by the Criminal Justice system alone. It was suggested that a collaborative effort was likely to produce better results in ameliorating the problem of violence, but especially violence growing out of interpersonal conflict.

Much of this violence, according to Rosenberg (1995), is an outgrowth of economic and social causes which have led to a decline in the social infrastructure in those environments where the problem of interpersonal violence is most acute. Having observed conditions in these environments and their perceived impact on heightening levels of violence researchers concluded that the public health model represented an effective tool that could be employed to address aspects of this problem.

The Structure of the Public Health Approach

The public health approach involves surveillance, data collection and analysis, education and awareness, and treatment. The strength of the public health approach is said to be its strong reliance on the scientific method and scientific reasoning (Rosenberg, 1995). Both Prothrow-Stith (1995) and Bell (1987), advocates of the public health model, describe its three basic prevention strategies as primary, secondary and tertiary. These strategies are designed to create an awareness of the problem and to educate the public regarding its seriousness, i.e., primary strategy; to provide treatment by intervening with persons at

high risk for victimization or offending, i.e., secondary strategy; and to provide treatment to those who have been injured, i.e., tertiary strategy. Bell, a psychiatrist who serves as the director of the Community Mental Health Council, a Chicago mental health center operating on the city's south side, has employed two of the above strategies in an effort to assist locally in ameliorating the problem of interpersonal violence. Prothrow-Stith, an internal medicine specialist, has also utilized these strategies in an effort to lower the risk of victimization in Boston's inner city.

Limitations of the Public Health Approach

Supporters of the public health model, which include members of the medical and health care establishment, while aware of the strengths of this approach are not blind to its weaknesses. The supporters of the public health approach are keenly aware that they must collaborate with criminal justice agencies and human services support agencies if they are to be effective in achieving the goal of violence prevention. They are also aware that their programs should be targeted at those at greatest risk.

A shortcoming of this approach is the slowness with which results are likely to be produced. Communities often seek quick results, but the imperative evaluation component of violence prevention programs will often further frustrate the production of early results. In order to overcome this shortcoming it has

97 percent of all killings in which gang conflict or drug activity were involved represented instances in which a gun or guns were the weapon of choice. Guns were utilized as the weapon of victimization in more than 72 percent of all victimizations in our sample, but it is evident that gun use is less prevalent in certain other situations leading to death. For instance, body force was used in 14.5 percent of sample victimizations, almost all of which were associated with child abuse.

Guns As a Tool in Youth Related Killings

Juvenile gun violence is said to be growing nationally (Fingerhut and Others, 1992). Most of that violence has been concentrated in the urban core of the nation's largest metropolitan areas. The rate of firearm homicide is highest among adolescent black males, a pattern of behavior which grew almost 30 percent between 1987 and 1989 (Fingerhut and Others, 1992). Wright, Sheley and Smith (1992) recently demonstrated that gun carrying among adolescents had reached alarming levels, and that more than four-fifths of incarcerated adolescents owned a gun at the time of incarceration. But the previous researchers were careful to point out that gun carrying and use by juveniles was largely confined to dangerous neighborhoods.

Harries and Powell (1994), employing a technique described as pattern analysis, utilizing data from the city of Baltimore,

shed additional light on the spatial pattern of juvenile gun crimes. They found most juvenile gun crimes in the study city occurred in or near a cluster of high stress neighborhoods. The first of the above researchers described the zone of juvenile gun assaults as "killing fields," while the second group identified above referred to the target zones as spaces within which social control and social cohesion were largely absent. Needless to say it appears that juvenile gun violence is becoming more commonplace in neighborhoods described by us as dangerous.

In Milwaukee, juvenile gun violence revealed a substantial increase between 1989-1991 and 1992-1993. In the most recent time period juvenile offenders, found guilty of committing a homicide, utilized a gun in 82.9 percent of all incidents involving a juvenile. Other age groups relied less on handguns than did our youngest killers (see Table 5). The observed differences are

Table 5
 Gun Use Prevalence in Homicide Victimizations
 By Offender Age 1992-1993

<u>Age of Offender</u>	<u>Prevalence of Gun Victimization</u>
13-17 year olds	82.9%
18-19 year olds	46.9%
20-24 year olds	56.2%
≥25 year olds	61.1%

Source: Data drawn from Milwaukee County Court Records

partially explained by variations in the motivations and circumstances surrounding the event, as well as the gender of the offender. Since 13-17 year old males are most likely to be involved in instrumental acts of victimization, it is they who most often perceive the need to carry a gun.

Likewise, it is youth who are most likely to spend large blocks of time on the street and especially on streets where danger is believed to lurk who feel the need to carry a gun. Both Wright and Sheley (1995) and Lizotte and Others (1994) found that such youth indicated a need for guns to provide them with a feeling of self protection. Wright and Sheley indicated that self protection was a much more important motivation for carrying a gun than the symbolic value that was discussed earlier.

Local youth, too, demonstrated a preference for large caliber weapons over small caliber weapons. Thus, handguns of .38 caliber and above turned out to be the preferred guns of youth, although cheap small caliber weapons, e.g., .25 caliber Ravens, were a part of the mix. Local youth appeared not to differ from youth nationally in their preference for sophisticated high tech weapons, usually semi-automatic 9 millimeter guns of recent vintage.

Ownership and access to guns among our offenders varied by age group. Youth 15-19 represented the second highest ownership category (58.9 percent), but when coupled to access, the share rose to 91.8 percent. The vast majority of this juvenile and

young adult population was armed, and they also reported that most of the persons they knew were armed. This accords with national reports of adolescent gun ownership and access patterns.

The youngest members of our offender population (13-14) were all found to either own or have access to guns. Guns were owned by almost 90 percent of these youthful offenders. Young adult offenders (20-24) owned or had access to guns slightly less often than their younger peers (85.0 percent). Among this group, however, ownership was slightly more important than gaining access without making a purchase. There was a sharp drop off in both ownership and access among offenders 25 years and older. Among this group only 37.5 percent owned a gun at the time of the incident, while another 12.5 percent had access.

The offender responses clearly demonstrated that gun ownership and access decreased with the age of the offending group. The two younger of our offender populations were much more likely to own or have access to guns, at the time of the incident, than were our older groups.

We discovered that most juveniles and young adults owned or had access to guns at the time of the event. Not only that, but they favored the ownership of larger caliber guns. These were not individuals whose gun carrying experiences were likely to be confined to "Saturday Night Specials," which a number of groups had earlier wished to outlaw. The question before us now is, how important were parental influences on stimulating youth to arm

themselves based on the presence of guns in the home; especially guns maintained for home protection?

Lizotte and Others (1994) have demonstrated that in the case of guns used for sport, fathers often transmit this ownership pattern to their sons. This pattern was not observed to carry over among parents of guns held for protection. But they did find that peers who owned guns for protection had a strong influence on the gun carrying propensities of adolescents in their sample. Needless to say, we think it is important to discover how widely guns were found in the parental homes of the offenders in our sample.

The question posed to the respondent was, "Does your parent keep a loaded handgun in the house?" The question was worded in such a fashion as to implicitly suggest that a loaded firearm would only be maintained for the purpose of protection. Thus, if one were fearful that his home might be the site of a potential invasion, i.e., breaking and entering, there would be little reluctance to keep a loaded firearm in the home. Would this practice likely influence the willingness of individual household members to carry a weapon? That question cannot be answered with the data available. Nevertheless, the responses to the question varied noticeably according to the age of the respondent. In the aggregate, 69.7 percent of the respondents reported that their households were without a loaded handgun. Thus, a loaded handgun was present in slightly more than 30.0 percent of all households.

We are not certain what this level of loaded handgun presence suggests about neighborhood safety.

The youngest group of offenders, those under 15, reported no loaded handguns in the parental home, yet they possessed the highest likelihood of owning or having access to a handgun themselves. Almost two-fifths of the offenders aged 15-19 had come from homes where a loaded handgun was kept. While they themselves were highly likely to own a handgun, we are unable to tie that propensity to the gun owning practice of parents. Only one-fifth of the offenders 20-24 reported coming from households where loaded handguns were kept. But those 25 years or older reported that 37.5 percent of the households from which they came kept a loaded handgun. Caution is advised in terms of the responses of the youngest and oldest groups as they are based on small numbers. Nevertheless, it is clear that our offender sample had more than a slight familiarity with handguns, based on their presence in the home.

Peer Handgun Ownership

While it is clear that a substantial share of the offenders were from households where handguns were kept, it is not possible to directly link that experience with the gun owning or carrying behavior of the offenders themselves. A more conclusive link, however, seems to be related to the gun owning behavior of their peers. When the offenders were asked how many persons they knew

owned guns, they almost always responded that the number was large. In light of this response one is inclined to accept the position of Kennedy, Piehl and Bragha (1996) that fear is the essential element driving the demand for guns on the part of inner city youth. They assert that fear generates an independent influence that can be decoupled from the pressures of ownership generated by gang membership or participation in the drug economy.

If most persons believe that their peers own guns they too will seek to acquire guns to defend themselves against possible attack. When all offenders were asked why they armed themselves they listed in order of importance the following: 1) armed self against possible street attack (59.3 percent); 2) armed self for security reasons (20.9 percent); 4) armed self out of fear of home invasion (8.1 percent) 4) armed self for symbolic reasons (8.1 percent); 3) armed self as a standard tool of the trade (4.7 percent); and 5) armed self for other reasons (4.7 percent).

The widespread ownership and access to guns by juveniles and young adults is thought to play a major role in the increased risk of victimization in selected urban environments. A major issue, in this instance, the source of these weapons that appear so abundant that high school students report that guns can be acquired on very short notice when needed (Page and Hammermeister, 1997). Since youth under the age of 18 are ineligible to make a legal purchase, the guns held by our

juvenile offenders were illegally owned. Not only were they illegally owned, they were no doubt secured through illicit sources. A multiplicity of sources have been identified that may possibly supply the demands of youth, as well as others, who are seeking to acquire guns illegally. According to Kennedy, Piehl and Bragha (1996) these sources include "thefts from homes, thefts from gun dealers, improper sales from licensed dealers, private dealers, and diversion of guns obtained through legal purchase" (p. 151). While potentially the sources for such illegal weapons are numerous, Smith (1996) recently reported that most student respondents in his sample acquired handguns from friends, family members and the streets.

Handgun Source in Offender Sample

When members of our offender sample were asked the source of their weapons, most responded that they had acquired them in the street. All of the 13-14 year olds identified the street as their supply source. Twenty to twenty-four year olds were also highly dependent on street sources (90.0 percent). Fifteen to nineteen year olds were somewhat less dependent on street sources (68.5 percent). The least dependent on street sources were offenders 25 years and older (66.0 percent). The latter group, in terms of age, was eligible to do business with legitimate gun outlets, but still was primarily dependent upon illicit sources for guns. Only one respondent in the total offender sample reported acquiring a

gun from a gun store.

Although the vast majority of respondents indicated that they acquired guns in the street, the particular sources varied widely. In each instance, however, the primary street source was revealed to be friends and/or individuals associated with the drug business, as sellers or users. There was no indication of purchases from illicit gun dealers of the sort described as operating in Boston by Kennedy, Piehl and Bragha. Our offender sample defined street sources as sources that were distinct from gun store purchases. Thus, we are left without knowing where the primary providers themselves obtained the guns that eventually fell into the hands of our offender sample.

Our offender sample was highly dependent upon the availability of handguns. They seemed to encounter little difficulty acquiring handguns as needed, as seems to be true nationally. While handgun availability alone cannot explain the rise in homicide levels in the city of Milwaukee during the recent period, it certainly has added to elevated risk. Without access to guns the potential for wreaking havoc in poor neighborhoods would be lessened. Therefore, some system must be devised that would lower adolescent access to the broad arsenal of high caliber fire power if our dangerous neighborhoods are to become less dangerous. But guns are simply one element in the equation, albeit an important one.

Human Capital and Gang-Related Offenders

Gang-related offenders in our sample seemed to have little affinity for school. The dropout rate for this group exceeded 95.0 percent. Without adequate human capital this group should not be expected to fare well in the formal economy. As a matter of record, 54.0 percent reported that they had never held a full time job. Of those who had held full time jobs the occupation most often reported was that of stock clerk. The single high school graduate, however, held a job as the manager of a convenience store. It is apparent that a lack of adequate human capital hurt the offenders' job prospects, as many never interacted with the formal economy on an extended basis. Of course, part of this might be related to the youth of the offenders. At the time of the act of violence, for which they were later convicted, fewer than one-fourth were employed full time. The absence of employment and withdrawal from school provided this group with excessive discretionary time. Just how they spent this time reveals the group's basic orientation to life.

The Daily Activity Calendar

Offenders in our life history survey were presented with an activity calendar and were asked to describe how they spent their time during a typical week and weekend day. The calendar was

subdivided into five intervals, four of these intervals represented four-hour blocks of time, e.g., 4:00-8:00 P.M., while the fifth interval was spread over eight hours, i.e., 12:00 midnight to 8:00 A.M. The calendar was structured so as to account for expected periods of activity and periods of rest. The response of the offenders to this instrument was quite good. From the responses we were able to ascertain the amount of discretionary and non-discretionary time available to each offender. Moreover, the temporal activities engaged in by the offenders provided a rough indicator of the extent to which they were involved in street activity or non-street activity.

The Daily Activity Calendar of Gang-Related Offenders

Offenders known to be associated with gang-related killings exhibited a variety of daily activity patterns. In most instances though, these were individuals with a lot of discretionary time, as few were involved in the formal economy. These were individuals who spent excessive amounts of time hanging out with their friends. During periods of hanging out with their friends drug use was often in evidence. A minority of the offenders were in school or at work. Those who said they were in school were often in school for only a half day, while those who were enrolled for the full day made an easy transition to the streets after 4:00 P.M. Weekend patterns often mimicked weekday patterns for those who were neither in school nor in the formal work

force.

The period prior to noon, for those neither working nor in school, was a period spent resting, watching T.V. and/or preparing to meet friends in the street or at their homes. It was during the period from 4:00 P.M. til midnight that most engaged in conduct that might best be described as street activity. The activity in which most engaged between 4:00 P.M. and midnight was hanging out with friends. Many engaged in drug selling and partying during this period. The latter activity was most often described as a weekend activity. Thus, most of these offenders spent the equivalent of a work day "kicking it" with friends. Others combined the latter activity with drug selling as this often constituted their primary source of income.

Youngsters who were enrolled in school moved easily from school to the streets at the end of the school day. These were also youngsters who often indicated that they spent their evenings selling drugs. A minority of these offenders spent their days as most persons their age would be expected to do-in school or at work. Some were engaged in both activities. These were individuals whose weekday patterns and weekend activity patterns often differed. But for most, weekday activity patterns were indistinguishable from weekend patterns. These offenders represented a gregarious group with a need to be in the presence of their peers for extended periods of time.

How Other Offender Groups Spent the Period Between 4:00 P.M. and Midnight

Having established the hours between 4:00 P.M. and midnight as the time most offenders engage in range of activities that take them away from their place of residence, we will focus particular attention on this block of time relative to our remaining offender groups. Most individuals who are neither in the formal economy nor in school spend their morning activities at home entertaining themselves and preparing to hit the streets in the early afternoon. Drug-related offenders reported that during the hours between 4:00 P.M. and midnight that they were either selling drugs, hanging with friends or using drugs, in that order. Unlike gang-related offenders, who spent most of their time during this interval hanging with friends and secondarily selling drugs, the drug-related group's activities showed a reversal of that pattern, with drug selling representing the dominant activity.

Robbery-related offenders were more likely to report they attended school than other offender groups. Yet the activity in which most engaged between 4:00 P.M. and midnight was hanging with friends. This group also reported that this was the period in which they engaged in stealing, but on weekends the period was spent with girlfriends. Drug use was seldom reported by this group.

Other argument offenders represented a more diverse group than all of the others, at least in terms of how they spent their

discretionary time. In some ways, however, this group mimicked drug-related offenders in that the largest number reported they sold dope, just edging out those who reported that they spent most of their time hanging with friends. Using drugs and using alcohol tied for third position in terms of time spent during the target interval. Work and school were reported more frequently than by other groups. Because of the size differences among groups this is an unfair comparison among two of the groups. It is, however, a fair comparison of the time spent during the day for gang-related offenders. The most common ranking activities across groups was hanging with friends and selling dope. Only for robbery-related offenders was selling drugs not a ranking activity. On the other hand, no group, other than this one, reported stealing as a ranking activity.

The members of our offender sample spent their discretionary time in a variety of ways, but seldom was employment in the formal economy a ranking activity. These young men seemed to enjoy the company of their peers and likewise appeared committed to extracting financial gain through involvement in the local drug economy. We have no definitive answer for why they chose this route, but it apparently played more than a minor role in how they chose to spend their time.

Drug Use Among Gang-Related Offenders

Drug use is frequently associated with persons holding

memberships in gangs. Drugs are often used during parties sponsored by gangs. Since drug use is illegal, an acknowledgement of its use suggests a willingness to engage in illegal activity and participation in the local street culture. Among our offenders who were believed to have participated in a gang-related killing, 54.5 percent of those responding indicated that they were drug users. But only one in six indicated that they were drug addicted. The prevalence of drug use did not vary between migrants and non-migrants. Among users, marijuana far outstripped all other drugs as the drug of preference. Powder cocaine ranked second in terms of preference, but was always used in conjunction with marijuana. Not a single respondent indicated that crack cocaine was one of the drugs that they had used, although both LSD and PCP were identified by two respondents. The prevalence of drug use among offenders indicates a generally positive orientation towards street life.

Gang-Related Offenders Self Image

In a further attempt to discover the degree of street orientation of the interviewed offenders, we asked them to select from a set of responses the one best describing their own self image. Several offenders held multiple images of themselves, some of which were contradictory thus complicating our analysis. Persons viewing themselves as responsible individuals were thought less likely to possess a street orientation than persons

who viewed themselves as hustlers, i.e., living by their wits, or persons who identified themselves as individuals who acted first and asked questions later, i.e., impulsive. Less easily categorized were responses by offenders describing themselves as persons who like to have a good time. Persons who like to have a good time could be drug users, as well as more positively oriented individuals for whom having a good time could be interpreted in a more benign light. Thus, we are hard put to state where such persons fit within a street/non-street orientation.

One might ask whether it matters what image convicted killers hold of themselves since they have already committed a reprehensible crime. It matters, because it may provide a key to future behavior, since most of these persons will eventually be released from prison. It might be that the images people hold of themselves guide their everyday conduct including their past contacts with the criminal justice system. Moreover, do these purported self images differentiate these offenders from the remaining group of offenders (non-gang related)?

A Summary of Selected Gang-Related Offender Traits

In summary, it was found that all of the responding gang-related killers resided in extreme poverty neighborhoods. They were largely juveniles and had lived elsewhere prior to moving to Milwaukee at a relatively early age. Chicago was the most often

identified previous place of residence. Most had been in Milwaukee long enough to witness the deterioration of their neighborhoods. For whatever reason this group of offenders had a weak attachment to school and most of them eventually withdrew. The absence of adequate human capital appears to have influenced their success in the job market. Most had never held a full time job and only about one-fifth held jobs at the time of the incident. Given their propensity for drug use and the images they held of themselves it appears safe to conclude that most of these offenders could be described as possessing a street orientation. The operation of Anderson's code of the street appears to have been at work for this set of youthful male offenders.

Temporal Patterns of Victimization

Knowing how and with whom victims and offenders spent their days should provide some clues to the time of day and day of the week that is most likely to represent the interval at which fatal incidents take place. Among a population with excessive discretionary time it, however, becomes difficult to envision a time during the week that is more likely than another to represent the day or days in which a fatal incident is likely to take place. Historically, when most homicides were an outgrowth of interpersonal conflict it was the weekend that represented the interval of maximum likelihood of the occurrence of acts of

fatality. As instrumental killings began to challenge expressive acts for dominance the weekend peaking pattern began to lose strength (Rose and McClain, 1990). As we move to a third interval in which killings are increasingly an outgrowth of symbolic acts, e.g., gang-related killings, it is unclear what to expect in the way of a daily homicide rhythm.

Employing the sample victimizations previously described we are able to describe the daily rhythm observed in Milwaukee in 1992-1993. The aggregate pattern shows a weekend peaking pattern in which Saturday represents the peak day with fourteen deaths followed by Sunday (11) and Monday (10). Thus, a three day interval accounted for three-fifths of all victimizations. The days with the fewest homicides were Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. These three days accounted for only about one-quarter of all victimizations. Thus, while a weekend peaking pattern was observed it was less dominant than in an earlier era.

When the aggregate data were broken down by the daily rhythms associated with identifiable homicide types a set of unique daily rhythms emerged. Since we are describing patterns based on small numbers caution is advised. Drug related killings demonstrated a weak weekend pattern, whereas gang killings exhibited an almost random pattern with the exception of a Saturday peak. Robbery killings failed to exhibit a weekend peak, with Mondays and Tuesdays representing the two days in which peaks were observed. The most nearly random pattern was

associated with other argument deaths, with at least one killing taking place on each day of the week. It is among this group, based on traditional expectations, that a weekend peaking pattern would be anticipated. Yet this group demonstrated an almost random pattern, whereas the homicide type with similar numbers, i.e., gang-related, exhibited a strong Saturday dominance. Based on the above observations it would appear that the daily rhythm of homicide occurrences varies as a function of homicide type.

The time of day of victimization shows much less variation than does the day of week. More than three-fifths of all victimizations took place between 4:00 P.M. and midnight, with the interval between 8:00 P.M. and midnight showing a slight edge. As indicated earlier it was the period between 4:00 P.M. and midnight that most offenders reported that they were hanging out with their friends. Thus, it is only logical to expect most fatal confrontations to occur during this interval. Nevertheless individual offending groups, e.g., robbery homicide, demonstrated substantial variation around the mean. For instance, 75.0 percent of robbery-related homicides occurred during this interval, while only 57.8 percent of other argument killings took place at this time. Gang-related victimizations demonstrated a diurnal pattern more akin to that of other argument offenders, while drug-related killings exhibited a pattern more akin to that of robbery-related killings. Before noon was the period in which killings were least likely to occur. The period after midnight represented the

secondary interval in which victimizations were likely to occur. It was only among drug-related offenses that none were observed during the latter interval.

The daily rhythms of fatal offenses showed differences in observed historical patterns, as well as patterns observed during a more recent period. We are uncertain if this is simply a function of small numbers or the evolution of a new set of emerging rhythms. Differences in rhythms among homicide types might logically be expected, but once again we are uncertain how important the numerical differences between types are influencing the observations. But even among types where the numbers are larger a different pattern tends to show itself.

Robbery Homicide

Robbery homicide first gained prominence in the late 1960s and the early 1970s. According to Hoch (1973), it was the growth in robbery homicide that changed the pattern of urban homicides between 1960 and 1970. Moreover, robbery homicide during this initial period was largely confined to urban centers in the North. These were predatory acts that were often observed to be committed by youth (Zimring and Zuehl, 1986). Thus, robbery homicide from its inception was an activity in which young black men had become heavily involved. Since these were incidents that often grew out of robberies turned bad, risk levels often

depended on the absolute number of robberies committed at a given urban place. Zimring and Zuehl (1986) noted that only a very small fraction of all robberies translated into robbery homicides. Robbery homicide, unlike other homicides, often involved black offenders and white victims. These were the cross racial assaults that spurred efforts to clamp down on street crime during the Nixon presidency.

While robbery homicide is clearly a street crime and might have logically been included along with gang and drug related killings, we chose not to include it among that group because of its earlier heritage. Had it been included among the former group, that group would have accounted for almost 45 percent of all victimizations during the previous two year interval. By not including it, the two more recent categories of homicides accounted for only 34.9 percent of the observed Milwaukee homicides in 1992-93. The question is, do robbery homicides resemble the previous two felony homicides in terms of offender characteristics, victim characteristics, location of victimization and mode of action?

The Characteristics of Offenders in Robbery Homicides

The data on offender characteristics reveal that robbery homicides tended to involve individuals possessing traits similar to those observed among gang-related and drug-related offenders. Each of these groups were predominantly composed of young black

males, especially adolescent males. These acts were primarily committed by groups of individuals working under the cover of darkness. The goal, in terms of the nature of what the perpetrators expected to achieve appeared more diffuse. While money was the most sought after good, other items such as guns, an automobile, and items of clothing were also robbery targets. While robbery is sometimes a prime motivation in gang and drug-related killings, it has less significance than other motivations.

The Characteristics of Victims of Robbery Homicide

The victims of robbery homicide differed both in terms of race, gender and age, from victims of gang-related and drug-related homicides. Sixty percent of the robbery victims were white, whereas 90 percent of the offenders were black. Forty percent of victims were female, divided equally on the basis of race. The mean age of victims was 37 years, with 40 percent 50 years of age or older. Only 30 percent of the victims were juveniles. Yet almost two-thirds of the offenders were juvenile and another one-fifth were young adults. Thus, locally, robbery homicide represented an example of youth preying upon mature individuals in search of material gain.

These cases take on added public importance, as is reflected in media coverage, when they involve youthful black offenders and mature white victims. They represent what has been described as

retail killings, as the victims tend to be persons that the general public can identify with. Such cases often receive more extensive press coverage than the average homicide case. The general run of cases have been described as wholesale cases.

The Environment of Victimization

The environment of a robbery victimization, too, differed from the environment in which gang and drug killings occur. The latter killings overwhelmingly took place in dangerous neighborhoods where at least two-fifths of the households were poor. In the case of robbery killings, only 30 percent were undertaken in dangerous neighborhoods. Most occurred on the fringes of the black community and at some distance from that cluster of neighborhoods in which gang and drug-related killings occurred with some frequency. The victims often resided in neighborhoods that were further removed from the danger zone. Two victims were suburban residents, and another resided at the edge of the city. The point of contact between victim and offender often appeared to be random, but in some instances the offenders had targeted a specific site, e.g., a gun shop, where the intent was to steal guns; or outside a fast food shop, where an attempted robbery took place. The offenders in a number of cases lived on the periphery of extreme poverty neighborhoods or at least one tier of neighborhoods removed.

Non-Normative Offender Characteristics

While most offenders were juveniles or young adults, in one instance the offender was a 76-year old black male. The offender was the target of a home invasion robbery led by a young black female. In the struggle to fend off the invasion the intended robbery object fired, killing the juvenile female involved. This incident occurred outside of the cluster of dangerous neighborhoods previously described. Likewise, most older white victims were killed by young black males, but in one instance an elderly white woman was killed by a young adult white male who happened to be her grandson. This was a case in which an instrumental act was committed against a primary relation, a case that fits Decker's (1996) description of a deviant homicide.

Distinction Between Robbery Homicides and Other Felony Murders

Street killings, including robbery homicides, comprised more than two-fifths of all homicides in the city in 1992-93. But robbery homicides manifested a number of distinctions from gang and drug homicides. The greatest commonality between them was the age of the offenders. The age, gender and race of the robbery victims differed substantially from the two previous categories of offending. Another observed difference was the site of the offending. Robbery motivated homicides were less often committed in extreme poverty or dangerous neighborhoods. Robbery homicides indeed represent a different victimization genre.

Other Arguments

Our previous discussion focused attention on homicides that might be described as instrumental. Such homicides are said to be goal oriented and seldom involve individuals with whom there exists an emotional bond. Those conditions, however, are known to have been relaxed according to Decker (1996), as a growing number of instrumental killings in St. Louis involved primary relations. We now turn our attention from instrumentally motivated killings in order to focus our attention on expressive victimizations. These are victimizations that often grow out of disputes among persons who know one another and who are often engaged in a primary relationship. They represent interactions that are emotionally charged and often escalate through several stages prior to the strike of the fatal blow (see Wilkinson and Fagan, 1996). This category of killings is most often described as "Other Arguments" in the FBI's Supplemental Homicide Reports.

The Prevalence Of Other Argument Killings

Other arguments usually account for the single largest percentage of all killings in the United States. In the ten years from 1976 to 1985 that category accounted for approximately one-third of all homicides (Maxfield, 1989). In New Orleans, just prior to its take-off in victimizations in 1988, 53.4 percent of the observed killings were associated with other arguments. As

felony homicides have skyrocketed, the effect has been to reduce somewhat the prevalence of other arguments. This is especially true as it relates to family oriented killings, especially those involving spouses.

Yet, the increased availability of guns aimed at youth markets has no doubt elevated the share of other argument killings involving acquaintances. In our treatment of other arguments we did not include child abuse killings, as they tend to represent a special case. It is true that they generally involve emotional discord, but not interpersonal conflict. The latter group of cases will be treated separately.

Among our sample cases other arguments constituted approximately 35.0 percent of the total. These were cases distinct in a number of ways from the felony cases previously described. The data showed substantial differences in the gender mix; for example, females were more likely to be both victims and offenders. Guns were not as likely to represent the lethal weapon as in previous instances and only a small percentage of these incidents would have occurred on the street. Yet, the involvement of youth, both as victims and offenders, was greater than expected. Almost half of our sample cases in this category involved multiple offenders, an indicator of the strength of youthful involvement in killings that in another era would be dominated by mature adults.

Situations Leading to Victimization

Other arguments were inclusive of a range of situations which often led to victimizations. Among the group of frequently observed motives for angry confrontations were: retaliation for a previous offense, intimate partner confrontations, other acts of jealousy, actions that threaten one's status, acts associated with mental instability, intrafamily squabbles, etc. Often the above actions were ignited by excessive use of alcohol and/or drugs. It should be noted, however, that alcohol use has a long history of association with assaultive behavior (Wolfgang, 1958).

The earlier prevalence of violent situations leading to expressive victimizations, that are here described as other arguments, gave rise to such notions as the subculture of violence or the regional culture of violence. Acts that served as the basis for confrontation were often viewed as trivial by those outside the culture. But these acts were viewed as extremely serious, by those involved, for they often touched on questions of honor. Among today's youth the issue of disrespect, or being "dissed," (see Wilkinson and Fagan, 1996) represents their generational moral equivalent of issues involving honor. The easy access of firepower to youths on the street have guaranteed a substantial place for other arguments as a ranking set of circumstances leading to death.

Gender Characteristics

Because such a large number of other arguments grow out of emotional discord it is logical to expect the gender mix to differ from that associated with instrumental victimizations. In 1992-93, females constituted one-fourth of the victims but only ten percent of the offenders, although when multiple offender cases were removed from the pool the percentage of female offenders jumped to more than half. Obviously a different set of motivations distinguished multiple offender events, essentially made up of young males, from those in which females were the offenders. Our female offenders were generally engaged in arguments involving the behavior of present or ex-boyfriends. And in each instance the target of their anger was a male. In one instance, however, a female offender and her new boyfriend were jointly involved in the killing of an ex-boyfriend.

Female victims outnumbered female offenders. All but one female victim was killed by a male offender. The causes were variable, but an effort to sever an emotional bond reigned supreme. One woman was killed by her mentally unstable son; another was shot by an angry male who struck the wrong target; another was attacked by two juvenile males who used a board and a rock to kill her. In one instance two females argued over a mutual boyfriend and one stabbed the other. The participation of female victims and offenders in homicides associated with angry confrontations differs substantially from the previously described homicide patterns. It is among the more traditionally

motivated homicides that female involvement is most likely to be found. But in no instance were spousal killings observed.

Age Characteristics of Victims and Offenders

In the earlier discussed categories of homicide incidents both victims and offenders were largely youth. The other arguments killings, however, include a more diverse range of ages. Juveniles, in this instance, are less frequently found among the victims. Young and mature adults are more often the targets of an offender's wrath. This should not be unexpected as these conflicts often arise out of strong emotional bonds. The offender pattern, however, seems to invalidate our previous statement. In this instance, juveniles acted as offenders in more instances than did all other age groups. But this is in part deceptive, as they tended to participate in multiple offender victimizations-victimizations in which there were three or more offenders per victim.

These confrontations often were initiated by arguments that were fueled by strong emotional bonds, and more by issues associated with conflict of a different sort. For instance, one such argument involved a barking dog, while another involved name-calling in a tavern. Youth appeared to be caught up in acts where someone in their party had been "dissed" and/or some argument among neighbors led to a free-for-all. The motivations in group related actions often appeared to be retaliatory rather

than an explosion of emotions of the sort associated with male/female bonding.

Weapons Used

The weapons employed in the expressive killings previously described show a greater range in terms of weapon type than those used by perpetrators involved in instrumental offenses. Handguns, while continuing to represent the weapon of choice, were substantially less likely to be used in these emotionally charged settings. Yet almost three-fifths of the offenders relied upon a handgun to resolve the conflict in which they were involved. When we disaggregate offenders on the basis of gender it becomes apparent that male and female attackers differed, in terms of the weapon employed to commit the offense.

Female offenders chose knives in 75 percent of the cases and body force in 25 percent. No female offender utilized a gun in her assault on the victim. This no doubt reflects the motivational differences that sparked the initial confrontation. Male offenders, on the other hand, showed a strong preference for handguns (66.6 percent) and a secondary preference for long guns (16.6 percent). The predominance of young male offenders, when combined with the nature of the incident, was no doubt responsible for the strong handgun showing. Many of the latter cases represented ones in which face saving was involved.

The choice of weapons other than a gun often occurred in

settings where others were not present. These were not incidents, as a rule, that involved multiple offenders. In highly emotionally charged confrontations it appears that any convenient weapon will be employed to resolve the conflict or ward off an attack. In such instances knives and body force are disproportionately observed. Only a minority of males resorted to the use of knives or body force, suggesting either a different set of circumstances and/or that young males in particular are well armed in most circumstances. Thus, were it not for the greater involvement of females in the killings described as other arguments, the prevalence of gun use would not have differed greatly from the prevalence of gun use in gang, drug and robbery related killings.

Child Abuse

One surprising outcome of this investigation was the number of child killings that were discovered. The number of children killed during this two-year interval ranked fifth among the types of victimizations identified here. Much emphasis is placed on drug and gang-related victimizations, and we seem reluctant to address issues related to child killings even though they were so numerous among the cases drawn into our sample. These are the silent victims that tend to receive only limited attention in this section. There is, however, a developing literature which

addresses this issue. Finkelhor (1997) recently presented us with a status report on child homicides in the U.S.

Ages of The Victims

Among the eleven child victims drawn into our sample nine were less than three years old. Two of the victims were older children, six and thirteen years old. The 13-year old technically qualifies as a juvenile; but for the fact that she was killed by a parent she would not be included in the child abuse group. The second older child was abducted and sexually assaulted before she was killed by a stranger, i.e., strangled and drowned. All of the remaining children were killed by a parent or the mother's boyfriend. The majority of these children were physically abused by violently shaking, beating, suffocating, manual strangulation, and by scalding in a bathtub of hot water. One child was allowed to starve to death. The punishment meted out for these killings ranged from two years to fifteen years.

Sex of The Offenders

The sex of the offenders was almost equally divided between males and females. In two instances a male and female together were charged with committing the offense. In all other instances the lethal act was committed by either a male or a female. Younger children (<2 years old) were generally killed by the female parent. In such instances the child was clearly abused,

although in one instance the boundary between abuse and neglect was difficult to determine.

Were the offenders in these instances individuals with severe emotional problems or were they simply responding inappropriately to an intemperate child? Silverman and Kennedy (1988) suggest that young mothers who live in violent households may simply strike out at their own child under conditions of frustration. We are in no position to suggest that this is what happened among the very young children in their mothers' care in our sample.

Are there different circumstances and motives that lead males to kill young children? Does the gender of the child play a role in the likelihood of abuse by a female or male parent or parent surrogate of an infant that does not understand why his behavior motivates the offender to become abusive. At older ages male parents appear to wish to correct the behavior of the child by resorting to extreme forms of physical punishment. This stringent parental response is sometimes couched in religious dogma such that one can rationalize these brutal acts as attempts to remove a demon from the child. Because few of the offenders agreed to be interviewed by us we have no direct mechanism to get at the underlying character of the person involved.

Accidental Deaths

The final group of victimizations has been described as accidental. These most appropriately should fall in the category "Other" victimizations. They differ from all previous victimizations in that there was no ostensible intent to inflict harm on another, although in one instance the court was ambivalent in its interpretation of intent. Most of these were deaths that resulted from poor judgement in the handling of firearms. Offenders frequently stated that they thought a weapon was not loaded, leading them to handle it in a careless manner. Sound gun safety instructions, were they followed, could have prevented most of these deaths.

Victim Ages

Of the seven victims who were the targets of careless conduct all but one was a juvenile, and that person was a prejuvenile. Five of the victims were male youths, while the remaining two were female youths. Two of the offenders, however, were young/mature adults. Five of the offenders were male, while the others were female. Thus, offenders tend to be somewhat older than victims, yet among the older offenders one was male and the other female. A handgun was employed in all but one instance, in which case a rifle was used. In this case an older offender, while drinking with a juvenile friend, attempted to shoot an apple off the head of the juvenile. Unfortunately, the offender was both a poor marksman and a person of poor judgement. Among

all of the offenders in the reckless shooting cases he was the one that the courts punished most severely.

The Site Of Victimization

Each of the above victimizations took place in a residence. In most instances the victim and offender were alone in the room where the shooting occurred. But in the instance where the perpetrator attempted to shoot the apple from the victim's head an audience was present. All but one of these residential units were located in a dangerous neighborhood. But it should be noted that most of these acts did not take place in the poorest of neighborhoods, within the cluster of extreme poverty neighborhoods. The primary culprit in most of these cases was an individual who had a felt need to display a firearm and to subsequently handle it as if it were a toy that could not possibly provoke injury. Access to firearms, when coupled with poor judgement, can lead to an increased body count.

Institutional Influences and Risk

Up to this point the report has focused most of its attention on the circumstances associated with victimization. We have paid special attention to the taxonomy of risk, e.g., gang-related killings, and the role played by guns in facilitating the fatal action. But a series of actions, responses and influences

that were set in motion long before the killing date heightened the probability that such an event would occur. If we are serious about prevention we must get a better handle on the role of institutional forces in promoting behaviors that enhance the likelihood of individuals becoming involved in confrontations and/or attacks that lead to a fatal outcome. We have chosen to limit our attention to only a handful of institutions that are thought to impact the future of juveniles and young adults: a) the family, b) the schools, c) the church and d) the Criminal Justice System.

The effort to uncover what role each of these institutions played in influencing the behavior of youth is in no way an attempt to remove the onus of responsibility from the actors themselves, especially the offenders. We are firm believers in the power of human agency, but we are also aware that the direction one chooses to use his/her agency is conditioned by a series of external forces. It is the impact of these external forces in shaping human agency that we wish to capture. We will attempt to develop a better understanding of the forces identified above through the responses of offenders and next of kin of victims to selected items drawn from the life history questionnaires. This information will be supplemented by information extracted from court records. In this way we will be able to gain a longitudinal perspective on the developmental traits of the individual some years removed from the time of the

fatal event.

The Family

Among those forces that influence the character of youth none are as important as the family/household of socialization. Parents or parent surrogates are charged with the responsibility of directing their children along a course of responsible behavior, e.g., respecting the rights of others; comporting themselves in a responsible manner, etc. Most parents are successful in this enterprise and their children are generally able to maintain the status of the household of origin or experience upward mobility. But for households that are at or near the bottom of the socioeconomic hierarchy the task becomes more difficult, especially if affluence is everywhere in evidence. Parents who have experienced great difficulty in adjusting to the circumstances in which they find themselves may not be able to effectively transmit those values and norms required for success as are households more favorably positioned along the socioeconomic hierarchy.

In this section we will examine a number of characteristics of the family life of offenders and victims in an attempt to identify commonalities which might possibly have contributed to the lifestyle chosen by persons drawn into the sample. We will direct our attention to such items as a) family structure, b)

family size, c) regional origin, d) work history, e) occupational status, f) sibling difficulty with the law, and g) childhood punishment practices. We will stratify our family type questions by structure of victimization in an effort to ascertain if individuals involved in one offense type differ from those involved in another based on selected family characteristics.

Selected Family Characteristics Of Offenders Involved in Gang Related Homicides

As was indicated earlier, gang-related victimizations ranked second in frequency among all victimizations. They were exceeded only by homicides instigated by other arguments. Our life history questionnaire was designed to determine certain family-related traits among the offenders. The respondent was asked to provide specific responses to a number of questions composed of family-related variables. For this assessment offender responses to nine questions will be employed to ascertain if any family-related characteristics distinguish offenders by homicide type. Among the items of interest were family structure; parent work histories; family size or number of siblings; family violence; parent disciplinary practices; had siblings had problem with the law; had offenders ever been married; and were the offenders themselves parents. Responses to these items should provide some insight into the kinds of households the offenders grew up in and how that experience might have impacted the homicide incident.

Family Structure

Family structure is an issue that pervades most discussions about delinquency and/or other problematic behaviors of youth growing up in single parent households (). Most such households are headed by the female parent and they are highly likely to represent poor households (). From the perspective of researchers with an interest in crime and/or violence, such household heads are often viewed as parents who are less likely to maintain an effective level of social control over their adolescent children. The inability of these parents to provide their children with a monetary stipend that would enable them to participate in a strongly commodified culture is said to create pressures that lead to participation in the informal economy.

Of the households in which the sample gang-related offenders were reared, 75 percent were single parent households. The household structure among this group of offenders was almost synonymous with that of the offender aggregate. Within these single parent households, in most instances, it was the father who was absent; in only one instance the mother was absent and in another both were absent. Thus, we are talking about manifested differences between a majority of single parent households and a minority of two parent households. It is appropriate to add, moreover, in some households at some time during the growing-up period, a step parent might have been present.

Household Size

The number of siblings varied greatly in these households. But what was most striking was the frequency of large family units (≥ 5 children per household). More than three-fifths of the offenders reported coming from large family households. Almost three-fifths of the large families were associated with single heads. Two parent households were slightly more common in intermediate or small households. Given the propensity for large families to be headed by females suggests that they might experience greater difficulty in exerting control over their children's development than similarly situated households with fewer children to supervise. For instance, were these mothers more or less likely to be engaged in the formal workforce than were their married peers?

Working Mothers

On reviewing the data it turns out that single parents were more likely to have worked during their child's growing up years than were their two parent neighbors. Two-thirds of the single parents were in the workforce, whereas only 40 percent of the mothers in two parent households were at work. The occupations of the employed mothers were often cited as nurses aide, teachers aide, factory worker, custodian or secretary. The question, is did working single parent mothers have any more success in keeping their children free of contact with the criminal justice

system than single heads who did not work or mothers in two parent households who were in the workforce?

Siblings and Difficulty With the Law

Single parent households (66.0 percent) were more likely than two parent households (50.0 percent) to have children who had difficulty with the law. Yet the margin is not as great as might have been expected. When family size is considered as a possible contributor to children having difficulty with the law the outcome is not clear cut. Large families, those with five or more children, are no more likely to have had difficulty with the law (66.0 percent) than single parent households in general. This in part reflects the fact that most large families are headed by single parents. A larger share of intermediate size families (three to four children) were likely to have had children who encountered difficulty with the law (75.0 percent) than were larger families. No children from small families had difficulty with the law, but their small numbers makes this finding unreliable.

While family size and family structure does not appear to make a major contribution to a qualitative explanation of difficulty with the law, it is possible the nature of the criminal behavior in which their offspring engaged might be a more sensitive indicator of the role played by these factors than simply contact alone. Family size appears to bear little or no

association with the nature of the criminal conduct of their offspring. Both large and intermediate size families produced offspring that engaged in serious criminal behavior. Robbery, homicide and drug law violations were the offenses most often cited by our offender respondents.

Both male and female children had criminal histories. But female children were more often reported to have been involved in fights, shoplifting, and burglaries, whereas their male siblings were more likely to have been incarcerated for committing an act of violence. What becomes apparent is that the siblings of our respondents were actively involved in activity that drew them into the criminal justice system.

Was the propensity of siblings to engage in criminal acts in general and acts of violence in particular associated with behaviors they were exposed to at home or attitudes that parents harbored toward the use of violence. The response to two items from the life history questionnaire may shed some light on that issue. The question was asked if parents had engaged in acts of domestic violence during the offenders growing up years. Another question asked if parents had used physical punishment to reprimand children for engaging in improper behavior. These two items get at parental attitudes and practices towards the appropriate use of violence.

Serious Family Violence

Fighting between male and female partners in the households in which offenders were reared were highly prevalent. More than half of the offenders reported that serious violence had taken place in their homes. Serious violence was reported as an occasional phenomena (71.0 percent) in most instances. But more than one-fifth described it as a frequent activity. Thus, it is clear that at least half of the offenders were reared in households in which violent altercations were not unknown.

These altercations were essentially equilikely in homes headed by two parents as those headed by a single parent. Conflict leading to violent altercations was more common in households of working mothers (61.5 percent), than in households where mothers did not work (38.5 percent). There is a growing body of literature that addresses the psychological impact of the exposure of children to acts of violence (see Bell and Jenkins, 1993; Osofsky and Others, 1993). But much of this literature is addressed to issues associated with neighborhood violence. It is apparent from our questionnaire responses that violence is commonplace within the child's home as well as in the street.

Physical Punishment of Children

There is widespread acknowledgement that the use of physical punishment as a child rearing practice is largely a practice of low income and working class parents. The practice has been passed down from one generation to another and for blacks is

thought to have its origins in slavery. Almost three-quarters of our respondents indicated that they were subjected to physical punishment as children. Most reported that they were whipped with extension cords or belts when they engaged in conduct that did not meet with parental approval. Some researchers suggest that these practices simply re-enforce the importance of the use of violence in efforts to resolve conflict.

As observed from our questionnaire, there are two types of households in which physical violence was seldom or never employed as a child rearing tactic: single parent households and households in which serious family violence was generally absent. However, a larger number of the single parent household heads did use physical punishment techniques than did not.

Martial and/or Household Status of Offenders

A final family-related issue concerned the offenders themselves. In this instance we were interested in determining if the offenders had established independent households through marriage or the formation of common law unions. Since most of our offenders were young it was thought that most would still be attached to the parental household. That assumption was verified, as only 36.0 percent of the offenders reported that they were married or living in a common law union. Thus, gang-related offenders were dominated by juveniles who were still a part of households where violent conduct was fairly commonplace and whose

siblings, like themselves, had previously had contact with the law. A few siblings, again like themselves, had been found guilty of committing a homicide.

Parental Status of Offenders

While a relatively small share of our offenders were married, a larger share were themselves parents. Half of the offenders reported that they had fathered one or more children. Most children were fathered by the young adult segment of the offender population, but 30 percent of the fathers were juvenile males. Most of the reported children were young, with a modal age of two years. This group of young males left behind 31 children as they began serving time for an intentional killing. One young man (age 21) reported being the father of six children, while another (age 17) indicated that he was the father of three children. If one were to speculate on the legacy they leave their children it would be easy to conclude that another generation had been produced that might be expected to follow in their father's footsteps, if early interventions are not introduced.

We will now look at family characteristics of offenders involved in selected other victimization types to ascertain how they resemble or are distinct from those describing offenders involved in gang related killings. At this point we have no way of knowing whether or not we should expect different groups of killers to emerge from a common set of households or disparate

ones. But we will proceed to examine them in a similar, but more abbreviated fashion.

Family Characteristics of Drug Related Offenders

Drug-related offenders were somewhat older than the previous group of offenders. But they were also more likely to have been reared in a single parent household, in which case the mother was always the head of the household. In this group large families were much less (36.3 percent) prevalent than among gang defendant households. Were these differences in structure and size associated with other family-related behaviors that might have impacted on the life histories of this group of offenders? This possible relationship is still undetermined, but still under study. On the issue of sibling contact with the law, this group reported a lower prevalence (55.5 percent) than that reported by gang-related offenders. In this instance neither family structure nor family size appear to be related to sibling contact with the law. Those siblings that did have contact with the law were more often apprehended for their involvement in the drug trade or robbery.

Mother's Employment Status

In the previous discussion we noted that working mothers were quite prevalent among all offender mothers, but especially

among single parents. The mothers of the present group of offenders were less likely to have participated in the formal economy. But those who did were generally found to hold jobs similar to those held by the previous group.

Mothers from single family households were just as likely to be in the work force as mothers from two-parent households. Yet only two-fifths of the mothers from this group were in the work force. The children of working mothers, among this group, were most often found to have no contact with the law. The inverse of this finding was found with non-working mothers. The children of non-working mothers were the most likely to have had prior contact with the law. The underlying assumption, presumably, is that time devoted to work did not diminish the parents' ability to exert adequate control over their children's conduct to deter them from contact with the law.

Serious Household Violence

The finding that displayed the most pronounced difference between these two groups was the extent to which serious physical household violence occurred. In the households in which drug-related offenders were reared only 25.0 percent reported acts of serious physical violence between their parents and/or parent surrogates. Does the higher percentage of female headed households account for this lower incidence of serious interpersonal violence? That question cannot be answered from the

data available. But, for whatever reason, this group of offenders was not exposed to the same level of violence among adults in their households as was the previous group of offenders.

Physical Punishment of Children

Children in these households were only slightly more likely to have been administered physical punishment (75.0 percent vs. 73.0 percent) for misdeeds than children in the previous group. It seems that the tradition of physically punishing children for engaging in non-parentally approved behavior cuts across all groups. Since these groups are largely made up of black and Hispanic youth, albeit in smaller numbers, it would be interesting to see if physical punishment is common across both groups. Whippings in these households, as in the households of gang-related offenders were largely administered through the use of belts and extension cords. Thus, violence in the form of the physical punishment of children was commonplace.

Offender Family Status

Among our offender population 45.4 percent had formed independent households. A small number had established independent households on more than one occasion. Slightly more than two-fifths of the offenders indicated that they were parents. Only one of the juveniles in the group announced that he was a father. Unlike selected gang-related offenders, who had

fathered large numbers of children, this group seldom claimed fatherhood of more than 2 children. The future of these children, like those mentioned earlier, does not appear bright unless they are able to overcome barriers that their fathers were unable to overcome.

Family Characteristics of Robbery Related Offenders

Robbery-related offenders, like those among the previous two groups, basically consisted of young men who had not yet reached their 25th birthday. This group, unlike the others, included more juveniles (55.5 percent) than non-juveniles (44.5 percent). These were also young men who had spent most of their lives in Milwaukee, unlike those who were involved in gang-related offenses. Robbery is an activity largely engaged in by youth, yet such acts seldom lead to the death of the victim. Did these young men grow up in different kinds of households than those previously found guilty of felony murder or was their background essentially the same as the gang and drug-related offenders?

Distinguishing Characteristics

A number of family characteristics distinguish this group from the other group of felony offenders. First, the offenders are overwhelmingly from single parent households (88.8 percent). Caution about generalization is advised, however, because this

group involves smaller numbers (n=9) than the earlier groups. Unlike gang-related offenders the small family rather than the large family is the norm. Thus, in terms of family structure, single parents are more prevalent than in the previous groups, while the small family is the norm rather than the large or intermediate family. Will corresponding differences for other family-related characteristics be found, or will this group of robbery-related offenders display family traits similar to those of gang and drug-related offenders?

The Employment Status of Mothers

The statements that follow should clarify the above argument for us. The mothers of the robbery group of offenders were more likely to be found in the work force than either of the prior two groups. More than 80 percent (83.3 percent) of these mothers worked, with almost half holding skilled jobs. As indicated in an earlier discussion, a larger share of robbery-related offenders resided outside of the zone of concentrated poverty than any other offender group. Thus, it appears that this group of offenders were more likely to come from upper working or lower middle class households than were the others.

Sibling Contact With the Law

Only two-fifths of the siblings of these offenders had prior contact with the law. Those contacts were often for less serious

offenses, although for a smaller segment of this population contact with the law resulted from robbery and shooting incidents. Nevertheless, it appears that the siblings of this group were less likely to engage in law breaking activity. It should be noted again that this group of offenders had fewer siblings than did the others, with the possible implication that household size might play a role in promoting law breaking activity. The combination of small family size and social class differences could be at work here in limiting contact with the law as well as influencing the nature of that contact.

One might also conjecture that the social class mix of the households from which this group of offenders came accounted for the less serious violence between mothers and surrogate parents, if any were present. Only one-third of the offenders reported the occurrence of acts of serious violence among adults in their households. Thus, these households seemed to be drawn from a different universe relative to prevalence and frequency of serious household violence. Did this limited exposure to violence predispose these offenders to be less inclined to serious violence themselves. The answer is not yet clear, but court records describing offenders' prior criminal histories may shed light on this point.

While these households manifested a number of traits that distinguished them from the previous two groups of households, there was one trait that appeared to be almost universal among

them. The trait held in common was the propensity to rely on physical punishment to control and/or punish unwanted behavior of children. In this instance 83.3 percent of the offenders reported that they had been physically punished as children. As among previous groups, these whippings often involved the use of a belt or extension cord, although some were whipped with a switch or the use of the hand. Thus, it is apparent that these parents wished to regulate their children's conduct, but since we have no record of why these whippings were being conducted we have no way of determining how effective they were. We do know that they did not keep their children out of trouble, as they were ultimately convicted of committing an act of lethal violence.

Robbery-Related Offenders and Household Formation

Most of the offenders in this group were young. The mean age was 18, but half of the offenders were juveniles. Only one offender could be described as a mature adult and he had just crossed the threshold age to be placed in that category. The age characteristics of this group no doubt slowed their eagerness to form independent households, as only one half had done so. Those who had done so, with one exception, were young or mature adults. This suggests that at least half of the offenders continued to reside in their parental homes. Likewise, half of these offenders identified themselves as parents, having produced among them nine children or fewer than one child per individual. This represents

the smallest number of children per individual of all the groups surveyed thus far. Only one-third of those reporting that they were parents also indicated that they were married. The children of these offenders were young, with most not yet having reached school age. But as in other instances offenders, who were incarcerated, did leave behind children who had to be supported. How they will be supported represents a critical issue.

The Family Characteristics of those Involved in Argument-Related Killings

The age and gender mix of persons involved in argument based assaults is more diverse than the mix for the previous offense types. We would likewise expect these offenders to differ in unspecified ways in their family experiences. Nevertheless we also expect some overlap on family related dimensions. Unfortunately we are unable to address gender differences in family characteristics, as only one female offender responded to our life history survey. Thus, we are once again reporting on the family characteristics of males, but in this instance those who were involved in killings that were not instrumentally motivated.

Family Structure

Among those engaged in assaultive behavior growing out of emotional discord and/or lack of respect, single parents were heads of households in more than four-fifths (82.6 percent) of

the cases. The level of single parent households in this instance is quite similar to the prevalence level observed among drug related offenders. In this instance, however, almost one sixth of the absent parents were mothers. One mother was reported to be absent because she had drug problems. Did this high level of single parent headed households tend to impact aspects of growing up? It might well have influenced family size. Large families (27.2 percent) were less common than intermediate size families (45.0 percent) and thus, theoretically the single parents would have had greater control over their children's conduct. Sibling contact with the law seems to bear a modest association with family size. Siblings from large families were twice as likely to have had contact than not. Siblings from intermediate size families were as likely to have had contact as not. It was only among small families that there were no contacts with the law. Whether the mother worked or not did not seem to influence contact with the law.

Sibling Contact With the Law

For siblings having contact with the law drug-related violations were the most common. Stealing cars and robbery were other identified offenses. Offender siblings were also involved in two killings. Female siblings were also reported as having contact with the law, for the offenses of disorderly conduct and fighting. While two homicides were committed by the siblings of

the offenders, most contacts with the law did not appear to grow out of acts of violence.

Serious Family Violence

Serious family violence was in evidence in 50 percent of the offender households. In three-fourths of those households it was a frequent experience. No other offenders reported such a high level of frequency of serious violence between adults in their households. It appears that the observed level of exposure to family violence may well have established a pattern which the offenders employed in efforts to resolve conflict. One interesting find demonstrated that in households where serious family violence was not a problem sibling contact with the law was at a minimum.

Physical Punishment of Children

As usual the parents of these offenders, as was true of the three previous groups, were strong supporters of the use of physical punishment to promote conformity. In this instance more than four-fifths (81.8 percent) of this group of offenders reported that they were physically punished as children. Not only did they report that single heads of households resorted to physical punishment, but for the first time a few responded that physical punishment was also meted out by stepparents. The usual belts and cords turned out to be the instruments upon which the

parents relied. But shower brushes and scrub brushes were used as instruments of punishment as well. Three-fourths of the households in which siblings had no contact with the law were also households in which physical punishment was used to promote conformity.

Marital and Parental Status of Offenders

Only 36.0 percent of the offenders reported that they had ever been married, despite the fact that this group tended to be older (\bar{x} =22.6 years). Most of those indicating that they had ever married were young adults. Unlike marriage, the fathering of children did not show a strong association with age. The overall youthfulness of fathers accounted for the fact that most fathered only a single child. Thus, as a rule children were young, although a minority of offenders already had four children. Among the almost three-quarters of offenders who were fathers more than two-fifths were not married to the mothers of their children. As was true of the previous cases the incarcerated offenders left behind a number of children that had to be cared for. The per capita number of children was just over one per offender. By now all of these children have reached school age.

Dysfunctional Families

Some households are able to make what appears to be a

reasonable adjustment to the circumstances they find themselves in even when those circumstances are extremely difficult. When poor families, provided they are not below some critical threshold, are able to take advantage of opportunities available to them, they are able to rear their children in such a way that they will be able to experience upward mobility. But in order for them to do this they must be empowered with a surplus of human agency, adequate social and cultural capital and lots of good fortune. When families falter under the weight of the burdens of daily life and assume behaviors which make their lives even more difficult they are sometimes described as dysfunctional. The use of the term dysfunctional to describe the plight of these households has recently come under fire (Kelley, 1997). Yet one can hardly deny the existence of the intrafamily problems that so often seem to overwhelm poor households, especially those in which single parents must shoulder the entire burden of nurturing and managing their children's lives.

Among our sample of victim and offender households there is evidence of elements of dysfunctionality. The measures of dysfunctionality include inadequate nurturing, serious intrafamily conflict and parental substance abuse. We would expect children from dysfunctional households to be less successful in school and to be less likely to possess the social skills that might lead to their advancement in school or in the work place. Children of families with less human agency sometimes

do not do as well in school as children of families with greater human agency, even when their residential circumstances are similar. Agency in this instance reflects a constellation of factors that enable households to fend off, if only barely, the negative effects of external forces, as well as to overcome internal pressures to engage in troublesome behavior.

Inadequate Nurturing

One of our indicators of dysfunctionality, inadequate nurturing, prevails among the sample of victims and offenders who were designated by the court as children in need of protection and services (CHIPS) during their growing up years. These were children of parents who were no longer able to perform their parental responsibilities. In such instances children were placed in alternative households, e.g., foster homes, where it was believed they could receive adequate nurturing. In some instances the household to which the child was assigned failed to live up to the court's expectations.

Approximately 20.0 percent of the individuals drawn into our sample could be described as lacking adequate nurturing at some point during their childhood or adolescence. Offenders were no more likely to be designated as a CHIPS case (19.7 percent) than were victims (19.6 percent). There were noticeable differences, however, among those identified as CHIPS cases across homicide types. For instance, offenders involved in other argument related

deaths were much more likely to have been identified as a CHIPS case (26.1 percent) than were other offenders. All other offenders were clustered in a much more restrictive range (19.0 percent to 21.8 percent) that deviated only slightly from the offender average. Victims, on the other hand, seldom experienced the level of inadequate nurturing that characterized offenders. One notable exception was the group of other argument related victims; more than one-third (36.7 percent) were designated CHIPS cases. This level of prevalence far outstripped all others. Other argument offenders likewise were represented by CHIPS cases in more than a quarter of the time (26.1 percent) a level that exceeded that of all other offender groups.

Drug-related victims included no CHIPS cases, while robbery-related victims were represented by CHIPS in only 12.5 percent of the cases. Thus, it appears that victims hail from more diverse households than do offenders. In the aggregate it appears that a nurturing deficit characterized approximately one-fifth of the persons drawn into our sample, although variations were shown to cut across homicide types. A more intense review of the data, however, demonstrates that relying on a tally of the CHIPS cases alone underestimates the prevalence of deficit nurturing. When CHIPS-like cases are added to the mix the level of deficit nurturing is raised substantially. This seems to indicate that marginal levels of nurturing were widespread among our sample.

Our CHIPS data revealed that approximately one-fifth of

those in the offender sample, and one-sixth of the victim sample were undernurtured. On closer examination, however, it appears that the issue of adequate nurturing was far more extensive than that revealed by the CHIPS data. As was indicated earlier the CHIPS label was only assigned to children whom the court deemed would be better off if they were placed in an alternative family setting. Yet when the same criteria used by the court to designate a child as a CHIPS case was applied to other children in the sample the problem of inadequate nurturing was found to be far more widespread.

The additional children residing in households in which the CHIPS criteria applied were identified as CHIPS-like. Offenders were almost four times as likely to be identified as CHIPS-like as were victims. CHIPS-like offenders were two and one half times (51.5 percent) as likely to qualify for this label as those identified as coming from CHIPS households. The prevalence of CHIPS-like victims differed little from those labeled CHIPS victims. Just why these additional youth were not formally labeled CHIPS cases is unknown. It may simply have been a function of inadequate placement households. But for whatever reason, to simply rely upon those formally placed in alternative households to provide an accurate measure of inadequate nurturing would lead one to seriously underestimate the extent of the problem.

The Problem of Intrafamily Conflict

Another dimension of family functioning we examined was how well various household members got along with one another. What this observation measured was how much conflict existed among parents and their children, given the stresses and strains of everyday life. Simply stated this represents a measure of family cohesion. Like the above information, this information was drawn from court records. The indicators of cohesion were described as follows: a) stable relationships; b) some problems; c) chronic problems; d) major problems; and e) no problems listed. Among victims' households more than one-third (36.7 percent) were characterized as having chronic or major problems. This level of intrafamily conflict was modest compared to the almost two-thirds (64.3 percent) of offenders' households that reported chronic and/or major problems.

Groups by homicide type displayed modest variation in the extent to which serious family problems were observed. As was true in prior instances offender households demonstrated a higher prevalence of family problems than did victim households. Problems were most prevalent in robbery-related offender households, as well as intense. Gang-related and drug-related offender households varied little across the prevalence of chronic and major problems. Other argument households registered a slightly smaller share of serious problems.

Victim households, on the other hand, demonstrated greater

variation in the prevalence of intrafamily conflict. Ranging from a level of only 12.5 percent among robbery-related victim households to 45.0 percent among gang-related victim households and 42.0 percent among other argument-related households. Conflict in other argument victim households did not differ greatly than among other argument offender households. What is apparent is that internal family stress was widespread in the households in our sample. But it is also true that intrafamily conflict was much more intense in offender households than victim households. It was only in gang-related victim and offender households that differences in intrafamily conflict were at a minimum.

The Problem of Parental Substance Abuse

A final measure of family dysfunction is associated with the level of parental substance abuse observed in the households of victims and offenders. The indicators described in court records to designate the seriousness of the problem are listed as follows: a) no evidence; b) some problem; c) serious problem and d) none listed. There was no evidence of problems of drug abuse in 21.0 percent of the victim households and in 28.5 percent of the offender households. Moreover, in almost two-thirds (64.9 percent) of victim households no substance abuse problems were reported. Nor were substance abuse problems listed in two-fifths of the offender households. Substance abuse problems were

identified among 17.5 percent of victim households, with serious problems constituting three-fifths of the total. Substance abuse was much more widespread among offender households (30.8 percent). Not only was it more widespread among the latter households, almost all reported cases were described as serious. Thus, a share of both victims and offenders resided in households where parents were engaged in substance abuse. It was among offender households that the problem was both more prevalent and more intense. Substance abuse prevalence in selected households no doubt targeted them as households for which the removal of children from the household would be in the children's best interest.

Parental substance abuse varied as a function of the homicide type with which victims and offenders were identified. Problems of serious substance abuse were unknown in the households of victims who were the targets of drug or robbery-related homicides. In only about 15.0 percent of victim households in which the targeted individuals were identified as involved in gang-related or other argument killings were there problems of serious drug abuse. Among offender households, however, serious drug abuse problems were much more likely. Robbery-related households topped the list with 36.3 percent followed by gang-related households (31.1 percent) and other argument households (21.4 percent). Drug-related households demonstrated the weakest parental inclination to drug abuse (17.6

percent). It is apparent that problems of parental drug abuse were fairly widespread in offender households, but much more modest among parents of victims.

Schooling and Acts of Lethal Violence

The nation's urban education systems are reported to be in a state of decline (Nation at Risk, 1983; Chubb and Moe, 1989) where too few students are achieving at grade level or above. The above description is even more applicable in school systems serving primarily minority students. In Milwaukee, the public school system serves a predominantly minority population (80 percent). Therefore, we would expect Milwaukee schools to manifest many of the shortcomings of urban schools in general including low attendance rates, high rates of truancy, disruptive classroom behavior, high suspension rates and low achievement levels. Many urban students seem not to have bought into the achievement ideology and subsequently view school as a social arena that simply provides them an opportunity to interact socially with their friends and wage war against their adversaries. Dropout rates are generally high with one half or fewer who entered the ninth grade graduating four years later.

Given the changing character of the American economy it is imperative that the vast majority of pupils invest in schooling if they are to be given an opportunity to participate in a

rapidly changing job market. Those who do not view school as a gateway to opportunity have largely adopted an oppositional perspective (Miron and Lauria, 1995; Hemmings, 1996) and are inclined to cast their lot with the informal economy or to simply accept the fact that they will be relegated to the low wage service economy, an economy in which young minority workers frequently find themselves permanently lodged.

This section of the report will attempt to get at offender attitudes toward school, involvement in the social activities of the school, school truancy, school conduct and levels of academic achievement. As in the previous section, our treatment of school will be discussed in a segmented fashion. That is, we will view the schooling experience of offenders in accordance with the nature of the offense type, i.e., gang-related, drug-related, robbery-related and other arguments. By treating the subject in this fashion we will be in a position to ascertain if the schooling experiences of these groups were similar or dissimilar.

The Schooling Experience of Gang Related Offenders

The majority of these offenders did not look favorably upon schools and/or schooling (53.9 percent). At the same time, a substantial consequential minority (46.1 percent) viewed the schools positively. Of those persons who viewed the schools negatively, 71.4 percent were not involved in school social

activities. But only a slight majority of those who participated in school social activities held a positive view of schooling. Thus, involvement in the life of the school was no guarantee of a favorable attitude. The routine of schooling was often perceived as boring when compared to alternative activities that one could engage in outside school on a normal school day.

Truancy was high among those with a negative view of school (almost four-fifths, or 78.5 percent. Most preferred hanging out with their friends, getting high, selling and using drugs or simply staying at home and watching TV. These were no doubt students whose attachment to school was moderate at best and weak in many instances. Those who viewed themselves as only weakly motivated students presumably had already given up on school and were subsequently likely to adopt an oppositional perspective, if they had not already done so. Among those who were weakly motivated, 90.0 percent acknowledged that they earned poor grades.

Suspensions among the respondents could be considered normative conduct as 96.1 percent reported that they had been suspended. More than half of these were frequently suspended. These students could be described as individuals who often did not choose to conform to the rules of the school. They were often engaged in fights, and were guilty of disruptive behavior and showing teachers little respect. Thus, truants were simply a subset of a universe of individuals who exemplified a huge gap

between school culture and street culture. Nevertheless, a sizeable share of this group was moderately motivated (50.0 percent) as students.

The Schooling Experience of Drug Related Offenders

Drug-related offenders held school in lower esteem than did gang-related offenders. More than three-quarters viewed school negatively. This group had limited participation in the formal social life of the school (38.4 percent). But of the few who did choose to participate in school social activities, only 25.0 percent held favorable attitudes toward school. As with the earlier group, the lure of the streets for these students superceded their interest in school. One offender was quoted as saying, "...hate school-being there dealing with rules and teachers," while another said, "...went to school to see friends to socialize-not for the education." It is apparent that school held little appeal for the offenders, as demonstrated by a high level of truancy. Again, more than three-quarters (76.9 percent) of the offenders reported that they had been truant.

Those who reported a pattern of truancy indicated that during the time they were truant they would hang in the streets with their friends, sell and use drugs, play basketball, get drunk and have sex. Thus, schools were having a difficult time convincing this group that school learning was valuable. It was

certainly viewed as less valuable than some of the activities in which they engaged while truant. The weak motivation for school exhibited by 41.6 percent of the offenders represented the modal response of this group toward school. Moderately motivated students, who constituted almost two-fifths of the group (38.4 percent), suggested that it might be possible to salvage a substantial share of this group if they could be diverted from the life of the streets.

Poor grades serve as evidence that the majority had failed to buy into the achievement ideology. More than three-fifths (61.5 percent) indicated that they had earned low grades. Of those earning low grades four-fifths exhibited a weak attachment to school. Most, however, were willing to accept blame for their poor school performance. Only one offender among this group had not been suspended and half of them had been suspended frequently. Obviously this group was little concerned with rule breaking or the accumulation of human capital. This educationally undercapitalized group chose to cast their lot with friends, who no doubt also held similar views. They represented a group who chose the life of the streets over the life of the school, having decided that the illicit economy provided greater monetary rewards than participation in the formal economy. Having made this decision, school became simply a place to go to engage in an active social life.

The School Experience of Robbery-Related Offenders

These offenders like those previously discussed were not enamored with school. Only one-third responded favorably to school, which suggests that persons holding such views are unlikely to remain in school until graduation, however, of those who participated in the social life of the school (33.3 percent) two-thirds viewed the school positively. In this instance, those who chose to participate in the school's social life represented the smallest share yet. A possible interpretation is that this group is less athletic than the previous two groups, who were more likely to participate in the school athletic programs, or that the demand for spending money was so great that they simply chose not to become involved in the school athletic programs. If it is true that the demand for money to participate in a commodified culture is great enough to deter students from athletic participation, this suggests the growing importance of aspects of the street culture.

To further demonstrate their disdain for schooling 77.3 percent admitted to being truant. Those who were truant were equilikely to report that they spent time with their girlfriends or engaged in the sale of drugs. School, it appears, conflicted with the time some offenders viewed as time one could be earning money, albeit illicitly. Although this group of offenders were convicted on charges of robbery homicide, robbery was never

mentioned by them as a money earning activity. The failure to mention robbery is perhaps related to the fact that it probably was not an activity engaged in during the period one would normally be in school.

No individuals reported that they were highly motivated to do well in school. Most reported that they were moderately motivated (55.6 percent), with a second group indicating that they were weakly motivated (44.4 percent). Among the drug-related offender group weakly motivated individuals outnumbered all others. In the robbery-related offender group the single variable that tended to distinguish weakly motivated students from moderately motivated ones were poor grades. Both moderately motivated students and weakly motivated ones were frequently truant and were no strangers to suspension. Thus, these two groups seemed equally likely to engage in rule-breaking behavior, but one group took somewhat more seriously the value of the education program. This could partially reflect differences in social class background within this group that were raised in an earlier discussion.

Felony homicide offenders demonstrated discrepancies among them that seemed to be associated with the nature of the offense. But differences in age and strength of the orientation to life on the streets could possibly account for some of the observed differences. The latter orientation was often revealed through a description of the activities offenders said they engaged in

while truant. Gang-related offenders tended to have the most favorable attitudes toward school, but even they were in the minority. The more favorable responses by gang-related offenders may simply reflect larger numbers and subsequently greater variance.

The School Experience of Offenders Engaged in Interpersonal Conflict

Individuals involved in interpersonal conflict assaults constitute the largest number of individuals associated with any of the previous homicide types. While this is true, the number of individuals from this group who participated in our life history survey was somewhat smaller than that of gang related offenders. This group was slightly older than the previous offender groups. A single female offender was included among those who had participated in an interpersonal conflict, i.e., other argument, type killing. Juveniles were the offenders in just over one-fifth (21.7 percent) of these killings. Most offenders could be described as young adults. One might expect these offenders to respond somewhat more favorably to schooling than was true of the previous groups, but that simply represents conjecture based on differences associated with the circumstances of death.

On reviewing the responses of this group we found that favorable attitudes toward school topped two-fifths (42.8 percent) of the total. Gang-related offenders were the only group

to respond more favorably. Participation in school sponsored activities was reasonably high (45.4 percent). But participation in social activities did not assure that the participants would view the school experience as a positive one. As a matter of fact, those who participated in social activities were no more likely to view school positively than those who did not. Yet they were somewhat less likely to report that they were ever truant than those who were not involved in the social life of the school.

Truancy was less often a problem among this group (63.6 percent) than either of the previous groups, but even so almost two-thirds reported that they were truant at sometime during the school year. Of those who were truant almost half were truant for more than five days during the school year. Most who reported that they were truant explain their truancy in much the same way as did previous groups. They reported that they were bored with school and found life in the streets to be more exciting. There, they could hang with their friends, get high, sell drugs or visit the homes of girlfriends. The challenge facing the educational system is to somehow develop a greater appeal to the interest of a small but potentially dangerous group of students. These are the students who are prone to engage in acts that add to the city's annual body count, as well as the growing number of individuals who end up in the state correctional system.

While less than two-thirds of the above offenders were ever

truant, more than 95.0 percent were suspended. Suspensions among each of the groups were widely prevalent; thus, this group did not differ greatly from that of its peers. It did differ in the frequency of serious suspensions. For this group only half of those suspended were suspended five or more times. Moreover, this group demonstrated a slightly smaller share (40.9 percent) of weakly motivated students than that characterizing previous groups. Moderately motivated students (45.4 percent) constituted the modal group. The similarity in the share of weakly versus moderately motivated students no doubt affected the extent to which students reported that they earned poor grades. Since poor grades were overwhelmingly associated with weak motivation, a smaller share of weakly motivated students meant fewer students reported that they received low grades. A somewhat larger share of these students blamed their poor scholastic performance on others, but most continued to attribute poor performance to their own lack of effort.

A Summary of the Groups School Experiences

In many ways the schooling experience of these various offender groups coincided. What comes through in most instances is that these offenders held a negative view of their schooling experience. In only one instance did more than half view that experience as positive. Gang-related offenders represented those with the most positive attitudes toward school, while drug-

related offenders held the least positive attitudes. Yet gang-related offenders manifested the least motivation. One would ordinarily presume that participation in the activities of the school would lead to a more favorable view of school, but that did not seem to be the case. Surprisingly, those participating in school activities were only slightly more likely to exhibit a favorable attitude than those who did not.

The above argument raises a number of questions. Among them is how do you motivate students, who for whatever reason, exhibit little affinity for school work and/or participation in the social life of the school. It appears that few individuals among this group see any real connection between school and the outside world. Thus, they choose to devote their effort to experiencing the pleasures of the streets. The responses provided here represent the strongest evidence yet of both the strength and allure of the streets at an early age.

Religious Identity and Church Attendance Among Offender Groups

Religious practice and affiliation is thought to play an important socializing and value forming role in American society. Not only that, but churches have begun to play an increasing role in efforts to ameliorate a wide variety of social problems that have evolved in zones of urban poverty (see Carnegie Quarterly, 1987-1988; Klein, 1997). As a matter fact churches are being

urged, through contributions from both private foundations and government, to expand their social programs in poor urban minority communities. Reverend Eugene Rivers and his Azusa Christian Community has been singled out for praise for the work they have done in Boston's Dorchester community for their help in getting a group of preteens back on track. Such work has led to coalition building between community based church organizations and government agencies as the most recent approach to assisting poor youngsters in resisting the lure of the streets and subsequently the adoption of the street culture.

While a growing number of churches are becoming actively involved in developing social programs for low income children; in this instance we are more concerned with what Billingsley (1992) refers to as the spiritual values of the church. Billingsley's focus is on the black church, and since the overwhelming majority of our offenders are black, his focus takes on special importance. Billingsley (1992) demonstrated a strong religious expression among both black males and females. Church attendance was an indicator of how important religion was in the life of this population, particularly for black women, who attended church more frequently than did black men (76 percent to 61 percent). Lickona (1991) noted the following: "The more religious people were, the less likely they were to engage in morally questionable acts; and the younger they were, the more likely they were to engage in such behavior" (p. 13). Lickona, a

supporter of values education, thought that moral degeneracy of youth was at least partially responsible for the upsurge in youth violence and that moral values should be taught in schools. A similar position is iterated by Wilson (1993), who contends that individuals are born with a moral sense. In his opinion, it is only after they abandon this moral sense do they feel free to engage in unethical conduct.

Differential Patterns of Church Attendance

The respondents to our life history questionnaire were asked if they attended church regularly when they were growing up and if so, which religion they practiced. We assume that those who attended church regularly were more likely to manifest a moral sense or to adopt a set of pro social values than those who did not. On the other hand, church attendance may have had little impact if it were coerced by parents or if it had to compete with the strong secular orientation of their peers. The responses of the offenders to the items identified above could well inform us on the importance of church attendance on behaviors thought to reflect a specific value orientation. For instance, does church attendance influence truancy or criminal histories? Are there detectable differences in church attendance on the part of offenders associated with a specific homicide type, e.g., gang related?

Offenders more often than not (57.5 percent) indicated that

they attended church at some time during their growing up years. Some variation around the mean was observed. Gang related offenders were most likely to have responded affirmatively (61.5 percent), whereas drug related offenders were equally divided between attendance and non-attendance. Robbery related offenders (58.3 percent) differed only slightly from offenders engaged in other arguments (56.5 percent) in their church attendance habits. The central issue here, however, is did church attendance lead to the acquisition of values that distinguished them from individuals who failed to attend church as youth.

Church Attendance and Prosocial Values

We anticipated that those individuals stating that they attended church regularly while growing up would have a greater tendency to exhibit prosocial and/or a greater moral sense than those who did not. In order to test that assumption we compared the responses of each offender group on two sets of items. First we made the assumption that those persons who attended church regularly would be less inclined to state that they were ever truant from school. Second, we assumed that parents of children who attended church regularly would be more inclined to encourage children to engage honestly in their dealings with people, while the parents of non-church attending children might be inclined to advise those children to always look out for themselves first in their interactions with others. In no instance, however, did

church attendance seem to have an influence on children's propensity to engage in truant behavior.

Among gang-related offenders there was no strong positive correlation between regular church attendance and a history of non-truancy. In fact, 25.0 percent of the non-church attenders reported that they were not truant as opposed to 30.0 percent of the regular church attenders. Thus, attending church regularly while growing up, at least among this group, seemed to have had little to do with whether one chose to be truant.

The impact of church attendance on robbery homicide offenders relative to truancy was zero. All of these offenders reported that they were truant during their school experience. More than two-fifths (44.4 percent) of these youths reported that they attended church, but it did not seem to alter their tendency to be truant.

Drug-related offenders differed in some ways from the above two groups. Among this group 56.5 percent of the respondents reported that they attended church while growing up, while the same share reported that they were truant. But only 7.6 percent of the regular attenders were not truant. A larger share of those who did not attend church reported to never being truant (15.3 percent). Thus, non-church attenders were less likely to be truant than were church attenders.

The responses of offenders who were incarcerated for committing an expressive homicide, i.e., other argument,

exhibited an association between church attendance and truancy that was analogous to those previously described. More than three-fourths (76.8 percent) of those attending church regularly were also truant. Of those reporting that they did not attend church half were truant and half were not. Again non-church attendees were less likely to be truant than those reporting attendance. As a rule, church attendance does not appear to influence patterns of truancy among any of our offender groups.

Church Attendance and Parental Guidelines

With the second item we are attempting to ascertain if parental guidelines are reenforced by church attendance. We are assuming that individuals who report church attendance have their origins in households where church attendance is valued and a moral sense is more likely to prevail. This section of the life history questionnaire was designed to categorize the ways parents advise children in terms of how they should expect to relate to others. Some of the choices are positive, while others are negative. Most of the advice offered was positive (deal honestly with others; look out for yourself), although some parents advised their children to take from others (5.8 percent) or to never trust others (4.7 percent). Nevertheless, more than 70.0 percent advised their children to deal honestly with people and/or to look out for themselves.

Since honesty is a ranking value among Americans (see

Rokeach, 1973) we assumed that the parents of church attending children would choose it first. The parents of non-church going children we thought would be more inclined to advise children to look out for themselves first. We think the former choice is a less secular one and the latter choice is a more secular one.

The parents of gang-related offenders were more inclined to advise them to look out for themselves (34.6 percent) and secondarily to deal honestly with persons with whom they interacted (19.2 percent). Among parents who advised their children to deal honestly with those whom they interacted, 80.0 percent were parents of children reporting they attended church. But a sizeable segment (66.0 percent) of those who advised their children to look out for themselves were also parents whose children attended church. Thus, it appears that parents of church going children are only somewhat more likely to recommend the less secular option. It is true, however, that parents of children who did not attend church were more likely to recommend the more secular option.

The advice received by drug-related offenders differed in a number of ways from the above group. Support for honest interaction was higher (30.7 percent) and that for looking out for yourself was lower (7.6 percent). Other prosocial choices were also higher. Among those parents recommending honesty, 75.0 percent represented the parents of church attending children. Other prosocial choices were supported by the parents of church

attending children, e.g., assist others, while parents of non-church attending children were more inclined to support an antisocial choice, i.e., take from others. The parents in this group were more inclined to support the less secular option.

Parental advice to robbery-related offenders was more secular in tone than either of the others. In this instance look out for yourself was the most frequent message (66.6 percent) transmitted by parents. Two-thirds of the parents transmitting this message were persons whose children did not attend church. Honesty was the advice offered by only 22.2 percent of the parents, divided evenly between parents of children who attended church and those who did not. Because of the small number of responses, doubt is cast on the differences displayed. If we could extrapolate safely from these responses, it would indicate that these parents and their children differ from the previous groups in their support of a more secular orientation.

Persons incarcerated for engaging in assault growing out of emotional discord represented a more diverse group of offenders, especially in terms of ethnic mix. This group exhibited a higher level of support (47.8 percent) for the less secular choice, i.e., honesty, than any of the other offender groups. Look out for yourself accounted for 30.4 percent of the total responses. Parents whose children attended church were far more likely (72.7 percent) to advise their children to interact honestly than to adopt any other interactional strategy. The inverse was true of

parents whose children who had not attended church while growing up. Almost three-fifths (57.1 percent) of those parents recommended that children look out for themselves first. As a group these parents tended to be more supportive of prosocial values in general, although almost ten percent recommended that their children take from others.

As was true of truancy, parental advice to their children was mixed. Only offenders who were involved in interpersonal conflict homicides were strongly advised by their parents or a parent to emphasize honesty in their interaction with others. But robbery-related offenders were even more strongly advised to look out for yourself. What was clear, however, is that parents of church attending children were more inclined in each instance to support the least secular option. Parents of children who attended church were more likely to support prosocial values. It appears, however, that the strength of parental values diminished under the weight of peer values if truancy can be used as an example of the strength of peer influence.

Characteristics and Experiences of Victims

It is victims who constitute the underlying concern of this investigation. It is they who serve as concrete evidence of an increasing body count and that body count during the five years prior to 1993 was increasingly made up of juveniles and young

adults. In this investigation juveniles and young adults made up 38 percent of the total victimizations taking place in the city in 1992 and 1993. Victims are known to play a variety of roles in the actions engaged in immediately prior to the striking of the fatal blow (see Wolfgang, 1958; Luckenbill, 1977; Felson, 1982; Sobol, 1997). Thus, it is often intimated that victims bear some responsibility for the action ending in death. Of course a number of victims are passive non-participants in these actions and are therefore totally without blame for the violent assault. The extent of victim involvement largely revolves around the nature of the incident leading up to death.

Having previously provided a description of our offender sample based largely on their response to selected items on our life history questionnaire, we will now utilize a similar strategy in an attempt to gain greater insight into the characteristics and experiences of our victim sample. In this instance others had to speak for the victims. We sought responses from the next of kin of the victims drawn into the sample. Of those next of kin that we were able to contact, 57 agreed to respond to the life history questionnaire. The items on both questionnaires were similar, although in some instances they had to be modified to reflect a different sensitivity based on the role of the participants and the object of the questions. Nevertheless, these two instruments allowed us to ascertain disparities and similarities among and between victims and

offenders. For this discussion we will confine our descriptions to juveniles and young adults. We have chosen this tactic because it will essentially allow us to focus attention on persons coming from environments where there are more similarities than differences.

We are aware that next of kin might be inclined to provide a more positive picture of the victim than that which emerged from offenders' descriptions of their own life histories. But we contend that those biases are likely to be minimal. Some victims no doubt engaged in activities that parents found unsatisfactory, while other parents might have been quite pleased with their child's social development. We simply have to assume that those who speak for an anonymous victim will do so honestly, as they are very much concerned with reducing the level of violence in their neighborhoods as a means of protecting other members of their households, neighbors and strangers as well from the violence that has caused them so much pain. We utilize the same approach as that used with offenders. Victims will be aggregated by homicide type and various aspects of their life experience will be detailed based on responses provided by next of kin.

**Residential, Educational and Work Experiences of Victims Killed
in Gang-Related Confrontations**

Victims, like offenders, tended to reside in concentrated poverty neighborhoods and were exposed to many of the same

vagaries of life. Unlike offenders, victims were overwhelmingly (80.0 percent) natives of the city of Milwaukee. Most had lived in a number of local neighborhoods some of which were viewed as neighborhoods in decline, while others were viewed as stable. Those parents or other next of kin who viewed the victim's last neighborhood as one undergoing change generally reported change to be associated with growing incidents of violence, evidence of the presence of agents representing the drug trade, and evidence of a gang presence. Neighborhood change and/or decline was reported by next of kin from both the city's north and south side poverty enclaves.

None of the victims managed to graduate from high school. One had reached the twelfth grade, but was killed one semester short of graduation. The vast majority of victims were enrolled in school at the time of their death and therefore did not voluntarily leave school. The youthfulness of the victims placed them in jeopardy of having their school careers shortened. More than three-fifths of the victims were juveniles. These were individuals who had grown up in a number of city neighborhoods and had attended city schools, but had their lives cut short in gang related activities.

Although the victims were young, they were not strangers to the work force. Most (60.0 percent) had participated in the work force, some on a part time basis and others full time. Given their inexperience and limited human capital, almost all of those

who had work experience, were found on the lower rung of the occupational ladder, e.g., food service workers, although one victim had held a job as a store clerk. These were individuals who did not get the opportunity to experience upward mobility in the labor market.

Some victims, like their gang-related offender peers, were described by their next of kin as sometime users of drugs. More than half (54.5 percent) were described as drug users, but none of the users were said to have graduated to hard drugs. All identified users were described as occasional users of marijuana. Thus, victims appear to have used drugs at the same level as the offenders, but none had yet graduated to cocaine use, a distinction that set them apart.

Victims' Community Image

We earlier raised the question of the image offenders held of themselves. That question was posed to next of kin. Instead of asking how victims viewed themselves, we asked what the victim's reputation in the community was. A slightly modified set of images were presented to the next of kin, e.g., street wise instead of hustler or acts by one's wits. Persons who liked to have a good time represented the modal group (41.6 percent). Persons described as mature individuals (25.0 percent) and responsible individuals (25.0 percent) tied for second place. Persons who were identified as street wise constituted fewer than

ten percent (8.3 percent) of the total. The next of kin agreed with the image that was perceived as the community image of the victim in every instance.

We were concerned how the images that victims projected to the community were associated with their drug using propensities. What we found was that persons whose community reputations were described as mature or responsible were reported not to be users of drugs. The drug users were those persons who were viewed as streetwise or as persons who like to have a good time. Based on reported community reputations, victims possessing a street orientation and those possessing a non-street orientation were about equally divided.

A Brief Comparison of Victims and Offenders on a Select Set of Characteristics

Earlier we were concerned with the extent to which offender's parents worked. Parents of gang-related offenders were found in the labor force __ percent of the time. This level is substantially below that reported by victims' mothers (90.0 percent). These mothers also held jobs that were somewhat higher in status than those held by their counterparts. When asked if the victims' siblings had trouble with the law we found that half had, but their criminal offenses were rather minor when compared with those committed by gang-related offenders.

Another notable difference between victims and offenders was that far fewer victims had become parents. Only one-fifth of the

victims in this sample were reported to be parents, and of those who were identified as parents, it was most often reported that they had a single child. But it should be kept in mind that most individuals were juveniles.

The Schooling Experience of the Victims of Gang-Related Killings

Gang-related offenders had a more positive attitude toward school than all other offender groups. Victims posted an even greater liking for school. Just over half of the offenders displayed this positive view of schools, while more than three-quarters (77.7 percent) of the victims were said to hold favorable attitudes toward school. Not only did these students view school favorably, but 55.5 percent viewed them highly favorably according to their next of kin. Although favorable responses dominated, one parent reported that her child started out with a favorable view only to have that view change as he became a teenager. Possessing a favorable view, however, did not put a total damper on truancy. Almost three-fifths of the victims were at times truant from school. The reported cause of truancy seldom related to a strong street orientation as was the case with the offenders. Caution is urged in this instance, however, as parents may simply have been more reluctant to explain their child's truancy in strongly negative terms. Victims were somewhat more likely to have been suspended (63.6 percent) than to have

been truant. There were causal differences between victims and offenders for both of these behavior patterns (truancy and suspension).

Victims were more likely to have attended church (70.0 percent) while growing up than were offenders. Likewise, these were individuals who participated in the activities of the school (60.0 percent). Victims appear to both have liked school and participated in school activities on a much wider scale than gang-related offenders. While this was the case, it does not appear that church attendance bore directly upon these more positive outcomes. Victims of gang assaults tended to possess a more positive set of characteristics than did their attackers. Moreover, victims tended to have a higher regard for the value of schooling, but even though that was the case truancy was rather widespread.

Drug and Robbery-Related Victims

Because the number of drug and robbery-related victims was small, we combined those two groups for purposes of discussion. Our numbers were further diminished, at least on some items, as several of our victims were mature and older adults. This was especially true of robbery victims, but somewhat less so of our drug related victims. On items that relate to social characteristics, e.g., schooling, religion, community reputation,

a decision was made to eliminate mature and older victims from the discussion. Our rationale for doing this was that because of the disparities in age and our interest in focusing more directly on juvenile and young adult victims, the social characteristics of older victims could lead to a distortion of characteristics on some dimensions as an outcome of age effects. Certainly this does not represent a perfect solution to a complex problem. But it does highlight the severity of youthful predation on older adults, as well as on similar age peers.

Drug and robbery-related victimizations have in common the willingness of a set of offenders to confront a group of victims with the objective of achieving material gain. It was demonstrated in a prior discussion that a sizeable share of drug-related killings did in fact result from efforts to rob drug houses or drug dealers. Thus combining these two categories, out of necessity, does not represent an irrational decision.

Drug and robbery-related victims among this group were initially almost equal in number. But after the removal of older victims, on selected items, the bulk of the responses were drawn from the next of kin of victims of drug related homicide victims. As a group, these victims were predominantly natives of the city of Milwaukee. When they did originate from elsewhere it was from the small town south (blacks) or the small town north (whites). These were persons who resided in a rather small number of city neighborhoods during their lifetimes, that is, they were only

moderately mobile as a group. Most next of kin (80.0 percent), however, viewed these neighborhoods as neighborhoods in decline. The vast majority of these neighborhoods were located on the city's north side and were described as places where violence was becoming more commonplace and where drugs, gangs and robberies were essentially absent five years earlier, but were now in evidence in most of the neighborhoods where next of kin resided. It was in these neighborhoods that most victimizations took place (63.6 percent).

Victimizations Growing Out of Interpersonal Conflict

Expressive killings associated with other arguments were analyzed in a similar manner to instrumental killings. Unlike those described above, most of these victims were either juveniles or young adults. A small number could be described as mature adults, but no older victims were included among this group. Among this group of victims, as was true of the above group, natives of the city of Milwaukee were predominant (70 percent). When victims were not from the city, they hailed from small and middle sized cities elsewhere. In terms of neighborhoods of residence they were even less mobile than the previous group. Almost two-thirds of the next of kin viewed the neighborhood of current residence as a neighborhood in decline. The same indicators as described by others were said to be

present in most neighborhoods in this group--increased violence, an increasing gang presence and people using and selling drugs. North side neighborhoods were only slightly more numerous than south side neighborhoods, although the former neighborhoods were somewhat more likely than the latter to be described as neighborhoods in decline. Victims in this instance, unlike the previous group, were more likely to be killed outside of their neighborhoods of residence.

An Alternative View of Victims and Offenders

Our view of victims and offenders, to this point, has been informed by offender and next of kin responses to our life history questionnaire. Those responses have been extraordinarily beneficial in providing us with a longitudinal view of what the participants in these acts of violence were like as they came of age. As indicated earlier, these responses were not unbiased. Yet we are in no position to deny their validity and thus assume that respondents reported what they believed to be true. Fortunately, we had access to an alternate record of victim and offender characteristics derived from what normally would be considered an objective source-Children's Court records. We have extracted information from these records that provide additional insight into the differential traits that distinguish victims and offenders.

The topics chosen for purposes of differentiation include reports of child abuse or neglect (CHIPS cases); if one or both parties lived in homes where the primary source of economic support was derived from Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC); if one or more children in the home had been determined to be developmentally disabled and therefore qualified for supplemental social security financial support (SSI); gang membership; and contact with the juvenile court system. These are topics that allow us to reach some tentative conclusions about the life trajectories in which the participants in these acts of violence might have been encouraged to become involved. The household economic support base is identified; the augmentation of that support base as an outgrowth of a child's developmental status is also identified. Parental neglect and the possible placement of the child in an alternative residential setting is a characteristic of households from which victims and offenders often hail. It has been stated that the previous trait is an important marker indicating the likelihood of future problems among adolescents (Burt, Resnick and Novick, 1998).

The final two traits, holding membership in a gang, and having had contact with the juvenile court system, were the most prevalent. It was on the latter dimension that offenders and victims differed most. Offenders as a rule were more likely to have had contact with the court than were victims, although differences between them varied substantially by homicide type.

Offenders, as a rule, were more likely to be affiliated with gangs than were victims. However, in one instance specifically in gang-related killings, victims were more likely to have held membership in gangs than did offenders. Gang membership was held by 83.3 percent of the victims, but only 77.7 percent of the offenders. In no other group of victims did gang membership exceed 25.0 percent and in the case of robbery homicide victims none held membership in a gang.

Contact With the Juvenile Court System

Offenders among the group were not strangers to the juvenile court system. No fewer than two-thirds had had contact with the court, i.e., drug-related offenders, while the maximum, gang-related offenders, registered a contact rate of 80.0 percent. Victims in one of the above categories, i.e., gang-related, also had frequent contact with the courts, i.e., 50.0 percent, whereas drug-related victims had only limited contact (22.2 percent). The only other group of victims to have extensive contact with the courts were those associated with other arguments (47.3 percent). The gap between victims and offenders, among persons involved in other arguments, in terms of prevalence of contact, was smallest of all (21.7 percent). Thus, among groups willing to break societal rules those involved in other argument killings appear to possess the greatest commonality, and those involved in robbery related killings the greatest disparity.

Victim and Offender Sources Of Economic and Social Support

The dimensions chosen for comparison cover a range of characteristics including both endogenous, e.g., physical or emotional disability, and exogenous, e.g., gang membership. On the likelihood of being in need of parental support offenders and victims, on average, differed hardly at all. The same was true of individuals possessing physical and/or emotional disabilities. But offenders were more than twice as likely to come from AFDC households than were victims. Likewise offenders were almost twice as likely to hold membership in gangs than were victims. This ratio did not hold true in gang-related killings, in which victims had a higher prevalence rate than did offenders (83.3 percent vs. 77.7 percent).

An Additional Commentary On Contact With the Juvenile Court System

In contact with the juvenile court system differences between offenders and victims reach a peak (73.2 percent vs. 33.0 percent). Specifically, the limited contact that victims of drug (22.2 percent) and robbery-related killings (12.5 percent) have had with the juvenile system suppresses mean contact. While it is important to measure differences in prevalence relative to actual court appearances, it is also important to illustrate differences in frequency of contact and the nature of contact as well. Some differences were noted between frequency of contact with the juvenile justice system and homicide type. Offenders in each

instance had greater contact with the court than did victims.

Gang and robbery-related offenders had the least contact. Gang offenders were more than twice as likely to have had contact as gang victims (5.8 per individual vs. 2.6 per individual). The gap between drug offenders and drug victims was small (2.9 per individual vs. 2.1 per individual). The gap between other argument offenders and victims was likewise small (2.7 per individual vs. 2.2 per individual). The gap between robbery related offenders and victims was similar to that describing gang participants.

While the mean number of contacts was somewhat modest, some offenders registered a much larger number of contacts. A much smaller number of victims were associated with these higher contact frequencies. Victims had less frequent contact with the juvenile court system than offenders across all categories of homicide type. Among individuals with no prior contact with the court victims won hands down. The share of victims who had no previous contact with the courts was highest for robbery victims and lowest for gang victims. Thus, there were differences not only in the prevalence of contact with the courts across homicide type, but also in the level of contact.

Serious Youthful Offenders

After reviewing the level of frequency of contact with the court, among victims and offenders, it was apparent that a small

share of the sample of victims and offenders stood out from the rest based on frequency of court contact. Persons having had ten contacts or more were labeled serious offenders. These were individuals who were generally charged with the commission of a felony. Offenders were much more likely to be labeled serious offenders than were victims. Of all persons identified as serious offenders more than half (52.9 percent) were associated with gang-related offenses. Gang-related offenders were more than four times as likely to wind up in this category as gang-related victims. Among each of the other groups the ratio was closer than two to one. It was among gang-related offenders that it became evident that criminal careers had been established at an early age. This group had no peers, among other homicide offenders and victims, based on level of serious offending. For instance, offenders and victims associated with other arguments were equally as numerous as the former group, but were only one-fourth as likely to produce an equivalent number of serious offenders.

Gang-related offenders in particular were not only inclined to have frequent court contact, but the offenses with which they were charged most often constituted felonies. The most common offense was robbery, followed by burglary and a weapons charge, e.g., carrying a concealed weapon by a child; reckless use of a weapon. At the tail end of this list of offenses was a drug charge and operating a vehicle without the owners permission. Robberies were almost twice as frequent as burglaries and weapons

charges.

In summary, it is apparent that offenders, as a rule, were more inclined to engage in illegal conduct than were victims. Furthermore, gang-related offenders came in contact with the juvenile court system most often. Not all serious offending, however, was attributable to offenders, although the number of victims who qualified as serious offenders was small. Felonies were less common among the mix of illegal activities that characterized those involved in other homicide types. What did show up with increasing frequency among these other groups were weapons charges. This was especially true of offenders who were associated with other arguments.

Selected Individual Behavioral Characteristics of Offenders

A number of behavioral characteristics, drawn from our life history survey, should shed additional light on the perspective of offenders and how they possibly arrived at their current state of incarceration. The items that we have chosen to review include leisure time preference, engagement in serious fights, the recipient of serious injuries as an outgrowth of fights, position on gun availability, emotional response to killing and emotional response to sentence received. This array of behaviors and subsequent responses to those behaviors allow us to view the offender from yet another perspective. We previously paid

attention to how individuals responded to a series of social control agents. Now, however, we turn our focus is on a combination of sociocultural influences and the uses of human agency. As was previously done, attention will be focused upon individuals who constitute sub-aggregates. The sub-aggregates represent offenders who engaged in specific identifiable homicide behavior, e.g., robbery homicide.

Offenders and their use of Leisure Time

The amount of discretionary time that individuals have often governs the range of activities they might choose to engage in. Based on our review of offenders' daily activity calendars it became apparent that many offenders had large blocks of time available to them to engage in a wide array of leisure activities. What they actually chose to do during their leisure was no doubt constrained by monetary resources and personal preferences. These preferences and choices, however, were not simply idiosyncratic, but were at least partially influenced by their sociocultural roots. Offenders were provided with a list of 15 leisure items from which to choose the three activities in which they most often engaged. Based on their responses we were able to ascertain what the ranking responses were by offender subgroup.

The range of preferred activities differed little by subgroup. The activity that ranked first by each group was

hanging with friends. Although the distance between this and the second most preferred activity varied across groups. Table 6 below illustrates the leisure activities of each offender subgroup. Gang-related offenders demonstrated the sharpest

Table 6

The Ranking Leisure Activities of Offender Subgroups, 1992-1993

Leisure Activity Ranking	Gang Related Offenders	Other Argument Related Offenders	Drug Related Offenders	Robbery Related Offenders
1	Hanging with Friends	Hanging with Friends	Hanging with Friends	Hanging with Friends
2	Partying	(tie) Playing or watching Sports/Staying Home with Family & Friends	Playing or watching Sports	Staying Home with Family & Friends
3	Listening to Records	Watching TV	Staying Home with Family & Friends	Watching TV

contrast among the subgroups, as no other group identified partying and listening to records among their ranking choices. Among the remaining groups, playing and watching sports and staying home with family and friends were often the second or third choice. Among other argument offenders these two activities tied for second place. Watching T.V. represented the third most preferred activity for two of the above groups.

Offenders as a group displayed a strong element of gregariousness. It was during periods of hanging with their friends that the potential for violence was at its maximum. Likewise, conflict frequently arose on playgrounds; in a common scenario, offenders would go to demonstrate their athletic prowess, fights would break out and someone would fire randomly into a crowd, and unfortunately hit an innocent bystander. The offenders' preferred leisure activities and the settings for these activities further facilitate the potential for violence, especially when coupled with availability and/or access to guns and consumption of drugs and alcohol. Excessive leisure plus the desire to impress one's peers often sets the stage for interpersonal conflict. As some groups of young men like these have been described as individuals who manifest a continuous feeling of non-specific anger, i.e., floating anger, (Bernard, 1991) only a weak triggering mechanism is required to set off an explosion.

Table 7

The Ranking Leisure Activities of Victim Subgroups, 1992-93

Leisure Activity Ranking	Gang Related Victims	Other Argument Related Victims	Drug Related Victims	Robbery Related Victims
1	Playing Sports	(tie) Playing Sports/Hanging with Friends	Listening to Music	Staying Home with Family and Friends
2	Hanging with Friends	_____	Partying and Dancing	Playing Sports
3	Watching TV	_____	Playing Sports	Frequenting Taverns

The Preferred Leisure Activities of Victims

An effort was made to ascertain how victims most often spent their leisure time as well. The next of kin was provided with the same 15 leisure activity choices as were provided offenders. They then proceeded to identify from that list the three activities that their kin (the victims) enjoyed most. Victims were less than unanimous in their preferred choice and often engaged in activities that distinguished them from offenders. Hanging out with friends was not the preferred activity of any of the subgroups, although it did rank second with one group and third with two other groups (see Table 7).

Gang related victims were said to have preferred playing sports (33.3 percent) to all other choices on the menu. But

hanging with friends represented a strong second choice (25.0 percent). Other argument victims largely mimicked gang-related victims in their interest in playing sports (33.3 percent) and hanging with friends (33.3 percent). Hanging with friends was more often preferred than it was among gang-related victims. For this group all other choices were diffuse. Drug-related victims tended to differ from the previous two groups. The only preferred activity they had in common was playing sports and for this group it represented their third choice. Listening to records represented their ranking choice followed by partying and dancing. Robbery-related victims like drug-related victims preferred more idiosyncratic pastime, with staying home with family and friends representing their first choice. Frequenting taverns represented their third choice. This was not a ranking choice among any other victim subgroup. The one diversion which was identified as a preferred activity across all subgroups was playing sports, corresponding to hanging with friends across all offender subgroups.

Offender Involvement in Serious Fights

Our offenders overwhelmingly responded yes to the question, "Have you ever been involved in serious fights?" There seems to be little that would minimize a willingness to fight among our offender sample. According to Anderson (1997) a willingness to fight or to convince others of one's willingness to fight

reflects how well one has learned the rules of the street. A willingness and an ability to fight demonstrate the acquisition of survival skills in some neighborhoods, a skill that is acquired by street boys and boys from decent families as well (Anderson, 1997). While the majority in the offender sample admitted to having been involved

Table 8

The Differential Propensity To Have Been Involved in Serious Fights by Offender Type

Homicide Type	Percent Involved in Serious Fights	Percent Engaged in Numerous Fights
Gang Related	92.8	42.3
Drug Related	83.3	16.6
Robbery Related	66.6	25.0
Other Arguments	73.9	21.7

in serious fights there were marked differences in the prevalence rate by homicide type.

Gang-related offenders were the most likely to have been involved in serious fights. More than nine out of ten offenders in this group reported such involvement. But it is generally recognized that a willingness and an ability to fight represent important gang recruitment criteria. Robbery-related offenders were least likely to report a history of fighting. Drug-related offenders and those associated with arguments fell in between the

polar groups, with drug related offenders more closely resembling gang offenders in their fighting experiences. Those persons engaged in interpersonal conflict killings were more akin to robbery-related offenders than to others.

Not only were we concerned with the prevalence of fighting behavior among our offender subgroups, we were also concerned with the frequency of fighting. We therefore asked offenders if they had numerous fights, several fights, or few fights. We were especially interested in those indicating that they had been involved in numerous serious fights. That honor went to gang-related offenders, as more than two-fifths (42.3 percent) responded that they had been involved in numerous serious fights. Robbery-related offenders and those associated with other arguments accounted for more than two-fifths of those who had engaged in numerous fights. Only one in six drug-related offenders reported this pattern of behavior. The groups most likely to report that they seldom engaged in serious fights were drug and robbery-related offenders. While differences among these groups based on leisure time choices were nominal, differences in prevalence and frequency of involvement in serious fights was characterized by greater disparity.

Of those persons reporting they had been involved in serious fights, no fewer than half reported that they had suffered serious injuries as an outcome of those experiences. Most had been shot, cut or stabbed or had suffered severe head wounds from

having been struck with a blunt object. Most carry physical scars that serve as testimonials to such encounters. Some individuals described themselves as aggressors in these acts, while others viewed themselves as being attacked. It often became clear, however, that in one instance an individual might have been an aggressor, but in another might have been attacked. Across all groups fighting most often grew out of arguments involving jealousy, disrespect and money.

Offenders Think Guns Are Too Easy to Get

Given the frequency with which guns were used in resolving conflict in the numerous fights in which offenders were involved and the fact that most had used guns in the confrontation that led to death of another, it seemed logical to pose a gun access question to offenders. Offenders were asked if they thought guns were too easy to get. All offender groups responded with a nearly unanimous yes. One way that this response can be interpreted is that the respondents blame their current plight on the availability of guns and in hindsight think that serious efforts should be put forth to restrict access. While many thought guns should be banned, there were those who were of the opinion that things were unlikely to change. Although there was opposition to easy access, some variations did show up across subgroups.

Those that held the strongest views that guns could be acquired too easily were gang-related offenders (92.5 percent)

and robbery-related offenders (91.6 percent). Since these constituted the youngest of our offenders they may simply be associating their own difficulties with the law with their easy access to handguns. They would spend a large block of their young adult years incarcerated. Drug and other argument offenders were least convinced that guns were too easy to get, even though a sizeable majority (75.0 percent and 82.6 percent, respectively) also concluded that access was too easy.

Offender Responses To The Lethal Act

It is frequently said that youth have grown more callous over time and accept the possibility of having to take the life of another as a routine act when the other interferes with the goals of the aggressor. Such an appraisal best describes the expected response of those engaged in instrumental acts of violence. For those engaged in expressive acts of violence a broader array of responses should be expected. To clarify this issue we have attempted to ascertain how the respondents felt immediately upon recognizing that they had taken the life of another. The respondents were presented with a series of emotions describing how they might have felt. Among these choices were the following: neutral, angry, empty and emotionally upset. The first three categories suggest, at least to us, that the offenders do not have concern for the victim or the victim's next of kin. A

neutral response suggests that the offender views his action as routine and therefore incapable of prompting an emotional response. An angry response could suggest that the offender realizes that he is now in trouble and is angry at himself for committing an act that would land him in trouble with the law. An empty feeling does suggest an emotional response, but one that is flat and not easily interpreted. It is only the emotionally upset response that we interpret as reflecting feelings of remorse for the ultimate act of violence committed against another.

The above responses enable us to ascertain differences in emotional reactions among our subgroup of offender. A complicating factor is that some individuals participated in a multiple offender act and may not have been the shooter. In such instances it appears that anger may have been the offender's initial response to his predicament. Most offenders responded that they were emotionally upset (37.8 percent) and the fewest responded that they felt angry (16.7 percent). It should be noted, however, that those indicating anger differed only nominally from those indicating feelings of emptiness (17.5 percent). Neutral feelings were reported in 25.7 percent of the cases. Based on our interpretation of the responses at least one quarter viewed the act as a non-incident.

Among those reporting that they were emotionally upset gang related offenders (50.0 percent) led all subgroups in indicating this emotional response. This is somewhat surprising, although it

was indicated earlier that some gang-related killings took on characteristics of expressive acts. Neutral responses were stable across all subgroups of offenders. An empty feeling showed the greatest variation, ranging from 25.0 percent among drug and robbery related offenders to just 7.6 percent among gang related offenders. Anger reached a peak among offenders involved in other argument killings. In this instance it appears that a quarter of the offenders were angry as a result of the difficulty in which they found themselves, while more than a third showed signs of remorse. Neutrality and emptiness garnered more responses than anticipated. yet it was remorse which represented the modal response across all offender groups.

Sentencing Outcomes and Offender Responses

The final series of questions addressed in this segment of the report focus on the sentences the offenders received and how fair they perceived the imposed sentences to be. A small number of those responding to our life history survey are already eligible or will soon be eligible for parole. How these individuals view their sentences and/or the incarceration experience may influence what course they will follow in the future.

All of the persons who responded to our life history questionnaire were incarcerated, as that was a requirement for participation. As a result of this requirement we have no way of

knowing how unincarcerated individuals, that were initially charged with a homicide, differ from the individuals participating in the survey. What we do know is that these individuals, like similar groups around the country, have engaged in behavior that has led them to become part of a growing army of persons whom seem destined to spend a substantial part of their lifetimes in penal institutions.

The offenders were granted sentences of varying lengths. This was no doubt a function of their particular roles in the homicide event, the circumstances associated with their involvement, and the nature and frequency of their previous contact with the criminal justice system. While we are not able to account for the varying sentence lengths we are able to describe the variations among offender subgroups. If we employ sentence length as a measure of severity of punishment we can then ascertain which groups were more severely punished.

We grouped sentence lengths into the following five categories: 1) 10 years or less; 11-14 years; 15-19 years; >20 years; and life in prison. Individuals receiving either of the latter two sentences were viewed as being severely punished, while those receiving lesser sentences were viewed as being modestly or minimally punished. Persons awarded the lesser sentences would be eligible, all things equal, for parole in a shorter time period. As it turned out, gang-related offenders were the most severely punished, as almost four-fifths (79.1

percent) were given sentences in the upper two sentencing levels. Two-thirds of the members of this group received sentences of 20 or more years in length. The disparity among the other groups were lower. That was especially true among other argument offenders (55.0 percent) and drug related offenders (49.9 percent) The group that received the least severe punishment were robbery-related offenders (41.6 percent). It is, on the surface, unclear why such broad variations occur in the responses. One possibility is that the shooter in multiple offender homicides did not always choose to participate in this investigation.

The perception of offenders regarding the fairness of the sentence received also varied by subgroup. As a rule, the groups receiving the longest sentences tended to view their sentences as unfair. For instance, almost two-thirds (65.3 percent) of gang-related offenders thought that their sentences were either unfair or very unfair. This group did in fact experience the highest prevalence of sentences of 20 years or greater. But the group that thought their sentences to be most unfair were other argument-related offenders (78.2 percent). This group received the largest share of life sentences. Drug-related offenders were the least dissatisfied (36.3 percent) with their sentences, as a slight majority received sentences of less than 20 years. Robbery-related offenders were only slightly more dissatisfied (41.6 percent). They too were the recipients, in most instances, of sentences shorter than 20 years. Thus, it appears that

offenders who received sentences in excess of 20 years perceived those sentences to be unfair, while those who received shorter sentences were more inclined to agree that their sentences were fair. It is somewhat ironic to find that individuals who were clearly involved in a felony killing tended to receive the shorter sentences and therefore can be expected to be back out on the street in a shorter period of time. One thing stands out clearly-a percentage of the offenders in the sample were convicted of the charges against them and are currently serving time in the Wisconsin correctional system.

Next of Kin Response to Offender Sentencing

Having established the offenders' level of satisfaction with the sentences they received, we thought it appropriate to seek a response from next of kin on this issue as well. Next of kin were initially asked if they knew the current whereabouts of the offender who had been charged with the killing of their kin. The overwhelming majority reported that they were aware of the offender's status. There were slight variations among subgroups, but these were rather nominal, i.e., gang related, 90.0 percent; drug related, 100.0 percent; robbery related, 100.0 percent; other argument related, 90.0 percent. We then asked the next of kin if they were aware of the sentence that the offender or offenders received. The response to that item generally

corresponded to the previous one. The one exception was the response of those whose kin had been killed during a robbery; only three-fifths of those respondents were aware of the sentence imposed.

Next of kin responses to the level of punishment meted out varied substantially from the offender responses. In this instance respondents exhibited some uncertainty as they indicated their level of satisfaction with the sentences imposed. Next of kin, as a rule, were not pleased with the level of punishment that offenders had received. Most thought harsher penalties should have been imposed. Four-fifths of the next of kin of drug and other argument victims were dissatisfied with the sentences that the offenders received. A slightly lower level of dissatisfaction (66.6 percent) with the sentences imposed characterized the response of kin of gang and robbery offenders. It is clear, however, that a sharp majority of next of kin thought the courts were too lenient in meting out punishment to the individuals charged with killing their relatives, who were in many cases their children, though occasionally brothers, sisters or cousins.

Based on the response to the above question we thought it appropriate to report just what punishment next of kin might have found appropriate. Most (57.1 percent) thought that the offender should have received a life sentence. Others (28.3 percent) thought the sentence received should have been longer and often

been suggested that "we learn as we go," applying gained knowledge to the problem at any point in the process.

Emphasis On Firearms Issues

Public health approach proponents have adopted a strong stance against the widespread availability of firearms, especially those having little value other than to maim and injure, e.g., Saturday Night Specials. The strong stand against guns taken by this group has not endeared it to pro-gun Congressmen, some of whom are often financially supported by the National Rifle Association. The Center for Disease Control itself has sometimes been penalized by Congress for its strong anti-gun stance by having its budget placed in jeopardy for funding research that is perceived as anti-gun.

This approach demonstrates a strong sensitivity to the association between social forces and heightened levels of victimization among youth. Issues related to violence, sexual abuse and child abuse, along with the effects of exposure to violence on children's mental health, are among those which the public health model has been employed to assist in addressing.

Primary Focus-Interpersonal Conflict

From the perspective of lowering overall homicide risk, however, the model has thus far failed to address issues of risk that fall outside the arena of interpersonal conflict, i.e.,

felony homicide. Bell (1987) for instance makes a distinction between family violence and street violence. This does not mean that this approach does not contribute to lowering of homicide risk outside of the domestic relations area. Undoubtedly numerous persons are treated in trauma centers for gunshot wounds incurred through street violence. A large fraction of these treated individuals are saved from death by skilled surgeons, attesting to the effectiveness of the group's tertiary strategies.

A Comparison of Two Approaches

While the goals of the above two approaches are quite similar, the approaches themselves are oriented around a different set of assumptions. Police actions designed to lower levels of homicide are predicated on notions of deterrence and incapacitation. Their tactics are designed to strike fear in prospective victimizers and/or to remove them from the streets, i.e., to imprison, whereas public health advocates attempt to alter attitudes and behaviors through the use of instructional programs aimed at demonstrating the negative and/or irrational consequences of selected behaviors. Obviously it is possible to produce a much more rapid decrease in levels of victimization utilizing police approaches than public health ones. Yet the public health approaches, to the extent that they are effective, should be expected to have a longer lasting effect. That is, they should have a positive effect on reducing the peaking level in

the cyclical upturn involving a new youth cohort. Thus the promotion of programs designed to divert children from a life of crime through early intervention is thought to be cost effective (see Greenwood and Others, 1996).

The Issue of the Context of Youth Violence

There is no doubt that the public wishes an early solution to the problem of escalating violence and especially a reduction in the growing loss of ever younger victims. This loss was recently addressed by a National Academy of Science panel (Losing Generations, 1993, p. 13) who state:

"For more and more children and adolescents-especially those who are poor and those who must deal with discrimination that often faces racial and ethnic minorities-the contexts of their everyday lives fail to provide the resources, supports and opportunities essential to healthy development and reasonable preparation for productive adulthood."

The Academy report emphasizes the role of context just as we have in compiling this report. In Washington, D.C. where 224 youths less than 18 years old were killed during one five-year interval the context is said to have promoted growing feelings of fatalism among adolescents growing up in violent environments (Brown, Nov. 8-13, 1993). These growing concerns make it imperative that we adopt a set of strategies, incorporating both criminal justice and public health approaches, in an effort to reduce both the short term and long term level of lethal victimization among youth and older victims as well.

What Can Be Done In the City of Milwaukee to Lower Victimization Levels?

In Milwaukee, a second homicide peak level covering our five-year observational interval was reached in 1993. Since that year, the annual number of killings has been on a slow downward slide. The victimization level in the peak year was 168, but by 1996 it had declined to 143, an almost 15.0 percent decline. What we need to do is determine where in the victimization structure the decline was concentrated or whether it was randomly distributed across homicide types. Likewise, we need to know to what extent the decline cut across race/ethnicity, gender and age. Having access to this information will allow us to increase our awareness of which homicide types and victim groups appear most amenable to risk reduction.

Armed with this information, we should be in a stronger position to suggest recommendations that can be expected to have a long term impact on the problem of elevated risk. It should be noted, however, that at this point we are unable to specify why the observed decline took place. Since there has been no systematic effort to explain the decline, almost any group with a goal of homicide risk reduction can take part of the credit for the decline.

Scholars working in this area generally recommend the establishment of group specific target reduction strategies in order to achieve good results, e.g., young black males; gang related offenders; high risk neighborhoods. These recommendations

seem to be predicated on cultural differences and how they lead to disparate responses to poverty.

Not only have recommendations been directed at individuals and groups based on race/ethnicity, age and gender, but recommendations have also been directed at institutions of which these individuals are an integral part, e.g., the family or at institutions with which they regularly interact, e.g., the school. These recommendations often suggest the need for greater cultural capital to overcome deficits in human capital and the need to extend social networks in order to expand available sources of social capital. What we will do now is review a series of recommendations that have been employed in other cities before we make recommendations for the local community. The practices reviewed will cover those employed by the two primary approaches previously described, and others that may not easily fit into either category.

An Example of Selected Police Approaches Utilized to Reduce Levels of Violence

A recent decline in homicide levels from earlier peaks, in the 1990's, has been discerned in a growing number of the nation's larger central cities. In a few instances the actions responsible for the observed declines have been described, as well as celebrated. Some of the most notable declines have occurred in New York City, Baltimore and New Orleans. We will describe the actions that have been assigned credit for the

decline in two of the above cities. In the above three cities the bulk of the decline has been attributed to the actions of elements of the criminal justice system, with altered policing strategies receiving most of the credit for the observed changes.

We will also devote limited attention to St. Louis, which has also experienced a substantial decline. But St. Louis was chosen as an example of a place where the public health model is being used to guide the development of a series of strategies that are assumed to be effective in lowering levels of risk. At this point it is difficult to specify the impact of these strategies on risk.

In 1993, New York City appointed a new police commissioner who reorganized the city's police department. That reorganization led to a placement of emphasis on planning, data collection and analysis. The responses to plans were evaluated and the results of those evaluations were incorporated into subsequent strategies (see Bratton, 1997). A deputy superintendent for operations was installed who relied heavily upon computer maps to identify the location of clusters of crimes, as well as the time of day crimes were occurring.

A quality of life police strategy was introduced that enabled police to remove from the street an array of petty criminals, e.g., panhandlers, homeless people, etc. But according to Bratton the greatest impact on lowering crime rates was made not by the quality of life strategies, but by establishing goals,

of order maintenance, the city was able to reclaim its streets from those groups responsible for accelerating commercial decline, e.g., drug dealers, panhandlers, etc.

According to Kelling and Coles (1996), this effort was most effectively conducted in a neighborhood known as Boyd Booth. As a result of growing neighborhood fear, this community experienced a continued outflow of residents that led to an acceleration of the abandonment of housing and to an eventual sense of disorder (see Kelling and Coles, 1996). The primary goal of the police, local citizen's groups, the courts and business groups was to restore order to neighborhoods like Boyd Booth.

The "Broken Windows" theory formulated earlier by Kelling and Wilson was said to explain much of what was going on in declining neighborhoods. As residential and commercial properties were allowed to physically deteriorate, a loss of sense of order began to prevail which subsequently manifested itself in fear. Growing fear led residents who were unable to leave the neighborhood to spend most of their time indoors. Drug dealers and others engaged in illicit activity were able to take charge of the streets leading to even more rapid neighborhood decline. It was the introduction of community policing, according to Kelling and Coles, along with the development of a strategy of order maintenance that allowed the police, in cooperation with a number of other groups, to take back the streets. As was true in New York, a number of collaborations within the criminal justice

efficiently deploying officers, utilizing effective tactics and assessing outcomes. Since drugs were believed to be connected to a substantial share of the city's crime an effective tactic had to be developed to address this problem. Open air street markets were hard hit, enabling the police to remove a large number of dealers from the street. Since adolescents were major contributors to street crime an appropriate strategy was developed to address this issue. An effective truancy abatement program was established which effectively led to a decline in all but hard core truants.

New York City demonstrated that crime in general could be lowered and homicide in particular could be made to respond to scientific policing, where planning, efficient deployment of resources and evaluation of actions were the keys to success. Incapacitation and deterrence led fewer and fewer people to openly engage in criminal conduct as they were either in jail or afraid that they might be arrested. It should be noted, however, that it was necessary for the police to coordinate their activities with other branches of the criminal justice system, e.g., the courts, district attorneys office, corrections, etc.

In Baltimore the number of homicides were also observed to decline. The city, through greater cooperation between local citizens and the police, was able to make headway toward restoring public order in some of its worst neighborhoods. Through the introduction of community policing and a philosophy

system were necessary to make this approach work. But none was more important than the cooperation between the police who walked the beat and neighborhood residents.

Although Kelling and Coles make a strong case in support of the criminal justice system's contribution to restoring order in one Baltimore neighborhood, the city's mayor was at the same time seeking support from those promoting the public health model. Since the Mayor was especially concerned that a drug epidemic was responsible for neighborhood disorder and its accompanying violence, he thought a new national drug policy was needed to turn things around. He thought drug policy should be led by the Surgeon General rather than the Attorney General.

Yet David Simon, the author of the best seller Homicide, a compendium based on killings occurring in Baltimore in 1988, tended to appear sympathetic to the position of the police. He had gathered street level observations while accompanying police as they encountered perpetrators of street crimes, e.g., drug sellers; robbers; etc. It seems that the police, with whom he traveled, were dismayed by the success of the city's Trauma Units in saving the lives of persons perceived as street criminals, who had suffered gun shot wounds. The position of his police associates was that the city would be better off had these individuals not survived their injuries (see Simon, 1992). But with increasing skill in treating gun shot wounds trauma centers are able to lower the annual homicide count, as was indicated by

their success in Baltimore.

A Proposed Public Health Approach

In our third city, St. Louis, there was no evidence of a casual link between programmatic change and a lowering in the risk of violence, although there is ample evidence that effective prevention strategies were needed. Rosenfeld and Decker (1993) report a 47.0 percent increase in the number of homicides in St. Louis between 1990 and 1991. In 1990, the city witnessed 177 homicides, but in the following year that number had soared to 260. Not only that, a substantial share of these victimizations involved youth. Rosenfeld and Decker, criminologists by profession, concluded that the public health model included a number of positive features which favored its use as one approach to the prevention of violence. They were keenly aware of the tensions that existed among those who supported the criminal justice approach and those who favored a public health approach. They were not unaware of some of the shortcomings of this approach. Yet, in their opinion "The public health model had much to offer more traditional law enforcement approaches to violent crime." (Rosenfeld and Decker, 1993, p. 12)

The interpersonal conflict character of most St. Louis homicides combined with a heavy involvement of youth appears to have influenced the above scholars' decision to propose the adoption of the public health model in that city's efforts at

homicide prevention. The proposed model had at its core a neighborhood based Assault Crisis Team (ACT). ACT would be comprised of several violence prevention specialists. These professionals would represent medicine, social service, education, criminal justice and community residents trained in violence intervention. It was proposed that they be positioned in a number of settings where they might have easy contact with victims and offenders. In the settings established for this purpose the violence prevention specialist would be expected to do the following-"monitor levels and patterns of violence, mentor youth at risk for violence, and mediate disputes with a high potential for violence." (Rosenfeld and Decker, 1993, p. 28)

As noted earlier, neither persons nor places associated with high risk for violence are randomly distributed. An understanding of this concept led to the establishment of both a target population, i.e., young black males, and target neighborhoods in which risk was known to be elevated. Moreover, questions of viability were raised up front and the authors of the proposal were encouraged by a positive response coming from persons residing in high risk neighborhoods. As is true of public health approaches generally, this proposal will have a built-in evaluation component. While we don't know the outcome of this effort, we thought it worthy of description as an example of a public health model approach to lowering homicide risk in a major urban area in which risk was escalating in the early 1990s.

The previous descriptions of programs designed to address issues of violence were undertaken to demonstrate the content and structure of two successful programs and to simply describe the structure of a prospective prevention program. The programs selected for display were chosen because they represented the two primary approaches to violence prevention currently underway in America. While the two approaches have similar goals, they often pursue these goals independently with different results.

An effective criminal justice approach can produce a reduction in levels of violence in a relatively short period of time, as was demonstrated by the New York City program. The number of homicides in New York City declined from a high of 2262 homicides in 1992 to 756 homicides in 1996 (McBride and Garza, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, April 30, 1997). On the other hand the St. Louis public health model was poised to become operational in 1992, but we do not have data confirming the extent of its success in reaching its goal of homicide prevention. There is, however, data demonstrating a decline of 60 in the number homicides between 1991 and 1995. In major U.S. cities 1993 seems to represent a watershed between peaking patterns and subsequent decline.

A variety of approaches and combinations of approaches have been employed to assist communities to halt the escalation in killings that took place between the late 1980s and the early 1990s. In some instances specific efforts were made, whereas in

others it is less clear that robust efforts were required. Yet the success of the New York City Police Department has led to the exportation of that model to other high risk cities. Keeping in mind the description of the two basic approaches utilized in an effort to reduce levels of violence in general and homicide in particular we will now revisit the topic of escalating levels in Milwaukee. Having described in some detail the nature and patterns of lethal violence prevailing in Milwaukee during a two year interval, it now becomes necessary to think through a set of recommendations on ways to lower the levels of risk prevailing during the observation years. In order to do that we will draw from the previously described approaches to violence prevention, as well as from a more diffuse literature focusing on intervention and prevention relative to specific life threatening activities, e.g., gang related killings; drug related killings; easy access to handguns.

The city of Milwaukee has not been complacent on this issue-the Mayor of the city constituted a Task Force on Juvenile Violence in 1993 that devoted ten weeks to assessing the problem and developing recommendations to address the problem. The Task Force was divided into four committees or working groups that focused their attention on those systems that impact upon juvenile conduct, i.e., judicial bodies; legislative bodies; and community resource availability. The fourth committee was a data gathering group responsible for providing basic information

necessary for making rational and/or reasonable decisions. Most committees included representatives of both criminal justice approaches and public health approaches.

A number of sound recommendations were made, but one stood out from the others. It was concluded that the problem could be effectively brought under control, based on the recommendations of the committee, without an additional increase in taxpayer money. We are aware that taxpayers may be reluctant to bear the additional burden of investing in preventing homicides among individuals that they perceive as representing criminal types. But to assume that we can effectively intervene in the cycle of violence at no additional cost either presupposes that the committee's recommendations can be instituted within the constraints of the existing budget or that our efforts will simply be constrained by funds on hand. But either way, as we said earlier, the public will have to decide what level of victimization is no longer tolerable.

The Declining Homicide Count

Since 1993 Milwaukee, like a number of other large urban centers, has experienced a decline in its annual homicide count. In 1995 the city witnessed 25 fewer homicides than it had in 1993. That change represented a 15.2 percent decrease over an interval of two years. Just what led to this reversal in course

is unknown, although one might conjecture that it had its origin in an improved economic climate, demographic changes, e.g., an aging population, the imprisonment of potential victimizers or innovative police practices. According to a local newspaper article, innovative police practices were not initiated until the naming of a new chief of police in 1996. But for whatever reason, homicide levels are moving in the right direction. We contend that we do not have the luxury of waiting for change to occur as a matter of chance; instead, elements of the community must become actively involved in developing effective violence prevention and intervention strategies. Otherwise the short term gains experienced through a variety of incapacitation strategies are unlikely to deter successive cohorts from choosing violent tactics to achieve an array of dubious goals.

A Review of Selective Intervention and Prevention Strategies

What we will do at this point is review a number of violence prevention and intervention strategies that have been recommended by persons and groups with expertise in this area. Instead of simply reviewing the strategies out of context we will once again address those traits and system characteristics that were thought to impact rising risk levels and discuss strategies that are thought to be most effective in a given context. Because of the importance of efforts to lower levels of violent victimization, a growing battery of recommendations has emerged in recent years.

We will draw upon that literature and with our knowledge of the local community will raise questions about the prospective workability of these recommendations in this context. We will begin this discussion by directing our attention to the role of guns on victimization and efforts to limit gun accessibility.

Efforts to Limit Gun Access

It is generally agreed that easy access to guns, especially among youth, has done much to fuel the most recent take-off in homicide victimizations (see Hechinger, 1994). Yet efforts to control access have continuously run into stiff opposition. Much of this opposition stems from efforts to formally regulate primary gun markets. The major role of youth in elevating homicide risk and their overwhelming reliance on secondary markets suggest that our primary attention should be directed at those markets. That is, interventions in denying gun access to youth should be directed primarily at illicit markets. This is the practice that has been followed in Boston. The Boston Gun Project, which is part of a more comprehensive effort to address issues associated with street violence, with a primary focus on youth, is thought to have been very successful. Only one juvenile has been killed with a gun in more than two and one-half years. The Boston Gun Project involves a broad cross section of groups interested in the problem. This represents a collaborative effort in which the local police, probation and parole officers, youth

outreach workers, a group of university researchers and others worked together to attack the problem.

A target population, thought to be responsible for most youth violence, as well as several neighborhood clusters that served as the site of most of the observed violence were the primary focus of the Boston Gun Project's attention. A series of strategies were designed to address the issue of youth gun access. The first focused on gun supply and demand. The second set of strategies was focused on deterring gun use on the part of those who were viewed as the source of the problem, i.e., gangs. A series of strategies designed to deter gang members from acquiring and carrying guns was based on a policy of coerced enforcement (see Kennedy, Braga and Piehl, 1996), with the police and probation officers working together to ascertain if probationers had breached the terms of their probation and were eligible to be incarcerated or reincarcerated. They sent a clear message to prospective violators that they would be dealt with harshly if they were found guilty of violating the terms of their probation. Based on the tactics employed as part of the Boston Gun Project, Milwaukee might be able to address the problem of gun accessibility by:

- Identifying sources of illicit guns
- Clamping down on individuals who distribute guns illegally
- Identifying those neighborhoods in which most gun

violence occurs

- Identifying groups who are most responsible for engaging in acts of gun violence, e.g., developing gang mapping exercises
- Informing those youth on probation that if they breach the restrictions of their probation that they will receive harsh treatment by the criminal justice system

The above tactics, while representing the thinking of a number of collaborative agencies, basically represent criminal justice strategies. Public health strategies, at least those falling into the category of primary strategies, attempt to deter youth from acquiring guns in the first place. The latter approach seeks to educate persons to the danger of owning and/or carrying guns for protection. One educational strategy is to introduce in the elementary school a unit or exercise that focuses on conflict resolution. Fagan and Wilkinson (1996) recommend that these units include a segment on gun violence and that greater realism be added to the roles played by the actors chosen to demonstrate how a potentially violent encounter might be effectively defused.

Another public health strategy may likewise be added to the list if it is not already being practiced and that is to survey children attending school in dangerous neighborhoods to ascertain their level of exposure to violence in general and gun violence

in particular. It has been demonstrated that children who are exposed to violence often suffer negative behavioral consequences (Garbarino and Others, 1991). Thus, in a nutshell, the following public health tactics are recommended to assist in warding off the negative consequences of gun availability and gun use:

- Introduce conflict resolution strategies in schools in dangerous neighborhoods that involve the use of guns
- Survey children in schools in dangerous neighborhoods to determine the extent to which they might have been exposed to violence in general and gun violence in particular
- Provide mental health services to those children who show signs of negative behavior as an outgrowth of exposure to gun violence

Our second concern relative to observed increases in levels of lethal violence was the role of street gangs as a source of violence. Since street gangs demonstrate an affinity for violence and a weak commitment to normative behavior, their presence and numerical strength often foster a greater likelihood for the occurrence of violence and especially gun violence. The Boston Gun Project targeted gangs as their primary source of violence. These represented groups for whom gun access was very important and whose youthfulness promoted a lack of restraint. A problem

with police approaches to gangs is that their definition of what constitutes a gang is often too broad. From the perspective of the police, it seems that any group of youth who come together to engage in unlawful activity may be designated a gang. Thus, it becomes difficult to separate the conduct of ad hoc groups from that of persons holding membership in formal street gangs. The growth in group offending, especially among young males, has muddied the water in such a way as to make it more difficult to distinguish between formal gangs and informal criminal alliances.

In Milwaukee this is less often a problem than it is in some other places. The spread and growth of formal street gangs is well known to the local police. The question becomes, do we know enough to minimize the level of gang violence without relying almost totally on a strategy of incapacitation? Attempts to preempt gang violence are widespread, but criminal justice approaches still receive the most attention. These approaches generally focus on getting gang members off the street.

A number of school based gang programs have been established in response to the disruptive impact that gangs are having in some schools. School programs often focus on school dress codes, according to Klein (1995). While Klein is not opposed to dress codes, he seems unconvinced of the suppression value of this tactic or for that matter suppression tactics in general. To date, efforts at gang suppression appear to have had limited success. This had led Miller (1990) to call for the establishment

of a federal office of youth gang control.

Other agencies have also been at work in an effort to minimize the negative consequences often associated with youth gang involvement. One such effort is peer focused and attempts to prevent youth from affiliating with gangs. Guerra (1997) reports that in a set of Chicago elementary schools where this intervention strategy was employed, it was demonstrated to have produced no positive effects. Yet, another intervention program described by Guerra, which included both a classroom component and an after school athletic component, did produce positive results. None of the participants, who were involved, joined gangs during the year that they were enrolled in the program.

The available data tend to demonstrate that gang suppression is a complicated and difficult task. According to Klein (1995), efforts at suppression often lead to increased gang cohesion, thus producing an inverse set of outcomes. Spergel and Curry (1990) assessed four major efforts at gang suppression and concluded that the most effective were associated with community organization strategies, e.g., building community trust; involving parent groups in community programs, and opportunity strategies, e.g., job preparation; job placement; school tutoring. If Spergel and Curry's assessment of what works best has merit, and they are well aware of its weaknesses, it is possible that there is a set of strategies that might work in an emerging gang city like Milwaukee. It has been said, however,

that until the social context in which gangs tend to emerge and proliferate is addressed it will be difficult to reduce the attractiveness of gangs in poor communities. While recognizing the difficulties that are likely to be encountered in efforts at gang suppression one would nevertheless recommend the following:

- Attempt early to identify children who exhibit anti-social proclivities
- Assess and design programs to address those proclivities with appropriate followup
- Develop culturally sensitive treatment programs with followup
- Attempt to link such children to pro-social institutions and pro-social values
- Promote efforts to invest resources in local community development
- Promote efforts to place youth in employment experiences that possess the potential for upward mobility

Drug Use and Distribution: Can We Intervene?

Much of the increase in violence during the past decade has been attributed to the growth of drug markets across the nation. The entry of crack cocaine into the local market was delayed for reasons not fully understood, but such was the case in Chicago as

well (Wilson, 1996; Chicago Tribune, August 15, 1993). The fact the crack cocaine seemed to play a minor role as the drug of choice among both victims and offenders in our sample is not to suggest that drugs did not constitute a serious problem in this community. For in 1993, 9.5 percent of young black male homicide victims deaths were labeled drug related (Rose and McClain, 1998). Among the youthful offenders in our sample, 22.2 percent reported that they were addicted. Thus, there is ample evidence to suggest that drugs, in the poverty community in particular, have accelerated the resort to violence and, as a result, added to the body count.

The drug problem has been the focus of national attention with much of that attention directed at those engaged in the distribution and sale of illicit drugs. The criminal justice system's war on drugs has reportedly failed to lead to a serious diminution in drug consumption, especially crack cocaine consumption, in communities of despair across the nation (Toury, 1995). What it has done is to greatly expand the size of the nation's prison population. Young black men and secondarily young Hispanic men have been the primary targets of those responsible for ridding our streets of illicit drugs.

In some communities drug penalties have led to the removal of large numbers of black juveniles from the community. It is somewhat unfortunate that we have attempted to control this problem by devoting almost all of our resources to a strategy of

incarceration. Those who have failed to make a satisfactory adjustment to the situation in which they happen to be born can expect to spend part of their lives in either state or federal penal institutions.

To date, it appears that far greater attention has been devoted to sellers than users, when they can be distinguished. The crimes committed by users might diminish if we could reduce and/or terminate the users' dependence on drugs, especially crack cocaine.

The use of crack cocaine has been observed to have brought more women into the drug marketplace, a situation that has sometimes led them to exchange sex for drugs (Pettiway, Dolinsky and Grigoryan, 1994; Ratner, 1993). This practice leads to a greater exposure to and danger of transmitting HIV/AIDS, as well as making such women vulnerable to acts of violence. It should be noted that black women experienced the least decline among Milwaukee homicide victims between 1993 and 1995 of any gender/race/ethnic group. What stood out was the inability of the local police to bring closure to a number of these cases leading to speculation that the victims were possibly addicts who were killed by a male or male predators.

What we are advocating in this instance is that communities be allowed to divert some of their resources, allocated to address this issue, to fund non-criminal justice strategies. It is not that we think criminal justice strategies have not

impacted the problem, but as currently designed they appear to lead to overprisonization, with young black males being targeted far in excess of their level of participation in the drug using community (Miller, 1996). Those who sell drugs have obviously chosen to participate in the illicit economy and therefore must be punished, but even they tend to be treated more harshly because they have chosen to distribute crack cocaine rather than powder cocaine. Thus the action of the court, in this instance, is frequently viewed as biased against young black men who have chosen to sell crack cocaine (Toury, 1995; Miller, 1996).

The rise of a drug economy in poor neighborhoods has done much to accelerate neighborhood decline, while at the same time promoting attitudes of alienation and the adoption of an oppositional culture by those who perceive themselves to be victims of unfair treatment at the hands of the criminal justice system in particular and the larger society in general.

For Milwaukee to be able to weaken the influence of drugs in local markets it must be willing to adopt a combination of strategies rather than relying solely on those utilized by the criminal justice system to attack the problem. Some possible alternative activities that might help to weaken the impact of drug markets in dangerous neighborhoods and as a consequence lower the homicide risk are as follows:

- Identify youngsters at risk for substance abuse
- Develop new awareness programs to fight against

initiating substance abuse

- Evaluate the effectiveness of existing anti-substance abuse programs
- Provide treatment for persons who wish to overcome their substance abuse habit
- Evaluate existing policies relative to landlord responsibility for screening suspected drug dealers prior to renting properties to them
- Survey the existence of drug houses
- Close down drug houses and negotiate a purchase price with landlords and subsequently rehabilitate properties for rental to non-drug affiliated households
- Sentence first time youthful drug seller to a fixed term of community service with continuous counseling
- Impose harsh, but fair sentences (i.e. crack cocaine sellers treated the same as powder cocaine sellers) on all persons convicted of second and later acts of selling

Neighborhood Risk Intervention/Prevention

It was indicated earlier that neighborhood attributes play an important contributing role to the elevation of homicide risk. Wilson (1987; 1996) tends to place emphasis on the role of

neighborhood decline, concentration of poverty and the isolation of the poor in certain neighborhoods for a number of social ills that characterize these neighborhoods including an elevation in levels of violence. In such neighborhoods of concentrated poverty he observed that it was not unusual for more than half of the males to report not being in the labor force (Wilson, 1996). These are neighborhoods that have become increasingly vulnerable to a variety of social ills and organizational deficiencies many of which have already been discussed in this report. In such environments subcultures evolve which reflect the contextual effects of neighborhood influences on children and adolescents (see Sampson, 1997). It is in extremely poor neighborhoods that Anderson (1997) suggests that an oppositional culture among youth is most likely to take hold.

The effects of neighborhood poverty on children's development is beginning to be taken more seriously as new research focusing on this topic emerges (see Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, and Aber, 1997; McCord, 1997). As we learn more about neighborhood influences we should be in a better position to make neighborhood centered recommendations that might possibly assist in lowering levels of violent victimization in one group of neighborhoods only to have them transferred to another. In Milwaukee, elevated risk at the neighborhood scale exhibited a high degree of stability during the interval 1989-1993. Based on stories in the news media it appears that the same neighborhood

clusters continue to represent sites in which victimizations remain elevated. Thus, our recommendations for neighborhood level intervention and prevention strategies are directed at that subset of concentrated poverty neighborhoods that we had earlier labeled dangerous neighborhoods.

It should be noted that the neighborhoods experiencing high cumulative homicide counts are among the most desolate in the city. These are neighborhoods in which housing vacancies tend to be high, external appearances are often drab, and commercial strips show signs of obsolescence. These are neighborhoods often occupied by those who are trying to survive the economic impact of globalization, while at the same time they are besieged by the handicaps associated with the growth of an informal economy.

Among the tactics recommended in an effort to alter the negative contextual impact of residence in zones of social disadvantage and concentrated danger are the following:

- Survey the residential quality in the area
- Develop and/or coordinate existing housing rehabilitation programs in the area
- Monitor tenants' external maintenance of properties
- Award prizes to tenants by neighborhood groups that take pride in promoting aesthetic maintenance practices
- Shut down all drug houses in the area
- Encourage local commercial development along strip shopping streets

- Induce businesses who would employ local residents to establish locations in the area
- Promote the establishment of billboards in the area that carry prosocial messages
- Designate a nearby hospital as a trauma center
- Encourage local churches to establish mentoring and/or other prosocial programs
- Provide additional supervised sports activity
- Discourage adolescent loitering

Many of the above recommendations are somewhat diffuse, but this represents a more diverse arena and one which few formal recommendations have been offered and fewer still tested to determine their feasibility or workability. Whatever actions one chooses to pursue they should be evaluated in terms of their influence on lowering levels of homicide risk.

The Role of Schools in Lowering the Risk of Violence

School must play a critical supportive role in lowering the potential for violence among that segment of the school population that has both overtly and covertly demonstrated traits believed to serve as indicators. Teachers must be taught what to look for as early indicators or markers for future violence, e.g., schoolyard bullying, classroom disruption, classroom

fighting, etc. Based on teacher observations in the early grades programs may be developed that demonstrate the negative light in which both the school and the larger society view this conduct and the consequences that stem from it at later ages. Likewise psychological treatment and other appropriate mental health or physical health procedures may be recommended for individuals whose overt conduct is deemed to exceed the limits of normative behavior. In all cases, however, teachers must develop a sensitivity to the culture of the students (see Cousins, 1997).

When teachers fail to assist in recommending intervention strategies based on behavioral observations of repeated behaviors that are thought to serve as markers of future and more serious behavior, an opportunity to assist in altering negative behavior is missed. More and more often, it appears that teachers simply recommend suspensions and shift the responsibility for altering these behaviors on to other institutions. Thus, schools have increasingly begun to mimic the criminal justice model as a way of resolving the problem. Instead of removing the perpetrators from the streets temporarily, they are temporarily removed from the schools at an early age.

We think the rule breakers, i.e., those who fight in school, or classroom disrupters, must be identified early, appropriate interventions instituted and their conduct monitored over time. Based on a profile of conduct perceived to signal danger for children as they age, schools should begin to investigate a range

of programs that might be deployed to assist in combatting negative conduct. Other less apparent passive behaviors that might suggest difficulty in the future also should be noted.

Based on what we learned through our interviews with offenders two issues seemed to dominate: truancy and a weak attachment to school. It seems by the time students reach middle school age, those who earlier exhibited antisocial behavior are prepared to extend that conduct to the more risky environment of the street, where they use and sell drugs while carrying a gun. Or they join gangs and engage in a range of criminal activities. We will suggest a broad range of intervention and prevention strategies that we think could assist in ameliorating the problem. Our recommendations include:

- Identify rule breakers in the early grades
- Develop and introduce pro-social programs for those described as persistent rule breakers
- Develop an anti-bullying program
- Seek parental input and/or advice in determining the nature of the program that might be best for an individual child
- Develop linkages to parents through teachers and school aides from the local neighborhood schools
- Introduce conflict resolution and mediation programs into the curriculum
- Develop after school tutoring programs

- Develop supervised after school sports programs for children not involved in organized sports
- Develop curriculums and teaching strategies that are both interesting and meaningful to students who do not normally possess a strong attraction to school
- Review and possibly make changes in the present Truancy Abatement Program
- Develop culturally sensitive preparation programs for teachers who have had limited or no prior experience teaching in low income minority schools
- Demonstrate, in a realistic fashion, the connection between school and future employment opportunities

Obviously some of the above strategies are already being practiced in some local schools. If this is the case what is needed is to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used in curbing antisocial conduct. Without an evaluation component it is not possible to know how effective a strategy has been in addressing a set of assigned goals.

Family Needs and Violence Prevention

The family is generally recognized as the first line of defense in curbing children's violence tendencies, as well as other forms of delinquent proclivities. All of the other violence

mediating institutions must take a back seat to the family when it comes to assuming responsibility for children's conduct. The effectiveness of poor households in achieving this goal is thought to have diminished in the late 20th century. Some reasons often cited for lowered parental effectiveness are the exponential growth in single parent households among segments of the minority poor (Wojtkiewicz, McLanahan and Garfinkel, 1990; Patterson, 1997) and children's exposure to intrafamily violence (Lorion and Saltzman, 1993), as well as the abusive violence that parents heap upon their children (Fiender and Becker, 1994; Earls and Barnes, 1997). Examples of each of the above conditions were evident in households in both our samples of victims and offenders.

The loss of informal social control is frequently cited as a contributor to youthful criminal proclivities, and levels of homicide risk as well. This loss of informal control has led us to rely far more on agents of formal control, i.e., the criminal justice system, to regulate the conduct of youth. But it is not only the conduct of youth that is at issue, but the conduct of some parents themselves. One significant revelation in a review of the court records among our offender sample was widespread evidence of family pathology. It was not uncommon to find one or both parents suffering from alcohol and/or drug problems. Some parents themselves were involved in the criminal justice system, whereas others had simply abandoned their role as parents. When

the above traits are added to poor parenting skills and in some instances child neglect and abuse the odds are that children growing up in these households will themselves adopt some of the negative behaviors observed at home are good.

We are in dire need of effective programs that will aid in improving parenting skills, that will help parents effectively monitor their children's behavior, and that address the mental health problems that have overcome some parents. Until these issues are confronted we can continue to anticipate the occurrence of child abuse homicides and the proliferation of youth who have been socialized to believe that interpersonal conflict can only be resolved through the use of violence. To assist in overcoming these and other problems that are known to have their origins in the home we recommend the following:

- Identify parents suffering from drug and/or alcohol dependence and seek to enroll them in treatment programs
- Identify parents who are known to be guilty of child abuse and child neglect behavior and seek counseling for them
- Encourage parents who demonstrate and/or acknowledge poor parenting skills to enroll them in programs that promote good parenting skills
- Promote the formation of neighborhood parenting networks whose goal would be to monitor the behavior of neighborhood children
- Assist parents in developing the skills needed to lift

them out of poverty

- Encourage families to develop positive linkages to prosocial community institutions
- Expansion of family preservation programs

The recommendations suggested to assist in lowering the risk of violence among children and adults have been drawn both from the literature on violence and our knowledge of the local community. A careful review would probably reveal that a number of the recommended activities have already been initiated, while others might have been considered and rejected. While this might well be the case, it does not preclude the need for a well coordinated effort to address issues of youth violence locally. These efforts should be targeted at the city's most dangerous neighborhoods. The cost of introducing such strategies would probably prevent or at least work against their community wide adoption. Other strategies may prove more effective, but we must start somewhere, first by identifying what is being done and second by identifying what works.

A host of schools, churches and human service organizations operate within the confines or at the margins of the city's most dangerous neighborhoods. They need to be brought together in an effort to mount a coordinated attack on the problems of youth and adult violence in the neighborhoods of concern. Local leadership will be required to bring critical elements together to launch a

coordinated attack on a problem that is responsible for a loss of life and serious injury among a growing segment of the city's youth. Alternatively, we can rely solely on the criminal justice system for resolution of the problem. Based on examples described in this report it is quite possible for the criminal justice system to lower the homicide count, as was recently demonstrated in New York City. But that action only leads to a short term solution of the problem. If we are interested in lowering the violence peak in successive cycles of cohorts we must work to alter those forces that abet cyclical upturns in the first place. In order for this to occur greater cooperation between the criminal justice approaches to violence and public health approaches will be required.

A Final Note

This research effort has concentrated on shedding light on why Milwaukee, a city with no prior history of elevated homicide levels, would become a participating urban center in the final decade of the 20th century. Our findings demonstrate that Milwaukee, like a number of its American manufacturing belt peers, has become a depository for persons who have not been able to make a successful transition from industrial to post-industrial development. This lack of success has led to an expansion in extreme poverty neighborhoods largely populated by

minority populations who have historically encountered difficulty in their effort to experience upward mobility. The children of these abandoned populations have become increasingly alienated with many espousing an oppositional culture. Oppositionality, however, has not diminished one's interest in participating in a commodified culture (see Haymes, 1995), as well as a willingness to participate in an illicit economy to achieve a series of commodified goals. Thus, the rise of a new street culture is a reflection of the widespread changes taking place in the nation's economy and the subsequent social and cultural adaptations that have followed on the heels of economic change.

The format that we chose to present our findings was selected in order to allow us to indirectly test the validity of growing street culture, i.e., gangs, drugs and guns, on rising levels of victimizations especially among young minority men, but especially among young black men who constitute the majority of victims and offenders. The choice of this format enabled us to investigate the role of the various elements of the street culture and how it interacted with and was impacted by selected institutions in which it had contact. Unfortunately, because of time delays, we have not been able to incorporate in this report the outcomes of the statistical analyses that is in process. While the format chosen has been beneficial at one level, it obscures the importance of macro-structural processes going on at another. What our guns, gangs and drugs approach does is to

essentially enable us to provide a series of proximal descriptions and explanations for rising levels of risk without really addressing the issues and forces which undergird such choices.

The prevention and interventions strategies recommended reflect the need to overcome the impact of external forces on both individual and group behavior. Many of the recommended strategies have been attempted elsewhere with some success, while others have not always been effective. But each community will need to experiment with programs that hold promise. Most of all it is paramount that advocates of the primary approaches to prevention and intervention begin to collaborate. It is true that some agencies are far more effective in carrying out certain tasks and promoting selected techniques than are others. But that is to be expected given the different objectives of the participating bodies. These differences manifest themselves in how prevention programs are labeled, i.e., crime prevention; violence prevention, homicide prevention. It is true that homicide prevention, at some level, might occur in each instance, but it is unlikely that the same strategies will be employed in each. This simply highlights the need for further collaboration and program evaluation.

What we have suggested in this instance is that we initially focus most attention on those neighborhoods described as dangerous. This will provide us with an opportunity to experiment

with a variety of prevention techniques that can later be applied to another neighborhood when the need arises. We need to monitor the character of life in adjacent neighborhoods and distant neighborhood pockets that evolve into high or extreme poverty neighborhoods. But most of all every effort should be made to stave off expanding poverty, by assisting persons to gain a foothold in the mainstream economy. As our data clearly demonstrates there exists a strong association between the growth of dysfunctional households and levels of victimization.

Current evidence demonstrates that the peak of the current homicide epidemic has passed. In Milwaukee we have been successful in bringing most cases to closure and incarcerating those guilty of taking the life of another. But without real changes in the lives of that segment of the population that is most vulnerable to becoming part of the street culture we could be experiencing another upturn when the next cohort comes of age. At that time peak levels of homicide risk are likely to exceed those observed in the early 1990s and the demand for even more prison space will be greater than it is now. Prevention and intervention programs that offer greater hope to individuals who previously perceived themselves left out will be more likely to join mainstream culture.

By employing the format around which this section of the report was built we are guilty of devoting too little attention to the victimization of women, especially black women. We noted

elsewhere in this report that young women are increasingly being attracted to the street culture and as a result are potentially ratcheting up their risk of victimization (see Sikes, 1997). The recent decrease in the annual homicide count in the city revealed that the level of decrease among females was less than it was among males. Another group that was given little attention in this section of the report were children who were the victims of child abuse. This clearly represents an area in which greater attention is required. These holes in our investigation were in large part an outcome of a research design that elicited information from or about those who were known to be responsible for driving up victimization levels-young minority males.

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