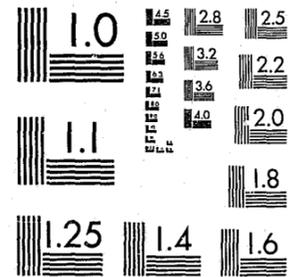


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5/6/82



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BLACK HOMICIDE AND THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Final Report
Grant # 5 RO1 MH 29269-02

Submitted to:
Center for Minority Group Mental Health Programs
National Institute of Mental Health

Principal Investigator:
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January 5, 1981

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ACQUISITIONS

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SECTION ONE

BLACK HOMICIDE AND LARGE URBAN ENVIRONMENTS

Introduction

Life in urban America is characterized by a richness and diversity usually absent in those areas in which large segments of the present urban population originated. In rural and small town America, life was simpler and often more serene even though the array of goods and services that we have come to think of as standard were often unavailable. Improvements in the quality of life that are most evident in urban settings allow us to frequently overlook or push out of our consciousness aspects of urban living that are troublesome and threat provoking. But for many persons it is not possible to push out of their consciousness the very real threats to survival that persist in selected parts of the urban milieu. These are persons who are often trapped in urban environments characterized by poverty. The world view of this population is likely to differ between those who have established a safe and comfortable niche for themselves in more desirable urban settings and those for whom opportunity for social mobility is often blocked.

One of the negative aspects of urban life receiving widespread attention during the previous fifteen years is that associated with a brief interval in which serious acts of collective violence, largely oriented toward the destruction of property, threatened the stability of urban places throughout the nation. Yet, the cadre of social scientists who were attracted to study the phenomena of collective violence have largely been inclined

to overlook the changing level of interpersonal violence occurring in selective urban contexts. This study is designed to fill that void, but it will focus on a single aspect of interpersonal violence taking place in urban settings. The aspect of interpersonal violence chosen for investigation is homicide, both criminal and non-criminal.

In most cultures, homicide is generally ranked as the most serious criminal act that can be committed against an individual. Likewise, it is generally believed to be the most difficult act to prevent, given its assumed association with the arousal of passion and its modal occurrence in private settings. This has not hampered some policy analysts from recommending options designed to deter the occurrence of these events, recognizing the more diverse circumstances and settings in which fatal acts of interpersonal violence have begun to occur. The recommendations for bringing this behavior under control often range from the imposition of more stringent gun regulations on one end of the spectrum, to meting out of more severe penalties by the judicial system for the total disregard for human life on the other.

Black Homicide: A Little Studied Phenomenon

Homicide as an act of taking the life of another is a more commonplace occurrence in the nation's larger black communities, such that it has reached almost epidemic proportions in specific urban environments. It was recently shown that the relative risk of victimization was eight black victims for each white victim at the national level (Vaupel, 1976). The upsurge in the level of homicide victimization since the mid-sixties had the most severe impact on the nation's black communities; thus, this pilot investigation has chosen to focus directly on the issue of black homicide in large urban environments.

The issue is a complex one, and we can only hope to scratch the surface of understanding in this initial effort at bringing the relevant issues into sharper focus.

Homicide investigations in the United States are conducted periodically by a diverse array of disciplinarians, although the research tends to be dominated by sociologists. The work of Wolfgang (1958) describing homicide patterns in a major city more than a generation ago has tended to serve as a model for most urban related homicide research appearing in the last two decades. The one major study that has departed from this tradition was conducted by Lundsgaarde (1977) from a legal anthropological perspective. The work of these and most other homicide researchers is almost certain to focus some attention on the role of blacks as victims or offenders in homicidal behavior. But seldom has attention been directed solely to the study of patterns of black victimization.

In those instances where attention was directed specifically toward the study of black homicide, the period of observation was one or two generations removed from the present. The Brearley (1930) study focused attention on patterns of black homicide at several scales during the decade of the twenties and thereby provides a base line against which changes in behavior can be measured over time. The more recent study by Pettigrew and Spier (1962) poses some interesting theoretical issues regarding the existence and transfer of a homicidal culture. But their analysis does not provide insight into the role of the urban context on the manifestation of a previously acquired set of culture traits in promoting a propensity for homicidal behavior. This investigation, like the two previously mentioned, will be concerned

specifically with the extent to which homicide continues to represent a major killer of blacks. The context and the period of observation, however, will differ from those of the earlier studies. Our attention will be primarily focused on patterns of black homicide in large urban contexts during the decade of the seventies.

Motivation for Study

The present investigation is an outgrowth of the lack of serious scholarly attention being paid to what continues to represent a major cause of death among blacks. It has become increasingly clear that homicides occurring in large urban environments tend to be dominated by both black victims and black offenders. Recent studies denoting that fact (Block and Zimring, 1973; Block, 1976; Rushforth and others, 1977; and Munford and others, 1976) seldom single this group out for special attention, even though it is obvious that blacks have become the primary actors in a lethal drama in those cities where they constitute upward of one-fourth of the population. The absence of primary emphasis on the central actors might be associated with the difficulty of securing information describing victim's race.¹ Likewise, homicide studies are most often criminological in orientation; and thus those persons dependent upon FBI statistics, i.e. annual criminal reports, will find that they do not provide racial identifications of victims or offenders. But given the seriousness of this cause of death when compared with the leading causes of death in the nation's larger black urban communities, it was decided that this topic required special attention.

Table 1

The Leading Causes of Death of Black Americans in 1959-61 and 1973²

<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Disease Specific Rates: 1959-61</u> (per 100,000 population)				<u>Disease Specific Rates: 1973</u>			
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Diseases of the heart	317.7	1	253.9	1	305.9	1	239.7	1
Malignant neoplasms	134.5	2	108.9	3	170.1	2	117.9	3
Cerebrovascular disease	115.5	3	120.9	2	96.1	3	99.9	2
Accidents	92.5	4	37.4	4	98.5	4	33.6	4
Influenza and pneumonia	63.8	6	43.6	5	39.7	6	24.1	7
Diabetes mellitus	13.0	13	22.7	7	18.2	9	28.2	5
Cirrhosis of the liver	12.5	14	8.1	15	26.6	8	15.2	8
Suicide					10.0	10	3.0	
Homicide	34.3	7	9.4	12	65.8	5	14.6	9
Certain causes of mortality in early infancy	89.9	5	66.4	4	36.8	7	25.7	6

Source: Erhardt, Carl L. and Berlin, Joyce, editors, Mortality and Morbidity in the United States, Harvard University Press, 1974, p. 27 and The Social and Economic Status of the Black Population in the United States 1974, Current Population Reports, Special Studies Series P-23, No. 54, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C., 1975.

Thus, this report will present some of the preliminary findings associated with a pilot investigation of black homicide in selected urban environments.

The primary motivation for this study grew out of the need to gain a better understanding of the forces which lead to the death of a growing number of black Americans. This, then, is essentially a victimization study. Yet, there is an attempt to secure information describing a variety of status measures associated with both victims and offenders. Likewise, a concerted effort has been made to link the homicide environment to the occurrence of the act. Little previous work has paid much direct attention to this variable, but the feeling here is that this represents a variable that should not continue to be overlooked. Not only are we concerned with the identifiable action space of the persons involved in interactions leading to death, but the role of the larger urban context will be considered as well. Almost a generation ago, Bullock (1955) suggested linking place with persons involved in the homicide transaction. The rapid expansion of territorial black communities in large urban environments since World War II and the corresponding decline in resources available to the cities in which these communities have emerged are thought to have had a negative impact on an increasing segment of the black population. It is within this context that this pilot investigation has attempted to elicit answers that will enable us to better understand the leading behavioral cause of death among black Americans.

The Study Context

Any study focusing on homicide as a cause of death among American blacks would logically choose large urban environments as a point of departure since more than two-thirds of that population is concentrated in such environments. More than one-third of the nation's black population was concentrated in 20

large central cities in 1970. In a number of these settings blacks constitute more than two-fifths of the city's total population, and in a growing number of cities they are likely to represent the majority population by 1980.

The movement of blacks to the city, beginning about 1910, represents one of the more notable migration patterns in American population history. This shift in place of residence from the rural South to the urban North was basically stimulated by the desire of blacks to improve their economic lot. Early movement was targeted for large cities along the Atlantic littoral, followed by movement to selected middle west manufacturing centers. During and following World War II, movement continued to these as well as to other perceived centers of urban opportunity. By 1960 black migration had led to a concentration of blacks in most of the nation's major urban centers. It is these centers that currently represent the modal environment of residence of the nation's black population. Residence in these centers has been associated both with economic success and with failure to achieve the American dream. It is the failure to achieve the American dream, as manifested by the recent upsurge in homicide rates in large urban environments, that provides the operational context for this study.

Temporal and Regional Variations in Risk of Victimization

The risk of homicide victimization has been described as cyclical, characterized by peaks and valleys in response to various external stimuli. The decade of the fifties experienced a downturn in risk of homicide victimization in comparison to that prevailing during the forties. But by the mid-sixties there was evidence of an upturn in risk of victimization. That

trend was in evidence through 1975. The national homicide rate prevailing in 1965 was 6.2 per 100,000, but by 1975 it had climbed to 10.2 per 100,000. The latter rate is the highest recorded in this century. The black³ homicide rate at the beginning of this most recent upswing was 30.1 per 100,000, but had risen to 44 per 100,000 by 1973 (Klebba, 1975, p. 197). Thus, it is clear that the increased risk of homicide victimization further aggravated an already serious problem, and by 1972 it had become the single leading cause of death among black males ages 20-34 (Dennis, 1977, p. 316).

Risk of victimization has long manifested a regional bias. That bias continues to prevail, resulting in the South continuing to maintain higher homicide rates than those prevailing elsewhere in the nation. Some have attributed high southern homicide rates to the disproportionate presence of blacks in the South's population. But there is also evidence that supports the higher southern incidence of victimization across race than that prevailing elsewhere. Reed specifically states, "There are large and persistent differences between southern and non-southern whites in the frequency with which they actually murder people (1972, p. 46)." The issue of a southern propensity for violence is frequently argued among scholars and will receive more attention elsewhere in this report.

The risk of black victimization, however, has been more notable in urban environments where the regional effect, at least on the surface, appears less compelling. Barnett and others' analysis of changes in homicide rates between the beginning of the most recent homicide upsurge and the early seventies, in the nation's 50 largest cities, demonstrates that approximately one-third of these places experienced more than a doubling of the risk of

victimization in less than a decade (1975, p. 90-91). The cities where homicide risk increased most sharply during this brief interval are identified in Table 2.

Table 2

Cities in Which the Risk of Homicide Victimization More Than Doubled Between 1963 and 1965 and 1971-72

City	Homicide Rate 1963 and 1968	Homicide Rate 1971-72
Detroit	9.64	38.93
Buffalo	3.98	14.98
Honolulu	3.04	9.69
Cleveland	11.99	38.47
Oakland	7.16	23.07
Akron	4.29	12.55
Long Beach	4.26	11.98
Philadelphia	8.11	21.74
Miami	10.88	26.57
Columbus, Ohio	4.65	11.86
Memphis	7.14	17.42
Atlanta	18.36	48.79
Minneapolis	3.48	8.53
New York	7.49	20.28
St. Paul, Minn.	2.54	5.81
Rochester, N.Y.	3.84	10.14

Source: Barnett and others, "On Urban Homicide: A Statistical Analysis," *Journal of Criminal Justice*, vol. 3, 1975: 90-91).

There were other cities, however, that did not show such sharp increases during this interval as they could already be identified as high homicide risk places at the beginning of the interval. These included such places as St. Louis, Baltimore, Dallas, Washington, Newark, and Birmingham. Most of these initial high risk places were those associated with a southern tradition. It is obvious that not all places in which homicide risk more than doubled during the above interval were places with large black populations or even places that were recent targets of large-scale black migration. But all of

those in which exaggerated levels of risk prevailed were places with large black populations and/or a large percentage of blacks in the population. Barnett and others, however, do not perceive deviations in homicide growth rates to be directly related to the characteristics of individual cities, but simply to represent normal deviations around a national trend (1975: 93).

The Investigation Cities

Changes occurring in the risk of homicide victimization within those environments in which blacks constitute a significant element in the population provide a universe from which a sample might be drawn for an in-depth investigation. However, the complexity of the problem and the availability of resources have resulted in limiting this investigation to a small number of places. The cities chosen for investigation were not randomly selected, but were chosen on the basis of regional location, black growth characteristics, and industrial status. Six cities were chosen as a part of the investigation: Atlanta, Georgia; Detroit, Michigan; Houston, Texas; Los Angeles, California; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and St. Louis, Missouri. Atlanta, Detroit, and St. Louis are described as primary cities, while the other three are described as secondary cities. Both primary and secondary data have been employed in the analysis of the homicide situation in the former, while only secondary data sources have been tapped in association with the latter.

A number of cities have been the targets of previous homicide investigations: Detroit (Zimring, 1979; Boudouris, 1971; Wilt and Bannon, 1974; and Fisher, 1976); Atlanta (Munford and others, 1976); and St. Louis (Herjanic and Meyer, 1975; and Meyers, 1954). Atlanta and St. Louis have both been

studied during the recent period, but those studies were seldom comparative, often only focused on a limited aspect of the topic, and were not primarily oriented toward providing an explanation of the changing level and incidence of black victimization. Nevertheless, these studies do provide support for this work. Among the secondary cities only Houston had been singled out for attention (Bullock, 1955; and Lundsgaarde, 1977). The lack of work in the other two cities is no doubt associated with the perceived limited magnitude of the problem. Neither Los Angeles nor Pittsburgh were characterized by doubling homicide rates during the previously described interval, nor could they be described as high homicide risk places in 1971-72. Thus, places characterized as manufacturing centers could possibly infer looseness of the opportunity structure in terms of gaining a foothold in the economy. It has been previously noted that during the sixties manufacturing centers were more often the sites of major riots than were service centers (Downes, 1969). The central issue raised by the latter point is to what extent is the changing structure of the American economy promoting conditions that increase the risk of homicide victimization.

Population Growth Characteristics in Sample Cities

Black population growth in the form of a net increase in the population as a function of migration was in evidence in Los Angeles, Detroit, Houston, and Atlanta. Net out-migration represented the established pattern in Philadelphia and St. Louis during the period 1965-70. The previous four urban centers represented places of maximal regional black population growth during this period, while Los Angeles and Detroit maintained a similar position among non-southern metropolises. The attraction of growth centers to persons previously residing elsewhere might be viewed as representing the perception of the existence of economic opportunity. Behavior representing the inverse of the above no doubt reflects the pull to places

of greater opportunity. Thus, one might construe the pattern of black population growth in our sample cities to represent varying levels of perceived urban economic opportunity. The incongruence, however, between perceived opportunity and actual opportunity could have the effect of promoting an intensification of stress levels in individual places. The greater the incongruence, the greater the likelihood of interpersonal conflict and subsequently the increased risk of homicide victimization.

The cities chosen for inclusion in this study are represented by places that can be described in regional terms as southern or non-southern. This regional dichotomy is thought to be important in attempting to address numerous conceptual issues associated with a propensity for violence. Likewise, it was thought important to include places characterized by rapid or slow black population growth during the previous decade stemming from migration. Finally, the nature of the urban economy and the ease with which it could absorb new limited skill entrants to the labor market were thought to represent external variables that should not be overlooked in our attempt to explain the pattern and risk of homicide victimization in a diversity of regional settings. Rapid growth stemming from migration was in evidence in Los Angeles, Detroit, Houston, and Atlanta. In the latter two places, migrants largely originated in non-metropolitan zones in their respective states. Migrants to Los Angeles and Detroit were of southern and non-southern origin, with non-southern migrants comprising the largest percentage of the total California migrants, while the inverse pattern prevailed in the Michigan case. Pittsburgh and St. Louis were places where black leavers exceeded black entrants, and where growth in the black

community had essentially reached an equilibrium state. The question of the importance of growth stemming from migration should aid in an evaluation of the role of regional culture of violence on the risk of homicide victimization. It should be noted, however, that the latter task is not likely to be resolved through the analysis of data assembled in this pilot investigation.

In some ways it would appear that our primary and secondary sample cities represent analogous pairs in terms of criteria previously stipulated for place selection. The similarity on these dimensions between Atlanta and Houston, Detroit and Los Angeles, and St. Louis and Pittsburgh is striking. Nevertheless, they are also characterized by important differences. Much of what we discover as it relates to homicide behavior will be drawn from our primary data base associated with interviews of persons directly involved in homicide transactions in the primary sample cities. But contrasting status differences derived from secondary sources should allow us to ascertain if what appear to represent urban analogues are sufficiently sensitive to replicate the pattern and risk of homicide victimization in the secondary cities. Thus, is having insight into the variables promoting homicidal behavior in Atlanta likely to allow us to predict the Houston pattern?

The Study Design

This study was designed to acquire information considered appropriate to enhance our understanding of the causal factors responsible for the most recent upsurge in both homicide levels and homicide risk within a small number of the nation's larger black communities. As stated earlier, the basic

information necessary to establish the number of black homicide victims, during a single year, by place of occurrence is not easily obtained. Thus, the first task of this study was to identify an appropriate data base that would facilitate an investigation of the homicide patterns of urban blacks. Once the problem of the basic data set had been resolved, both in terms of access and cost, one could then begin to seriously consider problems associated with data acquisition, data management, and data analysis and interpretation. As a result of the multiplicity of agencies and individuals that one had to establish contact with to secure pertinent information, the data acquisition problem proved to be both cumbersome and time consuming. However, a spirit of cooperation normally manifested itself in our contact with a myriad of agency representatives throughout the duration of this investigation. While the data collection has been described as cumbersome, the results of that effort more than compensate for any shortcomings associated with the process.

Primary Data Sources

Two agencies provided the initial data input for the study. They were the Federal Bureau of Investigation and individual city or county health departments. A listing of all homicide victimizations taking place within a single police jurisdiction, by race of victim, during a single year was secured from the FBI. This listing is described as the Supplementary Homicide Report and is transmitted by local police jurisdictions to the FBI on a monthly basis. These unpublished documents provide information on race, age, sex, and circumstances associated with each homicide victim killed within a specific police jurisdiction during the previous month. The

shortcomings of this data source have been described by others; but for researchers interested in securing information that describes the race of homicide victims in individual police jurisdictions, this represents a convenient and inexpensive source of information.

The second principal source of information employed to establish the universe of black victims was secured from local health departments. This and the above data source represent overlapping information sources; but they also provide independent information that is unique to the reporting agency, considering their dissimilar functions. The former list provides basic information on persons killed within an identifiable police jurisdiction regardless of place of residence. The latter list identifies all homicide victims residing within a health department's jurisdiction regardless of where death occurs. It is obvious given the different bases for these lists that they are not perfectly correlated. In 1975, eleven more black persons were killed in Detroit than were persons killed who resided in Detroit. In the Detroit case, during the latter year approximately three percent of the victims identified from the Supplementary Homicide Reports were not residents of the city and would therefore introduce error into the selection process at the point of list matching.

Health department data were utilized to secure still another data source. Death certificates, which provide substantial demographic information regarding the victim, were secured by identifying the death certificate number of a sample of victims appearing on the health departments' annual lists of homicide victims. Death certificates represent a standardized source of data, although individual cities frequently include one or more items regarding the victim than do others; e.g., Georgia indicates veteran status. The

latter data source, secured through individual health departments, provides information relative to age, sex, race, state of birth, marital status, employment status, employer, occupation, next of kin, place of residence, place of death occurrence, site of death occurrence, time of death occurrence, nature of injury, and weapon employed. From the synopsis provided by the death certificate, it is evident that much can be learned about the victim at the time of death. Thus, the two basic data sources employed to establish the incidence of black victimization in our sample cities were drawn from the records of two public agencies with divergent functions.

Other public information, utilized to illuminate aspects of the homicide transaction, was secured from police records, court records, and correctional system records. Police records were the most difficult to access, given the perceived conflict between the function of police organizations and academic research. Nevertheless, the cooperation of the police organizations in two of our primary cities was of the highest order. Both the courts and the correctional systems were extremely cooperative in assisting us in our efforts to acquire insight into a variety of aspects of behavior thought to have an impact on homicide risk.

Since our analysis is also concerned with the role of the homicide environment, a data source that assembles victimization information at the neighborhood scale would be of utmost value. Health department data is generally ordered at this scale, thereby aiding in the process of establishing both the magnitude of the problem and its spatial dimension simultaneously. Police data are less often available for analysis at the desired spatial scale. Police departments do, however, assemble homicide data at the precinct level and in some instances at a larger scale; but seldom do the

latter units coincide with the census tract. Census tract reports represent a data source from which many independent variables might be extracted. Since the census tract has been selected to serve as a surrogate for neighborhood scale and because it can be used to describe numerous social and economic attributes of population groups, it will represent the ecological unit on which much of our analysis will depend. It is well known that ecological units contain inherent weaknesses, but they likewise provide insight that is often missing from other contextual analyses.

The primary data sources for the kind of study we wished to undertake were previously identified. Because of the nature of the study, it was not possible to depend solely on a single data source to identify the universe of relevant persons involved in individual homicide transactions. But by combining the victimization lists of the FBI and local health departments, we were now in a position to secure information describing a variety of attributes of both victims and offenders. The FBI Supplementary Homicide Reports allowed us to establish the racial identification of each homicide victim in the universe, as well as the circumstances under which death occurred. From these reports, an interview sample was drawn. Likewise, matching attributes of persons from the former list with those on individual health department lists allowed us to identify specific individuals by name. The FBI Supplementary Homicide Reports do not identify persons by name. Thus, this matching procedure was a must as a means of facilitating an attempt to establish contact with persons or significant others associated with sample victims. The matching process was a tedious one and obviously resulted in some error associated with problems of misidentification. Nevertheless, it

was necessary to employ this procedure if our analysis of the situation was not to be totally confined to the kind of information available from the FBI's Supplementary Homicide Reports.

Organizational Structure

The study was organized in such a way that both longitudinal and cross-sectional data could be utilized in an analysis of the problem. The longitudinal analysis will be largely confined to the period 1970-75. By 1970 the renewed upswing in homicide victimization was well under way in a number of American cities. But by the end of the period, there was evidence in two of the three primary cities that a downturn had already set in. Although a five-year time period represents a short time interval, it does provide some advantages over that of a single year. Longitudinal data has been largely derived from Supplementary Homicide Reports. Insights, however, derived from interviewing persons directly affected by the homicide act were most often confined to a single year. The year 1975 was chosen as the basis for the cross-sectional analysis. Thus, the basic time frame for this analysis is the first half of the decade of the seventies.

Observations on post 1975 trends were also made; but the most intensive analysis covers a shorter time period, with the year 1975 receiving maximum attention. Now, fifteen years after the initial evidence of an emergence of increased risk in homicide victimization in American cities, we are in a position to ascertain the impact of this upturn on a small number of black communities, as well as the impact on a small number of persons who were directly or indirectly affected by the homicide act.

The Sample

Detailed information regarding the homicidal act and an expanded set of attributes associated with the relevant actors were derived on the basis of a sample of events. In each of the primary sample cities, a sampling fraction and stratification procedure were established as a means of identifying the pertinent actors associated with each event. The sampling frame was confined to the list of black victims appearing on the FBI's Supplementary Homicide Reports for 1975.

In each city, homicides were categorized in the following way: 1) family or domestic related; 2) acquaintance related; 3) stranger related; and 4) unknown relationship. These categories were derived from a description of the circumstances associated with each individual event. The variations characterizing the quality of the description of the circumstances of death, submitted by individual police departments, led to the possibility of some misclassifications. Yet, even though classification errors are thought to exist, such a classification scheme is necessary to avoid engaging in simplistic generalizations growing out of a very complex phenomena.

The sample in each city included the appropriate fraction of events, based on their prevalence in the universe of the victim-offender relationships previously described. Thus, the sample can be described as a stratified random sample, stratified on the basis of the victim-offender relationship.

The sampling fraction chosen was not constant among cities. In Atlanta and St. Louis, where the number of black homicides annually was less than half the number occurring in Detroit, a 40 per cent sample of black victims was identified. This sample of homicide events served as the set of events upon which our in-depth investigation of numerous facets of the prior life experience of relevant actors would be based. It was assumed that

with sampling fractions of this magnitude an adequate number of interviews might be successfully conducted such that a set of valid generalizations could be made regarding socio-economic status, experience with the educational system, experience in the world of work, life styles, and other behavioral traits associated with both victims and offenders. Ideally we wished to be able to match victims and offenders, in terms of matched pairs, on a set of common dimensions. The nature of the responses made this all but impossible as we were seldom able to conduct interviews with individuals representing both sides of the homicide transaction, i.e., victim and offender.

The above specified sampling fractions allowed us to identify 244 homicide events occurring in the primary sample cities during 1975. A 25 per cent sample of events in the three secondary cities resulted in providing a set of descriptive statistics for 322 total homicide events for the year. One could then compare individual cities on the basis of these descriptive statistics. But significantly more important was the manner in which the 244 events taking place in the primary cities would be employed to establish contact with persons directly and indirectly involved in the transaction. As previously indicated, health department lists were employed to identify an offender and the next of kin of victim and/or spouse of victim through the use of alternative public records. Next of kin and spouses, if married, can be identified from the death certificates of victims. Offenders, when known, can be identified through police and court records. Thus, we were able to identify the 244 victims associated with the sample homicide events in the primary cities, their next of kin and/or spouses, and their offenders when known.

It was the above pool of persons, who possibly knew most about the events that led up to the fatal transaction, but who could also bring to bear on this event the relevant experiences of the actors that appear remote in time, and whose lives had been temporarily or permanently affected by the act. One of the primary goals of this search was to establish contact with the maximum number of persons possible who were directly affected by the 244 events. Operationally, these persons were defined as 1) next of kin of victim; 2) spouse of victim; 3) the offender; 4) next of kin of offender; and 5) spouse of offender. The difficulty of identifying next of kin and spouses of offenders, as well as some ethical issues raised in this regard, led to an elimination of efforts to include members of these groups in our survey effort. Ultimately, the populations targeted for survey purposes were 1) next of kin of victims; 2) spouses of victims; and 3) incarcerated offenders.

Rationale Associated with Choice of Incarcerated Offenders

Incarcerated offenders were targeted because it was felt they would be more willing to cooperate, would be easier to locate, and would pose no physical threat to members of our interview team. What one eventually learned, however, was that only a small percentage of the offenders charged with these events were incarcerated. Most were never indicted, and others had already been released from incarceration some three years after the occurrence of the event. This led to a modification of plans to attempt to interview only incarcerated offenders. But, as had been anticipated, unincarcerated offenders were difficult to locate, and when located were often not

inclined to participate in an investigation of this type. Thus, our offender survey sample primarily represents persons who, at the time of the interview, were incarcerated for their role in the homicide transaction.

Problems Associated with Attempts to Establish Contact with Persons in Sample

Once the relevant sample had been drawn, an attempt was made to establish contact with each of the previously identified persons associated with the event. In order to do this, it was necessary to acquire residential addresses for persons residing in each sample city. The addresses of next of kin and spouses could generally be secured from the death certificates of victims. Addresses of persons charged with the act were sometimes available from both police and court records. But these data sources did not always turn up an address for an offender. Furthermore, in those instances where the courts failed to marshal enough evidence for a conviction, the records describing the transaction details were closed to public scrutiny. Thus, the possibility of establishing contact with persons who were found not guilty of the charge was largely foreclosed, meaning that almost all interviews were with persons found guilty of the commission of the act. The one exception to this rule was associated with our ability to establish contact with a small number of spouses who had also been initially charged with the homicide. The previously described data sources simply allowed us to establish an address file.

After establishing an address file, we could then attempt to contact the relevant individuals. The primary reasons for wishing to contact persons in the sample was to solicit an agreement for a face-to-face interview. Even

if we had been able to establish contact with each person who showed up in our address file, it was difficult to anticipate the extent of his or her willingness to participate in an interview. A letter was drafted specifying why we wished to conduct interviews, including a statement emphasizing the general lack of knowledge about forces responsible for the recent upsurge in homicide deaths in the nation's black communities.

Two additional inducements might have influenced the response level, but there is no way to ascertain the level of their importance. One inducement was a small cash stipend, while the other was based on an appeal to cooperate with a team of black research scholars. Intuitively it appears that these elements did prompt cooperation, but in individual instances they could possibly have elicited a negative reaction. Nevertheless, it is necessary to establish some meaningful rapport at the time of initial contact. The potential trauma that might be aroused in next of kin, however, often leads persons to indicate an unwillingness to discuss the subject regardless of how sensitively the initial interview request letter is structured. Letters from persons both willing and unwilling to cooperate reflect sensitivity to varying parts of the letter requesting the interview; but more importantly the letters reflect how the homicide incident has made an impact on their lives. One next of kin who was willing to cooperate responded in the following way:

"I am very glad to be one of the ones you all asked concerning the subject of killing. My brother killed and my brother was killed in _____. My grandson was killed in _____. My daughter killed her common law husband in _____. My first cousin was killed in _____. My fathers brother was killed in _____.

It seems rather obvious that the frequency with which homicide has touched the life of this individual basically prompted her to wish to cooperate in this venture. Others responded in an opposite way, noting they did not wish to be reminded of the event. Offenders, too, often indicated they chose to participate in the study as a means of informing others about the nature of violence in the lives of people like themselves. This attitude was reflected in a letter from an offender stating her willingness to participate in the study:

"I've chose to accept your offer in sharing my personal experiences I've encountered growing up in the black community, as well as my experience with violence. I hope this will give you and the people in your organization a better understanding of the struggles that myself, and other individuals such as myself have been through and are still going through."

Few individuals wrote letters indicating their motivation for wishing to participate in this investigation, nor were they requested to do so. But for those who did write expressing an interest in participation, it was clear that a combination of motives prompted their willingness.

The previously stipulated sampling fractions for individual cities allowed us to ascertain the actual number of interviewees sought in each city by victim-offender relationship. Once the decision had been made to eliminate spouses and next of kin of offenders from the interview pool, the size of the potential pool was reduced considerably. The aggregate potential interview pool after the elimination of the above categories numbered approximately 550 persons. The latter group represented our initial target population, and it was that group who represented our initial set of potential interviewees. But, as was previously stated, the potential offender pool was severely eroded by our inability to identify all persons thought to be

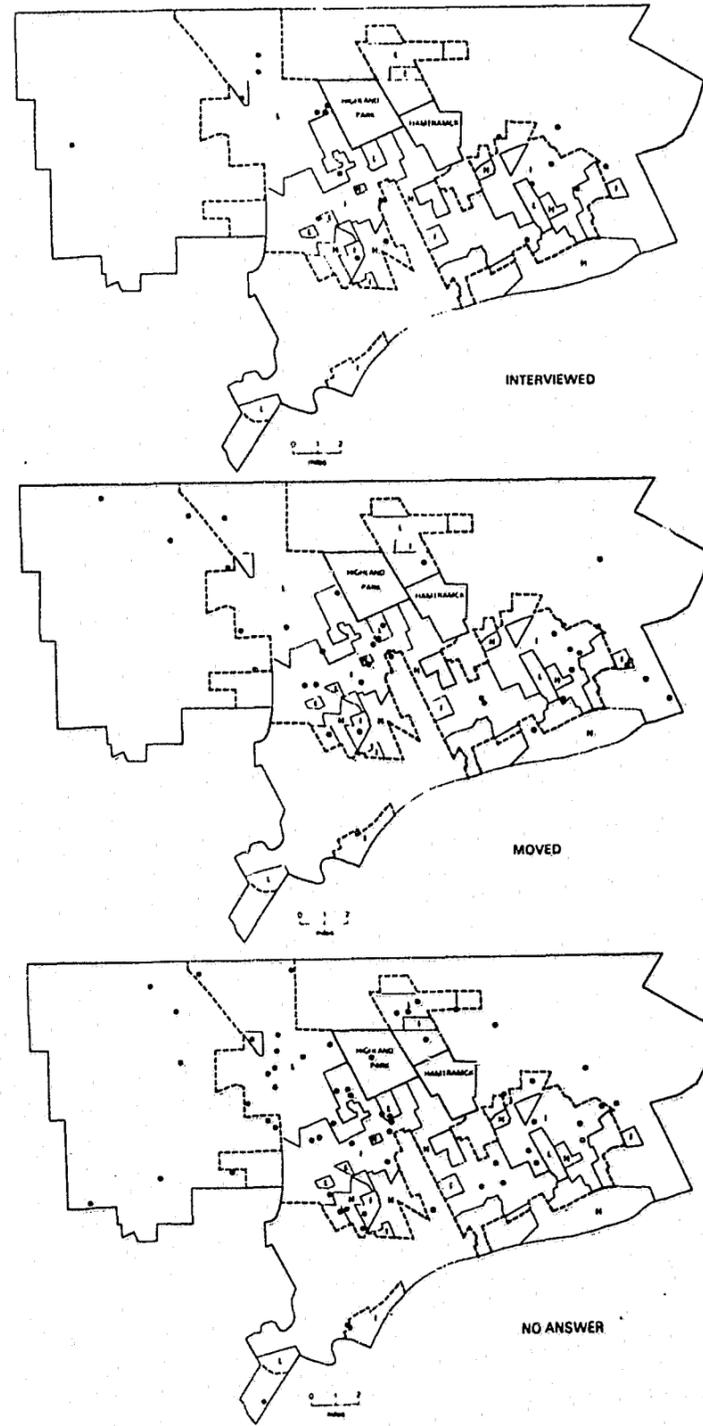
responsible for individual homicide acts. Thus, the active offender pool was somewhat smaller than the number representing the total number of sample victims. Our inability to establish contact and/or to elicit a positive response from persons in the offender pool made it necessary to modify our procedure in the sampling process. This point will be fully explained shortly.

The Next of Kin Interview Pool

The situation of identifying and establishing contact with next of kin of victims represented a marked improvement over that associated with offenders. But the ability to establish contact with next of kin varied markedly from city to city. There also existed a differential response rate based on place of residence within cities (see fig. 1).

Detroit next of kin were less convinced of the merits of the study, when weighed against the trauma of participation, than were persons from St. Louis and Atlanta. Of the persons included in the original Detroit next of kin interview pool, only 16 per cent agreed to be interviewed. It should be noted, however, that one-third of the persons in the pool could not be contacted as they had moved and left no forwarding address. Likewise, not all next of kin resided in Detroit. The inability to contact persons resulted in reducing the size of the potential Detroit interview pool from an original 137 persons to 60 persons. This and similar problems made it necessary to modify the original sample frame as a means of attempting to reduce the diminishing magnitude of the original sample pool.

Variations in the extent to which we were able to establish contact and elicit a positive response from next of kin of victims can be observed



RESIDENCE OF VICTIM SAMPLE
BY RESPONSE OF NEXT OF KIN
DETROIT 1975

Fig. 1

in Table 3. The table below illustrates the difficulty associated with attempts to secure a response from persons randomly selected to participate

Table 3
Status of Survey from Next of Kin
of Victims, By City - 1975

	Next of Kin Pool	Unable to Contact	Contacted - Did Not Respond	Responded- Agreed to Participate	Responded- Refused to Participate
Detroit	137	58	60	19	-
St. Louis	58	15	16	25	2
Atlanta	52	19	14	11	8

in a study of this type. Both the problems of establishing contact, and if contact is successfully established, having persons return the postal card included in the original letter requesting participation are enormous ones. Few persons who are unwilling to participate return the postal card. Thus, those contacted but who did not choose to respond, generally represented persons who did not wish to participate.

It appears that as a rule ability to establish contact with persons in the potential interview pool and the failure of those contacted to respond are problems of a similar order of magnitude. Agreement to participate, however, varied greatly from city to city. Only 14 per cent of the next of kin in the Detroit pool turned out to be persons with whom we were able to schedule an interview. This contrasts with our success in St. Louis where we were able to schedule interviews with more than two-fifth of the persons in the potential interview pool. It is not easy to account for the discrepancy across

cities; but obviously in those places characterized by a frequent change in residence, mobility does play a major role in reducing the size of the active pool. It is also possible that the structure of victimization has an impact on the willingness of next of kin to grant face-to-face interviews to persons with whom they are unfamiliar.

Modification of Sample Frame

The problem produced by the previously described inability to elicit a satisfactory number of next of kin responses made it necessary to modify the sampling procedure in order to attempt to overcome this shortcoming. Originally it was decided that a replacement sample would be drawn, based on 1975 victimizations, to attempt to increase the size of the active interview pool. This tactic failed to significantly alleviate the problem.

It was finally decided to draw new samples, using 1973 and 1974 as the new base years, in exactly the same way as the 1975 sample had been drawn. These new sample lists were viewed as providing a potential surrogate for persons we were unable to contact from our 1975 list. In actuality, this new list provided a small number of surrogates willing to grant a face-to-face interview. The problems associated with the original sample in terms of unsatisfactory response became even more exaggerated as we shifted to an earlier time period. The greatest success in adding additional persons to the active pool occurred in Atlanta, while the least success occurred in Detroit. The employment of substitute sample lists represented an expediency when we were confronted with the possibility of being unable to secure an adequate sized sample from the original list. This expediency led to only marginal improvement in the effective Detroit sample respondents, but resulted in more than doubling the number of persons from Atlanta willing to grant an interview.

Although the cross-sectional data generated through the interview process is rich in detail, generalizations are difficult to make since data is based on a small sample size. The total of next-of-kin interviews was 84, and the total number of offender interviews was 69, while the total number of interviews with spouses of victims was 19. Nevertheless, the insights gleaned from this group of persons directly affected by the homicide act provide a seldom available view of the diverse world of persons caught up in the violence syndrome.

Attempts to establish contact with offenders and to establish an adequate interview pool were characterized by problems as well. Here, as with the previous group, additional persons were added to the offender pool by identifying offenders associated with victims from our supplemental 1973 and 1974 sample victim lists. This procedure was more beneficial in adding to the effective offender pool than it had been in our effort to secure additional persons representing next of kin. The inverse of the previous pattern of city contributions to the number of potential interviewees was associated with the modification of the offender sample frame. The number of Detroit offenders agreeing to participate exceeded all others, while the St. Louis pool increased least as a result of the modified procedure.

The low conviction rate of persons identified as the homicide assailant in St. Louis leads to a small number of persons being convicted and remanded to prison in a given year. In Detroit, the enormous number of annual homicides coupled with the nature of the victim-offender relationship leads to a high level of conviction and the awarding of lengthy sentences. Atlanta

offenders, however, are highly likely to be convicted; but they appear less likely to serve a lengthy prison sentence. If incarcerated persons are selected as the primary target, the disparate pattern that characterizes the treatment of persons accused of committing a homicide has a serious impact on the development of an effective interviewee pool. Selecting persons from our alternate victim lists resulted in an approximate doubling of the effective offender interview pool in each city. The total number of offenders contacted who agreed to be interviewed by city were as follows: Detroit, 44; St. Louis, 14; and Atlanta, 14. The total number actually interviewed, however, was slightly less than the sum of those who originally agreed to be interviewed.

As is obvious from the description of our sampling procedure and results, bias associated with a high level of non-response could represent a serious error. Likewise, the small total sample size clearly makes it difficult to generalize our findings. Yet it is important to acquire information on so important a topic even if that information does not allow us to generalize in ways that would be much more meaningful. It is clear that a major shortcoming in attempting to undertake a study of this nature is the difficulty of motivating persons close to the homicide act to grant a face-to-face interview. This, coupled with the difficulty of locating such persons, leads to rapid loss in the number of persons in the original interview pool and the subsequent need to devise alternative strategies that would allow one to secure replacements. None of the alternative strategies pursued was sufficiently adequate to allow for the generation of effective sample sizes of large enough magnitude to minimize the problem of extreme sampling error.

In attempting to secure interviews with each of the relevant groups in relationship to the homicide transaction, another form of bias is introduced. This is the bias stemming from individual cities representing a single dimension, i.e., the predominance of respondents representing next of kin. Our next-of-kin responses were weighted in favor of Detroit respondents; and spouse responses were weighted in favor of Atlanta respondents. The respondent pattern is not easily explained, but is thought to be related to the structural pattern of victimization and to a variety of social and psychological circumstances directly associated with the prevailing structural pattern in each city.

Spouses of Victims

The third group of persons with whom face-to-face contact was sought were spouses of victims. Spouses, like next of kin, were thought to represent persons able to provide insight that would aid in understanding the victim as a person. Likewise, spouses represent persons basically dependent upon the victim for providing a battery of various kinds of support. The death of a victim would mean a temporary or permanent loss of that support. Thus, the question of how spouses adapt to the unexpected loss of support and make new lives for themselves was also involved in our wish to establish contact with this specific affected group. As expected, success in contacting such persons was low.

Of the 100 spouses of victims in the three city sample, 19 were interviewed. But more than half of that number were drawn from the Atlanta group. Detroit spouses proved most difficult to contact. Three years after the event spouses had often moved and left no forwarding address. Many of those

contacted had established new lives for themselves and did not wish to discuss aspects of a prior life. Thus, the small number of spouses interviewed reflects both the difficulty of establishing contact and the hesitancy of spouses to discuss aspects of their life that they might wish to forget. Likewise, there were a number of instances where the spouse was also the offender.

The Basic Survey Instrument

The basic survey instrument utilized in the face-to-face contacts with persons previously described was constructed specifically for use in this study. This instrument attempted to elicit standard information from the three groups of interviewees. The standard information sought in each instance related to residential history; educational history; employment history; family status; health status; and dimensions of life-style. Because each interviewee group represented a unique body in terms of their relationship to the homicide act, questions had to be included that reflected the nature of the interviewee's involvement with the victim. The individual questions represent both standard and idiosyncratic approaches toward an understanding of the variables that contribute to victimization.

Development of the instrument required the efforts of persons representing a number of disciplines (anthropology, geography, political science, psychiatry, psychology, and sociology) over a period of almost a year. The number of items in the questionnaire varied in terms of the target interview group. There were 183 items in the offender instrument, but only 141 and 143

items respectively in the next of kin and spouse instruments (see Appendix A). The time required to administer each questionnaire generally ranged between 45 minutes and one and one-half hours. Ease of understanding and interviewer sophistication are likely to have had an impact on time required to administer.

The instrument was administered in each city by persons who were residents of that city and who were trained for that task. The interviewers were all college graduates, a number of whom held faculty positions at local institutions of higher education, and were generally familiar with the communities in which they worked. One drawback in our selection of interviewers was the choice of persons unable to devote full time to the task, as most project interviewers were employed full time elsewhere. Nevertheless, the selection of a group of sincere and sensitive interviewers facilitated the successful completion of all interviews initiated.

The data collected through face-to-face contact with actors in the homicide transaction or with persons related to an actor were recorded directly onto the questionnaire to a computer readable format. Summary statistics were then derived for all items appearing in the schedule with the exception of those items that represented open ended items. The latter were transferred to individually coded cards in the verbatim form in which they had originally been recorded. Summary statistics were derived from individual cities and for the aggregate. Spouse responses, because of their small numbers, were recorded in aggregate form only. The nature of the survey instrument and the corresponding manner in which the data were formatted introduced severe constraints in terms of how the data might be analyzed. The analysis was essentially confined to the use of nominal scale techniques. In attempting to interpret the results of these summary measures, extensive use was made of contingency tables. This

allowed one to denote relationships between variables and to test a series of hypotheses specifying associations between variables.

Because of the length of the questionnaire and the time constraint associated with reporting out a set of preliminary results, not all topics will receive detailed treatment. Questions relating to capital punishment, gun regulation, and the impact of victimization on spouses will receive only limited treatment at this time. These are topics that will be addressed more fully at a later date.

While the two sources of data tapped, i.e., primary and secondary, in this investigation have been analyzed separately in terms of the structure of this report, there are sections of the reports in which these data are combined as a means of highlighting a point or where both can be readily employed in the development of a specific topic. One primary shortcoming associated with the employment of the kind of data available to us and the mode of analysis that we have chosen to employ is the absence of feeling and emotional undercurrents. Studies that can illustrate the human dimensions of homicide transactions often convey a much more powerful message than can be conveyed through the sterile assessment of a set of summary statistics, even though these statistics focus upon a variety of facets of the lives of persons involved in the incident or who were close to the incident. Lundsgaarde (1977), investigating Houston homicide patterns, employed an individual case approach and was much better able to convey the level of emotional involvement than is generally displayed in this report. Since we do not intend to make extensive use of individual case data, it was deemed appropriate at the outset to describe two cases in the style of Lundsgaarde as a means of attempting to convey a more personal touch to a very serious and complex topic.

Case Reports

Case report data is frequently employed in homicide studies by American scholars. The extent to which the case study approach is likely to be employed tends to vary among scholars as a function of standard disciplinary styles. Even when the case study approach is employed, there is variability among investigators based on the selection of few cases or many. Nevertheless, the case study approach to homicide investigation is standard; and when handled effectively, it often adds a dimension to the report that was missing from aggregate analysis. The success of the case study approach is limited by the availability of a variety of data sources. In this investigation, court documents were shown to provide the greatest range of information, permitting a reconstruction of the transaction and simultaneously providing extensive information describing the character of the principal actors.

As a means of demonstrating the merits of the case report approach, two cases were selected for illustrative purposes. These two cases are representative of the modal homicide transactions occurring in the nation's larger black communities. The first case to be described represents a conflict between acquaintances, while the second illustrates a homicidal transaction involving persons described as strangers. This information was extracted from the files of a variety of public agencies in the cities in which the homicides occurred.

The Acquaintance Transaction³

On September ____, the victim was shot to death in a St. Louis parking lot at approximately 8:42 P.M. His death certificate indicates he was

killed by "person or persons unknown." The FBI report, which is based on the police report of the incident, indicates that police believed the victim's murder was drug-related, and that _____ and his assailant were acquaintances.

On September 30, 1975, the accused offender was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon (his second arrest on this charge within one month). The weapon, a .45 caliber automatic, was tested and found to be the one used to kill the victim.

The victim was 19 years old when he died; the offender was 15 years old when he was charged with murder. The offender's criminal career had started years earlier when, at age 8, he was charged with "incorrigibility by truancy." Less than a year later, at age 9, he was charged with burglary, a felony. The accused's criminal record includes the following charges:

1968	incorrigibility by truancy
1969	burglary
1971	assault to do great bodily harm
1974	peace disturbance and trespassing
1975	stealing under \$50
1975	carrying a concealed weapon (.38 caliber Smith & Wesson revolver, fully loaded)
1975	carrying a concealed weapon (.45 caliber automatic)

In 1974, the accused was implicated in the murder of a 16 year old victim who was approached by three youths on bicycles as he stood in the doorway of an ice cream shop. One of the youths shot the victim twice in the chest while robbing him of his ice cream. The wounds ultimately proved fatal, but the victim lived long enough to identify his assailant. He

claimed he had been shot by the accused, then age 14.

The accused was charged with murder I and robbery I in that incident. Following the defense attorney's motion to dismiss the case, charges were later dropped because of "insufficient evidence." The accused has been described as a sophisticated and street-wise youth quite familiar with the intricacies of the criminal justice system.

The Stranger Transaction

On Friday, May __, 1975, at approximately 10:15 P.M., the victim, age 70, (black male, 5'2" tall), was dragged between two houses by the offender, age 22, (black male, 5'8"). He forced the victim to remove his pants and tore his shirt from him while robbing him of an unknown amount of money. The victim was then taken to the alley behind the address where the offender beat him to death with a 3-1/2 foot piece of wood taken from the rear steps of the house.

The victim's death was caused by multiple blunt injuries to the head. Charged with first degree murder, the offender was found "guilty as charged" by a jury on December __, 1975, and was sentenced to life imprisonment.

The victim and offender were not acquainted before the homicide incident, although the offender reported having "seen him around" prior to the incident and that, in fact, he "liked" the victim. While the men were not neighbors, they resided only a short distance from one another; although the incident occurred outside of the neighborhood of residence of both participants, it did take place in an adjacent neighborhood.

Robbery appears to have been a contributing factor in the homicide transaction. Nevertheless, it is not apparent why, after robbing the victim, the offender found it necessary to beat him to death. Considering the facts

that the offender had been unemployed for more than six months and that he was dependent, at least in part, on his brothers and sisters for financial support, it is not outside the realm of possibility that he would resort to violence or criminal action to obtain money.

But the offender did not cite robbery as the most important circumstance; rather, he named "argument/anger" as the single most important factor. The reason for his argument or anger with the victim is not known.

The two cases just described provide additional insight into the nature of transactions involving acquaintances and strangers. Both unique and commonplace attributes can be extracted from the information upon which such cases are drawn. But the mass of detail involved in such case descriptions does not readily allow one to strip away the more basic information from that which is trivial or simply interesting. Thus, case reports will only be used sparingly throughout this report; at the same time we acknowledge the value of this as an excellent technique to provide insight that transcends an analysis based largely on the evaluation of information embedded in a set of summary statistics.

The Structure of the Report

This report is an attempt to establish the seriousness of homicide as a primary cause of death among blacks in general and to establish a nexus between homicide risk and the environment in which homicides most often occur. Most of the information on which this report is based has been derived from a wide variety of sources in the three primary cities and from only a limited number of sources associated with the three secondary cities.

The general absence of work focusing upon blacks as homicide victims has not made our task easy. But it is hoped that what is learned as a result of this experience will make it easier for other investigators who might be interested in pursuing this topic.

The topics to be covered in this report are rather broad, resulting in only limited attention being devoted to selected aspects of the problem. The primary topics covered will include age structure of victimization; spatial patterns of victimization; temporal patterns of victimization; and patterns of female victimization. These topics will largely be developed from data secured from a variety of public agencies. Other topics that focus on sociocultural, economic, and other relevant attributes of the participants in the homicide transaction will be developed in the latter part of the report. The basic information upon which this section of the report is drawn comes from the survey data gathered by members of our interview teams in the three primary cities.

The principal investigator for this study assumes the overall responsibility for the development of the report; but individual sections represent the work of research associates, consultants, and project assistants. The contributions of these persons will be acknowledged in the body of the report. Because of the number of persons who have contributed to the development of the report, a variety of reporting styles will occur. Even in the development of a single topic, this might become evident when the contributions of several individuals are fused as a means of highlighting different facets of the topic. A large number of persons whose names do not show up in the body of the report contributed to its development. They provided ideas and collected information; others willingly agreed to allow us to invade their privacy as a means of highlighting the seriousness of the problem. This report is, at least, a first step in aiding in the understanding of a problem that has for the most part been overlooked.

SECTION TWO

CHANGING LEVELS OF MORTALITY AMONG YOUNG ADULT BLACKS:

THE CONTRIBUTION OF HOMICIDE

In the United States, life expectancy at birth has steadily increased during the twentieth century. Only a few nations on earth have populations who can look forward to a longer life expectancy. But within our own nation, there still exists a sizable discrepancy in life expectancy on the basis of race, this gap being approximately six years. Moreover, the rate of closure between the races has been more rapid for black females than for black males; and there was some evidence earlier in the decade to suggest black male life expectancy was slipping below an earlier maximum life expectancy. Black males 15-44 are the most seriously affected group in the life expectancy slowdown (Dennis, 1977: 315).

Given the normally positive association between level of economic development and life expectancy, a reduction in life expectancy at this stage in the nation's economic development is unexpected. This association is basically related to the quality of health care in developed countries. Those deaths not associated with physical disease, however, are less amenable to control even in developed countries. Dennis reports that during the early seventies black men between the ages 15-34 were primarily the victims of violent causes of death (316). The specific cause of death primarily associated with the decline in black male life expectancy is homicide, a cause assuming greater relative importance since the mid 1960's.

In large urban environments, which have continued to serve as primary targets of black migration, the problem is most severe -- at least in terms of the frequency with which homicide deaths occur. Since migrants are selective (on the basis of age), those places that are primary targets of migration will be characterized by a lower median age. This buildup of young adults in large urban environments provides the potential for interaction patterns and lifestyles that all too frequently end in violent death. It should be emphasized, though, that there is little evidence to support a direct link between migration and homicidal risk; that is, recent migrants are no more likely to be homicide victims than are long term residents. The risk of victimization, though, is positively related to sex and age.

Young black males have the highest victimization rate of any age-sex-race group in the nation. Block, in describing changes taking place in Chicago's homicide rate during the period 1965-73, indicates that black males between ages 15-24 contributed most to the increase (1976: 504). The victimization rate for black males in that age group grew from 54 per 100,000 in 1965 to 193 per 100,000 in 1970 (Block & Zimring, 1973: 6), an almost four-fold increase in five years. Victimization levels of this magnitude have led individual scholars to cite the growing severity of the problem of life years lost. Shin, Jedlicka & Lee (1977: 404) call the high death rate from homicide among young black males "one of our greatest epidemiological, as well as social, problems."

Attention here will be devoted to the homicide victimization status of young black males during the 1970's. Data for this evaluation will be largely drawn from victimization experiences occurring in Atlanta, St. Louis, and

Detroit. On some dimensions of the problem, however, data will also be included from Houston, Los Angeles, and Pittsburgh. The basic assessment will be limited to the central cities of these urban places, with primary emphasis devoted to those residential environments occupied principally by black people.

The first question that must be confronted is how to define young adults for purposes of this study. Much recent literature focusing on young adults defines them as the population aged 15-24, although some contributors include in their discussions the 25-29 age group as well. The decision here is to include persons between the ages 15-29. Herjanic and Meyer have noted a significant difference in the patterns of homicides in St. Louis between those "under 30" and those "30 and over." The rate of decline tends to vary from place to place.

The 15-29 age group includes those persons who are in transition from adolescence to young adulthood (15-19); those who are attempting to gain a foothold in the economy (20-24); and those who are in transition from dependency on family of origin to a position in a family of procreation (25-29). These age sub-groupings simply point up the alteration of goals and responsibilities as one proceeds through the life cycle. It is apparent that all persons do not proceed through this hypothetical cycle in an orderly fashion, and some may remain in a given stage indefinitely. The length of time a person remains in a given functional stage in the life cycle is influenced by internal and external forces.

The Development of Young Adult Blacks
in Large Urban Environments

Changes in the structure and the tempo of society have delayed the timing in which one begins to initiate the above series of responsibilities or

roles. Increased school leaving ages, later age at marriage, and longer periods of dependency combine to promote restlessness and an absent sense of responsibility. Qualitative differences distinguish the roles of an earlier generation of young adults from the roles of young adults today.

Earls, a Boston child psychiatrist, has spoken of the discrepancy between the biological maturity and social maturity of today's youth (1979: 53-63), a discrepancy that creates problems for which solutions have yet to be found. For black youths who have grown up in what some writers term "crisis ghettos," the problem is further exaggerated because persons socialized in environments characterized by extreme economic and psychological deprivation are thought to exhibit signs of social alienation at an early age. It has been said that these youths are taught early that life is difficult and they must learn to be independent and distrustful of others. Silverstein and Krate indicate that youth socialized in this mode often end up mistrusting adults and lacking a reliable emotional support system (1975: 15-18). They also point out that such socialization practices eventually lead to a loss of parental control, and that youth subsequently acquires, at a very early age, traits of adult independence.

Socialization Experiences

Loss of parental control is thought to be partially related to the inability or unwillingness of parents to provide emotional support for children in large families (Silverstein and Krate, 1975). Such traits, i.e., independence, while often admired in some settings, can prove troublesome in other contexts. Thus, in many low income neighborhoods in black communities throughout the country, youth are exhibiting signs of adult independence and

prerogative while chronologically they are still children. Given an absence of legitimate outlets, these men-children often drift into lifestyles that place them at risk of having frequent contacts with the police.

It appears that the rapid increase in homicide victimization rates among young adults since 1965, at least in part, validates some of the descriptions associated with becoming an adult in selected urban settings. Between 1960 and 1974 the rate of violent crime reported by the police increased 276.9 per cent, with the most rapid increase occurring since 1965 (Downs, 1977: 175). Many associate this increase with the coming of age of the baby boom population.

Experience in the Work Force

The size of the young adult population, their prior socialization experience, and their ability to gain a foothold in the economy are all thought to impinge on the likelihood of victimization. The cities that make up this study sample have been characterized by a variety of economic growth experiences since the middle sixties. Three sample cities have been drawn from the American manufacturing belt, which is currently experiencing a period of economic decline. The other three cities are located in the sun belt, which currently constitutes a region of accelerated economic growth. This growth, however, has not encompassed all large urban complexes in that zone. Nevertheless, the cities in our sample represent those in various stages of economic transformation.

The extent to which the economies of these individual places are able to absorb new entrants to the labor market is a function of new job vacancies and of the skills possessed by the potential entrants to the labor force.

Some of the cities to which blacks migrated during the sixties were places of declining opportunity, based on the volume of potential labor force entrants and the number of new entry jobs available at individual locations (Rose, 1975: 313-321). Detroit and Los Angeles, both major targets of black migration during the previous decade, showed a sizable increase in limited skill entry jobs; yet St. Louis, which suffered a net loss of blacks through migration, experienced a decline in the number of jobs in this category. It is not entirely clear what impact the job has on the frequency and risk of homicide victimization at individual places, but it is expected to exert influence on the choice of survival strategies and subsequently the direction of risk.

The general consensus is that both homicide victims and offenders are likely to be low status individuals. The validity of this premise seems to require additional scrutiny as the pattern of homicide victimization has shifted toward the involvement in acts that are motivated by economic gain. It is clear that a disproportionate share of black victims occupy marginal positions in the local economy. In 1975 few of the young adult victims in our sample cities held jobs that provided income significantly above the level of economic marginality. Table 1 illustrates variations in labor force participation by the St. Louis young adult population.

Table 1

Proportion of Young Adult Homicide Victims in St. Louis
Employed at Time of Death: 1975

AGE	15-19 year olds	20-24 year olds	25-29 year olds
	12.5% (N=8)	57.9% (N=19)	68.8% (N=16)

Source: Missouri Division of Health

The occupational designation most often appearing on the death certificates of the employed victims was "laborer." The extent to which victims were employed as laborers varied somewhat widely among cities. This and other job titles indicate the victims seldom secured jobs that provided more than nominal returns on labor. It is clear, though, by the time one reached the third stage of young adulthood that more than two-thirds of the St. Louis victims were in the labor force. In this latter group (25-29 years old), 50 per cent were married at time of death, whereas only 26 per cent of those 20-24 were ever married, and none of those in the 15-19 age group were ever married. The mean annual earnings of these victims was quite nominal. For those St. Louis victims in the third stage of adulthood, mean annual earnings based on lifetime earnings of 8.5 years was \$2400. Those in the age group 22-24 had earned on average less than \$900 per year during their almost seven years in the labor force.

A review of the lifetime work histories of these victims reveals that many victims were in and out of the labor force during various quarters of each work year. This lack of steady employment produces broad swings in the fluctuation of annual earnings. It is clear that the 1975 homicide victims were seldom persons with more than marginal economic resources. St. Louis victims will now be compared with those of other cities in our sample for whom appropriate data is available. It is not clear what the direct relationship is between homicide victimization and economic marginality, but in the St. Louis case both social status and social disorganization variables are powerful contributors to homicide risk in specific environments.

Trend in Violent Deaths: 1970-1975

Violent deaths occurring within black communities continued apace during the early years of the seventies. Whatever the underlying forces that were unleashed during the middle sixties, they were still found to be operating as we approached 1975. For young victims the problem seemed to grow more severe, although there was evidence of variations in the intensity of seriousness in our sample cities from one community to another. Among our three primary sample cities, the variations in the six year period distinguished the two northern cities (Detroit and St. Louis) from the southern one (Atlanta). During this period Atlanta experienced a decrease of approximately 40 per cent in the level of young black adult homicides. Both Detroit and St. Louis moved in the opposite direction, with the number of homicides in the 15-29 age group increasing by 38 and 36 per cent respectively. Neither city was characterized by a constant increase or decline throughout, but exhibited fluctuations from year to year (see table 2).

The contribution of this age group to the total number of homicides committed during this period varied from place to place and also showed signs of fluctuation. At the beginning of the period, young adults accounted for 41 per cent of the victimizations in Detroit; but by the end of the period, they accounted for almost 46 per cent. St. Louis showed signs of greater fluctuation, beginning the period with this group accounting for only 36 per cent of the total but accounting for an astounding 52 per cent by 1975. Atlanta began the period with its young adult contribution to violent death just slightly higher than that of the young adult contribution in Detroit at the same time; but by 1975 young adults accounted for only 33.5 per cent of

all victimizations. Thus, all three cities that began the decade with unusually high black homicide rates were experiencing divergent trends in the contribution of young adults to homicide victimization levels by mid-decade.

Table 2

Young Adult Homicide Victimization in Primary Sample Cities: 1970-75

Year	Detroit	St. Louis	Atlanta
1970	224	99	115
1971	320	99	105
1972	313	83	107
1973	311	104	126
1974	369	113	108
1975	309	135	66

Source: The FBI Monthly Homicide Reports

Divergent trends in the victimization of young adults were observed in St. Louis and Atlanta. That segment of the population previously identified as in transition from adolescence to young adulthood (15-19) best illustrates the divergent trends distinguishing these two cities. In Atlanta this group accounted for only five per cent of the victimizations in 1975, but accounted for seven per cent in 1970. St. Louis started the decade with young adults contributing ten per cent to the total victimization level and ended the period at the 13 per cent level. Detroit's 15-19 year olds constituted ten per cent of the victims at both the beginning and end of the period.

The existing pattern of variation among the individual segments of the young adult population implies variations in the nature of the forces prevailing within individual cities on the probability of homicidal outcomes.

What nature of forces caused the turnaround in Atlanta when at the same time the risk of youthful victimization in St. Louis was increasing?

Some of the possibilities that emerge as potential contributors to an explanation of the previous question are 1) an increase in the size of the Atlanta migrant population; 2) the more pronounced spatial segmentation of persons on the basis of socio-economic rank; 3) the rapid rate of black suburbanization in St. Louis and the subsequent concentration in the city of a less differentiated population in terms of social rank; and 4) the rapid deterioration of the physical environment in St. Louis black community space.

On the question of migrant contribution to homicide levels, it has been shown that newcomers to a neighborhood decrease the probability of homicide victimization in that neighborhood. This possibly reflects the migrants' penchant for choosing better than average residential environments in which to settle.

Homicide victimizations among young adults in St. Louis and Detroit were accelerated during the first six years of the decade. Atlanta, on the other hand, showed signs of declining levels of youthful victimization. St. Louis and Detroit reflected similarities with other midwest cities whose homicide patterns have been recently assessed. There was a total of 144 black victimizations in Detroit in 1965; and by 1973 the number had grown to 596, a 318 per cent increase. The latter increase is considerably larger than that reported by Block for Chicago during the same time period. Rushforth et.al. reported that changing incidence of homicide in Cleveland revealed a similar pattern, although it is not possible to compare similarities in the rate of change for this population as the latter writers employed a slightly different time interval (1977 : 531-533).

St. Louis, while experiencing growth in the number of homicides during this interval, did not show the same sharp level of increase that was true of Detroit. By 1965 St. Louis was already experiencing an annual black homicide level that was only approximately 25 per cent less than the number occurring in Detroit at the same date. Thus, its increase over the period of a decade has been much more gradual.

The Contribution of Felony Murder

Some writers attribute the rapid increase in level of victimization during this interval to the increase in the number of felony murders. Rushforth et.al. indicate that the contributions of felony murders doubled in Cleveland during the period 1969-74 (1977 : 533). They were careful to point out that most homicides were still non-felony related. Robbery homicides were said to increase from eight per cent to 19 per cent of all homicides in Chicago during a nine year period (Block, 1975 : 505). Zimring also noted a sharp upsurge in robbery homicides in Detroit since 1970 (1978:322). It is clear that felony murder is a growing contributor to the increase in victimization level in non-southern cities. In terms of the age structure of victimization, however, the question becomes, "Are younger or older adults at higher risk of victimization?"

In order to compare the changing ratio of felony-related homicides to those that are non-felony related, a simple measurement technique is required. Using the FBI Monthly Homicide Reports, it is useful to employ the frequency of victimization between strangers and unknowns as a surrogate for felony murder. While weaknesses in the use of such a measure are apparent, it does provide a crude assessment of the contribution of this growth pole to total acts of lethal violence. This simple technique would then

facilitate a comparison of age structure differences in the risk of felony victimizations. It is generally assumed, however, that felony murder occurs less frequently among young adult victims than among older victims. Block indicates that the average difference in age among victims and offenders of robbery homicide in Chicago was 27 years (1975: 505). Thus, it is assumed that the offenders in felony murder incidents will more likely represent persons under age 30, while the victims will more often come from that group of persons over age 30.

Felony murder victims among young adults in both Detroit and St. Louis account for a larger percentage of total victims than is true of this segment of the population in Atlanta. During the period 1970-75, young adults in Detroit accounted for 56.7 per cent of all felony homicide victims. In St. Louis this population accounted for 42 per cent of the victims, but in Atlanta stranger and unknown victimizations involving young adults accounted for only 31 per cent of the total. Thus, regional differences in the contribution of felony related acts to the deaths of young adults appear to exist. The variables undergirding this three city pattern are not apparent on the surface. They no doubt, however, reflect unique differences in the interaction pattern among young adults, as well as the nature of employment opportunities available to this population.

Robbery homicide, the principal subcategory of circumstances associated with felony murder, could be expected to occur with greater frequency in those cities where young adults are generally more affluent. In addition, in those cities where the poor and non-poor share residential space, the risk of victimization is heightened. Block describes this situation as income disparity and demonstrates that it is strongly related to crime rates in Chicago (1979:5). The condition of income disparity appears to be more prevalent in

Detroit than in St. Louis. In the former city the larger scale white exodus from the city has resulted in increased vacancy levels. This condition has allowed lower income persons to upgrade their housing package, at the same time promoting greater social class heterogeneity in neighborhoods most seriously affected by these patterns of movement.

A brief review of the occupational status of a sample of Detroit's young adult victims shows them to be financially better off than their counterparts in St. Louis. They may generally be described as working class, with employment most frequently centered in transportation, equipment, and other durable goods manufacturing. It is clear that the young adult population in Detroit had gained a stronger foothold in the economy at least in terms of identifying with a specific sector of the economy than was true of the St. Louis population. The greater affluence of the Detroit young adult population could possibly lead them to be singled out as felony targets more often than is likely to be the case in St. Louis. Persons possessing these characteristics are often found shot, beaten, or stabbed with no known offender being recorded. When an offender is apprehended, robbery homicide generally represents the modal circumstance associated with death. Some analysts attribute the increase in robbery murder to the increased availability of handguns.

Another facet of the felony murder syndrome is the increasing participation of segments of the population in the distribution of drugs for profit. There is evidence of widespread drug use in both Detroit and St. Louis. In Detroit it has been reported that a decrease in the availability of heroin resulted in a boost in price and a corresponding increase in levels of property crime (Silverman and Spruill, 1977). Yet those writers were not able

to detect a significant change in personal crime as a function of changing price elasticity based on available drug supplies. This perspective, however, seems only to incorporate the behavior of drug addicts under conditions of restricted supply. The outcome was said to heighten the incidence of robbery and burglary, both of which were considered property crimes. Unless it can be demonstrated that addicts are extremely passive persons, then the potential for violence would appear to exist under conditions of restricted supply. Likewise, it would appear that drug dealers or distributors would be more inclined to engage in violent behavior in order to maintain their existing profit margin; and under such conditions drug wars would appear more commonplace. It is also evident that younger persons are more often attracted to the drug business and to drug addiction. Consequently, an increase in the level of felony murder growing out of these twin components could be expected.

Changing Crime Rates and Changing Age Structure

It is often indicated that crime in general and violent crime in particular are associated with the size of the 15-24 age group. The rapid increase in this segment of the population is associated with the baby boom that lasted from 1947-1958. Since black fertility levels were even higher than those of whites during this period, the increase in this age group is even more attenuated. In 1970 this age group constituted almost 18 per cent of the population nationally. Wolfgang describes this group as the most criminogenic group in the nation (1978: 145). He believes that as the 15-24 year old population decreases as a percentage of the total population, there should occur a subsequent decrease in rates of crimes of violence.

Not all analysts, however, are equally strong in their support of the association between age structure and the propensity to engage in crimes of violence. Barnett et.al. found that the changing age composition of the population accounted for less than ten per cent of the increase in the rate of homicide victimization in 50 large American cities during a recent eight year period (1975: 87). The latter group admits that those aged 20-24 accounted for a five per cent increase in victimization percentage during that interval, but that their contribution to an increase in the total population was much more substantial. It was reported that an actual reduction in risk of victimization for persons in this age group occurred (Barnett et.al., 1975: 94).

But an analysis of selected individual places leads to contrary conclusions. For instance, the Block and Zimring study of Chicago victimization patterns indicates a quadrupling of risk during this period for black males aged 15-24 (see table 3). It was also shown that while there were some minor

Table 3

Changes in Homicide Victimization Rate Among Chicago
Black Males 15-24 Years Old: 1965-70 (per 100,000)

Age	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
15-24	54.0	101.9	111.2	141.2	191.3	192.9

Source: Block, Richard and Zimring, Franklin E., "Homicide in Chicago, 1965-1970," Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, Vol. 10, January 1973, p. 6.

fluctuations in the risk to white males in this same age group, the absolute change in their level of victimization during this same time period was nominal. Thus, instead of the 8:1 ratio, which describes nationally the

differential risk of victimization on the basis of race, an almost 20:1 ratio differentiates young black and white males in Chicago. It is apparent that the behavior of specific age groups in very different environmental settings can be expected to produce disparate results.

Black victimization levels also have the highest victimization rates among young adults. In 1970 the black homicide victimization rates for the primary sample cities of Detroit, St. Louis, and Atlanta were 67, 82, and 68 per 100,000 respectively. These rates are considerably higher than those for the total population (see table 4).

Table 4

A Comparison of Homicide Rates for Total Population and the Black Population in Sample Cities: 1970 (rate per 100,000)

Place	Total Population	Black Population
Atlanta	48.8*	68
Detroit	34.5	67
St. Louis	39.9	82
Houston	25.7	56
Los Angeles	16.2	41
Pittsburgh	10.9*	40

Source: Klebba, A. Joann, "Homicide Trends in the United States," Public Health Reports, Vol. 90, May-June 1975, p. 204.

* Atlanta and Pittsburgh rates are for the years 1971-72 and were drawn from Barnett, Arnold and et. al., "On Urban Homicide: A Statistical Analysis," Journal of Criminal Justice, Vol. 3, 1975, p. 90.

While all age-sex-race specific groups have experienced an increase in victimization rates since the middle sixties, young black males have been most severely affected. The rate of increase has been most rapid for white males; nevertheless, the total rate for this population group remains low.

A Methodology for Evaluating Age Specific Contributions to Level of Victimization

A method was recently demonstrated that was designed to determine the changing impact of victimization on specific groups within the age structure of the population. This technique was devised by Richard Block and is referred to as excess increase analysis (Block, 1975, pp. 504-505). The technique is based on the application of the age specific homicide rate to a linear projection of age-sex-race specific population distributions over time as a means of specifying the expected number of homicide deaths in each age-sex-race group during a specific time period. The results of this method, however, are sensitive to the margin of error between the projected population and the actual change in population over the projected interval. Nevertheless, it serves a useful purpose by providing a measure of expected homicide deaths to actual homicide deaths. A similar technique has been employed in this study to assist in observing whether the homicide generating forces have remained stable or have changed over the time period 1970-75.

A modified form of the Block procedure was applied to the population age structure of the six cities in our sample. The variations between the actual and expected number of total black homicides and those describing the magnitude between the observed and expected for young adult males are shown in figures 2 and 3.

Fig. 2

Actual and Expected Homicide Deaths in Sample Cities 1971-75

Year	<u>Detroit</u>		<u>Los Angeles</u>		<u>St. Louis</u>		<u>Pittsburgh</u>		<u>Atlanta</u>		<u>Houston</u>	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Expected</u>
1971	558	420	273	193	191	194	47	39	186	207	189	157
1972	635	422	282	196	159	193	29	39	198	207	178	158
1973	592	424	283	199	182	191	33	38	215	208	169	160
1974	642	427	271	202	175	189	58	37	214	208	188	162
1975	540	430	242	206	208	187	36	37	157	209	202	164

Fig. 3

Actual and Expected Homicide Deaths Among Young Adult
Black Males in Primary Sample Cities: 1971-75

Year	<u>Detroit</u>		<u>St. Louis</u>		<u>Atlanta</u>	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Expected</u>
1971	225	179	67	69	71	75
1972	229	180	67	69	61	75
1973	231	184	63	67	70	77
1974	254	187	45	66	63	78
1975	219	189	89	66	43	78

It was previously indicated that much of the study emphasis will focus on a single year. The disadvantages of this emphasis are numerous. For this reason a secondary focus will embrace a more extended period. The base year for this extended period is 1970. The projected homicides shown in figures 2 and 3 are based on forces at work in that year. To the extent that those forces have remained stable will largely influence the size of the gap between actual and expected homicides. The inverse of this pattern is expected to signal the operation of a different set of forces. Data from our primary sample cities reveal considerable variation in the level of victimization during the six year interval.

The smallest deviation between the expected and the actual occurred in St. Louis. That is, there were only limited signs of significant variation away from a linear trend, even though the expected level of victimization exceeded the actual by 4.2 per cent. The forces at work in St. Louis that were present in the base year seem to operate essentially intact throughout the period under investigation. Yet, our projection underestimated by 7.3 per cent the number of expected deaths of young adult black males. Thus, it is apparent that in St. Louis the forces promoting homicidal deaths have been unusually sensitive to victim age. Young adult males have become the primary target, and it is among this group that the excess increase has occurred. The greatest contribution to this excess can be associated with victimizations among black males labeled "unknowns," a category often representing unknown felony homicides.

The greatest deviation between the actual and expected number of deaths occurred in the Detroit case. There is evidence indicating that

broad swings occurred over the interval in the total number of homicide victimizations taking place in Detroit. But by the end of the period, the victimization level was close to what it had been at the beginning of the period. The total projected number of homicides among young adult blacks, however, was only 79 per cent of the actual, producing an excess of 168 victimizations. Because female victimization is being treated elsewhere in this report, we will only focus here on young adult males.

The excess deaths occurring among young adult males in Detroit was unduly high. Table 5 can be employed to assess the excess increase on a year by year basis.

Table 5

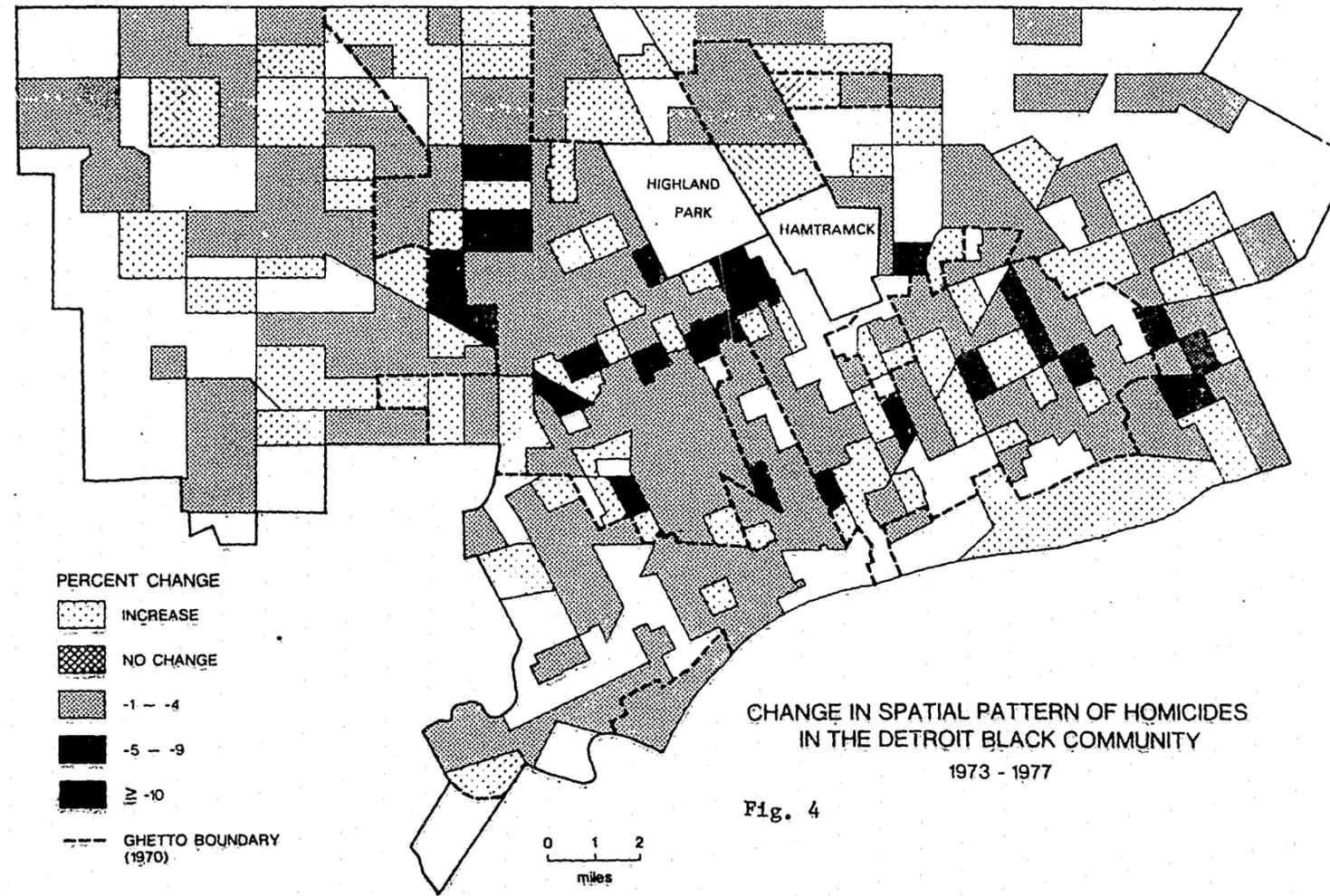
The Excess Increase of Young Adult Black Male Homicides in Detroit

1971-1975		
<u>Year</u>	<u>Excess Increase</u>	<u>% Excess</u>
1971	46	25.7
1972	47	25.8
1973	44	23.9
1974	68	36.4
1975	29	15.3

Source: FBI Monthly Reports and population projections.

The greatest primary contribution to the excess is found to be related to the growth of violent interaction between strangers. Secondly, the increase can be associated with violent altercations among acquaintances. In no single year did the number of victimizations in either of these categories drop to the 1970 level. These two sets of relationships accounted for approximately 57 per cent of all deaths during this period. Stranger homicide is much more prevalent in Detroit than in either of the other primary sample cities. The Detroit homicide epidemic apparently peaked in 1974 and has gone steadily down through 1977. The decline in the level of victimizations is manifested in changes in the risk and frequency of victimization at the neighborhood scale (see fig. 4).

The pattern of homicide in Atlanta's black community differs from that prevailing in the previous communities. Homicide in Atlanta declined over the five years; thus, young black adults were less often victimized. There were some severe fluctuations during the period, but they were in a downward direction. Only 57 per cent of the expected victimizations of young adult males occurred during this period. The downturn in victimizations can be associated primarily with a decline in fatal altercations between acquaintances and secondarily to a reduction in stranger homicides. Since stranger homicides most often represent felony murders, some action has seemingly taken place to minimize provocation. There is a possibility that this could reflect improvements in both economic opportunity and police community relations. The least change, however, has been associated



CHANGE IN SPATIAL PATTERN OF HOMICIDES
IN THE DETROIT BLACK COMMUNITY
1973 - 1977

Fig. 4

with family homicide. Although showing signs of decline, it continues to account for about one-fifth of all homicides among this young adult age group. See table 6 for a numerical appraisal of Atlanta's excess increase (which was negative) during this period. Another obvious difference among Atlanta, St. Louis, and Detroit is the higher frequency of female victimizations and offenses.

Table 6

The Excess Increase of Young Black Male Homicides
in Atlanta 1971-1975

<u>Year</u>	<u>Excess Increase</u>	<u>% Excess</u>
1971	- 3	- 4.2
1972	-15	-24.5
1973	- 7	-10.0
1974	-15	-23.8
1975	-25	-58.1

Source: FBI Monthly Homicide Reports and population projection

If the population projections developed to assist in our analysis of changing homicide pattern are reasonably accurate, it would appear that changes in the size of population are only weakly related to changes in the number of homicides. Although total populations at risk can be expected to influence the annual number of homicide deaths, the number of deaths and the risk of death are only moderately correlated.

In Detroit the black population during this period grew at a projected rate of 5.2 per cent, while the percent change in the number of homicides was 21.9 per cent. The St. Louis black population, on the other hand, underwent a projected decline during this interval; and its homicide level showed

a 1.4 per cent decline. The inverse of the St. Louis pattern was observed in Atlanta, where the projected black population grew by 5.5 per cent, while the incidence of homicide decreased by 25.2 per cent. It is clear that a simple change in the size of the population, in either a positive or negative direction, will not allow one to specify the direction of change in the incidence of homicide.

It was previously noted that the size and percent of the population in the 15-24 age group was expected to serve as a catalyst for an increase in the general level of crime. The proclivity of this population to engage in acts of violent behavior, however, is conditioned by a variety of external variables. In 1970, the percentage of the population 15-24 varied considerably among our sample cities. St. Louis had 17.0 per cent of its population in this age group, while Atlanta had almost 20 per cent of its population represented in this stage of the life cycle (see table 7). Among those cities in which net migration during the previous five years contributed little to total population growth, the percent who were 15-24 was found to be relatively low. Pittsburgh, a city with very limited net migration, had only 16 per cent of its population in this stage in the life cycle.

Table 7

The Percent of the Population Age 15-24 in the Sample Cities

	<u>St. Louis</u>	<u>Atlanta</u>	<u>Detroit</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>	<u>Houston</u>	<u>Los Angeles</u>
Percent of Pop. Age 15-24	17.0	19.5	17.5	15.8	18.3	16.1

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Los Angeles, whose share of young adults was similar to that of Pittsburgh, was a major target of migration. This obviously indicates that the Los Angeles migrant population was not confined to a narrow age band, but contained numerous persons of more advanced age. The size of the 15-24 year old population is weakly positively correlated with the number of homicides in each city with the exception of St. Louis, where the correlation is more strongly positive (.509). On the contrary, the homicide rate more often displays a weak negative relationship with percent of the population 15-24. Both in St. Louis and Pittsburgh that relationship is weakly positive (.146 and .133 respectively). It appears that the percent of recent migrants present in a neighborhood tends to reduce a risk of homicide, but an increase in the absolute size of the 15-24 age group does contribute to a modest increase in the total number of homicides in most places.

Age Standardization and Homicidal Behavior

Because the age structure in the sample cities shows a moderate amount of variation, it was decided that a standardization procedure should be employed as a means of eliminating the age structure effect on the incidence of homicide. The direct standardization technique employed here has been described by Presat (1976: 107), who indicates that a standard population should be chosen against which the age specific mortality rate of any given administrative unit can be applied. This procedure eliminates the influence of age structure differences distinguishing individual places. In this instance a standard black population of 100,000 was selected. This standard 100,000 possesses the age structure characteristics of the nation's

1970 urban black population, the homicide rates listed below were derived.

Table 8

Black Homicide Rates Based on a Standard Population: 1970
(per 100,000)

<u>City</u>	<u>Total Black Population</u>	<u>Black Male Population</u>
St. Louis	83	142
Detroit	61	102
Atlanta	80	134
Pittsburgh	42	70
Los Angeles	37	56
Houston	52	90

The greatest discrepancy between the standardized rate and non-standardized rate occurred in Atlanta, whose standardized rate is much higher than its non-standard rate. This no doubt represents the higher risk of victimization among Atlanta's more mature segments of the population. Although discrepancy among the other cities is minimal, wide variations exist in the homicide risk among these places. Moreover, the forces that create these different risk levels are complex and are not easily explained.

Zones of Black Occupancy and the Presence of Young Adults

Some of the variation in risk among young adult males is associated with the internal location of segments of this population. In our primary sample cities, there were changes underway that led to a spatial sorting out process within zones of black occupancy. The rapidity with which these shifts occur is directly related to the magnitude of available vacancies. Differential population growth patterns characterized each of these places during the decade of the sixties. Both Detroit and Atlanta experienced major gains in their black populations, while undergoing major losses among

their white population. St. Louis, on the other hand, managed only moderate growth of its black population, but like the other two cities lost a large segment of its 1960 white population.

The changes taking place in racial composition aid in establishing the boundaries of the territorial black community. In each instance that community occupied a larger segment of city space at the end of the period than at the beginning. This increase in the physical dimensions of the black community facilitated the greater spatial sorting out of persons on the basis of social rank and stage in the life cycle.

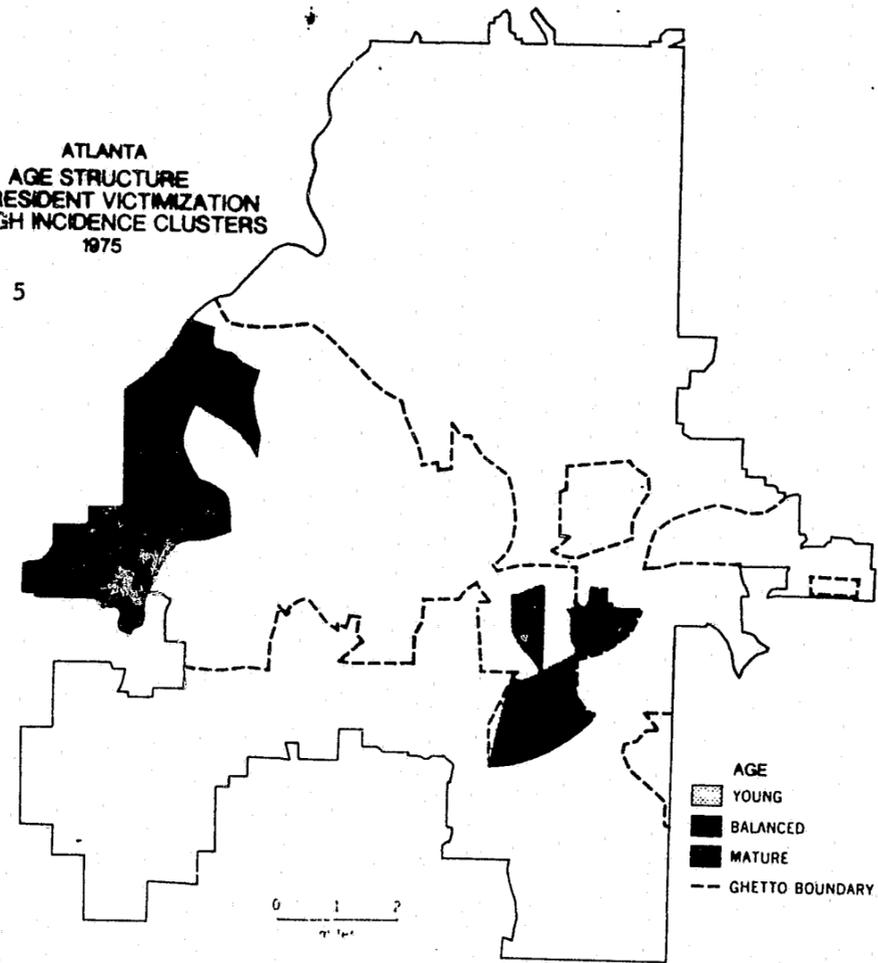
Micro-scale Population Dynamics

Young black males in St. Louis and Atlanta were attracted to those parts of the city that were on the edge of the 1960 black community. The older core communities were the losers of young adult males. Population shifts in Atlanta have been less systematic than those in St. Louis. The manner in which public low income housing is sited in Atlanta probably contributes to its non-contiguous pattern of neighborhood losing. But, generally, older residential neighborhoods were the major losers in both instances. There was a fairly even balance among Atlanta neighborhoods gaining and losing young adult blacks. In St. Louis, neighborhoods losing slightly exceeded those gaining elements of this population.

High risk of homicide was almost always associated with those neighborhoods in which young adult males were leaving or with zones that were unattractive to young immigrants. Neighborhoods in which high risk occurs are generally those in which young adults are products of the local environment (see figs. 5, 6, and 7) and for one reason or another appear to

ATLANTA
AGE STRUCTURE
OF RESIDENT VICTIMIZATION
IN HIGH INCIDENCE CLUSTERS
1975

Fig. 5



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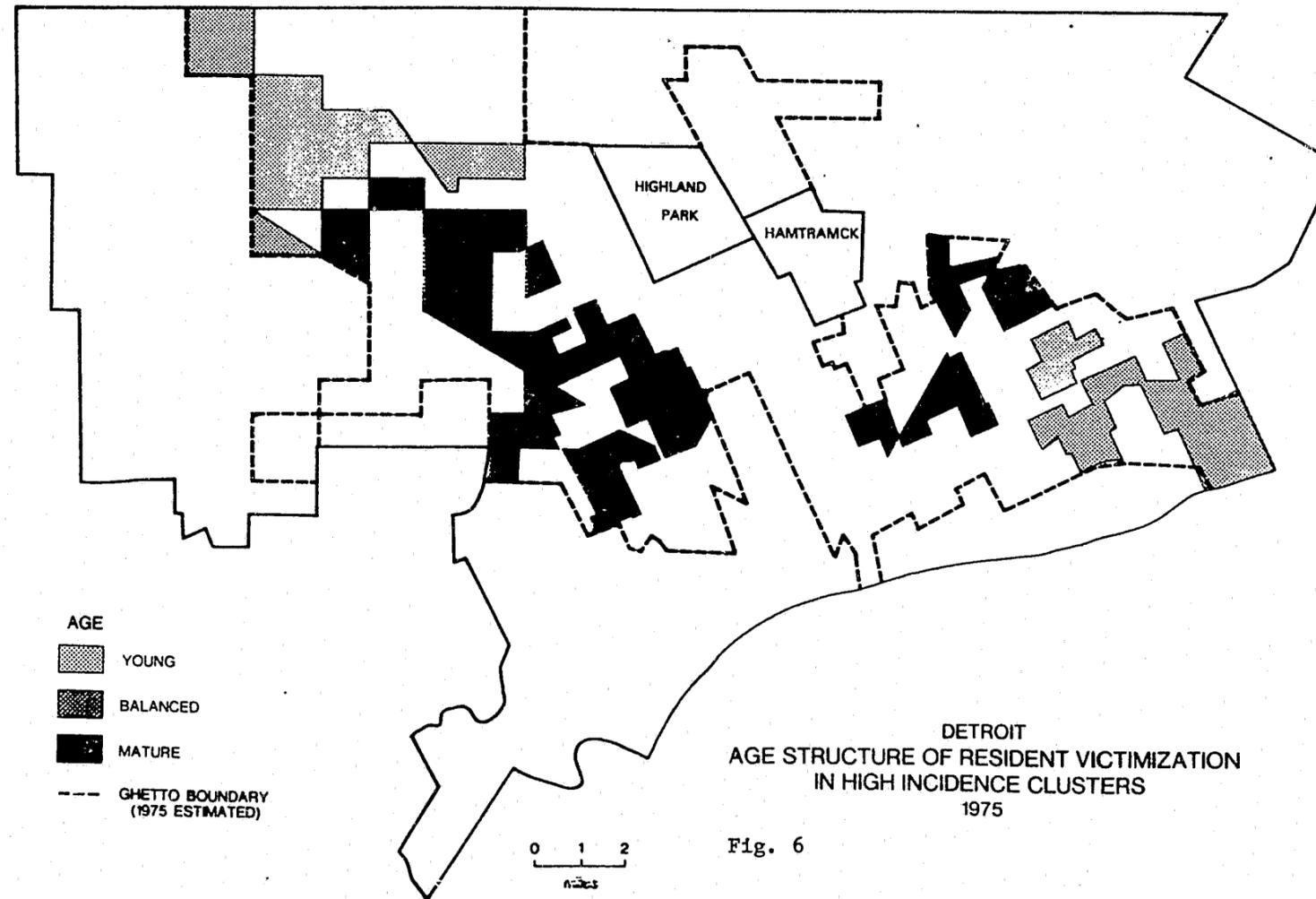
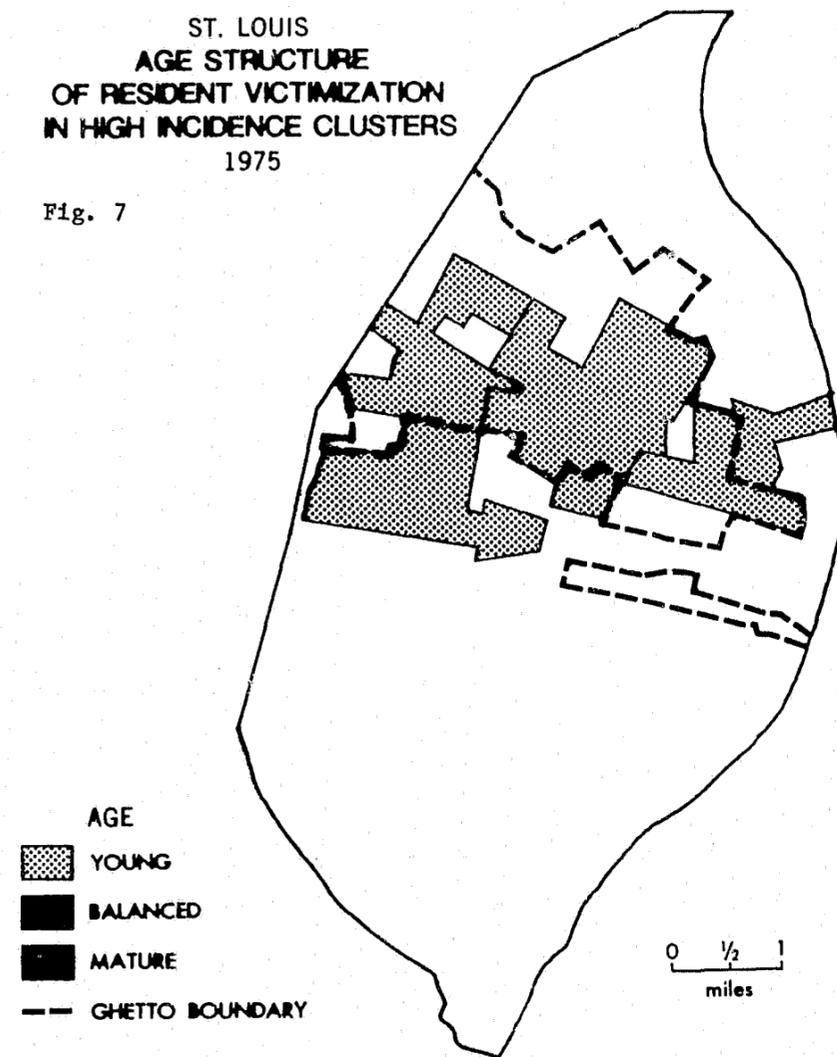


Fig. 6

ST. LOUIS
AGE STRUCTURE
OF RESIDENT VICTIMIZATION
IN HIGH INCIDENCE CLUSTERS
1975

Fig. 7



be anchored in these neighborhoods. Yet it should be acknowledged that public action is occasionally the mechanism triggering movement out of these neighborhoods, i.e., slum clearance, freeway development, etc.

The pattern of population decentralization that was underway during the sixties continued to manifest itself during the first five years of the seventies. Throughout the most recent five year period, the pattern of population shifts are even more pronounced in St. Louis than during the prior decade. Of the nine health districts in which blacks were the majority population, all but one have lost population since 1970 (see fig. 8). The greatest loss occurred in the easternmost district (abutting downtown) where the estimated loss was 55 per cent of black population during the period 1970-75.

The emptying out or deconcentration of blacks within these districts has led to black entry into peripheral districts that were only minimally black in 1970. This population shift has had the effect of also shifting the high incidence homicide clusters to the west and north. Beaumont, the easternmost district, represented a high frequency zone in 1970, but by 1975 it was the place of residence of only a few victims. The removal of Pruitt-Igoe housing project in this zone resulted in the district losing more than 10,000 persons. The corresponding reduction in the number of homicides was 44 per cent.

Detroit's population is estimated to have declined by 12 per cent between 1970-75. The largest percentage decline, however, occurred within those health districts in the city's inner and middle zone (see fig. 9). In 1960, the Detroit black population was basically confined to health districts that were basically coincident with the zone identified by Sinclair and Thompson as the city's inner zone.

POPULATION CHANGE
ON ST. LOUIS' NORTHSIDE
1970 - 1975

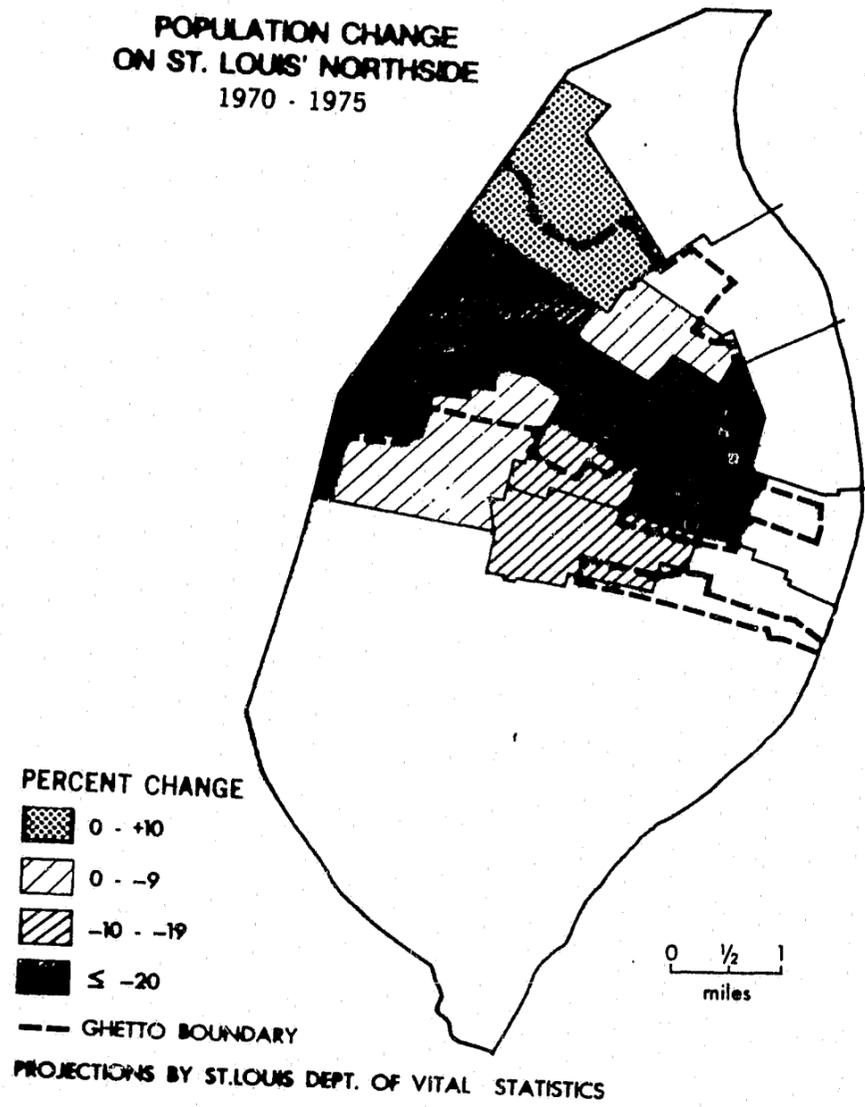


Fig. 8.

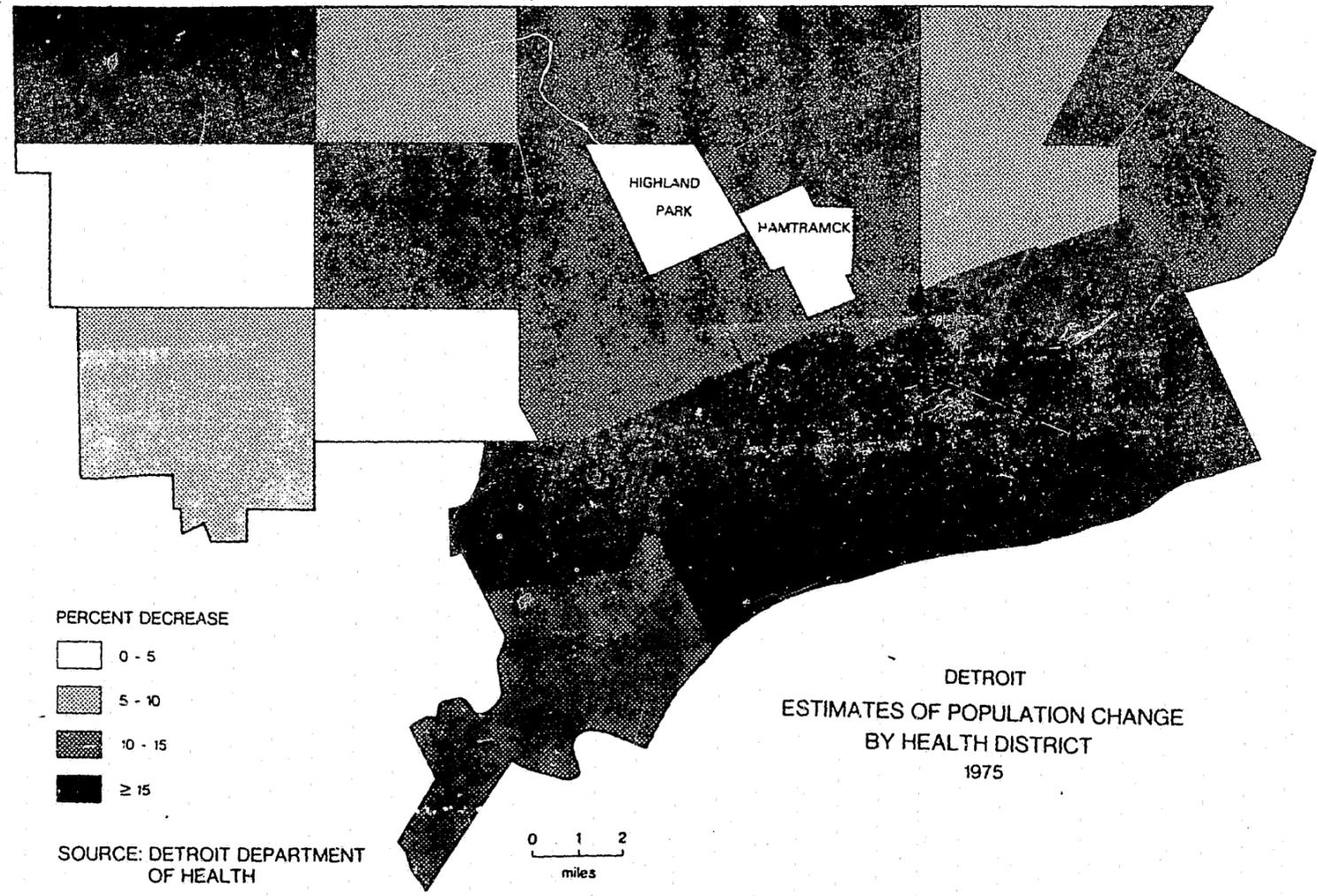


Fig. 9.

The old east side -- the zone of initial black occupation in Detroit -- represents a zone of major population loss. This area was easily accessible to important manufacturing facilities during the early years of residence. According to Greenberg, it was not until 1950 that large numbers of blacks initially began to move west of Woodward Avenue (1974: 35), the street that earlier served as a racial divider. He also contends that the poor residents of the east side have historically been more receptive to violence than the poor in poverty neighborhoods in a number of other cities that he studied (Greenberg, 1974: 59).

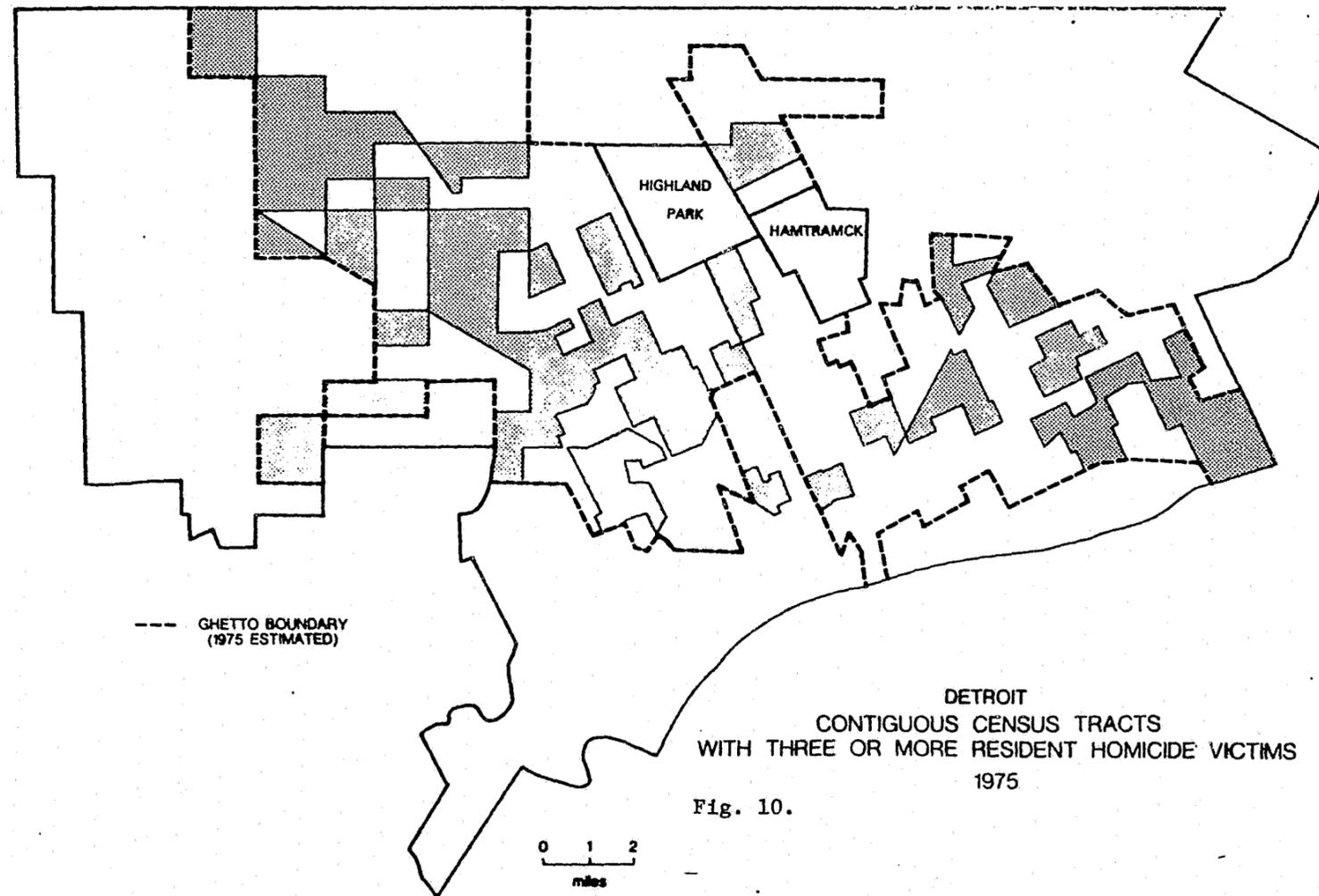
During the sixties the old east side community witnessed a loss of young adult black males. The adjacent districts to the northwest and east were the major gainers of the young adult population segment. The emptying out process that resulted in depopulation should have had the effect of lowering the risk of victimization in the original core community and shifting it to zones of new residence. By 1970 the largest segments of the black population resided in health districts that framed the original core both to the east and west. Both of these districts included more than 175,000 persons each. Middle income blacks, however, have been moving into lower density single family housing to the west and north of the original zone of occupation.

There was massive white abandonment of the city of Detroit during the sixties and it has continued into the seventies, leading to rapid residential turnover and to dispersion of blacks far beyond the margins of post World War II black residential zones. Middle income blacks have dominated the movement toward the northwest. While the estimates of change in the Detroit population since 1970 reflect a significant decline, estimates

of the size of the city's black population indicate a 7.1 per cent increase. The number of black homicides have increased during this five year period and have increased in those neighborhoods of recent black entry. It appears that the spatial dispersion of homicide victimizations out from ghetto core neighborhoods signals the rate and direction of black residential movement.

The black homicide rate in Detroit was estimated to have increased from 34.7 per 100,000 in 1970 to 48.7 per 100,000 in 1975 (Detroit Health Department). In those health districts to which blacks have moved in large numbers since 1970, there has been a significant estimated increase in the homicide rate, often a doubling over the 1970 level. If the Detroit pattern of young adult victimizations is similar to that occurring in St. Louis, then the motivation and circumstances leading to homicide are likely to differ among those who reside in areas of growth as opposed to areas of decline. The largest cluster of high frequency neighborhoods in 1975 was located on the city's northwest side, beyond the margin of the 1970 ghetto. A secondary cluster of high frequency neighborhoods was also found on the city's southeast side, beyond the margin of the 1970 ghetto (see fig. 10). The rapid increase in the number of housing vacancies in the wake of racial change possibly facilitates social class heterogeneity within residential submarkets. If this is the case, Block's contention of the role of neighborhood income disparity might be at work, leading to an intensification of homicide risk in areas characterized by close proximity between the black poor and non-poor.

Variations in the frequency of homicides within black residential space is a complex phenomenon. The lack of ease in explaining the internal



DETROIT
CONTIGUOUS CENSUS TRACTS
WITH THREE OR MORE RESIDENT HOMICIDE VICTIMS
1975

Fig. 10.

variations in homicide patterns is a function of the highly differentiated factors that contribute to an understanding of the homicidal outcome and the manner in which the homicide environment is defined. The homicide environment in this instance is based on place of victim residence. There are a number of weaknesses associated with defining the environment in this way, and they will be discussed at a later point in this report. The distance, however, between place of residence of victim and offender is generally thought to be short. Evidence for the latter position was recorded sometime ago and may be less valid today, given changes in homicide motivation over time.

Nevertheless, a decision was made to proceed to measure internal variations in the geography of homicide victimization in the previously described way. The ability to explain differences in internal frequency, employing a common set of independent variables, varies greatly among our individual sample cities. It appears that variations in the diversity of lifestyles practiced in the black community in conjunction with a series of random triggering events may be more important as predictors than a series of common status variables.

It was reported earlier that the black population in St. Louis had undergone a decline in size during the previous five year interval, but there had been no major downturn in the number of black victimizations. This would indicate that the risk of victimization has increased even though the size of the population decreased. The latter point illustrates a further difficulty in attempting to assess the risk of homicide victimization at the neighborhood level.

In attempting to define the homicide environment, the question of appropriate criteria must be treated. The criteria employed is often a function of data availability. Data describing the number of occurrences or the number of victimized persons residing in a given administrative unit is the most readily available. Risk of victimization measures at the neighborhood level are more difficult to derive as information describing the population at risk is available only for the census year, resulting in an inability to specify risk levels annually at the neighborhood scale. The problem of estimating risk at the city scale is less difficult, although population projections at the census tract level are not unknown. Clearly, an index of victimization at the neighborhood scale is a more meaningful measure, but the ease of securing neighborhood frequency data results in its being the more frequently used data to measure the level of victimization.

In this study, frequency of victimization is employed to establish baseline measures of variation in the incidence of homicide among residential locations. In the census year, a ratio scale interval is employed to specify risk of victimization within the black community. In some instances high risk and high frequency describe a common environment, while in other instances the inverse of this pattern may be present: Because census tracts vary in population size, the number of resident victimizations may not be a good indicator of risk. In Houston, several census tracts include more than 10,000 persons; and in these heavily populated tracts, there is a corresponding level of victimization frequency. Thus, frequency is not a good measure of risk in this instance. The higher frequencies in Houston do not always imply high risk. Law enforcement officials, who are basically interested in reducing frequencies, tend to indicate that the problem is being brought under control when the incidence of homicide is lowered. A lowering

of the incidence, however, does not necessarily lead to a reduction in risk. In a study of this type, both sets of measures are important, although both are not equally available.

High risk environments are here defined as those in which five or more homicides occur within individual census tracts during a single year. The number five was chosen because the average size of census tract populations is approximately 5,000 persons. Five homicide deaths within census tracts containing the mean population would lead to a homicide victimization rate of 100 per 100,000. The latter risk level is more than twice the national homicide rate for blacks. In a number of cities, tracts with small populations located near the downtown and tracts with large populations located on the edge of cities often lead to an incongruence between frequency and rates as measures of risk (see fig.11). Thus, the employment of a single measure to evaluate risk is not without inherent weaknesses.

The Association Between Spatial Shifts in Population and Changing Homicide Patterns in St. Louis

It is difficult to evaluate changes in homicide rates along a spatial continuum, though one might attempt to do this indirectly by evaluating changing frequencies in association with estimates of population change. It was previously indicated that eastern edge neighborhoods, as well as middle zone neighborhoods in the St. Louis black community, were losers of young adult black males during the period 1960-70. On the contrary, western edge neighborhoods were gainers among this population. It is unclear if this

process has intensified since 1970, leading all neighborhoods within a common corridor to lose population. Eight neighborhoods in this territorial band have been chosen for review as means of assessing changes in the incidence of homicide victimization in contiguous neighborhoods during a specified time interval.

Moving from east to west, the neighborhoods of occupancy change from zones of limited physical attractiveness to zones of greater physical attractiveness. Between 1970-75, however, much of the physical variation in the quality of the residential environment had been removed. Demographically, though, the population should be expected to age in an easterly direction.

The numerical pattern of homicide deaths in the above described neighborhoods differed from that prevailing in the larger black community during these two time intervals. There was a 47 percent decrease in homicide frequency among residents of these neighborhoods during the two years in question (see table 9). The eastern edge communities, which had been the zone of highest homicide frequency in 1970, recorded the smallest number of deaths in 1975.

Table 9

St. Louis--Changes in Homicide Frequency in Selected
Neighborhoods Between 1970 and 1975

	<u>Neighborhoods</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>1970 Rate (per 100,000)</u>
Eastern Edge	A	5	3	-2	89
	B	9	3	-6	133
	C	10	1	-9	116
Middle Zone	D	5	9	+4	76
	E	12	6	-6	124
	F	5	9	+4	--
Western Edge	G	9	3	-6	117
	H	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>	+4	--
Total number of homicides		57	40		

CONTINUED

1 OF 7

The middle zone neighborhoods showed little change during the two years, while the western edge neighborhoods experienced a modest decline. The changing demographic character of the population in these three zones should be expected to influence the age structure of victimization. In the middle zone "over 30" victims predominated during the base year, but by 1975 there were slightly fewer "over 30" victims than "under 30" victims. This zone might possibly have become the place of residence of selected young adults who were moving from neighborhoods near downtown. This might possibly have led to a piling up of young adults in the middle zone, leading to an alteration in the age structure of victimization in areas where there was no appreciable change in the frequency of victimization.

In the neighborhood clusters on both edges of the city, a more mature population is expected. In the eastern edge clusters, the altered age structure is the result of the presence of a residual population characterized by aging and limited economic resources. Consequently, in the near downtown neighborhoods there was a sharp drop in the level of victimization during these two time intervals. The magnitude of this decrease (70 per cent), when compared with the previously described population decline changes in this part of the city, implies a reduction in risk of homicide victimization--a logical consequence given the age structure of the population. The question then becomes whether risk has been transferred to alternate environments as a result of residential mobility or whether the target community developed a deterrent against the potential for dangerousness.

Among the middle zone cluster, two neighborhoods stood out as the environment of residence victimization in both years. These two neighborhoods are bisected by a major commercial artery and possess similar social, economic, and environmental attributes during the earlier year. The southern neighborhood,

however, was characterized by higher risk of victimization (124 per 100,000 vs. 76 per 100,000). In 1975 the southern neighborhood showed a 100 per cent decrease in the number of victimizations, while the inverse of this pattern was observed in the northern neighborhood. The northern neighborhood showed an increase in young adult victimizations, while the southern neighborhood showed a decrease. One obvious difference in the nature of victimization in the two time periods was the reduction in number of family-related homicides thought to be drug related. The balance between victimization based on age remained essentially the same in both years, with slightly more than half of all victims in the mature adult state in the life cycle. Victims, who were persons of advanced age, were likely to have been robbed in their homes. Instrumental motives seem to have gained over expressive motives by 1975. The implication here is that the increased presence of young adults resulted in altering the pattern of victimization without significantly altering the age structure of victimization or frequency of victimization.

It was earlier indicated that lifestyle or other behavioral manifestations are often important as predictors of potential homicide victims. Robins found truancy to be a better predictor of potential victimization than a number of traditionally employed explanatory variables, i.e. father absence (1968:18-19). A number of school related measures were secured from the public school system for all victims under 30 years of age who had been born in the state of residence. The percent of total "under 30" victims and the percent of those who had attended public school in the city of victimization varied quite widely. St. Louis had the largest percent of its victims

born in the state of residence, whereas the number of persons born in Georgia and attending Atlanta public schools was smallest. The number of students that each school system was able to identify ranged from a very small number in Atlanta to 30 in Detroit.

But in each system, evidence of truancy and withdrawal from high school prior to graduation were characteristics most often common to all victims. Of the 30 victims identified by the Detroit school system, not a single individual completed high school. Likewise, of the 24 victims identified by the St. Louis public school system, only one completed high school; and most were at sometime enrolled in a special school program. In addition, most had at some point been suspended from school. It should be pointed out, however, that a few students were victimized while they were still students; but that number was generally small.

School data were most complete for the St. Louis sample. Of the 24 victims in 1975, most had exhibited scholastic difficulties. The victims were essentially divided evenly among our three stages of young adult development. One striking finding was the large concentration of victims who had attended a single high school. The 24 victims were enrolled in 11 different high schools; but eight of the 25 had attended a single high school, which served the narrow corridor that contained the neighborhoods stretching between the eastern and middle zone neighborhoods previously described. This zone represented the most intense poverty area in the black community in 1970 (see fig. 12).

ST. LOUIS
STABLE HIGH RISK NEIGHBORHOODS
1970 - 1975

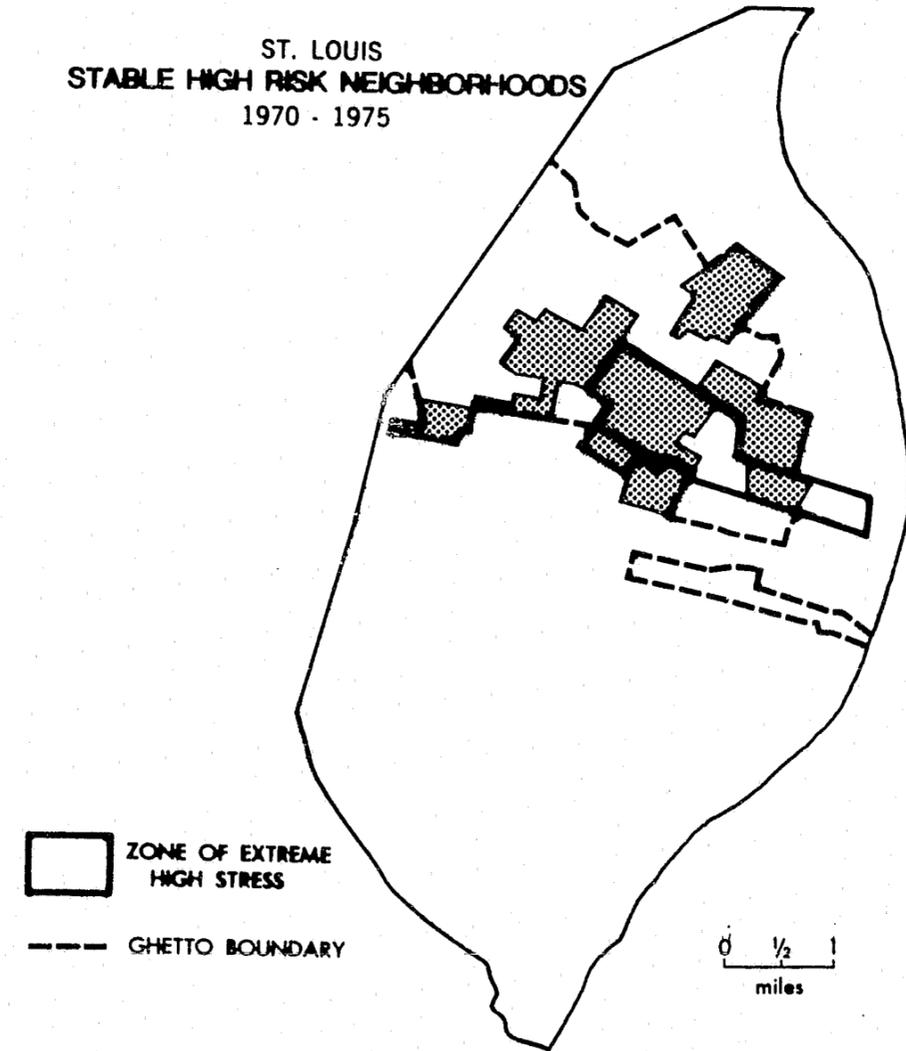


Fig. 12.

The circumstances surrounding the death of these young adults reveal that instrumental motives appear more often than expressive motives in the action chain that led to death. Drug related incidents represented the single most important contributor to death in this group of young men and women who found the schools stultifying and non-rewarding, and who eventually withdrew or were suspended (see table 10).

Table 10

Circumstances Surrounding the Homicide Deaths of a Sample of St. Louis High School Leavers

Victimization Frequency	<u>Circumstances of Victimization</u>						<u>Unknown</u>
	<u>Drug Related</u>	<u>Felony Related</u>	<u>Gambling</u>	<u>Gang Fighting</u>	<u>Sex Related</u>	<u>Family Related</u>	
	5	3	2	1	3	2	8

Source: Circumstances derived from FBI Supplemental Homicide Reports, 1975.

Of the 24 young adult victims in the St. Louis sample, 19 had changed their place of residence at least once between starting high school and the time of death. This mobility pattern should not be viewed as unusual since these persons were at a stage in the life cycle that leads to an abandonment of the parental home. But the small number of never married persons in the sample and the corresponding large number still residing in the parental home seems to indicate that the observed mobility pattern is essentially related to moves by parents. Of the 19 who moved, seven moved less than one mile from the place of residence at the time of initial enrollment in high school, and 12 moved a greater distance than one mile from the previous place of residence.

The largest number of victims had previously resided in the high stress, low socioeconomic status eastern zone, but most had abandoned that zone by the time of death. Most of the eastern zone movers were residents at time of death of less stressful and higher socioeconomic neighborhoods. Between 1970 and 1974, the zones in which most movers settled were those showing an increase in levels of homicide victimization. Obviously, simply leaving neighborhoods in which high homicide victimization rates prevail does not provide assurance that the risk will be significantly curtailed. Both personality and lifestyle contribute to risk and can offset the apparent safety associated with alternative environments. Likewise, environments undergo change; and thus the alteration of environmental status might add to the risk of victimization.

The circumstances leading to homicide victimization are extremely diverse. They are so diverse, in fact, that the term "homicide" seems somewhat restrictive in its ability to convey precisely the full range of actions leading one person or persons to take the life of another. The various categories assigned to homicides by the courts signal that body's recognition and sanction of lethal acts under a specific set of circumstances. Those acts that the public finds most abhorrent are punished most severely, while other acts in which the circumstances or custom find to be associated with probable justification are punished less severely, or not at all.

A general typology that is sometimes employed by the police to specify the relationship between the victim and offender is helpful, with the most frequently employed categories being family, acquaintances, strangers, and unknowns. But even among these broad categories, the range of possible

circumstances and their associated triggering mechanisms are diverse.

In 1970-71, nationally, the vast majority of homicides occurred among acquaintances (40 per cent), another 25 per cent occurred between family members and the largest share of the remainder were thought to be felony related. It is the latter category that has attracted much public attention, as it usually coincides with the public's view of crime in the street.

The risk of homicide victimization in the nation's larger black communities is so much greater than elsewhere that Goodwin describes it as ghettocide (1978: 182-205). With specific reference to homicide in the black community, he states:

More than a third of these ghetto killings occur during bar fights, street brawls, arguments at parties or family gatherings. The reasons are often so ludicrously trivial that they wouldn't have caused more than a raised eyebrow outside the pressure cooker atmosphere of the ghetto. (Goodwin, 1978: 187)

On the other hand, Silberman attributes the recent upsurge in black victimization to a weakening of black cultural controls that previously operated to minimize the frequency of violent deaths (1978: 135). He accuses the media of promoting the "bad nigger" image, leading to "the internalization and acting out of the 'bad nigger' myth" (1978: 157).

There is growing recognition of the severity of the homicide problem in black communities, yet little has been done to alleviate the problem. Lack of success here is no doubt related to the complexity of the problem and to apathy. There is little question that lethal violence is undergirded by a complex set of forces reflecting the operation of both internal and external values.

Some Notes on the Role of Drugs on the Increase in Violence

In some of the larger black communities the widespread availability of drugs is being cited as a catalyst promoting actions leading to lethal violence. Timothy Crouse, a writer for the Village Voice, is one of those whose first hand observations led him to assign great importance to the association between drugs and violence in Harlem. Crouse, who spent a year on the streets in Harlem attempting to understand the problem, admits that he is still baffled. He came away from this experience with the following perception of what Harlem is like: "Harlem is a place almost totally without hope; it therefore inspires intense hedonistic greed, desperate violence, and high flights of spirituality" (1979: 30). The extent to which Harlem can be employed as a model for life in other black communities cannot be easily determined; but it is thought that cities with black populations of the order of magnitude of a Harlem, and for whom the legitimate areas of opportunities are limited, might well be perceived in a similar manner.

Crime rates are known to increase as a function of size of place. The South is characterized by having fewer large metropolitan areas than exist in the non-South. This might in part account for the lower black crime rates observed by Hoch in the South in both 1960 and 1970 (1974: 203). But black robbery rates increased during this period, largely outside of the South. Hoch speculated that narcotics addiction became more widespread during the decade and led to higher incidence of instrumental violence within larger metropolitan areas.

It is the drug connection that Crouse also raises in his attempt to

explain the epidemic of violence in Harlem. He indicates that there is strong evidence to support the belief that the Harlem drug traffic is now controlled by black drug distributors; and in the wake of the change in control of drug distribution and sales, violence and scale of addiction have escalated. The implication here is that as the drug trade takes on increasing importance in the black community, an increase in homicide deaths among those associated with it will take place. To date, it seems that growing black control of the drug trade is confined to selected non-southern cities.

Specific Circumstances and Patterns of Homicide Victimization

The specific circumstances leading to homicide victimization are seldom readily available. One is often able to deduce the general nature of the circumstances by reviewing the FBI Monthly Homicide Reports. The quality of this data for the purpose of deducing the circumstances of death beyond the establishment of the relationship between victim and offender varies greatly from city to city.

In an attempt to go beyond the four category typology describing victim-offender relations, a series of sub-categories under each major relational category have been established. These sub-categories often shed greater light on the lifestyle and level of impulse control of the participants. Although these sub-categories represent an improvement over the general typology in illustrating differences among black communities, they are still fraught with shortcomings.

A catchall category, in some instances, will turn out to be the most important category or there does not exist an appropriate description to

specify subcategories because of the manner in which the circumstances are described by local police. The most troublesome relationship in the typology is that described as "unknown," where it is not always clear whether the circumstances are unknown, whether the parties were not previously acquainted, or both.

In order to gain greater insight into the circumstances surrounding each homicide victimization, Table 11 includes the set of sub-categories for this purpose. Each subcategory has been assigned to an appropriate victim-offender relationship. The sub-categories that have been extracted on the basis of a thorough review of FBI Monthly Homicide Reports are as follows:

Table 11

A Typology of Circumstances Associated with Primary Victim-Offender Relationships

<u>Family</u>	<u>Acquaintance</u>	<u>Stranger</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
spouse conflict	sex related	robbery	location of body:
parent conflict	gambling related	burglary	residence
sibling conflict	debt related	self-defense	street
other	alcohol related	police action	alley
	drug related	rape	other
	conflict occurring	other	police nominated motive:
	at party or		drugs
	social gathering		other

The chosen categories are not always mutually exclusive. In those instances where one type of relationship appears more important, that sub-category will be the one chosen to represent a specific set of circumstances. For example, under the stranger category, police action has been identified as an appropriate sub-category. But police are also involved as offenders or victims in

victimizations that are an outgrowth of both robbery and burglary. Thus, police actions are employed to describe police involvement in activities leading to death other than those associated with the commission of a felony. As can be readily observed, the sub-categories associated with unknowns are the least informative, in terms of their descriptions, about the nature of the relationship between victim and offender. Some police departments, however, include speculative descriptions and often imply the existence of criminal behavior, i.e., "Found on sidewalk tied up inside a duffle bag with a broken neck."

Changes among individual places in terms of the make up of victim-offender relationships provide some insight into the operation of forces leading to death. It is hoped that the designated sub-categories will aid in the establishment of a more precise set of circumstances surrounding death. Likewise, these subcategories should further illuminate the contributions of both the environment and lifestyles upon the nature of the homicide transaction. As structured, however, subcategories simply highlight the circumstances associated with the four category victim-offender typology that we have chosen to employ. Among these, the stranger and unknown categories have generally come to be associated with street crime. As was noted earlier, the increase in the incidence of robbery is thought to be related to increasing drug use and addiction; therefore, where this sub-category is dominant, it would indirectly indicate support for this notion. The general increase in the category "unknown" is often employed as a surrogate for other criminal behavior, i.e., feuding among drug dealers, which often leads to drug wars among competing forces. The escalation in both the latter

categories implies the increasing importance of instrumental violence.

In those cities where the traditional street corner society continues to be strong, the traditional expressive acts leading to death should also remain strong. But in those environments undergoing the transition from traditional street corner society to a highly competitive ghetto sub-economy based on participation in a wide variety of both legitimate and illicit activities, instrumental acts leading to death can be expected to proliferate. The dominance of one or the other of these sets should best be reflected in the behavior of young adult black males, who may not yet be firmly committed to a set of guiding principles of conduct. Nevertheless, this group should be expected to represent those persons likely to adopt new values as they are primed for experimentation, and spend much of their time receiving messages that glamorize the new values and their associated behaviors.

If some of the conjecture that was previously raised regarding regional differences in criminal behavior is correct, then differences in the structure of relationships, motivations, and circumstances should distinguish the homicidal victimization pattern prevailing in our primary sample cities of Detroit, St. Louis, and Atlanta, each of which had unduly high black victimization rates in 1970. A recent finding by the New York City medical examiner's office revealed that most blacks who died as a result of alcohol abuse were from the South, while those who died from drug abuse were primarily persons born in New York City (Haberman and Baden, 1978: 55). This finding supports somewhat the existence of regional differences in the incidence of drug use. But one must be careful not to overstate the case since alcohol deaths occur, as a rule, at a much later age than do deaths resulting from drug abuse. On the basis of existing evidence, one would anticipate the incidence of instrumental victimization to be greater

in Detroit and lower in Atlanta. St. Louis would be expected to possess a pattern that would fall somewhere between that characterizing Detroit and Atlanta.

Changing Victim-Offender Relationships Among Young Adult Blacks

The pattern of relationship between victim and offender in our primary sample cities illustrates the differential contextual effect that appears to be operating. In this group of cities, there are evident differences in the relationships leading to death. The category of "acquaintance" accounts for the largest percent of all victims, in all places, in both 1970 and 1975. This represents the expected pattern since it is this pattern which predominates nationally; and given the age and sex of the target population, it is only logical that this group account for a disproportionate share of the victims. Nevertheless, there are some striking differences among the proportion of victims fitting this category among cities. For instance, the acquaintance share of victimizations hovered around one-third in Detroit in both time periods, whereas in St. Louis one-half or more of the victims were known to one another in both intervals. Atlanta started the period off with 57 per cent of its victimizations included in this category, but ended the period with only 43 per cent of the victims being known to one another. It is clear that the modal pattern of victim-offender relationship has been undergoing change and differs considerably from place to place.

Triggering Incidents Leading to Acts of Interpersonal Violence Among Acquaintances

It is generally thought that some trivial incident among acquaintances is likely to serve as the triggering mechanism leading to acts of physical aggression

between persons who normally consider themselves friends or at least associates. The motivation for committing acts of physical aggression often revolves around the denial of self-esteem or respect. In settings where self-esteem is highly prized, but often challenged, a broad spectrum of interaction patterns might lead to provocation as an outgrowth of personal insult. Likewise, the nature of the associations themselves are expected to have an impact on the probability for potential conflict. Some writers support the idea that a set of learned behaviors heightens the potential for conflict.

Behavior that increases the probability for conflict is often thought to be associated with clusters of street-corner men, who often congregate to drink, to gamble, or simply to enjoy one another's conversation. Hannerz describes the street-corner male as a marginal individual seldom involved in long term relations with members of the opposite sex (1969: 54-59). On the question of interpersonal violence among this life style group, Hannerz states the following:

While street-corner peer groups vary when it comes to members' reactions to slights upon their honor, there are some where the challenge often leads not only to a heated argument but on to a violent fight. Sometimes such quarrels lead to lasting animosity, and people who are good friends one day may be bitter enemies from the next day and on. And the conflicts are easily expressed in violence again, as the two enemies continue to hang out at the same place and with peers they have in common. (1969: 56-57)

It is uncertain if Hannerz' descriptive typology can be employed to shed additional light on the prospects for violent altercations in the current study; but the attributes he describes do admittedly point up some problems, which are both place and group specific, that heighten the prospect for violence. Curtis, a defender of the subculture of violence thesis, thinks

the street-corner male typology is meritorious in assisting to understand the potential for violent conflict among black males. About this context he poses two questions: "What is it about street-corner male contexts that encourages head-to-head standoffs, the outbreak of altercations? Once begun, why do so many confrontations seemingly escalate into resolutions of serious injury or death?" (Curtis, 1975: 50)

If the phenomenon of the street-corner male is operating in our primary communities, we would expect it to be more prevalent among those communities where economic opportunity is most restricted, and where traditional values are prevalent. Increased secularization is thought to weaken traditional values and lead to an increase in instrumental violence relative to expressive violence. The implication is that street-corner men, while unsuccessful by societal norms, are still likely to believe in traditional values. It is sometimes said that the street-corner male has not rejected the values of the larger society, but that a situation ethic has emerged that permits him to adapt to his circumstances without the necessity of having to permanently relinquish traditional values. Drake refers to the street-corner male as part of the the unorganized lower class (1965: 779). He states:

At the lowest income levels, there is an anomic situation where gambling, excessive drinking, narcotic use, and sexual promiscuity are prevalent forms of behavior, and violent interpersonal relations reflect an ethos of suspicion and resentment which suffuses this deviant subculture (1965:779).

Here the notion of the street-corner male, as a reflection of the lifestyle of a segment of the black population, is postulated to reflect a set of behaviors associated with traditional values. Traditional values

are thought to more likely reflect the expressive self and less likely to be supportive of instrumental violence. It is apparent that some of the traits possessed by persons sharing the values of street-corner men tend to promote the potential for interpersonal violence. But what is less clear is whether this is not an overdrawn analogy that only typifies the behavioral propensities of a small group of black males that could not possibly lead to the level of violence now occurring in large urban environments.

While Hannerz' description of the life style dimension of a small group of street-corner males is illuminating, it must also be remembered that these persons were drawn from a single neighborhood and the period of observation was relatively brief. Likewise, it appears the street-corner males with whom Hannerz had contact were at least approaching middle age; thus, they might possibly reflect the values and behaviors of that group of individuals who had encountered extreme difficulty in attempting to negotiate the system beyond the black community.

On the latter point, if the system has been no less responsive to the younger generation than it was to the street-corner men, could we expect an enlargement of this specific subcultural group? While the behaviors and circumstances of street-corner men lead to a heightened probability for interpersonal violence, it appears such violence is likely to be confined to peers. The extent to which this pattern prevails among young adult males is likely to reflect a strong attachment to tradition and the extent to which the larger economy is responsive to the needs of this group.

Changing Allegiance to Core Values and Young Adult Males

Over the past generation, there is evidence of value change in the United States. While the American core values have remained essentially stable, the strength of allegiance to these values has been declining and new values appear to be gaining strength. Rokeach notes that between 1968-71 there was an obvious difference between whites and blacks in terms of value shifts. Among blacks he notes that inner harmony, ambition, and honesty became less important (Rokeach, 1974: 228-229). It should be noted, though, that honesty represented the ranking value among both blacks and whites during both time periods.

It has been suggested that the value differences distinguishing three generations of Americans are small, but there is also little evidence that global values are transmitted by the family from generation to generation (Bengston, 1975: 366). The inference here is that each generation responds to its external world independently, and value shifts reflect this independent assessment of appropriate and desirable goals and attitudes. The extent to which this position is shared is not precisely known, but it is probably held by only a minority of social scientists. Nevertheless, there is support for value shifts over time that have an impact on the social character of sub groups within the population. Yinger, in discussing the impact of these changes on blacks, states the following: "To be black is a different experience for those who have arrived at adulthood since, let us say, the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955, than it was for the earlier generations"(1977: 219).

One of the most obvious changes has been the desire of younger blacks to lead a more prosperous life, that is, the failure of young black Americans to passively accept poverty as a permanent status. Strumpel, in responding to this finding, indicates that unless the terms of trade are altered, the goal of prosperity is unlikely to be realized (1973: 104). Blacks, it appears, are becoming more individualistic and materialistic in outlook, both goals that appear to be inconsistent with the modal **lifestyle** of the street-corner man.

The structure of lethal violence among young adult black male acquaintances can be expected to embrace activities commonplace to the street-corner man lifestyle, as well as those of other lifestyles. The street-corner man lifestyle seems to reflect a withdrawal from the competitive life and an engagement in fantasy through the use of alcohol or other mood-altering substances. On the other hand, there has emerged within the nation's black communities an aggressive and sometimes hostile group of young men who seek to enjoy the prosperous life by developing strategies designed to overcome institutional barriers that weaken the probability of success. Some of these persons conform to Thorne's lifestyle mode described as resistant-defiant (1975: 247). Practitioners of this lifestyle are often willing to engage in extralegal behavior to achieve some immediate goal, regardless of who might be injured. Thorne describes this lifestyle group as working against people, as opposed to working with people. This latter group might well fit the description of "hustler," although this, too, possibly represents an overdrawn analogy.

It has been said that hustling is a commonplace activity in the black community. B. Valentine says hustling, "...refers to a wide variety of unconventional, sometimes extralegal or illegal activities, often frowned upon by the wider community but widely accepted and practiced in the slums and ghettos of large cities" (1978: 23). A wide range of activities are included under the rubric of hustling, many of which are engaged in by street-corner men. It is clear that the hustler and the street-corner man are not mutually exclusive styles; however, the core activities of the hustler are likely to induce instrumental violence with greater regularity than expressive violence.

Conflicts growing out of robbery, burglary, commercial drug transactions, and other acquisitive acts have a higher likelihood of leading to instrumental violence than those associated with anger growing out of emotional discord or personal insult. John Allen, a self-styled hustler, has indicated that, "Some violence is personal, some impersonal; some is premeditated, some accidental; some essential to attain a goal; some incidental" (1977: xx).

In those communities where hustling has become more widespread, one would expect a shift in the ratio of expressive and instrumental violence. Now an attempt will be made to assess the structure of lethal violence among acquaintances within our primary sample cities as a means of specifying the change in frequency of situations that have traditionally reflected the street-corner man lifestyle.

The Structure of Interpersonal Violence Among Young Adult Acquaintances

Violent victimization among acquaintances is commonplace in each of our sample cities. But the extent to which relational differences among persons

known to one another can be specified is dependent upon the quality of police reporting in individual cities. The quality of reporting for the purpose of comparison is good in both St. Louis and Atlanta. In Detroit reports, the frequent absence of detail makes it difficult to consistently specify the relational pattern among victims and offenders known to one another. Atlanta and St. Louis exhibited dissimilar trends in their general homicide patterns, as well as in those patterns exhibited between acquaintances during the period 1970-75. Homicides were shown to be increasing among young adult blacks in St. Louis, while decreasing in Atlanta. By the end of the period, young adult acquaintances in St. Louis were more than twice as likely to become homicide victims than were members of this population in Atlanta. In 1975, the number of acquaintance deaths in the younger male group in Detroit was approximately twice as great as the level occurring in both St. Louis and Atlanta. But when one considers the difference in the size of the base population among these places, it becomes clear that acquaintance homicides possess a lower risk of occurrence in Detroit than in the other two cities.

Among the several categories of relationships that have been established to denote the circumstances surrounding the act, the diffuse category described as "other" accounts for the largest number of deaths in both St. Louis and Atlanta. In most years one-half or more of the incidents fell into this category. But by 1975, the "other" category in Atlanta had shrunk as a proportion of the total, whereas the St. Louis total in this category had virtually remained unchanged. In the latter year, the major difference between these two places occurred in the area of drug-related deaths. For example, in 1975 approximately one-fifth of the St. Louis young adult black victims were to be

found in this category (see table 12). A major distinction between the two cities, as it relates to acquaintance homicides, is in the category of drug-related deaths.

Table 12

The Circumstances Associated with Acquaintance Related Homicides in St. Louis and Atlanta: 1970 and 1975

	St. Louis		Atlanta	
	1970	1975	1970	1975
Gambling	9	5	3	2
Party Related	-	1	5	2
Alcohol Related	-	4	3	1
Drug Related	2	11	-	1
Debt Related	3	4	3	2
Sex Related	7	8	10	7
Other	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>4</u>
total	35	48	38	19

Source: FBI Monthly Homicide Report

Superficially, it would appear that the street-corner man syndrome tends to show signs of stability in Atlanta, while aspects of the hustler syndrome appear to be gaining ground in St. Louis. The primary difference, however, appears to be associated with the increase in drug-related deaths in St. Louis. Street-corner man type victimizations, i.e., argument during a crap game, drunken argument, were relatively less commonplace in St. Louis in 1975 than in 1970. Trivial incidents more common to the lifestyle of the street-corner male were much more commonplace in Atlanta during both time periods. By 1975, fully one-third of the St. Louis victimizations appeared to be instrumentally motivated.

Another distinguishing difference between Atlanta and St. Louis is the lower age of victimization in St. Louis. In both time periods, the 20-24

age group represented the age segment within which most St. Louis victims were found. In Atlanta the frequency of victimization was greatest among persons 25-29 years of age. Indeed, it was the youngest age group (15-19) in St. Louis in which instrumental violence occurred most frequently, a possible indicator of their willingness to adopt the new values.

The difference in the extent to which handguns were employed as the weapon of death in St. Louis and Atlanta poses an interesting problem. Intuitively it would seem that handgun use would be more commonplace in the city where instrumental violence is a more frequent occurrence. Nevertheless, handguns are employed in a smaller percentage of all victimizations in St. Louis than in Atlanta. It seems that the problem is not with handguns being employed as the principal weapon of persons engaged in instrumental acts of violence in St. Louis, but with widespread use of handguns in all acts of violence in Atlanta. In Atlanta it appears that handguns are available to most persons who become involved in angry confrontations. It was previously noted that, on the basis of FBI Reports, it was not usually possible to distinguish between acts of instrumental violence and expressive violence. But among acquaintances, interaction patterns leading to death in Detroit show greater similarity to St. Louis than to Atlanta in terms of weapon used. The handgun was employed in 56 per cent of the victimizations in Detroit in 1970, and in only 46 per cent in 1975. Knives were used more frequently in Detroit than in either of the other cities. It appears that knives were generally employed when fighting actually preceded the lethal act. The greater number of victims in Detroit possibly accounts for the greater diversity in both circumstances and weapon used during the fatal interaction.

Detroit and St. Louis appear to exhibit greater similarity in the circumstances surrounding death than either shows with Atlanta. While it is not possible to categorize Detroit victims in the same way as was done for the other two cities, i.e., gambling, etc., it is often possible to deduce instrumental motives. Like St. Louis, the greatest frequency of victimization among acquaintances occurs among those 20-24 years of age. Likewise, instrumental victimizations appear more commonplace among younger persons in this group. There was a more than 50 per cent increase in acquaintance victimizations in Detroit between 1970 and 1975. A similar pattern characterized St. Louis victimizations, with the inverse of this pattern showing itself in Atlanta.

The resistant-defiant life style, which seems to be emerging among a segment of the black community's youth, appears more commonplace in Detroit and St. Louis. A description taken from the Detroit Police Department's files can be used to illustrate this point:

The deceased (age 23) and the defendant (age 19) were engaged in a pool game, when a disagreement occurred between them as to the size of the bet on the game. The defendant refused to continue to play and walked around the pool table where a scuffle ensued. The scuffle was broken up by other patrons. The defendant took his own cue and coat and walked toward the door. The defendant then drew his revolver from his back pants pocket and fired one shot, striking the deceased in the abdomen. The deceased fell to the floor and the defendant bent over the deceased, rolled him over and took an unknown amount of money from his pockets. The deceased's brother (age 19) then went to the deceased and the defendant pointed his revolver at him and demanded, "How much money do you have?" Upon being told, the defendant said, "Give it to me." The brother gave the defendant about \$85 and the defendant ran out the door.

In its early and middle phases, the confrontation in the above description had all of the earmarks of a commonplace ghetto conflict

growing out of a gambling argument. But in its final phase, it seems to deviate from the run-of-the-mill conflict motivated argument and takes on the characteristics of an instrumental act. The callousness with which the act was committed and the orderliness with which the offender acted in taking the money illustrates that this was more than a typical street-corner man confrontation. The defendant, it seems, can be more appropriately described as a hustler whose prime objective is to secure monetary reward through the use of any act that will insure the successful achievement of this goal. The above defendant was brought to trial on the charge of murder in the second degree, but was found not guilty for "lack of sufficient evidence."

If it can be validated that the lifestyle pattern we suggest appears to be emerging among young adult black males, then the motivation for interpersonal violence associated with the normative behavior of street-corner men will likely have to be reevaluated. It may no longer be necessary for the victim of an instrumental act to be unknown to the offender for him to be chosen as a target for acquisitive gain. This subject will be pursued again at a later point in this report, employing responses from a set of actors in the homicide transaction to shed additional light on the emergence of the resistant-defiant lifestyle. The behavior of the defendant described in the previous case raises a number of interesting issues. The question of whether the defendant could be considered "bad" or "mad" becomes essential in attempting to better understand the motivation for the commission of acts of lethal violence, as well as in offering the most effective intervention strategy.

Family Violence

Family violence ranks second only to violence among acquaintances as the dominant interaction pattern leading to death. The extent to which acts of lethal violence occur within the family setting among our three primary cities is highly varied. In 1975, family-related acts of lethal violence ranged from approximately 10 per cent in St. Louis to approximately 30 per cent in Atlanta. Yet among young adult black males the share of victimizations growing out of intra-family conflict is small. Family conflict leads to death among this group more often in Atlanta (15%) and Detroit (12.8%) than it does in St. Louis (6.6%). These differences are in part associated with modal age of victimization and the extent to which persons in that stage of the life cycle act as household heads.

In the family-related homicide transactions, there are varied relationships among individual family members. For example, in Atlanta the violent interaction among spouses more often leads to death than violent interaction among other family members. Moreover, in 1975 almost 90 per cent of the young adult black males who had been killed in Atlanta were victimized by spouses. In Detroit, however, the category "others" represents the most prevalent relationship, an indication that conflict is centered outside of the primary family. Greater balance among categories prevails in St. Louis, with a slight edge going to spouses, closely followed by parents and siblings. Unlike Detroit, the few St. Louis family related deaths tend to occur within the primary family.

Causative Factors Associated with Family Violence

Family violence has traditionally accounted for a significant share of

all lethal acts of violence. Most often these acts occur between spouses. In 1973, family homicides constituted 25 per cent of the national total (Lee and others, 1978: 406). Boudouris reports that the contribution of family homicide to total homicides in Detroit increased after World War II (1971: 669). Nevertheless, one can conclude that family settings have long represented settings in which violence between individual members possesses a high likelihood of occurrence.

Both structural conditions and mental health status have been employed by those attempting to explain the family violence phenomena. Given the inclination to act out their feelings of aggression and the ever present threat to individual security associated with economic marginality, lower income or economically marginal families are thought to possess a high propensity for violence. In fact, families have been described as breeding grounds for violence (Kopernik, 1964: 315-322). The latter perspective is associated with a psychiatric orientation that attributes the violent propensities of individual members of households to the changing relationship between the victim and the modal target. The modal target is often associated with a combination of economic and psychological consequences.

Family violence within black households is a little studied phenomenon, even though it is known to represent a frequent occurrence. This frequency is partially attributed to culturally prescribed ways of resolving family conflict, specifically that associated with husband-wife and parent-child relationships. Boudouris, reflecting on the sex differences of black victim and offenders in Detroit, indicates that female offenders are essentially reactive, whereas male actions are more likely to be associated with societal pressures and determinants (1971: 675).

Since the concern here is with victimization levels among young adults, one explanation that aids in explaining victimization within the black family is as follows: "It is not surprising, therefore, to find that many homicides among young adults involve alcohol or sexual jealousies, and it follows that some of the aggressive impulses of young adults are turned upon their own children" (Shin, Jedlicka, and Lee, 1977: 403). Others might simply see these intra-family conflicts leading to death as an expected outcome of the lifestyles associated with street families. Thus, street families, like street-corner men, might be expected to encounter frequent situations in which a violent response would be considered normative.

Yet it is more difficult to specify with precision what one means when labeling families in this way. Hannerz, who posited this life style type, was less than precise in specifying its dimensions. He subjectively evaluated street families in the following way:

They are called street families because they are conspicuous in the open-air life of ghetto street corners and sidewalks. Probably it is their way of life, and the complimentary life style of street corner men, which most closely correspond to an outsider's image of typical ghetto life (1969: 46).

Because of the absence of longitudinal data describing the lifestyle pattern of the individual family actors, the utility of the street family typology in aiding to assess the patterns of lethal violence cannot be specified at this point. But it should be noted that family violence is a widespread phenomena among a diversity of lifestyle types in the United States.

Gelles notes that until recently there was a blackout on family violence in the United States, leading one to generalize that it was basically a function of the prevalence of mental illness or pathology among individual family members (1978: 169). While admitting that family violence appears to be more commonplace among blue collar and lower class families, he basically attributes the frequency of violent interaction to attempts to adapt to their structural position in the economy. He specifically states that, "Violence is often an adaptation to structural stress, and family members tend to victimize one another in attempting to adapt to the stressful situations they find themselves in" (Gelles, 1978: 178).

Wilt and Bannon further note that conflict motivated homicides, which includes most family homicides, occurring in Detroit in 1972 were found among the lowest socioeconomic segment of the city's population (1974: 29). The economic marginality of street families and the lifestyle repertoires adopted by them to compensate for their status deprivation frequently lead to violence provoking outcomes. But according to Gelles, family violence is far more widespread among all social classes than is generally recognized.

Family Violence and the Homicide Transaction

The lifestyle of a segment of the black community leads to the conduct of social transactions that possess the potential for initiating violent interactions. Both the setting and the personalities of the interacting parties are thought to influence the outcome of potentially dangerous transactions. Luckenbill has described the stages through which these situated transactions proceed. He indicates that the transaction may be one in which the victim or the offender makes an offensive verbal statement; the victim

or the offender may refuse to comply with a request; or one or the other party might perform some physical act or non-verbal gesture interpreted as offensive (Luckenbill, 1977, p. 178-182). There are instances, however, in which it is only possible to identify the victim and the offender by the outcome of the transaction; but in other instances the victim or the offender announces his or her intentions at the outset of the transaction.

Personality Characteristics of the Actors

The role played by the individual actors, however, is thought to be directly related to their personalities. Symonds indicates that overt power struggles often lead to the initiation of violence in marriages (1978: 215). Likewise, he indicates that a series of personality types can be observed in these struggles. The personality types noted among males were the undercontrolled and overcontrolled sub-types. In the overcontrolled sub-type, aggression is released through the consumption of alcohol (Symonds, 1978: 216-217). Not only is the personality of the male important, but the personality of the female can also prove troublesome in escalating conflict. Some wives are said to engage in behavior designed to attack the idealized image of the husband, such that violence might be expected to erupt, especially if there exists few disinhibiting variables.

On the question of the association between the control of aggression and the black personality, Crain and Weisman contend there is support for differential regional propensities to engage in outbursts of anger (1972: 40-44). Southern blacks are thought to be more overcontrolled and thus less likely to have engaged in fighting than are northern blacks, who are better able to express and act on their anger. The intensity of stimulation to anger would

need to be greater in the South in order to bring about a similar display of anger response. It is uncertain if this example is equally applicable in situations involving friends and acquaintances, members of the family, or strangers. If regional differences do exist, they should lead to distinctions in the propensity for violence within the family, on the basis of the prevalence of a common set of hostility provoking actions.

In Detroit, in 1972, the acts most frequently leading to homicide within the family were associated with a variety of verbal challenges between husbands and wives. Other interaction patterns were noted by Wilt and Bannon, but none were so prominent as the initial two. The latter writers note that not only are current conflict patterns important in understanding the action leading to homicide, but so are the histories of family conflict. If regional differences do exist, one would expect family homicide to be more prevalent in the southern cities and among migrants to northern cities who were socialized in the South. These differences may be less pronounced among young black family members as a convergence of regional differences is thought to be underway.

The Three City Comparison

During the period 1970-75 the extent to which young adult black males became homicide victims as an outgrowth of family conflict differed among our three primary cities. Almost 15 per cent of Atlanta's male victimizations were family related, whereas only 9.2 per cent and 10.5 per cent occurred in this relational category in St. Louis and Detroit respectively (see table 13).

Table 13

Frequency of Family-Related Homicide Victimizations of Under 30 Yr. Black Males
by Principal Relationship between Victim and Offender: 1970-75

<u>DETROIT</u>					<u>Total Family Related</u>	<u>Total Under 30</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>Total by Year</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
<u>Year</u>	<u>Spouse</u>	<u>Parent</u>	<u>Sibling</u>	<u>Other</u>					
1970	3	0	0	18	21	171	12.3%	443	38.6%
1971	0	3	0	20	23	225	10.2%	558	40.3%
1972	2	1	0	23	26	229	11.4%	635	36.1%
1973	2	5	2	10	19	231	8.2%	592	39.0%
1974	15	0	2	5	22	254	8.7%	642	39.6%
1975	8	4	4	12	28	219	12.8%	540	40.6%
% by sub- category	(21.5)	(9.4)	(5.8)	(63.3)					
<u>ATLANTA</u>									
<u>Year</u>	<u>Spouse</u>	<u>Parent</u>	<u>Sibling</u>	<u>Other</u>					
1970	11	0	0	1	12	86	13.9%	210	40.9%
1971	9	0	0	0	9	71	12.7%	186	38.2%
1972	6	0	0	10	16	83	19.3%	198	41.9%
1973	4	5	2	7	18	93	19.4%	215	43.3%
1974	3	1	3	0	7	81	8.6%	214	37.9%
1975	8	1	0	0	9	60	15.0%	158	37.9%
% by sub- category	(57.7)	(9.9)	(7.0)	(23.9)					
<u>ST. LOUIS</u>									
<u>Year</u>	<u>Spouse</u>	<u>Parent</u>	<u>Sibling</u>	<u>Other</u>					
1970	1	1	1	1	4	67	5.9%	211	31.8%
1971	4	2	2	1	9	67	13.4%	191	35.1%
1972	3	2	0	1	6	63	9.5%	159	39.6%
1973	2	2	1	1	6	75	8.0%	182	41.2%
1974	5	0	2	4	11	89	12.4%	175	50.9%
1975	2	2	0	2	7	106	6.6%	208	50.9%
% by sub- category	(39.5)	(20.9)	(13.9)	(23.3)					

The major difference, however, among these cities is the relationship between victim and offender. In Atlanta the most prevalent relationship is that between husband and wife (see figs. 13, 14). During the 6-year interval, almost 60 per cent of the Atlanta victims were involved in husband-wife conflicts. In St. Louis this category included approximately two-fifths of the victims, while in Detroit just slightly more than one-fifth of the young adult male victimizations were in this category. For whatever reason, Atlanta wives more often than not victimize their husbands in family-related conflicts. In 1975, of the nine young adult male victimizations, six men were fatally shot by their wives, one was shot by his father, one brother was killed by the other, and finally an accidental shooting occurred among distant male relatives. Only three husbands killed wives during this interval.

Stranger Victimizations

Our prior discussion of acts leading to violent death emphasized aspects of the relationship and the nature of the transaction between persons known to one another. More recently, however, observers of violent behavior have noted the upsurge in lethally violent confrontations between persons not formerly known to one another. It is the risk of victimization by some unknown person that brought about national awareness of the "crime in the streets" syndrome more than a decade ago.

The escalation in the level of street violence during this period was thought to be ushered in by a cohort of individuals less committed to such old values as honesty and communal well-being, and more committed to materialistic and hedonistic lifestyles. The latter perspective is thought to reflect an emerging orientation of America's young adults, while the mechanisms available

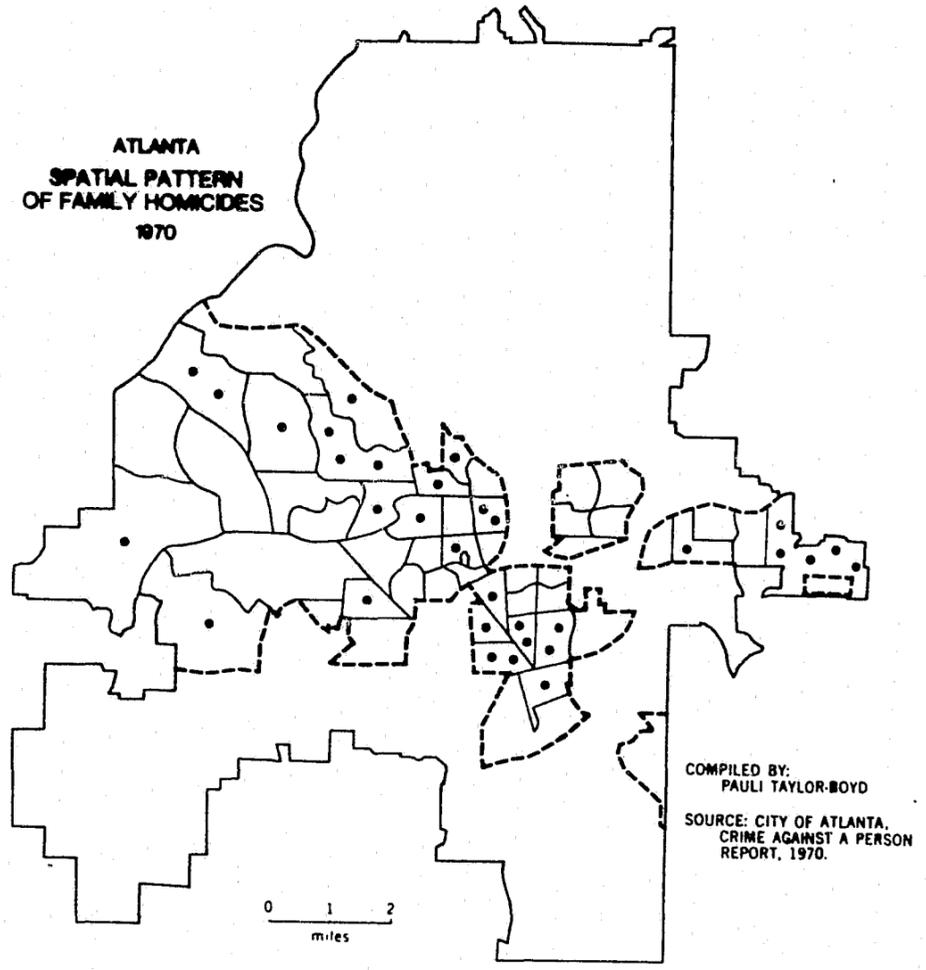


Fig. 13.

110 b

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME LEVELS
IN ATLANTA'S BLACK COMMUNITY
1970

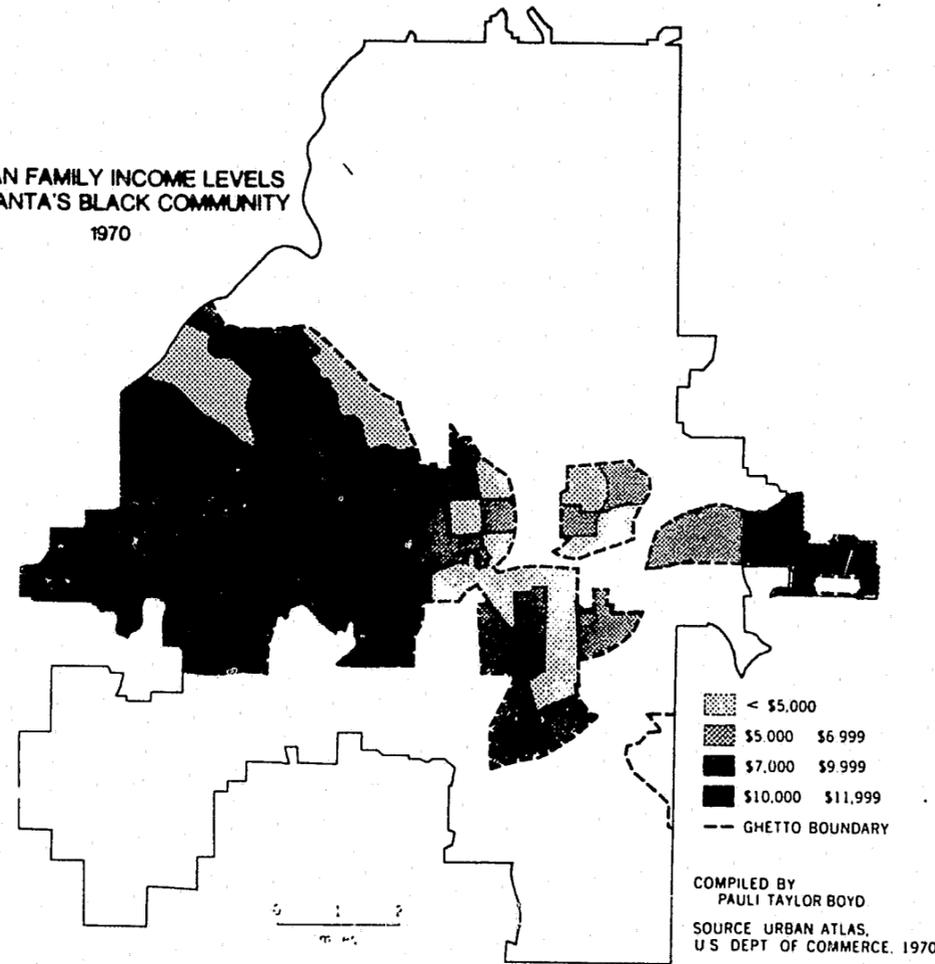


Fig. 14.

of society each acts to set the stage for an increase in violent transactions, which are associated with instrumental goals. The attainment of young adult status by persons born during the baby boom of the 1950's has acted to increase the potential for impersonal violence in the nation's larger central cities. These young adults are persons socialized during an era of rising affluence and the concomitant expansion of the range of goods and services available in consumer markets.

Unfortunately, the ease with which the desired goods and services could be acquired through legitimate channels was made difficult for persons unable to establish themselves in the primary sector of the labor force. In those environments where competition for scarce resources was intense, one alternative was to engage in a series of extralegal activities designed to provide access to a wider range of goods and services than might otherwise be available. Thus, the increase in robbery homicide is directly related to the sharp increase in robbery since the late sixties.

Some attribute a sizable share of the upsurge in robbery homicide to an increase in the easy availability of handguns. In support of this position, Zimring has shown that the association between robbery frequency and robbery homicide frequency declined in Detroit between 1971-74 (1979: 33). Robbery homicide increased continuously during this period, while robberies reported to the police declined in all but one year during this interval. Thus, the contention is that a complex set of forces have been at work promoting the notion that one is justified in taking property from others in the present urban context, and that these attitudes have been augmented by the easy availability of handguns.

to assist in achieving this goal vary widely among sub-groups in the population. The young, who are poor, alienated, and uncommitted to a set of traditional values, are thought to be at greatest risk of choosing to engage in acts of violence as a means of achieving material gains. It is uncertain how important acts of lethal violence among persons not previously known to one another have been in boosting the homicide frequency in American cities in general, and in the black communities of these cities specifically. During the period 1967-76, the homicide arrest rate increased by 57.4 per cent for males, while the robbery arrest rate increased by 85.1 per cent for this group. The similarity in the assault arrest rate (59.3 per cent) to that of the homicide arrest rate indirectly indicates that it has contributed relatively less to the growing incidence of stranger homicide than has the sharp increase in the robbery arrest rate. Further, assaultive homicides and robbery homicides are thought to derive from a different set of motivations. The former is more commonplace among acquaintances, while the latter more often represent transactions among persons not previously known to one another. Block's analysis of changing homicide patterns in Chicago lends validity to this position of "stranger" transactions. Of robbery homicide, which is the primary subcategory of stranger victimizations, he says. "The offender chooses his target victim based upon perceived vulnerability of the victim; the robber's method of threat is often determined by the target" (Block, 1977: 78). Thus, the nature of the situated transaction in stranger homicides can usually be expected to differ from that describing non-stranger homicides. Changing values, subsequent changes in lifestyle growing disparately in wealth distribution, increasing alienation, and subsequent impersonalization

Recently, approximately one-fifth of all homicides have grown out of interactions among persons previously unknown to one another. In individual places, the proportion often exceeds the national average. Variations around the mean, no doubt, indicate the extent to which the complex set of forces leading to this outcome differ from place to place. Resorting to the street-corner man and street family constructs as appropriate models to be employed in an attempt to partially explain the incidence of acquaintance and family homicides appears inappropriate in this context. When focusing upon stranger homicides, an alternate model might be substituted for the street-corner man model. Earlier it was suggested that hustling was likely to represent a more extensive pattern of activity in non-traditional black communities, a point suggesting that in Detroit stranger homicides were likely to account for a larger percentage of the total than would be the case in either St. Louis or Atlanta. This position is strengthened by the homicide pattern that has emerged in Chicago.

Chicago presents a number of similarities to Detroit in terms of mix of forces leading to homicide outcomes. Block has demonstrated that between 1965-74, the greatest increase in homicide victimizations has been among persons not previously known to one another. In 1965, 76 per cent of the Chicago participants engaged in homicidal altercations were known to one another, but by 1974 only 58 per cent previously knew one another (Block, 1977: 40). Block further shows that Chicago offenders had become younger during the ten years of observation, lending further support to the notion of youth's lessened attachment to traditional values.

Stranger homicides differ from other forms of homicide both in terms of the situated transaction and the goal of the offender. In most instances an

offender commands the victim to act in some prescribed manner as a means of allowing the offender to acquire some good or service. The manner in which the defendant responds to a specific command can seriously influence the outcome of the transaction. The basic activity pattern of stranger homicides appears to be related to robbery, burglary, police action, and self-defense. There are, however, numerous other miscellaneous activities that bring persons not previously known to one another together in violent conflict situations. Robbery homicide simply tends to represent the modal activity pattern in stranger-related deaths, although both the relative incidence and proportion of all stranger deaths vary by a sizable order of magnitude from city to city within our sample.

Police action represents yet another subcategory of growing importance in stranger homicides; and the term is employed here to describe those conflicts between an offender and the police in transactions that do not involve robbery or burglary. Thus, the latter category includes a variety of miscellaneous activities in which the police find it necessary to intervene. The complexity and differential perception associated with these transactions often lead to a blurring of the line between victim and offender. This problem is, however, most frequently encountered in situations where members of the black community discern the police to be engaging in unwarranted use of deadly force.

Most stranger transactions leading to death are undertaken for acquisitive gain; the offender is generally defined as that individual or group of individuals initiating the transaction. But depending upon the manner in which the transaction is conducted, the intended victim or the offender might constitute the homicide victim. It is not uncommon for young adult black

male felons, who are initially designated offenders, to end up the victim in these situated transactions. In those situations involving the police where there is no evidence of the commission of a felony, the circumstances become extremely difficult to define in terms of the victim/offender status.

Robbery Homicide

Robbery homicide is the most frequently occurring pattern among stranger homicides in our sample cities, where it accounts for approximately two-thirds of all stranger homicides. For instance, robbery homicide makes up about two-thirds of all stranger homicides in both Detroit and St. Louis, but accounts for less than half of those occurring in Atlanta. During the period 1970-75, robbery homicide fluctuated very little from year to year as a percent of all stranger homicides. St. Louis showed a slightly higher percentage of robbery homicides during the period under review, but it was also characterized by much greater fluctuation from year to year in its contribution to stranger homicides. Atlanta, like St. Louis, shows a great deal of fluctuation from year to year, and in 1975 did not witness a single robbery homicide victimization among young adult black males. In both of these cities the role of police action accounts for a greater percent of victimizations than is true in Detroit. There appears to be less reluctance to utilize deadly force by police officers in Atlanta and St. Louis in confrontations with civilians.

Young adult black men who are robbery homicide victims are more often persons described as the robber than as the robbed. This pattern appears to prevail in each of the primary sample cities, but the pattern is easier to assess in Detroit because of the greater numerical magnitude of total

victimization. In the latter city, however, there is some evidence of a pattern change during the period 1970-75. Between 1970-72 the majority of the victims were identified as robbers, but in 1973 and 1974 the robbed exceeded the robbers in total annual victimizations. By 1975 a balance had been attained between the two categories (see table 14). Victims who were "30 and older" were more likely to represent persons who were robbed, whereas the inverse of this situation characterized victims who were under 30 years of age. During the most recent years of this six year interval, young adult black men were as likely to be the victim as they were to be the offender in robbery homicides.

Table 14

Percent Young Adult Black Homicide Victims Who Were the Robbers and the Robbed in Detroit: 1970-1975

	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975
Robber	73%	60%	59.6%	44.4%	40%	50%
Robbed	27%	40%	40.4%	55.6%	60%	50%

Source: FBI Monthly Homicide Reports

One does not know if the above implies that a segment of the young adult male population had become more affluent or if offenders were becoming less selective in their choice of a robbery target. Given the higher percentage of robber homicide victimizations in the early years of the interval, one might assume that targets posing a higher homicide risk for the offender were abandoned in favor of safer targets. This would tend to indicate a preference for street robberies or residential robberies over commercial robberies, as the former result in a lower risk of victimization to the offender. Nevertheless, it was often noted that the victim in robbery homicide was almost as likely to be the robber as to be the robbed during this interval.

The defensive efficiency of those who are successful in thwarting a robbery attempt probably exceeds that of the criminal justice system. At the same time, however, this creates a wild westlike atmosphere in the nation's larger cities, where the good guys and the bad guys are frequently engaged in shoot-outs as a means of either maintaining or gaining control of property, i.e., money. Most often the perpetrators of death in these confrontations are 1) private citizens and 2) policemen and private security guards. The extent to which any of the above persons are identified as the perpetrator depends upon the target chosen by the robber. In almost all instances lethal acts growing out of confrontations between the intended victim and the robbery offender leads to a ruling of justifiable homicide.

Moreover, these confrontations have a higher probability of being interracial than all other homicide patterns. A sample of young adult black victimizations occurring in Detroit in 1975, among persons not previously known to one another, included an almost equal number of black and white offenders. In each instance the white offender was ruled to have engaged in a justifiable act. The black offenders, however, fared somewhat less well.

The previous evidence illustrating the riskiness of becoming a victim if choosing to engage in robbery is a point seldom made. One must exhibit caution not to overstate the case, considering the low clearance rate for this offense. Yet it appears that robbers are indeed sensitive to the risk associated with the choice of robbery targets. This is evident in the changing ratio of commercial to non-commercial targets. Young adult black males who are insensitive to the risks associated with the choice of a robbery target clearly increase the probability that they will become homicide victims.

The Environmental Context of Robbery Homicide

The importance of the environmental context of robbery homicide victimization is detailed below. Employing the dichotomous commercial/non-commercial setting as the environmental context for robbery homicide in Detroit, the risk of potential victimization on the part of one or more actors in the transaction can be more clearly specified. In 1975, 55 per cent of the identifiable Detroit transactions occurred in commercial settings (see table 15). But approximately 70 per cent of the young adult robbers were killed while attempting to rob a commercial institution. Apparently operators of many of these institutions are prepared for such eventualities, or the robbers lack professional skill. It has been said that youthful robbers seldom engage in the planning necessary to successfully carry out commercial robberies. Silberman has labeled most young black robbers as opportunists, although he admits there are some who would fit the category "semi-professional." The latter group are thought to engage in some planning and usually choose as their targets gas stations, liquor stores and other late hour small retail establishments (1978: 51). The take from commercial institutions is likely to be greater than that from a mugging, but the risk is also appreciably greater.

Table 15

Commercial Settings as Robber Victimization Sites in Detroit: 1975

<u>Commercial Setting</u>	<u>Number of Victimizations</u>
Restaurants	5
Food Markets	3
Bars	2
Record Stores	2
Party Stores	2
Other	2

Source: FBI Monthly Homicide Report-Detroit, 1975

Non-commercial robberies in Detroit most often represent residential robberies. In 1975, the vast majority of non-commercial homicide victimizations (within the black community) occurred in residential settings. In non-commercial settings, the victim is more often the target of the robbery than is the perpetrator of the act. It appears that persons in private residences are less often prepared to mount an effective defense against the possibility of robbery homicide as is apparently the case among operators of commercial establishments who are able to hire private security guards, as well as being on the lookout for this eventuality. Likewise, it is said that the police evidence a much greater willingness to intervene in public space behavior than in private space behavior.

Non-commercial robberies exceeded commercial ones during this interval. Among non-commercial robberies, residential robberies and street robberies accounted for most of these actions. The latter are most often believed to have occurred in public open space and might be described as crimes of opportunity. No doubt the "take" in an unplanned street robbery is smaller than that in a commercial or residential robbery, but the risks are obviously greater in the latter. The unwillingness of persons to give up valuables in a street holdup possibly increases the risk of victimization. Thus, robbers are at greater risk when engaging in a commercial transaction, while the target of robbery is at greater risk in a street confrontation. After 1972, in Detroit, street and residential victimizations of young adult males showed an increase.

Throughout the period 1970-75, the stranger homicide curve has more closely paralleled the total homicides in Detroit than in either of the other primary sample cities (see fig. 15). In St. Louis the number of

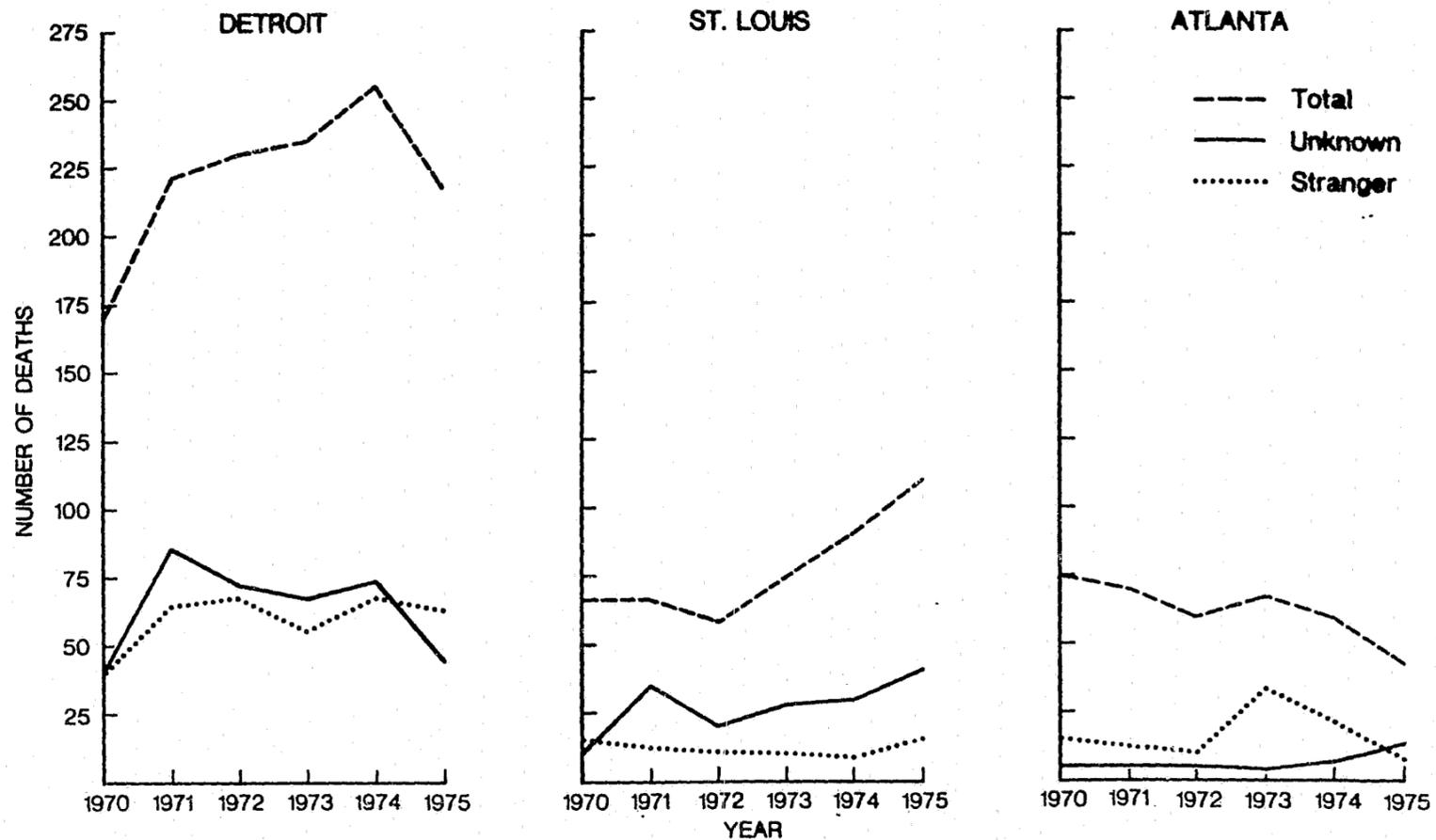


Fig. 15. TOTAL AND INSTRUMENTAL DEATHS OF YOUNG ADULT MALE VICTIMS: 1975

"under 30" stranger homicides decreased each year through 1974, while registering a small gain in 1975. From 1972-75, however, there was a steady gain in youthful victimizations in St. Louis. But in contrast to the pattern that emerged in Detroit, few of these represented stranger victimizations. The shape of the curve describing unknown victimizations is more nearly similar to the general trend in St. Louis than is that describing stranger victimizations. It is possible that the two trends are associated with a similar set of circumstances, but the Detroit Police are simply more efficient at establishing case closure.

Atlanta differed from both Detroit and St. Louis in stranger victimization trends. In only two of the six years did stranger victimizations account for a significant share of the total victimizations in the southern city. The contribution of stranger homicides to total homicides in all three cities is dominated by the contribution of robbery homicide. But only in Detroit is there an exaggerated level of victimization among persons "under 30." At this point, it is unclear whether the higher incidence of robbery in Detroit leads to increased vulnerability of the participants, or if the choice of target for acquisitive gain is the primary explanatory element. It will be necessary to compare the circumstances of victimization of the "over 30" group before this point can be fully resolved.

Victimization Occurring Under Unknown Circumstances

The increasing inability of police investigators to clear homicide cases is an indication of the growing incidence of felony murder, or at least the commission of homicides, not motivated by interpersonal conflict. The final general relational category employed in this study, the unknowns,

is believed to be more often related to instrumental violence than to acts of expressive violence. Earlier it was mentioned that this relational category was more ambiguous than the categories previously treated. It is said then that in specific circumstances this category reflected an unknown motive, even though the offender might be known or unknown. Nevertheless, this relational category has come to represent an ever-increasing element in the overall structure of homicide in large urban environments. Its contribution to total homicides varies greatly from city to city. In both Detroit and St. Louis the unknown category represents a significant element in annual homicide totals. However, young adult black males in Atlanta are seldom victimized under unknown circumstances. The latter fact appears to lend support to the belief that unknowns are more likely to represent instrumental rather than expressive acts of violence.

A close scrutiny of FBI Monthly Homicide Reports for individual cities produces mixed results. In some instances it appears that cases originally classified as unknowns might have more accurately been assigned to the category of "stranger" or "acquaintance." As indicated previously, the quality of the monthly reports for the purpose of relational classification is quite variable.

The St. Louis reports provide greater insight into understanding the circumstances surrounding unknown homicides than do the reports from other cities. For instance, the reports from St. Louis often speculate on the motive for the act by the inclusion of such statements as "believed to be drug related" or "victim killed gangland style." Such speculative statements are missing from both the Detroit and Atlanta reports. It is likely that some might be prone to criticize the St. Louis Police for engaging in speculative

behavior, but one would assume that the decision to provide additional insight for understanding these problems is grounded in the experienced wisdom of persons who are familiar with homicide motivation. Other informational sources tend to provide support for the link between drugs and acts of lethal violence in St. Louis. The extent of the contribution of drug-related victimizations to total unknowns is, at best, vague at this point.

Atlanta Unknowns

Unknown homicides occur least frequently in Atlanta. In only one year during the period 1970-75 did they exceed 10 per cent of the total. In 1975, unknown homicides accounted for 27 per cent of all young adult male victimizations; but homicide was on the wane among this population during the latter year. Thus, the unusual percentage for this category in Atlanta was based on a small numerical increase. A review of the latter city's police reports appears to indicate that unknowns here are less likely to be felony related than in either Detroit or St. Louis. In most instances the circumstances at the time of the incident were unknown, but an offender was eventually charged with the death. Atlanta "unknowns" tend to most often represent an unknown motive, but with witnesses available to identify the non-present offender. The character of the victimizations occurring in Atlanta inclines to be more akin to those describing the relationship between street-corner men than those between a hustler and his "pick." There is little evidence to support the notion that homicides identified as unknowns in Atlanta are associated with instrumental motives.

Detroit Unknowns

Detroit "unknowns" usually represent a more diverse set of circumstances and make a much greater contribution to total young adult victimizations than is true in Atlanta. During the period 1970-75 unknown victimizations accounted for 28.7 per cent of all victimizations of the previously identified group. This represented the largest single share of percentage victimizations among the four relational categories, exceeding that of "stranger" by only 0.5 percentage points. By 1975, unknown homicides had dropped to their lowest level during the six year interval, 21.5 per cent. A perusal of Detroit Police Reports provides clues indicating that instrumental motives rather than expressive motives are likely to predominate in unknown victimizations. The following two descriptions are indicative of instrumental motivations:

- A. A 27 year old black male was found bound hand and foot with an electrical cord, towel gag on mouth, lying on living room floor with 35 stab wounds on torso and head.
- B. Between the hours of 5 a.m. and 6 a.m. the defendant entered the apartment with key, wakened witness (a black female). Deceased awakened and defendant shot him one time. Defendant took witness at gun point to _____ and raped her.

A large percentage of unknown homicides in Detroit might be considered street crimes.

A review of Detroit Police Records leads one to conclude that robbery, sexually motivated acts, and revenge or punishment are most often the impelling elements. The likelihood that the victim was employed at the time of the incident was also greater. These conclusions are based on limited evidence; nevertheless, they point in the direction of implicating felony murder as the modal circumstance associated with the rising level of unknown victimizations among young adult males in the city of Detroit.

St. Louis Unknowns

Among our primary sample cities, St. Louis stands alone in the importance of unknowns as a major cause of victimization. In frequency of occurrence, unknown victimizations in the latter city rank second -- exceeded only by acquaintance victimizations. While it is true that unknowns are likely to run the gamut in terms of motivation, evidence from St. Louis is even stronger than that from Detroit, indicating a possible linkage to other criminal behavior or instrumental motivations.

As previously indicated, the role of drugs in St. Louis' unknown victimizations is thought to be widespread. The St. Louis Police implicated drug involvement in one-third of the young adult black male victimizations in 1975. The specific nature of drug involvements remains unclear; but it appears resorting to violence is associated with competition between individual drug suppliers for a share of the market as well as with problems arising in the drug distribution hierarchy. These acts are difficult to substantiate on the basis of the data generally available. But journalistic accounts of the circumstances associated with violence in St. Louis tend to support this view. This is especially true of the reporting in one black-oriented and owned newspaper in St. Louis, which is primarily devoted to reporting on incidents of criminal behavior in the black community.

It is difficult to categorize unknown victimizations on the basis of a known relationship between victim and offender. In some selected instances, however, locational data provides additional insight into circumstances of victimizations. Locational data in this instance refers to the site at which the body was found. The finding of a body, rather than a person being

killed in the presence of witnesses where no motivation was apparent, appears to distinguish felony from non-felony murders. A person killed in a tavern under circumstances where the motivation is unclear would be classified as an unknown victimization. Most often in such circumstances the location of the body is omitted from the FBI Monthly Reports.

In those instances, however, where no witnesses were available, the place where the body is located is prominently mentioned in these reports. The locational categories that appear most often in these reports include on the street, on the sidewalk, in an alley, on a vacant lot, in an auto, in an occupied residence, in a vacant building, or in some non-residential space within a residential structure. Locations, then, often by implication distinguish between expressive and instrumental motivations.

Summary

Young adult black males are disproportionately victims of lethal violence in each of the cities in our six city sample. They vary between one-third of all male victims in Houston to more than two-fifths in St. Louis. The tragedy of this situation involves the cutting short of life at such an early stage in the developmental process. Because of the downward shift in the mean age of death among persons in this group, the number of life years lost during the period of this investigation increased. In this section of the report, one has attempted to demonstrate the changing motivations and circumstances that have an impact on the risk of victimization of young adult males. In order to focus attention on these changes, the concepts of the street-corner male and the hustler were employed as points of departure, suggesting that victimizations involving practitioners of these lifestyles are likely to reflect motivations unique to each.

The employment of the above described lifestyles as bases for the discussion of so important a topic should not be considered trivial, but should be treated cautiously. It is obvious that the two concepts are not mutually exclusive; and there exists the possibility that by employing labels of this genre, the seriousness of the effort will be undermined. But it is hoped that these imperfect constructs, both of which are associated with certain inherent dangers, will be simply viewed as modes of coping with a difficult world.

Wishing to share in the bounty that is paraded before them daily, as well as the subsequent widening gap between material aspirations and the ability to satisfy those aspirations by participation in the legitimate economy, prompts many young persons to engage in a variety of hustles. Activities falling under this rubric place individuals in precarious positions that often lead to the potential for victimization, if not to actual victimization. It is suggested that when one's lifestyle orientation shifts from that most often associated with the street-corner man to that of the hustler, the risk of victimization is heightened.

Among such a youthful group it is only logical to expect that the vast majority of victimizations would occur among acquaintances. But even among acquaintances, one would expect a shift away from activities that have traditionally served as the basis of conflict and a shift toward those that reflect a material concern rather than a spiritual concern in places where the old is giving way to the new. In Detroit and St. Louis, it was shown that victims are more likely to become caught up in transactions reflecting the shift toward the hustler lifestyle than is true of Atlanta. One would suspect that this is partially a reflection of the size of place; size of the

black population; the nature of the legitimate opportunity structure; and regional ethos.

Among places with very large black populations and a shortage of legitimate opportunity, one would expect the hustler lifestyle to be in greater evidence than in those places where the inverse of this pattern is observed. Pittsburgh, one of our secondary cities, is more nearly representative of the latter situation, while Los Angeles is increasingly coming to be associated with the former. Yet, Los Angeles also manifests some of the characteristics of Atlanta as the relative importance of family homicides there gives it a character that is seemingly more common to cities in the South.

Expressive motivations continue to dominate the circumstances surrounding the death of young black adults, and we expect that to persist. But shifts in circumstances are likely to gnaw away at that dominance over time. By 1975, instrumental victimizations were evidently becoming much greater in importance in Detroit, Los Angeles, and Houston. Pittsburgh, Atlanta, and St. Louis were still showing a very strong expressive dominance. Acquaintance victimizations were the primary contributors to expressive male deaths in St. Louis and Pittsburgh, while unknown and stranger deaths were primarily responsible for the shifts taking place in Detroit and Los Angeles.

Needless to say, the broadness of our categories of expressed relationships makes it difficult to utilize the dichotomous expressive-instrumental relationships to indicate the extent to which the street-corner man lifestyle is being replaced by that of the hustler, in terms of the circumstances surrounding death. The categories "acquaintance" and "unknowns" leave much to be desired in terms of precision, and subsequently weaken efforts to measure changing lifestyle orientations.

SECTION THREE

HOMICIDE AND THE MATURE ADULT

The post-young adult population comprises more than 35 per cent of the nation's black population. This represents the group that has survived the difficult period of adolescence and the transition to young adulthood. Within this group, lifestyles become less fluid and life goals become clearer. Persons who makeup this group most often include at least two generations and are characterized by those who have visions of hope, as well as by those whose dreams have faded. These mature adults are at greater risk of death by disease than are their sons and daughters, a fact that reduces the probability that death will result from interpersonal conflict. The relative contribution of homicide as a killer among this group tends to basically diminish with age, but nevertheless a segment of the mature adult population continues to run an inordinately high risk of homicidal death (see table 16).

Mature males continue to represent the population at greatest risk of homicidal victimization, while females at this stage in the life cycle tend to lead more passive lives, spend more time at home, and interact with fewer persons outside the family. The more circumscribed pattern of female interaction is partially responsible for lowering the homicide risk on the basis of sex. Changing patterns of sexual socialization, however, can be expected to increase the risk of female victimization. Likewise, the patterns of male

Table 16
 Black Male Age Specific Homicide Rates: 1970
 (Rate per 100,000)

Age	Atlanta	Houston	St. Louis	Pittsburgh	Detroit	Los Angeles
15-19	154	69	140	20	136	52
20-24	265	293	452	196	313	234
25-29	301	246	210	302	279	131
30-34	303	195	403	47	206	96
35-39	276	186	222	135	192	89
40-44	241	131	272	110	183	120
45-49	215	68	285	70	169	39
50-54	213	118	239	159	130	55
55-59	210	80	62	84	104	66
60-64	120	195	48	--	69	30
65 and over	103	41	99	40	78	18

victimization among this group should reflect age specific properties of socialization, personality and lifestyle orientations that give rise to differentials in the risk of homicide victimization. Thus, the modal pattern of victim-offender relations, as well as motive and circumstances surrounding the homicide act, should be expected to differ among these two life cycle groups.

In many instances, the cultural, social and environmental milieu to which these two life cycle groups have been exposed will have differed significantly, while in others the changes will have been less abrupt. A sizable segment of this older population will have spent their formative years in rural environments, in different regions of the country than where they now reside, and in settings far more restrictive in terms of behavioral norms than the highly secular norms characterizing urban America.

The extent to which the mature adult has been affected by changes in level of secularity or lessened oppression is unknown; but whatever the magnitude, it should be expected to produce some adjustments in lifestyle. Not only will shifts in lifestyle adjustments within this life cycle group alter the risk of victimization, but changing norms among younger populations also influence risk. Traditionally, victims and offenders have represented similar age peers; but the growing importance of instrumental violence is beginning to widen the age gap between victim and offender. Conflict motivated homicides have traditionally served as the modal pattern among this age-sex-race group. Urban whites, however, who have reached the mature adult stage in the life cycle, possess a higher risk of felony murder.

Length of Residence in an Urban Context

Among the primary sample cities, there exists a differential temporal

presence in an urban environment. In both St. Louis and Atlanta, a sizable black core population (less than or equal to 60,000) was present in 1920, with slightly smaller populations present as early as 1910. In terms of core development, the black presence in Detroit came somewhat later but has far outstripped that of its two earlier rivals. Moreover, the secondary cities show some similarity to the primary cities in terms of core development.

But in the case of both Pittsburgh and Houston, the size of the black population was about one-half that of St. Louis and Atlanta. The growth of the Los Angeles black population is even more recent, having attained its core population only after 1930. This simply indicates the length of the period in which these cities have been the recipients of black migrants, thus allowing us to date the length of the urban experience.

St. Louis and Atlanta have had larger urban populations for a longer period of time as they were principal targets of migration prior to 1915. Pittsburgh's growth has been much slower and has stabilized since World War II. Detroit grew during the interwar period, the war period, and the post-war period, with the latter two periods accounting for the bulk of its growth. Rapid growth in the size of the black population in Los Angeles and Houston is a post-World War II phenomenon. Thus, the recency and source of migrant origins has implications for the prevailing world view of mature adults in each of these cities.

The Southern Service Centers

In Atlanta and Houston it has largely been a case of rural and small town populations heading for the nearest mecca, with migrants essentially having been drawn from the surrounding hinterlands. In form, the residential

environments of the earlier migrants to these cities were hardly distinguishable from surroundings in the small towns from which they came. Since Atlanta has had a sizable black population for a longer period of time, however, one would surmise that its population can be considered more urban, even though its current black population is approximately 25 per cent smaller than that of Houston. But in many ways their respective populations constitute those of urban villagers -- carriers of a traditional southern black culture.

The Midwest Industrial Centers

St. Louis and Pittsburgh have recorded slower growth during the most recent period, with both cities being characterized by net out-migration during the decade of the sixties, a pattern still believed to prevail. They both represent manufacturing belt cities, which have suffered from economic stagnation during the post-war era. Residents of Pittsburgh have lived there longer than residents of any of the other cities. Its limited attractiveness to migrants is partially responsible for its greater mean length of residence.

While Pittsburgh and St. Louis possess a number of similarities in demographic and economic characteristics, they do differ somewhat in regional ethos. St. Louis, a border city, formally maintained separate facilities for blacks until early in the post-World War II period. Thus, one would expect greater evidence of southern culture in the latter city. One other distinguishing characteristic is the place of origin of southern migrants. Pittsburgh's migrants have largely originated from the South Atlantic region, while migrants to St. Louis have basically come from Mississippi, Arkansas, and Tennessee.

The Super Ghetto Cities

The cities with the super ghettos, Detroit and Los Angeles, have served as magnets for black migration and are characterized by the largest percentage of their black populations being born elsewhere, 40.3 per cent and 51.6 per cent respectively. Although they hailed from different census divisions, southern-born blacks have dominated the migration streams. Black migrants to Detroit have basically come from Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi, while those of Los Angeles have moved from Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas. Yet, black migrants to Los Angeles do have more diffuse origins, with a larger share previously having resided in a metropolitan setting. The implications of the mobility patterns that have been partially responsible for black population growth on the propensity for violent interactions is not well understood. Nevertheless, there are those who contend that the origin of much of this violence is associated with southern traditions.

The Issue of a Southern Regional Culture of Violence

Gastil and Hackney have been the strongest supporters of the southern culture of violence concept among recent writers on the subject. Gastil specifically asserts, "...that persistent differences in homicide rates are best explained by differences in regional culture" (1971: 414). The supporters of the concept have not been lacking in critics who, as a rule, point to methodological weaknesses in the studies purporting to demonstrate the validity of a regional propensity for violence. Erlanger, who finds little merit in the notion of a southern subculture of violence (at least as developed by Gastil), thinks more attention should be devoted to non-cultural variables in an attempt to explain higher rates of lethal violence in the South. Yet, it appears that the differential propensity for black males to engage in acts

of violent aggression transcends simple cultural explanations.

Rural Blacks and the Issue of Violence

That blacks in the South have experienced violence-filled lives both during slavery and the post-emancipation period is well-known. The question is, "How important and under what conditions were acts of violence sanctioned in the conduct of interpersonal interactions with one's peers?" Johnson, in describing the attributes of black folk culture in rural Alabama, more than two generations after the end of slavery, indicates that many of the slave traditions continued to exist on the plantations during the period following World War I (1934: 1-25). According to Johnson, most of the traditions to which plantation blacks clung represented traits that were earlier valued by white southerners. Specifically, he says, "The high vogue of drinking, gambling, and dueling would perhaps be expected to be carried over to the slaves as part of their conception of the privileges of freedom" (1934: 5).

The work of Johnson provides some insight into the values of a rural black population during the early years of this century. These values were perceived as basically conservative, and as a result of both social and physical isolation had remained little changed since slavery. Yet, acts of violence were thought to have been sanctioned by both the respectable (church-oriented) and non-respectable (secular-oriented) segments of the black community on the basis of their personal interpretations of the need to inflict punishment for the commission of a transgression or to defend one's honor against attack.

The extent to which acts of lethal violence were committed by blacks against other blacks was in large measure a function of the personality of the actors and the setting in which interaction took place. While the culture sanctioned appropriate behavior, the actual conduct of behavior appropriate under a given set of circumstances was promoted or inhibited by the personality attributes of the interacting parties and the external constraints found to be operating in the environments.

Toch suggests that the propensity for violence is predicated on self-preserving strategies or acts designed to acquire individual rewards at the expense of others (1969: 135-136). A population characterized by social isolation and limited opportunity to acquire status in the manner prescribed by the larger culture was left to develop alternative status granting activities in which the risk of violent aggression was heightened.

There is evidence to suggest that black residents of the rural South had established a set of norms of conduct that sanctioned violence as a means of resolving conflict or acquiring advantage prior to migration from southern farms and towns to northern cities. The extent to which violence was actually practiced depended on the level of marginality of the population at a given location and thus its access to status providing opportunity. Denying access to status increases the level of frustration and promotes the development of a variety of outlets that enables one to vent this frustration or to provide alternatives to the status granting mechanisms of the larger community.

No doubt the most severe status-denying act confronting black populations during the early years of the twentieth century was the denial of their humanness or the right to be a "man." The denial of this basic right, above all

else, prompted many blacks to leave the South during the great migration (1915-1919). Most blacks, however, accommodated to an oppressive system and often directed their aggressions onto safer targets--other blacks. Since black males were the least advantaged group in the agrarian South, they were also least amenable to the primary social control mechanism--the influence of organized religion. Thus, they developed lifestyles with a strong secular bias, leading to frequent violent confrontations among the practitioners of these lifestyles.

Black Migration and Selected Attributes of the Migrant Pool

It is conjectured that the modal personality make-up of the early migrants from the South might have differed from that of the stayers. Migration theory stipulates the selectivity of migrants as a group, pointing out the differences among a series of objective measures. Subjective traits were also thought to influence the migration decision. The more assertive black male, the one who was thought to experience the greatest difficulty in attempting to adapt to a harsh social system, possessed a higher likelihood of desiring to leave the region. Pettigrew has described migration as one response to oppression. He states specifically, "Indeed, their massive migration from the South since 1915 can be interpreted partly as a means of avoiding whites who are most openly anti-negro" (Pettigrew, 1964: 49). The attention given to the differential composition of the personality make-up of the migrant pool is employed to establish a basis for a different pattern of black cultural development in response to alternate external worlds, i.e., residence outside of the South.

It is assumed that migrants had a lower attachment to place, had a greater willingness to sever ties with family and friends, and were without strong

ties to the social institutions that provided blacks with nurturance in the region of origin. Likewise, it is assumed the migrants were more individually oriented, possessed a stronger desire (or fantasy) for financial security, and were generally more adventuresome. Thus, the migrant could be thought less traditional and even more secular in orientation than his stay-at-home cousin who placed less value on these attributes. This apparently set into motion the evolution of a black subcultural variant that might eventually differ in significant ways from the black core culture. If this dynamic structural schema is valid, it should be possible to integrate the emergence of distinctive black subcultures with emerging notions of cultural associations with subcultural systems of violence.

Alternate Explanations of Social Systems in Support of Violence

The regional culture of violence, as developed by Gastil, and the notion of a subculture of violence, as developed by Wolfgang and Ferracuti, seem to reflect the distinctive patterns of violence observed in different settings. Gastil's "regional culture of violence" reflects a partial response to a southern rural social system, while that of the latter writers represents the adjustment of poverty populations to urban despair. While Gastil indicates some similarity between his notion and that of Wolfgang and Ferracuti, he indicates the existence of one or more notable differences. The most important difference distinguishing the southern regional culture of violence from the alternate concept is its condoning the use of violence in specific situations, or supporting structures in which violence might indirectly result, while failing to stress norms and values that are violence oriented (Gastil, 1971: 416). Gastil further indicates that a regional culture

of violence as an explanation "...go only part of the way toward explaining the particular lethal subculture among black Americans" (1971: 416).

Blacks and the Southern Regional Culture of Violence

The southern regional culture of violence, although an imperfect concept, can be viewed as supporting the use of violence when valued norms are threatened. These valued norms have run the gamut from the maintenance of the institution of slavery to the more recent efforts to prevent the dismantling of a dual educational system, at the institutional level, and as an appropriate response to acts of infidelity at the level of the individual.

Without question, violence appears to have been more highly sanctioned as a method of resolving conflict in the South than elsewhere in the nation. Blacks born into a social system where violence is sanctioned as a means of punishment, in specific instances of norm violation, are no more immune than whites from internalizing the appropriateness of the use of violence under prescribed circumstances. Since blacks and whites differ in the strength of their attachment to specific regional norms, the primary motivation for engaging in acts of violence could be often expected to differ on the basis of race. But more importantly, one is attempting to make clear that the act of violence is not the valued object; it is simply a mechanism to thwart the possible loss of a valued resource, i.e. a system of white supremacy.

The movement of blacks from the South to the North should normally be expected to lead to a transfer in the frequency of the commission of such acts under circumstances similar to those prevailing in the region of origin. Generational changes, however, should lead to a weakening attachment for the use of violence when confronted by the possibility of a resource loss. Moreover, new norms of conduct should eventually supersede the old. Thus, the strength

of attachment to a southern culture of violence on the part of the migrant population should diminish as a function of age, lack of continuous association with carriers of the trait, and distance from the source of the culture. It is likely that the culture will continue to strongly manifest itself during the first generation in the new setting, particularly if there is a lack of significant change in status of the migrant population.

The Subculture of Violence and Northern Urban Settings

The northern urban setting was quite unlike that which characterized the environment of residence of most black migrants prior to World War II. In this new environment, alternative norms were acquired that promoted assertive behavior over docility or pseudo-docility in interacting with significant others. These new norms could possibly provide a foundation for the occurrence of behavior that is defined by Wolfgang and Ferracuti as evidence of the existence of a subculture of violence. The primary distinction between the motivations undergirding these two violence schemata appears to be one of preventing resource loss versus one of supporting resource gains. The latter participants are those whom Toch has described "...as comprising persons who see themselves (and their own needs) as being the only fact of social relevance" (1969: 136). He cites bullying, exploitation, and self-indulgence as dimensions of the above behavior. Wolfgang and Ferracuti describe the resource gains associated with the subculture of violence as rewards provided by one's peers for engaging in valued behavior.

Thus, the norms of the members of this sub-culture provide support for engaging in acts of violent aggression. It is this point, however, that critics of the schema have denoted as its principal weakness. The implication is that

acts of aggression are committed as a means of eliciting peer approval. While this might frequently occur among selected juvenile and young adult groups, it is not likely to serve as a motivation for acts of instrumental violence committed outside of a peer context. The subculture of violence schema also suggests ghetto reinforcing behavior, appealing to some who would attribute its origins to the contraculture that is alleged to have evolved in this social setting.

The subculture of violence might best be described as reflecting a set of norms that have evolved in big city poverty neighborhoods to facilitate survival under conditions where the risk of failure is high. Moreover, its practitioners tend to express an inordinate appreciation for the material values of the larger society; but in order to fully participate in the projected employment of those values, they have been encouraged by circumstance to employ violence as a tool to achieve this goal. A subculture of violence predicated on such assumptions simply reflects the tools chosen by individuals and groups to achieve a common goal: the material rewards available in this society. Those committed to the use of violence to achieve these goals are thought distinguishable from persons associated with a southern regional culture of violence that basically supports the defense of valued resources through the use of violence.

In northern cities the subculture of violence is likely to be in greater evidence among young adults. Persons, whom we have previously described as mature adults, will demonstrate a more balanced mix between the former elements and the elements of the southern regional culture of violence. The extent of that mix will depend on the volume of migration from the South among the post-World War II generation. But the increasing secularity of the larger

society would tend to support the dominance of the former group in association with the commission of acts of lethal violence at this juncture in our history.

Distinguishing Characteristics of the Two Cultural Schemata

The principal elements that distinguish these schema should assist in providing greater insight into understanding the heightened risk of black homicide in large urban environments. Even so, these represent highly imperfect heuristic devices. But they attempt to grapple with a complex problem. It is our purpose to attempt to integrate the concepts as they basically apply to patterns of lethal violence across place and time. The employment of elements of only one of these schemata is likely to prove unsatisfactory when attempting to evaluate regional differences in the propensity to exhibit violent behavior, leading to death, under a variety of circumstances. Ideological differences undergird the basic premise in each of these modal orientations. It is clear, however, that elements of both can be found in each regional setting.

The gang tradition in large northern cities, which preceded the presence of the black super ghetto, no doubt established the ground rules applying to the northern subculture of violence. One rule that tends to be pervasive is a commitment to violent acts as a means of achieving valued goals. The northern variant of the subculture has stressed the use of violence in the acquisition of both material and non-material resources valued by both individuals and groups. Strong-armed robbery, however, is more likely to represent an activity that would be valued by persons who have been socialized in the northern subculture of violence.

The southern variant, as earlier described, rests on an ideological base that sanctions the use of violence to protect and preserve both institutional and individual integrity. The Deacons for Defense and Justice, a black advocate organization, and the Ku Klux Klan, a white advocate organization, are both examples of organizational structures designed to defend aspects of racial integrity. The former group, which originated in Louisiana during the decade of the sixties, served as the prototype for the Black Panther Party, which flourished in large American cities during the late sixties and early seventies. Both the Black Panther Party and the Black Stone Rangers, a Chicago-based street gang, represent organizational support bases for the southern and northern ideologies respectively. In the former, defensive violence was sanctioned; in the latter, offensive violence represented approved conduct.

While organizational structures were utilized to highlight the ideological bases of subcultural support for violence, we contend that most individuals who have been socialized in one ideology or the other act out their propensity for violence outside of a formal organizational context. The ideological bases for these cultural constructs appear to be quite clear, even when focusing exclusively on the behavior of segments of the black population. Still unclear, however, is what individuals are likely to be active carriers of the trait, holding circumstances and environmental context constant.

The cultural schemata just described were developed by different analysts as they relate to various environmental contexts as a means of providing a partial explanation of the heightened resort to physical violence on the part of national subpopulations. As has been indicated, these heuristic structures

have been subject to extreme criticism, partially because of the methodological difficulty associated with attempts to objectively validate them. Wolfgang and Ferracuti have expressed dismay in their inability to provide the kind of validity that their critics would find acceptable. They specifically state, "Our data show that clinical, intuitive assessments are better predictors than psychometrically oriented indicators" (1975: 11). They further indicate, "Subcultural affiliation is a 'gestalt', value-oriented life and, as such, may defy classical nosological identification procedures" (1975: 11). While criticisms of these constructs abound, they continue to be widely employed as intellectual constructs against which there are attempts to explain and test reality.

It is clear as they stand that they are not (or were not) equally applicable in providing an explanation for the support of violent behavior in southern rural and northern urban contexts, particularly as related to the existence of a black subculture that has taken its cues from the larger culture. The attempt here is to examine their applicability, in a very general way, to black homicide victimizations in different urban and regional settings during the first half of the 1970's decade.

Cultural and Pathological Contributions to Violent Responses

There is evidence that the lethal act is influenced by actors other than those directly involved in the transaction. Likewise, a specific setting promotes a response unlike that which might occur in an alternative setting. Yet, the triggering mechanism, which serves as the catalyst for conflict, tends to exhibit a high level of stability. These, as well as other factors, weaken attempts to provide a non-intuitive assessment of the validity of any single culture or subculture of violence construct. The setting, the situation, and

the character of the actors are all contributors to the outcome of a lethal act of violence. It has been said that in order to understand aggressive responses, particularly with reference to the prediction of dangerousness, one must take into account the interaction of three variables: aggressive drive or motivation (instigation), inhibitions against aggressive behavior, and stimulus or situational factors (Megargee and Menzies, 1971: 136).

The Megargee and Menzies explanation of acts of physical aggression includes aspects of personality, as related to ease to anger and arousal stimuli, social learning in the form of appropriate behavior in view of the action of the offending party, and the role of the presence of external constraints. Any one of these elements might be sufficiently inhibiting so that the strength of the arousal stimuli can be voided, meaning that a physical attack will not occur; or if it occurs, its level of physical harm will be reduced. Ease to anger or aggressive drive might be expected to differ among normal personalities and pathological personalities, but also among normal personalities under the influence of specific mood-inducing substances.

The Employment of Cultural Paradigms to Explain Black Violence

Blacks who engage in angry outbursts leading to death were recently identified as "normal primitives" by the diagnostic evaluation clinic of an eastern clerk of court (Swigert and Farrell, 1977: 18). The implication of this description is that blacks are impulsive and childlike, requiring only trivial acts to stimulate arousal. These stereotypes fail to recognize the presence of persons suffering pathological disorders that might induce arousal, since a blanket characterization is being employed to judge the temperament of all persons guilty of committing lethal acts that are stereotypically race specific. Obviously, black offenders and victims suffer from pathologies

that catalyze the frequency of arousal to anger just as do other groups. But it appears that if the expected circumstances surrounding the act are normative, evidence of an existing pathology is most frequently overlooked.

Swigert and Farrell equate the concept "normal primitive" with Wolfgang and Ferracuti's concept, the subculture of violence. In both instances, groups are presumed to be predisposed to violent behavior and frequently engage in acts in which the normative behavior is an expected outcome. It is said that, "Homicide among normal primitives more often involves friends and acquaintances, and less often involves strangers and relatives" (Swigert and Farrell, 1976: 70). It seems from our prior discussion that this behavior would more likely characterize persons socialized in the southern regional culture of violence than persons socialized in the subculture of violence, as it is interpreted here. Swigert and Farrell also point out that the offenders categorized in this way also tend to be older. We believe this represents further support for placing this offender group in the southern regional culture category. But more importantly it reflects the use of such schemata to negate the possibility that behavior described as normal may reflect varying levels of pathology, temporary or permanent. Thus, the non-heuristic use of these devices illustrates apparent problematic properties.

The Employment of Cultural Paradigms in a Non-U.S. Context

Some recent research by a group of Israeli scholars highlights both the positive and negative aspects of a cultural analysis of homicide behavior. The work of Landau, Drapkin, and Arad illustrates the role of cultural traditions on the pattern of victim-offender relations within Israeli society. These

authors show that clear distinctions exist in the relationship pattern, and ascribed motives on the basis of ethnic identity (Western Jew; Oriental Jew; and non-Jew). For instance, among Jews the marriage partner was the single most frequent target of homicide victimization (Landau, Drapkin, and Arad, 1974: 392-393).

Non-Jews, however, were shown to be more likely to kill a brother or sister, or a member of a rival clan. The choice of a specific target is allegedly embedded in the cultural norms of individual ethnic groups.

Moreover, the heavy emphasis on the role of culture in the previous description illustrates an ethnocentric bias on the part of the investigators. Leaning heavily on Wolfgang and Ferracuti's subculture of violence schema, the Israeli investigators attribute to the Arab homicide offenders, in their midst, characteristics reflecting aspects of the sub-culture of violence. At the same time, the non-violent traditions that undergird western Jewish culture are emphasized.

Jews, whose modal choice of homicidal target was a marriage partner, were more often viewed as succumbing to situational pressures. Landau places this problem into sharper focus when he states:

In the case of Western Jewish offenders, homicide might be interpreted as a result of pathology on the individual personal level. Among non-Jewish offenders this phenomenon should be approached rather from the cultural point of view; i.e. these offenders are part of the Arab culture of the Middle East in which reliance on violence is in many cases a social norm or even a cultural prescribed behavior (1975: 161).

Normal homicides committed by non-Jews, western Jews, and Oriental Jews respectively were 93 per cent, 65 per cent, and 51 per cent (1975: 161). In Israel, as in the United States, the non-integrated minority group members are more often described as engaging in normative behavior when found to be involved in violent altercations that prove to be lethal.

Psychopathology and Lethal Violence

Mead suggests that imperfect enculturation leads to the development of pathologies and that evidence of this flaw in enculturation is in greater evidence in poverty environments than elsewhere (1964: 11). She avers that while we are aware of the kinds of environments in which imperfect acculturation is most often observed, we have not established adequate measures to identify anti-social behavior with the carriers of the predisposition for pathological murder. As long as constructs such as "the subculture of violence" are employed simply as a means of explaining away behavior, with little emphasis on possible pathological disorders, then the "bad nigger" syndrome will continue to persist. No doubt the difficulty of distinguishing between what is bad and mad encourages the legal establishment to emphasize the bad at the expense of the mad.

Rappeport states that, "Society and the courts, on the other hand, have a limited interest in understanding behavior" (1978: 35). While Rappeport admits that psychiatrists have had only limited experiences with violent persons, he indicates there are programs that have been designed to help those persons declared sick. A psycho-social view of criminality defines as "sick" a variety of behavior that ultimately leads to homicide. But as long as such behavior is largely confined to those environments in which the subculture of violence is thought to prevail, pathological behavior is likely to be overlooked.

Black Psychopathology and Hostile Responses

It is easy to ignore the potential for pathology among blacks when hostile responses in inter-group reaction focus almost exclusively upon the immediate stimuli that acted as a triggering mechanism. Overemphasis on the subculture of violence discourages a view that would incorporate elements of

both micro and macro environmental contributions to behavior. Bonime, speaking of the larger culture, suggests that, "Ours is an angry culture" (1976: 7). He indicates that persons who are confined to environments where blocked opportunities and social inequities prevail are likely to become highly hostile. A sense of anger becomes a part of one's identity, but not without pathological consequences. He further points out that most persons, "...growing up in an angry milieu experience their individuality as participants--either attackers or defenders--within angry forces" (Bonime, 1976: 9). The pathological consequences of this anger are most often ignored.

Lee Robins, however, has taken an in-depth look at the problem of psychiatric impairment among a sample of St. Louis schoolboys. She found that almost half showed evidence of psychiatric disorders when they reached adulthood (1971: 340). The most frequently identified diagnosis included aspects of the anti-social personality spectrum (anti-social personality, 13 per cent; alcoholism, 16 per cent; and drug addiction, 3 per cent). The best predictor of impairment among the adult sample, according to Robins et.al., was evidence of anti-social personality during childhood. The excessive association of anti-social personality with psychiatric impairment may be viewed by some as not truly representing evidence of psychopathology, but simply as further evidence of deviance.

Those who support the normal primitive concept might simply view this as expected or normative behavior among segments of the black population. It is possible that these behaviors are seldom labeled as pathological among black subjects because of the perception of some mental health professionals that black subjects lack affinity for psychotherapy. Black patients, and males in particular, who are referred for psychiatric treatment are more often

provided drug therapy, than the traditional psychotherapy techniques employed with white patients. Thus, it becomes rational for some segments of the social order to view black deviant behavior as normative rather than pathological.

The Relationship Between Culture and Psychopathology

The relationship between culture and psychopathology is a complex one, but evidence of their interrelatedness is clear. Value shifts promote a disruption in socially acceptable behaviors and corresponding attitudes toward those who adopt the new behaviors. Conflict often arises between parents and children in reference to conduct growing out of value shifts. The counter pressures associated with conformity can produce inner turmoil leading to neurotic or psychotic reactions. These problems are more seriously aggravated when the social milieu of residence promotes extreme deviations in base line behavior during a single generation. Value changes among blacks have tended to emphasize the desirability of a prosperous life. Moreover, the conduct associated with this value shift is frequently thought to lead to deviant behavior and conduct that might be thought of as antisocial. Selected persons who are unsuccessful in attaining this goal might well develop traits that fall within the psychiatric spectrum.

Psychiatric Impairment in the Black Community

Blacks have not often sought the services of the private practice psychiatrist because of the stigmas associated with being labeled mentally defective and the exorbitant costs associated with these services. Until recently, adult blacks who interacted with the mental health establishment were those who suffered severe disorders and were seen only in public institutions.

But the growth of programs during the last two decades to serve children

who manifested some emotional disorder is indicative of the seeming increase in the incidence of psychiatric impairment. These children have been described by Brummit as dyssocial children (1978: 31). With specific references to those children referred by the public schools, he states:

Since "conduct disorders" represented our predominant population, we began viewing the consistent complaints associated with them as describing a dyssocial syndrome as opposed to the more commonly used labels--i.e., "passive-aggressive personality"; "sociopathic personality"; and "schizophrenic reaction, childhood type" (1978: 31).

Brummit infers that the children's problems are related to both a reaction to their milieu and socially learned values within a family context. The latter observation provides further support for a linkage between culture and pathology. Some would, however, choose to ignore this linkage and have us believe that maladaptive behavior is unrelated to cultural change and value shifts in the larger society. Labels such as "normal primitive" allow society to shift responsibility to the subculture while the larger culture denies any responsibility for the emerging subcultural manifestations.

Because of the manner in which blacks who show signs of psychiatric impairment have been viewed, black scholars have had a tendency to shy away from subcultural explanations of violent and aggressive behavior. Such explanations can be interpreted as simply an attack on black culture without any attempt to assist in the amelioration of the problem. On the other hand, an impairment orientation also casts doubt on the strength of blacks to overcome signs of weakness, i.e, poor mental health. But the reciprocal relationship between value shifts or culture change requires investigation if there is to occur a reduced incidence in acts of lethal violence in the nation's

larger black communities.

Values and Life Styles as Contributors to Violence

The implication of the previous discussion rests on the employment of a dynamic view of culture and the adjustments that groups and individuals make to value shifts within a generational context. It is assumed that blacks socialized in the South prior to World War II were taught that violence represented sanctioned behavior in specific situations. Lunds-gaarde, a strong supporter of the notion of sanctions as evidence of the culture-behavior nexus, indicates that the Houston grand jury's failure to indict selected homicide offenders is an indication that in some instances violence is approved (1977: 187).

While violence was often sanctioned to protect or preserve valued resources, the need to engage in violent behavior was essentially a function of life style and personality orientation. That segment of the black population most often found to be involved in violent altercations were those whose life styles were oriented toward the street life. This often involved excessive drinking, gambling, womanizing, and a general display of what would be described as loose morals by the respectable citizens of the community. Thus, homicidal assaults could most often be expected to occur among close associates, or at least persons who knew one another, and among spouses, often common-law.

The above description of violent interactions occurring among pre-World War II blacks could be observed in both the rural and small town South, as well as in major southern cities. Altercations of this type were not confined to segments of the black population, but extended to the white population who practiced similar lifestyles. The maintenance of this lifestyle pattern is

thought to be related to the lower inhibitions of persons who are blocked off from participating in more socially sanctioned behavior by a rigidly closed social system and the rejection of a moral code that could easily be interpreted as hypocritical.

Thus, those who chose to move toward the oppressor might well reject the lifestyle of the street; but for those who found the life of the stoic unrewarding, there was a move away from the moral code of the oppressor. The latter group, whether by choice or external encouragement, came to represent a subcultural element that was uninhibited in its resort to violence when confronted by the possibility of losing a valued resource. Since lifestyle changes occur primarily in relation to status shifts and age, only age led to changes in behavior where social status was fixed.

The movement of segments of this population from the South to the North led to modifications in the earlier life styles in response to the changed situational context and different general value orientations. The age of those who moved, as well as the more secular and impersonal influence of the larger metropolitan centers, should have led to the successful recruitment of a larger base of persons engaging in aspects of street life.

But, more important, how has this population movement influenced the second generation resident in terms of his/her life style opportunity and corresponding choice? Likewise, how did the basic value systems differ between regions, such that patterns of violent behavior among regions might be distinguished? We expect to find regional differences in patterns of lethal violence as a function of life cycle stage; and we will also explore the possibility of distinctive violence orientations on the basis of region of birth, employing sample survey data for the latter purpose.

In terms of life cycle stage, one would expect a withdrawal from the high risk activities associated with street life to be a function of age. This represents a lessening commitment to a pattern of conduct that is sometimes viewed as ego rewarding, but also risky in terms of life expectation. Among mature adults the strongest commitment to the old lifestyle should occur between those persons 30-34 years of age, as this represents a transitional bridge between those identified as young adults and mature adults. One would expect to find a bulge in the level of homicide victimization among the bridging population who represent regional migrants. The southern violence syndrome should be in greater evidence in those cities where migrants constitute a major source of growth.

In those cities where northern origin and the values promote alternative patterns of violence, one should be able to observe competing motives and alternative relationships among victim and offender. Older persons should more often constitute the target of victimization in those cities where instrumental violence is more commonplace. Thus, our contention is that instrumental violence will receive greater sanction among those persons committed to the street life in northern urban centers.

The primary evidence of value shifts on patterns of homicidal victimization is the relative increase in frequency of acts described as being instrumentally motivated. The greater reliance on exploitative lifestyles and the easy availability of handguns have served as catalysts prompting violent confrontations motivated by material gain. It is contended here that the recent upsurge in acts of instrumental violence represents a modification of the earlier concept of a subculture of violence that is supported by a need to defend valued resources against attack. This modification is based on value

shifts in both the larger society and among subpopulations and contextual changes associated with interregional migration.

The subculture of violence thesis of Wolfgang and Ferracuti fails to acknowledge these dynamics, but instead tends to emphasize peer approval as the principal sanctioning mechanism for conduct that has been interpreted by some as representing instrumental violence. Berkowitz is especially critical of the Wolfgang construct on the grounds that, "The aggression is not necessarily carried out because onlookers advocate such violence" (1978: 150). The latter writer's interpretational emphasis on social rewards as an index of instrumental violence permits him to employ and use the Wolfgang and Ferracuti construct as a whipping boy.

Our interpretation of instrumental violence as it relates to homicidal victimization would place emphasis on material reward, rather than on social rewards. This is not to say that the latter does not play a role; but with increasing emphasis on the value "prosperous life," it would seem that the former overshadows the latter as provocation leading to acts that ultimately result in death.

Victim-Offender Relationship Among Mature Adults

A review of the pattern of victim-offender relations among mature adults should enable us to compare the extent to which generational differences distinguish between the frequency of expressive acts and instrumental acts that prove lethal. Likewise, we will attempt to illustrate the presence of a given lifestyle orientation on the pattern of victimization. Lifestyle orientations can frequently be extracted from the FBI descriptions of the circumstances leading to death. The quality of these descriptions, however, varies

between cities. Both the acquaintance category and the family category of victim-offender relations should prove useful in attempting to identify lifestyle orientations and the differences that show themselves in terms of life cycle stage.

The task of assessing data for lifestyle orientations from non-interview data has numerous drawbacks. The initial assessment will be made utilizing descriptions appearing in the FBI Monthly Homicide Reports. At a later point, lifestyle dimensions will be evaluated using survey data describing both victims and offenders. In utilizing non-survey data in a victimization study that addresses itself to the role of culture on victimization, a major drawback is failing to understand the interactive role of the participants. This will be partially offset by our later evaluation of survey results.

Mature black males have been found to be at lower risk of victimization than their younger adult counterparts. But the former group includes a broader range of ages, and therefore one should expect a larger percentage of this population to participate in activities that are less risky in terms of the probability for interpersonal conflict. The highest risk of victimization is usually associated with the second phase of the young adult stage in the life cycle. Yet, risk continues to remain high through the early phase of the mature adult cycles. But during the previous decade, there was evidence of a downward shift in the age structure of risk. It appears that this downward shift in risk can basically be attributed to an increase in instrumental victimizations and easy access to handguns on the part of youth. Our concern in this section of the report, however, is with the victimization of mature adults and the forces leading to their demise.

The previous discussion emphasized the macro-scale forces that are thought to have an impact upon the risk of victimization. Place-specific cultural patterns and psychological impairment were the forces chosen for emphasis. Both are viewed as conditions that foster a set of behaviors that might be construed as risk enhancing. The former topic has received more extensive treatment among social scientists because it represents a topic with which they have greater familiarity. Even so, there is still much dissent among social scientists regarding the contributions of culture to violent propensities.

As a means of clarifying the contribution of culture to the actual risk of black victimization, we have attempted to integrate the two primary premises regarding the roles of culture and violence. Moreover, we also examined a set of behavioral repertoires thought to be associated with violent subcultures as a means of highlighting the situational aspect of homicide. This latter activity was employed to illustrate changes in the risk of young adult victimization. When combined, culture and situation should provide a better grasp of the forces that lead to increased risk of victimization.

Selected Groups of Mature Males and Risk of Victimization

Because of the greater range of groups included among the category "mature adult," it was decided that attention would be focused on only two five-year age segments. The group 30-34, representing early maturity, and the 45-49 age group, representing late maturity, were chosen for investigation. We would anticipate that the risk associated with the latter group would constitute some fraction of the risk associated with the former. Likewise, one would expect the two basic dimensions associated with the previously discussed concepts of a subculture of violence to be differentially represented

in terms of the circumstances and motives associated with death. Since lifestyles are expected to change with age, as a function of both mental outlook and physical dexterity, one would expect not only the number of deaths to diminish with age, but the circumstances to undergo alteration as well.

In those environments where expressive motives tend to predominate, there should exist a sharp downturn in the risk of victimization, unless a disproportionately large segment of the population continues lifestyle practices commonplace during early maturity into late maturity. Should this be the case, death as an outgrowth of sexual entanglements, barroom brawls, gambling debts, and similar acts would continue to make a major contribution to the risk of victimization. A review of the 1970 age specific homicide rates for our six city sample reveals sharp differences among cities in risk at specific phases during the life cycle.

Risk is normally highest during the second phase of young adult status in all cities. But risk during the early mature and late mature phases is quite varied. The highest early mature risk was found in St. Louis, followed by Atlanta and Detroit. The lowest early mature risk occurred in Pittsburgh and secondarily in Los Angeles. Late mature risk is lower in each of the secondary sample cities than among the primary sample cities. The difference tends to be associated with the joint contribution of both expressive and instrumental acts of violence among this age segment in Detroit and St. Louis and the continuation of expressive lifestyles through late maturity.

The number of family-related homicides between early and late maturity does not differ greatly among selected cities. In Atlanta and Houston, family conflict tends to prevail throughout the life cycle, while in Detroit and St. Louis its contribution is minimal at all stages of development and even less

so among our early and late mature stages of development.

What emerges from this assessment is the emphasis on lifestyles among the mature segment of the universe that leads to defensive violence in Atlanta, Houston, Pittsburgh, and Los Angeles. Offensive acts of violence were observed to be of growing importance in Detroit and St. Louis.

A Commitment to High Risk Lifestyle

The predominance of defensive violence among persons known to one another is an indicator of the prevailing strength of norms associated with the southern regional culture of violence. Likewise, it represents a propensity to engage in life styles that foster the potential for interpersonal conflict. Needless to say, the life styles themselves are most likely to be associated with one's position in the socio-economic stratum. Persons who cling to these life styles throughout their mature years are likely to more often find themselves in situations where established norms dictate an appropriate response. Thus, the size of the population committed to the life of the street, where traditional norms further gambling, excessive alcohol consumption, short-term personal loans, and loose sexual alliances, promotes the potential for violent altercations growing out of the need to accept a challenge to defend one's honor.

A closer investigation of the circumstances surrounding expressive homicides of both early and late mature males in Atlanta, Houston, and Los Angeles exhibits a common pattern, as well as circumstances that one generally associates with traditional street life. Lethal interactions occurring between family members are weighted in favor of spouse killings. In most situations the wife kills a husband who has been accused of sexual misconduct, physical assault upon the spouse, or problems associated with money management.

Inter-sex or sex-related conflicts are also commonplace among combatants described as acquaintances. While sex-related conflicts tend to diminish with age, they remain a principal source of antagonism well into late maturity. The lack of specificity in describing circumstances surrounding the lethal altercation makes it difficult to provide precise measures of the extent to which a given set of circumstances predominated in expressive interactions.

How Important is Psychological Impairment in Promoting Lethal Violence?

The question of psychological impairment was previously raised as a critical variable that might also act to increase the risk of victimization in certain kinds of interaction. This issue generally receives less attention because of the lack of precision associated with describing mental states that qualify as psychologically impaired states. The use of any defense for conduct that is abhorred by the general public is likely to receive only limited sanction. Thus, the problem of the mental state or psychological attributes of the interacting parties is seldom an issue when the case involves a low income or minority defendant. Nevertheless, it is imperative that we begin to attempt to learn what the role of the mental make-up is of persons who are inclined to engage in aggressive behavior that results in the death of an attacker or defender.

By the term "psychological impairment," we refer to any psychological state that would lead to a loss of the level of impulse control considered appropriate for the circumstances. In order to do this, it means that one must be able to distinguish conduct that is culturally induced from that which is psychologically induced. Because this does not represent a simple task, it

is much easier to rely upon cultural explanations to account for these behaviors as long as the victims and offenders are disproportionately represented by members of low income minority groups. The question being raised here is, "Has there been any change in the contribution of psychological impairment to the growth of homicide as a cause of death among mature adults?"

Most homicides occurring in the United States are classed as normal. It has been estimated that no more than 5 per cent of the persons who commit homicide annually are non-normal. Nevertheless, the stresses of daily life are such that persons with limited resources might be expected to succumb to these stresses with greater frequency. Yet, there has been no noticeable alteration in the percentage of the population believed to be outside of the average range of those thought to manifest signs of impairment. The growing array of coping mechanisms available to assist populations in adapting to their circumstances quite possibly enables us to maintain the equilibrium state. Does increasing dependence on alcohol and drugs represent attempts to ease the burden associated with psychological impairment? Or, is this dependency simply an attempt to overcome boredom and/or other temporary states whose short term effects are undesirable?

There have been some serious attempts to evaluate the extent to which homicide offenders suffer from major impairments. Henn et.al. discovered fewer than eight per cent of the St. Louis offenders, whom they evaluated, were suffering from psychological disorders (1976: 426-427). The disorders appearing most often were schizophrenia, personality disorder, and alcohol and drug abuse, which, when combined, accounted for approximately two-thirds of the total.

Another St. Louis study, which focused its attention on homicide victims rather than on offenders, discovered that 15 per cent of the victims had

received psychiatric treatment in one of the city's public treatment facilities (Herjanic and Meyer, 1976: 692). These authors were quick to point out the absence of a diagnosis of severe disorders among the former patients. Alcohol abuse, drug abuse, and sociopathy represented the conditions for which the patients were most often treated. Likewise, it was reported that the psychologically impaired victims were most likely to have been engaged in an expressive conflict at the time of death (Herjanic and Meyer, 1976: 692).

Psychological impairment as an element in the outcome leading to violent death is given only minimum attention unless there is gross evidence of severe mental disturbance or if the potential exists to employ it as a legal defense on behalf of the accused. In the latter instance, impairment is employed to excuse behavior and to insure that the defendant will be only minimally punished or possibly not punished at all for his/her role in the fatal altercation. For this reason, elements of the criminal justice system seem reluctant to pursue the contribution of impairment to the fatal act. A cultural explanation of the act provides the system greater leverage in seeing that the defendant is adequately punished for his or her misdeed. Thus, the central issue here is not that of insanity or incompetency to stand trial, but simply an attempt to determine if some character flaw might have been involved in urging one or more participants to behave in specific ways leading to the death of another.

The problem of ascertaining the potential dangerousness of individuals who were previously participants in violent behavior and/or who were guilty of threats of violence has brought the issue of impairment into sharper focus

recently. But lack of success in identifying persons could possibly lead to a dampening of interest in this line of investigation.

Impairment does not on its face indicate dangerousness; but among the small number of cases in a California penal institution, representing violent recidivists, the largest per cent were persons who had previously been referred for psychiatric evaluation for violence potential (Wenk and others, 1972: 398-399). Thus, it is clear that certain traits are likely to distinguish the violent offender, even though the ability to predict dangerousness is a weakly developed art at this time. Nevertheless, some attempt should continue to be made to ascertain the role of endogenous factors versus exogenous factors in the contribution to acts of lethal violence.

The absence of clinical data and the suspiciousness with which some psychometric measures are viewed, in terms of their use with black subjects, makes it extremely difficult to state how important endogenous variables are in stimulating blacks to violently act out, with death the result. Lunde (1976) recently discussed the length of time involved to produce an adequate number of cases for the purpose of clinical evaluation, indicating that it took him five years to accumulate 40 clinical evaluations. Because of the slowness with which one must proceed in clinical evaluations, that line of investigation has not produced a large sample from which generalizations regarding impairment might be derived.

On the question of the use of some of the more popular psychometric techniques to ascertain the nature of one's mental status, there is a tendency for black professionals to be mistrustful since seldom are these devices standardized on a black population. While the latter assessments are much

more frequent than the former, the possibility of error in diagnosis causes blacks to remain skeptical of their validity. This situation makes it extremely difficult to ascertain the level of impairment of black subjects involved in fatal acts of violence.

Circumstantial evidence might be introduced to identify cases in which the potential for impairment has shown itself. But even if this could be done with the crude evidence available, an undercount would certainly emerge. Moreover, circumstantial evidence regarding homicides occurring as an outgrowth of sexual assaults, extreme levels of jealousy, or other non-rational acts would indicate a strong possibility that at least one actor in the conflict suffered some level of impairment. Such indirect evidence is often more readily detected among expressive conflicts than among instrumental conflicts. This represents a serious drawback if we are unable to specify with some level of certainty the likelihood that psychological impairment was implicated in acts of lethal violence.

Another form of circumstantial evidence that might be employed as evidence of impairment, temporary or permanent, is the intensity of the injury (e.g., the victim was repeatedly stabbed 35 times). Neither of these types of evidence, however, do anymore than provide a motive for attempting to uncover evidence that psychological impairment could have played an important role in the lethal altercation.

A review of statements describing the circumstances associated with the 1975 acquaintance deaths, in each sample city, failed to provide the clues anticipated. The inability of this data source to provide the sought after clues does not allow us to circumstantially implicate the contribution of psychological impairment in the altercation leading to death. Thus, our

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attempt to identify crude evidence as a means of specifying the role played by impairment (independent of that life style) in the fatal altercation resulting in the death of selected mature males ended in failure. This does not lessen the importance of the need to learn the extent to which this variable contributes to these outcomes if we are to be expected to curb the risk of one individual taking the life of another. But other indirect sources of information will have to be tapped as a means of attempting to reconstruct the chain of events and the state of the individuals at the time of the altercation.

Our attempt to identify clues that might indicate some level of impairment within the dyad was confined to acquaintance deaths. Persons interacting with individuals other than acquaintances are also likely to exhibit signs of impairment, but those descriptions were not reviewed because it was thought they would contain fewer clues upon which to pursue the impairment theme. But clearly impairment is likely to show itself among each of the primary victim-offender relations previously described, although indirect evidence is thought to be more difficult to establish. It is unclear at this point the extent to which impairment is implicated in expressive versus instrumental deaths.

Summary

Mature adults are less often at risk of homicide than are persons who are still attempting to forge an identity and place for themselves in their local communities. A review of the victimization pattern among selected groups of mature adults revealed there is generally a sharp drop-off in annual victimizations between individuals identified as "early mature" and "late mature." This should not be unexpected as the size of the

late mature population is likely to be much smaller, and lifestyles that are thought to promote risk should be less in evidence.

The risk of victimization among those described as early mature is generally closer to that of the group of persons described as representing a transitional stage between late adolescence and young adulthood. In situations where the early matures fail to make a satisfactory adjustment from the young adult stage, one would expect risk to increase. The absence of satisfactory adjustment between stages reflects the operation of both external and internal variables. Where the opportunity structure is severely restrictive and poverty is widespread, the risk of victimization among early mature males should be expected to be high. Traditionally, the greatest risk of victimization has been concentrated among this group.

Late mature individuals are generally expected to have reached a stage in the life cycle where risk of death as an outgrowth of violent altercation is unlikely. Among black males, however, the risk does not always diminish at the expected rate. This situation became even more exaggerated in some environments during the early seventies as late mature males were frequently the targets of instrumental victimizations. Thus, the victim's role in the homicide was becoming a passive one, largely unrelated to lifestyle attributes.

When one examines the frequency of victimization among late mature males in our sample cities, the pattern among cities is shown to be quite varied. In Houston and Atlanta, expressive victimizations tend to remain a fixed feature throughout the life cycle, although showing signs of diminishing importance with advanced age. In St. Louis the frequency of victimization at this stage in the life cycle is negligible, possibly indicating the occurrence of expected lifestyle shifts as a function of age. In both Detroit and Los Angeles, late mature males are increasingly becoming victims of instrumental

death, which is more often related to economic than to social motives.

Both early and late mature individuals were most often involved in altercations between acquaintances and relatives. The circumstances surrounding those altercations, in most instances, were those associated with specific lifestyle patterns and traditional norms of conduct. The prevailing pattern was that associated with attempts to protect or preserve some valued resource, i.e., honor, money, emotional support, etc.

Nevertheless, a secondary pattern, which was essentially offensive rather than defensive, was observed to be emerging in Detroit and Los Angeles. The modal number of victimizations among both early and late mature black male adults occurred among acquaintances in most instances. In Detroit the most frequent victimizations among early mature males occurred among those identified as unknowns in both 1970 and 1975. In Los Angeles in 1975, early mature victims were most often killed by an "unknown" assailant. The implication here is that mature adults are most often killed as an outgrowth of interpersonal conflict occurring among acquaintances or within the family, and most of that conflict tends to be concentrated among early mature males.

The role of culture was discussed at length, both as a promoter of lifestyles and as a stimulant promoting selective beliefs. An attempt was made to partition the role of culture in terms of an idiosyncratic base that is regional or place specific. It was tentatively concluded that a southern regional orientation to violence could be distinguished from that prevailing in other parts of the nation. Most late mature blacks were thought to have been socialized within the context of this orientation. Thus, when encountering culturally specific stressful situations, striking-out behavior

represented a form of socially sanctioned conduct. Expressive acts of violence represent the modal form of violent behavior by the carriers of this cultural variant.

Instrumental violence, on the other hand, was thought to be more widespread among residents whose cultural learning evolved in low income communities in the North. If this represents a plausible interpretation, then it would explain regional differences in the tendency to respond to specific life events in different ways.

Much emphasis, however, has been attributed to the role of culture on the display of violent tendencies among blacks. Yet, the contribution of psychological impairment as an explanatory variable has been given only limited attention. Many explanations can be found for overlooking the role played by impairment on the tendency to respond to environmental disturbances in a violent manner, but they hardly justify our continuing ignorance of the contribution of this variable.

A crude attempt was made to employ circumstantial evidence to ascertain if impairment might have influenced members of a dyad to behave in a violent manner leading to the death of one member of the dyad. The information source employed for this purpose was not sufficiently descriptive to reveal a set of underlying clues that might indicate some level of impairment. While one might generally conclude impairment is less often implicated in acts of lethal violence than is culture, the extent and strength of the former variable on the propensity for violence is not well understood among black

participants in the lethal struggle.

SECTION FOUR

THE HOMICIDE ENVIRONMENT AND RISK OF VICTIMIZATION

Introduction

Most analyses of homicide patterns confine their focus to patterns of interaction between the victim and the offender. Such studies are numerous and reflect the primary orientations of the disciplines most often represented in these works -- psychology and sociology. A component that is most often missing from these studies is the role of the environment as a contributor to homicidal risk. It is not that the environment has been totally omitted from such analysis, but when included is generally assigned, at best, a secondary role in the analysis. There is a growing recognition, however, of the importance of an ecological assessment in attempts to explain homicide patterns.

We were recently reminded that "violent crime is not equally likely in all areas of a community" (Block, 1977: 61), a recollection that is readily acknowledged by scholars of spatial structure and neighborhood residents alike. Block's emphasis is on social and physical structure of the neighborhood, an emphasis he designates as constituting part of the macro-environment of violence.

Wolfgang, in his classic study of homicide in an urban environment, included a chapter entitled "Spatial Patterns," which sought to describe what have been called "homicide settings." Both Block and Wolfgang emphasize the environment in which the homicidal act occurs. Such an emphasis is a partial

outgrowth of their crime orientation and total dependence upon police data as raw material in their analysis. As was indicated in a previous section of this study, the homicide environment is operationally defined here as the place of residence of the victim. Emphasis here is on victimization and those forces leading to acting out behavior resulting in victimization. Thus, our approach to an investigation of the homicide environment will differ in some ways from that of other investigators whose objectives are unlike our own.

The primary environment under investigation is that which serves as the place of residence of the black population in our six city sample. In each of our sample cities, the black and non-black populations are highly spatially segmented, resulting in the formation of race-specific environments of residence. Most black homicide victimizations are likely to occur within that segment of space in which most intra-group interactions take place, namely the black community. The high level of black homicide victimization, therefore, leads the black community to become a zone of concentrated homicide deaths in those cities where blacks constitute a sizeable number in the total population. It is those zones of high homicide concentration that will serve as the primary focus of our attention.

The Spatial Structure of Black Residence

Zones of black residence within cities demonstrate an internal spatial structure that in some instances partially replicates the structure of the larger environment in which they are embedded. Internal differentiation within the black community should influence the pattern of resident conduct such that the spatial pattern of homicide victimization would reflect the influence

of the social-spatial structure of the black community. Communities with a highly differentiated spatial structure should be expected to display a less uniform spatial pattern of homicide victimization. On the other hand, those communities showing less variation in spatial structure should manifest a pattern of greater uniformity in their spatial pattern of victimization.

Those writers who view the black community as a monolith would be partially supported if patterns of homicide victimization were shown to be random in character. Others may argue that the character of place plays only a minor role in interaction patterns leading to homicidal outcomes and that the personalities of the interacting parties are of much greater significance. Needless to say, these countervailing ideas require testing, and some attempt will be made to clarify these notions at some point in this study.

Variations in Risk by Size of Place

Cities, both now and historically, have served as environments where persons were at greater risk of becoming victims of interpersonal violence. There is evidence that size of place is directly related to rates of homicide victimization. Size of place is thought to influence the frequency of interaction and thus the potential for violence. Mayhew and Levinger, in support of this position, state "that as aggregate size increases additively, both the number of phone calls and the number of homicidal assaults will increase multiplicatively" (1975: 94).

Other writers, however, differ in their opinions on the role of size of place on homicide victimization. For example, Hoch indicates that size of place is not significant in explaining homicide rates by SMSA size in 1970 (1974: 87). From the perspective of spatial structure, it might be

significant that these two conflicting positions on the role of size of place do not employ the same unit of analysis. The latter study used the SMSA, while the former uses the city. Thus, the inclusion of the suburbs in the size of place analysis tends to reduce its explanatory power in relation to homicidal risk. This inclines to implicate the role of social-spatial structure on interaction patterns and subsequently on the risk of victimization.

Variations in Homicide Frequency by Sub-areas within the Black Community

Although the black community in large central cities is the target of most acts of lethal violence, there has been little effort to identify sub-areas within the black community on the basis of differential risk of victimization or variations in frequency of victimization. The absence of a systematic analysis of this phenomenon can be attributed to the monolithic view of the black community held by many social scientists, and to the fact that most homicide studies are conducted by persons who are likely to assign the environment a very minor role in the analysis of homicide patterns. For the latter reason, spatial patterns of victimization are given short shrift in all territorial communities regardless of ethnic or other identifying attributes. This shortcoming was pointed out by Bullock more than a generation ago. In addressing the issue of the role of place in an attempt to understand the process of criminal behavior, the latter writer states the following:

As a starting point, it is theoretically assumed that strategic areas of the city pull people of potentially significant characteristics who, during their leisure time, become involved in situations of congenial origins out of which conflicts develop and homicides occur (Bullock, 1955: 566).

Bullock, in describing the unusually high incidence of homicide in the black community of Houston during the early 1950's, attributed this pattern

to racial segregation and the prevalence of disorganized areas within the black community. He further indicated that high-incidence homicide areas could be distinguished from low-incidence areas by the prevalence of a deteriorating physical habitat and the low occupational status of its residents. Bullock's argument is based on the presence of an overarching cultural system that supports a form of ecological segregation and the denial of economic resources leading to a relaxation of social controls within a specific ecological niche. Unfortunately, the work of Bullock has been advanced very little from the perspective of the role of place on acts of lethality, in general, and circumstances that single out the black territorial community as a zone of high homicide incidence, in particular.

The Historical Role of Homicide Risk in Selected American Cities

The risk of homicide victimization in the black community has traditionally been high in large urban environments. Brearley, reporting on the level of victimization in selected cities in 1925, substantiates this point. Victimization rates were higher during that era than they are at present. It was not uncommon to find victimization rates in excess of 100 per 100,000. Southern cities were generally agreed to be more violent places than those outside the region. Yet, the data presented by Brearley does not unequivocally bear out this contention. The cities cited in table 17 show large variations in homicidal risk within regions, as well as between regions.

Table 17
Homicide Rates Among the Black Population
in Selected Cities: 1925

City	Rate per 100,000	City	Rate per 100,000
Chicago	102.8	Atlanta	107.3
Detroit	113.6	Houston	46.6
Cleveland	101.2	Dallas	99.4
Pittsburgh	54.8	Memphis	129.1
Philadelphia	61.2	New Orleans	75.0
Boston	21.4	Birmingham	104.5
Cincinnati	189.7	Miami	207.9
Indianapolis	56.7	Richmond	28.5
Newark	36.2	Baltimore	39.3
San Francisco	17.7	Washington	31.5

SOURCE: Brearley, H. C., Homicide in the United States, 1932.

Yet, cities along the northeastern seaboard show lower rates of victimization than cities around the Great Lakes. Likewise, South Atlantic cities exhibit, as a rule, lower levels of victimization than those prevailing in east and west South Central cities. The large discrepancy in incidence of victimization between places is not easily explained in terms of available data.

The Role of Homicide as a Cause of Death in
Southern and Northern Cities: Before 1930

By 1925, southern cities were already renowned for the level of violence present within the black community. Memphis, in 1930, was described as the homicide capital of the nation. The city fathers were said to explain this situation by indicating "most of the murders were of negroes by negroes, so the police and government could not be held responsible" (Henri, 1975: 120). At the same time, the black population in selected northern cities was growing rapidly as a result of an increase in the volume of southern migration. The physical accommodations available to blacks during the period 1900-20 have been described as deplorable and led to near epidemic levels of death resulting

from the spread of contagious disease. In 1920, in Detroit, the black death rate from pneumonia was 776 per 100,000 (Henri, 1975: 112), a level many times higher than the homicide level. While it is apparent that conditions in cities favored high homicide victimization levels during this earlier era, there is little evidence available to allow us to identify high risk environments within cities at this early date.

The Relative Change in the Role of Homicide as a Cause of Death

A decline in urban homicide levels has taken place over two generations, but even so the currently prevailing levels are thought to be unduly high. Greater success has been exhibited in bringing contagious diseases under control during this interval than has been true of homicide. During the two generations that have transpired since Brearley described the risk of victimization in selected American cities, those cities have undergone a major transformation in their social and economic characters. The eradication of contagious diseases has been a primary accompaniment of this transformation.

Behavioral causes of death, whether primarily related to exogenous or endogenous stimuli, seem to have been less susceptible to control. While the risk of homicide victimization has decreased, the relative importance of homicide as a cause of death has increased. For instance, in the St. Louis black community -- at the neighborhood level -- homicide frequently ranks next to heart disease and cancer as one of the leading causes of death. The ability to bring all but the primary degenerative diseases under reasonable control has led behavioral causes of death to assume greater relative importance among the major killers. But the still unanswered question is, "What role has

the environment played in sustaining a relatively high level of homicide victimization over time?"

Modeling the Spatial Structure of the Black Community

In those large cities where the black population is also numerically large, differentiation within the black community on a number of dimensions is apparent. Such differentiation has been highlighted by selected scholars whose work on the factorial ecology of the black community has provided us with greater precision in illustrating the spatial structure of that community. The work of Roseman and others (1972) and Pettyjohn (1976) allows us to view the similarities and dissimilarities between the spatial structure of the black community and the larger community of which it is a part. Pettyjohn, employing a 35 variable model, was able to identify six factors that were spatially differentiated within the Los Angeles-Long Beach black community. Socioeconomic status was the single most important differentiating dimension, regardless of whether one employed a principal component or principal factor analysis.

The Harburg Model and the Spatial Structure of Sample Communities

Factorial ecologies have provided greater insight into the spatial structure of the black communities than have other techniques used for this purpose. A unique use of factor analysis by Harburg and associates (1973) has special importance for this study. In order to establish an areal sample frame for their blood pressure study, the Harburg research group used factor analysis to identify high and low stress areas in the city of Detroit. Employing only nine variables in their analysis, they were able to establish two principal factors: socioeconomic status and instability.

On each of these dimensions the factor scores were combined to provide an index of stress for each census tract in Detroit. Following the lead of these researchers, a similar index of stress was developed for each individual census tract within the black communities in our sample.

Employing a twelve variable set, which was similar to that employed by Harburg and associates, a series of factors were derived. Most of the explained variance produced by these variables was associated with two factors, social disorganization and socioeconomic rank. Unlike the Harburg study, no crime variables were included in our analysis. The impact of the absence of crime variables on the strength of the factor described as social disorganization is unknown. Nevertheless, we were able to combine the factor scores on these two dimensions as a means of identifying a stress continuum ranging from high to low. For instance, tracts showing a high positive score on socioeconomic status would, when its scores were combined, produce a moderate level of stress.

Unlike Harburg and associates, who identified stress levels nominally, we specified only the precise stress score for each neighborhood within the black residential community. High and low stress neighborhoods as a proportion of all neighborhoods vary extensively from city to city. Table 18 illustrates the prevalence of neighborhood stress types within the black communities of our sample cities. Some of the variation in stress is associated with differences in the size of the population by census tract and the total number of census tracts in which the black population constituted the predominant population in 1970.

Table 18

Variations in Stress Levels within Selected Cities by Neighborhood

City	% Extreme High Stress	% High Stress	% Moderate Stress	% Low Stress	% Extreme Low Stress
Detroit	2	28	41	27	2
St. Louis	3	30	46	14	8
Atlanta	6	32	28	26	8
Los Angeles	5	35	21	32	8
Pittsburgh	5	30	19	43	3
Houston	23	23	41	14	0

The two high-stress categories account for less than one-half of all neighborhoods in each city, and closely approach one-half in Houston, while they represent only 30 per cent of the total in Detroit. Pittsburgh, Atlanta, and Los Angeles possess the highest percentage of low-stress neighborhoods.

Spatial Structure and Levels of Stress

Stress levels are viewed here as a set of exogenous variables, which both directly and indirectly impinge upon the behavior of persons residing in a specific neighborhood. Harburg and others address the defined stressors in the following way:

We conceive of socio-ecological stressors as social processes in local populations which indicate the relative availability of socioeconomic resources and the stability of major institutional patterns (1977: 626).

The specification of neighborhood stress levels provides insight into the social context in which individuals must attempt to adapt. Moreover, the ability of the individual to cope with these socio-ecological stressors should be expected to influence the risk of homicide victimization.

The spatial pattern of stress prevailing at the neighborhood levels can serve as an index of the socio-spatial structure of the black community. Of the two factors employed here to measure levels of stress, socioeconomic rank and social disorganization, both are found with varying levels of intensity in each neighborhood. In some instances, they tend to counter one another, leading to an amelioration in stress levels. In other instances, they tend to complement one another, leading to a reduction or to an increase in stress levels. For example, in those neighborhoods where high levels of social disorganization and low indicators of social rank prevail, stress levels will be high. The derived levels of stress are based on the assumption that these factors are additive, a supposition that may not be entirely valid.

It is logical to assume that the intensity of stress levels within given neighborhoods could be expected to impinge upon the propensity for violent behavior. But when one considers that neighborhoods do not represent closed systems and that neighborhood residents interact in a larger arena, the expected response to socio-ecological stressors is ameliorated. In those neighborhoods that constitute the primary activity spaces of their residents, the role of socio-ecological stressors should be expected to have the greatest impact on interpersonal conduct.

In a black high-stress area in Detroit, it was revealed that dissatisfaction with the neighborhood is highly related to perceptions of the neighborhood safety (Kasl and Harburg, 1972: 322-323). The same study demonstrated that perceptions of neighborhood violence were low in low-stress neighborhoods. The one similarity in the perceptions of respondents in high- and low-stress neighborhoods was the prevalence of residential robbery, implying that circumstances surrounding homicidal acts should be expected to differ among high- and low-stress neighborhoods.

There is some evidence of a gradient pattern describing the distribution of stress within each city's black community. In Pittsburgh, a city characterized by topographic irregularity, the gradient pattern is most highly distorted. Also, there are communities in which the deviation from the gradient pattern appears to be related to variables other than those associated with the physical characteristics of the landscape. In Atlanta, for instance, the predominance of public housing in specific locations remote from the center of the city produces a distortion in the pattern. Similarly, a mild sectoral bias shows itself in St. Louis. The gradient pattern that is in evidence in Los Angeles does not appear to be strongly related to proximity to the central business district, as it is in most other places.

In most instances, variations in the intensity of stress appear to be related to the timing of settlement within the black community. Zones of long-term black occupancy tend to be characterized by high levels of stress, whereas those zones of more recent occupancy tend to be characterized by lower levels of stress. Thus, the dynamics of housing market operations within black residential space leads to a characteristic pattern of stress, unless distorted by the presence of large-scale public housing.

Within our sample cities, the mean stress levels do not vary greatly. Likewise, the range in the intensity of neighborhood stress does not show major differences from one city to another. There is an exception, however, as the range of stress in Atlanta neighborhoods is greater than in all other cities. While stress levels among individual cities exhibit a great deal of similarity in the mean stress scores for individual black communities, variations in homicide rates for this common set of communities is much

more disparate. The correlation between mean stress scores and mean homicide rate varies from a high of .557 in Atlanta to a low of .003 in Pittsburgh. Thus, neighborhood stress as we have defined it does not show a consistent relationship with the risk of homicide victimization (see table 19).

Table 19

The Ecological Correlation Between Neighborhood Stress Levels and Homicide Victimization Rates: 1970

Atlanta	.557
Detroit	.275
Houston	.261
Los Angeles	.192
St. Louis	.064
Pittsburgh	.003

It is not obvious why the range of association between neighborhood stress and homicide victimization is so large among individual places. This could possibly mean that some populations develop more effective coping mechanisms than others, and that the complexity of the homicide act does not allow it to be explained by a common set of independent variables such as those serving as the basic indicators of stress employed in this study. When stress is regressed against homicide rates at the neighborhood level, the results are likewise mixed.

The generally poor association between stress and the risk of homicide victimization may result from the manner in which stress has been operationally defined. Even if our operational definition of stress were more rigorously defined, the weakness of employing an ecological variate to explain individual behavior would still have to be confronted. The effectiveness of the

coping behavior of individuals residing in areas where the mean stress level is high can lead to a minimization of undesirable outcomes.

The manner in which individuals choose to cope with stress represents a learned response that is an outgrowth of membership in a specific cultural group. Rapoport recently evaluated the role of culture in mediating the effects of stress (1978: 241-261), suggesting that the coping mechanisms employed can only be evaluated against a set of norms and values practiced or adhered to by the responding individual. It is not apparent, however, that the black population within individual cities is so culturally divergent that dissimilar responses occur at the neighborhood scale when the intensity of stress is of similar order of magnitude. While the ability of the stress model to predict the risk of victimization at the neighborhood scale leaves much to be desired, it generally results in an underprediction of risk in high-stress neighborhoods and an overprediction of risk in low-stress areas (see figs. 16-20).

The Disaggregated Stress Model

In order to better understand the role of individual independent variables on the risk of victimization, at the neighborhood scale, it might be useful to disaggregate the stress model. The contribution of each of the 12 independent variables might then be observed as a means of ascertaining which variables are the primary contributors to the explanation of risk in individual places, as well as in specific settings. The independent variables included in the model are as follows:

<u>Table 20</u>	
X_1 = % female heads of households	X_7 = male unemployment
X_2 = % divorced	X_8 = % population black
X_3 = median family income	X_9 = median educational attainment
X_4 = % living outside SMSA	X_{10} = % housing vacancy
X_5 = % male 15-24 years of age	X_{11} = median rent
X_6 = % households in poverty	X_{12} = % crowded households

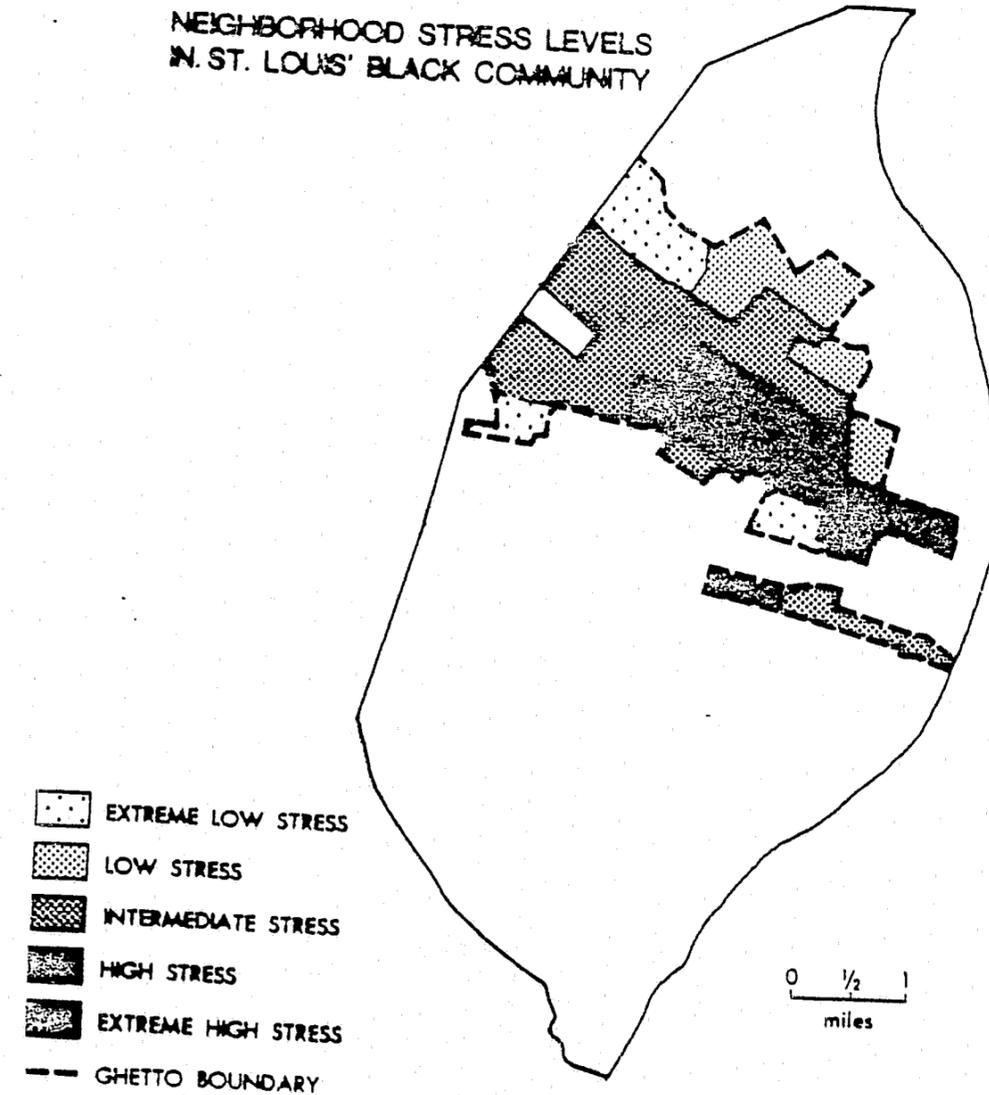


Fig. 16.

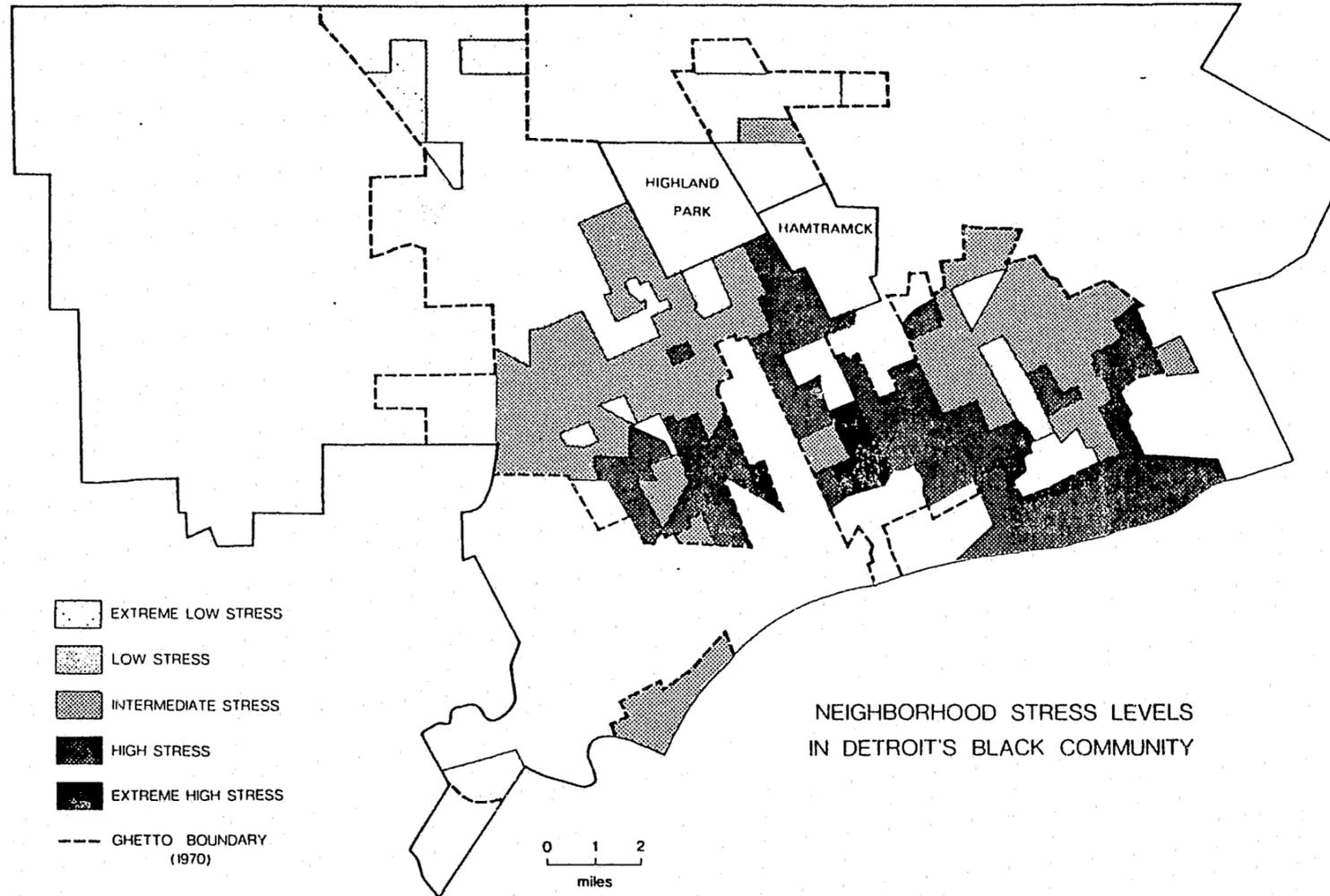
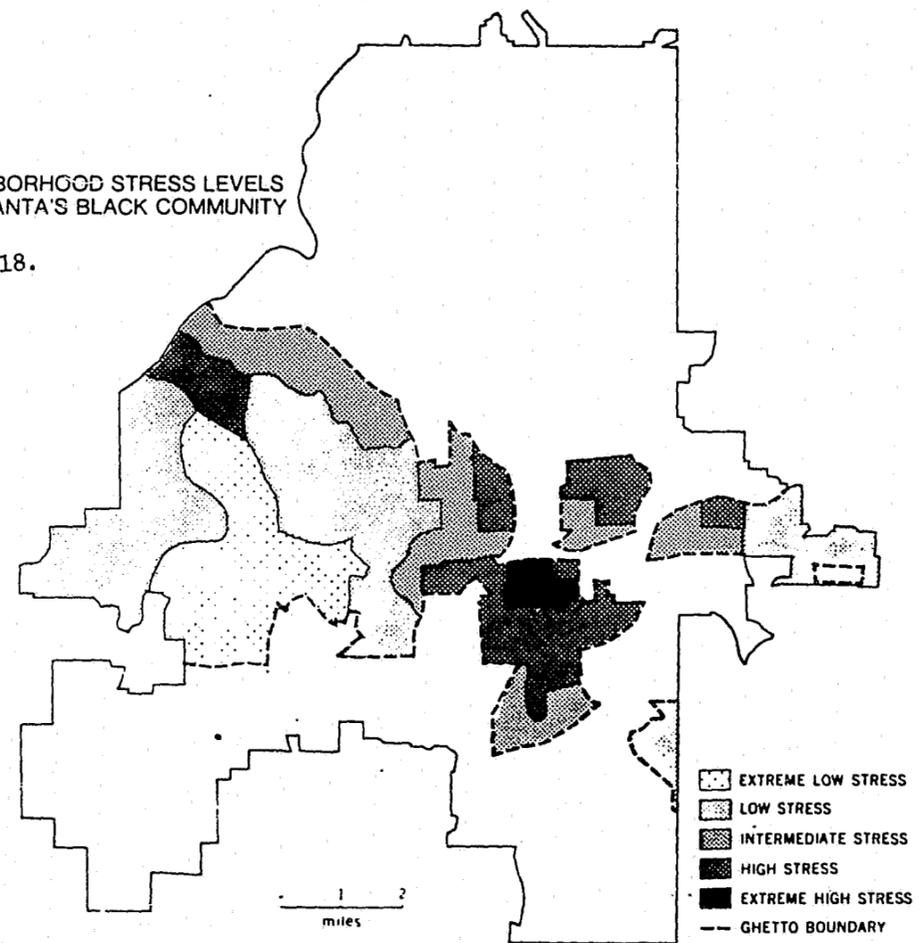


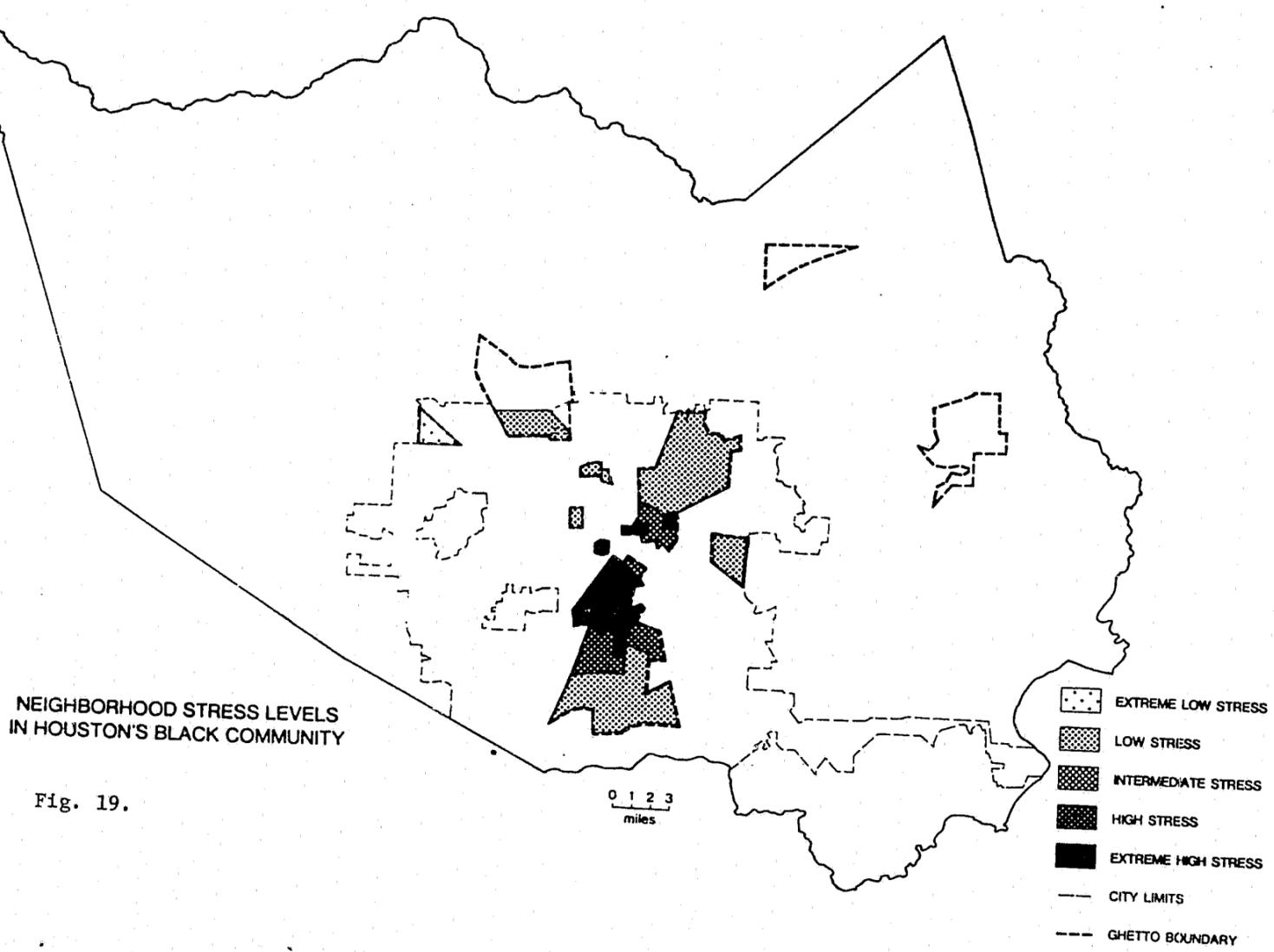
Fig. 17.

NEIGHBORHOOD STRESS LEVELS
IN ATLANTA'S BLACK COMMUNITY

Fig. 18.



184 d



NEIGHBORHOOD STRESS LEVELS
IN HOUSTON'S BLACK COMMUNITY

Fig. 19.

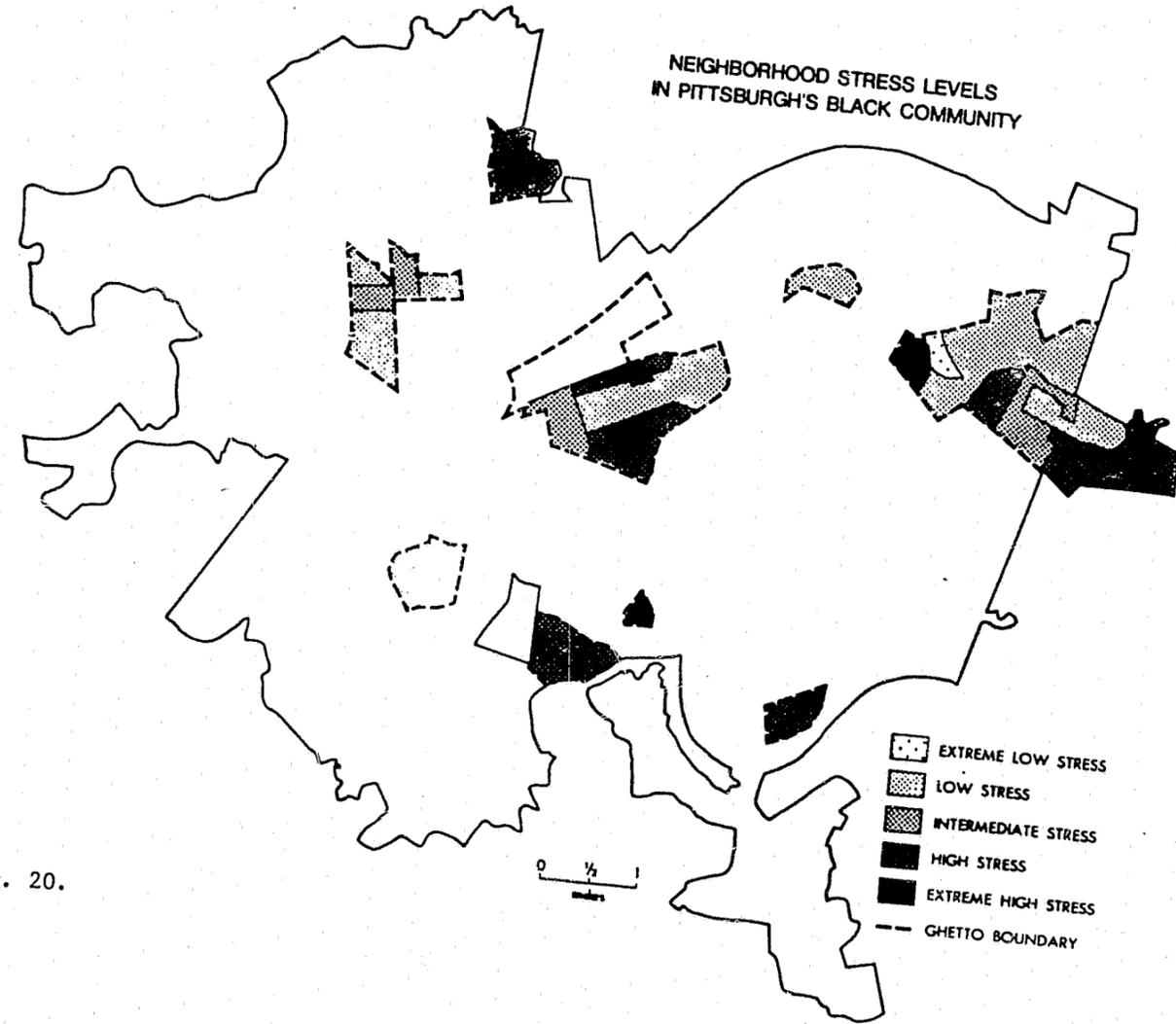


Fig. 20.

These variables were chosen because they act as indicators of the social and economic status of populations at the neighborhood scale and because selected items implicitly provide a measure of the physical character of place.

The strength of these variables to provide an explanation of risk of victimization can be expected to vary from city to city, as well as from neighborhood to neighborhood within a single city. This is likely, given the diversity of circumstances leading to homicide victimization from place to place. In those cities where traditional patterns of homicide victimization prevail, the variables in Table 20 should provide a better explanation than in those places where instrumentally motivated homicides are becoming more commonplace. Thus, neighborhoods characterized by low social status and high levels of social disorganization should be expected to have higher levels of victimization, basically as a result of the modal life styles of their residents. Where such conditions do not exist, then there is some question regarding the efficacy of the above variables to provide a satisfactory explanation of risk.

The regression format chosen to test the predictive powers of the independent variables is one in which variables are entered sequentially, one at a time. This procedure enables one to observe the interaction effect as the significance of the contribution of individual variables is altered when subsequent variables are entered in the analysis. Both normal and log transformations of all variables were employed without significant variation occurring in the level of explained variance, although it is apparent from observing individual scatter plots that the relationship between all independent variables and the dependent variable are non-linear. But those variables explaining the largest percentage of the total variance do exhibit a linear relationship with the dependent variable.

Variations in the Explanatory Power of the Model Among Sample Cities

The contribution of this set of independent variables to the total explained variance differs from city to city. The best explanations are reported for Pittsburgh ($r^2=.719$) and St. Louis ($r^2=.705$), while the worst results occurred in Detroit ($r^2=.186$) and Los Angeles ($r^2=.058$). Also, the predictive power of these variables showed moderate strength in Houston ($r^2=.483$) and Atlanta ($r^2=.393$). Moreover, in both St. Louis and Pittsburgh there appears to be less socioeconomic diversity within the black community and correspondingly less spatial segmentation on the basis of social rank. The two southern cities differ from Pittsburgh by displaying a greater intensity of spatial segmentation on the basis of social rank. Thus, within Houston and Atlanta a clear spatial pattern of socioeconomic differentiation has evolved with evidence of great disparity separating the extremely poor from those who are better off.

The Detroit and Los Angeles results, however, are less readily explainable. They both have a large and diverse black population occupying expansive residential zones within their respective cities. One would be led to speculate that the emergence of non-traditional homicide patterns in these cities weakens the explanatory power of variables that tend to be most effective in predicting homicidal risk in traditional low-income neighborhoods.

Homicide Frequency as a Surrogate for Risk

The pattern of homicide distribution within the black community in individual cities is highly varied. In some cities the frequency of victimization is highly concentrated within a small percentage of neighborhoods in which blacks constitute the majority population. In others, homicide frequency is more broadly dispersed. The notion of homicide frequency, as opposed

to homicide risk, is a more straightforward measure and allows one to monitor changes in the spatial pattern of residence of victimization from year to year. Risk of victimization, which is a more useful concept, can only be evaluated during those periods in which information describing the size of population is available.

It is necessary then to review data describing both frequency and risk at the neighborhood scale, if we are to more fully understand the implications of these twin measures. It would be highly desirable to be able to specify risk annually, but unfortunately this can only be done during the decennial year. Frequency data, however, is available annually and is often used by interested parties to proclaim changes in level of seriousness of the homicide victimization problem. Yet, this measure is not without shortcomings when used as a surrogate for risk.

As a simple measure of problem seriousness, census tracts in which three or more residents were victimized during a single year are identified as high-risk environments. The number three was chosen because it was thought to represent a suitable surrogate for high risk. If high risk is defined as a level of victimization of 50 per 100,000 or greater, three victimizations during a single year is thought to represent a reliable surrogate of risk. The correlation between homicide frequency and risk, however, does vary appreciably among cities, ranging from a high .680 in Pittsburgh to a low .140 in St. Louis. Los Angeles (.518), Houston (.497), and Detroit (.456) show a moderately strong association between frequency and risk, while Atlanta (.289) displays a somewhat weaker association.

Variables that greatly influence the association between frequency and risk are size of the resident population within census tracts and the number

of census tracts in which three or more residents were victims. Atlanta, Los Angeles, and Detroit tracts averaged between 4,000 to 5,000 persons. Houston tracts averaged more than 11,000 persons per tract, while Pittsburgh tracts averaged only slightly more than 3,000 persons. Los Angeles and Pittsburgh have the lowest victimization ratios, with 24 per cent and 13 per cent of all tracts falling into the high-frequency category. Houston and St. Louis are found at the other extremes, with approximately 65 per cent of all tracts within the black community being identified as high-frequency tracts. Both of the latter cities are characterized by larger than average populations per tract and fewer tracts in which blacks constitute the majority population.

In Atlanta, Detroit, and Pittsburgh, high frequency tracts possess a greater likelihood of constituting extreme high risk than elsewhere. Extreme high-risk environments are those where the homicide victimization rate equals or exceeds 100 per 100,000. Seventy percent of all Atlanta high-frequency tracts were also extreme high-risk tracts in 1970, while only 26 per cent of those in Houston could be described in this manner. Extreme high-risk tracts as percentage of total tracts in which blacks constitute the majority population range from a low of eight percent in Los Angeles and Pittsburgh to a high of 41 per cent in Atlanta. Each of the other cities averages close to one-fifth of the total. Thus, it is clear that both extreme high-risk homicide environments and high-frequency homicide environments differ substantially from city to city, and that the relationship between risk and frequency also varies.

The Strength and Direction of the Independent Variables

Just as the distributional pattern of frequency and risk varies among

cities, so does the strength of the selected independent variables to explain these patterns. Variables that are generally the strongest predictors of risk are unlikely to represent the strongest predictors of frequency. Even though frequency data are more readily available and will be employed extensively in this report, risk of victimization is the more critical issue. The contribution of the 12 independent variables to the risk of victimization based on place of residence is highly variable. In St. Louis, five of the 12 variables are significant at levels less than five per cent. But neither in Los Angeles nor Pittsburgh does a single variable show the previous level of significance.

It is also clear that the principal contributors to explanations of variance do not act in the same direction in all cities. Divorce, which is a primary contributor in St. Louis, Houston, and Atlanta, is a case in point. In the former two cities, divorce is positively associated with risk, while in the latter it is negatively associated with risk. This might simply reflect the high incidence of family homicide in the latter city, as well as the absence of divorce in poverty neighborhoods where risk is greatest in the latter city.

In St. Louis, however, the percent of female-headed households is also a significant contributor, but is characterized by a negative association. Women who were previously married, but who are no longer found in a family setting, in some way appear to contribute to an ecological risk of victimization. Likewise, this seems to imply that divorced women are found in different contextual settings in Atlanta than is true in St. Louis and Houston. Divorce does not serve as a critical predictor in Detroit, Los Angeles, or Pittsburgh.

The percent of population 15-24 is a primary contributor to an explanation of

risk in three cities; and as in the previous instance, it does not always produce a common direction of association. In both Detroit and Houston, the former variable is negatively associated with risk, whereas in Pittsburgh there is evidence of a positive association. Intuitively, one would be inclined to expect a positive association, although it is obvious that this could be misleading when the units of observation are neighborhood scale entities. The mobility characteristics of this population and the fact that risk is based on the neighborhood of victim residence might help explain the negative association.

Other variables that show significant levels of explanation from place to place are median education, median income, percent poverty, percent vacant, percent elsewhere, and percent unemployment. As in the prior examples, all variables do not maintain a common direction of association from place to place. For instance, percent elsewhere is generally negatively associated with neighborhood risk, but in Houston a positive association exists. Does this imply that persons migrating from non-metropolitan counties elsewhere in Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas tend to establish residence in low-income neighborhoods? A review of our correlation matrix suggests that this is not the case as a strong negative association exists between percent elsewhere and percent poverty.

The implications of the positive association between percent elsewhere and neighborhood risk in Houston remains unexplained. But it appears that the positive sign associated with percent elsewhere is the function of some joint effect between other variables and the former. When percent elsewhere is entered into a bivariate regression model employing Houston data, the association between percent elsewhere and homicide risk is negative. While

the full 12 variable model generally produces better results, a more limited model including fewer variables does not reduce the level of explanation significantly.

Status variables, such as those employed in our regression model, tend to provide a better explanation of risk than frequency of occurrence. Differences in frequency of occurrence are partially influenced by the number of units of observation in each sample. In this instance, the sample is purposive in that all census tracts with three or more victimizations have been included in the analysis. Among our sample cities, our 12 variable regression model provides a high level of explained variance in only one city. St. Louis has an R^2 of .70, or only slightly lower than the explained variance associated with risk. After we corrected for sample size, the explained variance in all other cases was small. The uncorrected coefficients of determination, however, ranged from a low of .14 in Detroit to a high of .82 in Pittsburgh. In those cities where the number of units of observation was larger, the corrected coefficient of determination was small.

As in our assessment of risk, the variables that contribute most to explanation of frequency vary from city to city. Likewise, the 12 variable model does not always produce the best results. In a number of instances, the highest level of significance for individual variables occurs at a point in the analysis where fewer than 12 variables have been entered into the regression equation. Table 21 shows the stage in the regression format in which the highest level of significance occurs in the explanation provided by individual variables. In neither Detroit nor Los Angeles do status variables such as poverty or unemployment tend to be explanatory, but instead variables that tend to represent demographic characteristics show up as being relatively

Table 21

Level of Significance of Key Variables at Point of Entry in the Regression Equation

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	<u>St. Louis</u>	<u>Atlanta</u>	<u>Detroit</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>	<u>Houston</u>	<u>Los Angeles</u>
Number of variables	11	6	5	11	1	11
Name of significant variables	% unemployed(+) median rent (+) % vacant (+)	% poverty(-) median income(-)	% 15-24	% vacancy (+)	% female head (+)	% elsewhere (+)
Corrected coefficient of determination	.701	.031	.036	.238	.207	.026

more important.

The variables that are traditionally thought to be more important contributors to deviant behavior occur with greater frequency in the remaining cities. The ability is poor of this set of variables to predict the frequency in which residents of a given neighborhood are likely to fall victims of an act of homicide. This might simply represent a weakness of employing place of residence as the underlying focus for the dependent variable. But without measures that would serve as an index of the spatial mobility characteristics of the average resident in specific neighborhoods, it becomes overly difficult to offset this procedural deficit. It does appear that the more compact the spatial configuration is that makes up the black community, the greater the explained variance.

The black communities in Los Angeles and Detroit are physically expansive, and the level of explained variance in both instances is small. On the other hand, where the black community tends to be spatially compact as in St. Louis, and secondarily in Pittsburgh and Houston, the level is improved. In the latter two cities, the shape of the black community is distorted by the presence of several non-contiguous nodes or what might be better described, at least in Houston, as a sectoral channeling effect. The Atlanta spatial configuration possesses greater similarity to that of Detroit than to that of the other sample cities. Since there has been no formal test of the contribution of the size and shape of the residential configuration, the above statements simply represent observations that one intuitively assumes might somehow to be related to the level of explanation.

Few analyses have assessed the problem of risk of violent victimization outside of the context of the larger community. When the larger community is

the focus of attention, it is almost standard practice to include percent black as a predictor variable. This decision is obviously based on the known association between black population and violent crime rates. Thus, percent black often turns out to be a significant explanatory variable in ecological models of violent crime.

Both Block (1979: 50) and Levy and Herzog (1978: 345) have found a strong association between percent black and the homicide rate in Chicago's community areas. The two latter writers indicate that percent black and percent unemployment were the most significant variables in explaining Chicago's 1972 homicide rate. Likewise, percent black has been employed as an independent variable in the regression equation employed by Hoch in an attempt to explain crime rates in more than 135 SMSA's in both 1960 and 1970. Hoch found the coefficient for percent black was always positive and often significant (1974: 190).

The tradition of employing percent black as an independent variable in regression equations designed to explain crime rates is not a recent one; and because of racial differences in both victimization and offense levels, it generally shows a strong association. But when the focus of attention is on the spatial configuration that makes up the black community, the level of explanation associated with percent black seems to diminish.

Among our six city sample, percent black often proved to be a weak contributor to an explanation of homicide risk. Only in Los Angeles did percent black rank above most other variables, and even there it was not significant at the 10 per cent level or below. The results of our regression model indicate that a unique set of variables among the 12 entering the equation best explain homicide rates in individual cities. In one city, St. Louis, percent black was found to be negatively associated with risk of victimization.

The Partitioning of Zones of Risk and the Employment of Alternative Models

The 12 variable regression model employed to evaluate homicide risk and frequency in our six city sample has demonstrated varying degrees of success. Acting on the assumption that high-risk homicide neighborhoods differ from those neighborhoods of lesser risk, the black communities in our primary sample cities were partitioned on the basis of critical levels of risk (greater than or equal to 100 per 100,000 and less than 100 per 100,000). After partitioning, the model was rerun with selected combinations of variables that showed a strong association with homicide in the original 12 variable equation.

In model I, the homicide rate is expressed as a function of X_1 (% female headed households)+ X_2 (% women divorced)+ X_3 (% family below poverty)+ X_4 (median educational attainment)+ X_5 (% vacant units) or $Y=F(X_1+X_2+X_3+X_4+X_5)$. In model II, the independent variables were X_1 (% women divorced)+ X_2 (% vacant units)+ X_3 (% elsewhere)+ X_4 (median family income), and finally in model III yet another combination of variables were programmed to enter the model. These variables included X_1 (% population 15-24)+ X_2 (% vacant units)+ X_3 (median family income)+ X_4 (% male unemployment). The three models were then employed to assess the risk of victimization independently in neighborhoods where level of risk exceeded 100 per 100,000 or was less than 100 per 100,000. The former neighborhoods are being designated as extremely high-risk neighborhoods, while the latter are identified as moderately high-risk neighborhoods.

The success of the individual models varied greatly from city to city, as well as between extremely high risk and moderately high-risk neighborhoods within the same city. Models I and II were the best predictors of risk

of victimization in extremely high-risk neighborhoods in both St. Louis and Atlanta, but predicted risk poorly in this neighborhood class in Detroit. Model III produced poor results in both extremely high- and moderately high-risk neighborhoods in St. Louis and Atlanta; but it explained 13 per cent of the variance in Detroit moderately high-risk neighborhoods, while explaining less than one percent of the variance in extremely high-risk neighborhoods. All these models produced poor results in both moderately high- and extremely high-risk neighborhoods in Detroit.

A review of the mean and deviation of the ten variables included in the three models reveals that minimal differences distinguish moderately high- and extremely high-risk neighborhoods on these dimensions (see table 22).

Table 22

The Mean and Standard Deviation for Selected Variables in Extremely High- and Moderately High-Risk Homicide Neighborhoods in Detroit: 1970

	Extremely High-Risk (N=32)		Moderately High-Risk (N=106)	
	\bar{X}	σ	\bar{X}	σ
Homicide Rate	137.0	41.1	54.0	23.3
Percent. Female Head	26.9	6.1	25.1	8.5
Percent Divorce	16.8	2.8	15.6	4.3
Percent. Poverty	21.3	8.2	18.2	9.3
Median Education	10.1	1.1	10.5	1.0
Percent Vacancy	8.8	5.0	8.2	5.3
Percent Elsewhere	7.8	3.5	7.9	3.2
Median Income	\$7952	\$1629	\$8536	\$2009
Percent Unemployment	10.4	4.5	9.9	4.6
Percent 15-24	17.0	2.8	18.0	2.6

No doubt these minor differences, in part, account for the lack of model success in Detroit. It should be pointed out, however, that none of the variables employed in the model were transformed. In those instances where the assumptions of linearity are invalid, the results of the model expectedly will be poor. A review of the individual scatterplots of the Detroit data shows a non-linear pattern to be characteristic of a number of variables. Block employed logged data in his regression of Chicago homicide rates "because of their non-linear nature" (1979: 48). It is commonplace to transform raw data by employing an appropriate transformation technique that will allow one to produce a linear relationship where one does not normally exist. As a means of determining if the transformed data provides a better explanation of homicide risk, a double log transformation ($\log Y = a + b \log X_n$) has been employed with each of the variables included in models I through III.

Neither the untransformed nor the transformed data in either model provide a good measure of the level of explained variance in moderately high risk neighborhoods in St. Louis. In extremely high-risk St. Louis neighborhoods, model I, employing untransformed data, provides a higher level of explanation ($r^2 .81$) than does transformed data ($r^2 .46$). In model II, the inverse of the previous pattern exists, with the log transformation producing better results ($r^2 .61$) than the untransformed data ($r^2 .33$). The results associated with model III are poor, both with and without transformed data.

In Atlanta, neither model -- utilizing transformed or untransformed data -- provides a strong explanation of homicide risk in moderately high-risk neighborhoods. Models I and II demonstrate moderate strength of association in extremely high-risk neighborhoods, with a slight change in strength being found after data transformation. Detroit is anomalous among our sample cities.

Untransformed data in each model provides a weak, but better, association in moderately high-risk than in extremely high-risk neighborhoods. After data transformation, each model provides a better explanation in extremely high-risk neighborhoods.

Model II accounts for 30 per cent of the explained variance in extremely high-risk Detroit neighborhoods. Moreover, when the data is transformed, model II provides the highest level of explanation in extremely high-risk neighborhoods in each city. The level of explanation ranges from r^2 of .46 in St. Louis, to r^2 of .37 in Atlanta and r^2 of .30 in Detroit. The transformed data reduces the discrepancy in the level of model explanation from place to place. Among the four variables included in Model II, percent elsewhere (X_3) contributes most to the level of explanation. It is negatively associated with risk and produces the largest change in r^2 in each city. In Atlanta and St. Louis, two primary explanatory variables are positively associated with risk: percent divorce (X_1) and percent vacancy (X_2). In Detroit, the second strongest variable, median family income (X_4), is negatively associated with risk.

Model III provides a better explanation of risk among extremely high-risk neighborhoods in Detroit than it does elsewhere, although it is just more than half as powerful as Model II. In model III, median family income (X_3) provides the strongest association with risk.

The three disaggregated models fare only slightly better than the 12 variable model in explaining the risk of victimization in moderately high-risk neighborhoods. Moreover, in the Detroit analysis, the best results are associated with the log transform of Model III. Even here, less than ten percent of the variance is explained. Unemployment (X_4) possesses the strongest

explanatory power in the latter instance. Variables other than the type employed in this analysis appear to be necessary to shed greater light on homicide risk in moderately high-risk neighborhoods.

In our primary sample cities, the lack of satisfactory model explanation of the variance associated with moderately high-risk neighborhoods suggests that they possess characteristics not readily measured, which distinguish them from extremely high-risk neighborhoods.

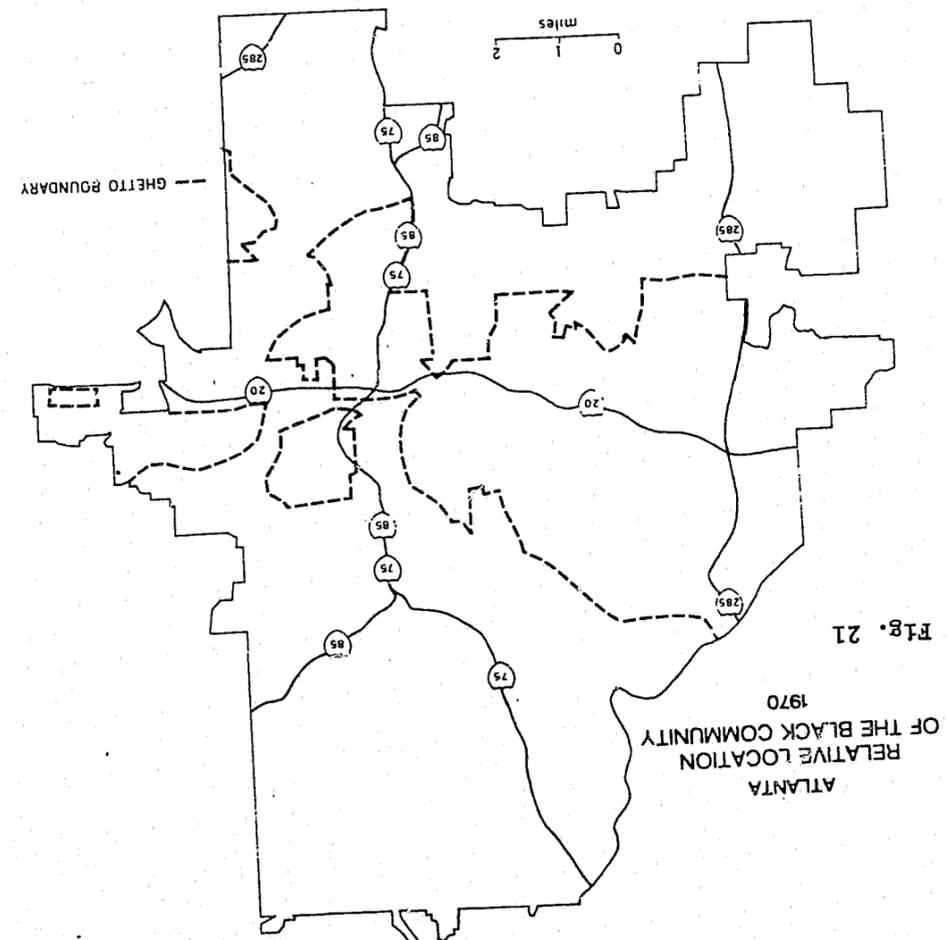
The Spatial Pattern of Risk in the Sample Cities

The previous statements have specified some of the socio-demographic differences among these neighborhood classes. Yet, nothing has been said regarding their pattern of spatial distribution. The greatest concentration of extremely high-risk neighborhoods occurs in Atlanta (see fig. 21).

Atlanta

Most extremely high-risk neighborhoods in Atlanta ring the CBD on the east, west, and south, and represent zones of traditional black residential occupance. Moreover, it has been noted that Atlanta's pattern of black residential concentration remained essentially fixed between 1930 and 1950 (Hartshorn and others, 1976: 46). Frequently within these traditional settings, or on their margins, are to be found public housing developments. The original housing in these zones is often sited in neighborhoods in which high risk prevailed in 1970. Besides these three primary clusters, two outliers could also be observed. These outliers were also zones in which public housing structures had been sited.

Thus, it appears that high risk environments in Atlanta, in 1970, were largely comprised of neighborhoods that had originally been set aside for



low-income black occupance during the early part of the century. The public housing component, however, represents a much more recent addition. Finally, extremely high-risk neighborhoods in Atlanta exemplify the oldest black occupied neighborhoods in the city.

St. Louis

In St. Louis, extremely high-risk neighborhoods tend to typify a different spatial pattern than that just described for Atlanta. This, in part, is a reflection of the spatial layout of the city and the location of the central business district within its spatial developmental context. The St. Louis extremely high-risk neighborhoods are inclined to be more dispersed than those in Atlanta. Half of these neighborhoods are located along a north-south axis less than one mile west of the downtown. The other neighborhoods tend to be somewhat more dispersed, with three of the four located toward the western margin of the city (see fig.22).

St. Louis neighborhoods have undergone massive changes since 1950, resulting in the dispersal of the black population throughout a band or corridor approximately three miles wide and extending from an area just west of the central business district to the western edge of the city. In terms of housing types, this corridor possesses a diversity of residential environments, but is essentially occupied by the city's low income population.

Detroit

In 1970 the spatial pattern of extremely high risk in the city of Detroit was largely confined to the city's inner and middle zones, with one outlier found along a narrow zone on the city's northern edge (see fig. 23). The greater frequency of high-risk neighborhoods occurs within the city's rapidly changing middle zone. On the near east side of the city, which has

ST. LOUIS
EXTREME HIGH RISK
HOMICIDE NEIGHBORHOODS
1970

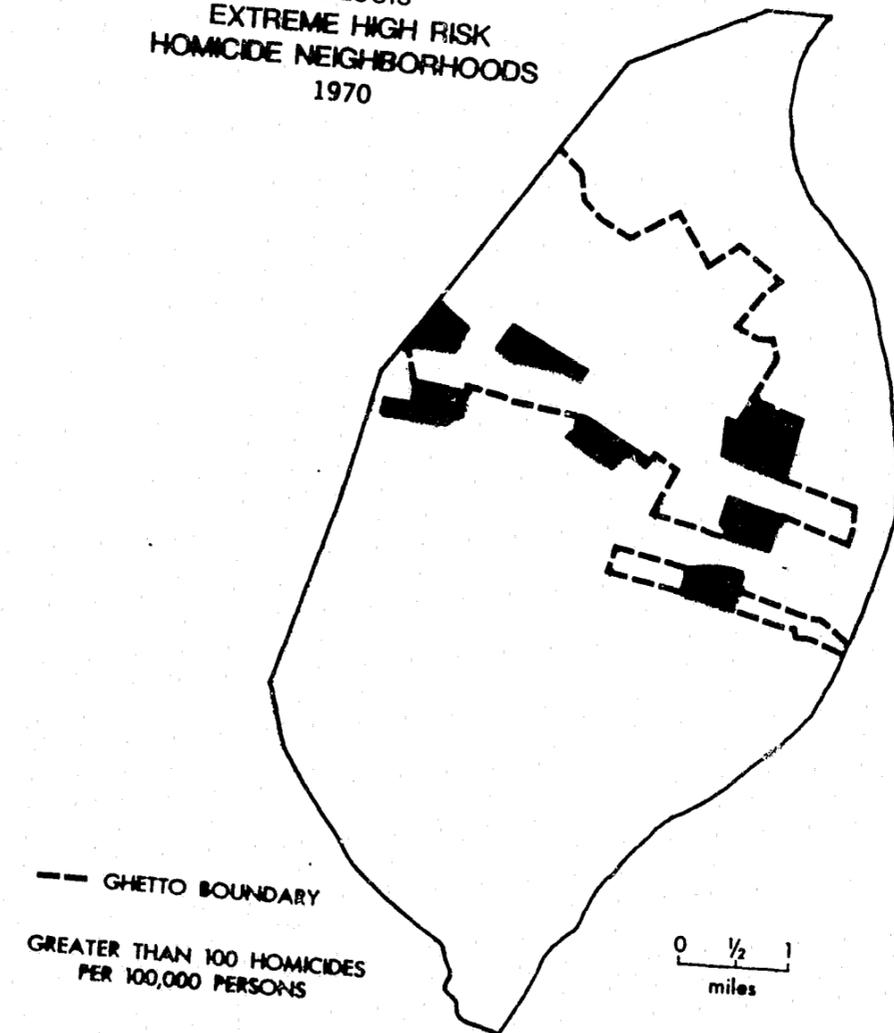
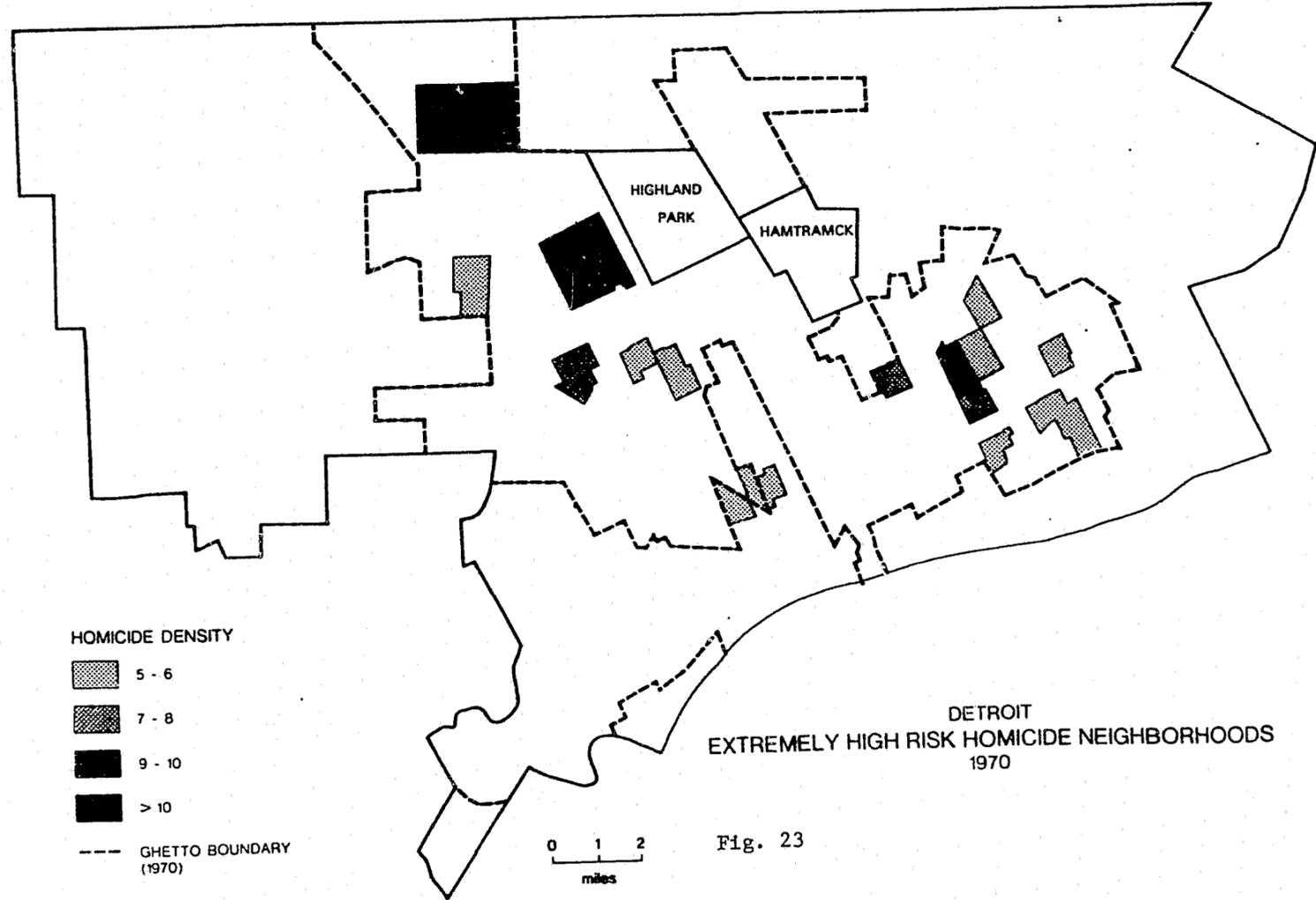


Fig. 22



long served as one of two core areas of black settlement in Detroit. In 1970 this area was severely blighted, and in the early sixties much of it was targeted for renewal.

Extremely high-risk environments were frequently located in Detroit's inner zone in 1970. Sinclair and Thompson, in describing the population of the inner zone, state the following:

The inner zone is the domain of the poor and the downtrodden, those who are "rejected," "forgotten," or "left behind" by other elements of Detroit society. More than 25 per cent of the zone's 37,000 families subsist on incomes below the poverty level (1977: 8).

The association between risk and poverty would be expected to be high here, with much of the risk being expressive in its orientation.

The middle zone, a zone of more recent black occupance, has come to include the greatest number of extremely high risk neighborhoods in the city, although many of these are located adjacent to inner zone neighborhoods. Also, the middle zone represents the zone of working and lower middle class concentration. Moreover, in the northwest sector of this zone, blacks have become the majority population, with racial change occurring within a very short period of time. In this sector, the prevalence of extremely high risk is not always in keeping with the physical image that this zone projects. Yet, Sinclair and Thompson, when discussing the attributes of the middle zone, state:

The middle zone contributes greatly to the city of Detroit's reputation as the nation's homicide capital. The high incidence of violent crime is related integrally to the tensions and frustrations created by social upheaval, but also is linked to Detroit's drug traffic and to an exceedingly high handgun ownership (1977: 13).

On the basis of what is known about these two zones, it is assumed that there might exist a zone-specific pattern of circumstances leading

to death that our regression model was earlier unable to detect. Two neighborhoods, which satisfied the definition of extremely high-risk in 1973, were selected to illustrate this point. One of the 1973 neighborhoods was situated in the city's inner zone, while the other was in the middle zone (see fig.24).

The distribution of extremely high-risk areas in Detroit appears to be confined to old established down-and-out neighborhoods and to newer neighborhoods in which social change has taken place rapidly. Thus, unlike both Atlanta and St. Louis, extremely high risk is not overwhelmingly associated with the distribution of poverty, but tends to also be sensitive to other forces that are more difficult to specify.

Differential Environmental Risk in Secondary Sample Cities

In terms of the character and pattern of black residential environments, the secondary cities are more diverse than are the primary cities. Since the middle sixties, two of the cities -- Los Angeles and Houston -- have had rapid growth of their black populations. On the other hand, Pittsburgh -- the single eastern city in the sample -- has experienced very slow growth in its black population during the same time interval. Thus, the demand for black residential space has been prompted by the growth characteristics of individual places. Moreover, the spatial pattern of black distribution is also partially influenced by the topographic character of the landscape.

Pittsburgh best displays the strength of this topographic factor. Here, several small non-contiguous black residential areas exist as a result of the surface feature irregularities that have influenced the amenity value of sites in that city. Contrasting the sprawling black community in Los Angeles

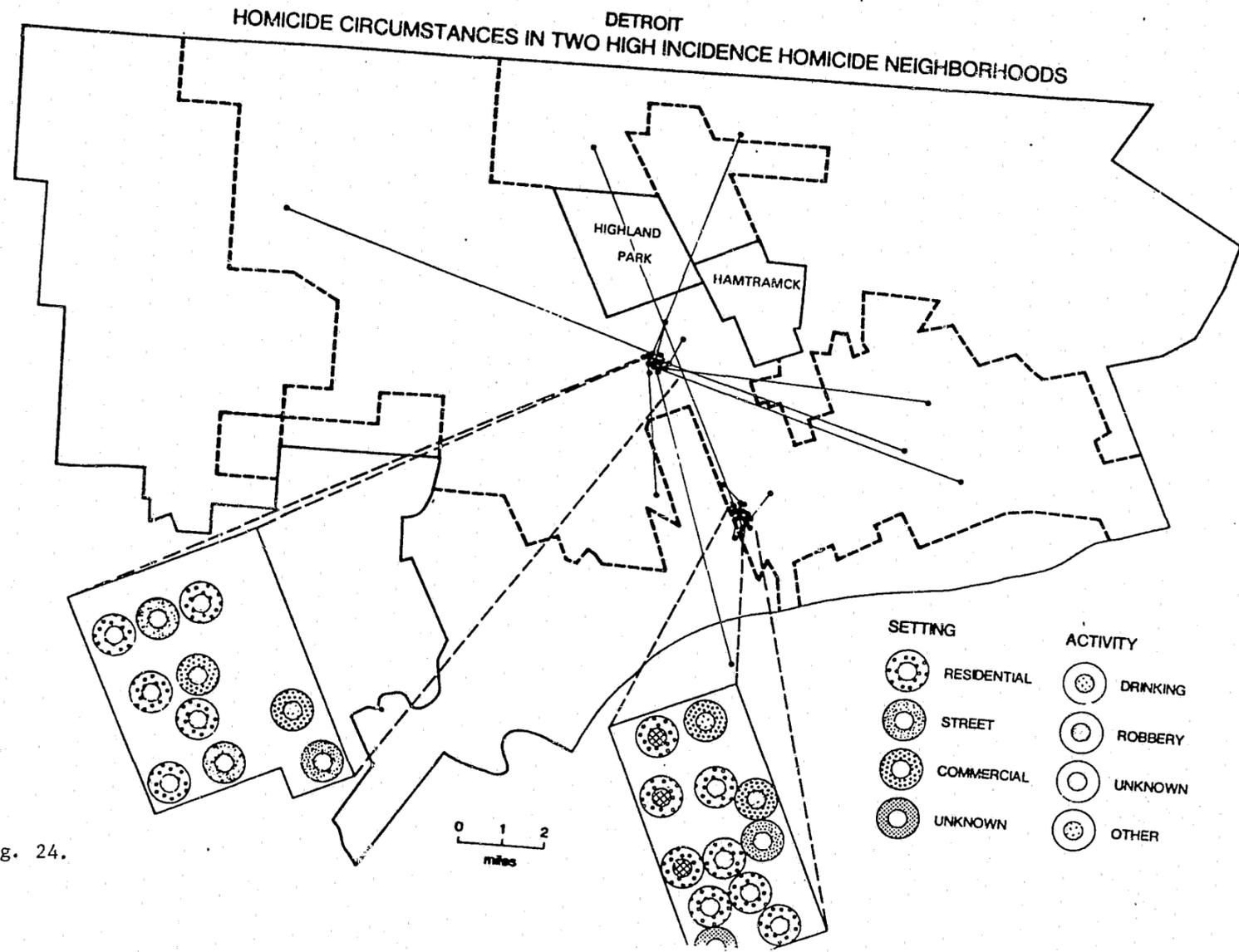


Fig. 24.

with several non-contiguous nodes in Pittsburgh makes comparison of the spatial pattern of high-risk environments difficult at best.

Los Angeles

In 1970, there were 12 identifiable extremely high-risk environments in the Los Angeles black community. Nine of these were located east of the Harbor Freeway (see figs. 25, 26), which has been described by Nelson and Clark as the divider between the city's poor and non-poor black populations (1977: 38). These extremely high-risk neighborhoods form two loose clusters in the low-income sector of the black community. One of these clusters is located north of Slauson Avenue in a zone of older black settlement, whereas the second cluster is located in the far south, with an outlier in the nationally known community of Watts.

As was true in our primary city sample, the modal extremely high-risk pattern is one in which high-risk neighborhoods tend to be concentrated in or near areas of original black settlement, with an occasional outlier being found elsewhere. There is a strong correspondence between high-risk and high-frequency neighborhoods in Los Angeles, inasmuch as three-quarters of the high-risk neighborhoods are also high-frequency neighborhoods. High-frequency neighborhoods, however, are twice as numerous as high-risk neighborhoods. Unlike Detroit, both high-risk and high-frequency environments are less commonplace.

As was true in other cities, our regression models accounted for a greater percent of the explained variance in extremely high-risk environments than in moderately high-risk environments. (The term "low risk" is deliberately excluded as a descriptor in the black community because so few neighborhoods

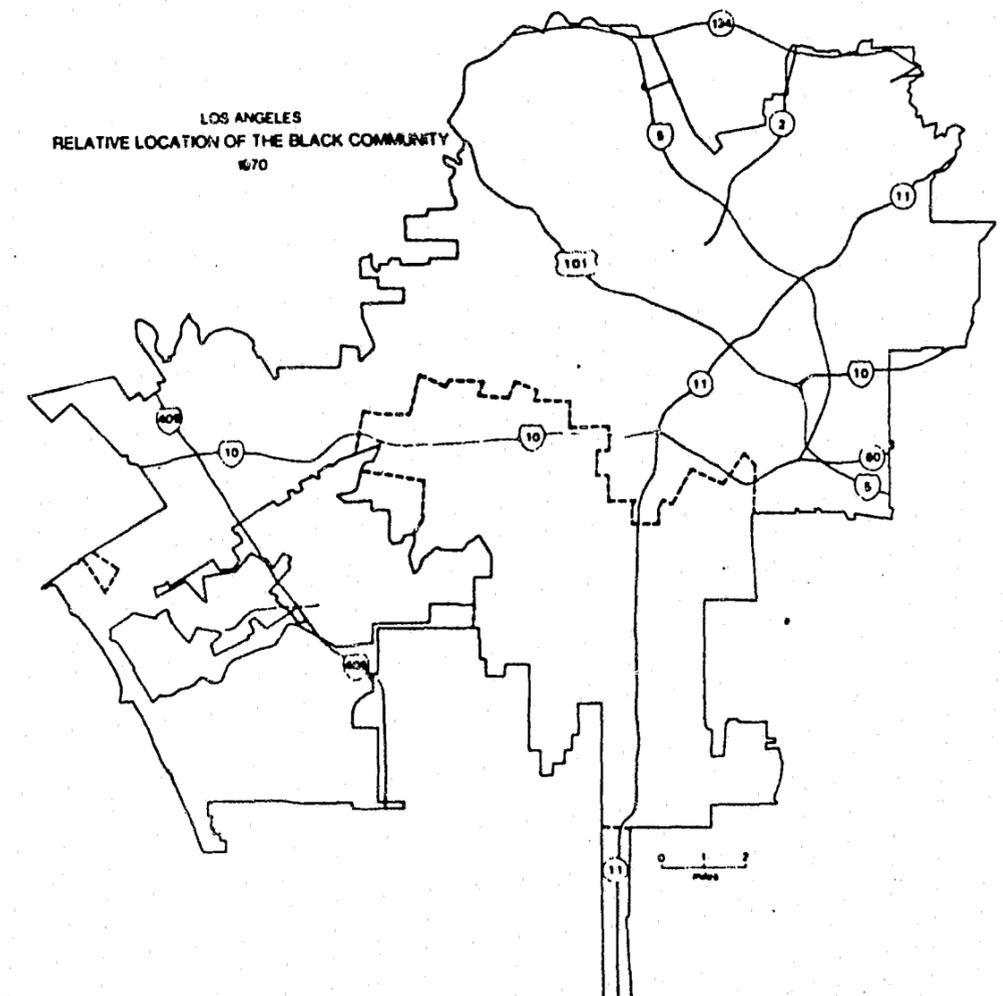


Fig. 25.

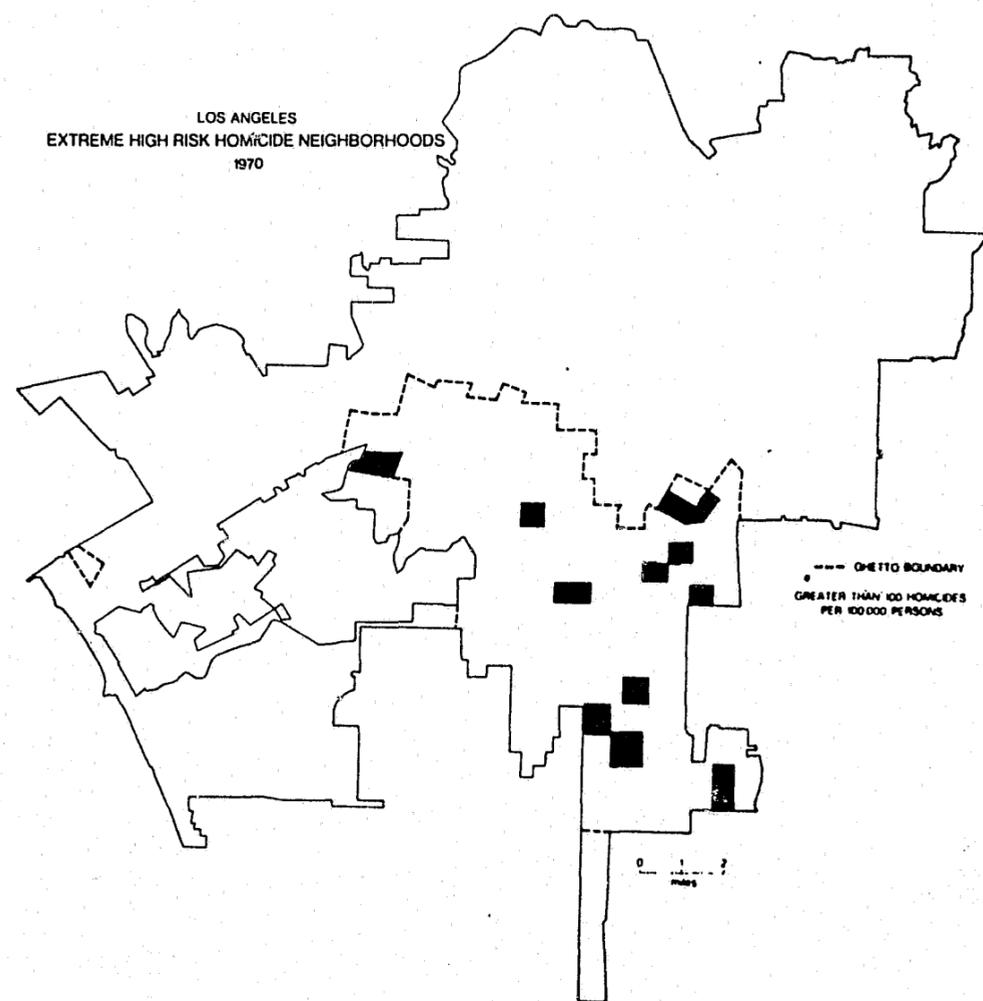


Fig. 26.

have homicide victimization rates lower than 50 per 100,000.

Los Angeles is, however, an exception. It has a much larger share of its neighborhoods with risks lower than 50 per 100,000 than that occurring in other cities. Los Angeles shows greater similarity to Detroit in the pattern of risk. Also, there is a stronger similarity to Detroit in the success of the model that provides the better predictor of risk. As in Detroit, model III turned out to provide the best explanation of risk.

The single most significant variable, in this instance, was percent vacant, which had a partial r of .781 and was significant at the two percent level in the linear model. Vacancy is no doubt a good surrogate for neighborhood desirability or attractiveness when alternatives exist. Thus, in those situations where there exists a strong spatial pattern of socio-economic differentiation within the black community, differences in intensity of risk can be expected. Likewise, the success of individual models employed to explain risk will show greater variation under these circumstances.

The Spatial Dynamics of Homicide Victimization within the Black Community

The previous analysis of the spatial pattern of both risk and frequency of victimization has been confined to a single year, 1970, which was employed as the benchmark year since census data was available to assist in the analysis. A variety of attributes describing neighborhood scale phenomenon, which are thought to be associated with the risk of victimization, were available in the census files. In the succeeding years, no such information is available, and the dynamics of change are such that to assume stability in significant attributes could prove misleading. The absence of critical input data will require that we move from a determination of risk to frequency of risk as a means of monitoring the pattern and scale of victimization within

the black community. The time period that will be employed for the purpose of detecting change in the homicide environment will be 1970-75.

Homicide Frequency versus Homicide Risk

The homicide epidemic in our primary sample cities continued during this interval; however, the spatial pattern of victimization varied among individual cities. An operational definition of risk was specified earlier. In defense of that definition, let us state our case in the following way: It is possible to approach risk of victimization from the perspective of place of occurrence, place of offender residence, or place of victim residence. Each has its advantages and disadvantages, and optimally one might wish to integrate all three in attempting to derive homicide risk environments.

But if forced to choose between the three, given an interest in defining risk at the neighborhood level, the decision would be to select place of victim residence on the grounds of data completeness and the possibility of linking place of residence to a greater variety of possible causal factors. Yet, this measure is clearly beset by a number of deficiencies. Place of occurrence, however, is an even weaker measure on which to base risk. Regarding the final measure, offender place of residence, data incompleteness is a major drawback as well as the lack of uniformity in reporting this information by official agencies. Needless to say, in order to fully comprehend risk at least from a subjective perspective, all three variables are central. When confronted with the need to choose between them, one leans in the direction of place of residence.

Homicide Frequency and the Changing Spatial Dimensions

An anticipated by-product of employing this threshold value of frequency is its ability to provide an index of the rate and direction for the changing spatial dimensions in the black community within individual cities. For those who are inclined to be supportive of notions that attribute risk of victimization to the operation of a black subculture, changes in the frequency of victimization along the periphery of the black community tend to provide some support. There is little question, though, that as the black population is dispersed throughout a larger spatial frame, an increase in the frequency of victimization on the periphery is likely to occur. Whether this show of increased frequency on the periphery is a function of structural conditions is likely to be disputed.

The expansion of the circumference of victimization can best be observed in the city of Detroit. Evidence of the dispersion of the place of homicide victims, however, can be readily observed in those neighborhoods that lie immediately west of Detroit's zone of primary black occupancy (see figs. 27, 28). In 1970, only 11 black homicide victims resided west of Greenfield Avenue, but by 1975 that zone was the place of residence of 59 black homicide victims. Thus, the increase in the frequency and distribution of homicide victimization beyond a pre-existing boundary can be employed as crude evidence of a boundary shift. As the black community alters its physical dimensions, there appears to evolve an altered spatial pattern of risk of victimization. But seldom is the frequency of victimization as high as that prevailing in more central locations.

It is being suggested that the spatial distribution of the residence of black homicide victims is a good indicator of the changing spatial dimensions

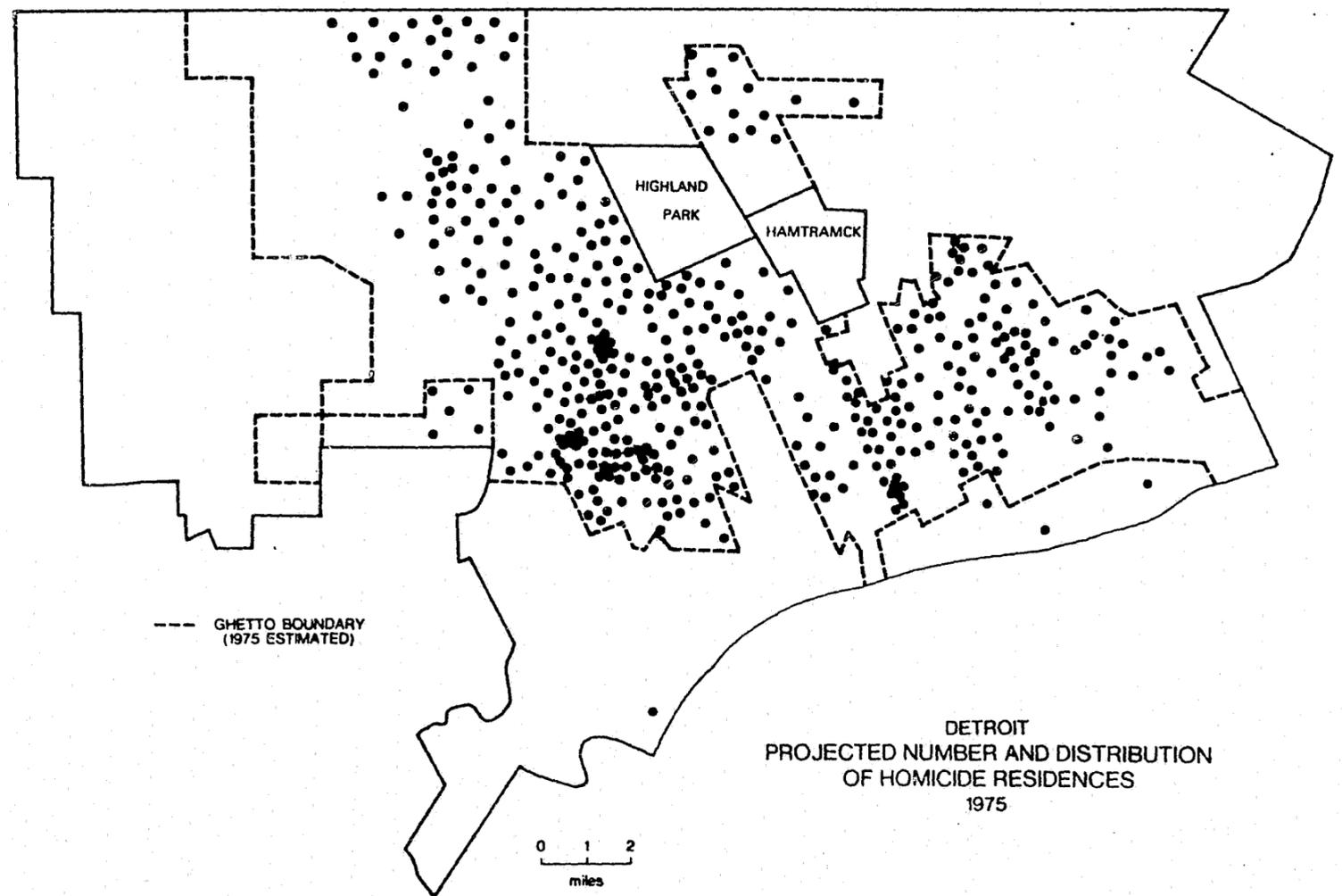


Fig. 27.

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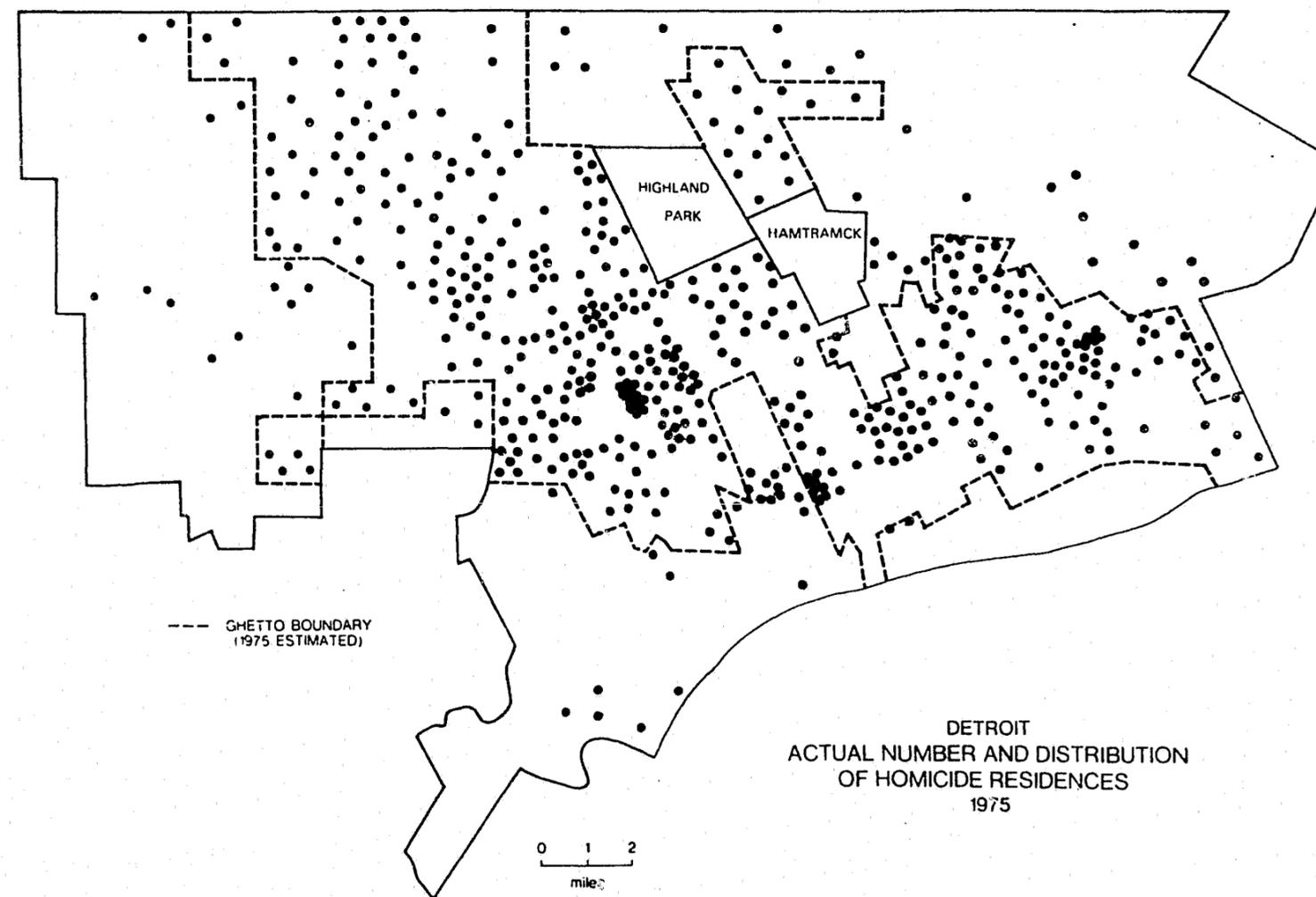


Fig. 28.

of the black community. In those communities characterized by rapid population growth, an increase in the frequency of homicide victimization on the periphery of the black community should be in evidence. This is certainly the case in Detroit. In the slower or non-growth communities, only weak evidence of this pattern is expected to prevail. For instance, in St. Louis some proof of the increase in homicide victimizations on the periphery of the 1970 black community is observed, but the zone in which these changes are occurring indicates only limited expansion of the black community's boundaries during a five-year interval.

Thus, the rate of change of the black population, and its subsequent spread beyond the limits of its original boundary, will influence the spatial change in frequency of victimization. The import of this pattern seems to indicate that a shift in place of residence does not necessarily lower the risk of victimization for specific individuals as long as those moves take place within a specific socio-cultural territorial framework. There is some danger, however, in the previous generalization. The victim's place of residence is only one dimension of the risk of victimization; furthermore, other dimensions are likely to be of greater significance.

Up to this point, the discussion of the homicide environment has focused on its micro-environmental attributes. While a neighborhood scale analysis is of great importance, it is sometimes advantageous to focus attention on spatial units that are somewhat more expansive and that lend themselves to broader generalization. A combining of spatially contiguous neighborhoods, which satisfy some critical minimum threshold in terms of homicide frequency, should facilitate a shift from a micro-environmental assessment to a macro-

environmental assessment of homicide density within the context of the black community. Instead of attempting to untangle the specific attributes of individual neighborhoods, we can now turn our attention to the role of neighborhood clusters as contributors to the total level of victimization. Needless to say, evidence of a shift in place of residence does not necessarily serve as an indicator of a change in one's social network, or change in one's set of values or behavioral propensities, all of which have an impact upon the risk of victimization.

The Macro-environment of Victimization

Contiguous neighborhoods in which three or more resident victimizations occurred within a single year constitute a cluster. The neighborhood cluster approach is thought to be superior to a single neighborhood assessment of the problem. A major drawback of this approach is the location of the periodic isolated neighborhood that satisfies the critical minimum threshold of resident victimization. Thus, the decision to identify high frequency clusters -- simply on the basis of contiguity -- does eliminate some high frequency neighborhoods from the assessment. The extent to which this takes place appears to be a function of the degree of compactness of the black community.

Atlanta's Homicide Clusters

In 1970 there were three high frequency clusters located in Atlanta's black community, but by 1975 four such clusters could be identified (see figs. 29 and 30). During the initial year most Atlanta neighborhoods were included in these three clusters, with more than four-fifths of all homicide

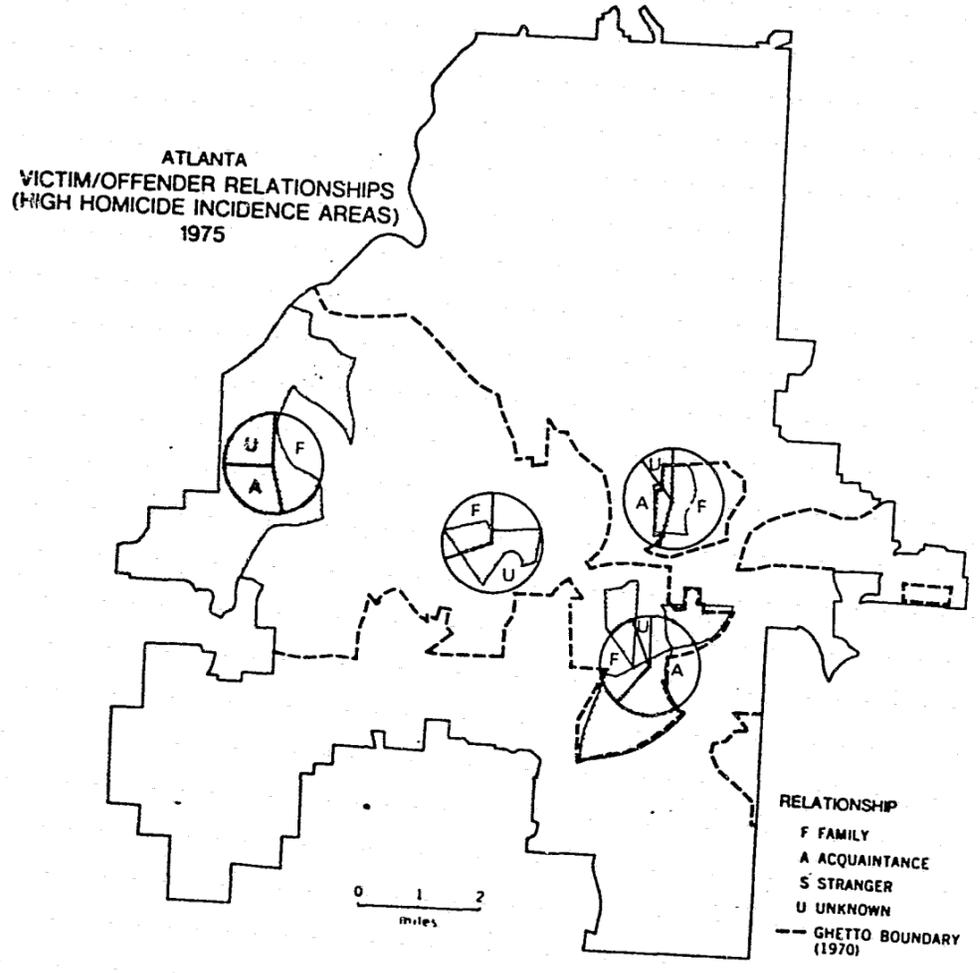


Fig. 30.

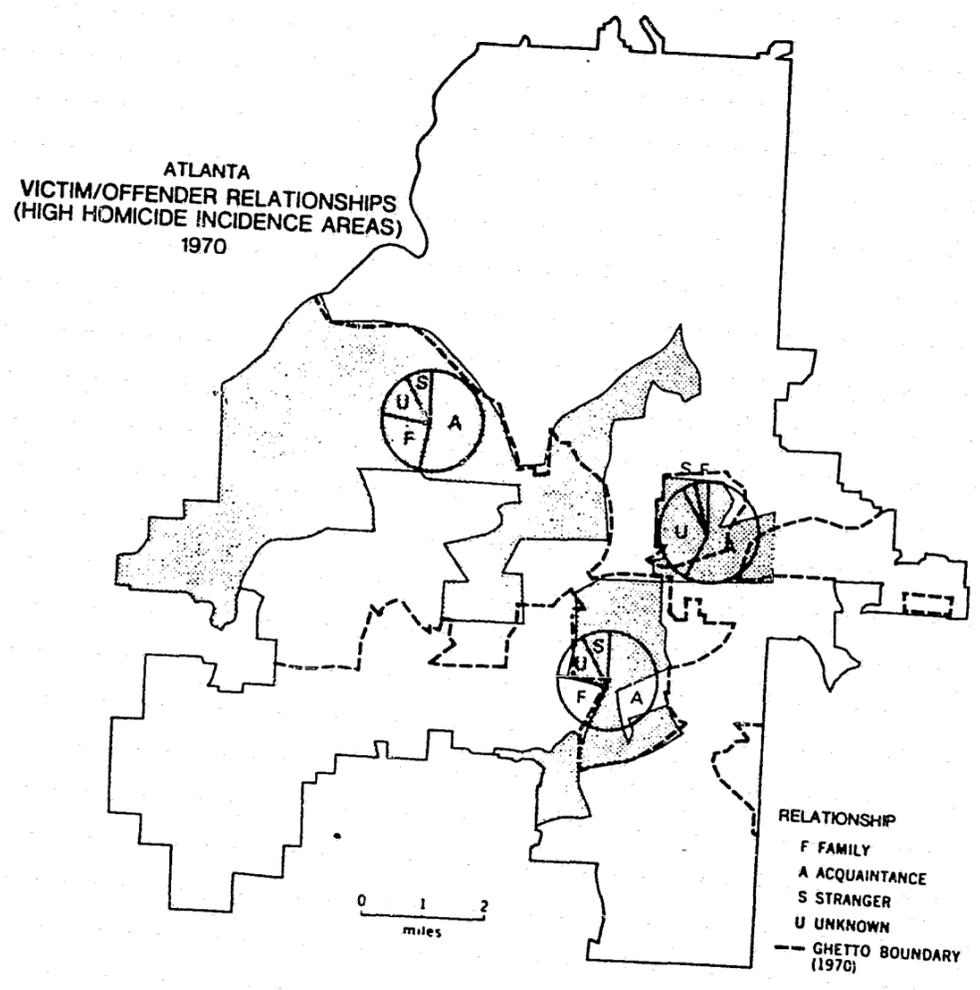


Fig. 29.

victims residing within these primary clusters. These clusters included not only most of the city's extremely high-risk neighborhoods, but numerous others as well. During the initial year most neighborhoods in Atlanta were plagued by levels of victimization that identified them as at least moderately high risk environments.

Most of the neighborhoods excluded from these high-risk clusters were located in southwest and east Atlanta. Low-stress Atlanta neighborhoods were those least likely to be found in high-frequency clusters. Thus, only in those environments that were the places of residence of high-status populations or households characterized by minimum levels of disorganization was risk also at a minimum. Between 1970-75 the number of homicide victimizations in Atlanta showed evidence of subsiding. Moreover, the changing magnitude of the number of homicide victimizations led to an altered pattern of victim clusters by 1975.

Only 22 per cent of Atlanta victims were residents of the four high-frequency clusters that emerged in the latter year. The decline in number of homicides also led to decline in the density of victimization. Three of the 1975 clusters surround the central business district and include a number of the previously identified extremely high-risk neighborhoods. The fourth cluster was located on the western margin of the city and represented a zone of rapid population growth, leading to some discrepancy in the association of frequency and risk. By 1975, the skeleton of the earlier clusters was intact, but the magnitude of those clusters had been sharply delineated. This pattern tends to provide support for the notion that as stress diminishes in communities dominated by expressive acts of violence, high-risk environments will be confined to those of minimum amelioration of stress.

St. Louis showed little change in its distribution of high-frequency neighborhoods during the period 1970-75. In both intervals, four clusters were identified (see figs. 30 and 31) that included most neighborhoods in the black community. Homicide density in St. Louis was high during both time periods. There, however, was some evidence of lessening density by 1975. The lowered density can be attributed to a major decline in frequency in the community's eastern cluster, a cluster that experienced some significant depopulation during the interval. Also, there was some lessening of homicide density in the community's central cluster.

The westernmost cluster represented the zone of black population expansion and included just more than one-fifth of all victim residences in both time periods. Moreover, in both periods an outlier containing fewer than five percent of victim residences could be observed.

The compactness of St. Louis's black community permits only a minor gap between clusters, with the three central clusters essentially constituting a single environment in which the frequency of victimization is high throughout. Thus, unlike Atlanta and Detroit, where low-frequency neighborhoods occur with some regularity, this is seldom the case in St. Louis. While there is some evidence of lessening density within clusters, there is little evidence of a diminishing scale of clusters satisfying the threshold level of victimization. One would conjecture that the intensity of stress in St. Louis' subcommunities maintained heightened levels throughout the period, such that homicide victimizations were commonplace in all environments of predominantly black residence in the city.

Detroit Clusters

During the period under investigation, the clustering of high-frequency

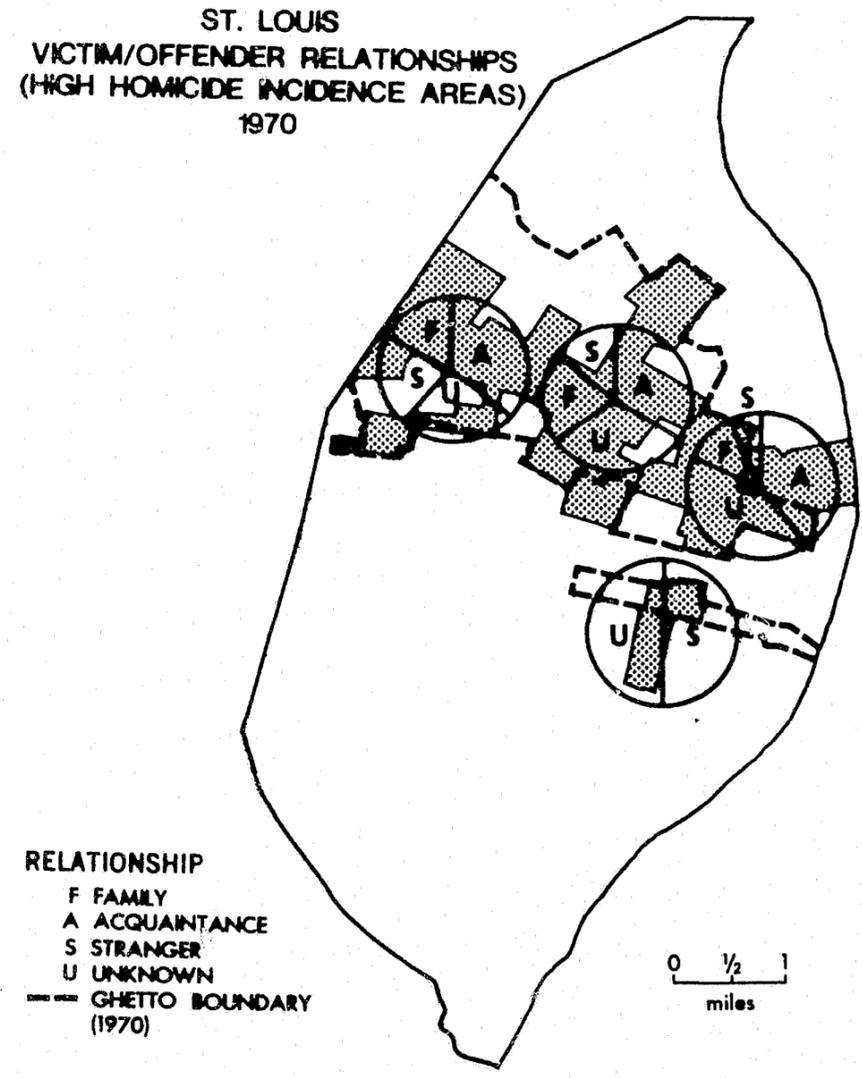


Fig. 30.

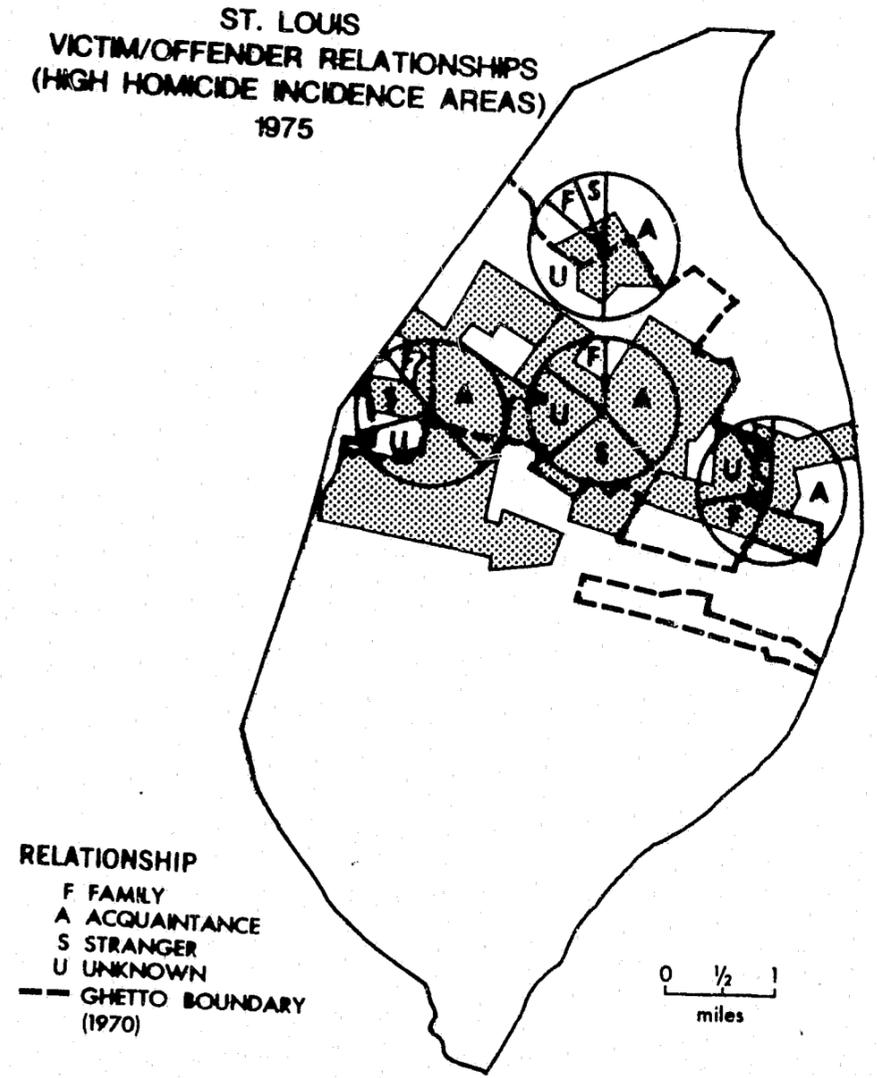


Fig. 31.

neighborhoods in Detroit reveals a more complex pattern than that occurring in its companion cities. In both intervals more than 40 per cent of all victims resided in high-frequency clusters. A slight increase in the percent found in such environments occurred between 1970 and 1975. While the magnitude of the clustering showed only minor differences over time, the spatial pattern of the clusters showed evidence of alteration (see figs. 32 and 33).

There were twice as many identifiable clusters in 1975 (14) as in 1970 (7), even though the number of resident victims found in these clusters changed little. The mean number of neighborhoods forming a cluster diminished during the interval, with many fewer large clusters prevailing in the latter year. Yet, few clusters continued to serve as the places of residence of most victims. By 1975, two west side clusters were the places of residence of 44 per cent of all cluster resident victims. Clusters occupying the same relative location as they did in 1970 also accounted for approximately the same number of victims. Moreover, the two principal zones of west side resident victimizations remained stable over time.

By 1975 the east side clusters had become more fragmented, and the near downtown cluster had diminished in scale. One major change in the cluster pattern was the formation of two secondary clusters beyond the margin of the 1970 black community. Both of these new outliers were located on the western edge of the earlier community. The emergence of additional clusters beyond the margin of the 1970 black community has led to a reduction in level of homicide density, as a similar number of homicide victims were residing in a larger expanse of territory in 1975. Not only did changes take place in homicide density during the previous interval, but changes in the age structure

219 a

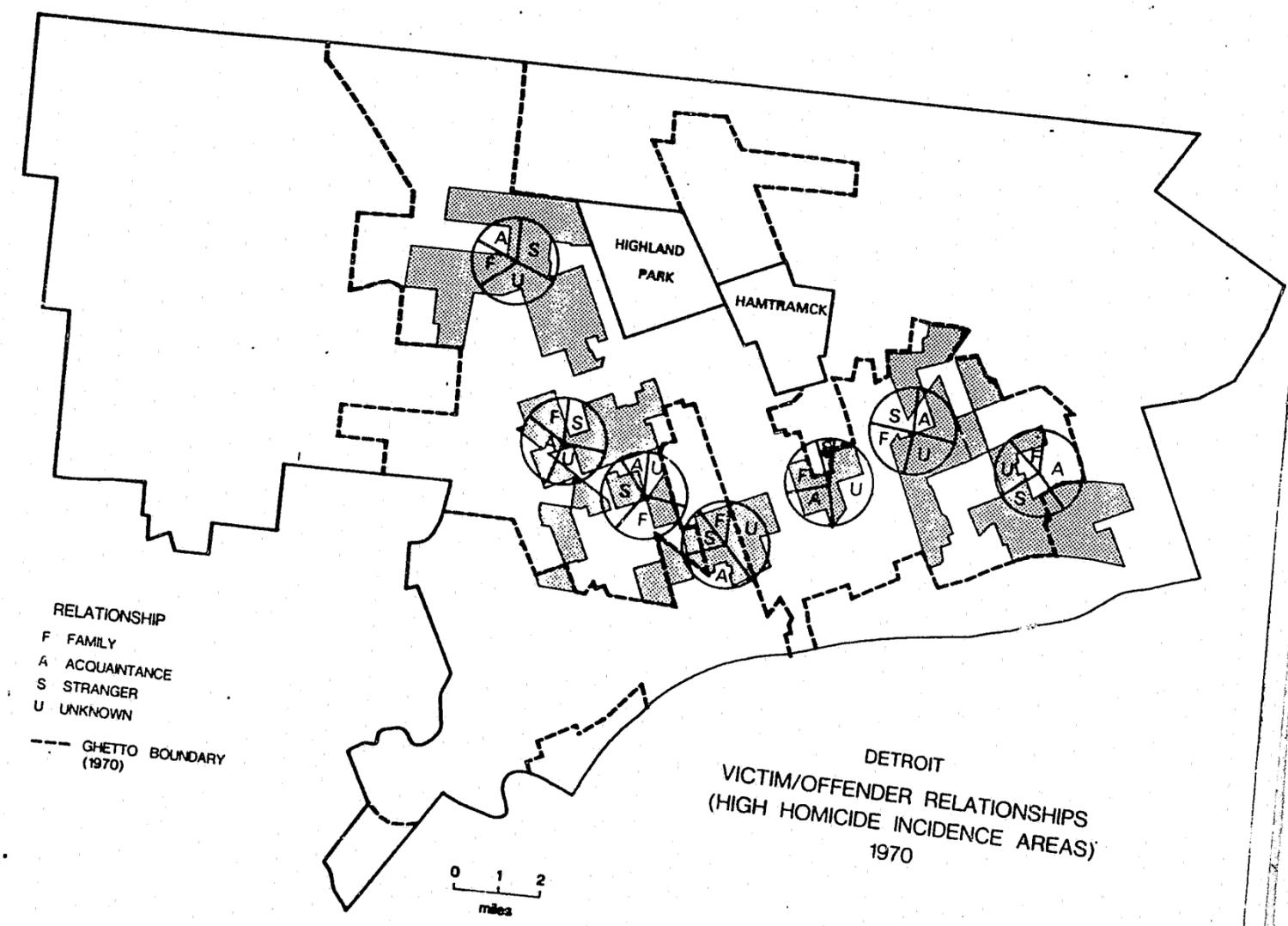


Fig. 32.

219 b

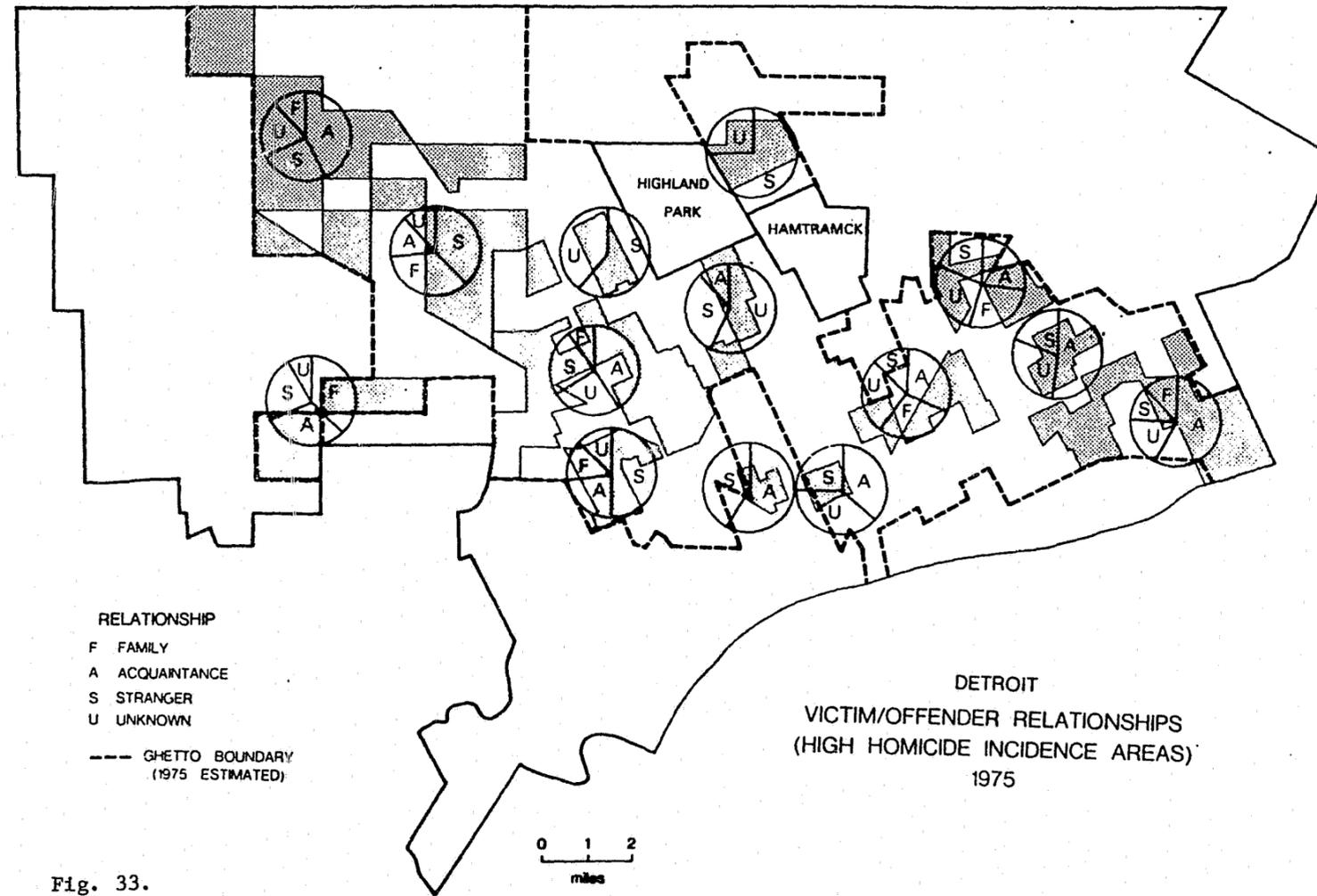


Fig. 33.

of victimization and victim-offender relations were also apparent within the context of the evolving spatial clusters.

Age Structure of Victimization by Primary Spatial Clusters

The modal age structure promoting an increase in the risk of victimization is an important issue in attempts to understand the growing incidence of homicide victimizations in large urban environments. Some writers previously noted that the recent increase in victimization rate represents the coming of age of the baby-boom generation, implying the young have a tendency to engage in behaviors that are violence-provoking. Needless to say, the age structure of victimization marks an important component of the structure of violent behavior; that is, the age of the offender. Yet, this variable seldom provided a strong explanation of risk when employed in our previously described regression models. Further, the direction of association between the variable 15-24 year old males and risk was, more often than not, the inverse of the expected direction. Although encountering methodological weaknesses in the employment of this variable in an attempt to explain the probability of risk, it does not negate its importance as an issue that must be kept before us.

In this assessment, attention will be focused directly on the modal age structure of victimization. Only primary spatial clusters will represent our central concern. These represent clusters in which a minimum of 15 victims were residents during the year under investigation. Employing this threshold value will eliminate some of the previously identified clusters in individual cities, where risk was somewhat intense. The primary clusters were those in which homicide transactions were much more commonplace.

A three-stage age classification has been employed for the purpose of specifying the modal age structure of victimization in the primary spatial cluster. The groupings employed are under age 30 victims (young), over age 30 victims (mature), and clusters in which the age structure is essentially balanced (that is, clusters which show no clear predominance in the previous categories). Physically large spatial clusters are those that most often demonstrate a balanced age structure. Nevertheless, the modal age structure of victimization should be expected to provide some insight into the modal life styles within specific city locations.

Spatial Age Structure of Victimization in Atlanta

Three primary spatial clusters of resident victimization could be identified in Atlanta in 1970. But by 1975 only two clusters satisfying the minimum threshold of victimization remained. In the former year the large western Atlanta cluster and the cluster immediately east of downtown were characterized by a balanced age structure (see figs. 34 and 35). As previously indicated, the physical expanse of spatial clusters became smaller between 1970 and 1975. Yet, the southeastern cluster and the far western cluster continued to satisfy the minimum threshold value. In the former cluster, victims were concentrated in the under 30 category -- as they had been in 1970. Young black persons living in poverty neighborhoods were at high risk of victimization during both time periods. The west side cluster, which covered a large part of the community in 1970, was now only a remnant in terms of its former scale. Furthermore, its age structure of victimization was balanced.

The lowering of homicide density in Atlanta during this period has led

222 a

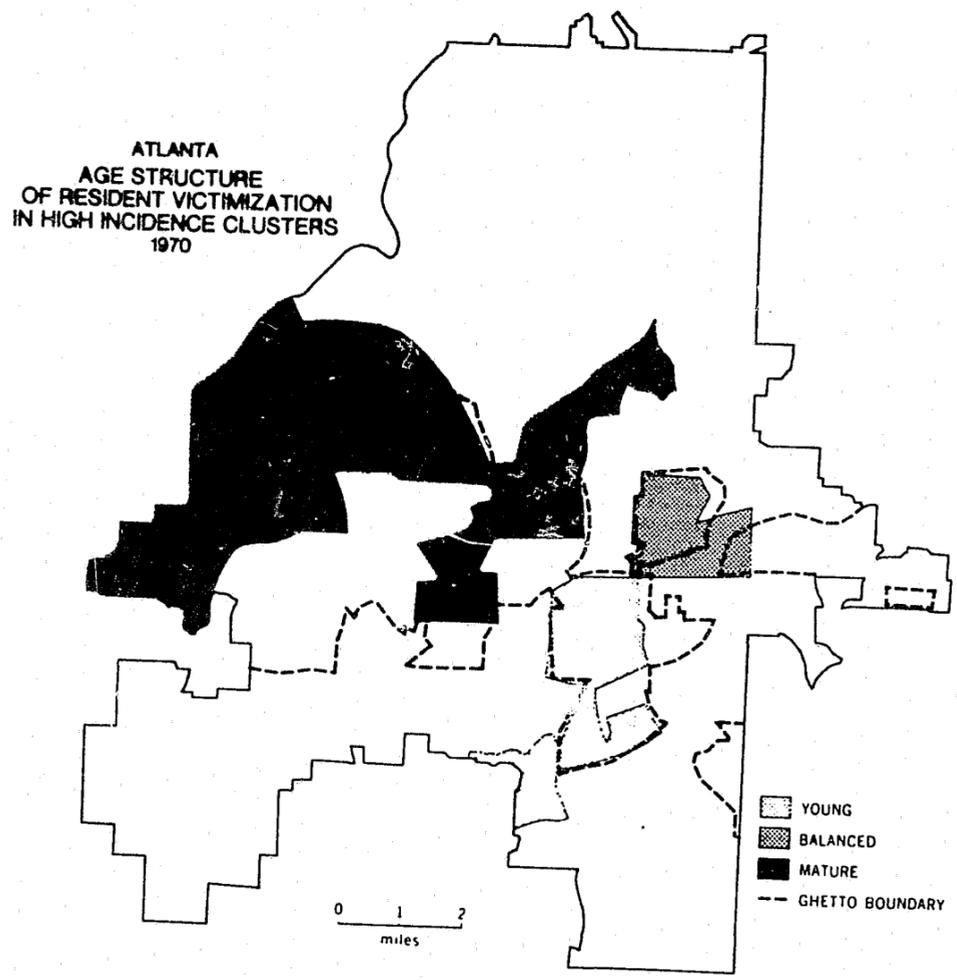


Fig. 34.

222 b

ATLANTA
AGE STRUCTURE
OF RESIDENT VICTIMIZATION
IN HIGH INCIDENCE CLUSTERS
1975

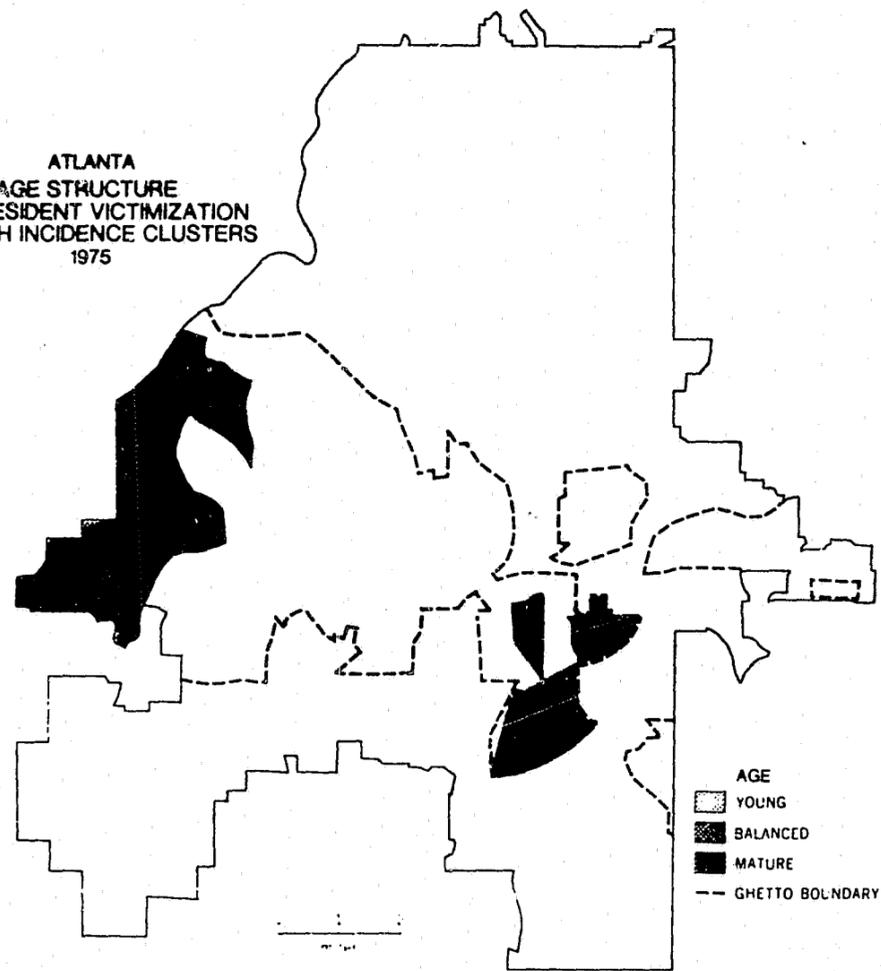


Fig. 35.

to a reduction in scale of all clusters, causing former clusters to be eliminated from the primary group. It should be noted that the major shift in the victimization pattern in Atlanta's primary spatial clusters, besides lessening of density, was the alteration of the sex ratio of victims. In 1970, the southeastern cluster included a disproportionate share of female victims, at least in terms of the expected male-female ratio; but by 1975 this discrepancy had been eliminated and the expected sex ratio was once again manifested. By implication, an imbalance in the sex ratio of victimization usually points to domestic conflict and secondarily to inter-sex struggles.

Spatial Age Structure of Victimization in St. Louis

In St. Louis three primary spatial clusters were found during ~~both~~ time periods. Moreover, it was previously noted that the spatial configuration of these clusters changed little during the 1970-75 interval. What did change, however, was the age structure of victimization in each cluster, possibly reflecting the residential dynamics in the black community during the period. The reduction in residential density in the eastern cluster may have led to piling up elsewhere. Mature victims represented the modal group in both the eastern and western clusters in 1970, while in no cluster did youthful victims represent the predominant group. But by 1975 youth victimization represented the modal victim concentration in each of the primary clusters (see figs. 36 and 37).

The primary clusters of victim residence have undergone a dramatic age structure change in just half a decade. This pattern would seem to imply a growing reliance on lifestyle and behavioral propensities that have only

ST. LOUIS
AGE STRUCTURE
OF RESIDENT VICTIMIZATION
IN HIGH INCIDENCE CLUSTERS
1970

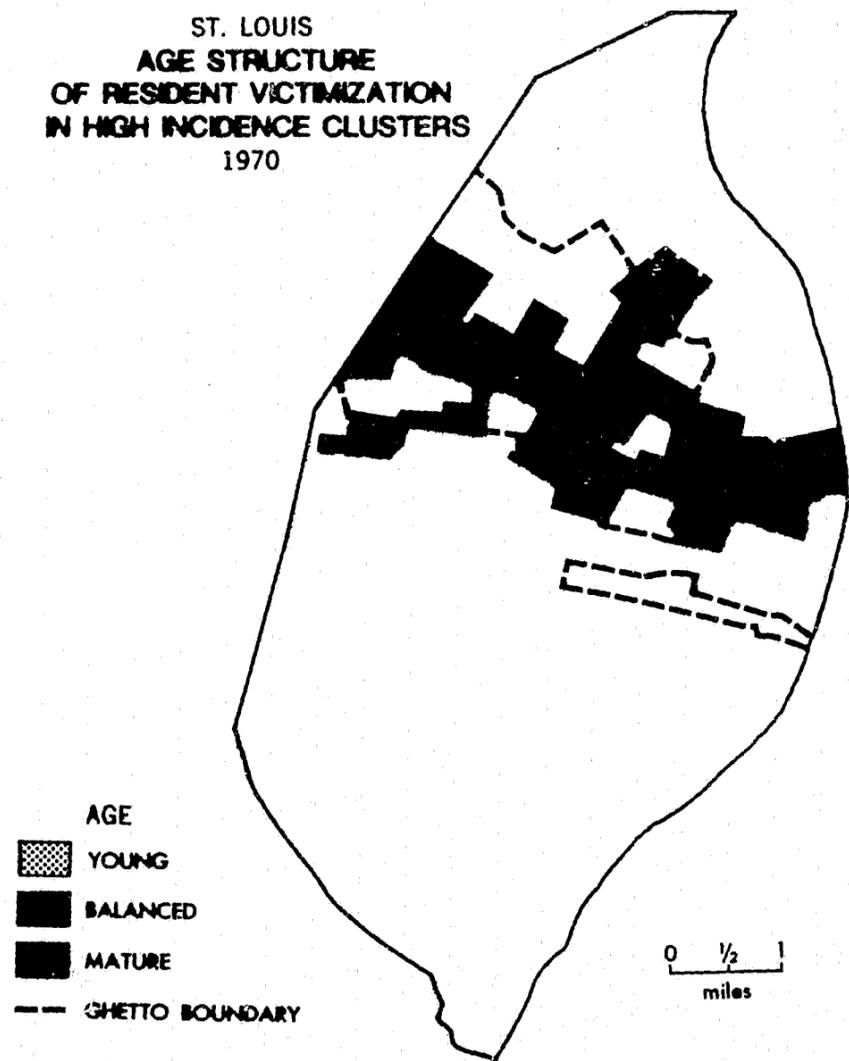


Fig. 36.

ST. LOUIS
AGE STRUCTURE
OF RESIDENT VICTIMIZATION
IN HIGH INCIDENCE CLUSTERS
1975

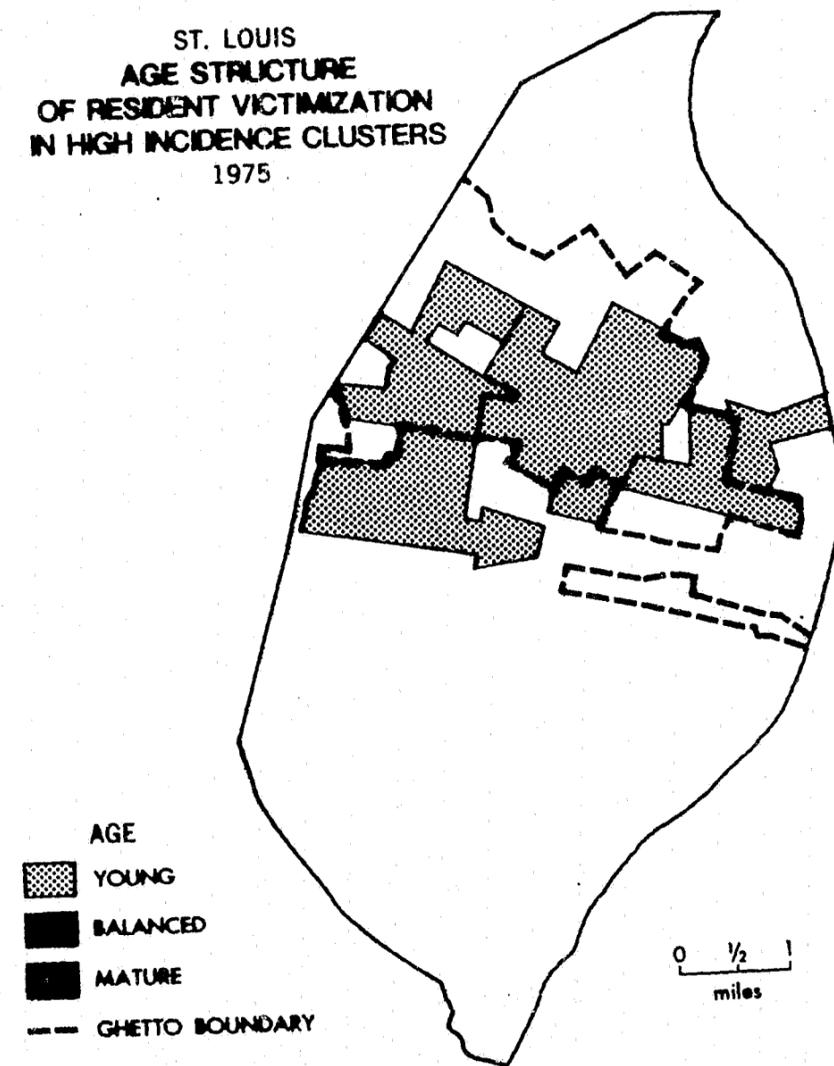


Fig. 37.

begun to show themselves. A slight increase in the percent female victims was also evident in the central and western clusters, while the eastern cluster experienced a sharp decline in female victims. Since domestic conflict is not a major contributor to death in St. Louis, this is somewhat unexpected.

Spatial Age Structure of Victimization in Detroit

During the period 1970-75, Detroit witnessed almost a doubling in clusters of victimization. But because of the declining homicide density during this interval, only about half of these clusters qualified as primary clusters. Furthermore, in 1970 seven of the eight spatial clusters were identified as primary. The spatial range of identifiable clusters showed an appreciable change in scale, a pattern that was not as much in evidence in the other primary sample cities. Victims in other cities tended to reside in a more restricted zone than was true of victims in Detroit.

The greatest change in density occurred among east side clusters and the principal near-downtown cluster, with a sharp decline in homicide density apparent in both zones. On the west side, however, there was an increase in total homicide density among the several clusters located in that part of the community. There were three primary west side clusters in 1975, whereas only two such clusters were in evidence in this area in 1970. The latter clusters evolved in a residential zone that was not a part of the 1970 black community.

A more balanced age structure of victimization prevailed in Detroit during 1970 than prevailed during 1975 among primary spatial clusters. The balance was most in evidence among east side clusters, with the primary downtown clusters being identified as mature (see figs. 38 and 39). The

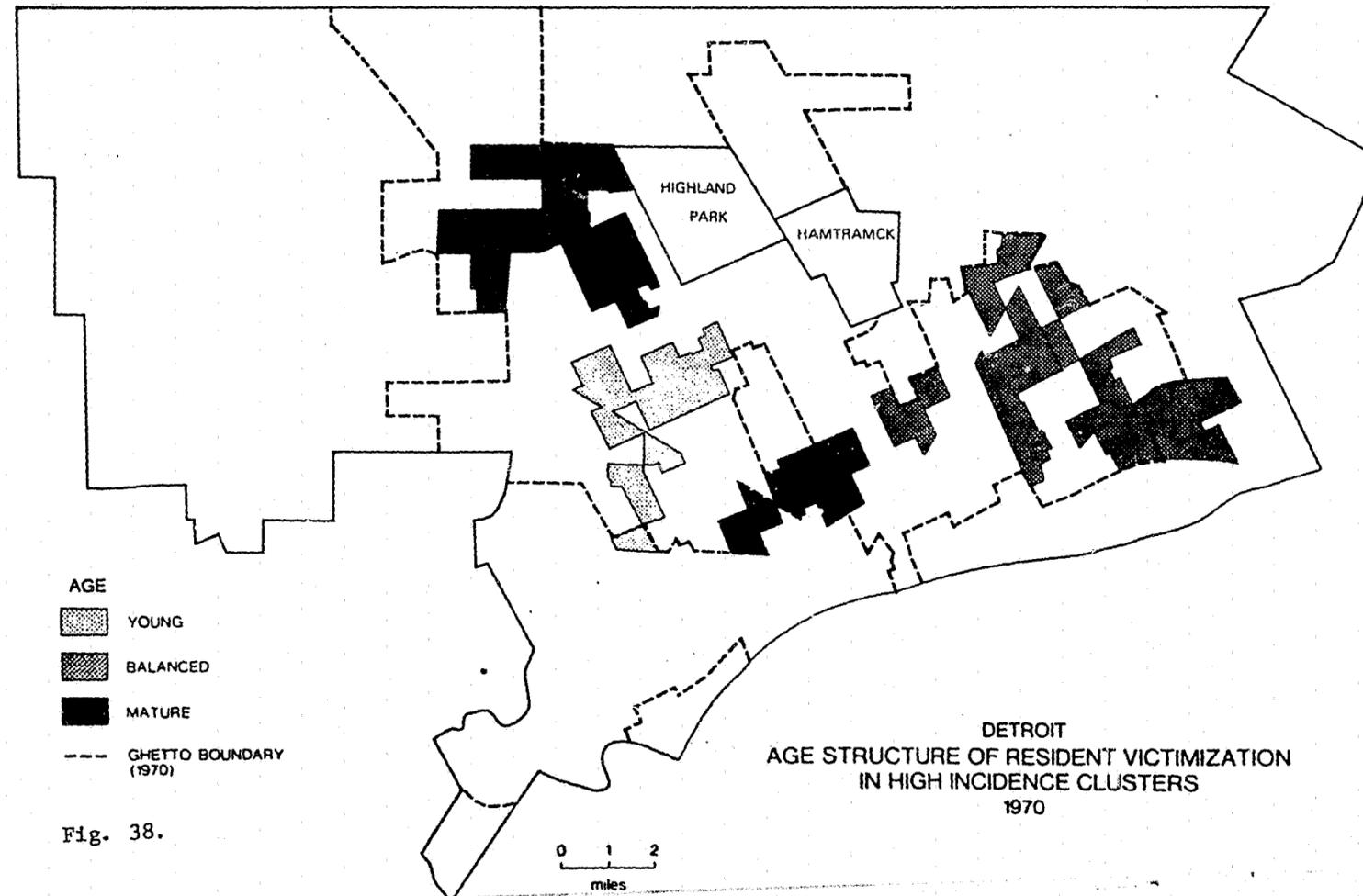
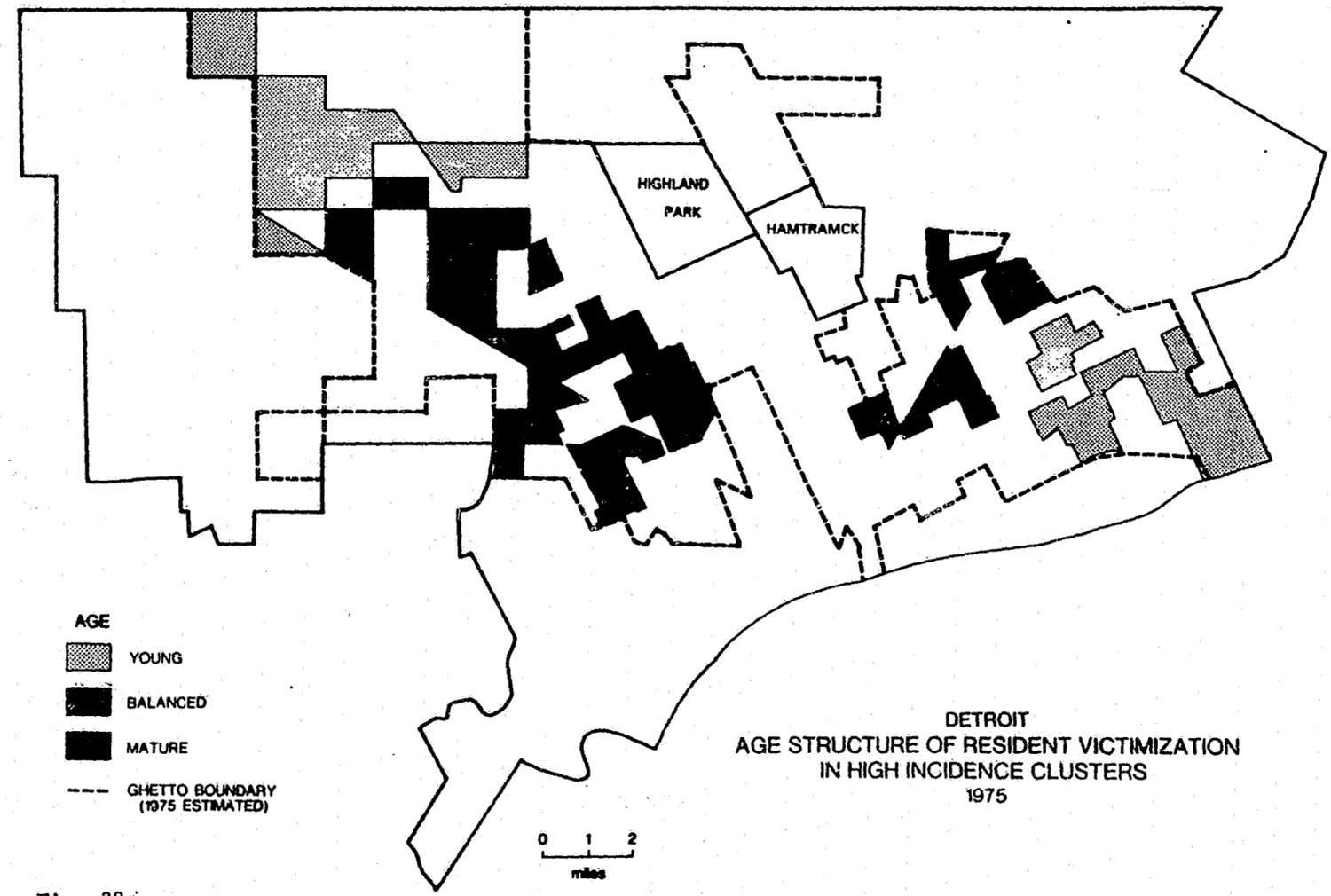


Fig. 38.

CONTINUED

3 OF 7



DETROIT
AGE STRUCTURE OF RESIDENT VICTIMIZATION
IN HIGH INCIDENCE CLUSTERS
1975

Fig. 39:

two primary zones of concentration on the west side showed a predominance of youth victimization in the near west side cluster and predominance of youth victimization in the far west side cluster. Thus, the age structure of victimization differed between east side and west side clusters of resident victimization. Moreover, the expected sex ratio prevailed among all primary clusters.

Between 1970 and 1975 the spatial pattern of modal age victimization in Detroit underwent major changes. A balanced age structure characterized three of the primary east side structures, whereas the fourth -- one which did not previously exist -- had a youthful age structure of victimization in 1975. The east side, in the latter year, showed a greater variety in its pattern of age structure of victimization, with mature and balanced structures occurring in the traditional clusters and youthful age structure of victimization emerging in peripheral clusters (see fig.39, p. 226). A seeming inverse of the spatial pattern of age victimization took place within east and west side clusters during the period under investigation. During 1975 the one similarity among east and west side clusters was the predominance of young victims in peripheral clusters, leading us to logically concern ourselves with the circumstances of death associated with the observed pattern of age structure of victimization.

The Spatial Pattern of the Victim-Offender Relationship

Changes in homicide density and age structure of resident victimization characterize specific high-frequency clusters within the black community in each city. These attributes, however, are closely tied to other attributes that impinge directly upon the risk of victimization. The nature of the relationship between victim and offender is one of the more important

of these. Furthermore, the victim-offender relationship of the resident victims, by spatial cluster, has been identified in each time period as a means of determining the stability of the modal relationship. The four categories of relationships established are those that were previously identified. Although these are very broad categories, they do specify the general nature of the prevailing association among interacting dyads.

Domestic conflicts, as an example of family interaction patterns, often lead to the death of a partner under a variety of circumstances. The latter pattern is more commonplace among low income families than among other economic status groups. The primary issue here, however, is how these victim-offender relationships manifest themselves in terms of a spatial pattern of maximum likelihood. Once those patterns have been identified, one can then begin to attempt to explain the contribution of specific predictors.

Internal variations in the spatial pattern of resident victimization are seldom-investigated phenomena, and consequently poorly understood ones as well. But there exists a general recognition that diverse orientations toward the use and targets of violence prevail in different parts of the black community. These differences reflect both social status and socio-cultural orientations. As a case in point, acts of expressive violence are generally thought to occur most among lower socio-economic status populations. Nevertheless, there is increasing evidence that non-lower status populations are more often guilty of this kind of behavior than previously assumed.

Acts of violence can be categorized as expressive or instrumental. Expressive acts of violence are generally associated with an act of anger that is frequently, but not necessarily accompanied by an argument. Family discord

and conflict arising among acquaintances no doubt lead to the most frequently occurring acts of expressive violence.

Instrumental violence, on the other hand, has as its primary goal the acquisition of material or other resources. It is seldom associated with existing or pre-existing interpersonal discord among the interacting parties. The latter expression of violence is generally associated with the commission of a felony, which frequently ends in the death of one or more of the interacting parties. The stranger and unknown categories are more often associated with acts of instrumental violence than to acts of expressive violence. These two broad categories of violence-provoking situations are not totally mutually exclusive, but do provide us with a mechanism that facilitates distinguishing one set of violent propensities from another.

The primary objective of this section of the report is to attempt to identify primary spatial clusters in which the resident victim population is more frequently associated with either expressive or instrumental violence. Traditionally, black victims have been associated with acts of expressive violence growing out of interpersonal conflicts that involved acts of approval, denial, or disrespect.

Yet, the sharp upturn in the incidence of acts of lethal violence since 1965 is, in part, associated with an increase in felony-related activity and an increase in the availability of handguns. Most of this increase has occurred among black males under age 30, both in terms of victimization and offense rates. Thus, this raises the issue of change in orientation in the violent propensities among cohorts born since 1945, and particularly among those born since 1950. The upshot of this is that changing cultural and/or structural orientations are producing a new set of relationship patterns that,

with growing frequency, lead to death.

Regional variations are known to exist in terms of the strength of the foregoing dichotomous relationship. In 1972 known and suspected felony-type killings accounted for fewer than 20 per cent of all homicides occurring in the South. At the same time in the North Central states, instrumental victimizations accounted for slightly more than one-third of all homicides. Since cities are the sites of the vast majority of all homicides, one would expect cities in these respective regions to reflect regional norms in terms of the structural relationships associated with acts of lethal violence. Thus, the different regional propensities do indeed show themselves among our sample cities.

In those cities showing the greatest internal variations in socio-economic status and age structure characteristics, there will also appear a greater diversity in the spatial ordering of victim-offender relationships. If the latter postulate is valid, Detroit should exhibit a greater variety of relational patterns. Of the six primary spatial clusters identified in that city, four were zones in which instrumental acts accounted for the largest percentage of all victimizations. Three of these clusters represented those in which stranger victimizations typified the modal pattern. Furthermore, stranger and unknown relationships comprised almost two-thirds of the victimizations in one of these clusters.

Instrumental acts of lethal violence formed the modal pattern in Detroit's west side clusters in 1970, whereas east side clusters were the environments in which resident victims were most often killed during the commission of acts of expressive violence (see fig.40). Although no simple explanation for this pattern is readily available, one might conjecture that the east side, which served as the zone of original black occupance, is still the zone where

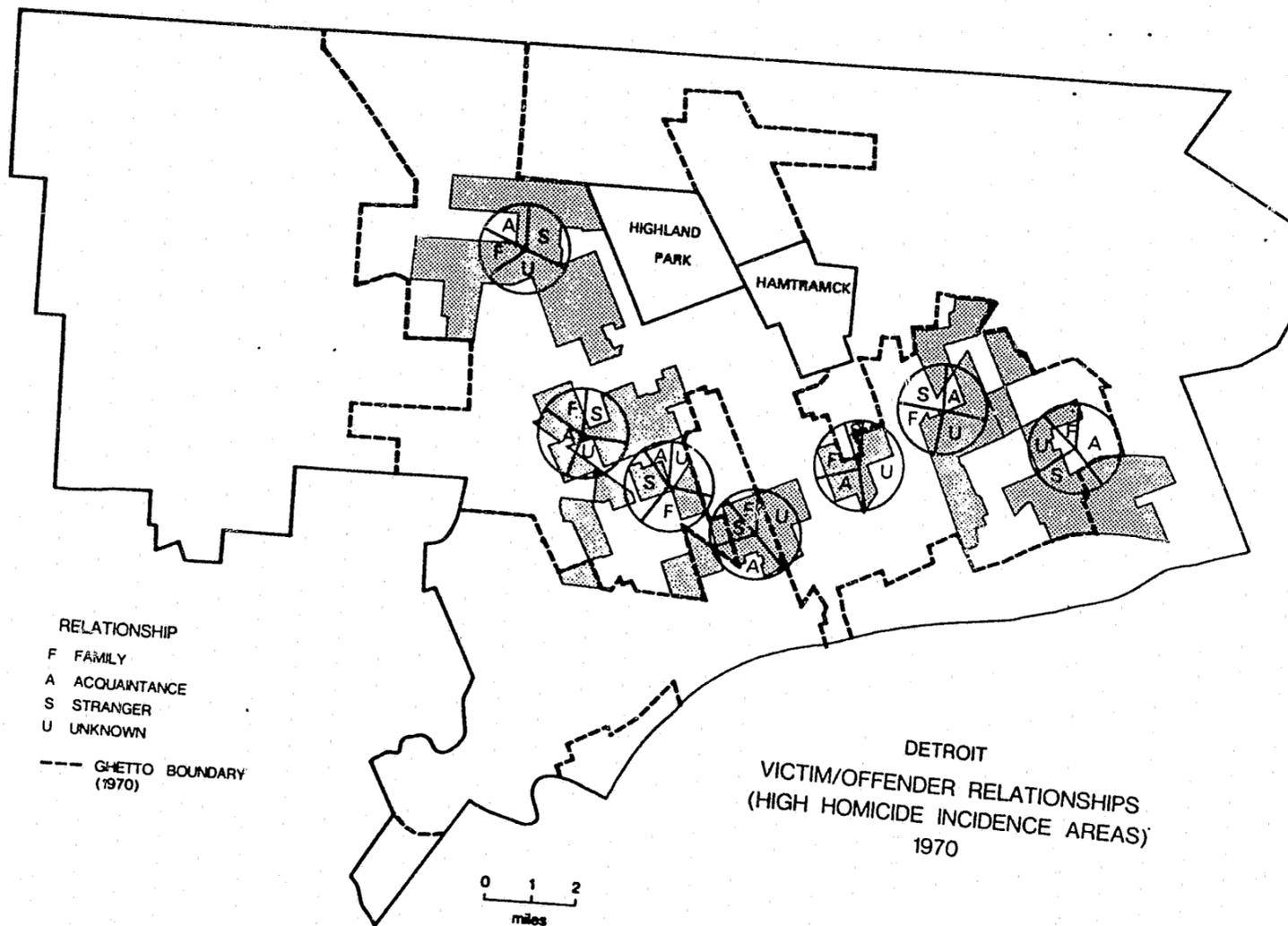


Fig. 40.

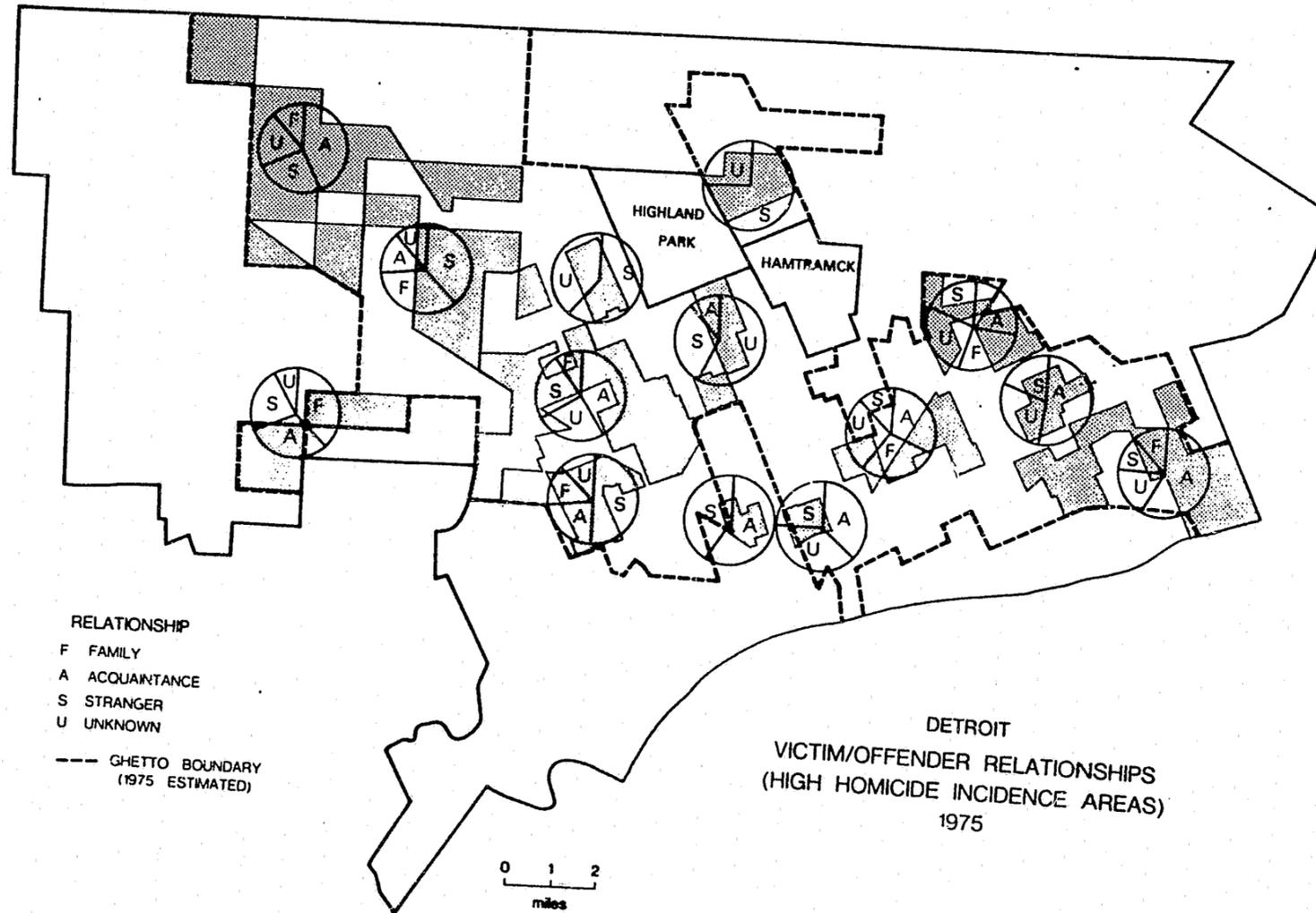


Fig. 41.

traditional black values are more likely to be observed. Thus, the practice of traditional life styles in this zone is thought to have accounted for its expressive dominance in 1970.

Along these same lines, Spergel detected sometime ago a discernible difference in the criminal orientation of a sample of young adult offenders from both Chicago's south side and west side (1963: 237-250). The older established south side was the site of more sophisticated criminal behavior, with emphasis on property crime, while the east side -- the zone of least development -- was the zone of greater interpersonal violence.

In Detroit, the west side bears some similarity to Chicago's west side in terms of developmental stage, with the exception that it represents Detroit's higher socioeconomic status area. There is strong evidence in the Detroit case -- just as was true in the Chicago case -- that internal variations in spatial patterns of violent behavior are a function of a combination of sociocultural variations and socioeconomic differences.

In 1975, the three primary clusters on Detroit's east side were even more readily identified as zones of expressive violence than they had been five years earlier (see fig. 41). Family violence and violence among acquaintances continued to represent the modal relationships. Even on the city's west side, expressive violence was more obvious in two of the primary spatial clusters than it was earlier, whereas in only one primary west side cluster did instrumental violence continue to be more commonplace.

Between 1970 and 1975 the number of homicide victims in Detroit increased sharply, the largest percent of that increase being associated with a growth in the risk of instrumental violence. It appears that instrumental violence in Detroit is much more dispersed than is expressive violence, at least in terms of the contiguity of high-frequency clusters. Only in those

Detroit clusters that failed to satisfy the criteria of primary spatial clusters does instrumental violence tend to predominate. Therefore, it appears that the threshold level employed to identify primary spatial clusters results in an elimination of zones of instrumental violence from our assessment.

Detroit's spatial pattern of high homicide density fails to reflect the sharp upturn in instrumental victimization between 1970 and 1975. The principal weakness of this assessment is the failure to include the location of the offense as well as the place of offender's residence and place of victim's residence. Moreover, the distance separating the three is likely to be shorter in cases involving expressive violence. As it turns out, our primary spatial clusters tend to clearly delineate patterns of expressive violence in city during both time periods. Unfortunately, our fixed definition of primary spatial clusters was not sufficiently sensitive to identify zones of instrumental predominance in the subsequent time period. This, in part, reflects the growing distance between victim and offender as well as the growing tendency for instrumental victims to reside in higher status neighborhoods than do expressive victims.

The St. Louis Spatial Pattern of Victimization

The structure of victim-offender relations in St. Louis possesses greater similarity to that in Detroit than that in Atlanta. This is particularly true if we employ the dichotomously structured expressive-instrumental schema. In 1970, instrumental deaths constituted the modal pattern in each of St. Louis' three primary spatial clusters. Moreover, the strength of this pattern can be attributed to the strong contribution of unknowns to the list of victims in each cluster. Unknowns accounted for more than two-fifths of the victims in both the eastern and central clusters. The other component of

instrumental violence, stranger victimizations, was far less commonplace in these two clusters, but comprised one-fifth of all victimizations in the western cluster (see figs. 42 and 43). By 1975, unknowns had diminished in relative importance in each of the three primary clusters. Nevertheless, the contribution of stranger victimizations during the interval had remained relatively stable. The result of these changes in the unknowns-stranger ratio led to a relative decrease in the strength of instrumental death in St. Louis's primary spatial clusters.

Expressive acts of violence constituted the modal pattern in St. Louis clusters in 1975. Moreover, the dominance of expressive acts was associated with a general increase in the share of acquaintance victimizations. For instance, in the eastern cluster almost two-thirds of all resident victims were acquainted with their assailants. Although the proportion of acquaintance victimizations remained essentially unchanged in the central cluster, there was a sizeable increase in acquaintance deaths in the western cluster. Thus, St. Louis -- like Detroit -- showed a relative weakening of the strength of instrumental acts within its primary spatial clusters.

One basic difference between St. Louis and Detroit is the relative contribution of stranger victimizations, which generally account for a larger percentage of instrumental deaths in Detroit's primary spatial clusters. The emerging pattern in St. Louis requires additional scrutiny. This is especially true of the circumstances associated with acquaintance deaths. It is believed this broad category might be masking a non-traditional set of circumstances leading to death.

The sharp increase in acquaintance victimizations in St. Louis appears to be directly related to the age structure of victimization. In each primary

ST. LOUIS
VICTIM/OFFENDER RELATIONSHIPS
(HIGH HOMICIDE INCIDENCE AREAS)
1970

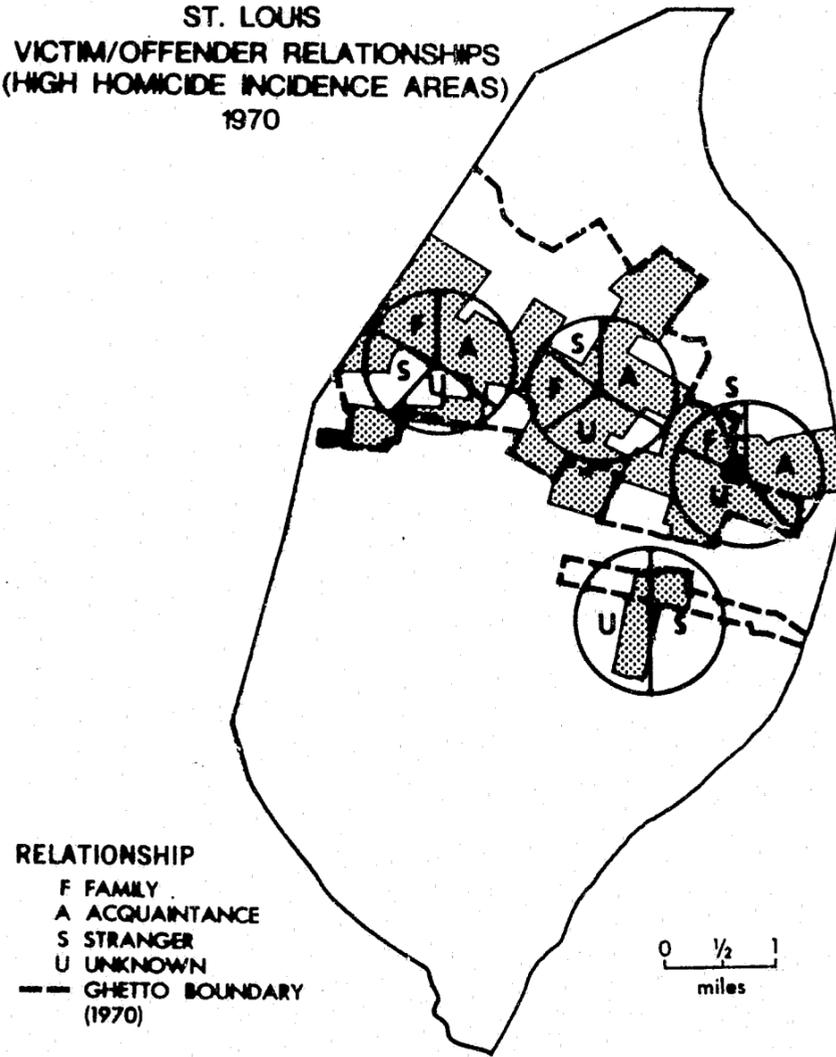


Fig. 42.

ST. LOUIS
VICTIM/OFFENDER RELATIONSHIPS
(HIGH HOMICIDE INCIDENCE AREAS)
1975

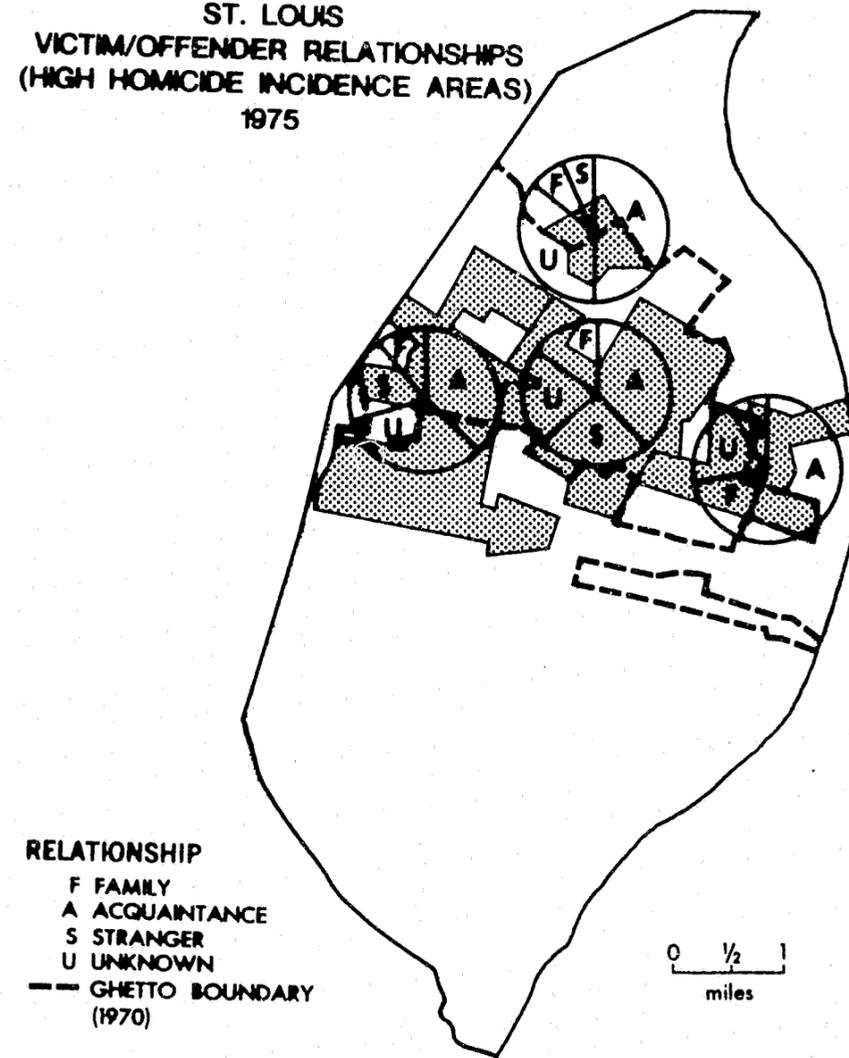


Fig. 43.

cluster, young victims who were known to their offenders made up the largest percentage of victims. During the interval between 1970 and 1975, family homicides in St. Louis declined to less than ten percent of the total, an unusually small percentage when compared to the national average. They did, however, increase slightly as a percentage of all homicides in the older primary spatial clusters. Family homicides were possibly made relatively less important by the increasing number of never married young black males who constituted the modal victim type.

It is unknown if the apparent change in the pattern of victim-offender relations in St. Louis is an outgrowth of improved police work or is a real change in the actual pattern. Moreover, it is possible that improved police work could lead to higher clearance rates; and cases previously showing up as "unknowns" now show up as "acquaintances." Since many unknown deaths appear to be drug related, they no doubt bring together actors who were previously known to one another.

The Pattern of Victimization in Atlanta Spatial Clusters

The third sample city, Atlanta, shows both an aggregate pattern and an internal pattern of victim-offender relations, which distinguishes it from the non-southern cities in the primary sample. Here the expressive structure of homicide victimization in both time periods shows a strong predominance. Thus, family homicide assumes an importance here that is lacking in both Detroit and St. Louis.

Homicide density in Atlanta showed a precipitous decline between 1970 and 1975. As the annual number of victims remained high for the first four years of the decade, the change did not occur gradually. The year 1975 appears to

ATLANTA
VICTIM/OFFENDER RELATIONSHIPS
(HIGH HOMICIDE INCIDENCE AREAS)
1975

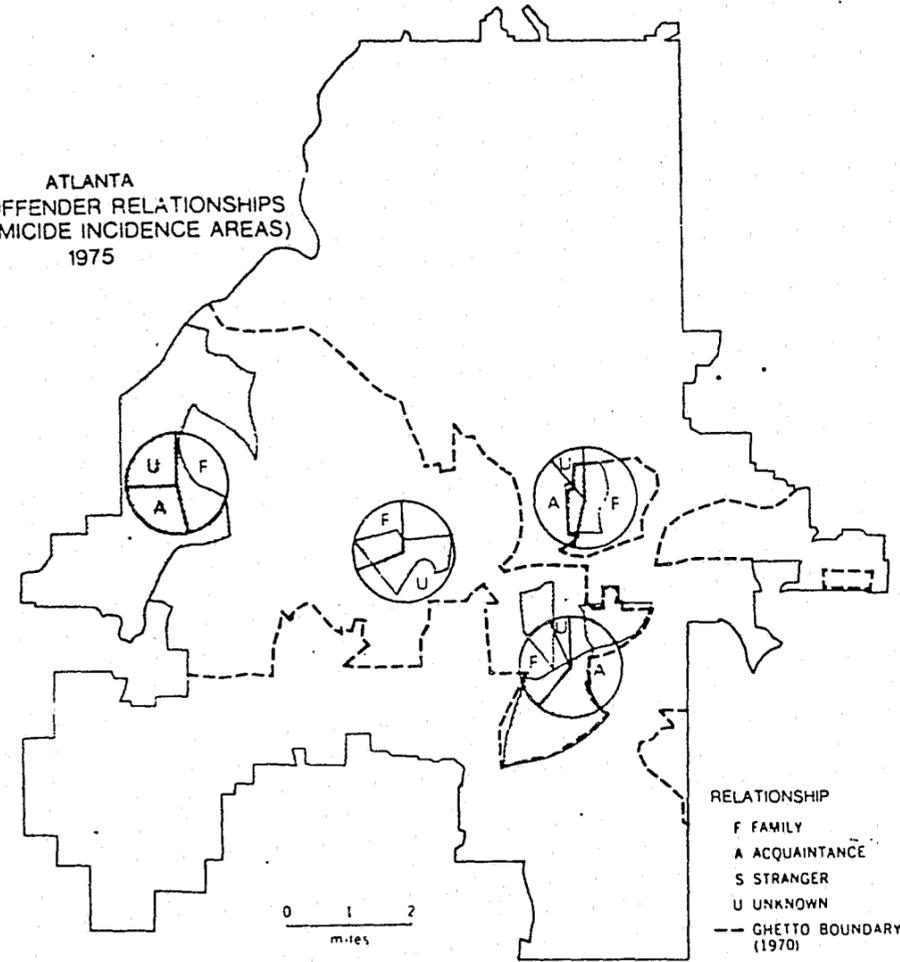


Fig. 45

It is apparent that not only are instrumental acts leading to death less frequent in Atlanta than in our other cities, but those that do occur tend to be more dispersed. There is little evidence of the concentration of instrumental victimization within the city's primary spatial clusters. Acts of expressive violence, on the other hand, appear to be more concentrated than dispersed. Primary spatial clusters, in cities with a low-density black population, appear most often to represent zones of expressive dominance, even when the contribution of instrumental violence is substantial.

In all three cities a unique spatial pattern describing homicide density emerged, with both density differences and the spatial pattern of victim-offender relationships tending to undergo changes over time. But basic structural differences between cities continue to prevail. Some of these differences are an outgrowth of the nature and spatial form of the black community, whereas others are influenced by economic and institutional forces. No doubt sociocultural influences undergird the modal victim-offender relationships that predominate in individual spatial clusters. Regional value systems, however, may be at the heart of the nature of victim-offender relationships that lead to acts of lethal violence, but proof of this thesis awaits further analysis.

Persistent High Risk Environments

The previous treatment of environmental risk of victimization was confined to identifying the spatial pattern of risk in selected cities at two different points in time. Such an assessment permits one to observe spatial shifts in risk, as well as changes in the modal pattern of victim-offender relationships within the black community. But it is also important

to be able to identify environments characterized by persistent high risk, for it is within these stable homicide environments that imitative behavior no doubt reaches its peak (see fig. 46).

Data were only available, however, to permit an assessment of cumulative high risk within the Detroit and Atlanta black communities. In order to identify cumulative high-risk environments, the total number of resident victim deaths, by census tract, were summed over the period 1970-75. Those tracts recording a minimum of 20 resident victims during this interval were identified as persistent high-risk neighborhoods (see figs. 47 and 48). In both Detroit and Atlanta, a number of persistent high-risk environments were in evidence.

The spatial pattern of risk differs in the two cities, however, largely in response to regional differences in the way blacks are allocated housing. Neighborhoods, in which expressive conflict is quick to ignite, dominate the pattern of cumulative high risk in Atlanta, while a mixed conflict pattern is apparent in Detroit. In both communities, it is evident that the persistence of high risk is confined to specific environments.

Persistent High Risk Neighborhoods in Detroit

In Detroit, persistent high risk is concentrated in a cluster of neighborhoods ranging two to six miles from the center of the city. An outlier just beyond the six mile band can be observed, just as can isolated neighborhoods within two miles of downtown. The four to six mile zone was one in which neighborhood stress was previously described as intermediate in intensity in 1970, an indication that this represented a zone in which the poor and the non-poor were juxtaposed. It is in such a zone that instrumental violence inclines to be more commonplace. (Block also detected this pattern in selected

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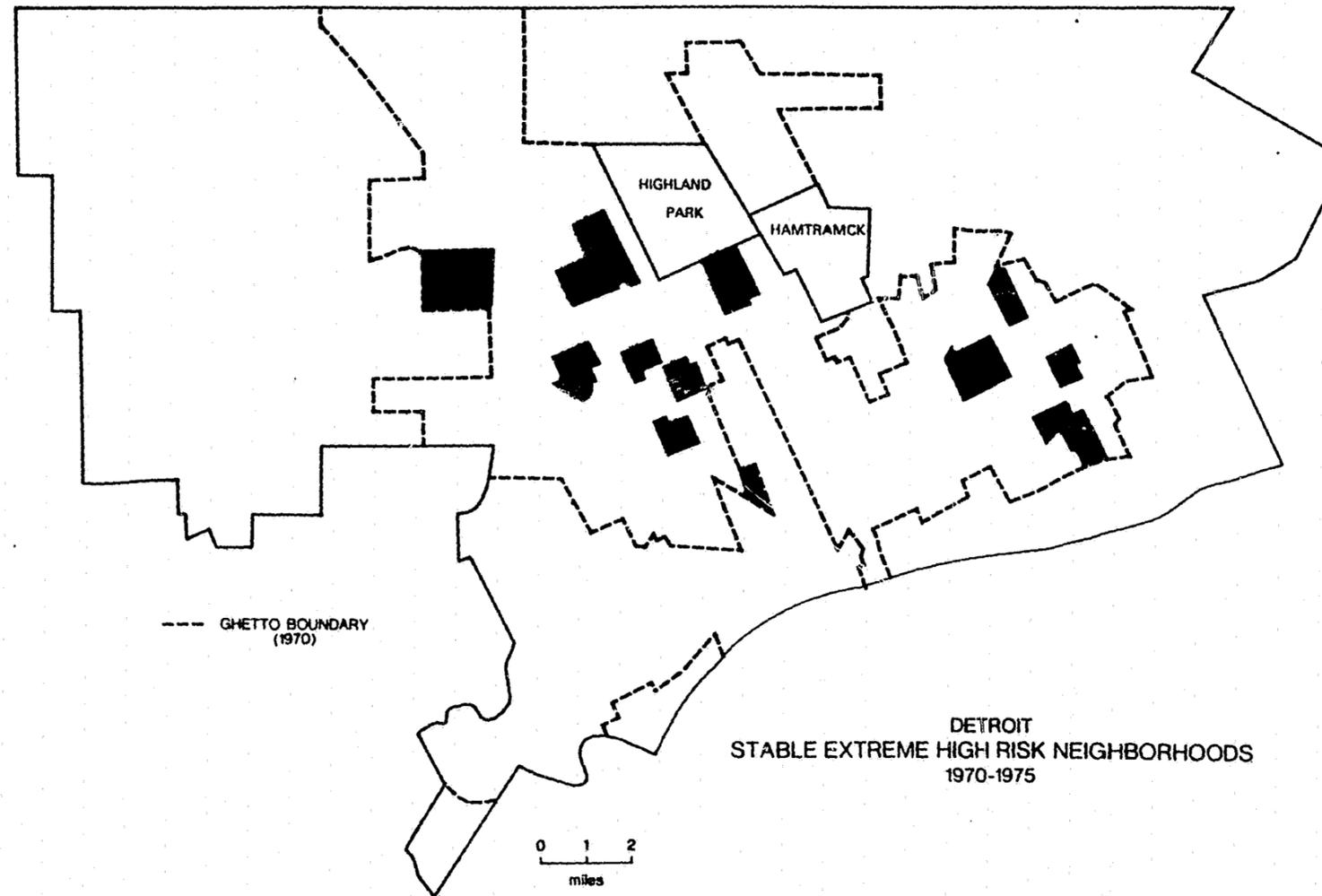


Fig. 46.

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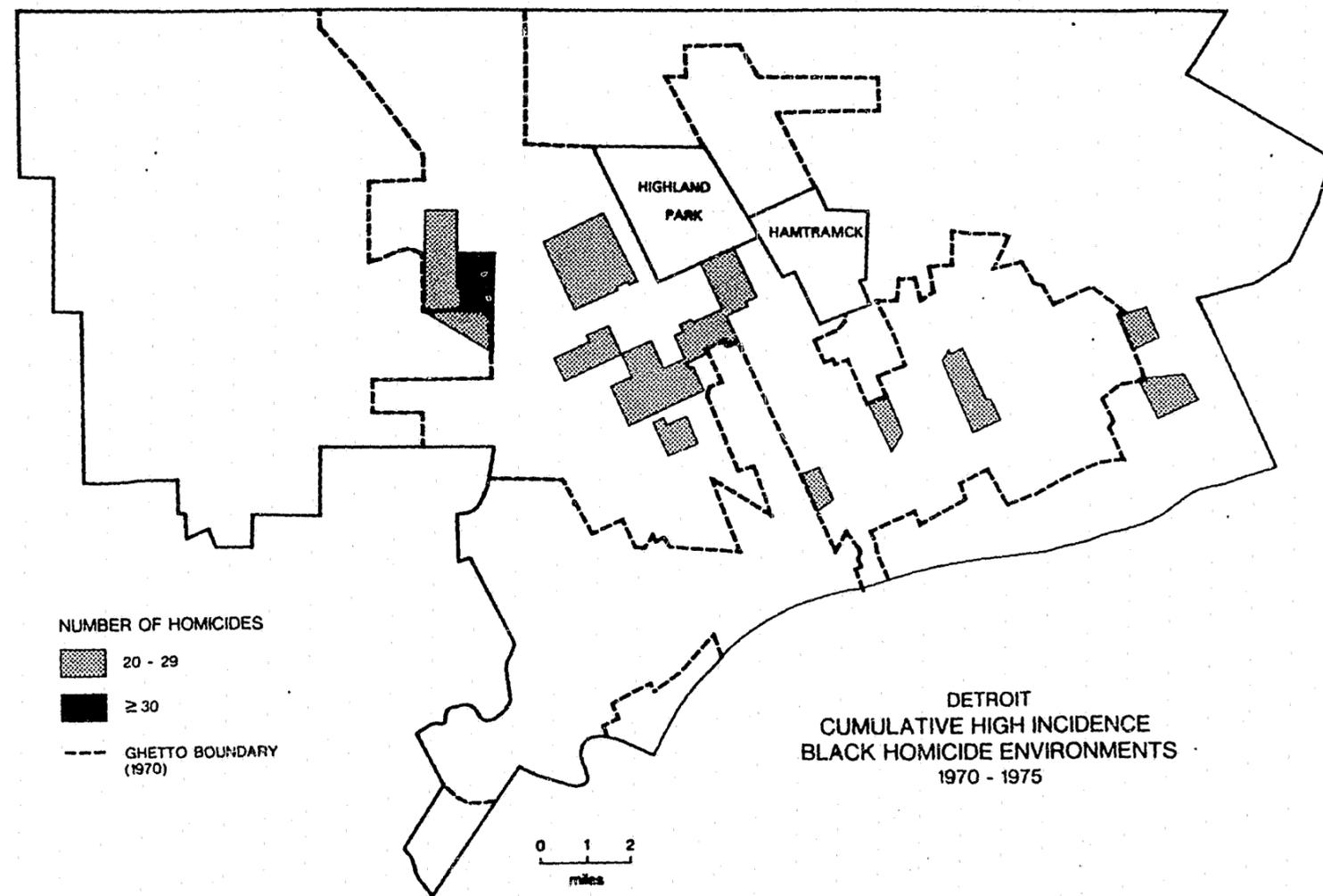


Fig. 47.

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ATLANTA
CUMULATIVE HIGH INCIDENCE
BLACK HOMICIDE ENVIRONMENTS
1970-1975

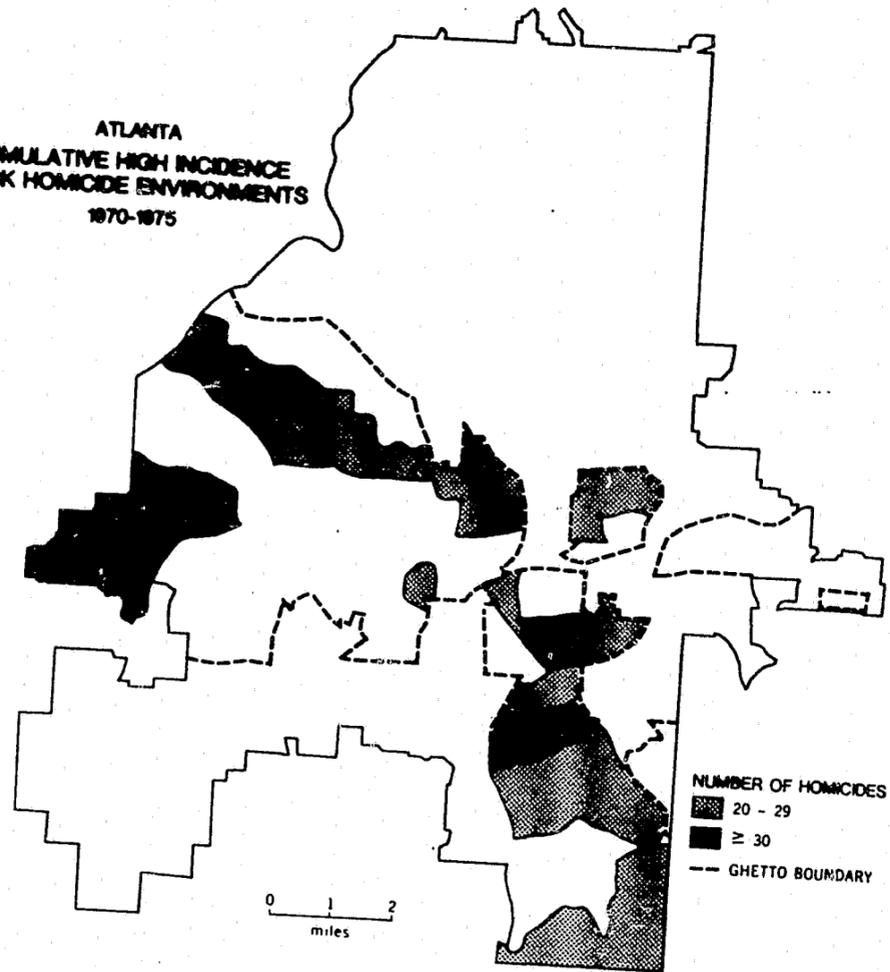


Fig. 48.

Chicago community areas [1979: 50-53].) In zones extending beyond six miles, and in those found between downtown and two miles from the center of Detroit, expressive violence tend to represent the predominant pattern in persistent high-risk environments (see fig. 49). During the period 1970-75, 62.4 per cent of all black homicide victims resided within a four-mile belt, extending two to six miles from the center of the city.

Persistent High-Risk Neighborhoods in Atlanta

In Atlanta, persistent high risk is most often associated with poverty or near-poverty neighborhoods, although some exceptions are apparent. Since conflicts between friends and relatives represent the circumstances under which acts of violence are most often perpetrated, the prevailing spatial pattern of persistent high risk represents a logical one. The zones of high and high-middle status black occupancy in southwest Atlanta, as described by Hartshorn and others (1976), is devoid of persistent high-risk neighborhoods. The disappearance of this high risk in Atlanta is most likely to be associated with reducing the intensity of expressive violence, particularly that occurring among acquaintances.

Regression Models and Persistent High Risk

A series of regression models were employed earlier in this section of the report in an attempt to explain the contribution of selected independent variables on both risk and frequency of victimization at the neighborhood scale. The results were mixed, both in terms of individual models and the differential level of explanation associated with the choice of independent variables within the context of individual cities. Nevertheless, these same models were employed in an attempt to determine the strength of individual models to

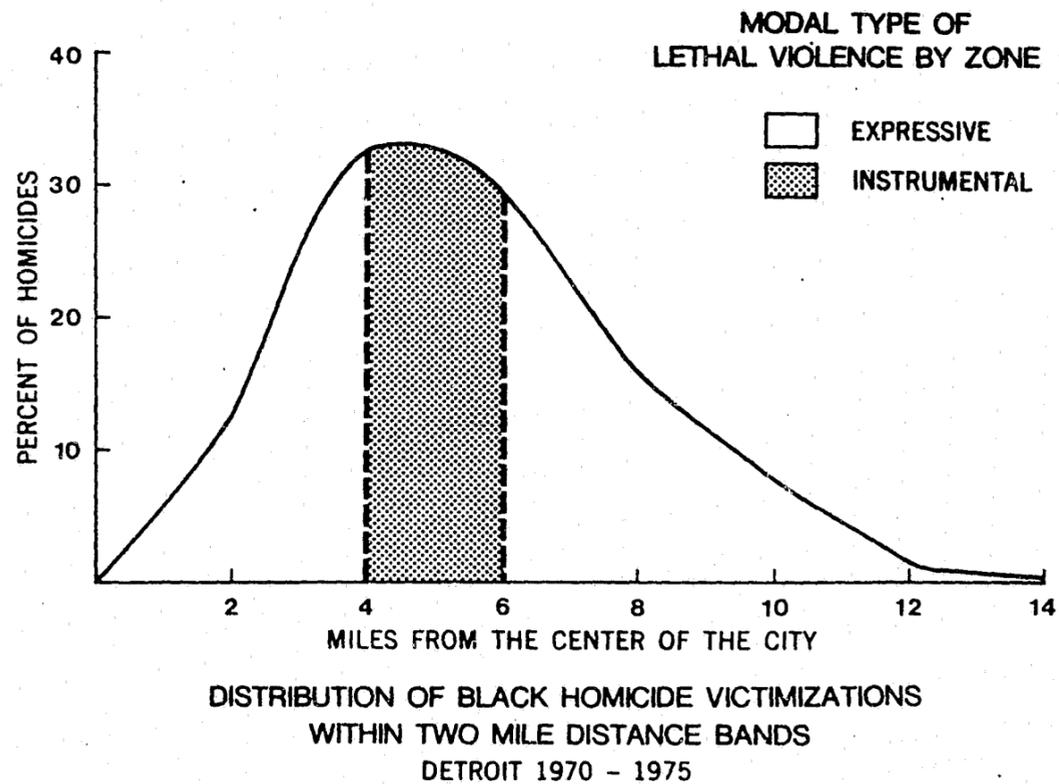


Fig. 49.

explain the ecology of persistent high risk.

Cumulative homicides in persistent high-risk neighborhoods serve as the dependent variable in a series of regression runs employing the previously identified 12 variables, as well as selected variables from the 12 variable group. Of the models previously employed, the 12 variable model provided the best explanation of variance in Detroit. An adjusted r^2 of .249 was observed, but only two of the 12 variables attained a critical level of significance: percent vacant and percent crowded. Only model III, among the other models used, provided even a minimum level of explanation. Nevertheless, vacancy and male unemployment usually show up as significant variables in any variable mix.

As it had in Detroit, the 12 variable model produced the best results in Atlanta's persistent high-risk neighborhoods. But the level of explanation was much weaker than in the former case. The variables reaching significance in Atlanta were percent female-headed households and percent vacancy. Vacancy tends to show up as a critical variable in both instances, which seems to imply that persistent high risk is most often associated with environments perceived as unattractive to persons possessing a greater range of options in selecting a residential environment. Thus, it is assumed that persons residing in these high-risk environments are those whose choices of places to live are severely restricted.

In attempting to determine the strength of explanation of individual variables within the context of the models specified for this purpose, the format of the independent variables is very important. The previous discussion was principally based on the behavior of independent variables that had been converted to ratio scale. When the same variables are placed in

the model as interval scale data, however, the outcome is far superior to the use of ratio scale data for the purpose described previously. Moreover, when the prior described models were employed -- using interval scale data from Atlanta -- there was a significant increase in r^2 in each instance. The highest level of variable significance, however, was associated with model III. The variables showing the highest level of significance were number of women divorced and number of persons previously residing outside of Atlanta.

Persistent high-risk environments appear to be associated with aspects of neighborhood instability and include as residents persons with limited options to choose a more desirable neighborhood of residence. These environments tend to represent places in which expressive acts of violence are inclined to typify the dominant pattern, although one Detroit cluster of persistent high risk was shown to be dominated by instrumental acts of violence. To some extent it appears that high-risk zones possess a kind of stability that aids in fostering a specific pattern of behavior as a means of adapting to one's lot in life.

The question of the environmental contribution to instrumental violence, however, is less clear cut, and appears on the surface to be less place specific than the former. One would be inclined to agree that instrumental violence shows greater sensitivity to changes in the macro-environment, while expressive violence is more often associated with conditions at the micro-scale.

SECTION FIVE

OPPRESSED AND VULNERABLE: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF BLACK FEMALES AS HOMICIDE VICTIMS*

Between 1960-1976 the probability of being a victim of a violent crime, such as murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, nearly tripled, as did the probability of being a victim of a serious property crime--burglary, purse-snatching, or auto-theft (Silberman, 1978: 3-4). However, the probability of being a victim of some form of violent activity, particularly homicide, is considerably higher for blacks than for whites. In 1976, according to the FBI Uniform Crime Reports, of 18,780 murders, blacks were 46.6 per cent of the victims (FBI Uniform Crime Report, 1976: 10). In addition to blacks having greater potential for becoming victims of homicides, their rape victimization rate is two and one-half times the white rate. For robbery, the black victimization rate is three times the white rate; and for aggravated assault, the black victimization rate is

* This section of the report is authored by Paula D. McClain, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Ms. McClain was a Project Research Associate.

one and one-half times higher than the white rate (Silberman, 1978: 160).

Statistics indicate that one's chances of becoming a homicide victim are increased substantially if one is a black male between the ages of 15-29 (Klebba, 1975: 204). In 1973 the homicide rate for white males aged 15-24 was 10.5 per 100,000; for black males in the same age category, the rate was 85.1 per 100,000. In the 25-34 age group, the white male rate was 15.3 per 100,000, while the black rate was 153.4 per 100,000. In the 35-44 age category, the rate for black males was 124 per 100,000 and for white males 12.7 (Shin, Jedlicka and Lee, 1977).

The situation is slightly better for black females, but the homicide rate is still considerably higher than that for white females. During the same year that the homicide rate for black females 15-24 years of age was 19.9 per 100,000, the rate for white females was only 3.8 per 100,000. In the 25-34 and 35-44 categories, the rates for black females were 28.3 and 25.5 respectively. For white females in the same categories, the homicide rates are 3.9 and 4.1 per 100,000 respectively (Shin, et al.).

In recent years researchers have begun to direct their attention to identifying and examining causal determinates that contribute to this disproportionate representation of blacks, as a group, as homicide victims (Rose, 1978; Rose, 1980; Rose and Deskins, 1980). Little attention, however, has been given to examination and explanation of the black female role as victims of lethal acts of violence.

Research on female homicide victimization, in general, and black female homicide victimization, in particular, is virtually non-existent (Zahn, 1975; Letcher, 1979). Possibly this lack of interest may be attributed to the small percentage of females proportionately as homicide

victims. In 1976, females were 24.5 per cent of the homicide victims (FBI Uniform Crime Report 1976: 11). Perhaps the lack of research may also be attributed to the tendency of the field of victimology to be concerned with the evaluation of the victim's responsibility for the offender's act (Weis and Borges, 1973; Symonds, 1979; Shainess, 1979). Weis and Borges state that attitude studies indicate that victims of crimes against the person are often stigmatized and some classes of people are viewed as "legitimate" victims (Ibid.).

Homicide, like rape, takes on a certain game-like quality. The more the encounter is seen as a contest between equal contenders, the greater is the stigma for the loser or victim; the greater the equality between victim and offender, the greater the responsibility for the outcome...Furthermore, certain groups of individuals are viewed as "legitimate" victims having diminished justification for complaint if they are victimized. Inferior social status frequently is the deciding factor in determining who is a "legitimate" victim. Therefore, lower-class individuals, racial minorities, and women are often held to be more "legitimate" and deserving when they are victimized (emphasis added) (Weis and Borges, 1973: 77-78).

The situation of black females as "triple legitimate" victims - black, poor and female - may also account for the absence of study on their role as victims of criminal violence. This exploratory is an attempt to begin to fill the void associated with empirical research on black females as victims of lethal violence. One is primarily concerned to pursue answers to a series of basic questions regarding the social and environmental characteristics of black female homicide victims. Answers are sought to the following questions: What are the basic demographic and personal characteristics of black female homicide victims? What are the social and environmental factors that may contribute to the probability of a black female being a homicide victim? What is the relationship between the

victim and offender and the circumstances of the homicide incident? Are the characteristics of black females who are victims of criminal homicide similar to those of black females who commit criminal homicide?

Data

Data used in this investigation were assembled through the project, "Black Homicide in the Urban Environment," funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. The aim of the project was to identify and assess factors that contribute to the recent upsurge in frequency and risk of homicide among blacks in large urban areas. Six cities were chosen as sample cities — Detroit, St. Louis, Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Houston and Los Angeles — for which secondary data from police reports, court records, and so forth were gathered on homicides committed in 1975.¹ Interviews were conducted in three cities — Atlanta, Detroit and St. Louis — with offenders, next of kin of victims and offenders, and spouses of victims and offenders.

The data on black female homicide victims were extracted from the larger data set, which consists of secondary data on black female homicide victims for 1970-1975 in three of the six sample cities: Houston, Detroit and Atlanta (N=661).² This information was augmented by more detailed data provided by surveying a small number of the next of kin of black female homicide victims killed in 1975 in the three interview cities: Atlanta, Detroit and St. Louis (N=10).

Black Females as Homicide Victims

The absence of prior research, hence the development of an empirical theoretical framework for analysis of black female homicide victims, necessitates that a descriptive analysis of the sample of black female homicide victims and sub-sample of victims whose next of kin were interviewed be undertaken first. The characteristics of black female homicide victims examined include: age of victims, educational level, fighting behavior, previous encounters with the law, home life and neighborhood environment as child, family violence, drinking and narcotics problems, employment patterns, community reputation, the relationship of the women to their murderers and the type of weapon with which they were killed.

1. Age of Victims

Data on the ages of black female homicide victims were available for the interviewed sub-sample and for the victims in the three sample cities. In the sample of black female homicide victims, 12.5 per cent were between the ages 5 to 14, 25 per cent were 15-19, 12.5 per cent were 20-24, 25 per cent were between the ages of 25-29, 12.5 per cent were 30-34 and 12.5 per cent were over 40.

Table 23 shows the age distribution of victims for the three cities (see table 23). This table indicates that the age ranges with the largest percentage of victims were the 20-24 and the over 40 age groups, 19.9 and 26.9 per cent respectively. If the categories 25-29 and 30-34 are combined, the percentage is 27.7. It is this age category, 25-34, that had the highest homicide rate for black females in 1973, 28.3 per 100,000. Also, the 35-44 category had a rate of 25.5 per 100,000 (Shin, et al.).

Table 23

Age of Black Female Homicide Victims for Detroit,
Atlanta and Houston, 1970-1975*

Age	Detroit	Atlanta	Houston	Combined Total Percentages (%)
0 - 4	4.4% (16)	1.9% (2)	5.7% (11)	4.4% (29)
5 - 14	3.5 (13)	0	1 (2)	2.3 (15)
15 - 19	9 (33)	5.9 (6)	8.9 (17)	8.5 (56)
20 - 24	22.3 (82)	21.6 (22)	14.6 (28)	19.9 (132)
25 - 29	16.6 (61)	15.7 (16)	9.9 (19)	14.5 (96)
30 - 34	13.6 (50)	14.7 (15)	11.5 (22)	13.2 (87)
35 - 39	8.7 (32)	9.8 (10)	13.5 (26)	10.3 (68)
40 and over	21.8 (80)	30.4 (31)	34.9 (67)	26.9 (178)
	N=367	N=102	N=192	N=661

*Complete 1970-1975 data available for Houston only. Atlanta data are for 1971, 1972 and 1974, and Detroit data are for 1971 through 1974.

Source: Compiled by author from FBI Reports.

2. Education Level

Data on educational experience were only available for victims whose next of kin agreed to be interviewed (N=10). Of that group, 10 per cent of the victims had some elementary school education, 40 per cent had some high school, 40 per cent were high school graduates, and 10 per cent had some college. The victims' attitudes toward school could not be recalled by

10 per cent of the cases; however, 30 per cent of the victims apparently had a highly favorable attitude toward school, 40 per cent were somewhat favorable, 10 per cent had a neutral attitude, and 10 per cent had a somewhat unfavorable attitude. The data also indicated that 20 per cent of the victims earned very good grades, 30 per cent earned fair grades, and 20 per cent of the next of kin could not recall the victims' grades. Only 11.1 per cent of the victims quit school because of trouble with the law; 88.9 per cent attended school regularly.

3. Fighting Behavior

Since the victims' lives were taken during acts of lethal violence, did they have a history of activity in the arena of physical violence? The data indicated that only 30 per cent had engaged in fights as youths, and the occurrences were seldom. On the other hand, 70 per cent of the victims had no history of involvement in fights. Also, none of the victims had ever sustained injuries as the result of a fight.

4. Previous Encounters With the Law

Did the victims participate in behavioral sequences involving them with law enforcement officials that might have contributed to an increased probability of being a homicide victim? Wolfgang (1958) found that between 1948-1952 in Philadelphia 69.8 per cent of black female homicide victims had no previous arrest record, compared with only 38.7 per cent of black male homicide victims who had no previous arrest record. Among whites, 86 per cent of white female homicide victims and 67 per cent of white male homicide victims had no arrest record (Wolfgang, 1968: 175).

The data for the interviewed sub-sample indicate a conformance with

Wolfgang's findings. Approximately 90 per cent of the victims had no previous encounters with the law. The remaining 10 per cent had been arrested on drug-related charges. However, there apparently were no convictions or jail sentences associated with the arrests.

5. Home Life and Neighborhood Environment as Child

The data for the interviewed sub-sample revealed that 80 per cent of victims grew up in homes where both parents were present and 20 per cent grew up in homes where the father was absent. Of those whose father was absent, 50 per cent of the next of kin indicated that the relationship between the victims and their fathers was strong and warm, while 50 per cent said their relationship was distant and at times difficult.

Over three-fourths, 80 per cent of the victims, apparently had strong and warm relationships with their brothers and sisters while growing up. Only 10 per cent of the next of kin indicated that the victims did not get along well with their brothers and sisters, and 10 per cent indicated the relationship was distant. It also appeared that 90 per cent of the victims had no problems with parental authority, while disobedience was the source of conflict between the victims and their parents for the remaining 10 per cent.

Only 10 per cent of the next of kin felt that the neighborhood in which the victim spent most of her childhood was not a good place to live; 90 per cent believed it was a good neighborhood. Additionally, 77.8 per cent indicated that most of the people who lived in the neighborhood in which the victim grew up were stable working class people. In only 11.1 per cent of the cases were the people in the neighborhood described as "down and out," and 11.1 per cent described them as middle class. In view

of the overwhelming description of the neighborhood as a good place to live, it is not surprising that only 10 per cent of the next of kin felt that the neighborhood in which the victim was raised was directly related to the homicide.

6. Family Violence as Child

Did the victims come from homes in which physical violence and parental fighting were commonplace? Approximately half, 50 per cent, of the interviewed sub-sample of next of kin indicated that the victims were raised in homes where the parents did not believe in physically punishing children for misdeeds. Of the remaining victims who were raised in homes where parents believed in physical punishment, fathers were responsible for administering punishment in 10 per cent of the cases and mothers in 40 per cent.

Of those next of kin who responded to the question (N=8), 75 per cent of the victims were raised in homes where their parents never engaged in serious physical fights. Serious physical fighting that did not result in injury was present in the home environment of 12.5 per cent of the cases, and 12.5 per cent grew up in an environment where there was serious physical fighting between their parents that resulted in minor injuries. Also, all of the victims grew up in homes where no one ever used a weapon to injure another family member.

7. Drinking Problems and Narcotics History

In 88.8 per cent of the cases, the next of kin indicated that the victim was not a regular user of alcohol; 11.1 per cent of the victims were. Also, 88.9 per cent of the victims were not drug users; however, 11.1 per

cent used heroin. In response to whether they felt that alcohol and drugs were in any way related to the homicide incident, 10 per cent responded that they believed alcohol was related and 11.1 per cent felt drugs were related.

8. Employment Patterns

Were the victims employed on a regular basis? Or, were they out of the work force? At the time of their deaths, 60 per cent of the black female victims were unemployed, 20 per cent were employed full time, and 20 per cent were employed part time. Of those who were employed, 20 per cent worked in the manufacturing industry, 40 per cent in retail sales, 20 per cent in professional services and 20 per cent in other areas. In response to a question concerning the annual earning characteristics of the victim, 57.1 per cent of the victims earned under \$5000 a year, 28.6 per cent earned between \$5000 and \$9999, and 14.3 per cent earned between \$15,000 and \$19,999 a year.

9. Community Reputation

When asked what the victim's reputation in the community was like, 44.4 per cent of the next of kin indicated that the victim was viewed as a mature and settled person. A responsible family person was the reputation of 11.1 per cent of the victims, 33.3 per cent were characterized as individuals who liked to have a good time, and 11.1 per cent were viewed as street-wise persons (hustlers). All of the respondents agreed that the victim's community reputation was accurate.

10. Relationship of Victim to Her Murderer and Circumstances of Homicide

What are the circumstances under which black females are most likely to meet their deaths and who are their murderers? Are the circumstances of their deaths and the individuals who murder them directly tied to their sex roles? Wolfgang (1958) found that 46.7 per cent of black female victims and 64.9 per cent of white female victims were killed within a family relationship (Wolfgang, 1958: 207). "Family relationship" was defined as including relationships by consanguinity or legal affinity, e.g., husband, parent and so forth. Also 84 per cent of all females, black and white, were killed by individuals with whom they had a primary group relationship. Wolfgang further suggests, "We must say that when a man is found murdered we should first look for his acquaintances; when a woman is killed, for her relatives, mainly the husband, and after that her paramour, present or past" (1958: 208).

In the interviewed sub-sample of next of kin, 70 per cent indicated that the victim knew the homicide offender, while 30 per cent did not. The breakdown of the relationships was 30 per cent of the victims were killed by strangers, 30 per cent by friends or associates, 20 per cent by lovers, and 20 per cent by other relatives.

For the three sample cities, data on black female homicide victims revealed that 37.52 per cent were killed by family members, 28.44 per cent by acquaintances, 12.71 per cent by strangers, and 21.33 per cent were murdered by unknown assailants (see table 24). The table also indicates that Atlanta and Houston have the greater portion of black female homicide victims killed by family members, while Detroit's victim-offender relationship percentages are almost identical in three categories — family,

acquaintance, and stranger — and slightly lower in the fourth category, unknown.

Table 24

Victim-Offender Relationship for Black Female Homicide Victims for Detroit, Atlanta and Houston - 1970-1975*

	Detroit	Atlanta	Houston	Combined Total %
Family	28.1% (103)	52 % (53)	47.9% (92)	37.52% (248)
Acquaintance	27.5 (101)	29.4 (30)	29.7 (57)	28.44 (188)
Stranger	17.2 (63)	4.9 (5)	8.3 (16)	12.71 (84)
Unknown	27.2 (100)	13.7 (14)	14.1 (27)	21.33 (141)
	N=367	N=102	N=192	N=661

*Complete 1970-1975 data available for Houston only. Atlanta data are for 1971, 1972 and 1974, and Detroit data are for 1971 through 1974.

Source: Compiled by author from FBI Reports.

Descriptive accounts of the circumstances of the homicide incident for the sample are illustrative of the predominant instance of the black female murdered within a family relationship, principally by her mate or lover, and tied to her sex role.

Case 1

The victim and her husband were having an argument over the children going to bed. The husband pulled a shotgun and threatened to kill the victim. The victim told her husband that she was tired of him and if he was going to kill her then kill her. The husband shot the victim through the head.

Case 2

The victim and her husband were having marital problems. She returned from a friend's house and went to sleep on the couch. The husband tried to awaken her and eventually began to beat her when it seemed that she spurned his romantic advances. The victim died from multiple injuries due to assault - severely beaten.

Case 3

The victim and her boyfriend argued. The boyfriend shot the victim at a stop sign through the glass window of the car with a .357 Magnum.

11. Type of Weapon

Data on type of weapon used in the homicide incident were available for black female homicide victims for the three sample cities, but data were not available for the interviewed sub-sample of next of kin of victims (see table 25). The table indicates that 63.7 per cent of the black female homicide victims in the three cities were murdered by firearms. Knives were the weapons used in 17.4 per cent of the deaths; and other means, i.e. physical strength and other objects used as weapons, accounted for 18.5 per cent of the weapons used. On an individual city basis, firearms were used in at least two-thirds of the homicides of black female victims.

Table 25

Type of Weapon Used in Homicides of Black Female Victims --
Detroit, Atlanta and Houston, 1970-1975*

	Detroit	Atlanta	Houston	Combined Total %
Firearm	60 % (220)	72.6% (74)	66.1% (127)	63.7% (421)
Knife	22.3 (82)	11.8 (12)	10.9 (21)	17.4 (115)
Other	17.7 (65)	12.7 (13)	23 (44)	18.5 (122)
Missing Data	--	2.9	--	.4
	N=367	N=102	N=192	N=661

*Complete 1970-1975 data available for Houston only. Atlanta data are for 1971, 1972 and 1974, and Detroit data are for 1971-1974.

Source: Compiled by author from FBI Reports.

Discussion

The picture that begins to emerge of the black female homicide victim, based on the data utilized here, is that she -

- was probably between the ages of 25 to 34 or over 40 years of age
- had some high school or was a high school graduate
- had no history of involvement in fights
- had no criminal record
- was raised in a two parent household
- had strong and warm relationship with siblings
- had no problems with parental authority
- was raised in a neighborhood of stable working class people that was viewed as a good environment in which to raise children
- was raised in a home where parents did not engage in serious physical fights and did not believe in physically punishing children for misdeeds
- had no drinking or drug problems
- was probably unemployed at the time of death
- probably had a relatively good reputation in the community
- most likely knew her murderer, which was either a husband, common-law husband or lover, other family member, or acquaintance
- was killed by a firearm.

The data indicated that 70 per cent of the victims had no history of involvement in fights, 90 per cent had no encounters with the law, and 55.5 per cent were characterized as mature and settled individuals or responsible family persons. (These results must be viewed with the understanding that the information is not self-report data but is data on the victims provided by next of kin, which may or may not be completely accurate.) These and other results raise additional questions for exploration. Although these individuals met their deaths in a very violent manner — criminal homicide — they appeared to be individuals whose lives were relatively unaffected by violence. In this regard, the question arises, "What is the relationship between the social and environmental characteristics of the homicide victims and the absence of participation in behavioral sequences such as fighting and encounters with the law that could lead to homicide?"

First, what causal impact did home environment have on the absence of fighting among the victims? Home environment is operationalized using six variables: (1) the presence of serious fights between their parents while the victims were growing up; (2) whether either parent was absent from the household for any significant period of time during the victim's youth; (3) problems with parental authority; (4) good relationship with brothers and sisters; (5) family approval of fighting; and (6) whether the neighborhood in which the victim spent most of her childhood was a good place to raise children.

Using crosstabulation analysis, there appears to be no statistically significant relationship between these operationalized home environment variables and the absence of fighting behavior among the victims. In regard

to the relationship between fighting behavior and serious fights between their parents, 83.3 per cent of those victims who were raised in homes where their parents did not engage in serious fights did not fight, and 16.7 per cent of those raised in homes where their parents did not fight had a history of involvement in fights. Of those who came from homes where their parents' fighting did not result in injury, all (100 per cent) did not fight. Of those who were raised in homes where their parents' fighting resulted in minor injury, all (100 per cent) fought ($\chi^2 = 3.55$ $p > .05$).

The presence of both parents or the absence of one also appears to have no statistically significant relationship to fighting behavior. Of those who came from two parent homes, 75 per cent did not fight and 25 per cent did. Among those victims whose father was absent while they were growing up, 50 per cent fought and 50 per cent did not fight (Fisher's Exact Test = .53). Problems with parental authority also had no statistically significant relationship to the fighting behavior of the victims. Of those victims who had no problems with parental authority, 66.7 per cent did not fight. However, 33.3 per cent did fight periodically (Fisher's Exact Test = .70). Among those who did have problems with parental authority, principally disobedience, 100 per cent did not fight.

The variables, good relations with brothers and sisters, family approval of fighting, and whether the neighborhood in which the victims grew up was a good place to raise children, also appear to have no statistically significant relationship to the fighting behavior of the victims. Of those who did not get along with their siblings, all (100 per cent) did not fight. Of those victims who had a strong and warm relationship with their siblings, 75 per cent did not fight and 25 per cent did. Among those

victims whose relationship was described as distant, all (100 per cent) fought ($X^2 = 2.86$ $p > .05$). Of those victims whose parents approved of fighting, all (100 per cent) fought. However, among those whose parents disapproved of fighting, 66.7 per cent did not fight and 33.3 per cent did (Fisher's Exact Test = .43). Of those victims whose next of kin indicated that the victims were raised in a good neighborhood, 66.7 per cent of the victims did not fight and 33.3 per cent fought. Of those victims who were not raised in a good neighborhood, all (100 per cent) did not engage in fights (Fisher's Exact Test = .70).

Operationalizing home environment in the same manner, what impact did it have on the absence of encounters with the law among the victims? As with fighting behavior, there appears to be a statistically significant relationship between these operationalized variables and encounters with the law on the part of the victims. Of those victims whose parents did not engage in serious fights, 83.3 per cent never had any difficulty with the law and 16.7 per cent had been arrested for drugs. Of those whose parents fought but where the fighting did not result in injury, and of those whose parents fought and the fighting resulted in minor injuries, all had never had any difficulty with the law ($X^2 = .38$ $p > .05$).

The presence of both parents or absence of one parent also had no statistically significant relationship to the victims' involvement with the law. Of those from two-parent households, all had never had any difficulty with the law. Among those victims whose father was absent, 50 per cent had never had any difficulty with the law and 50 per cent had been arrested for drugs (Fisher's Exact Test = .20).

Of those victims who had no problems with parental authority, 100

per cent had not had any difficulty with the law; and of those who had problems with parental authority, all had been arrested for drugs (Fisher's Exact Test = .10). The relationship between the victims and their siblings also had no statistically significant relationship to the victims' difficulty with the law. Of those who did not get along with their brothers and sisters, all (100 per cent) had no involvement with the law. Of those victims whose relationship was described as strong and warm, 87.5 per cent had no difficulty with the law and 12.5 per cent had been arrested for drugs ($X^2 = .28$ $p > .05$).

The neighborhood in which the victim was raised, as with the other variables, had no statistically significant relationship to the victim's involvement with the law. Of those next of kin of the victim who indicated that the neighborhood in which the victim was raised was good, all of the victims (100 per cent) had never had any involvement with the law. Of those victims who were not raised in a good neighborhood, all (100 per cent) had been arrested on drug charges (Fisher's Exact Test = .10). There was no variance in the family approval of fighting variable; hence, there was no statistic.

Black Female Victims and Offenders: A Comparison

This section shifts the focus of this article to an examination of the similarities and/or differences between black females who are victims of criminal homicide and black females who are perpetrators of homicide. Are these two groups drawn from the same populations? Survey data on nine black female homicide offenders, on comparable questions asked the next of kin of black female homicide victims, are utilized to answer this question.

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov 2-Sample Test is utilized to determine whether the two groups are from the same or different populations.

In the area of education, 44.4 per cent of the homicide offenders finished high school, as did 40 per cent of the victims. The percentages are also similar in the other education categories. Among offenders, 44.4 per cent dropped out of high school before completion and 11.1 per cent dropped out of school before the ninth grade. Among victims, 40 per cent had some high school, 10 per cent had some elementary school, and 10 per cent had some college. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z was .54 with a probability greater than .05 indicating that, in regard to education level, the black female victims and offenders are similar.

Of those female offenders interviewed, 62.5 per cent had previous encounters with the law compared to 10 per cent of the black female victims. However, the K-S test ($Z = 1.11$ $p > .05$) indicates that both the victims and offenders had similar experiences with the law. The offenders and victims also appeared to have similar employment patterns. At the time of the homicide incident, 66.7 per cent of the offenders were unemployed and 60 per cent of the victims were unemployed ($K-S Z = .15$ $p > .05$). The only area in which the victims and offenders appeared to differ was in their fighting behavior. Among the offenders, 77.8 per cent had been involved in fights as a teen or adult compared to only 30 per cent of the victims ($K-S Z = 1.70$ $p < .05$). Therefore, it appears that in most respects, with the exception of fighting behavior, the characteristics of black females who are victims of criminal homicide are similar to those of black females who are perpetrators of homicide.

Conclusion

The exploratory nature of this study does not allow generalizations to the population of black female homicide victims. However, the findings may provide data to formulate hypotheses for further investigation.

The data indicated that, in brief, black female homicide victims were principally between the ages of 25 to 34, had at least some high school education, had no criminal record, had no history of involvement in fights, were probably unemployed at time of death, and probably knew their murderers. These findings also indicated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the operationalized home environment variables and the absence of involvement in fights and previous encounters with the law among the victims. The absence of statistically significant relationships, however, may be attributed to a number of factors unrelated to the character of the variables employed.

First, the small size of the interviewed sub-sample of next of kin of black female homicide victims ($N=10$) is an important factor. In small samples, the amount of difference necessary to achieve statistical significance is, of course, enormous; and obviously the observed differences in the sample are not significant at the .05 level. Measurement error is probably the second factor that may account for the absence of a statistically significant relationship. The construction of some of the questions and the level of measurement may have contributed to the loss of precision in prediction.

Future research should be aimed at testing the research questions formulated in this work using more precise measures and larger samples. Then it may be possible to more definitely identify social and environmental

factors that might contribute to and affect the probability of black females as victims of acts of lethal violence.

SECTION SIX

BLACK FEMALES AS HOMICIDE OFFENDERS:
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY*

The rising incidence of criminal violence, particularly homicide, is of increasing concern to many individuals -- policy makers, academicians and ordinary citizens. The probability of being a victim of some form of violent activity, especially homicide, is considerably greater for blacks than for whites (Silberman, 1978: 160; Shin, Jedlicka and Lee, 1977). According to the FBI Uniform Crime Reports in 1976, of 18,780 murders, blacks were 46.6 per cent of the victims (FBI Uniform Crime Reports, 1976: 10). Not only are blacks disproportionately the victims of homicide, but they are also disproportionately the offenders. In the same year, blacks were 53.5 per cent of those arrested for murder and non-negligent manslaughter (Ibid.: 185).

Researchers are beginning to explore the causal factors that contribute to this disproportionate representation of blacks as a group as homicide offenders and victims (Rose, 1978; Rose, 1980; Rose and Deskins, 1980). Because homicide transactions are so dominated by male involvement, however, there is seldom an attempt to isolate black female involvement in

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this behavioral sequence. Females, as aggregates, accounted for 14.9 per cent of those arrested for criminal homicide in 1976 (FBI Uniform Crime Reports, 1976: 185). The crime index, however, does not give the racial breakdown of the female arrest percentage.

Classical theories of female criminality sought to establish normative based causality, subsumed under the heading of "scientific," between criminal behavior and biological and assumed inferior characteristics of women (Lombroso and Ferrero, 1894; Thomas, 1907 and 1923; and Freud, 1933). The theory of female criminality emerging from these studies is that the biological female criminal was one who possessed a number of degenerative stigmata. Deviant behavior was attributed to the survival of "primitive" traits in individuals, particularly those of female and nonwhite races. It was also postulated that individuals develop hierarchically from the most highly developed, i.e., white men, to the most primitive, i.e., nonwhite women (Klein, 1973). Therefore, within this framework, criminal women were those who were attempting to be "men."¹

Contemporary studies identify a close relationship between women's sex roles and the types of crimes most frequently committed by women (Hoffman-Bustamante, 1973; Simon, 1975; Norland and Shover, 1977).

Women tend not to be arrested for crimes that require stereotyped male behavior, i.e., robbery, burglary. When they are arrested on such charges, it appears that they have played secondary, supportive roles. Even in crimes where women are more frequently arrested, their involvement in the offense is closely tied to the female sex role. Where women are often sole perpetrators, i.e., homicide, shoplifting, the close ties are still evident. Where the crime requires behavior that is consistent with expected female roles, women appear to make up a large number of the petty criminals (forgery, fraud, embezzlement, prostitution, vagrancy, curfew and runaway) ... (Hoffman-Bustamante, 1973: 131).

Research on criminal behavior of black females is almost non-existent. Brearley (1930) generalized that, based on his data, black women were more likely to commit homicide than were white women. He explained that "... this should not be surprising in view of the Negro women's greater freedom of life, physical vigor and familiarity with weapons." (Brearley, 1930: 251-252). His assertions about the nature of black women appear to be normatively based.

Von Hentig's work Crime: Causes and Conditions (1947) contained a section on "The Delinquency of the Colored Woman." He characterized the black woman with a record of delinquency as a person with a violent temper prone to uncontrollable outbursts. His postulated possible explanation is "... that the colored girl has a masculine or boyish streak and that this strain may to a certain extent account for her strong-arm solutions of personal problems" (Von Hentig, 1947: 177). It should be emphasized that both of these works appear to be based on the assumption of the classical theorists that nonwhite women were "primitive," and deviant behavior was the result of the possession of "male" characteristics.

The focus of this section is on black females as perpetrators of criminal homicide and their involvement in acts of lethal violence. A series of research questions are explored regarding the characteristics of black females involved in homicide transactions. What are the basic demographic and personal characteristics of black female homicide offenders? What are the characteristic criminal roles of black women who commit homicide? What type of weapon is most often used and who are the victims? What reasons do black women give for committing criminal violence and is the violence instrumental or expressive?

Data

Data used in this investigation were assembled through the project, "Black Homicide in the Urban Environment," funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. The aim of the project was to identify and assess factors that contribute to the recent upsurge in frequency and risk of homicide among blacks in large urban areas. Six cities were chosen as sample cities -- Detroit, St. Louis, Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Houston and Los Angeles -- for which secondary data from police reports, court records, and so forth were gathered on homicides committed in 1975.² Interviews were conducted in three cities -- Atlanta, Detroit and St. Louis -- with offenders, next of kin of victims and offenders, and spouses of victims and offenders.

The data on black female homicide offenders were extracted from the larger data set, which consists of secondary data on black women charged with criminal homicide in 1975 in the six sample cities (N=119). This information was augmented by more detailed data provided by surveying a small number of black female homicide offenders in the three interview cities (N=9).³

II. Characteristics of Black Female Homicide Offenders

A 1969 study of crimes of violence by women resulted in the development of a profile of women (all races) committed to prison for homicide (Ward, Jackson and Ward, 1969). As aggregates, women committed to prison for homicide --

- were 65 per cent white, 25 per cent black, 10 per cent Mexican
- tended to be of above average to below average intelligence
- came from families in which there was no reported criminality
- came from unbroken homes
- were reported to have been sexually promiscuous or prostitutes
- seldom had reports of homosexual involvement
- had serious drinking problems
- had virtually no reports of narcotics use
- were diagnosed as having some type of psychological disability
- had limited criminal careers.

The commission of homicide usually involved --

- the women as sole perpetrator
- children and husbands or lovers as victims
- no premeditation
- the use of guns, knives, or other household implements. (Ward, Jackson and Ward, 1969).

Extent and trends of homicides committed by women:

- Two out of every 1000 women (.2%) arrested in the U.S. are arrested for homicide (as of 1969).
- Of all homicide arrests (male and female) in 1967, women accounted for 1 in 7 (the proportion has been declining slowly; in the early 1960's it was 1 in 6).
- Of prison commitments for homicide, the ratio is lower: 1 in 11.

- The increase in the number of arrests of women for murder and manslaughter has increased faster than has the population.

This profile will be utilized as a framework for analysis of the sample and interviewed sub-sample of black female homicide offenders to determine how closely they resemble or differ from the persons on whom the typology was based.⁴ The variables intelligence, homosexual involvement, and psychological disability were not measured in the data and are therefore excluded from the analysis. However, additional variables such as fighting behavior, home environment as a child, and employment patterns are analyzed.

Black Women Involved in Homicide

The discussion that follows is comprised of the exploratory findings, drawn from the data in an effort to answer several very basic questions about the personal characteristics and social environment of black females involved in acts of lethal violence. The black female characteristics examined include the following: education level, fighting behavior, previous encounters with the law, exposure to crime and violence in their home environment as a child, general home environment, evidence of illegal sexual behavior, drinking and/or narcotics problems and the employment patterns of the women.

1. Education Level

The Ward, et al. prototype of female murderers indicated that they tended to be above average to below average intelligence. Intelligence is not measured in this study; however, education level is, although one acknowledges that the latter is not a surrogate of the former. Of the female offenders interviewed, 44.4 per cent finished high school, 44.4 per cent dropped out between the 9th and 11th grades, and 11.1 per cent failed

to continue their formal education beyond the eighth grade. Of those finishing high school, 25 per cent went on to junior college, 50 per cent went to trade or technical school, and 25 per cent went to work. More than a majority of the female offenders, 66.7 per cent, had a favorable attitude toward school, and 88.9 per cent were never suspended from school.

While growing up, 77.8 per cent had career objectives, but of that percentage only 33.3 per cent indicated that they accomplished their objectives. The open-ended responses revealed that many felt the reasons why they didn't achieve their objectives were lack of schooling and not being able to afford additional schooling, e.g. college or professional school, necessary to achieve career objectives.

As a group, over half (55.5 per cent) of the interviewed sub-sample had less than a high school education, which was reflected in the type of job they normally held (when employed). Those categories ranged from clerical employment to unskilled manual labor. This lack of education and resulting occupational categories may account for the fact that 44.4 per cent of the interviewed sub-sample felt their earnings were inadequate to support themselves and/or their families.

2. Fighting behavior

Was the homicide incident an isolated experience with violence? Or, were the offenders familiar with, and participants in, behavioral sequences (such as fighting) that involved violence? Almost three-fourths of the interviewed sample, 77.8 per cent, had been involved in fights as a teen or adult. Specifically, 55.6 per cent fought a few times, 11.1 per cent fought several times, and 11.1 per cent fought numerous times. Half (50 per cent) of the offenders had been injured as the result of a fight, some

more than once. The types of injuries varied. One offender had a jaw broken on one occasion and her front teeth chipped on another occasion. The butt of a gun across the head caused an injury to an offender in Detroit and another received a broken nose. (All of those injured were in Detroit.)

Of those offenders involved in fights, 42.9 per cent identified their role in the fights as the aggressor, 42.9 per cent were the attacked, and 14.3 per cent described their role as a bystander. Although three-fourths of the offenders engaged in fights periodically, most (85.7 per cent) did not find it necessary to arm themselves.

3. Previous encounters with the law

The profile developed in 1969 of female homicide offenders indicated that they had limited previous criminal careers. This does not appear to be the case for the interviewed sub-sample. Of those female offenders interviewed, 62.5 per cent had had previous difficulty with the law. The types of offenses for which they were arrested are varied. One offender had a previous larceny arrest, and one had been convicted of assault with intent to kill and had been given a two year sentence.

In examining data from the Georgia Crime Information Center on black female homicide offenders in Atlanta for 1975 (N=11), for whom records were available, 54.5 per cent had previous encounters with the law. There was no information on 27.3 per cent and 18.1 per cent had no previous record prior to being arrested for homicide. Of those with prior arrests, the offenses included shoplifting, simple larceny, assault (stabbing), forgery, carrying a concealed weapon, burglary, and aggravated assault.

4. Crime and violence in family

Ward, et al. found that most of their sample came from families in

which there was no reported criminality. This also appears to be the case for the interviewed sub-sample of black female homicide offenders. Of the sub-sample, 37.5 per cent had brothers and/or sisters who had had previous difficulty with the law; 62.5 per cent did not. Of those whose relatives had encounters with the law, the predominant offense was murder. One respondent's sister killed her husband and was subsequently incarcerated. Another's oldest brother was convicted of murder and incarcerated. The same respondent also had a half-brother who was incarcerated, but she could not recall for what offense.

All of the offenders (100 per cent) were raised in homes where their parents believed in physical punishment. The degree of physical punishment, however, appeared to vary. A majority indicated that physical punishment consisted of whippings/spankings. Yet, for a few physical punishment meant being "beat with extension cord or rope" and having their "heads knocked against the wall." These offenders' experiences extend beyond the bounds of physical punishment into the realm of physical abuse. Also, 55.5 per cent came from households where there were occasionally/rarely serious quarrels.

5. Home environment as child

The literature prototype indicates that female homicide offenders came from unbroken homes. This also appears to be the case for the interviewed sub-sample of black female offenders. Of that group, 88.9 per cent were raised by their natural parents and 75 per cent of that group got along well with their parents while growing up. In 88.8 per cent of the sub-sample, all brothers and sisters lived at home while the offender was also growing up. The person who played the strongest role in developing a

set of guidelines for their conduct with others, in 66.6 per cent of the cases, was a family member. The father provided the guidelines in 22.2 per cent of the sub-sample; 33.3 per cent felt the mother was most instrumental; and 11.1 per cent followed guidelines established by either a brother or sister.

Of those guidelines established by family members, 44.4 per cent felt the one emphasized most was "Always deal with people honestly." That guideline emphasized most in 33.3 per cent of the cases was "Never trust others," and 22.2 per cent stated that the axiom, "Attempt to look out for yourself," was predominant. In terms of personal relationships with persons other than family members while growing up, 33.3 per cent had many friends, 11.1 per cent had some friends, 22.2 per cent had a few friends, and 33.3 per cent did not associate with persons outside their family and had no friends while growing up.

6. Illegal and illicit sexual behavior

Ward, et al. found that the female homicide offenders in their study were reported to have been sexually promiscuous or prostitutes. This variable was not measured in the interview data; however, arrest data for the sample of black female homicide offenders for 1975 for Atlanta may be useful (N=12). Only 8.3 per cent of that group had ever been arrested for solicitation for prostitution or other sexual offenses.

7. Drinking problems

Serious drinking problems were characteristic of Ward, et al.'s sample of female homicide offenders. In the interviewed sub-sample, only 12.5 per cent identified themselves as being alcoholics. However, one could consume a great amount of liquor and not consider or admit that one

was an alcoholic. In response to a question of how extensive was their experience with alcohol, 12.5 per cent indicated they drank a great deal, 75 per cent drank a little bit, and 12.5 per cent never drank. It appeared that this sub-sample of female homicide offenders, in contrast to Ward, et al.'s, did not have serious drinking problems. At the time of the homicide incident, however, 55.5 per cent were drinking, and 20 per cent of that group felt alcohol was related to the incident.

8. Narcotics history

Ward, et al.'s profile indicated that female homicide offenders had virtually no reports of narcotics use. This also appears to be the case with this sub-sample of female offenders. None of the respondents indicated that they considered themselves addicted to drugs. In terms of actual drug usage, 12.5 per cent smoked marijuana a great deal, 25 per cent smoked it a little bit and 62.5 per cent never smoked it. In examining hard drug usage, we found 12.5 per cent used cocaine a great deal, 2.5 per cent used it a little bit, and 75 per cent never used it. Heroin was used a little by 25 per cent of the sub-sample, and 12.5 per cent used hallucinogens a great deal; 75 per cent never used heroin and 87.5 per cent never used hallucinogens. Drugs were not related to the homicide incident in any of the cases.

9. Employment patterns

Were the offenders employed on a regular basis? Or, were they in and out of the work force? At the time of the homicide incident, 66.7 per cent of the offenders were unemployed and of that group 33.3 per cent were actively seeking work. Of the unemployed group, 20 per cent had been unemployed less than three months; 20 per cent had been unemployed over six months but under a year; and 40 per cent had been unemployed over one year.

The occupational categories in which the unemployed group previously worked are varied: 16.7 per cent worked as laborers, 33.3 per cent worked as clericals, 33.3 per cent were employed in the area of personal services, and 16.7 per cent either didn't know or were students. Only 44.4 per cent had ever held a full-time job; and of that group, 25 per cent had held the same full-time job for 17 years, 25 per cent held the same job for 3 years, and 50 per cent held the same job for only a year. Over half (55.6 per cent) of the sub-sample were first employed at a relatively young age, between the ages 15-17; 33 per cent first started to work between the ages of 18-20; and 11.1 per cent did not hold their first job until they were 27 years old.

Discussion

The data indicated that slightly more than three-fourths of the interviewed sub-sample, 77.8 per cent, had a history of involvement in fights and more than half, 62.5 per cent, had encounters with the law prior to arrest for homicide. These percentages raise additional questions for exploration. What is the relationship between the social and environmental characteristics of the offenders and their behavior patterns, such as fighting and previous difficulty with the law? The first causal determinate on the fighting behavior of the offenders as teenagers or adults to be examined is home environment. Home environment is operationalized using four variables: (1) good relationship with parents; (2) the presence of serious quarrels in their family either between their parents or others; (3) the most emphasized guideline they were taught to live by; and (4) family approval of fighting.

Using crosstabulation analysis, there appears to be no significant statistical relationship between these operationalized home environment variables and the fighting behavior of the offenders. In regard to the relationship between fighting behavior and whether they got along well with their parents, 66.7 per cent of those who fought a few times also got along well with their parents ($\chi^2 = 3.73$ $p > .05$). Serious family quarrelling also appears to have no significant relationship to fighting behavior -- 25 per cent of those whose families did not quarrel seriously fought numerous times and 50 per cent of those whose families did not quarrel seriously, fought a few times ($\chi^2 = 4.73$ $p > .05$).

The three guidelines most emphasized were look out for yourself; never trust others; and deal honestly with others. One would expect a

statistically significant difference in the fighting behavior of individuals who adhered to the first two guidelines from those who adhered to the third. There are differences, but they are not statistically significant. Of those offenders who were taught to look out for themselves, 100 per cent fought a few times. Of those taught to never trust others, 33.3 per cent fought numerous times, 33.3 per cent fought a few times. Among those who were taught to deal honestly, 50 per cent fought a few times ($X^2 = 7.5$ $p > .05$).

With regard to the fourth operationalized home environment variable, family approval of fighting, there does appear to be a statistically significant relationship to the offender's fighting behavior. However, the causal direction is not what one would expect. Of those offenders who fought (combined categories), 85.7 per cent of their families disapproved of fighting ($X^2 = 8$ $p < .05$; lambda asymmetric = .33). Therefore, it would appear, parental disapproval of fighting did not appreciably affect the fighting behavior of the offenders.

Table 26

Fighting Behavior by Family Approval of Fighting

<u>Family Approval</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
<u>Fight</u>		
No	---	14.3% (1)
Numerous Times	100% (1)	---
Several Times	---	14.3% (1)
Few Times	---	71.4% N=8 (5)

$$X^2 = 8 \text{ } p < .05 \text{ } \text{lambda (asymmetric)} = .33$$

Examining the relationship between inter-personal relationships of the offender as a youth and as an adult and fighting behavior, there also appears to be no significant statistical relationship. As a youth, 100 per cent of those who indicated they had no friends as a youth fought (combined percentages of categories fought several times and few times). Of those indicating they had many friends, 66.6 per cent fought; 100 per cent of those with some friends fought; and 50 per cent of those with few friends fought ($X^2 = 6.45$ $p > .05$).

As adults, 80 per cent of those who indicated their relations with others were friendly, fought (combined percentages of categories numerous times, several times and few times). Of those offenders who indicated their relations with others were cautious, 75 per cent fought. The Chi square test indicates that the two variables are independent of one another ($X^2 = 2.12$ $p > .05$); therefore, based on this statistical test, there appears to be no causal relationship between the substance of the offenders' relations with others and their fighting behavior.

If these operationalized home environment variables and personal relations with others variable appear to have no statistically significant relationship to the fighting behavior of the offenders, is it possible that internal, emotional variables, such as jealousy, could account for the fighting pattern?

Examination of the data reveals that 100 per cent of the female offenders (N=5) who identified themselves as jealous individuals had fought (combined categories). There appears to be a statistically significant relationship between the fighting behavior of the offenders and whether they had been taught to handle jealousy ($X^2 = 18.9$ $p < .05$; lambda asymmetric = .75). Of those individuals who fought numerous times, 100 per cent had

never been taught to handle jealousy, and 60 per cent of those who fought a few times had also never been taught. Of those individuals who fought several times, 100 per cent were taught to strike out in situations that aroused jealous feelings, and 40 per cent of those who fought a few times were taught to control their emotions. Consequently, it appears that 55.5 per cent of the sample of interviewed female offenders were either never taught to handle jealousy or were taught to strike out in those situations.

Table 27

Fighting Behavior by Taught to Handle Jealousy

Fight	Taught to Handle Jealousy			
	No	Control Emotions	Strike Out	Other
No	---	---	---	100% (2)
Numerous Times	100% (1)	---	---	---
Several Times	---	---	100% (1)	---
Few Times	60% (3)	40% (2)	---	---

N=9

$$X^2 = 18.9 \quad p < .05 \quad \text{lambda (asymmetric)} = .75$$

Although a majority of the offenders, 55.6 per cent, indicated they were jealous individuals, 75 per cent indicated that they never seriously engaged in activities designed to make their mates jealous. There appears to be no statistically significant relationship between whether the offenders seriously provoked jealousy and mates with similar behavior patterns (Fisher's Exact Test = .86). Of those individuals who never seriously provoked jealousy in their mates, 83.3 per cent had mates who engaged in activities designed to provoke jealousy in them.

Since the home environment variables appear to have no statistically significant relationship to the fighting behavior of female offenders, would we expect them to have an impact on whether the offenders had difficulties with the law prior to arrest for the homicide? Once again the home environment is operationalized using four variables: good relationship with parents; the presence of serious quarrels in their family either between their parents or others; the most emphasized guideline they were taught to live by; and family approval of fighting. Additionally, one other variable is utilized -- whether other siblings had difficulty with the law.

As with fighting behavior, the operationalized home environment variables appear to have no statistically significant relationship to whether the offenders had encounters with the law prior to arrest for homicide. In regard to the relationship between previous difficulty with the law, 60 per cent of those who got along well with their parents had previous encounters with the law (Fisher's Exact Test = .71). Additionally, among those who did not get along with their parents, 50 per cent had previous difficulty with the law and 50 per cent had not.

Serious quarreling within the family appears to have no statistically significant relationship to whether the offender had encounters with the law prior to the homicide incident ($X^2 = 5.16 \quad p > .05$). Of those offenders who had previous difficulty with the law, 60 per cent indicated that their families did not quarrel seriously. Conversely, of those offenders who had not had previous encounters, 66.7 per cent indicated their families had serious quarrels on rare occasions, and 33.3 per cent indicated that serious quarrels occurred occasionally.

There also appears to be no significant statistical relationship between the offenders' previous encounters with the law and the most emphasized guideline they were taught to follow ($X^2 = .18$ $p > .05$). Among those offenders who had previous encounters, 20 per cent adhered to the guideline, "Look out for yourself," 40 per cent believed you should "Never trust others," and 40 per cent were taught to "Deal honestly with others." No statistically significant relationship was observed between the offenders' previous difficulty with the law and whether their families approved of fighting (Fisher's Exact Test = .63). Of those offenders who had difficulty with the law, 80 per cent had parents who disapproved of fighting.

The fifth operationalized home environment variable, siblings' difficulty with the law, also appears to have no statistically significant relationship to whether the offenders had encounters with the law (Fisher's Exact Test = .29). Sixty per cent of those offenders who had difficulties with the law had brothers and/or sisters who also had been in difficulty with the law. However, 40 per cent of that same category of offenders had brothers and/or sisters who had no encounters with the legal system.

Black Women and the Homicide Incident

The discussion that follows is comprised of the conclusions, drawn from the data in an effort to answer several very basic questions about the nature of black female behavior in the behavioral sequence of acts leading to lethal violence. The aspects of violent crimes examined include the following: whether the women acted alone or with others; who the victims were; where the crimes took place; whether the crimes were premeditated; what weapons were used; and what rationale, justification or explanation was given by the black women for their crimes.

1. Criminal Roles of Black Women

The roles of women in homicide, as defined by Ward, are conspirator, accessory, partner, and sole perpetrator. Conspirator is defined as one who instigates or has knowledge of the crime but who does not participate in committing the criminal act itself. The accessory is one who plays a secondary role in committing the crime -- acting as a lookout; driving a getaway car; carrying weapons, tools, or the proceeds of robberies and burglaries. The partner is one who participates equally in all aspects of the crime. The final category is the woman who acts as the sole perpetrator of the crime. Data presented in Table 28 indicates that 95 per cent of the black female homicide offenders in the six sample cities for 1975 acted alone. Only 3.4 per cent were partners with another person in the commission of the homicide and 1.6 per cent were accessories.

Table 28

Roles of Black Females in Homicide Incidents for Los Angeles, Houston, St. Louis, Atlanta, Detroit and Pittsburgh for 1975 (N=119)

Conspirator	---	---
Accessory	2	1.7%
Partner	5	4.2%
Sole Perpetrator	112	94.1%

Source: Compiled by author from F.B.I. Reports for the six sample cities.

The female roles of conspirator, accessory, and partner refer principally to homicides committed in the course of a felony, i.e., robbery and burglary. Males, black and white, are overwhelmingly the participants in incidents of felony-murder (Wolfgang, 1958), whereas the role of sole

perpetrator for females usually involves homicide committed during non-criminal activity, i.e., domestic quarrels. The role of black females as sole perpetrators in homicides, in most cases, is tied to their sex roles. Descriptive accounts of the circumstances of the homicide event for the interviewed sub-sample are illustrative of the predominant instance of the black female as sole perpetrator in a homicide.

Case 1

Offense: Second degree murder

The offender (age 33) and the deceased had been living in a common-law relationship for four years. One evening they were over at a friend's house when a fight took place between the friend and another male who was present. The offender was attempting to break up the fight, when the deceased stepped into the fight pulling a small knife from his pocket and cut the other male on the neck. The man ran from the house stating that he would get the deceased for cutting him. The offender returned home shortly afterwards. At approximately 12:15 AM the deceased returned home and demanded that the offender go inside the house and get a shotgun. The offender refused and an argument ensued. The offender went into the house, armed herself with a .38 caliber Colt BSR and came out onto the front porch. The deceased, seeing that the offender was armed, stated: "Bitch, you know if you shoot me, you are going to do some time." At this time the offender shot the gun six times, of which two slugs fatally struck the deceased.

Case 2

Offense: First degree murder

The offender (age 21) and the deceased had been living together for two years. The offender during the last month had caught the deceased three times going out with a former girlfriend. On one occasion the deceased did not come home all night and the defendant, in the early morning, had seen his truck parked in front of his former girlfriend's house and saw him leaving.

One evening the offender went to the parking lot of the deceased's place of employment and asked him to return to her. (The deceased had left her the previous Monday.) The deceased went into his place of employment and when the offender saw him coming back across the parking lot, she took a rifle from her car and fired one shot, fatally wounding the deceased in the head.

A third case is illustrative of the few instances when a female is involved in a felony-homicide and her role is that of a secondary actor,

i.e., accessory or partner (Wolfgang, 1958; Ward, Jackson and Ward, 1969).

Case 3

Offense: First degree murder

The offender (age 18) and a male companion entered a market. The male companion accosted the deceased with a silver gun and robbed him of about \$20 and a pistol. During the hold-up the deceased was shot in the chest. The offender stood by in the store and escaped with her male companion.

In light of the circumstances that black females rarely kill in concert with someone else and are not involved to any great degree in instances of felony-homicide, who are the victims of their lethal acts of violence?

2. Relationship of Offender to Victim

The literature indicates that in cases of homicide committed by females the salience of the sex role is also apparent. Unlike the victims of male homicide offenders, the victims of females are rarely store-owners, strangers or other individuals slain in the course of the offender committing a crime. The victims of female homicide offenders are overwhelmingly persons with whom the offender had an affectional relationship. Husbands, common-law husbands or lovers are the dominant victims of female homicide offenders (Ward, Jackson and Ward, 1969; Rasko, 1976; Totman, 1978; Biggers, 1979). Relatives and acquaintances are the second largest categories and strangers and children are the last categories of victims. This distribution of victims also appears to be the case for the sample and sub-sample of black female homicide offenders. Table 29 shows the categories of victims for the sample and Table 30 indicates the sex and race of the victims.

Table 29

Relationship of Offender to Victim

	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
Husband, Common law Husband and Lover	58	49.7
Relatives	6	5.1
Acquaintances	40	34.2
Strangers	10	8.5
Children	3	2.5
	(N=117)	(100%)

Source: Compiled by author from FBI Reports for six sample cities.

Table 30

Sex and Race of Victim of Female Offender

	<u>Black</u>	<u>White</u>	
Male	85.5% (100)	0	N=100
Female	14.5% (17)	0	N=17
	N=117		

Source: Compiled by author from FBI Reports from six sample cities.

Examination of Table 29 indicates that more than one-half of the victims of female offenders, 49.7 per cent, were either husbands, common-law husbands or lovers. Other relatives, such as mother, father, sister, brother and so forth, were 5.1 per cent of the victims; acquaintances were 34.2 per cent of the victims; strangers represented 8.5 per cent; and children were

the victims in only 2.6 per cent of the cases. Table 30 reveals that all the victims were black, and 85.5 per cent were males and 14.5 per cent were females. Data for the interviewed sub-sample of black female homicide offenders indicated that husbands, common-law husbands or lovers were the victims in 55.6 per cent of the cases, acquaintances were the victims in 33.3 per cent, and 11.1 per cent of the victims were children. Also, 55.6 per cent of the victims were males and 44.4 per cent were females; all the victims were black.

This distribution of victims is congruous with previous research in the area. Wolfgang (1958), in one of the most comprehensive studies of homicide, found:

When a woman committed homicide, she was more likely than a man to kill her mate. Of 89 Negro female offenders ... 45 per cent, killed their husbands; and of the 15 white female offenders, 7 killed their husbands. On the other hand, of 321 Negro male offenders ..., 12 per cent, killed their wives; and of the 118 white male offenders ..., 11 per cent, killed their wives.

Men (both black and white), because of their broader social networks and greater freedom of movement outside the home, are more likely to kill and be killed by acquaintances (Wolfgang, 1958; Goode, 1969). Since women who commit homicide are more likely to kill their mates than are males who commit homicide, then the place of occurrence of the homicide incident should also be tied to the female's sex role. Therefore, we should expect females who commit homicide to do so primarily in their places of residence.

3. Location of Offense

The place where the homicide occurs plays an important role in the circumstances associated with the homicide event. Wolfgang (1958) found that 79.8 per cent of the females (both black and white) who committed

homicide did so in the home, compared to 44.7 per cent of male homicide offenders. Males overwhelmingly committed homicide outside the home, 55.3 per cent. Further analysis indicated that of those homicides committed by females in the home, 59.8 per cent occurred in the home of both the female offender and her victim. Other studies substantiate Wolfgang's findings (Ward, Jackson and Ward, 1969; Totman, 1978).

Examination of the data for the six city sample of black female homicide offenders revealed that the principal location of the homicide incident concurred with Wolfgang's and others' findings. Nearly half of the offenses, 47 per cent, occurred in the offender's home; 15.4 per cent occurred in a home other than that of the offender; 2.6 per cent occurred in bars; 29 per cent happened in the street; and 6 per cent took place in other locations (see table 31). Since males primarily kill outside their homes, there are a wide range of possible circumstances associated with the homicide incident, such as felony-homicide, barroom altercation, assault and so forth. However, if females who commit homicide do so principally in the home, the range of circumstances are limited, i.e., domestic violence or defensive measures against an intruder. Once again, the place of occurrence for females who commit homicide is tied to their sex roles -- the incident occurs in the home.

Table 31
Location of Offense for Six Sample Cities (N=117)

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Per Cent (%)</u>
Offender's Home	55	47 %
Other's Home	18	15.4
Bar	3	2.6
Street	34	29
Other	7	6
	(N=117)	(100%)

Source: Compiled by author from FBI Reports for the six sample cities.

4. Premeditation

The picture that is emerging of black females who commit homicide is that they are principally sole perpetrators, usually kill their husbands, common-law husbands or lovers, and the homicide takes place in their homes. Given the sex role connection of these three variables, would premeditation be involved? Operationalizing the concept of premeditation is extremely difficult. The length of time between the planning of the crime and the actual commission of the crime, which is necessary to constitute premeditation, is subject to many interpretations. In view of the problems in operationalization, the definition of premeditation made use of Ward, et al. (1969) is utilized. Thus, the homicide incident is categorized as premeditated "... only when there was a definite statement about a definite plan of action made by the subject or her crime partners, when the crime was one of a series of similar crimes, or when the crime was first degree murder" (Ward, Jackson and Ward, 1969).

Ward, et al. found that 21 per cent of their sample cases were classified as premeditated; 46 per cent were not premeditated; and they were unable to determine whether the homicide was premeditated or not in 33 per cent of the cases. The data on the sample and interviewed sub-sample were insufficient to make a determination of premeditation. However, the interviewed sub-sample was questioned as to whether they could account for the situation that led to the homicide. Arguments and anger led to the homicide in 44.4 per cent of the cases; 11.1 per cent indicated they acted in self-defense; 11.1 per cent indicated they were in the wrong place at the wrong time; 11.1 per cent felt drugs and/or alcohol led to the death; and 22.2 per cent could not recall the situation.

Although the temporal sequence is absent, one could theorize that arguments and anger, self-defense, and alcohol and drug usage are variables that could lead to situationally motivated, rather than premeditated, homicide. If one were to follow that line of reasoning, then conceivably 66.6 per cent of the cases of the interviewed sub-sample were not premeditated. This reasoning, at this juncture, is purely ad hoc and a more precise measurement of premeditation is in order.

5. Type of Weapon Used

Is there a female specific weapon of choice in the commission of homicide? The prevailing theory in the literature is that female homicide offenders are most likely to kill their victims with guns; knives are the second most frequently utilized weapon (Cole, Fisher and Cole, 1968; Ward, Jackson and Ward, 1969; Totman, 1978; and Biggers, 1979). Biggers (1979) found that among female murderers guns were considered "safe" weapons because attack or defense could be made from a safe distance. Also, the

women using guns either carried guns with them or had easy access to them in their homes.

Firearms as the principal weapons of females who commit homicides also appear to be the case for the sample of black female homicide offenders.⁵ In the sample, 72.6 per cent of the black female homicide offenders killed their victims with guns; 23 per cent used knives; 2.7 per cent used some physical means, i.e., hammer or plastic bag; and 1.7 per cent used other means, such as an automobile. In the interviewed sub-sample, 66.7 per cent used guns. However, only 33.3 per cent of the sample indicated that they owned a gun at the time of the incident. Therefore, it would appear that those who did not own a gun, but used one in the commission of homicide, must have had easy access to a firearm, probably in the home. Knives were the weapons in 11.1 per cent of the cases of the interviewed sub-sample, 11.1 per cent used physical means, and no data were available on the weapons used for 11.1 per cent.

6. Offenders' Rationale

What reasons do black females give for committing homicide? Totman (1978) and Biggers (1979) found that the majority of female homicide offenders in their samples felt justified in killing their victims, especially if the victim was a husband, common-law husband or lover. Biggers also found that none of the women in her sample (N=32) expressed guilt or remorse regarding their crimes. In general, the women in her sample "... were bitter and resentful that they were in prison, for they viewed their crimes as acts of self-preservation or as justified revenge."

Data for the interviewed sub-sample indicate that 66.7 per cent felt that there were situations that justify a man killing his wife or girl-

friend, or a wife killing her husband or boyfriend. When asked to describe the situation that justifies killing a spouse, the predominant answer was in cases of beatings.

Some examples of the responses:

- #1 - Yes! (In case of) husband/wife beating. When you can't talk to them, you've got to stop them somehow.
- #2 - "Hard to say. Different circumstances. If man is constantly beating her, then could be justified."
- #3 - "As far as woman and ladyfriend beating, if you do something to them you are protecting yourself."

Interestingly, when asked whether there are other situations in which you feel a person is justified in taking the life of another, 66.7 per cent of the interviewed sub-sample answered no! This is the obverse of the response percentages to the previous question. Therefore, it appears that two-thirds believed that circumstances of the male/female relationship may justify the killing of a spouse, i.e., continual beatings; and identical percentages felt that there are no other circumstances that justify the taking of a life.

When asked how they felt after they realized that a person had been killed as a result of their actions, 33.3 per cent indicated they were emotionally upset; 33.3 per cent had felt empty (sad); 11.1 per cent did not feel anything; 11.1 per cent felt disbelief; and 11.1 per cent did not respond to the question. All of the sub-sample indicated that there were things they could have done to prevent the homicide. The prevention measures elicited in the open-ended questions included the following:

- #1 - "If he had gone to his mother's house like I asked him. By him using drugs and drinking, it never would have happened."
- #2 - "I could have left the parking lot and have left him."
- #3 - "If I could have found someplace to go. Left at 5:00 in the morning."

- #4 - "If me and my husband had been together and if I had been making more money on the job."
- #5 - "His brother not coming around."
- #6 - "If I had done what I started to do, I would have gone somewhere else."
- #7 - "If he hadn't hit my mother."

Disposition of Cases of Black Female Homicide Offenders

This section shifts the focus of this article by examining the relationship between black female homicide offenders and the criminal justice system. The preceding discussion indicated that the circumstances under which most black females commit homicide are tied to their sex roles. They usually kill their mates; the crime occurs inside the home; a "safe" weapon, principally a gun, is used; and they act alone. Is their treatment by the criminal justice system, once they are arrested for the crime, also tied to their sex roles?

Researchers in the area of women and the criminal justice system have found conclusive evidence that women receive different treatment than men. They disagree, however, on the nature and direction of the treatment. One view is that female offenders are dealt with more harshly because they exhibit behavior patterns that do not conform to the values society has about the personality and role of women (Chesney-Lind, 1973; Timen, 1973; Simon, 1975). Simon states that judges "are more likely to throw the book at the female, because they believe there is a greater discrepancy between her behavior and the behavior expected of women than there is between the behavior of a male defendant and the behavior expected of men" (Simon, 1975: 52).

The other view is that women receive gentler treatment from the

criminal justice system than men. This differential treatment, empirically supported, appears to stem from assumptions on the part of criminal justice personnel that women are in need of protection (Moulds, 1978; Nagel and Weitzman, 1971). One researcher indicates that "Both the reasons given and the actions taken by officials in the criminal justice system have reflected the assumption that women are different from men in ways that justify for women softer, more caring, protective treatment" (Moulds, 1978). One study also found that females of all races received less harsh treatment than did their male counterparts. However, non-white females received slightly harsher treatment than did their male counterparts. Moreover, non-white females received slightly harsher treatment than white females; non-white males received harsher treatment than white males (Moulds, 1978).

Court data for black female homicide offenders in Atlanta and Detroit for 1975 (N=34) appear to conform to the second view. In 44.12 per cent (N=15) of the cases no indictments were issued for a variety of reasons, i.e., self-defense, justifiable homicide, and insufficient evidence. In 41.18 per cent of the cases the women were either convicted or pleaded guilty to manslaughter, voluntary and involuntary. Of that group (N=14), 35.7 per cent received probation, 21.4 per cent had a major portion of their sentences suspended, 35.7 per cent received straight sentences ranging from 3 to 15 years, and sentences could not be determined for 7.2 per cent of the cases. Returning to the sample (N=34), 5.88 per cent were convicted of lesser charges, i.e., reckless use of firearms and assault with intent to commit murder, and 5.88 per cent were acquitted of the charges (see table 32).

Table 32

Disposition of Cases for Black Male and Female Homicide Offenders for Atlanta and Detroit, 1975

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
No Indictment/ Charges Filed	25.3% (23)	44.12% (14)
Convictions/Pleas Manslaughter	29.6% (27)	41.18% (14)
Convictions/Pleas Murder	23.1% (21)	2.94% (1)
Convictions for Lesser Charges	---	5.88% (2)
Acquittals	9.9% (9)	5.88% (2)
Cases Closed/ Death of Defendant	6.6% (6)	---
No Data on Disposition of Case	5.5% (5)	---
	(N=91)	(N=34)

Source: Compiled from court records for Atlanta and Detroit.

(N=91), some differences are observed (see table 32). No indictments were issued in 25.3 per cent of the cases. Convictions or pleas for manslaughter were obtained in 29.5 per cent of the cases, and 23.1 per cent entered guilty pleas or were convicted of murder, either first or second. Acquittals occurred in 9.9 per cent of the cases, 6.6 per cent were closed because of the death of the defendant, and no data were available on the disposition of the cases of 5.5 per cent.

Of those black males who either pleaded guilty or were convicted of murder, 42.8 per cent received life sentences, 23.8 per cent received

sentences ranging from 4-20 years, 28.6 per cent were sentenced to from 2-15 years, and 4.8 per cent received probation. Of those convicted of, or pleading guilty to, manslaughter, 11.1 per cent received probation, 3.7 per cent had a major portion of their sentence suspended, 66.7 per cent received sentences of 1 to 20 years, and no sentencing data were available on 18.5 per cent.

It appears, from examination of the data in Table 32, that black females were more likely not to be indicted for homicide (44.12 per cent) than were black males (25.3 per cent). Black females had a higher proportion of conviction/pleas for manslaughter than black males, but black males had a higher conviction rate for first and second degree murder. It is possible that the reason why black females have a higher proportion of manslaughter convictions/pleas is that manslaughter does not carry as severe a penalty as murder. Data on the disposition of cases of white male and female homicide offenders, for purposes of racial comparisons, are unavailable.

Conclusions

The exploratory nature of this study does not allow generalizations to the population of black female homicide offenders. Nevertheless, the findings may provide information to formulate hypotheses for further study and suggestions for the development of additional instruments to more precisely measure the concepts.

The data presented here on black female homicide offenders indicates a conformance with the Ward, et al. profile in some aspects and a variance within others. In brief, black female homicide offenders, for the most part, had previous encounters with the law, came from homes with no reported criminality, were raised by both parents, and had no serious drinking problems. Also, in 95 per cent of the cases in this study, black females committed homicide alone. Guns were the predominant weapon used (72.6 per cent), with knives the second most frequently used weapon (23 per cent). Husbands, common-law husbands, and lovers were the victims in almost half of the cases, 49.6 per cent; and black males were the victims in 85.5 per cent of the cases.

These findings also indicate that there is no statistically significant relationship between the operationalized home environment variables and the offenders' fighting behavior and difficulty with the law prior to arrest for homicide. However, the absence of statistically significant relationships may be attributed to a number of factors unrelated to the character of the variables employed.

First, the small size of the interviewed sub-sample of black female offenders (N=9) is an important factor. In small samples the amount of differences necessary to achieve statistical significance is of course

enormous, and obviously the observed differences in the sample are not significant at the .05 level. The second factor that may account for the absence of a statistically significant relationship is probably measurement error. Thus, the construction of some of the questions and the level of measurement may have contributed to the loss of precision in prediction.

Another avenue for further examination is why the fighting behavior of the interviewed sub-sample of black female homicide offenders is the inverse of stereotype feminine behavior. Are the sex role socialization processes of black women dissimilar enough to account for behavior at variance with the norm? From a cultural, and possibly normative, perspective there are some profound differences in the image and role of black and white women.

American white women, principally during slavery, developed a very pristine image and that image was supposedly in need of protection from a variety of perceived evils (Ladner, 1971). However, the role and image of black women are starkly different from that of their white counterparts. Conditions created in slavery -- and continually fostered by societal racism -- pushed the black woman into a position of accepting obligations and responsibilities for not only the care and protection of her own life, but for that of her family as well (Ladner, 1971). The question of whether these cultural differences translate into empirically testable differences in sex role socialization that could account for the behavior patterns is one that deserves additional study.

Future research should also be aimed at testing the research questions formulated in this work using more precise measures and larger samples. Then it may be possible to more precisely identify social and environmental factors that affect and contribute to the violent behavior of black females involved in lethal acts of violence.

SECTION SEVEN

TEMPORAL AND SPATIAL ASPECTS OF HOMICIDE*

Introduction

In previous sections of this report, a wide variety of topics have been touched upon as they relate to the problems of blacks killing other blacks. In this section a large number of summary statistics have been compiled that will lend emphasis to some of the earlier discussions and that will touch upon topics which were previously given only limited emphasis. Among the topics discussed more thoroughly here than elsewhere are those dealing with the temporal rhythm of death.

Other topics that are given specific attention are those related to the weapon of choice utilized by assailants in each of the sample cities. And finally a centographic analysis of residences of defendants and victims, as well as offense location, is undertaken for a single year.

The assessment that follows is generally drawn from a modified form of the data base used elsewhere in this report. This leads to some inconsistencies, and at times dissimilar conclusions based upon different sample sizes. Nevertheless, this assessment provides a less restricted view of the topic under investigation. It is, however, complementary to the primary emphasis in this investigation, black-on-black homicide.

* This section of the report is authored by Donald R. Deskins, Jr., Professor of Geography and Associate Dean of the Graduate School, University of Michigan.

Data

This inquiry is based upon a sample of homicides committed in 1975 in each of the selected cities. One hundred seventy-six homicide cases are examined for Atlanta, 271 for St. Louis, and 207 for Detroit. These cases do not represent all of the homicides committed in these cities in 1975, but include only those for which detailed records are available. Because of our interest in specific aspects of these cases, records that did not include the desired information were eliminated from the universe.

Characteristics of Victims and Defendants

Gender of Victims

The records reveal that all of the homicide victims in Atlanta were black, so comparisons based upon race cannot be made in this instance. This was not, however, the condition of the data available for St. Louis and Detroit where respectively 78 and 79 per cent of homicide victims were reported to be black. Of the total sample of victims in St. Louis, 83 per cent were males, whereas in Detroit, males accounted for 95 per cent of all homicide victims in the sample. In each of these cities male homicide victims in 1975 exceeded female victims by at least an eight to two margin.

Race and Gender of Victims

When victims are stratified by race, gender differences become apparent as the risk of victimization among black and white women tends to be very great. In Atlanta, where only data for blacks are available, 77 per cent of the victims were male. The percentage of males among black homicide victims in both St. Louis and Detroit is slightly higher, with 85 per cent of the victims being black males in both cities. In comparison, the percentage of

white male victims is slightly lower in St. Louis, where only seven out of ten victims were males. The percentage of males among white homicide victims was significantly lower in Detroit, reaching only 57 per cent. This shows that among white victims, females made up a much higher percentage of the total when compared to black victims in the two cities (see table 32).

Gender of Defendants

In the cities examined, homicide defendants and victims are predominately male. Seventy-three per cent of the defendants in St. Louis are male; and a very similar percentage, 72 per cent, was found in Detroit, showing little variance in the gender mix of defendants in these cities.

Race and Gender of Defendants

In contrast, when looking at the gender of homicide defendants according to race, the differences are more clearly apparent. For example, black defendants in both Detroit and St. Louis have almost identical percentages, accounting for 90 and 91 per cent of the defendants, whereas only one out of every ten homicide defendants is female. In Atlanta, on the other hand, three out of ten black defendants are female, the highest level of female involvement observed among the cities being examined.

Involvement of white females as defendants is 14 per cent in St. Louis, but only 8 per cent in Detroit. Male dominance as defendants also holds for whites in both St. Louis and Detroit (see table 32).

Age of Victims and Defendants

The race and gender of the respective victims and defendants for the

CONTINUED

4 OF 7

TABLE 32

Homicide Victims and Defendants								
	Victims						Unknown	
	White			Black			Total	
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total		
<u>Atlanta</u>	-	-	-	13	40	176	-	176
<u>St. Louis</u>	41	15	46	181	31	212	3	271
<u>Detroit</u>	24	18	42	140	24	164	1	207
Defendants								
<u>Atlanta</u>	-	-	-	90	40	130	46	176
<u>St. Louis</u>	36	6	42	163	17	180	49	271
<u>Detroit</u>	47	4	51	102	11	113	43	207

cities selected have been discussed. Now, age of victims and defendants is considered. Upon examination of the data on Table 33, it is obvious that black male and black female victims are respectively much younger than white male victims, a relationship paralleling that observed when defendants' ages are compared according to race. This generalization holds for all three cities considered.

When black victims are examined as a category, there is little difference between the average age of males and females. In Atlanta there is only a two year difference between black male victims (34 years) and female victims (32 years), but these differences are greater when ranges in the ages of victims are considered. For example, black male victims in Atlanta range in age from 1-70 years, while the female age range is 1-53 years.

In St. Louis, black female victims are on the average approximately three years older than black male victims; however, there is a wider range for black males (2-82 years) and a narrower range for black females (15-75 years). These age ranges in St. Louis are similar to those found in Detroit, even though the average age of black victims by gender differs slightly in the case of black males.

Although older than black victims as a category, age of white victims, when stratified by gender, shows that white males are considerably older than white female victims. This relationship holds for St. Louis and Detroit, cities for which data are available.

There is a much greater differential between the average ages of black male and black female defendants than there is between black male and black female victims. In Detroit black male defendants are, on the average, eight years

older than black females, who average thirty years in age. Black male defendants in Atlanta are also older than females, but the difference in the average age is only one year. In St. Louis, on the other hand, the opposite relationship is found: black male defendants, on the average are 25 years old, seven years younger than the average female defendants.

White and black defendants, on the average, are younger than victims, a relationship that holds except in Detroit where black male defendants are 38 years of age, five years older than the average age of black male victims. Nevertheless, the difference in ranges in age, even in the Detroit case, is smaller for defendants (see table 33).

Types of Homicides

In this study, homicide is classified into five categories: 1) murder, first, second, and third degree; 2) accidental; 3) self-defense; 4) justifiable; and 5) unknown. In each of the cities approximately 70 per cent of the homicides are classified as murder. Justifiable homicide is the next largest category, with approximately 20 per cent of the homicides so classified (see table 34). There is only a slight variance in this category: Detroit, with 18 per cent, has the lowest percentage of justifiable homicides reported, and Atlanta has the highest, 20 per cent. Accidental homicide and self-defense categories are small, ranging from a low of three to five per cent across the cities examined.

Relationship Between Victim and Defendant

The relationship between victim and defendant is important, and empirical evidence strongly suggests there is a greater probability that homicide will occur among acquaintances, family members, lovers, common-law partners, and

TABLE 33
Age of Victims and Defendants

<u>Atlanta</u>		<u>Victims</u>		<u>Defendants</u>	
<u>Race Gender</u>	<u>Average Age</u>	<u>Range in Age</u>	<u>Average Age</u>	<u>Range in Age</u>	
White Male	-	-	-	-	-
White Female	-	-	-	-	-
Black Male	34	1-70	33	17-61	
Black Female	32	1-53	32	17-52	
<u>St. Louis</u>					
White Male	47	1-93	-	-	
White Female	39	15-75	-	-	
Black Male	30	2-82	25	16-68	
Black Female	33	15-75	32	18-72	
<u>Detroit</u>					
* White Male	67	67-72	41	18-80	
White Female	48	22-73	-	-	
Black Male	33	5-81	38	13-68	
Black Female	33	1-74	30	14-70	

* numbers are small

Table 34

	<u>Type of Homicide</u>						Total
	Murder	1st Degree 2nd 3rd	Accidental	Self-Defense	Justifiable	Unknown	
Atlanta	134	0	0	42	0	176	
St. Louis	188	8	13	62	0	271	
Detroit	148	12	10	37	0	207	

significant others than between strangers.

Generally the data on homicide for Atlanta, St. Louis, and Detroit confirm this contention (see table 35). There is, however, some variance in the distribution. In Atlanta 26 per cent of the homicides occurred within the family, which is the highest percentage in this category among the cities examined. Moreover, in St. Louis and Detroit the percentages are 10 and 14 per cent respectively. No homicides for Atlanta were reported in the categories of lovers' triangle and common-law partners. Nevertheless, when these categories were reported for both St. Louis and Detroit, none exceeded 6 per cent. The largest category of victim-defendant relationship is acquaintances. St. Louis leads in this category, with 40 per cent of homicides committed in that city so classified. This is followed closely by Atlanta, which reports 39 per cent of its homicides in this group, while Detroit has a low of 32 per cent.

The stranger-to-stranger category varies widely. Atlanta has the smallest percentage of stranger-to-stranger homicides of the three cities -- only 11 per cent. St. Louis' 29 per cent in this category is nearly three times larger than Atlanta's in magnitude, followed by Detroit with 26 per cent. These data suggest that a stranger's risk of homicide would be greater in St. Louis and Detroit than it would be in Atlanta. Finally, the number of homicides where the relationship between the victim and defendant is unknown ranges between 17 per cent in Detroit to 24 per cent in Atlanta -- slightly varying between cities.

Weapon Used

As would be expected from the results of other studies, the most frequently used homicide weapon is the gun. In nearly eight out of ten homicide

Table 35

Relationship Between Victim Defendant

<u>City</u>	<u>Relationship</u>						<u>Total</u>
	<u>Stranger</u>	<u>Acquaintance</u>	<u>Family</u>	<u>Lovers Triangle</u>	<u>Common Law Boy-Girl Friend</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	
Atlanta	19 (11)	68 (39)	46 (26)	0 (0)	0 (0)	43 (24)	176
St. Louis	54 (29)	108 (40)	27 (10)	8 (3)	13 (5)	61 (23)	27
Detroit	53 (26)	67 (32)	28 (14)	12 (6)	11 (5)	36 (17)	207

(55) = percentage

cases in each of the cities examined, a gun was the weapon used: 76 per cent of the cases in Atlanta, 75 per cent in St. Louis, and 78 per cent in Detroit. These percentages include both long and hand guns. When long guns are removed from the count, the percentages of handguns used in the respective cities are Atlanta, 65 per cent; St. Louis, 63 per cent; and Detroit, 64 per cent. There is no significant variation in the percentage of handgun use between cities, and the data further confirms the fact that the handgun is the dominant homicide weapon. After guns (long and hand), knives are the next highest category of weapons used, averaging about 12 per cent in the homicide cases examined. Based upon these data, it is worthwhile to speculate as to what would happen to the homicide rate in these cities if handguns were not so readily available (see table 36).

Temporal Variations

Seasonal and Monthly

The data on monthly variations in homicide is quite clear. The peak month of homicide occurrence in Atlanta was April. For both St. Louis and Detroit, it was September. In Atlanta the months with the least homicides were June and July. Homicides were lowest in St. Louis during March, while being lowest in February in Detroit. There is some correspondence in the monthly patterns of homicide in St. Louis and Detroit, but little with Atlanta's pattern.

Atlanta's seasonal homicide pattern is bi-modal, with equal numbers of homicides occurring during the respective winter and summer quarters. St. Louis' peak season is summer; and for Detroit summer and spring seasonal peaks occurred, with each having 62 homicides. For all three cities the

Table 36

Weapon Used in Homicide

	<u>Atlanta</u>	<u>St. Louis</u>	<u>Detroit</u>
Shotgun/rifle	16 (11)	33 (12)	28 (14)
Hand gun or just gun	115 (65)	171 (63)	132 (64)
Knife	22 (12)	29 (11)	25 (12)
Blunt Object	2 (1)	6 (2)	7 (3)
Hands/beaten	3 (2)	10 (4)	10 *
Cord/strangled	1 *	6 (2)	2 (1)
Other	16 (9)	16 (6)	2 (1)
Unknown	1 *	0	1
	176	271	207

* Unknown other less than one percent

seasonal high occurs during the summer months, especially August and September (see table 37).

Weekly

Weekly fluctuations in homicide are apparent when the data for Detroit are examined (see table 38). During the last week in the month, the homicide activity was the heaviest: 34 per cent of the month's homicides occurred. The lowest frequency occurred during the first week of the month, followed by a rise in numbers during the second week when 25 per cent of the month's homicide activity took place, only to ebb to a low of 23 per cent in the third week. It seems that the peaks in homicide coincide with the bi-monthly and monthly pay periods -- during the weeks of the month when more money is available and presumably more social interaction is taking place. Data for Atlanta and St. Louis were not sufficient enough to be useful in discussing this point.

Daily

The day of the week with the highest number of homicides is Saturday for Atlanta and Detroit; Wednesday is the highest homicide day for St. Louis, with Saturday ranking as the day with the second largest number of homicides (see figure 50).

When the weekend (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) is viewed as a group of days, 61 per cent of the week's homicides happened during this period in Atlanta. During the weekend in St. Louis, 48 per cent of the homicides occurred, while 46 per cent of homicides took place in Detroit during this period. The lower concentration of homicides during weekends in the latter

Table 37

Seasonal & Monthly Variations

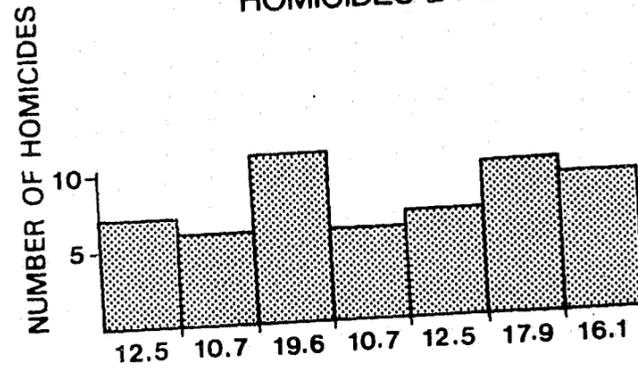
	<u>Atlanta</u>		<u>St. Louis</u>		<u>Detroit</u>		<u>Season</u>
Jan	12		25		12		
Feb	20	47	17	54	11	36	Winter
Mar	15		12		13		
Apr	21		24		22		
May	8	40	20	66	25	62	Spring
Jun	11		22		15		
Jul	11		21		16		
Aug	19	47	27	80	20	62	Summer
Se	17		32		26		
Oct	13		24		15		
Nov	13	42	21	71	15	42	Fall
Dec	16		26		12		
	176		271		207		

Table 38

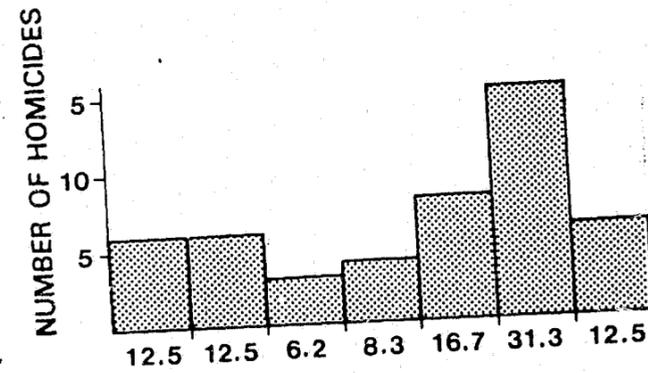
Weekly Fluctuation of Homicide

Week	<u>Atlanta</u>		<u>St. Louis</u>		<u>Detroit</u>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1	-		-		36	(18)
2	-		-		50	(25)
3	-		-		46	(23)
4	-		-		69	(34)
					201	(100)

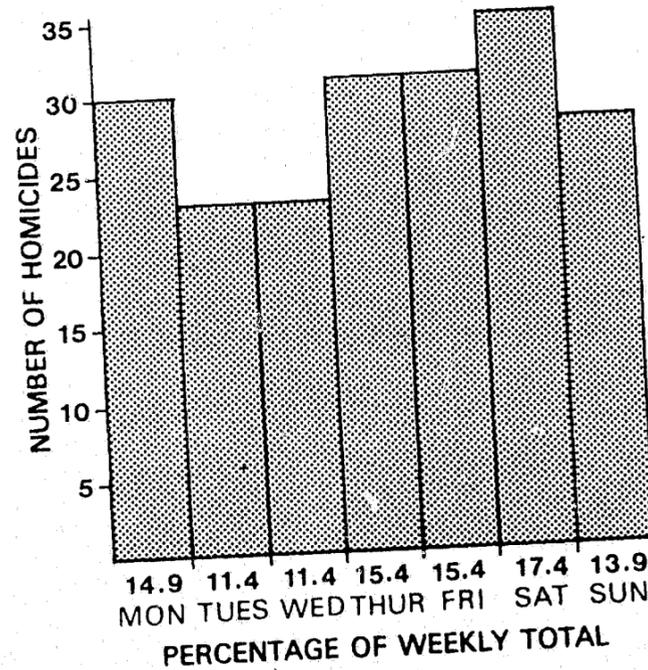
HOMICIDES BY DAY OF WEEK



ST. LOUIS



ATLANTA



DETROIT

Fig. 50.

two cities no doubt reflects a different rhythm of life than that prevailing in Atlanta. Higher unemployment rates and more youthful offenders are thought to make a substantial contribution to the probability of becoming a homicide victim at any particular time during the week.

Hourly

The time of day when the greatest number of homicides are committed in Atlanta is from 9 to 10 p.m. In St. Louis and Detroit, on the other hand, the greatest number of homicides are committed between 8 and 9 p.m. If the day is divided into quarters (first = 8 a.m.-2 p.m.; second = 2 p.m.-8 p.m.; third = 8 p.m.-2 a.m.; and fourth = 2 a.m.-8 a.m.), a much tighter pattern emerges. In all three cities between 45-49 per cent of homicides are committed during the time period beginning at 8 p.m. and terminating at 2 a.m. This evening-early morning period is the time when homicide risk is greatest. It is also the time period when most individuals are not working, but are at home with family and relatives or socializing with friends in a variety of environments. This period is followed by the fourth quarter, 2 a.m.-8 a.m., which is the next highest in homicide frequency (see table 39).

The evening-early morning period is that point along the diurnal continuum in which violent altercations tend to occur in each of our primary sample cities. Although there are differences that distinguish these individual locales as places in which acts of violence are commonplace, the modal time of day at which death occurs shows little differentiation.

Inter-Racial and Inter-Gender Homicide

The comparative percentage of white and black homicide victims and defendants has already been revealed in a previous examination of the data.

Table 39

Hourly Occurrence of Homicide

<u>Quarter</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Atlanta</u>	<u>St. Louis</u>	<u>Detroit</u>
1st	8am-2pm	6	13	30
2nd	2pm-8pm	12	13	48
3rd	8pm-2am	25	24	91
4th	2am-2pm	6	13	30

This is likewise true of the sex composition of victimization. At this juncture the discussion is focused upon the interracial and intergender aspects of homicide in the three cities examined. While the principal thrust of this study is devoted to black-on-black victimization, the issue of interracial homicide will be given some limited attention. Conflicts between the sexes, leading to death, will also be singled out for attention.

Racial Crossover

In St. Louis, in 1975, none of the incidents in the data reviewed here shows any white victims being killed by blacks. The data does reveal that for the 212 black victims, there are three white defendants, strongly suggesting there is little racial crossover in the St. Louis homicides (see table 40).

Data for Detroit indicate that interracial homicide is more commonplace there than in St. Louis. There is evidence of both blacks killing whites and whites killing blacks, although the magnitude is not great. Of the 42 white homicide victims reported in Detroit in 1975, only five of the defendants were black; this represents 12 per cent of the defendants in homicide cases where the victims were white. Whites, on the other hand, were defendants in 9 per cent of cases where victims were black (15 out of 164 cases). Although the racial crossover in homicide is slightly higher than that reported for St. Louis, chances are that racial crossover will occur in only about one in ten homicide cases.

Gender Crossover

Most defendants in homicide cases are males, as are most victims. This discussion of gender crossover will focus primarily on the magnitude of

Table 40

Victim and Defendant by Race

Atlanta

Race	Gender	Victim Number	Defendants						Unknown
			White			Black			
			Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
White	Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	Female	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black	Male	136	0	0	0	63	37	100	31
Black	Female	40	0	0	0	27	3	30	10
Black	Total	176	0	0	0	90	40	130	46
Unknown		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>St. Louis</u>									
White	Male	41	28	3	31	0	0	0	11
White	Female	15	7	1	8	0	0	0	7
White	Total	56	35	4	39	0	0	0	15
Black	Male	181	1	2	3	139	15	154	25
Black	Female	31	0	0	0	24	2	26	6
Black	Total	212	1	2	3	163	17	180	31
Unknown		3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3

Table 40(continued)

Victims & Defendants by RaceDetroit

Race	Gender	Victims Number	Defendants						Unknown
			White			Black			
			Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
White	Male	24	17	2	19	4	0	4	1
White	Female	18	15	2	17	1	0	1	0
White	Total	42	32	4	36	5	0	5	1
Black	Male	140	15	0	15	79	8	87	38
Black	Female	24	0	0	0	18	3	21	3
Black	Total	164	15	0	15	97	11	108	41
Unknown		1							1

female victims and offenders stratified by race.

Blacks. In Atlanta 27 per cent of defendants in cases of black male homicide are black women. This figure is abnormally high when compared to the level of female activity in other cities. The defendants in cases of black female homicide are predominately black males. (Males are defendants in 92 of these cases.)

In St. Louis, black female defendants in male homicide cases represent 8 per cent of the perpetrators and only 6 per cent in female homicide cases. The percentage, however, of black female defendants for black female homicides is 13 per cent, the highest observed among the three cities.

Whites. In St. Louis, females in 1975 were defendants in 3 out of 41 cases (7 per cent) of white male homicide. White female defendants are also the defendants in 7 per cent of cases where the victim is a white female. In Detroit the respective percentages are slightly higher, with the former reaching 11 per cent and the latter 8 per cent.

The data on Table 40 clearly indicate there is little racial crossover in homicide, and gender crossover moves predominately from male to female when it occurs.

Victim and Type of Homicide

The majority of homicides committed in Atlanta, St. Louis, and Detroit are classified as murder, which includes first, second, and third degrees. In examining data on types of homicide in Atlanta, three out of four black homicides fell into this class, and the remaining 24 per cent are categorized as justifiable homicide. When the Atlanta homicides are stratified by gender,

nearly 30 per cent of the male homicides were classed as justifiable.

Only 5 per cent of female homicides were so classed.

In St. Louis, murder is also the leading category of homicide, with 67 per cent of the black homicides so classed, a lower percentage than that found in Atlanta. The remaining black homicides in St. Louis are classified as follows: 24 per cent, justifiable; 6 per cent, self-defense; and 4 per cent, accidental (see table 41). Black male homicides in St. Louis follow a similar distribution, with a slight shift toward the justifiable homicide category. None of the city's black female homicides, however, fell into the justifiable category. But 16 per cent were classed as self-defense, the highest percentage recorded across the cities.

A higher percentage of white homicides in St. Louis were classified as justifiable than were found among the city's black cases. Much of this is attributed to white female homicides, where 33 per cent were classified as justifiable. The picture was somewhat mixed in Detroit. For the total white homicides committed in 1975, only 12 per cent were classified as justifiable. On the other hand, white male homicides in this category reached 25 per cent.

Spatial Aspects

In what parts of the city does homicide occur? Where do the respective victims and defendants reside? To address these questions for the three cities, spatial statistics -- generated by using centrographic techniques -- were examined. The spatial attributes of homicide locations, respective residences of victims and defendants generated by this technique, are displayed on Table 42 and in a series of maps.

Table 41

Victim and Type of Homicide

	<u>Victim</u>			<u>Type of Homicide</u>						<u>Total</u>
	<u>Race</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Murder</u>			<u>Acci-</u>	<u>Self-</u>	<u>Justi-</u>	
<u>Atlanta</u>				<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>dental</u>	<u>Defense</u>	<u>fiable</u>	
	White	Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	White	Female	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	White	all	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Black	Male	136	96	0	0	0	0	40	0
	Black	Female	40	38	0	0	0	0	2	0
	Black	all	176	134	0	0	0	0	42	0
	Unknown		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>St. Louis</u>										
	White	Male	41	34	0	0	0	0	7	0
	White	Female	15	10	0	0	0	0	5	0
	White	all	56	44	0	0	0	0	12	0
	Black	Male	181	117	6	0	6	7	51	0
	Black	Female	31	24	2	0	2	5	0	0
	Black	all	212	141	8	0	8	12	51	0

Table 41(continued)

	<u>Victim</u>			<u>Type of Homicide</u>							
	<u>Race</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Murder</u>			<u>Acci-</u>	<u>Self-</u>	<u>Justi-</u>	<u>Unk</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Detroit</u>				<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>dental</u>	<u>Defense</u>	<u>fiable</u>		
	White	Male	24	14	0	0	0	1	6	3	24
	White	Female	18	9	0	0	0	3	4	1	18
	White	all	42	23	0	0	0	5	7	4	42
	Black	Male	140	105	0	0	0	6	3	23	3
	Black	Female	24	13	0	0	0	3	2	4	1
	Black	all	164	118	0	0	0	9	5	5	4

The locations of homicides in Atlanta are more concentrated than the residential locations of victims and defendants. Moreover, the central tendency of this distribution covers an area of 17.18 square miles, compared to the spread of residential locations of victims, which covers an area of 23.83 square miles -- the most dispersed of the three distributions -- and the 18.11 square mile area covered by the residential locations of defendants (see table 42). These distributions are mapped on Figures 51 to 59.

Spatial statistics on homicides in St. Louis indicated that the locations of victim residences are also the most dispersed of the three distributions considered. When compared with location of the offense, they are only .39 square miles larger than the area found in the ellipse of homicide locations, which is 8.46 square miles. Although defendant distributional pattern is smaller, it cannot be easily compared because of limited availability of data (see table 42 and figures 51 to 59).

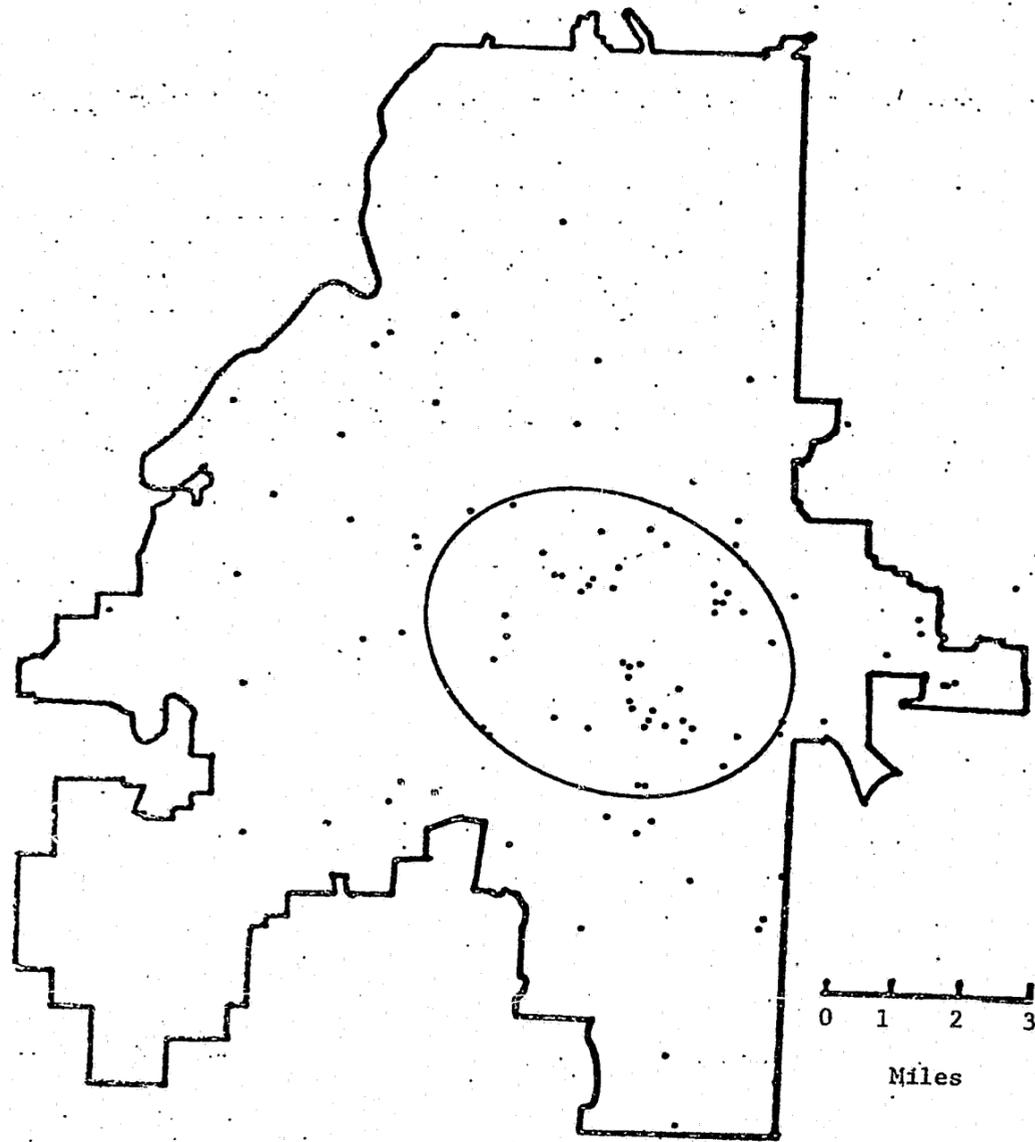
Again, in Detroit residences of victims are the most dispersed, covering an area of 21.43 square miles, followed in descending order by residences of defendants and locations of homicides (see table 42 and figs. 51 to 59).

Centrographic techniques yield descriptive statistics on the distribution of homicide locations and the residences of victims and defendants, as well as answering questions in purely spatial terms of where the activities take place and where victims and residents live. They do not, however, indicate if the events and participants are residing in different residential environments. To address this question more fully, each city is divided into

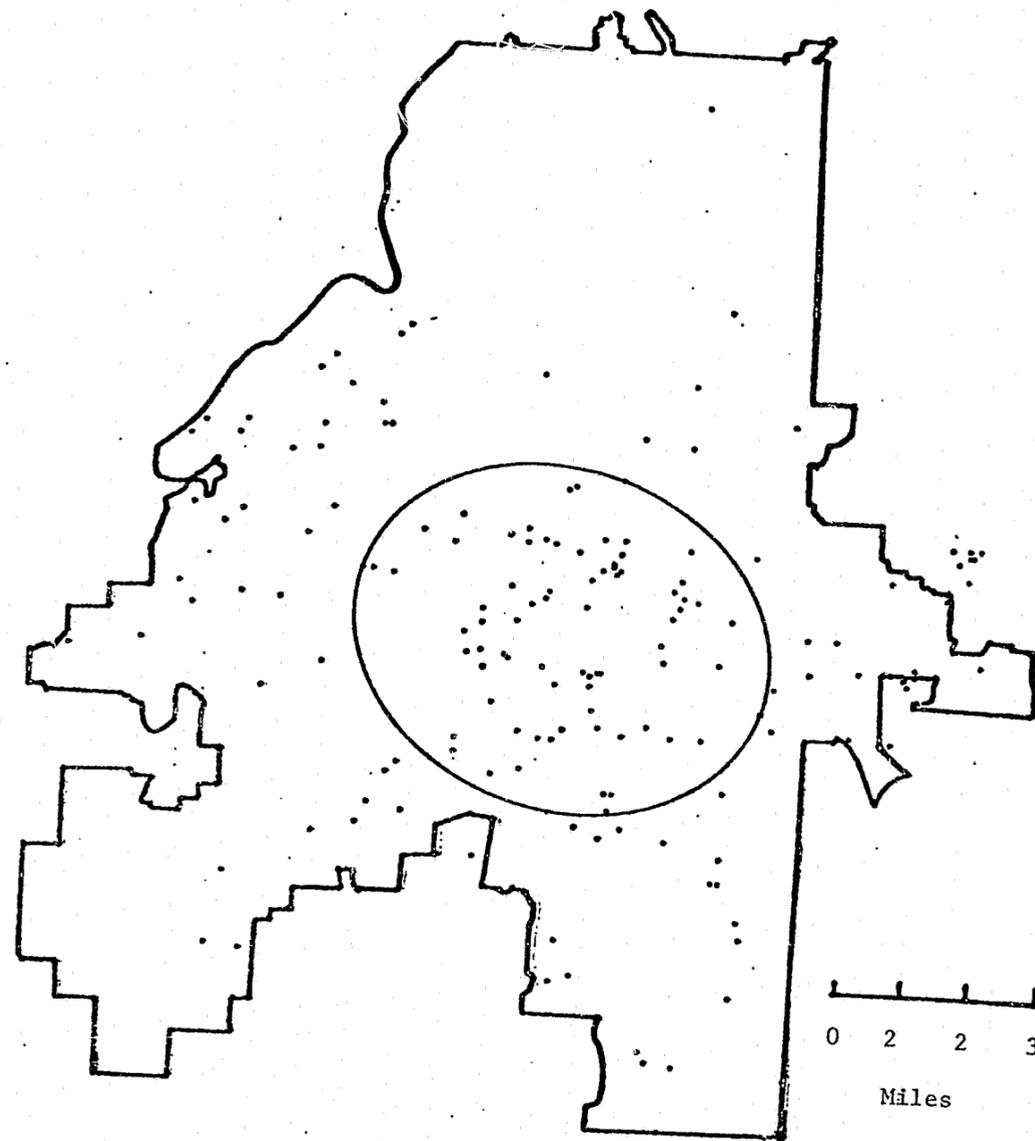
Table 42

Spatial Statistics on Homicide

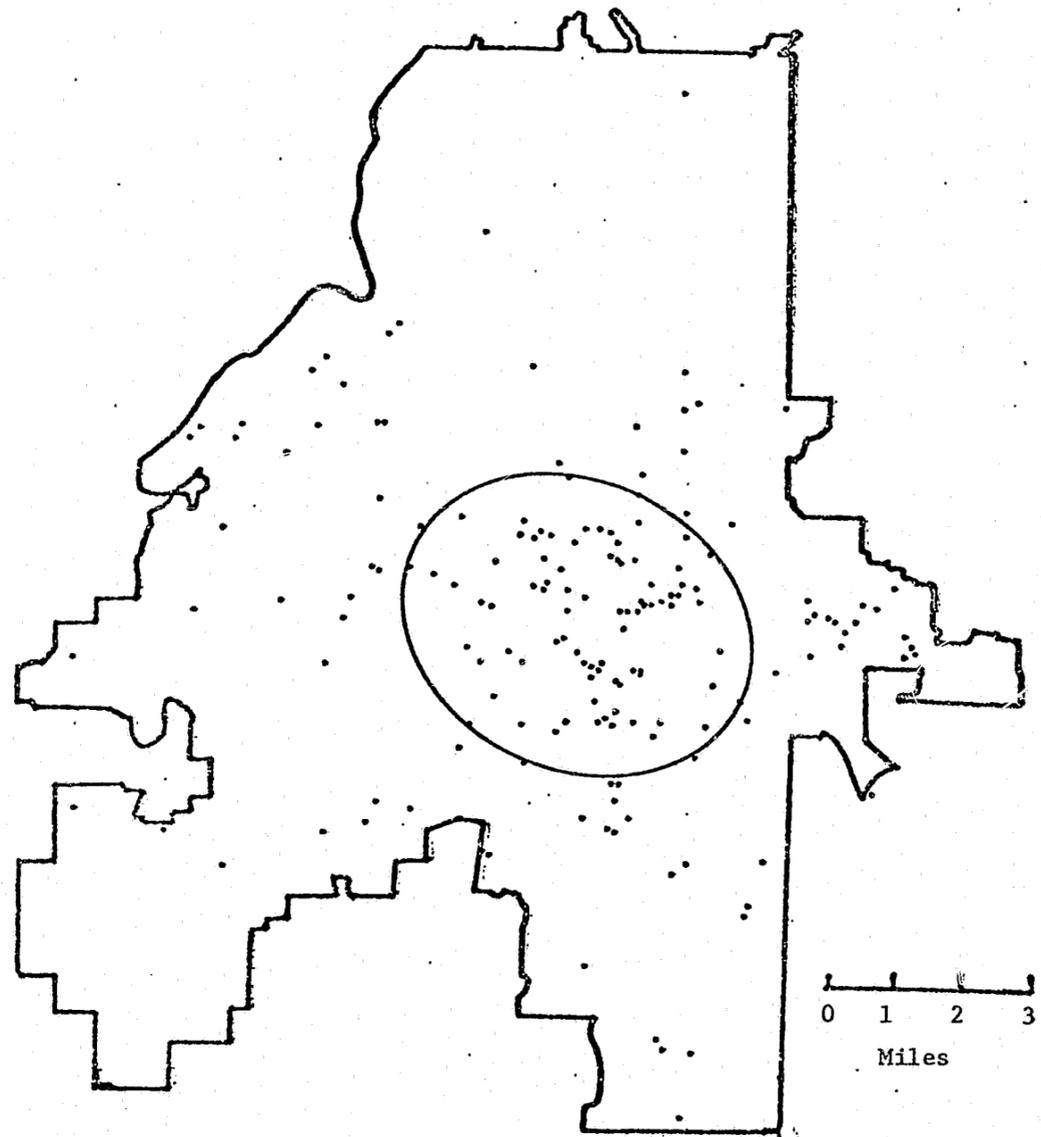
		# Pts	Standard Devn.		Media Center		Standard Distance	Angle of Ellipse	Area Sq Miles	Circularity
			X	Y	X	Y				
Atlanta	Location of Homicide	172	1/20 Miles 50.56 43.86		1/20 Miles 180.59 239.03		Miles 3.35	Degrees -24.48	17.18	0.8035
	Victim's Residence	167	60.20	50.78	176.44	237.23	3.94	-17.63	23.83	0.8109
	Defendant's Residence	99	53.47	43.65	178.58	233.17	3.45	-18.67	18.11	0.7732
St. Louis	Location of Homicide	242	30.94	35.30	159.44	184.76	2.50	124.29	8.07	0.6865
	Victim's Residence	219	30.18	36.38	159.94	185.77	2.36	112.87	8.46	0.7624
	Defendant's Residence	9	20.28	28.05	152.11	188.78	1.73	107.23	4.35	0.6702
Detroit	Location of Homicide	195	68.10	36.77	273.26	168.57	3.87	-7.36	19.37	0.5256
	Victim's Residence	202	72.97	38.36	267.35	172.39	4.12	-6.76	21.43	0.5131
	Defendant's Residence	165	72.16	35.26	272.34	173.42	4.01	-5.86	19.72	0.4784



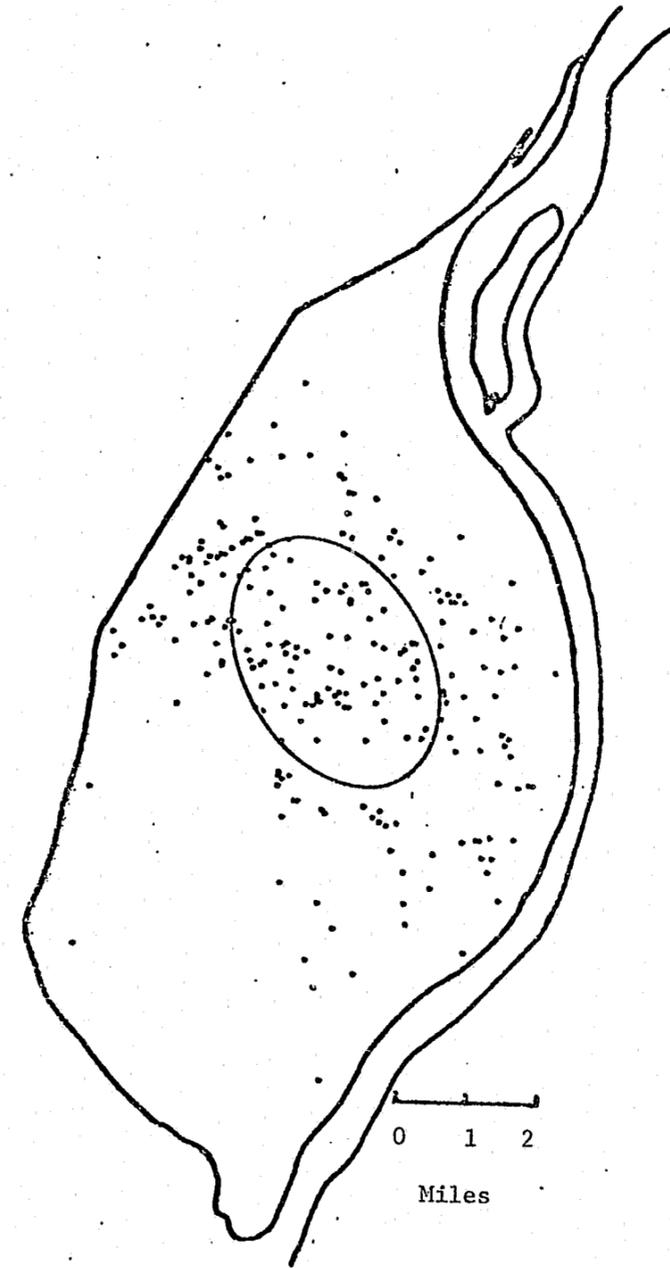
ATLANTA 1975: LOCATION OF DEFENDANTS' RESIDENCES
Figure 51



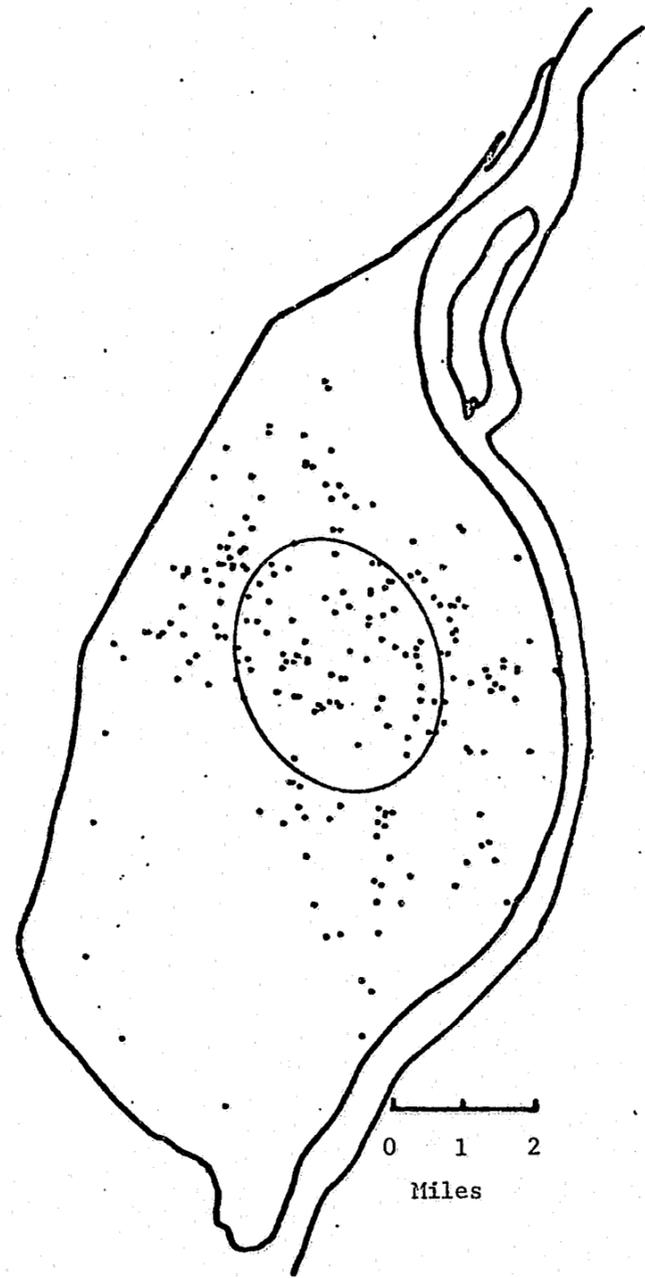
ATLANTA 1975: LOCATION OF VICTIM'S RESIDENCES
Figure 52.



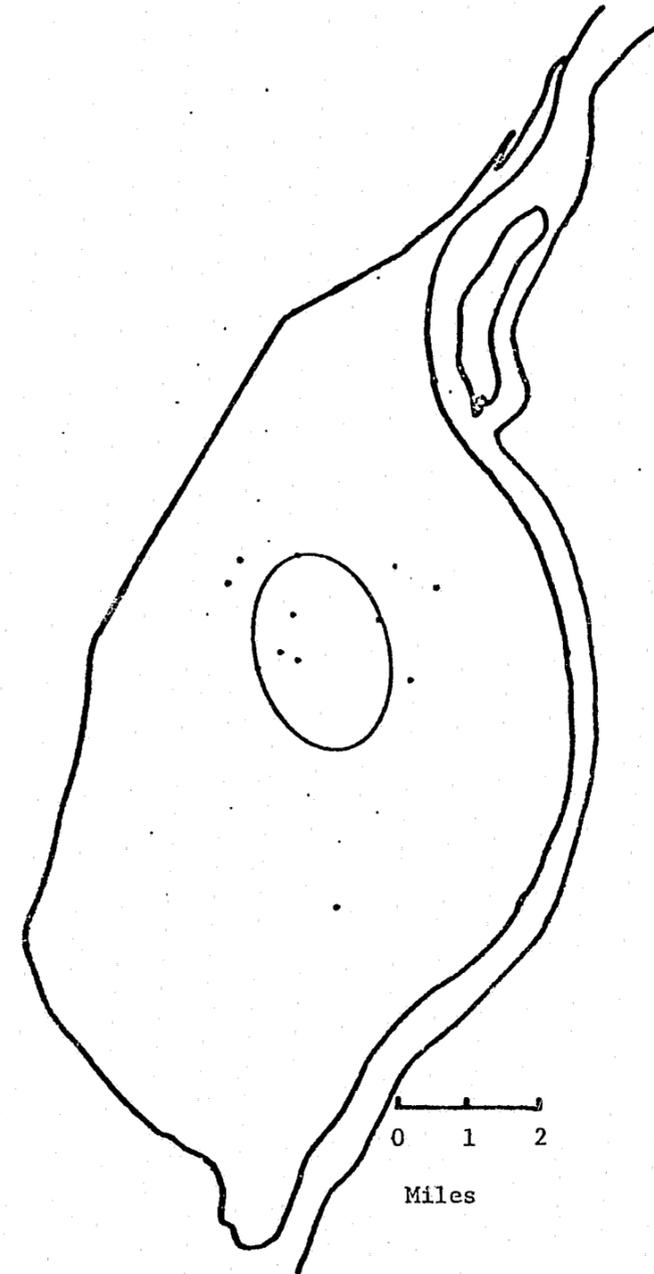
ATLANTA 1975: LOCATION OF HOMICIDES
Figure 53.



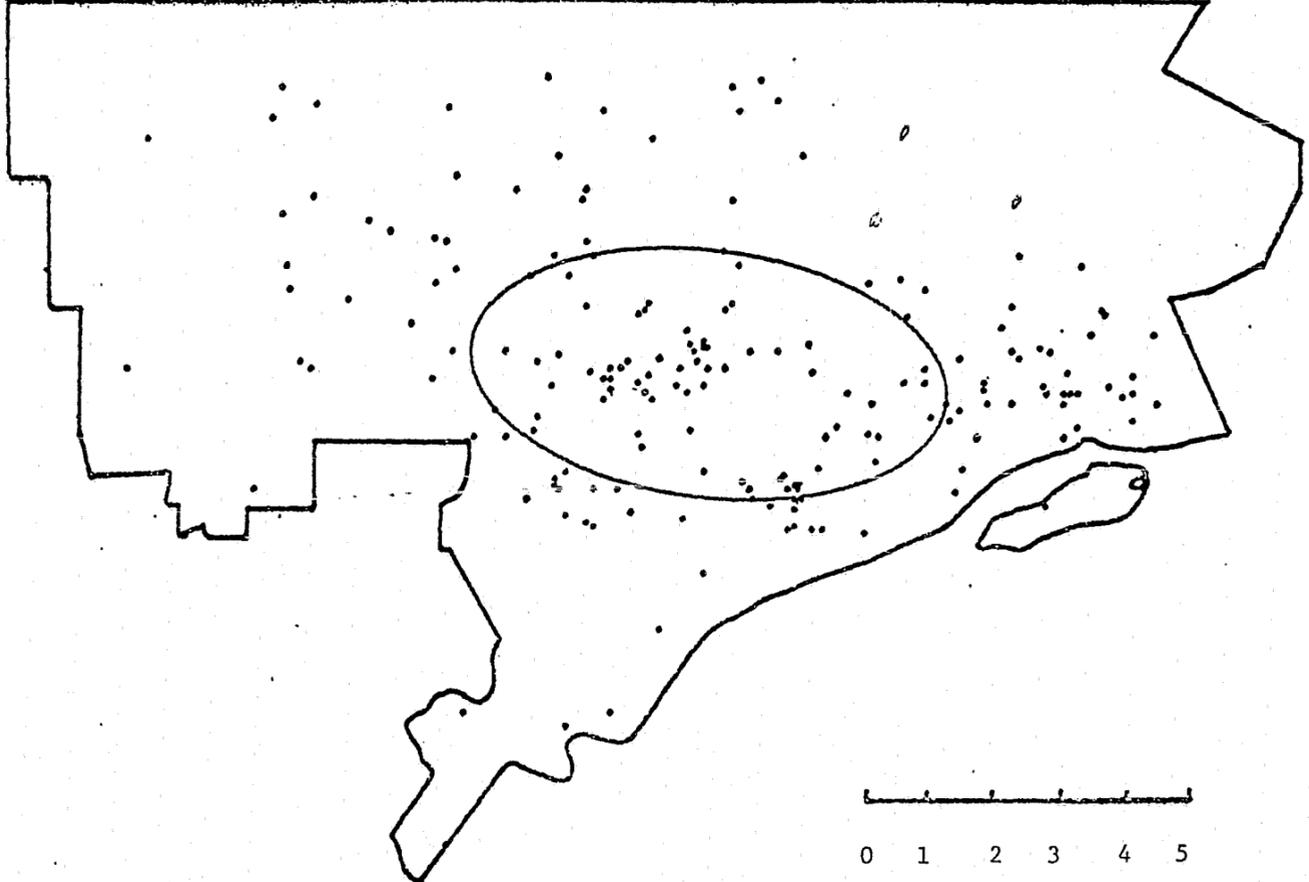
ST. LOUIS 1975: LOCATION OF HOMICIDES
Figure 54.



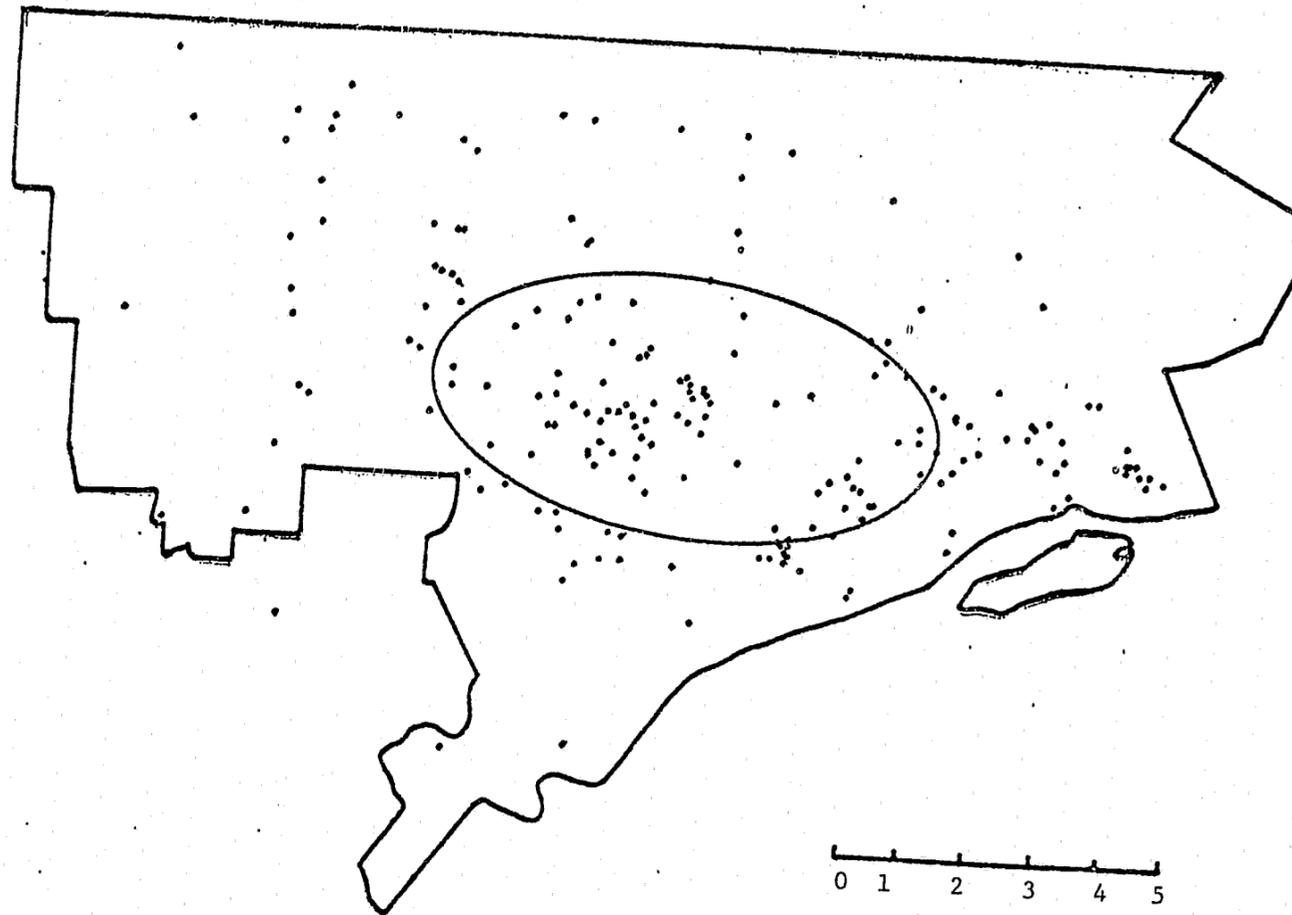
ST. LOUIS 1975: LOCATION OF VICTIM'S RESIDENCES
Figure 55.



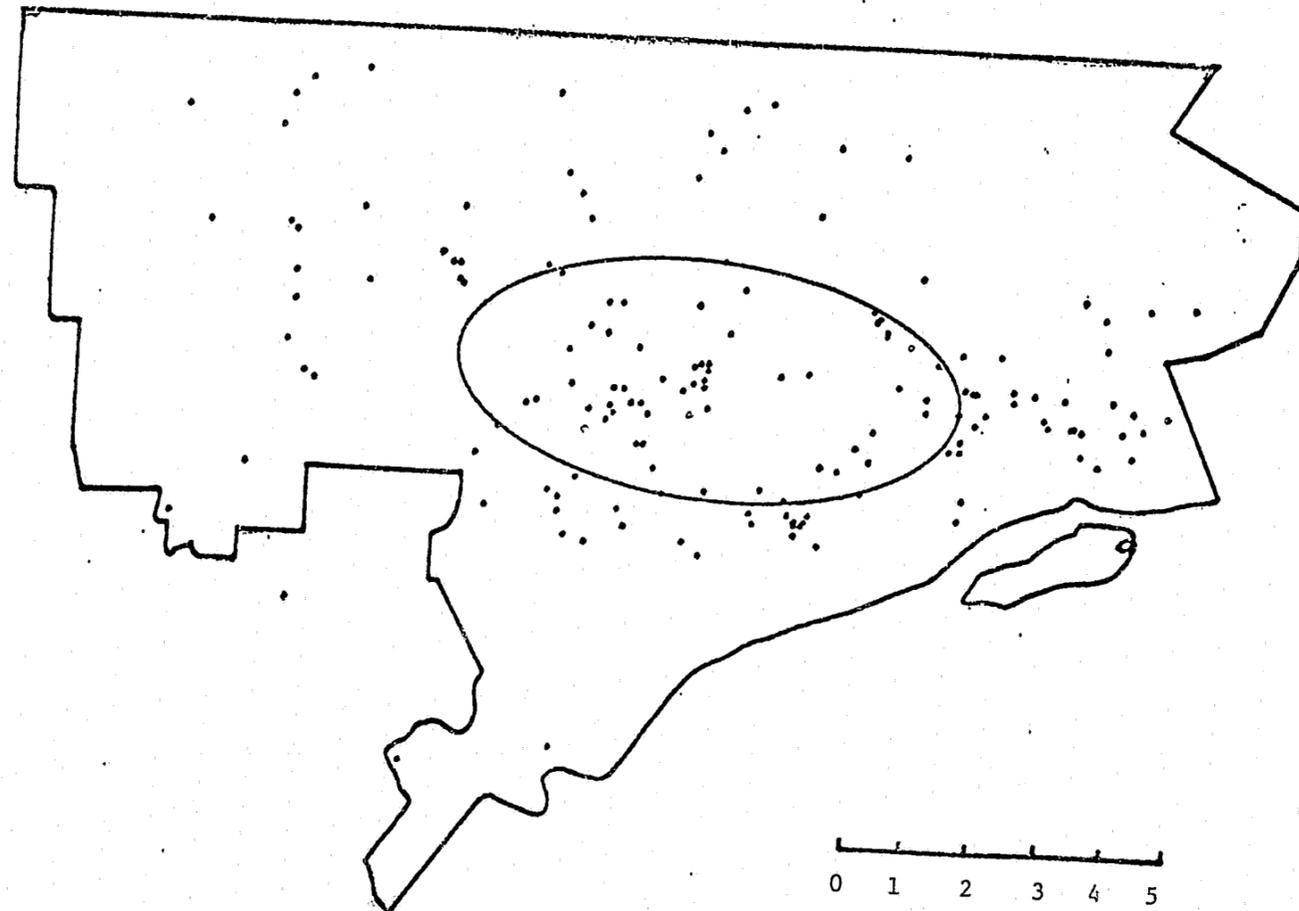
ST. LOUIS 1975: LOCATION OF DEFENDANTS' RESIDENCES
Figure 56.



DETROIT 1975: LOCATION OF HOMICIDES
Figure 27.



DETROIT 1975: VICTIM'S RESIDENCES
Figure 58.



DETROIT 1975: DEFENDANTS' RESIDENCES
Figure 59.

a black area (90% or more black population), a white area (less than 10% black population), and a racially transitional area (11 to 89% black population). Each of these areas is matched with the respective distributions of homicide locations, residences of victims, and residences of defendants. These racial areas for the three cities are found on Figures 51 to 59 .

In Atlanta, 52 per cent of homicide locations are in the heavily populated black areas, with another 27 per cent occurring in the racially transitory areas. Only 21 per cent of the homicide locations are found in predominately white areas (see table 43). Homicide distribution within the racially stratified areas of the city generally includes travel time between the residences of victims and defendants.

St. Louis' distribution of homicide activity over the three racial areas follows a similar pattern; however, there is less homicide activity observed in white areas and slightly more in the transitional zones. The same trend holds for Detroit, with much less activity in white areas and more activity in racially transitional zones.

In conclusion, within the three cities most homicide activity occurs in black areas, while the least occurs in white areas.

Table 43
Homicide-Related Locations and
Black Residential Pattern

	<u>Percent of Location</u>		
	<u>Black Areas</u> Census trends with 90 percent or more black residents	<u>Transitional Area</u> All tracts with from 11 to 89 black residents	<u>White Areas</u> Census trends with 10 percent or less black residences
<u>Atlanta</u>			
Homicide location	52	27	21
Victim's residence	49	25	25
Defendant's residence	44	35	21
<u>St. Louis</u>			
Homicide location	44	39	16
Victim's residence	40	44	17
Defendant's residence	83	0	17
<u>Detroit</u>			
Homicide location	39	49	12
Victim's residence	43	49	8
Defendant's residence	36	48	16

SECTION EIGHT

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON HOMICIDE AND PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS*

The aim of this material is to review and discuss the relationship between one set of variables, namely personality characteristics, and the specific crime of homicide. The preference of the author was to approach the subject more globally and to narrow the focus to the more specific problem after obtaining the parametric view. Thus, the problem to be addressed has been narrowed from the more global problems of crime, delinquency, violence, and aggression to the specific act of homicide, and further delineated to focus on whether there are identifiable personality characteristics associated with homicide. Of course, the ultimate aim is to determine whether there are significant personality characteristics associated with black murderers if, in fact, personality can be shown to be an important variable in understanding homicide.

The literature on crime, delinquency, violence, and aggression is voluminous, so much so that special abstracts and bibliographies have become necessary to assemble and record the available information. Nevertheless, this review has been undertaken in a fairly exhaustive and systematic manner.

There are well over sixty-odd good books on the general subject of crime -- books that were felt to contain information on homicide. Only about half of these books, however, address the subject of the homicide personality

* This section of the report was authored by Dr. Alvin E. Goins, Consulting Psychologist, Washington, D.C.

characteristics of criminals. Moreover, the literature shows that although there have been some attempts in the past to present individual theories or explanations of crime or criminal behavior, there is yet no universally accepted comprehensive theory or explanation of crime as a general concept. The simple explanation is that crime and/or delinquency are not unitary concepts or categories of behavior, but multidimensional and dynamic.

The most recent effort to provide a general comprehensive explanation for criminal behavior was published by Yochelson and Samenow in 1976. This series of three volumes titled The Criminal Personality is discussed in some detail as these volumes focus on the personality characteristics of criminals. The authors attempt to show that the common assumptions about the criminal mind are incorrect, are based on faulty suppositions, and serve to "reinforce those behavior patterns that the criminal must completely abandon if he is to become a responsible member of society."

The authors, claiming to be reluctant converts from the stereotype of the criminal as the subject of early emotional or socioeconomic deprivation and resulting mental illness, postulate and identify what they call a "criminal personality," particularly a criminal thought process, which they found to be pervasive and characteristic of the criminals used as subjects.

Moreover, the authors discuss the criminal expressions of energy, fear, "zero" emotional state, anger, pride, power thrust, sentimentality, religion, concrete thinking, fragmentation, uniqueness, perfectionism, suggestibility, sexuality, lying, and being a loner. Using what they call the phenomenologic method, Yochelson and Samenow obtained their data largely from unstructured interviews and therapy sessions with 240 criminals who had the following characteristics: 90 per cent, hard core and incarcerated; 75 per cent,

21 years of age; and 99 per cent, males.

To reiterate, these authors do not view the criminal as a victim of the past environment or crippled by unresolved conflicts and irrepressible urges. Rather, they feel that the criminal operates with choice and free will, and that the critical characteristics distinguishing the criminal from the non-criminal are a multitude of faulty thought processes.

In a rather harsh critique of this study, however, Burchard (1977) notes the following:

.... by focusing on the thought processes of the criminal, Yochelson and Samenow have taken a refreshing step away from the rather futile and unsuccessful attempts to understand and cope with the criminal in terms of a psychodynamic model. Unfortunately, the step is a rather small one due to the rather unsophisticated procedures that were employed to collect, analyze, and present their data. If there are substantial differences in the thought processes of the criminal and non-criminal, the reader must rely on the authors' insight and subjective impression to make that determination. Considering the fact that there is a growing technology involving the systematic and empirical investigation of thinking behavior, it is too bad that this investigation relied almost exclusively on opinion and anecdotal reports.

Some of the more obvious flaws associated with the authors' methodology include (1) the absence of any operational definitions, including an adequate distinction between a criminal and non-criminal; (2) the lack of any systematic procedure for eliciting and measuring thinking behavior; (3) the lack of any systematic procedures for classifying and comparing different thought processes; and (4) gross overgeneralization of almost all of the findings that are presented. With respect to the latter, in almost every statement involving an interpretation or conclusion the generic term 'criminal' is used as a referent Clearly the authors are of the opinion that there is such an entity as a criminal personality, and that the thought processes and behaviors of each are clearly separable. While they describe many differences, they provide no empirical evidence to support such a claim.

Given this criticism of the study and the fact that the authors did not focus on the specific crime of homicide, the utility of these volumes for an

understanding of the personality characteristics associated with homicides was greatly reduced.

When the problem is approached by a review of the literature on violence and aggression -- most of which could be subsumed under the subject of crime, but nevertheless are rather unique -- the literature again reveals that most of these books contain little, if anything, on the subject of homicide.

Moreover, these books also recognize the complex nature of the phenomena and identify various forms of aggression and violence, often specifying the situation. Also, the best and most recent books have preferred to avoid an attempt to provide a single viewpoint or synthesis or explanation for violence and aggression, but some have presented one or more of the recognized theories or explanations without any attempt to relate them. Thus, in one of the latest and comprehensive books on the subject of violence (which includes murder) by Kutash, et al (1978), five theoretical positions are presented: 1) psychoanalytic, 2) learning and behavioral, 3) sociological, 4) ethological, and 5) sociobiological. The book also includes chapters on various types of aggression and aggression in various situations, recognizing that the variables and the weighting of these variables are different for the different circumstances.

In recognition that there are different forms of violence and aggression that may be associated with different variables, the new journal, Aggressive Behavior, initiated in 1975, employs the following article index: a) aggressive behavior, b) anger, c) animal-aggressive behavior, d) attack behavior, e) hostility, f) threat postures, and g) violence.

An attempt to focus on the personality characteristics associated with violence and aggression also was not conclusive. Thus, even with this

narrower focus, the problem remained complex and oblivious to very much synthesis because of the number of interacting variables and because the characteristics are different for the different types of aggressors. Thus, the personality profiles of the rapist, the mugger, the assassin, and the mass murderer are all different from each other, although there may be some elements common to all. Then again, while it is possible to identify some of the personality variables that have been isolated by various authors as being characteristic of murderers, the same array of personality characteristics are often found in many others who are neither murderers nor even delinquents.

When we add the situation and the predisposing conditions to the personality profiles, however, the combined interacting process makes for a better explanation, even though the characteristics may still differ from one situation to another, and from one predisposing conditions to another. For example, the political assassins have been almost all psychotic, with long and grim experiences of emotional deprivation and abnormal rearing. These include Lee Harvey Oswald; his killer, Jack Ruby; and finally, Sirhan Sirhan (Fawcett, 1971).

Furthermore, there are many problems in assessing the aggressive component of personality as noted by several authors. Cochrane (1975: 9-14), after surveying the personality instruments available at the time (1975), stated that they were not sufficiently precise to accurately measure limited aspects of aggression. He noted that unconscious aggression in particular was usually overlooked, and that the distorting effects of personal style have seldom been considered. He recommended that a clearer definition of what was being assessed and the inclusion of unconscious aggression were

essential, and that any psychodynamically meaningful classification system should be based on specific psychodynamic theory. Cochrane later offered what he considered a promising technique, the Object Relations Technique (ORT); and Hoppe and Singer (1977: 261-270) later reported some interesting relationships between violence and certain personality measures.

Bach-y-Rita, et al (1971: 1473-1478), in a study of 130 violent patients (seen at the Massachusetts General Hospital and the Boston City Hospital) provided a number of insights into some personality and/or psychosocial variables. The patients, all having a chief complaint of explosive violent behavior, were categorized into the following groups: Group I, patients with temporal lobe epilepsy; Group II, patients with seizure-like outbursts; Group III, patients characterized by diffuse violence; Group IV, patients with pathological intoxication; and Group V, patients with repetitive violence directed at a specific individual. The average age of the patients was 28 years, 16-30; 13 were women.

The psychosocial histories of most patients portrayed childhood deprivation and social maladjustment demonstrated by work and family instability. Histories showed that a chronic lack of control resulted in innumerable difficulties such as job loss, family disruption, and unfavorable contact with the law. The majority had sought help in the past for control of violent impulses, but usually to no avail. Twenty-nine patients (of the approximately 50 questioned) had a history of hyperactivity as children; 72 of the 130 patients had been unconscious because of injury or illness; 25 of the 130 revealed that they had suffered either febrile convulsions or adult seizures; and 23 of the 130 revealed a history of psychosomatic illness such as asthma, ulcers, or colitis. Seventy-nine patients received EEG examinations and 37

of these showed abnormalities.

Of 43 patients who had psychological testing, 12 had subnormal IQs and nine showed signs of organic impairment. The high incidence of abnormal findings on EEG's and other tests, and the episodes of unconsciousness and seizures reported, indicate that the difficulties of many of these patients are probably the result of what in children is termed minimal brain damage. Dynamically, the patients were found to be generally very dependent men with poor masculine identity, and a sense of being useless, impotent, and unable to change the environment. Individual episodes of violence were marked by a total breakdown of ego function and disorganization of thought process, with an outpouring of the primary thought process.

In a popularly written article adapted from his book Murder and Madness, Lunde (1975: 35-40) notes that "...murderers are not a homogeneous group of 'bad guys.' For the most part, they are husbands, wives, lovers, neighbors, friends, and acquaintances: persons who no longer can endure chronic dissatisfaction and frustration..." Thus, the characteristics of the murderer are as varied as the characteristics of the criminal in general. Moreover, Lunde states that "although social scientists have tried to isolate a personality profile for murder, they have been unsuccessful. However, while there is no single prototype, there are patterns to murder that depend upon the relationship between the killer and his victim."

Lunde has pointed out a number of identifiable patterns as they relate to specific homicide situations. They are as follows:

Murderers are rarely colorful, careful or ingenious. Most kill on the spur of the moment, often during a heated quarrel. ...

... More than 40 per cent of murder victims are killed in residences. One-fourth of all murderers and their victims are closely related to each other.

Women who kill their infants or young children, for instance, usually are severely disturbed, suffer from extreme bouts of depression, and may experience delusions. ...

Persons who kill casual acquaintances usually grow up in what some social scientists call a 'subculture of violence.' ...

... In felony murders, the killer, almost always a man, kills for money, sex, or drugs, or when he tries to escape detection for a crime.

... In contrast to ingenious fictional killers, real murderers are less-than-clever persons who use conventional weapons. ...

Because so few murders are planned and so many result from emotional flare-ups, few killers actually consider beforehand what they are going to do or what might happen to them after they do it. ...

An analysis of some 30 rather recent prime source reports dealing specifically with murderers revealed a picture similar to the one painted by Lunde, that is, a very mixed profile of the murderer. This may have been because at least one-third of these reports were from foreign countries, such as Britain, France, Germany, New Zealand and Poland, which may or may not have been appropriate for American analysis. Furthermore, at least one-half of the reports were about adolescents or even younger children, and there appears to be more variation among younger murderers.

Thus, in one foreign report, Schachter (1975: 174-187) investigated homicide and homicide attempts by subjects under 20 years of age. Nothing specific was found in the personalities of these subjects. On the other hand, mental illness or mental deficiency was found to exist in many of the other foreign studies, although Gillies (1976: 105-127) found in his psychiatric examination of 400 persons accused of murder a high percentage of psychiatrically normal persons -- in contrast with findings reported in England and Wales.

Walshe-Brennan (1975, 1976 and 1977), however, in a study of 11 children convicted of homicide in England and Wales, discovered that despite a history

of blackouts in several cases, all were found to be free of epilepsy. Moreover, all of the children came from normal homes and, apart from minor offenses, none was involved previously in serious anti-social behavior. Also, the murderers were found to have more cooperative personalities than children found guilty of non-capital offenses, and showed both normal intelligence and personality factors. In view of the relatively large number (eight over-dominant) of abnormal and maternal relationships -- and it was difficult to determine the role of paternal alcoholism, promiscuity, and criminal convictions -- Walshe-Brennan suggested further research on the role of the working mother and the cycle of deprivation theory.

The most prevalent finding regarding the murderers in these studies showed the psychodynamics and interaction of their personality characteristics and the pressures of the situation in which they found themselves. Some of the American reports are cited below.

Athens, in his doctoral dissertation, proposed a symbolic interactionist approach to violent criminal acts (homicide, aggravated assault, and forcible rape) to provide information on what actually happens when a person commits a violent criminal act. By conducting private interviews with 58 persons convicted of violent crimes, Athens collected data on the self-image of violent actors, their violent careers, and the interpretations they make of violent situations. Analysis of data showed that self-images fell into three types: violent, incipient violent, and non-violent. Interpretations of the situations in which the acts were committed fell into four types: physically defensive, frustrative, malefic, and frustrative malefic. An invariant linkage was found between self-images and interpretations of the situations. It was concluded that the majority of violent crime is caused by persons with violent and incipient violent self-images.

King (1975: 134-145) examined the case histories of nine homicidal youths to define parameters, develop a theory of causality, and design a treatment approach. Violence, examined in a total environment context, was found to be related to the absence of cognitive skills and a failure to cope. He concluded that intense, reeducational treatment programs followed by long-term aftercare were needed to develop social and communicative skills.

Rutolo (1975: 1-16) described a study of three confessed and convicted male murderers and one unconfessed but convicted male murderer, all of whom were seen in pre-trial examinations. Two of the murderers had committed homicides in the course of felonies; the other two had committed suddenly conceived "crimes of passion." The murders were not premeditated or planned in any deliberate way as to time, place, or victim; each murderer reported that "it" just seemed to happen, and each showed a need to explore or to have explained to him the factors that culminated in his taking a human life. Although, in the opinion of psychiatrists, three of the murderers were obviously psychotic at the time of the homicides and one was on the brink of psychosis, none was adjudged legally insane by a jury of his peers.

Investigation into the psychodynamics of these murders revealed that each possessed a guarded, disguised, idealized image, propped up by a neurotic price system. This system, with its inevitable component of self-hate, was the "critical mass," the explosive mixture, which, when penetrated too rapidly by circumstances, led to a lethal explosion. Although the initial impression was that the murders were essentially incidental to the murderer, a closer examination revealed the psychic necessity, in each case, to eliminate a victim to shore up a previously shaky pride system. Suicidal thoughts, impulses, or acts occurred in all four individuals; and it appeared that hopelessness and contempt for his own life was a common precursor of homicide in

each case.

It is felt that although many schizophrenics enter their psychotic frame of reference primarily to avoid their enormous fear of the outburst of their hostile impulses, occasionally the process misfires. Significantly, the two more chronically schizophrenic murderers had both warned hospital or penal authorities of their homicidal potential but were not heeded. The other two, suffering from more acute or incipient psychoses, had little or no warning of the imminent breakthrough of their homicidal potential. All four murderers were diffusely alienated, especially from their feelings of hostility (although two had externalized theirs into hallucinatory warnings), and one was able to assume even a modicum of true responsibility for his act.

In each of these individuals there was a gradual or abrupt increase in tension level prior to the crime. Each seemed to have moved in the direction of health relative to their habitual psychic positions. In their clumsy, ill-conceived, but characterologically consistent attempts at striving for their own unique "good," they all moved precipitously, and their sudden surges toward change produced overwhelming conflict and increasing anxiety to the point of disorganization and panic. Each then lurched precipitously back to his former psychic position of safety. The victim was a symbolic impediment to that wild lurching, and consequently had to be eliminated.

Symonds (1975: 17-18) examined Rutolo's paper in the same journal and concluded that there is a common psychological factor in persons who persistently commit violent crimes: their alienation from, or unrelatedness to, the plight of their victims. He theorized that criminals involved in such

crimes of violence have been severely brutalized in childhood and exposed to excessive and irrational violence, resulting in a personality pattern that has as its core an unrelatedness to other people.

Malmquist (1971: 461-465) retrospectively appraised twenty adolescents charged with individual acts of murder in terms of their behavior and mental state prior to the act. He found that certain premonitory signs and symptoms are prevalent in people who are never violent. In this report, 17 of the patients were male and three were female; four of the male patients were black. The age range was 13 to 18 years. None of the twenty had previously committed an offense against a person. Diagnoses were as follows: schizophrenic, 3; depressive disorders, 10; personality disorders, 7. All social classes were represented, so that the focus of the study is not on a type of psychopathology linked to social class, but on adolescent age functioning leading to homicide.

A prodromal period of events was delineated. Behavioral changes took diverse forms, but usually related to shifts in mood or cognitive reflections. Most noticeable was a deep pessimism in the adolescents about themselves or their predicament. A "call for help" was made but was muted and often not perceived by those in daily contact. Family members resorted to denial if the behavioral change was sensed. Direct or indirect refusal of help by a friend, family member, or an institutional representative was common. Drugs were used in two ways during the prodromal period. Barbituates and tranquilizers were used to contain impulses and effects without much success. A second usage involved amphetamines and psychotomimetics, with or without marijuana. Four of the juveniles had been using amphetamines irregularly. Object losses that appeared related to homicide involved lovers or mothers. The

capacity to tolerate separation, let alone master it, proved inadequate in many of these adolescents, and drive and ego regressions occurred. Provocative incitement by teenage girls, who questioned the manhood of the boys and urged them to fight, instigated the homicide in some cases. Ten of the patients experienced somatization, hypochondriasis, or a recurrent medical problem. An emotional crescendo appeared in the form of an increasing build-up of agitation and energy, accompanied by motor restlessness and disturbed eating and sleeping patterns. A breakdown of ego controls over affective discharge was evidenced in crying and moody preoccupation. Finally, homosexual threats, overt or covert, raised the homicide index.

Malmquist sees the homicidal adolescent as in a deep state of mourning because of the seeming hopelessness of relief. The disappointment may be an accumulation of academic or vocational failures, social disappointments, failures in love relationships, heterosexual or homosexual disillusionment, or a feeling that someone has betrayed them or has engaged in acts of dishonesty. The homicide may serve the illusory function of saving one's self and ego from disintegration by displacing onto someone else the focus of aggressive discharge.

Sorrells (1977: 312-320) also analyzed case data on 31 juveniles charged with homicide or attempted homicide and found that "in general, this group of juveniles would not be seen as more disturbed than any other delinquent sample." The juveniles were from Alameda County, California; about one-third of the homicides occurred during the commission of a robbery; in about one-fourth of the homicides, the assailant was intoxicated; about two-thirds of the assailants were carrying the weapon used, suggesting that a predisposition to kill or injure may be present without necessary premeditation. Almost all

the assailants were males, and one-half were 16 years old or younger. Two-thirds had prior correctional involvement; the others had never demonstrated antisocial behavior. Some youngsters were anxious or depressed, some were social isolates and overly controlled, and some were hostile and explosive; others seemed healthy and well-adjusted. Nevertheless, the families of the subjects were characterized as violent and chaotic, and many of the parents had histories of crime, alcohol abuse, and violence. Only one-third of the youngsters had apparently adequate maternal and paternal figures in the home at the time of the homicide.

Sendi and Blomgren (1975: 423-427) did a comparative study of certain criteria cited in the literature as predictive of homicidal predisposition in adolescents. The three categories of criteria -- clinical, developmental, and environmental -- were applied to study groups of ten adolescents who had committed homicide, ten who had threatened or attempted homicide, and ten who were hospitalized controls. The findings did not support the presence of a well-crystallized predisposition for homicidal behavior in this population, but did show that the adolescents who committed homicide were psychotic-regressive and those who threatened or attempted homicide were organic-impulsive. The study strongly suggested the importance of environmental factors in reinforcing homicidal behavior.

Wagner and Klein (1977: 25-26) compared the WAIS subtest patterning between institutionalized criminally insane (first and second degree murderers) subjects who were matched on sex and age with subjects who perpetrated aggressive interpersonal attacks short of homicide. Both groups had been referred for psychological testing by courts and social agencies. A substantial and significant difference in IQ was found in favor of the attackers over the

murderers. Results were interpreted as lending credence to the hypothesis that differences in IQ exists among important subpopulations of murderers.

Two books are of extreme importance for any understanding of the personality characteristics of murderers, one by Abrahamsen (1973) and the other by Kutash, et al (1978). Abrahamsen, a psychiatrist who has examined many murderers, once felt that the characteristics of the murderer were well established. They were difficulty in communicating, rebellion against parents, little or no male identification, rich fantasy life, feeling of unworthiness, wish for revenge, fear, frustration, and depression. The author later discovered that

as I dealt with an ever greater variety of cases, I was surprised to discover that many law-abiding people who came to seek my help shared with murderers many psychological symptoms and deviations in personal behavior. Although these private patients were plagued by more or less the same troubles, they could not and did not commit murder. While therapy was indeed important, this could not be the whole story.

Abrahamsen continued that

I have learned that there are three main intertwining psychological elements which may open the mind to murder: frustration, fear and depression. But the making of the murderer is more complicated than the interaction of these three factors. Homicide does not originate because of a clearly defined impulse to murder, but is released by the intensity of inner conflicts.

He elaborated that

... in examining those who have committed murder, I have found one common characteristic ... all the murderers were intensely tormented. Deep down, they felt beset, trapped in an intense conflict growing out of the struggle between sexual and self-preserving drives. It is these inner drives which shape the aggressive thrust that in a certain situation may trigger murderous impulses resulting in violent acting out to the point of murder.

Abrahamsen lists ten predominant characteristics of the murderer:

(1) extreme feelings of revenge and fantasies of grandiose accomplishments which may result in the acting out of hateful

impulses; (2) loneliness, withdrawal, feelings of distrust, helplessness, fears, insignificance, loss of self-esteem, caused by early (pre-Oedipal) childhood experiences; (3) sexually overstimulating family situation because of primal-scene experiences; (4) errors of spelling or speech related to emotional disturbances in early (pre-Oedipal) childhood; (5) tendency toward transforming identification, blurred self-image, suggestible, impressionable; (6) inability to withstand frustration and to find sufficient gratification for expressing hostile aggressive feelings through constructive outlets; (7) inability to change persistent egocentricity, self-centeredness (primitive narcissism) into elements of health ideals and conscience (ego ideals and superego elements), resulting in dependency on and contempt for authority; (8) suicidal tendencies with depression; (9) seeing the victim as the composite picture of the murderer's self-image; and (10) history of previous antisocial or criminal act associated with threatening or committing murder.

Abrahamsen reiterates that although all the signs listed above are also indications of emotional disturbances for those who may not necessarily commit murder, the difference lies in environmental and constitutional factors.

Kutash, et al. (1978) provide a very comprehensive set of review articles on violence and murder, and indeed represent the most up-to-date information available. The chapters were prepared especially for this volume by many of the authorities on the subject, and the chapter on murder by Revitch and Schlesinger is excellent. The authors present a system for classifying antisocial and criminal behavior -- based on motivational stimuli for committing crimes -- and show how it can be used to predict future violent acts and to help select appropriate treatment for offenders; explore the unexpected, explosive outburst of destructive (often murderous) behavior known as the catathymic crisis; and discuss the causes, manifestations, and consequences of murder in several different contexts (in families, in political situations, in warfare, and as capital punishment) and by several different types of violent offenders (including parents, siblings, spouses, assassins, and soldiers).

The authors state the following:

An essential first step in the understanding of homicide -- or, for that matter, any aspect of nature -- is an appropriate classification schema with which to organize one's observations. Our classification of crime, including homicide, is based on motivational and dynamic aspects of the act. In rare cases, the motivation is a direct outgrowth of the neurological or psychiatric condition. In a majority of cases, the motivational factors are independent of diagnosis and form the basis for classification (Kutash, et al., 1978).

In a comment on personality characteristics, the authors state:

There is little question that psychological testing has contributed substantially to the understanding of psychopathology and personality dynamics. Consequently, psychological tests should have great relevance in the understanding of homicide. Very little, however, has been published in this area. A review of the literature shows approximately fifteen papers on psychological testing and homicide, with the same major flaw running through most; that is, since they do not provide information on the specific nature of the homicidal act, the reader does not know what type of homicide the results apply to.

On this point, the authors conclude that "a brief review of several of these studies is warranted since this literature is relatively unknown and does represent an initial inquiry into this field" (Kutash, et al., 1978).

Several other excellent books that focus specifically on murder and/or murderers were reviewed, but because the list is extensive they will not be discussed here. Nevertheless, these books provide and indeed supplement the overall understanding of murder provided by Lunde, Abrahamsen, Kutash, and others. Thus, it is felt unnecessary to extend further our already lengthy review of the personality characteristics of participants in the act of homicide.

In recent years, and in response to the works of Von Hentig (1947) and of Abrahamsen (1973) among others, a whole new area of research or focus has been developed called victimology; and a new International Journal of Victimology was started in 1976. This area is mentioned and was reviewed because of the close correlation between the murderer and his/her victim, and oftentimes it is

absolutely necessary to understand the role and behavior of the victim in order to understand the murder.

The ultimate aim of this review was to gain an understanding of black-on-black homicide. Unfortunately, the available research that addresses this problem is relatively sparse, particularly in view of the overwhelming amount of research on crime, delinquency, aggression, and violence. Nevertheless, some literature relating to black crime and/or violence, including murder, was identified and digested for this review. Of particular interest is a popularly written special issue of Ebony magazine (September, 1979), which was devoted almost solely to the issue of black-on-black crime. Listed under causes for black-on-black crime are the following: (1) racism and oppression, (2) unemployment, (3) hard drugs, (4) urbanization and family breakdown, (5) inadequate prison system, (6) double standard of justice, and (7) influence of the media in portraying violence. Most of these issues will be treated elsewhere in this report.

SECTION NINE

PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES OF OFFENDERS AND NEXT OF KIN OF VICTIMS

Introduction

At the outset it was stated that this investigation was being conducted at two different scales, based primarily on different data sources. Most of the previous discussions were based on official documents secured from various local, state, and national agencies. The exception to this was McClain's treatment of female victims and offenders, in which data sources were combined as a means of highlighting and understanding the female role in lethal altercations resulting in the death of black subjects. In this section of the report, information will be provided that was generally drawn from face-to-face contact with persons directly involved in, or related to persons directly involved in, the lethal transaction.

The format of this report section is based primarily on the structure of the several interview schedules designed for this project. The questionnaires included items that touched on a diversity of topics thought to have an impact, direct or indirect, upon victimization risk. Not all items included in the questionnaire will be discussed here -- not that they are unimportant, but because there is need to report some of our more significant findings at an early date. Most information offered here represents the images held by both the actors in the lethal transactions themselves and the social institutions with which they interacted. It is believed

that this kind of information is critical in attempting to unravel the set of life events that led to the predicament of those involved in homicide transactions.

Social Milieu of Offenders

Length of residence in a community is sometimes viewed as an index of how well an individual is likely to reflect local community values. Among those who hold this view are local public officials. It is, therefore, not uncommon for them to attribute misconduct to newcomers to the city -- on the ground that the exhibited behavior was learned elsewhere. During the riots of the 1960's, many of the responses of local public officials attributed riot behavior to unassimilated recent migrants. Verification for this position, however, was seldom forthcoming; and more often than not, the inverse of this position was found to be more nearly correct. Nevertheless, one should be expected to detect differences on selected variables related to attitudes, behavior, and values on the basis of length of residence in a given social milieu. A central question becomes, "What is the contribution of one's current and previous social milieus on the probability that one is likely to encounter situations that promote the risk of violent interaction?"

Migration and Homicide

In most large urban environments a sizable share of the population will have previously lived elsewhere. Moreover, the ratio of the newcomer to old resident mix is likely to reflect the perceived attractiveness of the city to persons previously residing elsewhere. Given the differences in the attractiveness of the cities we have chosen to investigate, the migrant/non-migrant mix should be expected to vary.

Both Atlanta and Detroit have been recent targets of black migration, while the movement of blacks to St. Louis has occurred on a much smaller scale. When other variables are held constant, it is uncertain what role migration can be expected to play relative to the risk of victimization. But it is generally believed that values acquired in one environment may lead to conflict in another. If this is the case, then the presence of newcomers might possibly lead to tensions and the potential for an increase in interpersonal conflict. The manner in which that conflict might be resolved is a function of the personality of individual actors and the socialization process in which they have been involved.

Regional differences in the socialization process of both blacks and whites are often noted; however, the current strength of these regional differences is unknown. But it is assumed that changes taking place in American society have led to a weakening of regional differences. In the general black population, in our three city sample, the percentage of the population born in the state of residence varies from a high of 82.5 per cent in Atlanta to a low of 50.2 per cent in Detroit. St. Louis more nearly resembled Detroit on this dimension, with 56.5 per cent of the group being born in the state of residence. From this information it might be assumed that Detroit and St. Louis residents have come from a more diverse set of social and cultural backgrounds than those that characterize Atlanta residents, based solely on the constraints associated with the state of birth. The regional and functional characteristics, i.e. primary economic function, of the state of origin can be expected to have an impact on a wide variety of personal attributes associated with interpersonal patterns of conduct.

State of birth data, while of some significance, might be less important than length of residence in an alternative environment. Likewise, state of birth data indicating a high percentage of persons born in another state is likely to be heavily weighted toward the upper end of the age spectrum, and thus may not accurately describe the state of origin characteristics of that segment of the population most likely to constitute the offender pool. It has been mentioned elsewhere that offenders tend to be concentrated in the young adult age group (15-29). Moreover, the offender population does not generally span as broad an age range as does the victim population, and a smaller percentage of offenders were more likely to have been born in another state than is true of the general population. This situation can be partially attributed to the age of offenders, whom we previously said were inclined to be young. Although offenders tend to less often represent persons of migrant origins, they do as a rule represent persons whose parents were migrants.

The sampling procedure for this study was detailed in the introductory section of this report. Only significant aspects of that procedure will be detailed here. The number of interviews conducted in each city was small, ranging between 25 and 30 per cent of the persons drawn into the original sample. The total number of persons interviewed in the three primary sample cities was 68. With an N of this small size, the level of confidence that we are able to assign to our responses is low. Nevertheless, these responses do provide insight into the behavioral propensities of the sample population. Although it would be extremely risky to generalize these findings to others possessing similar traits, these responses should not be discounted as trivial.

The small N is basically a function of two factors: the small number of offenders who were found "guilty as charged" and the inability to locate unincarcerated offenders three years after the occurrence of the event. The small number of incarcerated offenders made it necessary to attempt to establish contact both with persons who had served their sentence and had been released, as well as with those who were either given probation in lieu of a jail sentence or not convicted of the original charge. As might be expected, the largest percentage of positive responses came from those persons who were presently serving time for the commission of the homicide act.

Length of Residence in the City

Among those persons with whom an interview was conducted, the majority in both Atlanta and Detroit had spent their entire lives in the city where the homicide occurred. Slightly fewer than half of the St. Louis offenders were life residents of the city. Moreover, most of the migrants to St. Louis who possessed offender status were longtime residents of the city. Thus, city newcomers showed a very low level of involvement in interactions leading to death. In both St. Louis and Detroit, however, there is evidence of greater newcomer involvement than is true in Atlanta. The designation "newcomer to the city" was assigned to persons who had lived in the city for less than ten years. From this limited population base, using cross-sectional data, it does not appear that newcomers hold a high probability of becoming homicide offenders; moreover, that likelihood is lower in Atlanta than in the other two cities.

On the basis of the migratory characteristics of our sample of offenders, it becomes apparent that they have spent most of their lives in the city where the lethal act occurred. This leads us to attempt to delineate the

nature of the local environment in which their attitudes and values have been basically shaped. In order to do this, it was thought that the residential mobility experience of the offender sample might provide some additional clues.

Residential Mobility of Offender Sample

In each city most respondents indicated that they had lived in a number of local residential environments, although the Detroit group proved to be somewhat more mobile than the others. Twenty-five percent of the latter group had lived in six or more neighborhoods, a level which was five percent higher than that of the St. Louis group and ten percent higher than that of the Atlanta group. With the exception of the Atlanta group, most were relative newcomers to their 1975 neighborhoods. Only one-third of the St. Louis respondents had lived in their 1975 neighborhoods for more than five years. Shorter term stays are more characteristic of St. Louis and Detroit neighborhoods than of Atlanta neighborhoods. But, respondents in St. Louis and Detroit were more likely to report that their 1975 neighborhoods were good places to live than was true of Atlanta respondents.

Perceptions of 1975 Neighborhoods

Most respondents felt "location" and "the people" were the attributes that made their neighborhoods good places to live. Atlanta respondents, however, did not view these attributes as being more important than a number of other attributes. One noticeable difference between St. Louis, Detroit, and Atlanta was the presence of a sizable share of friends residing in the same neighborhood in the first two cities.

Most respondents appear not to hold negative perceptions of their 1975 neighborhoods. Yet, as many as one-third of the respondents frequently perceived these neighborhoods to be poor places in which to rear children. Most of those responding negatively did so by pointing to the presence of noxious influences -- usually associated with elements of vice or boisterous behavior on the part of neighborhood residents.

The role of the local environment in creating a milieu in which violent interactions are likely is unclear from the individual respondents' perceptions of the neighborhood as a good place to live. It is quite possible that neighborhood satisfaction is closely associated with the lifestyle preferences of individual respondents, and therefore does not clarify the extent to which the neighborhood might serve as an independent variable that contributes to the risk of violent interaction.

The recency of movement into neighborhoods of offender residence implies a superiority of present neighborhood of residence over that of previous neighborhoods. Even so, as mentioned above, a number of persons indicated these neighborhoods were not good places to rear children, which is one way of saying that the norms and values often manifested in specific behaviors were at odds with those emphasized in the larger black community. Nevertheless, whatever the specific characteristics of these new neighborhoods of residence, they were generally viewed as good places to live and therefore compatible in terms of the lifestyles of the offender sample. An important criterion in neighborhood satisfaction among this group, especially in Detroit and St. Louis, is the presence of people with whom they feel comfortable. It is unclear what the implications are of this poorly defined attribute.

The Educational Experience of the Offender Sample

Level of educational attainment in American society is positively correlated with social status. In order to succeed in American society, it is generally assumed that some minimal level of educational attainment will have to be satisfied. The required threshold level has continued to shift upward as the demands of society become more complex, with the median level of educational attainment today standing at more than 12 years and continuing to rise. For those who have difficulty negotiating the American educational system, at least in terms of reaching some societally determined critical level, the promise of a productive future is seldom bright. Moreover, the belief that one's future is in a large measure associated with schooling has led to much emphasis being placed not only on educational accomplishment, but also on attending the right school.

The median level of black educational attainment (10.3 years), although continuing to lag behind that of whites, has shown major gains over the previous generation. Black parents have historically assumed that education was the key that would enable their children to enjoy a more productive life than they had known themselves. Although that attitude still lingers among the parental generation, it does not appear to assume the same level of importance in the student generation. Nevertheless, most still contend that success in the educational system is vital if one's life chances are to be increased. The inverse of this position tends to imply that a lack of success in the educational system relegates one to a menial position in the labor force at best, or participation in the shadow economy at worst. Because of the central role assigned educational institutions in this country, it was thought the experience of both victims and offenders within that system might possibly provide clues to better enable us to understand the sequence of events that

often lead to death.

Educational Attainment Level of Offender Sample

The experience of homicide offenders with the educational system is highly varied and is strongly influenced by the age of the offender and the environment in which schooling took place. Twenty-five per cent of the total offender sample completed high school, a level that must be considered low in terms of today's norms. The highest percentage of high school completions occurred among our Detroit offenders, with almost one-third reporting they were high school graduates. In Atlanta and St. Louis, 15.4 and 13.3 per cent respectively reported earning a high school diploma. Thus, the mean level of high school completion is strongly influenced by the large number of offenders in our sample from Detroit where, in 1974, 42.7 per cent of all blacks between the ages of 25-34 had completed high school.

Most offenders reported that they had dropped out of high school during their enrollment in grades 9-11. Only in Atlanta was the modal level of educational attainment less than nine years. But the offender age structure is more varied in Atlanta than in the other two cities. The mean age of Atlanta offenders is 42; mean ages in Detroit and St. Louis are both 29. For some reason only a small percentage of the offender group found it necessary to continue high school beyond the eleventh grade (see table 44). At some point in their middle adolescent years either dissatisfaction with school or the pull of the non-school environment prompted them to withdraw.

Attitudes Toward School

The attitude of the offenders to school was mixed. But in each city a weak majority indicated favorable attitudes. In Detroit, where the majority was

Table 44

Offender Level of Education by Age

	Over 33	29 - 33	24 - 28	19 - 23	Below 18	Row Total
Completed high school	5 29.4 23.8 7.7	3 17.6 27.3 4.6	7 41.2 35.0 10.8	1 5.9 8.3 1.5	1 5.9 100.0 1.5	17 26.2
Completed \geq 9 yrs. < 12 yrs.	10 25.0 47.6 15.4	8 20.0 72.7 12.3	11 27.5 55.0 16.9	11 27.5 91.7 16.9	0 .0 .0 .0	40 61.5
Completed \geq 6 yrs. < 9 yrs.	5 71.4 23.8 7.7	0 .0 .0 .0	2 28.6 10.0 3.1	0 .0 .0 .0	0 .0 .0 .0	7 10.8
Completed less than 6 yrs.	1 100.0 4.8 1.5	0 .0 .0 .0	0 .0 .0 .0	0 .0 .0 .0	0 .0 .0 .0	1 1.5
Column Total	21 32.3	11 16.9	20 30.8	12 18.5	1 1.5	65 100.0

364

smallest, 52.5 per cent expressed a favorable attitude. The Atlanta and St. Louis respondents showed an even more favorable response to school, with 61.5 and 60 per cent viewing school as a positive experience. A variety of positions were expressed by those persons holding unfavorable attitudes toward school. For instance, they talked about qualities of the school itself, including teaching methods, regimentation, and confinement, as well as attitudes relating to the race of teachers. Other responses illustrated the presence of parental conflict, feelings of personal inadequacy, competing interests, and peer influence. In the Detroit case, the latter two explanations seem predominant. For example, one respondent from that city expressed his position in the following way: "Caught up in two different rhythms; wanted to do something fast and slick."

It is apparent that competing interests play a major role in student attitudes toward school. For those who are at ease in the school setting and who find a place for themselves in the school's social life, one would expect favorable responses relating to school. But for others for whom school seems to offer very little, the development of unfavorable attitudes -- as well as subsequent withdrawal prior to graduation -- is to be expected.

Participation in Extracurricular Programs

One would suspect that school extracurricular programs would serve to promote positive attitudes toward school. Moreover, the variety of such activities present in big city schools should provide satisfactory outlets for the many talents and interests normally found in diverse student populations. With this in mind, a comparison of the participation level of our sample offenders was undertaken for each city. More than one-half of all

respondents reported that they participated in extracurricular school activities. Almost two-thirds of the Detroit respondents stated that they took part in these social activities, while only 53 per cent of the Atlanta and St. Louis respondents were found to be participants. It is unknown if the higher level of participation in school programs was in anyway responsible for the larger percentage of students completing high school.

The extent to which persons participated in school social activities is apparently a function of length of residence in the city. Among those respondents who had spent their entire lives in the city, 71 per cent also took part in school social activities. Less than one-half of the recent newcomers to the city were found to participate in extracurricular activities. Thus, it is assumed that those persons unable to find a place for themselves in the social world of the school will seek alternative outlets as a means of self-expression. If this is the case, recent migrants to the city would appear more prone to withdraw from school prior to completing high school.

Most of the respondents who identified the extracurricular activity in which they were involved indicated a sports activity. Many took part in a number of events, but in most instances their second activity was also sports related. In addition, participation in the more passive non-athletic activities seems to have held little interest for the respondents. Most were attracted to what are perceived to represent the more masculine-oriented activities. This might, however, simply indicate a difference in outlook based upon self-image. Nevertheless, it would be of interest to determine if those who participated in school social life differed in terms of their relationship to the victim from those who were unable to find a place for themselves among school-based social activities.

The School Curriculum and Attitude toward School

The perceived importance of school on the students' future life chances is also likely to influence attitude toward school. For those students primarily concerned with acquiring skills that can be used in the work place, the nature of the school curriculum may constitute a very important influence on attitude toward school. Thus, our respondents generally reported a lack of enthusiasm for the school curriculum. For instance, in both Atlanta and Detroit fewer than half of the respondents thought the curriculum was structured to meet the needs of the work place. On the other hand, slightly more than half of the St. Louis respondents thought the curriculum was designed to assist them in the work place. Attitudes often exhibited relative to the school curriculum indicate that a large percentage of persons fail to see the relevance between school educational programs and the world of work. This could also imply that the futures envisioned by these persons were not ones requiring much formal education.

Offender Perceptions of Teacher Attitudes

Teachers and teacher attitudes are thought to have an impact upon pupil attitudes and behavior. In a school where the environment lacks warmth, the school tone is not likely to engender favorable attitudes towards the school. Teacher attitudes, however, might be directly related to existing conflicts between the values carried by teachers and those that prevail in the environment where the school is located. "Friendly" was the modal characteristic employed by most of our respondents to describe teachers. Many viewed their teachers as being disinterested in their welfare, a response given by almost one-fifth of the students. But even when teachers appeared

to be less than friendly, students perceived them as willing to help.

Respondents were asked to indicate if they had a favorite teacher and a least-liked teacher, and to also point out the grade and subjects they taught. Most said they had a favorite teacher. Moreover, there was little difference between cities in the extent to which respondents identified a favorite teacher. In fact, more than two-thirds, but fewer than three-fourths, identified a favorite teacher.

Detroit respondents identified a best-liked teacher more frequently than did persons from the other cities. While they most often had a favorite teacher, there was also more willingness to express dislike for a single teacher. For example, 62 per cent of the Detroit respondents identified a least-liked teacher, while only a minority of offenders from the other two cities identified a least-liked teacher. It is not easy to account for the polarities that describe the respondent attitudes from Detroit. Among those items most often cited in describing a least-liked teacher were the following: harassment, strictness, arrogance, general negative attitude, prejudice, and violence.

History teachers, as a rule, were most often reported as favorites, whereas English or language-related teachers were those least liked. It does not seem, however, that subject matter is directly related to one's feelings about teachers, nor are teacher attitudes a principal contributor to the termination of one's educational experience prior to high school graduation.

On the question of subject matter, respondents were asked to identify their most- and least-liked subjects in school. Offender response to the question

of most-liked subjects indicated a wide range of choices. The subject, however, most frequently reported as the best liked was mathematics. In all three cities, mathematics accounted for almost one-half of the total responses. English and science ranked second and third overall, but minor differences did show themselves from city to city. The second ranking subject in Detroit was English; in St. Louis it was music; and in Atlanta, art.

Student Discipline Patterns Among Offenders

A growing issue in urban education has to do with student discipline. In many school districts it is said that teachers are unable to discipline students and that this lack of control makes teaching difficult. An effective learning environment can hardly exist in schools where chaos abounds. One measure of handling the disciplinary problem is through the use of suspensions or expulsions. Suspensions, in particular, have become a primary tactic in attempting to rid schools, at least temporarily, of students who are viewed as disruptive or who have exhibited difficulty in conforming to school regulations. This tactic has been employed with great frequency in "inner city" schools, for that is where the greatest incongruence between school values and student values is considered to exist. An attempt was made to determine which members of the offender sample were thought to be conformist or non-conformist in terms of school values. In order to do this, a review of disciplinary history of each individual was undertaken as a means of ascertaining who had been suspended or expelled from school, how many times he/she had been suspended, and for what acts he/she had been suspended.

Suspensions had been given to a majority of respondents in Detroit and St. Louis schools, but only to a small minority of the respondents from Atlanta.

It appears that suspensions, at least at the time when those persons were growing up, were far more commonplace in northern urban schools than in those in the South. Sixty-five and 72 percent respectively of the Detroit and St. Louis respondents had been suspended one or more times. Only 15 percent of the Atlanta offenders reported that they had ever been suspended. But it should be recalled that Atlanta offenders are older, and thus were often in school during an earlier period in which student conformity was a less serious problem. Likewise, fewer Atlanta students were still in school when they reached late adolescence.

Multiple suspensions represent the established pattern in the northern environment. In Detroit more than one-fifth of the respondents had been suspended five or more times. The frequency of suspensions for individual students was lower in St. Louis, but the proportion of persons suspended exceeded that which characterized either of the other two cities. Suspensions themselves, while a general indicator of school-student value conflict, are not as instructive in pointing up deviant behavior as is information identifying the violation for which the suspension was made.

Suspensions or expulsions were practiced against a variety of behaviors that were held to be in conflict with school norms. It is not known how heavily offender attributes, e.g., previous suspensions, prior record of negative behavior, and so forth, impinged upon the decision to temporarily remove the student from school. But in our two northern school systems the offender sample was found to engage extensively in behavior considered inappropriate in a school setting.

Fighting was the act for which most of the suspensions were ordered, with

almost half of all suspensions being for that reason. In fact, it was the single most important reason for suspending students in Detroit. Moreover, fighting was the sole reason cited for suspensions in Atlanta; but because so few students were suspended, it is difficult to evaluate the implications of this behavior. Thus, one would generally be inclined to assume that other forms of conduct considered inappropriate in a school setting were less evident in Atlanta. Nevertheless, fighting was less important in accounting for suspensions in St. Louis than in the other two cities. Inappropriate conduct, which often took the form of teacher disrespect; use of profanity; and poor self-control accounted for more than one-half of all the St. Louis suspensions.

Truancy was also observed to be an important factor associated with suspensions in Detroit and St. Louis, but was seldom mentioned as a factor leading to student suspensions in Atlanta. Truancy is thought to be a good gauge of the existence of competing interest and is sometimes used as an indicator of the probability that one will fail to complete high school. It was previously identified by Robins (1968) as an indicator of a short life expectancy. That author found in a study of St. Louis schoolboys that truancy was the best predictor, among a set of independent variables, of the future life expectancy of those persons in her sample. Moreover, the truancy level was somewhat higher among the St. Louis sample than among the Detroit group.

Physically rough play has been previously cited as a frequently occurring phenomena in schools with predominantly low-income black populations. Webster (1974), in addressing himself to this issue, comments in the following way: "As one might see in any ghetto, there was much running about, chasing, fake

fighting, and wrestling, but there was nothing truly hostile in nature." It should be pointed out that the above description refers to a recently desegregated school system. Nevertheless, while play styles among low-income black children might differ from those of middle-income white children, this does not connote a tendency toward hostility and subsequent violence. Yet for those persons suspended from school for fighting, one could either assume a misunderstanding of ghetto play styles or the presence of serious provocations that normally engender a violent response.

To what extent the pupils suspended for fighting represent deviants, in terms of the cultural norms of the local black community, is unknown. What is apparent, however, is that almost half of the offender sample had some previous contacts with acts of aggression, leading to dismissal from school. Fighting did not appear to represent deviant behavior on the part of the offender sample in general, as more than 90 per cent reported having been in a fight. Also, more than 60 per cent of those reporting said that they had suffered physical injury from their fighting experiences. The latter behavior, however, was not confined to the school environment. It is uncertain how characteristic the fighting behavior exhibited by segments of the offender sample was within the social milieu in which they had been socialized. But one would be inclined to conjecture that the general level of assaultive behavior characterizing this group might have exceeded the limits attributable to sociocultural norms.

One final facet of the suspension problem that was given some attention was the association between length of residence and suspensions, and relationship to the deceased and suspensions. It was found that relative newcomers to the city were less often suspended than migrants who had been in the city for more than ten years. Moreover, long-term residents and non-migrants

showed greater similarity in suspension patterns than those which described newcomers. Of persons who had spent all their lives in the city, 57 per cent had been expelled from school, while 65 percent of those who had resided in the city for more than ten years had been expelled. Persons who had been residents of the city for more than five years, but less than ten years, were less likely to be suspended than others. Only 37.5 per cent of the latter group had been expelled. One implication of the noted difference in suspension behavior and migrant status is that non-migrants and long-term residents possessed a greater probability of challenging existing rules than was true of newcomers.

The connection between suspensions and the offender's relationship with the deceased uncovered some interesting associations. For long-term residents and non-migrants, the modal pattern of victim-offender relationship was distinguishable on the basis of suspension behavior. When this pattern was tested using chi square as the mode of analysis, some interesting results were revealed. For instance, the null hypothesis indicating independence between having been suspended and knowing the deceased was rejected at the .05 level for non-migrants and at .10 level for long-term residents. The null, however, was accepted for short-term residents.

Among long-term residents and natives, having been suspended increased the probability that the victim would be either a stranger or an acquaintance. Persons who had not been suspended, however, were more likely to have killed a spouse, other relative, or lover. It is possible that the same low level of impulse control and general disregard for school values led those who had been suspended to interact with non-intimates in a violently aggressive fashion. Moreover, it is assumed that the stimulus provoking one to take the

life of an intimate would need to be of greater intensity than in the former situation. Thus, the latter group was likely to exhibit greater impulse control.

In its ability to retain our sample of offenders through to graduation, the school was seldom able to compete with alternative interests. During the time the offenders were in school, there was frequent conflict between offenders' norms and those of the school. This conflict frequently led to suspensions, which were more commonplace in the North than in the South. Among persons suspended for breach of social norms, the nature of the victim-offender relationship was seen as most influenced by the time spent in the local social milieu.

The World of Work and the Offender Population

Participation in the world of work is often used as a measure of economic independence, as well as a means of defining self. But persons with limited skills, as the offender sample has been shown to represent, often have difficulty obtaining jobs, or at least obtaining jobs that provide a measure of financial security. Moreover, the dissatisfaction associated with low-status jobs and the limited financial rewards often lead workers into lifestyles that enhance the risk of becoming involved in interactions leading to aggressive behavior. As a means of attempting to establish the contribution of work role to circumstances promoting or abetting lifestyles that increase risk of involvement in violent interactions, the work experience of this population will be described.

Employment Status

At the time of the incident 46.3 per cent of the offenders were employed,

while a slight majority were unemployed. The largest percentage of those not working were under 30; however, most were concentrated in the 25-29 year age group. The latter group is generally thought to constitute the segment of the population that has most recently established itself in the economy, and is now in the young family stage in the life cycle. In the offender sample, only among persons in the age categories 20-24, 35-39, and 40 and older were the majority employed at the time of the homicide incident. A chi square of 7.9 with 5 degrees of freedom, however, is not significant at the .05 level; thus we must reject the hypothesis that employment at the time of the incident was age related. Nevertheless, it is apparent that the young family stage is at risk of being bypassed because of the inability of persons to gain a foothold in the economy.

The employment situation was observed to differ by city. In Atlanta and St. Louis, 69.2 and 60.0 per cent of the offenders respectively were employed at the time of the incident, whereas almost two-thirds of the Detroit offenders were found to be unemployed. Also, the Detroit offenders were found to have been unemployed for the longest period of time, with 29 per cent of the unemployed having been out of work for a year or more. The length of unemployment is less protracted in Atlanta and St. Louis. Nevertheless, Detroit offenders had not given up on finding employment as the majority indicated they were looking for work. On the other hand, less than one-third of those out of work in St. Louis and Atlanta were seeking jobs. At the time of the incident, a few had withdrawn from the labor force and had to find alternative means of support.

Among the unemployed more than three-fifths had been out of work for six months or longer, while more than two-fifths had been without jobs for more

than a year. For the long-term unemployed, time undoubtedly weighed heavily upon them. They had excess leisure time, thus having to establish some daily routine to facilitate making use of this surplus. Moreover, the situation was such that they were amenable to engaging in a variety of activities that later might prove troublesome.

Since so few persons were looking for work at the time of the incident, it seemed most had given up on finding employment. Although the relationship was not totally consistent throughout the age range, the percentage looking for work appeared to decline as a function of age. Also, the single largest number of unemployed persons were 25-29 years of age, and only one-half of them were seeking work at the time of the homicide.

Of those seeking employment, most were looking for jobs as laborers. When one notes that most job seekers were persons who had dropped out of high school, the kinds of jobs sought represent a realistic appraisal of potentially available jobs. Most of these persons had previous experience in the work force, as 69.7 per cent stated they had previously held full-time jobs. Only 20 per cent of those aged 20-24, however, reported having held such positions. Delayed entry into the labor force, unless associated with preparation for work, is likely to promote involvement in the irregular economy and subsequent contact with the law. Full-time employment, although representing the status of most of the employed at the time of the incident, seldom characterized the work status of more than 70 per cent of those employed. Furthermore, there were minor variations in the extent to which part-time employment was a source of financial support in individual cities.

For those unemployed at the time of the incident, a source of financial

support had to be found. Almost half of the unemployed persons reported that they were financially dependent upon other family members. Fathers were most often identified as the principal source of financial support, followed by mothers, siblings, and others at about the same level of dependency. Fathers were shown to be employed in more than 90 per cent of the instances, regardless of whether the offender was employed at the time of the incident. Although mothers were less often employed than fathers, the majority of mothers had jobs.

Most offenders came from homes where other family members worked. Nevertheless, the unemployment of adult family members no doubt placed additional strain upon the limited family resources derived from the income of employed family members. This implies for young persons unable to gain a foothold in the economy that parents must continue to share limited resources with their children. Moreover, such a situation can also be expected to increase household stress and to create environments where intra-family conflict is aggravated. Finally, 70 per cent of those indicating dependence on family resources were under 30.

Offender Self-Image and Financial Dependency

Aside from noting differences in the extent to which unemployed persons were dependent upon family financial resources for at least partial support, it was thought beneficial to examine that support within the context of self-image. Thus, offenders were asked to indicate which of the following persons they thought best fit their description of themselves: 1) responsible family persons; 2) hustlers; 3) likes good time; 4) religious; 5) irresponsible; and 6) other. Most viewed themselves as holding membership in groups one through

three, with "responsible family persons" representing the image held by the greatest number of persons.

Among the several categories, the most ambiguous was "hustler." In order to minimize this uncertainty, a hustler was defined as a person who lives by his wits. Hustling is said to increasingly represent a means of financial support for persons who identify themselves as not being a part of the work force. It also places persons at increased risk of involvement in lethal transactions, depending upon the nature of the hustle.

Persons who survive by hustling often engage in a wide variety of activities, some legal and others illegal. B. Valentine (1978), who recently addressed the issue of hustling in one ghetto community, indicates that it most often includes the following activities: 1) the numbers game; 2) buying and selling hot goods; 3) gambling; 4) bootlegging liquor after hours; 5) stripping abandoned building of salable items; 6) shoplifting; 7) looting; 8) running con games; and 10) trafficking in narcotics. Members of the offender sample, however, were not asked if they participated in any of these activities. Thus, it is unclear just what activities persons who described themselves as hustlers engaged in.

In terms of family financial contributions, most hustlers look to their fathers for support, but persons who viewed themselves as responsible family persons were more often dependent upon their mothers. These two self-image types account for 71 per cent of all offenders. Moreover, it is unclear why they most often turn to specific family members for support. Even more puzzling is why persons who view themselves as hustlers turn to fathers for financial assistance, unless it is assumed fathers are likely to be more sympathetic toward this self-image orientation.

The Contribution of Offenders to the Financial Support of Others

Not only were some persons dependent upon family and others to contribute to their financial support during temporary layoff periods, but others were themselves the principal sources of financial support for a wide range of dependents. In most instances, the occurrence of the homicide incident terminated support previously derived from the offender's work activity. For example, 70 percent of Atlanta offenders were contributing to the support of a set of dependents. The dependency burden was lower in Detroit and St. Louis, where only about three-fifths of the offenders contributed to the support of others. Furthermore, the mix of dependents varied among cities, with wife and children dominating in Atlanta and Detroit, and children only dominating in St. Louis.

The homicide incident frequently led to a loss of financial support for a set of dependents whose breadwinner had been gainfully employed at the time of the incident. One of the most frequently overlooked aspects of the homicide transaction is the financial burden, caused by loss of income, to the family. Yet, for those persons not actively engaged in the work force, the methods they chose to acquire financial resources often placed them in precarious situations, abetting the potential for the occurrence of lethal violence. In the latter instance, the offender possibly adds further to his or her family's financial burden -- at least temporarily.

Satisfaction with Job

In terms of satisfaction with their work, employed offenders gave mixed responses. The greatest satisfaction was found among Atlanta workers, but less than one-half of the Detroit workers expressed satisfaction and slightly more than one-half of the St. Louis workers indicated they were contented. Yet, only a minority in all cities found their jobs very dissatisfying. Level of dissatisfaction does not appear to be directly related to income adequacy, since most respondents agreed that incomes were at least minimally adequate. Nevertheless, a number of persons were not satisfied with their employment.

In St. Louis, where less than two-thirds indicated their weekly incomes were sufficient to support their needs, the earnings adequacy problem was most severe. The actual mean weekly income of offenders was highest in Detroit (\$212.00) and lowest in Atlanta (\$142.50), whereas St. Louis (\$161.50) respondents earned somewhat more than Atlanta offenders. If these weekly incomes are converted to annual earnings, they would place the offenders in the working-class category. But if the offenders show much similarity to the offenders in our sample, their annual earnings will be severely reduced by long stretches of unemployment. This latter situation no doubt promotes economic marginality among persons who, when employed, perceive their earnings as adequate.

Differences in level of living, lifestyle, and general outlook no doubt influence the extent to which respondents view their various incomes as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Likewise, it might be posited that one's self-image is partially associated with job or income satisfaction. In the following section an attempt will be made to more fully explore the role of self-image on work experience.

Offender Self-Image and Work Experience

Offender work experience differences based on self-image were found to prevail. Persons who viewed themselves as "responsible family persons" were most likely to be employed, and if unemployed to be looking for work. Eighty per cent of the respondents were concentrated in the first three self-image categories as follows: "responsible family persons," 47 per cent of the total; "hustlers," 23.5 per cent; and "like to have a good time," 10.3 per cent.

A distinguishing feature of the two larger groups was length of employment on a single job. Hustlers tended to average a very short stay on individual jobs, usually remaining for only about six months. On the other hand, the mean for "responsible family persons" was 11.1 years. Moreover, these differences are partially associated with the higher mean age of "responsible family persons." But they also possibly distinguish the offender population in terms of outlook, temperament, and life goals.

Self-image differences were noticeable on a city-by-city basis. "Responsible family persons" comprised 60 per cent of the St. Louis sample and more than one-half of the Atlanta respondents, but only 40 per cent of the Detroit sample. The one major difference in the between city analysis is the varying prevalence among persons holding the self-image of hustler. For example, one-third of the Detroit offenders identified themselves as hustlers, but only one-fifth of the St. Louis respondents were inclined to view themselves in this way. On the other hand, no Atlanta respondents identified themselves as hustlers. Thus, our description of hustler work experience is limited to work environment in northern cities. It is not

certain whether the Detroit milieu prompts persons to view themselves as hustlers more frequently than is the case in other places, or if the size and age structure of the Detroit sample simply favored this response. Nevertheless, it is clear that work experience and work outlook differ among the two larger self-image types.

Offender On-the-Job Relationships

Not only is it important to understand the work experience of those persons charged with committing a lethal act of violence, but the manner in which they perceived relationships between themselves and other persons in the work place may provide some clues as to how they generally interacted with others. Thus, questions were posed that specifically sought answers to how they got along with both fellow workers and supervisors.

First, however, the offenders' views of work, in terms of the rewards associated with it, will be evaluated. Most offenders considered work to be a means of achieving specific goals. A slight majority of offenders, however, saw work as a career activity. Moreover, career goals were in greater evidence in Atlanta than elsewhere.

In many instances the establishment of career objectives represents excursions into fantasy, given the limited resources of individuals and the constraints that would have to be overcome. So, it is understandable that only a minority of those who had earlier established career goals found these goals obtainable. Yet it is clear that there were persons who at one point in their lives held out hope for a better future. Detroit offenders, however, less often than others reported attaining their career goals. Thus, it is possible that the goals established by the Detroit sample were more realistic than those established by others. But for persons holding lofty

goals early on, disappointment was probably the rule.

The most important characteristics that the offender population sought in a job were identified. From a list of nine desirable job characteristics, each respondent was asked to select the three most important to him or her. Respondents from each city most frequently chose the same three characteristics: opportunity to perform useful tasks, opportunity to be creative and original, and opportunity to work with people. On the other hand, the more security-oriented characteristics -- making a lot of money and job security -- were chosen much less often. Nevertheless, it is uncertain if this reflects the greater importance of a self-fulfillment orientation over that of personal security, or the simple realization that personal financial security represents a major uncertainty for the black worker, even under the best of circumstances.

It was assumed that the offenders' on-the-job experiences might provide some insight into the kinds of relationships that occurred between the offenders and others. The vast majority of offenders encountered no serious problems in getting along with others at work. There was, however, a slight difference in their normally good working relationship with fellow workers and that which existed with their immediate work supervisors. These small differences no doubt represented the expected distinctions associated with response to co-workers as opposed to response to authority figures. Thus, there was limited evidence of discord between workers and their supervisors.

Nevertheless, there were some obvious differences in the worker-supervisor relationship on a city-by-city basis. For instance, St. Louis respondents reported that they got along well with fellow workers, but at the same time indicated a somewhat less favorable relationship with supervisors. Moreover,

Detroit workers were slightly more positive in their relations with supervisors. Finally, Atlanta workers were more positive than those in the other two cities. Based on self-reports of how well offenders got along with persons at work, it appears that on-the-job behavior is not a good index of how offenders would behave in specific social situations.

Another dimension of offender work behavior that was chosen for investigation was the experience of having been fired. Firing is interpreted to mean that the employer had expressed some dissatisfaction with the worker's job performance or with some worker trait that was negatively valued by the firm. (Removal of the worker from the work force as a result of external effects, i.e., an economic downturn, is not viewed here as a firing, but as a layoff.) A "put down" on the basis of poor performance might be responded to in a number of ways. Moreover, these responses possibly provide clues to how the individual might perform in other situations where his or her competency is challenged.

Among our offender pool, the incidence of firing was small. Most persons indicated they had never been fired from a job. In fact, fewer than 16 per cent reported having been fired in St. Louis and Atlanta, while almost 25 per cent of Detroit respondents said they had been fired. Of the various possible grounds for firing, no one reported perceiving his or her firing to be related to racial prejudice. Moreover, the most frequently cited reasons were those associated with a lack of skills or motivation. Thus, most persons who had been fired viewed their firing to be related to some objective trait that made them unsuitable for the job.

The response to firing varied minimally between cities, with the most frequent response being "I didn't like it," followed by "I didn't care."

Only in Detroit was there evidence of anger as a response to the firing. Nevertheless, the general response to firing appears to be quite mild and does not suggest a strong attachment to a particular job.

Considering the proportion of persons unemployed at the time of the homicide incident, it is surprising to find so few persons having been fired. This is an indication that a number of these persons were possibly laid off as a result of a slow economy, or that they simply quit because of dissatisfaction with some aspect of the job. In either case, persons outside of the work force do not appear to be terribly disturbed by this turn of events. But for those who had been fired, most admit that they didn't like it.

The Relationship Between the Offender and the Deceased: Civil and Psychological Consequences

In the act of homicide, the victim-offender relationship is often a central feature surrounding the circumstances leading to death. To determine what the precise relationship was between the offenders in our sample and the persons they were charged with killing, a number of questions were asked that would allow us to spell out that relationship and to specify its impact on the circumstances that led to death. The offenders were also requested to indicate how they felt about the deceased at the time of the incident; how the incident made them feel; and what the circumstances were that led them to act in this manner. Besides being concerned with the emotional response of the offender to the incident, we were also concerned with how the relationship between the offender and the deceased influenced the offender's decision to participate in this study and, indirectly, how it influenced certainty of punishment for engaging in the lethal act. Finally, we were

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concerned with how the respondent relationship with the victim differs from that among victims and offenders generally.

A Comparison Between National Victim-Offender Relationships and That of Sample Offenders

It is widely acknowledged that most victims of lethal violence were previously known to their assailants. The extent to which this is true, however, has been changing for more than a decade. In 1979, there was a greater likelihood that victim and offender were not previously known to one another than was true in 1965. Moreover, the strength of this likelihood is thought to vary by region. For instance, a higher percentage of persons who were previously known to one another will be found among homicide victims in the South than outside of that region. On a nationwide basis, most homicides occur among acquaintances, followed by those occurring among family members. Felony-related acts, however, are gaining in importance as primary contributors in homicide transactions. Most often these acts include persons not previously known to one another. In the South, however, felony murder is not as widespread as in the rest of the United States.

There is a moderate similarity in the relationship between respondent offenders and their victims, and the pattern that prevails is nationwide. On a national basis, 43 per cent of offenders reported they were acquaintances of the victim, another 31.7 per cent represented family members, and 25.4 per cent were strangers. In individual cities, however, one could observe noticeable differences in victim-offender relationships. For example, the victim and offender were strangers in 40 per cent of the cases in St. Louis, but in only 17.5 per cent of the instances in Detroit. In Atlanta, victims were unknown to offenders in only 23 per cent of the incidents, a pattern

characteristic of that region. There is evidence of discordance between the offender-victim relationship in our sample and the victim-offender relationship described by aggregate data during the same year. In terms of the victim-offender relationships prevailing in the individual cities, the foregoing would indicate that the persons interviewed were not representative.

The relationship between the offenders and victims in our sample showed the greatest deviation from the observed aggregate pattern in Detroit. It should be mentioned, however, that offenders did not always specify what their relationship was with the victim. In fact, almost one-fifth of the Atlanta offenders failed to report their relationship to the victim. Since the percentage reporting that they were strangers or family members is what one would expect if the sample were representative of the universe, it is believed that those not reporting a relationship were most likely acquaintances. Only 7.7 per cent of the Atlanta respondents reported they were actually acquaintances, a percentage that is unrealistically low when considering this represents the modal relationship nationally.

Evidence of incongruence in the relationship between the respondent offender and his or her victim, when compared with the aggregate city, occurred in each city. Family respondents are overrepresented in St. Louis, and acquaintances are overrepresented in Detroit. The stranger relationship is underrepresented in Detroit, as are acquaintances in Atlanta. Thus, it is clear that for some reason the persons interviewed did deviate from the aggregate pattern characterizing the structure of victimization in individual cities. A partial explanation for this discrepancy is thought to be associated with the likelihood of incarceration as a function of the victim-offender relationship. In fact, the closer emotionally one is to the deceased, the greater the likelihood that the offender will be arrested and charged with committing the act. This no doubt leads to a disproportionate number of

convictions of husbands who kill wives, as well as convictions of acquaintances who had a close relationship with the deceased.

It is believed that the strength of the emotional bond is likely to influence both the nature of the transaction that led to death and the criminal justice system's response to the incident. Moreover, transactions involving loss of self-respect or lowering of self-esteem are likely to engender an intense emotional response, leading to arguments that frequently escalate to fighting. Thus, the offender's role in the transaction will be likely to influence persons who make the decisions to incarcerate or not to incarcerate.

Lundsgaarde (1977) earlier found that some variation existed in the proclivity of the courts to incarcerate a set of Houston offenders on the basis of the victim-offender relationship. For instance, the smallest percentage of persons sentenced were relatives (20.8 per cent), followed by acquaintances (36.77 per cent). Moreover, offenders who did not know their victims were most likely to be sentenced (41.82 per cent). If the Houston pattern holds in other cities, relatively fewer persons should be expected to be serving time in Atlanta than in Detroit, simply based upon the structure of victimization. The expected incarcerations, however, might be distorted because police are unable to bring cases to closure or because grand juries fail to return indictments. In fact, the extent to which unknown offenders are participants in these transactions will have a serious impact upon the number of persons incarcerated. Where emotional bonds were strong between offender and victim, and the act resulted from a sudden angry outburst, incarceration probability is lowered. In Atlanta, where family related homicides are relatively frequent, the percentage of family related offenders should be lower among incarcerated persons than among those charged with committing non-family related deaths. This situation, however, is further aggravated by the sex of the offender. Wives who kill husbands appear less likely to be incarcerated than husbands who kill wives. Thus, a

disproportionate number of the incarcerated offenders from Atlanta should represent persons who were previously identified as acquaintances.

Among Atlanta offenders, the highest conviction rate was for males who had been charged with killing females. Of 52 offenders in the Atlanta sample, 36.5 per cent were still incarcerated in 1978. On the other hand, the nature of the victim-offender relationships in Detroit should lead to a higher incarceration rate than is true for Atlanta. Moreover, St. Louis had a smaller percentage of persons serving time for the commission of a homicide than did either of the other two cities. The higher percentage of unknown offenders in St. Louis is thought to strongly influence the percentage of persons who were eventually incarcerated. Thus, the structure of victimization is thought to distort the make-up of the offender sample because considerable discrepancy exists in the likelihood of incarceration as a function of the relationship between the offender and his or her victim.

Family Homicide and Offender Attributes

Altercations among family members occasionally lead to death. One-half or more of these fatal quarrels occur between husbands and wives. It is said that because husbands and wives know best how to hurt one another, their altercations often involve using demeaning statements, which challenge the self-worth of one partner or the other. Potential for such altercations is heightened as a function of the absence of both financial and psychological resources. Among the offenders interviewed who were involved in family-related altercations, the majority in each city were husbands or wives. Furthermore, other relatives made up less than 15 per cent of the respondent offenders in both Detroit and St. Louis, and were not represented at all in Atlanta.

Of the husband/wife respondents, there was an equal likelihood that the respondents would be found in a common-law arrangement as in a civil union in both Atlanta and St. Louis, whereas in Detroit there was a slightly higher percentage of civil unions than common-law marriages. The nature of the marital arrangement is thought to relate both to the level of economic security of the persons involved and to the acceptance of values that support legalization of marriage. In most instances, persons traditionally involved in non-legal unions were those who had marginal positions in the economy. Thus, economic marginality and its associated lifestyle practices undoubtedly elevate risk for intra-marital conflict. Also, in those environments where economic marginality is greatest, family homicide -- with particular emphasis on marital conflict -- is likely to be commonplace.

Marital conflict is often fueled by jealousy-provoking acts of one or both partners. But jealousy was found to be only a minor catalyst in the homicide incidents in each city, being mentioned less often as an associated variable in Detroit than in the other two cities. The implication of this finding is that jealousy was not generally a major activator of conflict leading to death within families. This does not mean, however, that the potential for jealousy was not present, but only that it did not serve as the primary variable contributing to the respondent offender's action that ultimately led to the killing of another person.

Normally, one would have expected a larger share of other relatives to have been included in the offender pool. But perhaps they are less often incarcerated, and when incarcerated choose not to discuss the subject. Of course, the exact relationship between other relatives and the circumstances

that led to death are likely to play an integral role in their willingness to discuss the topic. From the larger non-interview sample, it was observed that fathers were sometimes charged with killing young adult sons. These disputes appear to grow out of conflicts between sons and step-mothers or from acts of parental disrespect. In circumstances such as this, where the father is generally found not to be incarcerated, the trauma of reliving the past did work against such persons showing up among respondent offenders.

The Acquaintance Relationship and the Homicide Offender

The amount of detail describing the relationship between victim and offender that can be extracted from the FBI Monthly Homicide Reports is very limited. Among the various categories of victim-offender relationships, that of acquaintances is most seriously compromised by this paucity of information. This frequently makes it impossible to ascertain the precise nature of the relationship among those persons described as acquaintances on the basis of available information from the above mentioned source. At best this category simply denotes that these were persons previously known to one another. This group then includes persons who maintained a variety of relationships, ranging from lovers to casual contacts. Nevertheless, the nature of the relationships should indicate how persons might be expected to feel about each other, and how these feelings were manifested in the lethal transactions and in the aftermath of those incidents. Offenders were asked how they felt about the deceased, as it was thought that their responses might provide some clues to the precise victim-offender relationship, especially as

they refer to the relationship among precise acquaintances.

An offender response to the question "How did you feel about the victim?" was reported by only 67 per cent of all offenders (see table 45). The non-responding offenders on this item were concentrated among those who were convicted of killing family members or strangers. In the case of relatives, the offenders might possibly have harbored ambiguous feelings and thus refused to identify how they felt about the deceased. Persons who reported feelings about spouses all indicated negative feelings. The refusal to specify one's feelings about strangers is more difficult to explain. Table 45 clearly shows that how one felt about the victim was a function of the victim-offender relationship. All offenders, however, were willing to reveal how they felt about acquaintances. From these responses it is indirectly possible to specify the strength of the social bond between victims and offenders sharing this relationship.

The majority of acquaintance relationships appear to have been casual at best, considering that 52 per cent of the offenders indicated they neither liked nor disliked the victim. On the other hand, there appeared to have existed a minimum number of antagonistic relationships. Positive feelings about acquaintances occurred in 44 per cent of the cases, but only 11 per cent were strongly positive. This would tend to indicate that lethal conflict among close friends is minimal, but in at least one-third of the instances the relationship was more than simply casual.

On a city-by-city basis, major differences were noted in the respondents' feelings. For instance, positive feelings were more in evidence in Detroit

Victim/Offender Relationships by Offender Attitude Toward Victim

Table 45

	liked victim a lot	liked victim	did not like victim	neither liked nor disliked victim	row total
did not know victim	.0 .0 .0	1 11.1 8.3	.0 .0 .0	8 88.9 34.8	9 19.6
spouse	.0 .0 .0	.0 .0 .0	2 100.0 66.7	.0 .0 .0	2 4.3
mate	2 100.0 25.0	.0 .0 .0	.0 .0 .0	.0 .0 .0	2 4.3
relative	3 50.0 37.5	2 33.3 16.7	.0 .0 .0	1 16.7 4.3	6 13.0
acquaintance	3 11.1 37.5	9 33.3 75.0	1 3.7 33.3	14 51.9 60.9	27 58.7
column total	8 17.4	12 26.1	3 6.5	23 58.7	46 100.0

Chi Square = 50,83179
with 12 degrees of freedom
Significance = .0000

than elsewhere, but only a minority of the responses indicated the existence of strong emotional bonds. In Atlanta, where no one would have expected a majority of positive responses given the modal pattern of the relationship among victims and offenders, this did not occur. Almost two-fifths of the Atlanta respondents failed to report how they felt about the victim. As indicated previously, this might have reflected an ambiguity in feelings among husbands who were charged with killing wives. Moreover, they were overwhelmingly indifferent in terms of feelings about the victim. Only one respondent from St. Louis indicated evidence of positive emotions about the victim.

Neither in Atlanta nor St. Louis was there strong evidence that the offender strongly disliked the victim, unless such feelings were harbored among persons unwilling to indicate their feelings. On the basis of respondents' feelings, however, it seems safe to say that only a few offenders maintained strong emotional attachments to their victims. Only in Detroit was there evidence that might fail to support this contention.

Offender Views on Justification for Taking the Life of Another

The nature of situational transactions appears very important as a triggering action leading to death, tending to obscure the role of feelings in these complex interactions. This seems particularly true in the case of respondents who were convicted of killing a husband or wife. Two questions that are inclined to highlight the nature of transactions that might give rise to the possibility of a lethal encounter are as follows: 1) "Are there situations which justify a person killing one's spouse?" and 2) "Are there situations which justify one person taking the life of another?"

It was thought that responses to the first question might provide insight into understanding what kinds of persons would be willing to kill a spouse, and what the circumstances were that would lead one to consider this action to be appropriate. With regard to the second question, if persons answered yes, they were then asked to describe those justifiable situations.

A majority of offenders (57.6 per cent) indicated that no situation justified a person to kill his or her spouse. But it seems that a number of attributes can be used to distinguish offender responses on this item, although none of these attributes are strong enough to reject the null hypotheses. The strongest differences, however, are associated with both marital status and employment status at the time of the incident.

The majority of persons who were legally married, divorced, or separated at the time of the incident believed there were situations that justified one spouse killing the other. Most persons who opposed this position were those who were living in common-law marriages or those who had never been married. The implication of this finding is that the strength of attachment among persons in common-law arrangements tends to be weaker, and thus the threshold of discord is inclined to be lower.

Persons who were separated from their spouses at the time of the incident were most likely to support justification, possibly reflecting the existence of scars associated with an unsuccessful union. Currently married persons were most evenly divided in their attitudes, with a slight majority favoring non-justification. This would imply that almost one-half of those persons who had killed spouses for any reason would feel justified in killing their spouses if, in their opinion, the situation warranted it. The condition most

often cited as providing justification was self-defense (56.8 per cent), followed by sexual impropriety or cheating (25.0 per cent).

Employment status was the second most important distinguishing attribute among persons who supported or failed to support the notion of situational justification for killing one's spouse. Those who were employed at the time of the incident were predominately supportive, while the unemployed felt there was no justification. The latter group included more persons who were younger (20-29) and fewer persons who were ever married. Thus, it appears that support for justification is strongly related to possible negative experiences in the marital relationship. Other attributes that seem to be weakly associated with justification are recent migrant status and poor health.

On the question of justification for killing in general, under a prescribed set of circumstances, there was majority support. This would lead one to believe it is possible that as many as 64 per cent of our offenders might consider they were justified in committing the act with which they were charged. Those holding this position do not seem to differ -- on a set of selected objective traits (reported fighting behavior, etc.) -- from those who do not believe that one is justified in killing under any circumstances. Persons most likely to support justification were those whose role in fights was that of the attacked and who owned a gun at the time of the incident. This appears to represent those who perceive themselves as persons who others attempt to take advantage of and who accordingly have decided to protect themselves against real or imagined adversaries.

Among persons who are supporters of justification, fear of personal harm

appears to be strong. This is deduced from the majority of persons who reported that their role in fights had most often led to their being attacked. As a larger percentage of the supporters of justification owned guns at the time of the incident, they might have been more inclined to purchase weapons to defend themselves against future attacks. Most respondents reported that the only justification was associated with self-defense or self-protection, and that fear of a possible attack, based on prior experience, could lead one to feel that his or her lifestyle or social milieu made it necessary to protect one's self against the possibility of attack.

Other stated justifications were diffuse, and covered a range of situations that would prompt a given individual to kill another without having to carry the burden of guilt. The latter justifications appear to bear more directly on the lifestyle and/or personality of the respondent. In one instance a respondent indicated one would be warranted in killing a professional hit man, another said one was justified when a person being robbed resisted the attempt, while still another stated as justification being called a liar or having a person raise his or her voice in talking to him. Thus, the motivation expressed by about one-third of the respondents seemed idiosyncratic and not directly related to fear of personal harm or threats to the safety of one's family.

Respondents from the individual cities differed in terms of their views on situations that justify one's taking the life of another. The greatest support for situations that were thought to justify an act of lethal violence was found among Atlanta respondents, where 70 per cent of offenders found grounds on which taking the life of another could be warranted. St. Louis

and Detroit respondents provided views that were closer to one another, but with less support for justification occurring in the latter city. Self-defense was the justification stipulated by 88 per cent of the Atlanta offenders, while this rationale was cited by only 58.6 per cent of the Detroit offenders and 62.5 per cent of the St. Louis offenders. In the latter two cities, more diffuse justifications are indicated than in the primary southern city. It is assumed that this represents the greater diversity of personalities and lifestyles characterizing offenders from Detroit and St. Louis.

It is clear that the majority of respondents are of the opinion that there are situations in which the killing of another is justified. Most, however, indicate that the only situation warranting this action is one which threatens their own safety or the safety of a family member. There is official recognition of this position in the form of the charge "justifiable and excusable homicide." Even the charge "voluntary manslaughter" seems to imply some justification for the expressed behavior.

Psychological Response of Offenders to Homicide Act

Since most of our offender respondents were incarcerated at the time of the interview, one would conclude they were not justified in taking the action for which they were imprisoned. The implication here is that their offensive acts were motivated not by the need to protect themselves from physical harm, but rather the need to accept a challenge, to strike out at a perceived aggressor, to protect self-image, or to express oneself in a fit of anger. Feelings of justification, however, should have an impact upon the offender's psychological response to the incident. One would expect persons who felt that the situation warranted their concomitant behavior to

express little emotional arousal as a result of the incident. A series of questions were posed, which will permit us to determine the extent to which lack of arousal and implicit feelings of justification were present.

It is conjectured that persons who believed the situation that led them to take the life of another was justified would exhibit only a minimal psychological reaction to the incident. Offenders were asked how they felt upon realizing that a person had been killed as an outgrowth of an interaction in which they were involved. Although the nature of the relationship with the deceased should be expected to have an impact on their immediate response, it should be kept in mind that it has already been established that detachment was the feeling exhibited by most offenders, suggesting the presence of a weak emotional bond to the victim. Thus, under the circumstances it is unclear whether the offender's response to the incident essentially reflects his or her feelings for the deceased, or concern for one's own well-being upon realizing an irreversible act had been committed, which could possibly lead to the offender being severely punished.

A number of emotional states are possible as a reaction to one's role as the perpetrator of the homicide act. These possible responses have been categorized in the following way: emotionally upset, angry, sad, and neutral. A staged pattern of responses was also possible, but no attempt was made to tap a short-term time lapse response. Thus, what is reported here is the emotional response that the offender remembered immediately upon realizing that his or her actions had resulted in the death of another.

The largest number of offenders indicated that they were emotionally upset as a result of the experience. No other single response category approached

it in importance. Those who reported being emotionally upset were overwhelmingly drawn from that group of offenders who viewed themselves as responsible family persons. But this group also produced a number of persons who expressed feelings of neutrality in response to the act. Persons who were most likely to feel anger were hustlers, although they also frequently exhibited feelings of neutrality. These emotional states occurred slightly more often than that of empty or sad, which was proportionately better balanced among all self-image groups. Responses to the incident, however, appear to be as strongly related to age as to self-image.

Older persons are more likely to indicate feelings of anxiety than are younger persons, whose modal response is likely to reflect neutrality. More than four-fifths of those expressing neutrality were in the 20-29 age groups. Younger persons possibly were less often involved in intense emotional relations with the victim, leading them to less often express anxiety or depression in conjunction with the act. While there were a variety of responses from each age group, it was clear that persons expressing neutrality in response to the incident less often stated strong positive feelings for the victim.

Only 13 per cent of the offenders acknowledged that they committed a lethal act in defending themselves. Most offenses were committed as a result of arguments growing out of anger and, depending on the circumstances, could lead to a variety of emotional responses. Even though self-defense was not the primary motivation for the act, feelings of indifference were widespread. The lack of emotional attachment to the victim and the fact that more than one-quarter of the offenders exhibited neutral feelings

immediately after the occurrences probably indicate they were not thinking of the possible penalty to be paid later. Nevertheless, there is some evidence that in the post-homicide period a number of offenders clearly indicated an overriding concern with the impact of the act on their futures.

The feelings of the offenders for the plight of others seem questionable based on their response to this question: "Do you think anyone has suffered as a result of this act?" The greater majority of all offenders do not perceive anyone having suffered as a result of the homicide; however, **the strength of this response varied from city to city.** For example, four-fifths of St. Louis offenders indicated no one had suffered, while closer to two-thirds of the respondents in Atlanta and Detroit expressed this sentiment. There was occasional concern that the victim's parents might have suffered, but seldom was this regard widespread. Moreover, it was more often expressed by Detroit residents than others. The extent to which one perceived suffering to occur is no doubt related to how well one knew the victim. This would tend to be in accord with the previous description of the feelings expressed by the offender for the victim. At that time it was indicated that the emotional bond between the offender and the victim was weak.

One might assume that offenders who are incarcerated do not generally view that experience as a form of suffering, an indication that suffering and punishment are probably viewed differently. One Detroit respondent did, however, reply to the contrary, stating that he had suffered most; and since the victim was old, he felt the victim's family should be glad that he had simply removed a burden from their midst. This very callous attitude was seldom observed, and most offenders indicated they experienced a changed outlook on life as a result of this occurrence. Yet, more than one-fifth of

Detroit and Atlanta respondents stated that their outlook had remained the same.

If punishment is not viewed as a form of suffering, then it is unlikely that it will serve as an effective deterrent to violence for those who are confronted by similar situations in the future. On the other hand, there is hope when one considers that most respondents see the homicide experience as changing their outlook on life.

Jealousy as a Triggering Mechanism in the Act of Homicide

The threatened loss of emotional support and the corresponding possibility of the transfer of that support to another leads the threatened individual to experience feelings of jealousy. Jealousy is most often an emotion that grows out of interpersonal relations involving intimacy. Moreover, it is conditioned by cultural expectations, and response to jealousy can range from mild feelings of being hurt to feelings of outrage that are sometimes accompanied by acts of violence.

The possibility of jealousy leading to acting-out behavior is thought most likely to occur among those populations who engage in lifestyles characterized by intimate involvement with multiple sexual partners. Not all such behavior, however, is associated with conflict between sexual partners; but the response to feelings of jealousy is more intense in this context. The economic marginality of most of our offenders should be expected to prompt some to engage in behavior in which signs of jealousy would be evident. Thus, the nature of these responses is likely to be conditioned by the personality of the respondent, cultural expectations, and the specific setting in which the triggering act occurs.

Jealousy and Male Honor

Family violence is often known to be related to undercurrents of jealousy. Much of the behavior associated with jealousy is explained in terms of male honor. Halleck, in discussing family violence, describes the jealousy-provoking situation as follows: "The most common situation related to violence in families is that in which a loved one threatens to leave or arouses feelings of possessiveness and jealousy by showing interest in another partner" (1978: 54). Curtis (1975), appears to see this turn of events as inevitable among black ghetto residents. He indicates that "the economic marginality of street-corner men commonly results in quick-changing and undefined relationships with women." He further states, "As a result, there is considerable disagreement and distrust about sexual unfaithfulness" (50). The triggering mechanism described by both writers includes feelings of jealousy, but these feelings are undergirded by a code of conduct based on the need to protect male honor.

The roles of honor and respect are highlighted as crucial elements in dictating an appropriate response to sexual impropriety in Assault With a Deadly Weapon, Autobiography of a Street Criminal. In this instance, John Allen, the central character, was charged with shooting two members of a rival gang who had decided to have sex with his girlfriend. Allen, on being released from the youth center, responded to the act in the following way:

I felt that it was self-defense. Also, when Rock tried to do what he did, this was outright disrespect not only to Ann but more so to me, 'cause I was her man and you're not suppose to disrespect a man and his woman (1977: 70).

The male honor code is said to be based upon a double standard of sexual morality, which permits men to engage in sex with whatever number of women they are able to seduce, while women are expected to engage in sex with a single marital partner (Martin, 1978: 184). The extent to which these attitudes and behavioral styles manifest themselves among our offender population is likely to influence the potential for jealousy-provoking acts of violence, some of which might possibly lead to death.

Since jealousy is known to represent an essential ingredient in about 10 per cent of all homicides in the nation, respondents were questioned regarding their perception of themselves as jealous persons. More than two-thirds of the respondents rejected the idea that they could be considered jealous persons. Of the respondents who identified themselves as jealous persons, 40 per cent were 30 years of age or older. In this instance, it is uncertain whether the determining factor is age, or if jealousy among younger offenders is manifest in the emergence of personalities less sensitive to traditional stimuli. Among attributes of offenders that were cross-tabulated with "Are you a jealous person?", only one was significant: jealousy was found to be strongly associated with marital status.

In our sample, no "never married" respondents considered themselves to be jealous. The largest percentage of persons indicating that they were jealous were those describing their marital status as separated. On the other hand, the largest percentage of those describing themselves as not jealous were persons involved in common-law marriages. Single persons and those involved in common-law marriages tend to indicate jealousy is an emotional response that is unlikely to get out control. But for some persons

involved in civil unions and whose marriages have been dissolved, or temporarily disrupted, jealousy could present a problem, depending upon the circumstances.

Jealousy-Provoking Behavior

While most respondents indicate they are not jealous persons themselves, they do admit to engaging in behavior that is jealousy provoking. The most frequently mentioned jealousy-provoking behavior was related to some aspect of the male-female relationship. In fact, our offenders admitted to going out with other women, bringing a woman home, and being caught with another woman. Moreover, this behavior can lead to a variety of actions that hold the potential for violence. For example, a number of respondents indicated that a violent altercation between the offender and/or the offender partner and his/her competitor ensued. Fighting, arguing, abandoning the common domicile, and withdrawing affection represent actions that were most often associated with jealousy-provoking behavior. Any of these actions might cause a violent confrontation, depending upon the intensity of anger, the attachment of one or both of the parties to violence, the presence of others, and the availability of a weapon. Few of the reported acts, however, led to death.

When the offenders were asked how they might be expected to respond to similar jealousy-provoking stimuli, they were much less explicit than in describing how their mates responded -- often indicating that they did not know how they would respond. The most frequent answer was that they would try to discuss their concerns with their mate as a means of resolving the conflict. But in a few instances persons admitted that they would resort to violence as a means of coming to grips with what they considered offensive

behavior. Furthermore, the most violent reactions came from St. Louis offenders.

Offenders were less vague when asked what the most serious jealousy-provoking act their mate might engage in to elicit feelings of agitation. It becomes clear that a response to questions of jealousy in the abstract do not produce the same reply as questions relating to specific jealousy-provoking stimulus. Moreover, most respondents indicated that the most serious jealousy-provoking act that their mates might engage in was sexual misconduct. In fact, this was the most common response in Detroit and Atlanta, but was not a frequent reply among St. Louis offenders. Also, disrespect and dishonesty were often mentioned, without respondents specifying a context for these behaviors. Nevertheless, it does not imply the need to act upon situations having an impact on one's honor or self-respect.

In the abstract, jealousy proved to represent an affliction that characterized only a minority of the respondents. When discussing the concept under the condition of imagined provocations, the extent to which jealous responses would be aroused was altered. To admit that one is jealous possibly represents a perceived admission of weakness, and therefore accounts for the disproportionate share of persons who refused, in the abstract, to acknowledge their jealousy. But when confronted with specific image-threatening events, a larger percentage of persons acknowledged feelings of potential jealousy. Thus, the question "Are you a jealous person?" may not be perceived the same way as asking a person what stimuli would provoke his or her jealousy. It becomes obvious that threats to the perceived male prerogative, refusal to willingly accept the sharing of sexual partners, and disrespectful behavior provoke feelings of jealousy.

The element that distinguishes respondents who feel threatened by the foregoing behavior is what action they would take. Most were vague in terms of stating an appropriate response to jealousy-provoking acts, with many saying, "I don't know." The next largest number mentioned they would attempt to resolve the conflict through discussion, or that they would act violently if stimulus most likely to provoke jealousy in them was invoked.

Some respondents said that their opinion regarding jealousy-provoking stimuli had changed when they reached maturity. Yet, approximately one-half indicated stability in terms of their opinion regarding jealousy-provoking acts. Moreover, these attitudes do not appear to be strongly associated with age, as one might expect. But when questioned regarding the changed attitude, most who stated that their interpretation of jealousy-provoking stimuli had been altered, attributed it to a maturation effect.

The greatest stability on the foregoing question was exhibited by persons who were currently married, persons who had been married only once, and persons who spent their leisure time with non-family members. Thus, it seems that persons who have suffered marital failure have concluded that jealousy-provoking acts are a fact of life; and in order to confront this reality they must minimize their feelings of jealousy.

If jealousy-provoking stimuli represent frequently occurring phenomena in the social world of the offender, then participants in the social milieu must find ways to insulate themselves from possible hurt. The question posed in this regard was "How were you taught to handle jealousy?". Slightly less than one-half of the offenders indicated that they had not been taught to handle jealousy, leading us to believe they interpreted the question to mean whether or not they were given formal instructions on doing so. Of the group

who responded that they had been taught to handle jealousy, almost two-thirds indicated they controlled their emotions; approximately 15 per cent said that they thought of other things; and 10 per cent indicated they would strike out at the source of their discomfort.

Persons who most often said they had been taught to control their emotions were responsible family persons (40.6 per cent), persons aged 30 and over (44.8 per cent), long-term migrants (40.9 per cent), and persons suffering from ill health (45.5 per cent). It is not known how those who had not been taught to handle their emotions might be expected to respond in jealousy-provoking situations. But there is ample evidence that at least one-half of the respondents have attempted through social learning to insulate themselves from possible feelings of despair associated with the arousal of jealous feelings. Such feelings might possibly weaken the emotional bond between sexual partners.

Because the feeling of jealousy frequently leads to a temporary loss of impulse control, it is recognized as a potential triggering mechanism for the commission of acts of violence. Since the most intense arousal of jealous feelings is associated with conflict between the sexes, potential for intersex acts of homicide is heightened. Spouse homicides, lovers' arguments, and conflicts between members of the same sex for the affection of a member of the opposite sex all represent situations in which jealousy might trigger homicide.

Jealousy was a factor in a relatively small percentage of the total homicides in which the offenders from our sample cities were involved. For example, in Atlanta 15.4 per cent of the offenders implicated jealousy as an element in the transaction, while only 10.0 per cent of the Detroit offenders cited jealousy as a critical factor. But it was more frequently the basis of

homicides in St. Louis (20.0 per cent) than elsewhere. Thus, 10 to 20 per cent of the fatal transactions were undergirded by jealousy-inducing stimuli.

Social Milieu of Victim

In the previous section attention was devoted to highlighting a select set of offender background factors that were thought to possibly have an impact on the circumstances leading one to become involved in a lethal altercation. The background factors chosen for review were those thought to seriously influence one's life chances. As a result of the report's basic non-criminal orientation, little previous attention had been given to the offender in this report. But in any study of victimization, it is crucial that pertinent information describing both victims and offenders be available to the investigators. Now that the social milieu of the offender has been described, it is equally important that we investigate environmental facets of residence of victims since they represent the primary focus of this study.

One does not anticipate major differences in the environmental context in which the participants function, but it is possible that victims and offenders responded to that context in dissimilar ways. If dissimilarities do exist, they are expected to be associated with migration status, age structure differences, social class, family structure, and differences in personality and subsequent outlook on life. In attempting to evaluate the role of the environmental context on the victim's behavioral propensities, the disadvantage of a third party perspective must be recognized. Additional care is necessary in acknowledging that in most instances the persons involved in the homicide incident were not dyads in a common violent interaction.

In our original research design we had hoped that it would be possible to interview persons associated with each sample homicidal transaction, from the perspective of both the victim and offender. Only in a few cases were we, in fact, able to talk with both parties involved in a single incident.

Depending upon a third party to provide information about the victim is likely to be less informative than the experience of talking directly with the offender. Nevertheless, the third party is an important source, often being the mother or other close relative of the victim. In some instances, where the victim was married, it was possible to question his or her spouse regarding the victim's adult conduct. Thus, our third parties were thoroughly familiar with a variety of victim traits and could provide a picture of the victim that is not expected to be significantly more biased than that provided by our offender sample.

Residence in an Urban Milieu

The length of victim residence in an urban milieu is quite similar to that displayed by interviewed offenders. St. Louis does, however, show greater dissimilarity in victim origin than is characteristic of Detroit and Atlanta. In the latter two cities from one-half to almost two-thirds of both victims and offenders had spent their entire lives in the city of origin, whereas more than four-fifths of St. Louis victims were natives of that city.

The above discrepancy illustrates the absence of migrant status among the vast majority of St. Louis victims. In fact, a smaller percentage of St. Louis offenders (46.7 per cent) had spent their entire lives in that city than was true of the other two cities. But, in general, victim origins were more often urban than were those of offenders. Thus, it is evident that

the lifestyles of the victims are more likely to be influenced by urban socialization patterns than is true, at least, for the offenders in our sample.

Not only are the origins of victims and offenders likely to influence their outlooks and lifestyle preferences, but so is that of their parents. As it turns out, parents are much more likely to have been born elsewhere than are both victims and offenders. Parents of migrant origins were most commonplace in Detroit and least commonplace in St. Louis. Nevertheless, the pattern of parental origin for both victims and offenders is quite similar.

In most instances parents, who in Detroit are only one generation removed from their cultural roots, are of southern origin. In St. Louis, fewer than half of the parents were migrants and thus should exhibit weaker ties to southern rural traditions. A majority of Atlanta parents were migrants; but as they most often came from elsewhere in Georgia, southernness is not the issue.

Regional and urban influences, as well as parental and peer influences, should be expected to have an impact on the social milieu in which the victims and offenders conducted their daily routines. The expected compatibility between these two sets of influences should lead one to expect greater homogeneity in modal lifestyles. Where the two are more often in conflict than in agreement, an ambiguous set of expectations will generally be the case.

Atlanta victims were overwhelmingly southern and almost evenly divided between rural and urban origins. Even those who were of urban origin, however, had come from homes where at least one parent was likely to have grown up in rural Georgia. While Detroit is the more urbane of these three communities, it is similar to Atlanta in the parental origins of the victims.

The migrants to Detroit, like those to Atlanta, came from rural and small town environments in the South. Thus, as a function of the divergent environments in which the generational groups were socialized, one would suspect a greater strain in parent and victim values in Detroit than elsewhere.

St. Louis is the one sample city where differences between parent and child would be expected to be minimal in terms of environmental influence. What differences that do exist might best be attributed to temporal as opposed to environmental influences. St. Louis victims were thought to be more urban and to possess fewer ties to a southern rural culture than were victims in the other two cities.

On the other hand, Detroit -- while more urbane -- should be expected to show greater signs of cultural conflict between generations. In the latter instance southern rural values may appear to be less functional in a major metropolitan context, and thus may be abandoned for values that are thought to be more characteristic of the setting in which the present generation finds itself. As a result of the closeness of the migrants in both time and place to their cultural origins, only in Atlanta are southern rural values likely to be minimally diluted. Nevertheless, the migrant origins of both parents and children are thought to have an impact upon the behavioral propensities of persons whose social and cultural experiences are rooted in specific environments. We are uncertain, however, regarding the direct nexus between these experiences and the risk of victimization. Yet it is important, in some crude way, to attempt to establish the role of the environmental nexus on risk of victimization.

The Residential Environment of the Next of Kin of Victims

Whether migrant or non-migrant, the victim and his or her next of kin

had to find an environmental niche for themselves in the city. The residential environment, and the social community of which it was a part, provided an arena in which most social transactions would be conducted. Moreover, the character of those transactions would be strongly tempered by local customs. Yet it is apparent that new values emerge, subsequently leading to devaluing old customs. If prevailing customs and subsequent behaviors were not at odds with the values held by the responding next of kin, the neighborhood of residence is likely to be viewed positively, provided that the physical quality of the neighborhood is not an offsetting factor.

When resources are unavailable to move to a neighborhood of choice, then one must attempt to adapt to an environment congruent with one's resources. Frequent moves are generally an indication of neighborhood dissatisfaction, whereas lengthy tenure in a single neighborhood represents either the inverse or an effective adaptation to a less than desirable environment.

Most next of kin had resided in their present neighborhood for at least a moderate period of time. Moreover, residents indicated a shorter stay in their first neighborhood of residence in the city than in the present one. Detroit respondents appear more mobile, with a smaller percentage (33.3 per cent) indicating they had lived in their first neighborhood for more than five years, than was true of either Atlanta (41.7 per cent) or St. Louis (50.0 per cent) respondents. The gap between the individual cities in terms of length of neighborhood residence is nominal.

But differences in the intensity of attachment to the neighborhood are much greater. Weak attachment is assumed to be associated with the presence of noxious elements or dissatisfaction with housing. The weakest neighborhood attachment occurs in St. Louis, and the strongest in Atlanta. Almost

one-third of the St. Louis respondents indicate they do not like their neighborhood, a likely indication of norm conflict. Moreover, St. Louis was the only one of the three cities in which the vast majority of victims resided in the same neighborhood at time of death as the next of kin. This probably reflects the victim's dependency status, as he or she generally tended to reside in the same house as the next of kin. A somewhat similar pattern was evident in Detroit, but failed to show up in Atlanta.

It is unclear whether the present neighborhood of next of kin residence was the one in which the victim spent most of his/her growing-up years. One's declining attachment to the present neighborhood might also be associated with its simply being the neighborhood of residence at the time of the death of a loved one. Nevertheless, most next of kin indicated that the neighborhood in which the victim was raised was a good place to raise children. Once again, Detroit and St. Louis respondents were less positive on this issue than were Atlanta respondents. For example, more than one-fourth of the respondents in both Detroit and St. Louis viewed the neighborhood in which the victim spent his/her growing up years as a poor place to raise children. This is an indication that a sizeable share of the next of kin resided in environments during their children's formative years that they perceived to be undesirable as child-rearing environments.

The role of adult behavior in the growing-up neighborhood was raised as a variable that might have influenced the behavior of children. More specifically, the question was aimed at tapping feelings relating to how well adults in the neighborhood got along with each other. In fact, the extent to which one socialized in a positive and socially coherent environment should serve as a reinforcer of values deemed important in the local community.

Adult neighborhood behavior was thought not to have a serious impact upon the behavior of children in Detroit, and had only a limited impact in Atlanta. Yet in St. Louis almost one-half of the respondents thought the way adults got along influenced the behavior of children.

Adults were generally shown to have gotten along well. Frequent visiting between neighbors was commonplace in both Detroit and Atlanta, but less so in St. Louis. This might be a sign of the continuance of rural and small town traditions in Detroit and Atlanta; however, they also showed greater evidence of adults behaving in disrespectful ways. Thus, it seems children were reared in neighborhoods in which neighboring was commonplace; and as a rule only a few adults were found to engage in behavior that was thought to seriously undermine local community values. Detroit respondents thought the role of adult influence on the behavior of children was minimal, the implication being that adult behavior was not perceived as negative. On the other hand, in St. Louis it was thought to be maximal, an indication that adult behavior was viewed as noxious and could lead to its being imitated by neighborhood youth.

When respondents were asked their subjective view of the social class structure of the victim's growing up neighborhood, most reported it to be working class. More Atlanta respondents identified the growing-up neighborhood in this way (86.4 per cent) than was true of respondents from Detroit (75.0 per cent) and St. Louis (76.9 per cent). In all instances, however, the modal class structure was perceived to be working class. It is assumed that this designation implies that most adults in the neighborhood worked for a living and were able to earn a modest income when compared with others they knew. Only in Detroit did as many as 10 per cent of the respondents

identify their neighborhoods as middle class, while a small percentage of respondents in Atlanta (9.1 per cent) and St. Louis (15.4 per cent) described their neighborhoods as "down and out."

On the basis of the responses of next of kin, it is assumed that working-class values predominated in most growing-up neighborhoods, and that it is these values that are predominant in most urban black neighborhoods throughout the nation. It is clear that the next of kin of most victims perceived themselves to have at least secured an acceptable neighborhood for their children to grow up in, and most were convinced that the neighborhood of choice was a good place to raise children.

The Neighborhood as a Contributor to the Lethal Altercation

When behavioral attributes of a neighborhood come into conflict with the values held by the respondent, he or she will possibly choose to take up residence in an alternate neighborhood or simply attempt to adapt to the presence of noxious behavior. In some instances it is clear that the next of kin viewed the neighborhood as having played a direct role in the death of the victim. Both in Detroit and St. Louis approximately one-fifth of the respondents proclaimed the neighborhood to have been directly implicated in the act of homicide. Atlanta respondents were less often inclined to indict the neighborhood, but even here 13.0 per cent attributed the death to a neighborhood effect.

In the aggregate some one-fifth of all respondents supported the belief that a neighborhood effect functioned as a direct contributor to death. That effect was disproportionately identified by persons who subjectively appraised their neighborhood as being down and out. Respondents from down-and-out neighborhoods overwhelmingly (71.4 per cent) thought the neighborhood was

implicated in the death. This view was held by fewer than 16.0 per cent of the working-class neighborhood respondents and by none of the middle-class respondents. The null hypothesis that no differences exist between perceived neighborhood class structure, and the next of kin's view that the neighborhood was directly related to the homicide, must be rejected at the ten per cent level of significance. It appears that the lower the perceived status of the neighborhood, the lower the likelihood that one would be able to protect one's offspring from the vagaries of the neighborhood effect.

Experiences of Victims with Educational Systems

It is thought the experience of the victim, like that of the offender, with the educational system might provide some clues to assist us in understanding the circumstances that lead to death. There is evidence of generational improvements in the level of educational attainment between victims and their next of kin. The greatest improvements were associated with Detroit victims, while the smallest improvements were apparent among St. Louis victims. This is interpreted to mean that a disproportionate share of migrant parents in the Detroit sample had completed fewer years of formal education than St. Louis parents (who less often possessed migrant status). The movement to the city led to the victim expanding the educational gap between him/herself and his/her parents. Without a significant improvement in the generational difference in education between parent and child, the mobility status of the child is likely to be impeded.

Victims displayed a greater affinity for education that was true of offenders. This was evidenced by the higher percentage of persons graduating from high school. For some reason Detroit victims were less likely to be high school graduates than were those in either St. Louis or Atlanta.

Detroit victims liked school less well than persons from the other cities. Approximately 25.0 per cent of the Detroit victims indicated a dislike for school.

The strongest positive attitudes regarding school were displayed by St. Louis victims. In fact, school was positively viewed by most victims as a place to socialize with friends, and other aspects of school were seldom major competitors with the social function that the school satisfied. St. Louis victims did indicate a liking for their teachers, which was on par with their expressed positive view of school as a social meeting place.

School Retention and Extracurricular Activities

The school's retention power was similar in each city. Approximately three-fifths of the victims attended school during their teen years. Those who quit school did so for a variety of reasons that varied substantially from city to city. In Atlanta more than 20.0 per cent of the victims quit school to take jobs, possibly indicating that a larger share of persons came from low-income families. In St. Louis quitting to take a job and quitting because school was boring were tied in importance. Most persons who quit school in Detroit did so because they found school to be boring (29.2 per cent). Competing interest, as was the case with the offenders, was much in evidence among victims as well.

Participation in the extracurricular activities of the school is no guarantee that school will be able to retain students through to the completion of high school. Students were less active in extracurricular activities in St. Louis and Atlanta than in Detroit, but the inverse of this pattern was observed in terms of retention. Athletics represented the

activity that most often attracted students in all cities, but was disproportionately appealing in Detroit. Moreover, this pattern may well have been associated with sex of victimization. The greater diversity of activities that attracted victims in Atlanta and St. Louis indicates that the victim makeup in some ways differed from that which characterized Detroit. The level of victim and offender participation in extracurricular activities was quite similar in each city, with Detroit victims and offenders being drawn into these activities much more extensively than the others.

Since athletic programs appeared more often than did other activities or programs, one sought to examine the extent to which participants had been rewarded. It is generally assumed that if an activity is sufficiently rewarding, individuals are likely to develop positive views toward the provider of the reward. In this instance one would expect that persons rewarded for participating in school activities would develop favorable attitudes toward school. If the school could not serve as a source of valuable rewards, the participants would be required to seek positive identities for themselves in other arenas.

While a majority of victims participated in extracurricular activities, particularly athletics, it was found that few individuals excelled in these activities. Possibly upon discovering that they were unable to excel in organized sports, the victims' weak interest in school diminished further, leading them to withdraw from school. Only in Detroit did more than one-half of all victims participating in athletics excel in those programs. In the other two cities those who excelled numbered from close to one-third to almost two-fifths.

In both Atlanta and Detroit, basketball was the sport in which most victims excelled, while in St. Louis victims more often were superior in swimming. There seems to exist only a weak relationship between athletic excellence and school retention. Only excellence in football appears to be related to high school graduation, and only a very small percentage of persons excelling in athletics were superior in football.

Attitudes regarding school do not seem to be dependent upon excelling in extracurricular activities. But it is clear that attitudes about school are positively related to participating in the social life of the school. A test of the hypothesis that no differences in attitude about school distinguished victims who participated in the social life of the school from those who did not was rejected at the .01 level, with a chi square of 38.60.

As a rule, persons who did not participate in the social life of the school held unfavorable attitudes toward school, whereas those who participated in athletics exhibited a diversity of attitudes, mostly favorable. Among persons participating in other extracurricular activities, all held favorable attitudes. If persons are unable to find a place in the social life of the school, it is apparent that their attitudes regarding school are likely to be negative, and the probability of them withdrawing from that social arena is further enhanced.

Scholastic Performance and School Retention

Victims viewed school to be more important as a place to meet friends than as a place to gain knowledge. Nevertheless, some students develop positive self-images, partially on the basis of scholastic performance. As a group, victims were fair to good in terms of their reported scholastic performance. Grades in school appear to be a more powerful index of retention than

does participation in school social life. A test of the null hypothesis that there was no difference in school dropout behavior as a function of scholastic performance was rejected at the .05 level of significance, with a chi square of 27 and 16 degrees of freedom. Prior to graduation, good and very good students were much less likely to quit school for any reason than were students characterized by mediocre and poor scholastic performance. In fact, poor students were most likely to quit because they found it boring. The largest percentage of victims to quit school for that reason were in Detroit, and secondarily in St. Louis. Atlanta victims were most likely to quit school to take a job or because they were in difficulty with the law.

Some victims had been enrolled in special school programs because early on they had been recognized as possessing traits that required cultivating or that might slow their progress in the regular school program. Special programs had not been utilized by any Atlanta victims. This might mean that such programs were not available when these persons attended school, or that it was not thought they required special assistance. About 25.0 per cent of Detroit and St. Louis victims had been enrolled in such programs. In Detroit most victims had been enrolled in special programs for the gifted, and secondarily in programs for slow learners and persons with behavioral problems. Victims enrolled in special programs in St. Louis were primarily persons with learning difficulties. Next of kin from the latter city viewed these programs as minimally beneficial. Yet almost one-half of the Detroit next of kin thought they were advantageous.

Enrollment in these programs might be thought to have influenced the victims' attitudes regarding both school and themselves. It is unclear, however, if possessing deficits of the kind often associated with special programs had any bearing on the circumstances that led to death. Needless to say,

some victims showed evidence of requiring special assistance if they were going to be able to function adequately in the school's academic programs. Unless the problems that led them to require special assistance were overcome, their difficulties were likely to become more exaggerated the longer they stayed in school. The inclination of students in special programs, with the exception of those identified as gifted, would likely be to withdraw from school at the point that their problem became stigmatizing.

Victim Suspensions

It is clear that most victims held positive attitudes toward school, possibly because they viewed school primarily as a place to meet friends. Most victims, like most offenders, failed to complete high school; but one difference that seems to distinguish victims from offenders was the absence of the need to suspend them from school for behavior perceived to be in conflict with school goals and values. It is not clear whether this indicates that victims tended to adapt better to the school environment or if it is a bias associated with third-party reporting. If the latter phenomena are not responsible for this difference, it is possible that victims less often engage in disruptive or maladaptive acts than do offenders.

Suspensions were only in evidence among selected persons attending school in St. Louis and Detroit. For instance, in Detroit suspensions had been given out to nearly 30.0 per cent of the victims, but only to 25.0 per cent of the St. Louis victims. The most frequent reasons given for victims having been suspended were, in order of importance, fighting, conflicts with teachers, and problems associated with truancy. The pattern of infractions leading to a temporary dismissal from school is quite similar among both victims and offenders. It is uncertain, however, if there exists any linkages between the

dismissal behavior and the behavior that might have been implicated in the death of the victim.

Not a single victim from Atlanta was ever reported as having been suspended. This could either indicate a difference between school policies and administrative styles in northern and southern school systems, or differences that might be partially associated with a regional ethos, which defines both appropriate school conduct and guidelines for handling it, i.e., corporal punishment in lieu of suspensions. Needless to say, we are without hard evidence to corroborate the underlying causes for these differences. But we can tentatively conclude that victims less often engage in those behaviors that lead to school suspensions than do offenders.

The World of Work and the Homicide Victim

The work experience of homicide victims, like that of offenders, should provide clues to a wide variety of attributes that might somehow have been related to the homicide incident. The work role is very important in American society and often influences one's view of himself or herself, as well as the way one is viewed by others. So not only is work an activity that enables persons to satisfy their creature comforts, but it is also a status-providing mechanism. If persons fail to achieve either of the previously stated goals, they will be inclined to attempt to do so through alternate means, which often prove troublesome and subsequently lead to lifestyles that place individuals at high risk of victimization. On the contrary, one would expect a satisfying work experience accompanied by adequate income to serve as a deterrent to the risk of victimization.

The Employment Situation of Victims

Victims are generally somewhat older than offenders, and therefore should normally be expected to be in the work force. The extent to which one is not in the active work force is a reflection of local labor conditions, the absence of desired skills, or the worker's unwillingness to accept jobs that he or she finds personally unsuitable. For whatever reason, victims were found to be employed more often than was true of persons in the offender sample.

Approximately 58 per cent of the victims were found to be employed at the time of the incident. Even though victims were more often found to be in the work force than were offenders, the 42 per cent unemployment rate is excruciatingly high. It is unclear why so few persons were in the work force, other than to cite the standard litany of explanations. To be sure, some of the victims might have found participation in the shadow economy more attractive and financially more productive. Yet there is little direct evidence to support that contention. It is apparent, however, that victims -- like offenders -- have encountered major obstacles in securing and retaining jobs.

The employment situation shows much variability between cities. The smallest percentage of unemployed persons, at the time of the incident, occurred among Atlanta victims (30.4 per cent), while the highest was observed in St. Louis (85.7 per cent). Detroit was found almost at the center of this continuum. One would suspect that such differences reflect age structure of victimization, level of educational attainment, attitude toward work, and robustness of the economy in each city. During much of the decade the St. Louis economy has been described as unusually weak, and therefore it is only

logical to expect a smaller percentage of the victims to be employed at the time of the incident. Even among those persons employed in the latter city, the ratio of part-time employment to full-time employment was much higher than elsewhere. If employment status is directly related to the risk of victimization, we would expect it to have a more negative impact on persons from St. Louis than elsewhere. Either by choice or because of a lack of alternatives, the latter group is expected to be more strongly attracted to the irregular economy.

Parental Career Objectives

The career objectives that parents held for their children were highly varied, but seldom satisfied. If these objectives had been fulfilled, unemployment levels would have been lower. The extent to which parents established career goals for their children varied between cities. In Detroit and St. Louis most next of kin indicated they had established career goals for their children. Only in Atlanta did a minority of next of kin state they had not established such goals.

The goals that were established ranged from those that required post-high school training to those that could be satisfied by acquiring a specific skill without the benefit of additional formal education. Given the extent to which victims failed to complete high school, some parent-specified goals would have been difficult to achieve. Surprisingly, more parents indicated that the goal they held for their child was for him/her to be a professional athlete, followed by medicine and other health-related employment. The final major goal category was entertainment, i.e., musician or singer.

It is not known how widely such career goals are held by persons of working-class backgrounds, but it appears these goals tend to border on fantasy. Thus, the goals that parents of victims establish for them bear only a small probability of reaching fruition. Nevertheless, it is apparent that they wish to have their children share in the good life that they know is available in urban America. Their choice of goals seems to be tempered by existing realities in many instances; but in others, goals seem to revolve around the desire to have their children acquire fame and fortune.

The Structure and Rewards of Victim Employment

The employment structure characterizing an individual city might well influence the chances for employment and the kind of monetary reward available to a person possessing limited skills. Most persons were found to be employed in a catchall employment category designated as "other." Of the primary industrial categories, most workers were found in the manufacturing sector of the economy. The share varied from 22.0 and 20.0 per cent in Atlanta and St. Louis to 37.5 per cent in Detroit. Manufacturing workers were, as a rule, the best paid among the several industrial groups. Atlanta's workers were more evenly distributed across industrial groups, while Detroit and St. Louis workers were concentrated in fewer sectors. The transport sector accounted for most St. Louis employment. Domestic employment appeared only in Atlanta, and employment in retail sales occurred only in Detroit.

As a group, the victims were not representative of the well-paid part of the work force. In 1975 the largest percentage of employed victims

(41.7 per cent) earned between \$5000-9999. The second largest earnings group (30.6 per cent) represented those earnings less than \$5000 per year. These two groups accounted for more than 70 per cent of all victim earnings. Most victims who were employed, however, were probably able to maintain a working-class lifestyle. Detroit victims had higher earnings than persons from either of the other two cities, whereas poverty level incomes were most in evidence in St. Louis. Moreover, victims from both Detroit and Atlanta were characterized by a more diverse pattern of earnings than was true of St. Louis victims. In the aggregate, however, it appears that the earnings pattern is unrelated to the structure of employment. As was mentioned in a previous section of this report, the number of quarters that one is employed during the year bears heavily upon annual income. In fact, younger workers are often out of the work force as much as they are in it.

Household Formation, Dependency, and Victim Employment

Only a limited number of victims were household heads at the time of the incident. The previous display of limited earnings should be expected to work against household formation, which in the individual cities is directly related to employment status and annual earnings. Fewer than one-fifth of the St. Louis victims were household heads, while 30 per cent and 45 per cent respectively of the Atlanta and Detroit victims had assumed that responsibility. Thus, wives and dependent children were left without financial support more often than elsewhere. Each victim had few dependents; but in those cases where the victim was a household head, it is unclear how those dependents would be supported. Elsewhere in this report, our assessment of a small sample of spouses of victims should shed some light on that problem.

A further note on the dependency question relates to the dependency role between victim and next of kin; that is, was the next of kin dependent upon the victim's earnings for total or partial survival, or was the inverse true? Fewer victims were primary contributors to the support of next of kin. Yet almost one-third of the Atlanta victims provided some support, but usually less than one-half, while only about one-sixth of the Detroit victims were contributors to the financial support of next of kin. In fact, the inverse of this pattern was more often observed, with next of kin providing some financial support to the victim.

The financial contribution of next of kin in support of the victim was more often in evidence in St. Louis than elsewhere; however, it was not uncommon for Detroit victims to secure support from next of kin. Only in Atlanta was next of kin financial support to the victim minimal; nevertheless, even here almost one-third of the victims were receiving some parental support. Victims, it was discovered, were more often financially dependent than financially supportive. In fact, there were few household heads among the victim group, a contention further borne out by the widespread contribution to the victim's financial support by members of the next of kin's household. In St. Louis, on the other hand, the death of victims (who one would expect to be financially independent, even if economically insecure) puts an end to financial contributions from next of kin.

At the time of death it appears that most victims who were unemployed had withdrawn from the work force, for a very small percentage were searching for work at that time. When persons who are financially dependent upon others stop seeking employment, it indicates they have little faith in finding jobs

or in skill improvement programs. St. Louis victims in this instance were more likely to be looking for jobs than were other victims. This might have simply reflected the greater severity of the jobless situation among victims from that city. Extensive and lengthy unemployment among victims no doubt encouraged them to utilize their leisure time in ways that increased the risk of violent altercations among themselves and those with whom they frequently interacted.

Work, it seems, was not an experience that was alien to most victims, but was one in which only slightly more than a majority were currently involved. A check of earlier work behavior indicates that most persons had had some experience in the work force dating back to their early adolescent years. For most, though, their first job had been secured between the ages of 16 and 18, although there is ample evidence to show that a sizeable percentage of these persons were employed at ages 15 and under. Whatever these earlier work experiences were like, it does not appear that they were adequate to sustain them through to early adulthood. A slow economy combined with limited job skills and often poor attitudes seems to have led them to withdraw from the work force by the time of death.

Work Values

The work values of the victims are thought to provide some insight into the role work played in the lives of this group of persons. For most, work was simply a means to an end. Earning money was the most important goal associated with victims in each city. In fact, no other goal even modestly approached it in importance. A materialistic orientation was the overriding one; but given the lack of monetary resources among this group, their choice

of an important work goal appears logical. The only other highly ranked goal was the ability to be useful, important only in Atlanta.

Security, fulfillment, and creativeness were expressed as the work values of some victims; however, these were the goals of only a small minority. Money was the primary goal of 83 per cent of St. Louis victims and of more than 60 per cent of the Detroit victims. Only in Atlanta was money thought to be the primary goal of fewer than one-half of all victims. It seems that the higher the unemployment level among victims, the stronger the emphasis on money as a primary work goal.

Unemployment and an absence of money possibly encouraged a number of victims to engage in a variety of illicit activities as a means of securing money. The potential risk of victimization is thought to be strongest in those circumstances where one's ability to secure legitimate employment is most marginal. Young, prospective entrants to the work force in St. Louis appear to potentially be at the greatest risk, while those in Atlanta appear to be at lowest risk in terms of the impact of the work role on the risk of victimization.

Fighting Behavior

Patterns of fighting behavior are thought by some to represent an important indicator of the potential for engaging in acts that could ultimately lead one person to take the life of another. In those environments where fighting is supported as an approved method of resolving interpersonal conflict, the problem of escalating aggression becomes a more serious one and one that could lead to death. It is generally concluded that support for fighting is more commonplace in low-income communities than elsewhere; consequently, homicides are also more prevalent in these communities. Hostile outbursts

that lead to fighting are triggered by a wide variety of stimuli. Often, in high-risk environments, the initial stimulus is described as trivial by persons whose values and status are not those of the environments that they are describing. The primary goal of our assessment of fighting behavior is to attempt to specify, intuitively, the strength of a number of internal and external variables on behavior that might ultimately lead to homicide.

Fighting behavior of a sample of both homicide offenders and victims will be examined as a means of denoting the existence of similarities and differences between them. A set of basic items regarding fighting propensities were prepared for all interviewees. But a number of questions, which were designed to connect the importance of fighting behavior to the circumstances leading to death, had to be modified on the basis of the interviewee's role in the altercation.

Since the questions developed for next of kin of victims sometimes differed from those established for offenders, we are left without a matched set on all dimensions of behavior associated with fighting. Moreover, it was generally assumed that some questions relating to fighting behavior might best be omitted from the next-of-kin schedule. Nevertheless, a number of questions do represent matched pairs, while others (although employing different language) also attempt to uncover similar background information.

In attempting to understand fighting behavior, it is important for us to be able to identify the usual role of victims and offenders in fights. Toch (1969) concludes that employment of violence might derive from individual needs, which are motivated both by internal and external stimuli. These needs are thought to originate from the individual's inclination either to bolster self-esteem or to defend one's reputation against possible doubt.

Toch identifies these two motivational types as self-preserving strategies (1969: 135). But he also points out that there exists a second class of stimulus to violence whose motives he describes as follows: "Our second grouping of categories may be described as comprising persons who see themselves (and their own needs) as being the only fact of social relevance" (1969: 136). According to Toch, the latter group includes persons who engage in bullying, exploiting others, self-indulgence, and releasing emotional tensions. The self-centered motivations associated with the latter group are thought to be growing in importance and are emerging as a crucial element in altering the victimization structure. This represents, from the perspective of the victim, what Stern has labeled as gratuitous violence. He describes the acts associated with the second group as follows: "Violence has nothing to do with you personally; it is provoked by your accidental presence" (Stern, 1980: 150).

Fighting is basically a physical display employed in the release of aggressive feelings. Aggression, however, is not always expressed in a physical way, nor are all displays of aggression manifested in active behavior. But fighting is a readily observed expression of aggressive behavior, even if not the most important. Fighting is thought to represent uncontrolled aggression and is more commonplace among persons who are of low social status. Nevertheless, even persons who might normally be expected to exhibit aggressive behavior have learned to inhibit the behavior vis-a-vis the source of anger. Thus, aggressive behavior in the form of fighting is often suppressed or inflicted upon a safe target if the penalty for this acting-out behavior is feared to be excessive. Needless to say, there are others who maintain only limited control over feelings of aggression and are

inclined to engage in fighting behavior when their anger threshold has been reached.

The concept of fighting, as it is employed here, embraces a wide variety of physical acts, wherein one individual seeks to inflict pain upon another because of some real or imagined breach in accepted norms of conduct. The violated norm may represent one that is valued by one's social or cultural group, or one that is indicative of the idiosyncratic orientation of the angered individual. The outcome of any fighting match is likely to be conditioned by a wide variety of constraints, not the least of which include physical strength and availability of weapons. The latter point indicates, by implication, the seriousness of the norm violation and the degree to which the angered individual wishes to inflict pain or punishment. Therefore, fighting is said to exist when two or more persons are engaged in an altercation where the use of physical force is involved, i.e., hands, knives, guns, etc. But the act itself is an outgrowth of a perceived norm violation and/or the withholding of resources. The end result of the act of fighting may lead to a bruised ego, minor physical injury or, more importantly, death, since these all represent a possibility along the fighting outcome continuum.

Fighting behavior is simply an index of the extent to which one is able to bring or keep feelings of aggression under control. The extent to which uncontrolled aggression ends in the death of a fight participant is often a function of the joint anger level, the strength of the wish to punish, and the weapon used. Minimal anger and desire to punish might be offset by the use of an extremely lethal weapon.

Crain and Weisman (1972) argue that blacks, because of encounters with

racial discrimination, have a greater problem of treating pent-up hostility than do whites, and that because of the position of the two groups in society, they have developed different styles of handling aggression. Using fighting behavior as an index, they also conclude that blacks have greater difficulty in bringing their aggression under control than do whites. Employing a survey instrument, they reported that 28 per cent of the black respondents indicated that they had been in a fight, whereas only 19 per cent of the white respondents indicated that they had been involved in this kind of activity (Crain and Weisman, 1972: 35).

It is thought that persons who are less likely to recall anger are better able to inhibit aggression. This led Crain and Weisman to conclude that regional differences existed in the ability to display anger, which led northern-born blacks to report they had engaged in fights more often than did southern-born men. The problem, though, is one of being able to express anger and subsequently handling anger in non-maladaptive ways.

Erlanger also cites data that confirm the fighting behavior of blacks on the basis of region of birth described by the previous authors. He indicates that black males born in the South, but currently living in a non-southern city, report to have less often engaged in fist fights than men born in the North (Erlanger, 1975: 486). The question of frequency of fighting, however, is simply an index of the ability of the parties involved to express anger, but does not treat the issue of desire to injure, which is another dimension of the problem. Erlanger does indicate that on the question of having been threatened or cut with a knife, southern males do show a higher positive response. This tends to indicate that southern-born black males

less often engage in fighting behavior, but appear more prone to injure once an altercation has been initiated.

Since fighting behavior involves two or more participants, it is important that we understand the role of each. Unfortunately, this is somewhat difficult to do without talking with persons who observed the individual act of fighting. It is possible, however, to determine the modal role of each participant in a fight. The employment of the labels "victim" and "offender" is known to obscure the participant's role in fights leading to death. Luckenbill (1977: 179) states in this regard that they "are heuristic labels that either emerge in the transaction or are artifacts of the battle." Nevertheless, on closer examination, it might be found that these are significant differences that characterize the modal fighting role of persons who, in the final analysis, are identified as victims and offenders.

The bully boy/whipping boy syndrome recently investigated by a Swedish author provides additional insight into one's role in fighting behavior. Olweus (1978) reports that bully boys possessed lower anger thresholds, had greater willingness to engage in acts of verbal aggression when confronted by disappointment, were not close to their fathers, and manifested limited impulse control.

Whipping boys, on the other hand, were inclined not to value acts of physical aggression, were not self-confident, but did maintain a close relationship with parents. The author describes the whipping boy as one who "is exposed to some form of active aggression on the part of other pupils; he is not the object of indifference, unpopularity, or other more passive expressions of dislike," and a bully "is a boy who fairly often oppresses or

harasses somebody else; the target may be boys or girls, the harassment physical or mental" (Olweus, 34-35). Thus, there is some indication that the participants in expressions of aggressive behavior may manifest a different set of traits, depending upon their role in the aggressive display.

Offender Fighting Behavior

Because offenders have been accused and often indicted for committing an act of lethal violence, it might be assumed that they were persons who had in the past frequently displayed an inability to control their aggression by engaging in fights. So, as a means of determining what the prior fighting experience of our offender respondents had been, they were asked to indicate with what frequency they had been involved in fights, both as youths and as adults. More than four-fifths of all offenders reported that they had been involved in fights during their lives. Only one-sixth of this population indicated a lack of prior fighting experience.

The offender fighting behavior stands in contrast to the third party report of the fighting behavior of victims. Only 47 per cent of the victims were reported to have ever engaged in a fight. Needless to say, both offenders and victims are reported to have exhibited a higher likelihood of engaging in fights than persons identified in the previously cited Crain and Weisman survey. The implication is that both groups had difficulty managing their aggression, but that the problem was much more severe among offenders than among victims.

When offenders were asked about the frequency with which they had engaged in fights, it was found that the majority (50.7 per cent) had fought only a few times, although almost one-fifth were reported to be frequent

fighters. Non-migrants were found to engage less often in fights than was true of recent migrants, who reported more than any other group to being frequent fighters. The latter, however, does not accord with information found in previous surveys.

Offenders as a group were not strangers to fighting. Their role in fights is, however, unclear. In attempting to shed light on the usual role of offenders, one was basically concerned with whether the offender was the aggressor or the attacked. In some instances, offenders reported that they played neither of these roles, but simply happened to be bystanders or participated in some other uncertain role. More than two-fifths of the offenders reported they were usually the person attacked in the fights in which they were involved. Another 35.0 per cent identified themselves as aggressors. Almost one-fifth described their role in a less precise fashion.

Those persons whose role in fights was most often that of the attacker clearly had a more serious problem with control of aggression than persons who were most often the attacked. It appears advisable to attempt to ascertain what attributes distinguish these two groups. But before doing that let us uncover differences in the fighting role of the offender as a function of place of residence.

It is possible that the circumstances motivating offenders to become embroiled in fights during their growing-up years might vary on the basis of place of residence. A summary of the frequencies described in the respondents' reports tends to indicate that place of residence does distinguish between offenders on the basis of their usual role in fights (see Table 46).

Table 46
Offenders: Most Frequent Role in Fights by City

	Atlanta	Detroit	St. Louis	Row Total
Do not recall my role in fights	1	1	1	3
	33.3	33.3	33.3	
	10.0	2.7	7.7	5.0
	1.7	1.7		
Aggressor	1	16	4	21
	4.8	76.2	19.0	
	10.0	43.2	30.8	35.0
	1.7	26.7	6.7	
Attacked	7	16	2	25
	28.0	64.0	8.0	
	70.0	43.2	15.4	41.7
	11.7	26.7	3.3	
Bystander	0	1	4	5
	.0	20.0	80.0	
	.0	2.7	30.8	8.3
	.0	1.7	6.7	
Other	1	3	2	6
	16.7	50.0	33.3	
	10.0	8.1	15.4	10.0
	1.7	5.0	3.3	
Column Total	10	37	13	60
	16.7	61.7	21.7	100.0

Chi Square = 18.35632 with 8 degrees of freedom

Significance = .0187

Atlanta offenders proclaimed that their usual involvement in fights came as a result of being attacked. Both Detroit and St. Louis offenders, however, appear more aggressive as they were much more likely to have been the aggressor. Yet, it is clear that an equal share of Detroit offenders represented persons who had been attacked. Only among St. Louis residents was there evidence of persons frequently being drawn into fights outside of the context of there having been a central figure in the initial conflict.

Findings showing differences among offenders related to their usual role in fights leads us to pursue some of the underlying attributes that might have stimulated these differences. Based on information available through our sample survey, we chose to examine the association between offender's role in fights and frequency of fighting, self-image, and migrant status. Fighting frequency and fighting role represent one means of ascertaining if there is some unique characteristic possessed by individuals who have difficulty in inhibiting feelings of uncontrolled aggression. Likewise, we are concerned with the attributes of persons who are often singled out as targets of aggression. This concern is further advanced by our choice of the variable "offender self-image" as a means of interpreting one's usual fighting role. Finally, the question of differences in migrant versus non-migrant behavior in the fighting arena will be examined, as it was previously pointed out that several writers had reported that migrant males from the South less often engaged in fights than was true of their non-southern counterparts. The problem arising here is that not all southern migrants are found in a northern environment. The variables chosen for our purpose are not without shortcomings; nevertheless, they are thought to be able to provide some insights into the problem of observed differences in propensity to engage in fights.

Role in Fights and Frequency of Fighting

As was previously noted, most offenders reported that their usual role in fights was the result of being the target of someone else's aggression. More than one-half of the persons who indicated that they had most often been attacked were persons who had a background that included only limited fighting. The percentage of those who were attacked declines continuously as frequency of fighting increases. Only 12.0 per cent of those who identified themselves as frequent fighters were persons whom we included among those who were targets of others seeking to release feelings of aggression. It is uncertain if the whipping boy syndrome was at work here, but it does open up some interesting possibilities.

Aggressors were more likely to represent persons who frequently engaged in fighting. Yet, among those persons indicating that they were infrequent participants in fights, 43 per cent identified themselves as aggressors. The relationship between frequency of fighting and one's fighting role is less clearcut among aggressors than among targets of aggression. That is to say, the linear relationship observed between frequency of fighting and one's role as the attacked does not exist.

Offender Self-Image and Role in Fights

It was previously noted that offender self-image was an important distinguishing characteristic on a number of important attributes. Among the six self-image categories previously specified, it was usually found that the major distinctions occurred between the dichotomous image hustler/non-hustler. The non-hustler category was dominated by persons who identified themselves as responsible family persons. Among the two categories that most persons

tended to identify with, responsible family persons and hustlers, the ratio of aggressors to target of aggression was quite similar.

Role uncertainty was the major difference that distinguished between these two groups. Almost one-fifth of the responsible family persons described their role as that of bystander or that of being drawn into an ongoing conflict. Hustlers, on the other hand, were more precise in specifying their role; and they were almost equi-likely to be targets of aggression as they were to be the aggressor. Yet, responsible family persons were much more likely to say they were the aggressors than were members of the alternate group. Hustlers, however, far more often reported that they owned a gun at the time of the incident than did non-hustlers, a presumed indicator of their willingness to engage in aggressive behavior. This might imply that hustlers were more bent upon inflicting serious injury whenever they became embroiled in the release of aggression than was true of persons representing other self-image identities.

Migrant Status and Role in Fights

Because migrants are generally thought to better inhibit feelings of aggression, especially if they are of southern origin, a decision was made to compare offender fighting behavior along this dimension. The shortcoming of the process is that this population may not be representative of the general migrant/non-migrant pool, since it encompasses a highly select group whose violent expressions led to the death of another. Migrants, as it turns out, were no more likely to be fighters than were non-migrants. More than four-fifths of the members of both groups recalled having been involved in fights. But on the question of frequency of fights, migrants indicated that they had been involved in numerous fights much more often than had non-migrants, a response that would normally be unanticipated in view of the

findings of others.

There was a high degree of similarity between the response of these two groups on the question, "Were you the aggressor?" Approximately one-third indicated that they were the aggressor. But on the question of aggression target, migrants reported they were far less often the target of aggression. Yet, a much larger percentage of non-migrants were uncertain about their role in fights. Thus, migrants were no less likely to report that they had engaged in fights than had non-migrants, but fighters were found to engage in fights with much greater frequency if they were migrants. A major shortcoming of this assessment is an absence of the question, "With whom did you usually fight?" Were migrants more often responsible family persons who aggressed against other members of their households? Or, were non-migrants usually hustlers who often attacked others and who were also subsequently attacked by acquaintances having like orientations? These, we think, are important questions, but are ones for which we are unable to provide direct answers.

Fighting and Physical Injury

The previous discussion focused on the frequency with which members of our offender sample were guilty of releasing expressions of aggression, at least in the form of fighting. A logical follow-up to the issue of frequency of fighting is the extent and frequency to which persons were injured during fights. More than three-fifths of the offenders reported that they were injured as a result of fighting. The extent to which a person was likely to report an injury incurred in a fight was a function of the frequency of fighting. More than 90 per cent of those persons who frequently

engaged in fights were injured, but only slightly more than one-half of those who seldom fought were injured. The null hypotheses that there is no difference in frequency of injury of fighting was rejected at the .05 level of significance. It is only among the group of persons who fought only a few times that the gap between being injured and not being injured is small.

Hustlers were more likely to report that they sustained an injury than were others. In fact, other self-image groups were almost as likely not to sustain an injury as they were to sustain one. Hustlers reported sustaining injuries three times as often as not sustaining one. It appears that the intent to inflict pain was much more intense among those persons hustlers fought with than was true of others. The implication is that the latter group was at higher risk of injury than other groups because of some trait or set of traits that catalyzed the aggressive display. While injuries were found to be widespread among fighting offenders, seldom were these injuries stated to be serious. In fact, only about one-fifth of the offenders reportedly had been seriously injured as a result of their involvement in fights.

The Role of Parents in Providing Support for Fighting

Fighting has been found to represent a not uncommon procedure for resolving conflict among persons in our offender sample. It is not fully understood if this behavior is an outgrowth of children imitating behavior learned in the home as an appropriate means of resolving conflict, or if it simply represents a single building block that leads to providing sanctions for choosing to engage in fights as a problem-solving procedure.

Serious quarrels within the family were not uncommon events in the households from which offenders were drawn, leading one to assume that

occasional violent outbursts among family members served as models for resolving a variety of kinds of interpersonal conflict. But even though slightly more than one-half of the offenders reported that serious quarrels were not uncommon in their parental homes, parents did not normally condone their children's fighting. In fact, more than four-fifths stated that their parents were not generally supportive of fighting. Some did indicate, however, that if they were attacked, parents urged them to defend themselves. Likewise, some parents suggested if their children had been wronged by others that fighting might represent an approved form of conduct. The responses of our offender sample tend to imply that both imitative and sociocultural learning were associated with information transmitted by parent to child, in both indirect and direct ways, regarding the appropriateness of fighting as a conflict-resolving effort.

One other dimension associated with parenting is sometimes held to influence a child's acceptance of externally directed aggression. The extent to which physical punishment is inflicted upon children for the commission of socially non-approved acts is sometimes viewed as tacit support for the use of violence in interpersonal relationships. Some psychologists not only support this notion, but also indicate that the child's response to punishment might vary as a function of which parent inflicts it. It is unclear how important these acts are in the present context, but parental support for physically punishing children for socially unapproved behavior is extensive. Support for physical punishment occurred in more than 80 per cent of offender households. Moreover, the mother usually undertook the task of inflicting physical punishment.

Differences in Fighting Propensity Among Sample Cities

The individual's usual role in fights and fighting frequency differs from community to community, although the greatest discrepancy exists in the area of fighting role. Persons who had not engaged in fighting either as an adult or adolescent ranged from 12.5 per cent in Detroit to 20.0 per cent in St. Louis. Numerous fights (26.7 per cent) were characteristic only of St. Louis. Moreover, limited fighting occurred more often in Atlanta (61.6 per cent), but was comparable (47.0 per cent) among St. Louis and Detroit offenders.

The offender's fighting role, however, appears to be unique to each city. Aggressors and targets of aggression occur with the same frequency (42.0 per cent) in Detroit, but in Atlanta almost three-fifths of the offenders report their usual fighting role as that of the attacked. Seldom did Atlanta offenders report their role as that of the aggressor. This finding might simply reflect a different sex ratio among offenders. In St. Louis, the offender fighting role was more uncertain. St. Louis offenders report they were neither the aggressor nor the target of aggression in most fights in which they were involved. They imply that they simply got caught up in an action in which they were not one of the principal protagonists. One might expect this situation to prevail more often in gang-related fights where the offender came to the defense of a significant other.

Our Detroit offenders, however, principally represent persons who view themselves as aggressors or targets of aggression. It is clear, though, that one's lifestyle and corresponding situational difficulties are likely to dictate one's fighting role. This position is further strengthened by

testing the hypothesis that there is no difference in one's role in fights as a function of self-image. Employing the Detroit offender response to test this hypothesis provides some support for the previous proposition. The null hypothesis is rejected at the .01 level of significance, as it is evident that self-image does indeed lead to very distinctive fighting roles, with hustlers more often perceiving themselves as targets of someone else's aggression and responsible family persons more frequently acting in the role of aggressor.

Offenders generally were found to have engaged in physical displays of aggression at some point during their lives. Frequency of fighting, however, increased the risk of serious injury. More than one-half of all offenders who reported they fought only a few times indicated that they had been injured. Fighting among the offenders appeared to represent serious business in terms of the frequency with which injuries were sustained. Most offenders sustaining serious injuries had been stabbed or shot. In fact, stabbings represented the most frequent injury-inflicting act. Moreover, it is apparent that persons, with whom offenders fought, intended to do bodily harm. Offenders were not reluctant to display aggression during their growing up and adult lives, and they were often the targets of the aggressions of others.

Fighting Behavior of Victims

Are victims as a group different from offenders in terms of their fighting experiences? This question can be tentatively explored on the basis of our next-of-kin responses, but the strength of our findings will be weakened by the small size of the sample. Even though the findings based on

the response of next of kin are tentative, we expect them to point in the direction of behavior that might be thought characteristic of the population which they represent.

It was indicated earlier that victims were reported to have fought less often than was true of offenders. This might possibly imply that victims tend to basically differ on some significant dimension related to the release of aggression than do offenders. On the other hand, victims might have found themselves in situations that differed from those of offenders. Luckenbill, however, suggest that one should review the role played by each member of the dyad in the homicide transaction as a means of determining who should appropriately be labelled victim and offender. In order to do this, he describes the series of events leading up to act of death. These events have been described by Luckenbill as follows: a) offensive verbal expressions; b) refusal to comply with a request; and c) offensive physical or non-verbal gestures (December 1977).

Do Victims and Offenders Differ in Response to Gestures of Aggression?

The question that emerges from these series of events is whether victims and offenders, as a rule, tend to respond differently to the opening act of the transaction. If there are differences in their response to the opening act, who is better able to withdraw from the transaction before it escalates to the point of no return? It has been pointed out by others, however, that the victim is frequently the individual who initiates the transaction leading to death. Wolfgang describes those homicidal outcomes where the victim initiates the transaction by an extreme show of physical force or weapon display as victim precipitated homicides (1958: 252). He also indicates that they are most

likely to take place among persons engaged in a primary relationship, where emotional responses are readily intensified.

The lesson to be learned from this is that those persons who are inclined to strike out against others in a fit of rage often end up the victim in the homicide. This would tend to imply that these are persons with limited impulse control, for whom the provocation is thought not to warrant the kind of aggressive display shown by the victim. Wolfgang contends that male blacks are more likely to display manifestations that lead to their demise than are other race-sex groups.

It is unclear from our data the extent to which victims precipitated their own demise. But no doubt some victims were the first to initiate a show of force, which ultimately led to their death. Victim-precipitated homicides are most likely to occur in situations where the emotional bond between the dyad is strong and in settings where saving face is an important contributor to the escalation of aggressive discharge. A victim whose death has occurred at the hands of a spouse, close relative, or acquaintance is much more likely to have precipitated the action than a person whose death was instrumentally motivated. Likewise, victim-precipitated deaths are more likely to lead to only minor punishment of the offender. Wolfgang indicates that if it can be demonstrated that the victim provoked the act leading to death, a charge of murder can be reduced to manslaughter -- provided that the evidence of provocation conforms to four criteria established by law (1958: 247-251).

If self-defense can be employed as a surrogate for victim-precipitated homicides, only 14.1 per cent of those persons from the offender sample viewed the transaction from that perspective. Hustlers, persons aged 25-29, and persons who responded that the victim was someone liked by them were

most likely to indicate that the situation which led to the death was self-defense. It is not known at what point in the transaction that the offender perceived the need to vigorously defend himself or herself against violent attack. Thus, we are unable to validate the position of the offender indicating that his or her defensive act was provoked by the behavior of the victim.

Could the Fatal Act Have Been Prevented?

Most offenders (80.0 per cent) agreed that the incident could have been prevented. Those least likely to think this was possible were persons who identified the victim as a mate or stranger. Among the latter, only about 70 per cent thought the act could have been prevented. From this crude attempt to indirectly ascertain the extent to which offenders thought the act had been precipitated by the victim, it was found that less than 15.0 per cent interpreted the transaction in that way. But it was also clear that persons with specific age, self-image, and other attributes were more inclined to support this view than others.

Frequency of Fighting

Victims were less inclined to be fighters than were offenders. Only 55.6 per cent of the victims, whose fighting behavior was reported on by next of kin, were recalled as having fought during their youth. Of those who did fight, the modal frequency of fighting was identified as "now and then." This can be construed to mean that this set of victims had a relatively high threshold of aggression. Few were identified as frequent fighters; twice that number indicated they seldom engaged in fights. Thus, the threshold of aggressive response was deemed to be very high among that 44 per cent of the

victims who never fought, high for the group who seldom fought, intermediate for those who fought now and then, and low for frequent fighters. Since frequent fighters were so few, the victims whose frequency of fighting might be described as intermediate no doubt represent the pool most likely to display aggressive behavior.

The Neighborhood Milieu

The neighborhood milieus in which most victims were socialized were not unusually hostile places. Although fighting among neighborhood children was commonplace, it was seldom vicious. In fact, weapons other than one's hands were seldom resorted to during the fight. It does, however, appear that fighting among neighborhood children was more commonplace than among victims themselves. Few victims were described as frequent fighters, yet almost 30 per cent of the next of kin reported that neighborhood children fought frequently. But almost one-half of the neighborhoods were places where children seldom fought. An incongruence exists between the tendency for the neighborhoods to be places where one fighting pattern served as the modal pattern and another that described the modal fighting pattern of victims. Thus, it appears that victims were somewhat less likely to engage in displays of aggressive behavior than were neighborhood cohorts of the same age.

Injuries of Victims

The intensity of fighting during the victim's youth appeared to be relatively mild on the basis of reported injuries. In fact, victims were much less likely to have suffered an injury while fighting than were persons from our offender sample. This might partially be related to our not specifically distinguishing between youthful and adult fighting behavior. This could mean

that most of the injuries sustained by offenders were sustained as adults. But as youths only ten per cent of the victims were reported to have been injured as an outgrowth of fighting. At the same time, only five per cent of the victims were known to have injured others. The injured victims, like the injured offenders, were most likely to have been stabbed; youthful shootings were rare. There seems to be no difference in the probability of victim injury as a function of the tendency for fighting in the neighborhood of residence. In fact, propensity to injure seems much more likely to be entwined with the victim's personality characteristics.

Victims who were reported to have injured someone in a fight were those viewed as possessing hostile-aggressive personalities. The null hypothesis stating that there is no difference in the adult personalities of those who injured others in youthful fighting must be rejected at the .01 level of significance. Likewise, persons injured in youthful fights were also those likely to injure others. Victims, however, were more likely to be stabbed, but were more prone to severely beat their opponents.

Adult Fighting Behavior

After victims reached adulthood, their fighting behavior diminished. In fact, almost 70.0 per cent of the victims were reported not to engage in fights as adults. Moreover, most victims who continued to fight as adults were persons whose adult personalities were described as either outgoing and friendly or cautious and reserved. Persons manifesting these personality traits were most likely to fight with friends; persons who fought with spouses were described as hostile and aggressive. Personality differences among victims tend to establish the target of aggression. Because of the gregariousness of

the youthful victim, he or she was more likely to have been reported as having engaged in fights than had the more retiring types. When persons with non-outgoing personalities became adults, they were more likely to have fights than when they were youths. Also, the targets of their aggressive energy are likely to differ from those of their more gregarious colleagues.

Similar differences were noted between personality characteristics of victims and prior difficulty with the law. But seldom did fighting lead to this problem. When there was evidence that fighting led to difficulty with the law, the hostile-aggressive personality was disproportionately represented, and persons with that personality type more often had difficulty with the law as a result of drug violations or commission of a felony.

Fighting and Prior Difficulty With the Law

On the matter of victim difficulty with the law, there is a strong association with youthful fighting behavior. Victims who were characterized as intermediate frequency fighters were more likely to have encountered problems with the law than had any other fighter group, including non-fighters. Intermediate level fighters were most often arrested for public drunkenness and robbery. Ninety per cent of those persons who were reported to have seldom fought never encountered difficulty with the law. On the contrary, 87.5 per cent of those identified as intermediate frequency fighters did report difficulty with the law. The null hypothesis that frequency of fighting does not distinguish those who have difficulty with the law is rejected at the .01 level of significance.

Fighters are also more likely to have been convicted of an offense than are non-fighters. Not only were intermediate frequency fighters more likely

than other fighters to have been convicted of an offense, they were also more likely to have been incarcerated for more than one year for committing an offense. Persons identified as intermediate frequency fighters apparently have limited impulse control and a tendency to engage in troublesome behavior. These were persons who were disproportionately out of work at time of death (70.6 per cent), more likely to have been suspended from school (55.6 per cent), and more apt to be concerned with improving their personal appearance (31.3 per cent).

Intermediate Frequency Fighters

The intermediate frequency fighters among victims (27.8 per cent) appear to represent a special group who could have as easily been the offender as the victim in the lethal outcome. Persons possessing the attributes of the intermediate frequency fighter are expected to more often have precipitated events that led to death than are other fighter types. Most victims reportedly were more often attacked than aggressors (27.7 per cent). The role of most victims, however, was less clear-cut than was true of our offender sample. But the intermediate frequency fighters are hypothesized to more often represent aggressors than any other fighting frequency group. The intermediate frequency fighters among victims are thought to more nearly resemble the high frequency fighters among the offender population. Intermediate frequency fighters were found proportionately more often among our Atlanta sample than among persons from either Detroit or St. Louis.

Parental Sanctions for Physical Punishment

Support for the use of physical punishment as a means of demonstrating

parental disapproval of specific behavior was widespread among parents of victims, just as it had been among parents of offenders. Approximately three-fourths of the parents were reported to have used physical punishment as a tool in the child-rearing process. The practice of employing physical punishment was also widely practiced by the victim's grandparents. Few parents indicated that they had abandoned practices of child rearing that they observed in their own parental home. Thus, the cultural tradition of resorting to physical punishment continues among this generation of parents, with only limited evidence that they have abandoned this practice in favor of alternative punishment modes. Most victims at sometime were physically punished by parents for misconduct, yet this in no way singles individuals out as possessing characteristics that would later lead them to show little impulse control in managing feelings of aggression.

An exploratory indicator of the relationship between physical punishment and aspects of victim fighting behavior is the extent to which the victim was physically punished in comparison with other children in the family. Most victims were reported to have been punished no more frequently for engaging in acts of misconduct than were other children in the home, tending to indicate that victims essentially participated in a set of routine behaviors for which most children were likely to be physically punished.

For acts of misconduct, the responsibility for punishment was almost twice as likely to be assigned to the wife as to the husband. This might in part be related to the seriousness of the misdeed and the husband's absence in about one-third of the households. Moreover, it is possible that children who were punished more frequently than others might have been punished by the father, if the committed infraction was thought to be extremely

serious. On the other hand, more frequent punishment might have also been perceived as necessary in homes where the father was absent.

Previously it was demonstrated that intermediate fighting frequency youth represented the most prevalent group among victims. They were also those to sustain the more serious injuries. Persons who were described as fighters within this level of frequency were shown to be physically punished less often than other children in their households. Since a number of negative attributes were associated with this level of fighting, this finding is contradictory to what is expected. It is possible that this group learned quite early to escape punishment for misconduct or were from households where physical punishment was infrequent. Another possibility, however, is that all children from households where this trait manifested itself were practitioners of the trait, and therefore were no more prone to misconduct and subsequent physical punishment than other children in their family. Frequent fighters were punished more often than others; those who seldom fought were punished less.

Those who were punished more frequently constituted about 13 per cent of all victims. They had a tendency to show disrespect for parental authority, to represent both hostile and reserved personalities, to be found more often in father absent households, to be found more often in households where parents fought, and to represent persons who were injured in a fight. Physical punishment was routinely dispersed when children engaged in non-parental approved acts. But there were persons among the victim category whose conduct or misconduct was perceived by parents to be more frequent or more serious than that of their other children; and, as a result, they were subsequently punished more often than others. One can only speculate what impact this misconduct might have had on the victim's interaction with others

when he or she became an adult.

Summary:

From the previous description of the fighting experience and the behavior of offenders and victims, it was demonstrated that the two groups possessed much in common as it related both to fighting frequency and to parental support for physical punishment. Yet, victims were less often reported to have suffered serious injury or to have inflicted serious injury upon another person during the course of a fight. Likewise, fighting in the parental home was reported less frequently in the victim's home than in the offender's home. A major question becomes whether this indicates a stronger commitment to fighting as a means of conflict resolution than does the use of physical punishment to reprimand misconduct.

There seems to be little that distinguishes the commitment to physical punishment of children among the parents of victims and offenders. But the parents of offenders tend to possess a stronger commitment to fighting as a conflict resolution strategy than do those of victims. The widespread use of physical punishment by parents represents a learned tradition, yet it seems less important than the imitative behavior of parental fighting in distinguishing the fighting intensity, i.e., infliction of serious injury, between offenders and victims.

Self-image and community reputation among victims are likely to have an impact upon choice of associates, choice of behavior settings, and inclination to arm oneself. This, coupled with the quick resort to fighting given sufficient provocation, often leads to the death of one member of a dyad. Persons identified as hustlers, whether labeled as victims or offenders,

seem most likely to provoke the enmity of others and often seem to invite an attack. At the same time it appears that they possess a greater appetite for lethal violence. Hustlers were found to be less prevalent among victims than among offenders, but victims who were described as persons who liked to have a good time possessed a number of traits similar to those of hustlers.

The commitment to fighting as a conflict-resolution strategy is obviously learned through both imitative behavior and sociocultural traditions. Moreover, the intensity of that commitment seems to be intertwined with one's self-image or community reputation. As a result of prior social learning and personalities that predispose them to sanction the use of violence as a survival strategy, persons inclined toward the hustler end of the self-image continuum are better prepared to assume the offender role.

The Use of Mood-Altering Substances

Introduction

Violent acting-out behavior is often associated with the consumption of mood-altering substances. It is the contention of some that selected substances play a primary role in triggering the transaction that ultimately leads to death. When inhibitions are released and coupled with other negative personal effects associated with drugs, the stage is set for initiating transactions that become threatening and that later escalate into physical confrontation. The extent to which black subjects use these substances is likely to influence risk of victimization.

Alcohol is the substance most often implicated in these confrontations. A recent study, undertaken in the Medical Examiner's Office in New York City, indicated that approximately one-half of the violent deaths in that city were associated with alcohol use (Haberman and Baden, 1978: 8).

Wolfgang (1958), in his Philadelphia study, also demonstrated that more than one-half of both victims and offenders had been drinking at the time of the incident. Moreover, he found the percentage to be even higher for black males. The association between alcohol consumption and homicide is strong, but evidence is seldom available that would allow one to specify the blood alcohol content of the participants in the act. Therefore, it is difficult to assess the precise role of alcohol in the homicidal outcome. Nevertheless, it is evident that alcohol prompts individuals to alter their usual behavior and heightens the prospect for violent conflict.

The association between drugs and violent death is more tentative than that between alcohol and violent death. For one thing, the array of drugs used and their impact upon behavior is more diverse, making generalization more difficult. Needless to say, some drugs have been found to produce an effect that spurs individuals to engage in bizarre behavior, including extremely violent behavior. Powers and Kutash (1978) remind us that in attempting to assess the role of drugs on aggressive behavior that the following factors should be taken into consideration: drug type, pre-morbid personality, dosage, expectations, and environment (p. 317).

It should also be kept in mind that many persons are multiple substance users, ingesting alcohol in combination with a variety of drugs. But the profile of persons who were victims of violence and were known drug and alcohol abusers indicates some important distinctions. Haberman and Baden found in their post-mortem analysis of a sample of substance abusers that black alcohol abusers were older (over 30), and drug abusers were younger (under 30). They also indicated that alcohol abusers were much more likely to be southern migrants, whereas drug abusers were persons who had usually grown up in the

city. Thus, it appears the choice of a mood-altering substance is in part related to both age and sociocultural origins.

One final point should be made regarding the general relationship between drugs and violence. Much of the violence associated with drugs is only indirectly associated with drug consumption. Violence seems to be more often associated with acts designed to insure access to drugs than to drug consumption and its effect upon behavior. Powers and Kutash, in describing the influence of heroin on violence, had this to say: "The direct effect of the drug, however, is to reduce aggression rather than increase it" (1978: 330). Nevertheless, the user's ire might be raised if he is unable to secure drugs, leading him to assault persons who are believed to be engaged in the denial behavior (p. 333). Thus, it is the behavior associated with participation in the drug culture rather than the taking of drugs that more often heightens risk of victimization. This is made extremely clear when viewing the situation in New York City. There, narcotics abusers are most often killed in disputes or actions directly associated with narcotics. According to Haberman and Baden (1978: 88-90), narcotics abusers are most often killed by friends or acquaintances (47.0 per cent), and guns were the most frequently used weapons. Yet, these deaths could generally be attributed to participation in the drug culture rather than to the influence of drugs on criminal behavior.

The Use of Alcohol by Offenders

The use of mood-altering substances among our offender population was found to be widespread, and the use of alcohol on a regular basis was characteristic of more than 70.0 per cent of the offender sample. But alcohol use is known to be prevalent in the black community nationally, just as it is in the larger

community. The central issue is the extent to which a population's use of alcohol results in a permanent or temporary impairment of the faculties of a significant segment of the population. Persons who find day-to-day survival most difficult are at greater risk of using alcohol to alter their harsh realities, leading us to assume that alcohol consumption would be more intense in high stress areas than in low stress areas.

Drinking is said to be "a prime source of adult recreation" (Sterne and Pittman, 1976: 180) among one group of black low-income housing project residents, a fact that is thought to promote early drinking by project teens. The excessive use of alcohol in this milieu is believed to lead to a breakdown in family rearing practices.

Alcohol consumption reaches its apex on weekends. Bourne sees this problem as follows: "Drinking among the Black urban poor is strongly identified as a weekend phenomenon geared to alleviating the stresses of the previous week" (1976: 41). Using alcohol in order to cope with a difficult life is thought to be widespread among the black urban poor; therefore, alcohol should not be an unexpected attribute among persons in our offender and victim samples. Although most offenders acknowledged that they were regular consumers of alcohol, only 16.4 per cent were identified as problem drinkers. Victims were less often reported to be regular users of alcohol (42.3 per cent). Yet, 62.9 per cent of those born before 1945 were identified as regular users of alcohol. This is in keeping with the Haberman and Baden finding that alcohol tends to be the preferred mood-altering substance of mature adults.

As was indicated earlier, problem drinkers tend to be older, whereas

younger persons often show a preference for marijuana -- although multiple substance abuse was shown to be widespread. There is some evidence of a migrant/non-migrant disparity in an expressed preference for hard liquor and marijuana among offenders. Non-migrants were more than twice as likely to use marijuana regularly than were migrants. There was no appreciable difference among these two groups in excessive hard liquor consumption. Non-migrants were more likely to be addicted to drugs; migrants were much more likely to be alcoholics. Marijuana use was generally more widespread among offenders than was excessive use of hard liquor; this might simply represent a property of age. Only a small percent of this population identified themselves as either alcoholics (7.4 per cent) or addicts (14.0 per cent).

The Use of Mood-Altering Substances Among Victims

Victims were much less likely than offenders to be drug users. Only 15.0 per cent of the victims were reported to be users of drugs. Yet more than two-fifths of the drug users' deaths were thought to be drug related. Victims were also less likely to be regular consumers of alcohol, an attribute of almost two-fifths of the offenders. From the perspective of substance abuse, it appears that offenders as a group are more likely to be regular consumers of both alcohol and drugs than are victims as a group.

Among both offenders and victims, problem drinkers are a small percentage of the total. Yet, we find alcohol frequently implicated as playing a central role in the homicidal act, with almost one-fourth of victim deaths said to be alcohol related. On the other hand, almost one-half of the offenders reported that alcohol was directly related to the incident. The amount of alcohol consumed by either group is thought to seriously determine where

alcohol was involved in the incident. Powers and Kutash indicated, however, that the relationship between aggression and alcohol consumption tends to be curvilinear, and that persons whose blood alcohol content shows a medium level of consumption are likely to be most aggressive (1978: 324).

Unfortunately, we are unable to specify the amount of alcohol consumed by participants in the lethal struggle. According to Haberman and Baden, the amount of alcohol required to raise the blood alcohol content to an aggression-provoking level in the average person would be more than five highballs, 1.6 pints of ordinary wine, or ten beers (1978: 33). Yet they indicate that loss of inhibitions and critical judgment is reached at somewhat lower levels of blood alcohol content. Of the offenders in our sample, more reported they were mildly intoxicated than in any other single state of alcohol influence -- probably indicating a low blood alcohol content sufficient to produce some impairment in judgment and inhibition relaxation.

Since alcohol is often a critical variable in the homicide drama, it is important that we point out some of the notable attributes of those persons who were regular users of alcohol. Among this group, alcoholics are thought to more often find themselves in situations where aggressive behavior might be provoked. The alcoholic aggressor, however, might be in greater danger of being seriously injured or killed than his would-be target. But only 7.5 per cent of the offenders responded positively to the question, "Are you an alcoholic?" Those who did, tended to be older, with the largest percentage (22.2 per cent) concentrated in the 35-39 age category.

Among the six self-image types that were developed for this study, only two included persons who described themselves as alcoholics. Responsible family persons and religious persons were the only self-image groups having members who were self-reported alcoholics. Most of these persons were infrequent

fighters during their youth and engaged in an arm's length relationship others on reaching adulthood. They were more likely to be persons who considered themselves suspicious and hostile, traits that could be thought to represent the potential for aggressive behavior. Thus, older persons with a self-acknowledged drinking problem were likely to display traits that could involve them in situations in which violent behavior was an expected response. But only one-half of those persons who said they were alcoholics stated that alcohol was related to the incident.

The data describing victim drinking behavior does not allow us to identify a group of persons who could be classified as alcoholics. Nevertheless, drinking was a frequent characteristic of this population. Most persons who fought frequently were regular users of alcohol. It is uncertain how victims differed from offenders on most drinking related attributes, other than they were less often regular drinkers. To this extent, one would assume that alcohol was less frequently implicated in the death of victims than it was a catalyst that promoted offenders to behave in a violent fashion.

The Role of Drugs in Homicidal Behavior

The role of drugs as a variable in homicidal behavior is less clear-cut than that of alcohol. This is, in part, related to the more diffuse reactions engendered by individual drugs and the greater difficulty of detecting the level of drug ingestion in the victim's body. Some drugs act as stimulants; others acts as depressants. Heroin, a narcotic, is most often associated with homicide, although it is far from being the drug most widely used.

Heroin is described as a depressant, and therefore should not be expected to act as a triggering mechanism for aggression. But because heroin is the preferred drug of persons engaged in hustling, the circumstances in which such persons find themselves provide a context in which an aggressive display might be thought necessary. Powers and Kutash state: "The surest way to identify heroin users in a slum is to observe the way people walk. The heroin user walks with a fast, purposeful stride, as if he is late for an important appointment" (1978: 331). Rapid movement is said to be associated with the means of securing heroin and the selection of a sanctuary where it can be used.

Death might occur in any number of settings associated with the acquisition of resources needed to secure drugs or with disputes growing out of conflicts between users and/or suppliers. Haberman and Baden have classified motives associated with deaths as an outgrowth of narcotics abuse as a) disputes, b) crime-related, and c) narcotics-related (1978: 89). The first category is attributed to the risks inherent in the drug culture; the latter tends to imply that presence of narcotics in the body was related to death. The largest percentage of narcotics-related deaths are associated with disputes that take place among acquaintances. Thus, the elevation of acquaintance deaths among young black males may indeed be tied to the motive frequently nominated by the police: drug-related.

Amphetamines, which are used by a rather wide circle of individuals, serve as stimulants, and their use is sometimes associated with the onset of violent behavior. Amphetamines are used most extensively by young white males and the dosage is said to be light (Newmeyer: 1978). Newmeyer also reports the incidence of violent fighting associated with amphetamine users

in his sample was less than five percent, leading him to conclude that this behavior represents the exception rather than the rule.

In a study by Ellinwood, however, it was found that large dosages of amphetamine do influence behavior. Although Ellinwood was careful to point up the role of the pre-morbid personality, he indicated that among persons who had engaged in violent behavior, "The main problem appeared to be a loss of intellectual awareness of the nature of drug-induced paranoid thinking and the lowering of impulse control" (1971: 11.73). He further indicated that the combination of consuming large doses of amphetamines and carrying a gun was extremely dangerous. Amphetamines, however, were seldom found to represent the drug choice among the offenders in our sample.

Narcotics are most often implicated in homicidal deaths in American cities; psychedelic drugs, i.e., marijuana, are the most widely used but are seldom associated with violent behavior. Heroin and methadone derivatives were most often found in the bodies of New York homicide victims. In a recent nine city survey of drug-related deaths, drug use in association with homicide was found to be prevalent in Chicago (15.6 per cent), Philadelphia (36.2 per cent), and Washington, D.C. (28.0 per cent) (Gottschalk, 1979: 747).

In each of the above cities, narcotics represented the primary drug type associated with drug-related deaths. Gottschalk found that narcotics were primarily responsible for the deaths of persons who were young; who were black, Puerto Rican, and Mexican-American; who were unemployed; who had dropped out of high school; and who were unmarried (1979: 751-753). Although narcotics are clearly the most important drug group implicated in behavior leading to homicide, one must concur with Powers and Kutash that both the personality and the environment should be investigated in attempting to unravel

the homicide and drug connection.

Neither victims nor offenders in our sample indicated widespread contact with the drug culture. A precise measure of contact was derived through victim and offender response to our survey instrument. Offenders were asked a slightly different question than were the next of kin of victims. Nevertheless, even though there was a discrepancy in question wording, it was not overly difficult to determine the extent of drug culture contact. Offenders were asked if they were both addicted and users; next of kin were asked if victims were said to be drug users.

Approximately 16 per cent of the victims were said to be drug users, and one-half of those were described as drug dependent. Offenders were reported to have had more widespread contact with the drug culture than did victims. In fact, almost 15 per cent of the offenders were self-identified addicts. A much larger per cent, however, were drug users. Almost 40 per cent of the offenders were marijuana users; more than one-fifth of the offenders were heroin and cocaine users. Amphetamines were used less extensively than any other drugs, yet 17.6 per cent reported having used them. Victim users were overwhelmingly born after 1945, and thus tended to represent a younger population. Offender addicts, however, were inclined to be uniformly distributed among the over 30 and under 30 populations. Marijuana users constituted a slight majority among victim users. Among offenders, heroin, hallucinogens, and amphetamines were of equal importance in leading to addiction, but marijuana was used much more extensively than any other single drug.

Drug Use and Self-Image or Community Reputation

Both victims and offenders showed a differential propensity for drug use

on the basis of community reputation and self-image. Among victims, persons identified as hustlers had the most extensive contact (44.4 per cent). Persons who liked to have a good time were slightly more prone to be drug users than were mature settled individuals or family persons. Almost one-fifth of the latter group were drug users, whereas one-tenth or fewer of the former groups had contact with the drug culture. Drug choice also differed, with heroin and methadone preferred by hustlers and heroin and cocaine the choices of persons who liked to have a good time. Marijuana use was not distinguishable by reputational type.

Persons maintaining a specific identity among offenders also indicated a preference for specific drugs that tend to be associated with those identities. Hustlers preferred heroin and hallucinogens; persons who viewed themselves as irresponsible preferred heroin; religious persons used hallucinogens; and responsible family persons were hooked on amphetamines. It should be remembered, however, that these descriptions are based on extremely small values and could prove misleading. But intuitively they appear to provide an expected response on the basis of what is known about the lifestyle of persons whose identities we have described.

Father Absence and Drug Use

Father absence is the one attribute that best distinguishes drug users among our victim sample. With the exception of cocaine, all drugs were used more extensively by father-absent victims than by all other victims. It is unclear what this pattern might be attributed to. Attempts to identify a unique drug user personality have met with mixed results. The influence of father presence or father absence on the child's emerging personality also

remains an area of limited exploration. Robins, however, holds that anti-social fathers (which includes father absence) contributed to anti-social personality traits of a sample of St. Louis black school boys (Robins and Others, April 1971: 338-346).

This is a complex issue and one for which only a limited effort has been made toward reconciliation, other than to establish an association. Brummit, however, touches on aspects of this problem in his investigation of dyssocial children. He employs the term dyssocial to include the spectrum of disorders usually referred to as passive-aggressive personality, sociopathic personality, and schizophrenic reaction: childhood type (Brummit, 1978: 31). Specifically, when the mother is indigent, he states:

If there is a common-law relationship, the "husband" will demand attention and rob the children of affection. If the husband is a heavy drinker given to fighting, the family suffers abuse and the children struggle to survive in an atmosphere of strife and violence. It is this pre-conditioning which orients the child toward assaulting other children in the classroom (Brummit, 1978: 35).

The implication here is that environmental context both in the home and beyond the home promotes the adoption of a set of traits, which might be described as anti-social, and that persons who possess such traits are at greater risk of becoming regular users of hard drugs.

Personality of the Drug Abuser

Most attempts to identify the drug-abuser personality have relied on the use of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) as the test instrument. Both drug and alcohol abusers have usually shown an elevation on the Pd scale of that instrument. The Pd scale indicates "A mixture of rebellious, resentful attitudes toward authorities, lack of positive emotional

experiences, asocial trends and interpersonal conflicts" (Millon and Diesenhau, 1972: 110). Yet the prototype personality (as defined by Overall), while exhibiting an elevated Pd, shows significant differences among alcoholics and drug addicts.

The narcotics addict is described as impulsive, with a low frustration tolerance, often exhibiting superficial signs of friendliness when, in fact, he or she is likely to be hostile (Overall, 1973: 109). On the other hand, the alcoholic is likely to show signs of depression and dependency. Overall is inclined to emphasize the difference between the personalities of drug addicts and alcoholics, pointing out that the former is more likely to be anti-social, impulsive, and hostile (1973: 110). If his assessment is correct, it would tend to support our finding that persons who describe themselves as hustlers, or who have community reputations as hustlers, are more likely than others to be users of hard drugs and to have drugs implicated in the homicide.

Homicide offenders who are described as undercontrolled personalities possess greater similarity to that of Overall's addict type than do the so-called overcontrolled personality types. Differences have been recognized among those persons described as undercontrolled personalities. McGurk has identified three types of undercontrolled homicide assaulters, labelling them paranoid aggressive, disturbed aggressive, and psychopathic (1978: 157-158). The psychopathic type is described as having an elevated Pd and Ma (9-4 type) on the MMPI, a description that conforms to the narcotic addict profile. In describing the psychopathic homicidal assaulter, McGurk indicates the "most distinctive features are impulsiveness, anti-social attitudes, and a moderate degree of hostility which is directed at other people" (1978: 158). The two

previous groups of homicide assaulters were described as having abnormal personalities, although the latter fell within the normal range on the MMPI scale. Each of these groups was described as having an undercontrolled personality, but with a higher elevation on specific scales.

The employment of the MMPI with black subjects has been questioned by black psychologists because of the very small number of blacks on which the instrument was normalized. The higher elevation of black respondent scores on individual scales has led blacks to be wary of MMPI assessments, as these scores have a tendency to show blacks as being more pathological than whites. Frequently this instrument has served to screen blacks out of employment opportunities, and thus has generally been regarded with suspicion.

Because the Pd scale of the MMPI is employed extensively by the criminal justice system, Elion and Megargee decided to assess its performance in distinguishing a sample of black incarcerated offenders from a sample of black college students. They found the Pd scale to effectively discriminate among these two groups (Elion and Megargee, 1975: 169). Since their evaluation was limited to a single scale, they indicated that "there was an urgent need to investigate the validity of all of the MMPI scales among all minority groups that are typically assessed by it--" (Elion and Megargee, 1975: 171).

Offender Self-Image and the Use of Mood-Altering Substances

Among offenders the propensity toward dependence on, or at least regular use of, mood-altering substances seems to be best distinguished by offender self-image. This is particularly true among heroin users, who were heavily drawn from the group identifying themselves as hustlers. Hustlers were most

likely to report that they were heavy consumers of the drug; responsible family persons were most likely to report never using it. Among these two major self-image groups, there were no reported differences in the limited use of heroin. It is also clear that these two self-image groups maintained a different pattern of relationships with their adult peers. Hustlers were more likely to report that their relationships with adult peers were hostile or cautious, whereas responsible family persons were likely to report them to be cautious or friendly.

The modal pattern of peer relationships reported by hustlers directly implicates them as being anti-social and possibly possessing traits previously noted as those expected of drug abusers. It has been demonstrated, however, that anti-social behavior usually predates the use of mood-altering substances. Inciardi reports that males in his sample of drug users who were engaged in a life of crime did not use heroin prior to arriving at a median age 18.7 years, although their first criminal act occurred prior to their sixteenth birthday (1979: 339). Marijuana was used at an earlier age by persons in Inciardi's sample, but it is generally concluded that marijuana is not a violence-inducing substance (Abel, 1977: 207). The best evidence from our offender sample tends to indicate that the propensity for the use of mood-altering substances in general, and individual drugs in particular, is best determined by individual self-image.

Self-Assessment and the Use of Mood-Altering Substances

The quantity of use of specific drugs by offenders reveals significant differences in how offenders view themselves on a selected set of bipolar adjectives. The quantity of heroin used distinguishes heavy users from non-

users on two self-assessment dimensions. On the dimensions of safety and honesty, persons who reported they were heavy users of heroin more often reported they were somewhat safe and somewhat honest; non-users reported they were very safe and very honest. These responses, it is believed, are likely to indicate propensity for involvement in activity that could lead to difficulty. None of the heavy users of heroin or the non-users reported themselves as being very unsafe or very dishonest.

A similar response was observed with regard to safety among heavy cocaine users, but no significant differences were observed on the item of honesty. Heavy marijuana users also reported a significant difference between themselves and non-users on the honesty item. Thus, only on the dimensions of honesty and safety were there statistically significant differences, based on a chi square, among the users of specific drugs and the non-users. In no other instances did these differences show a major distance between drug users and non-users on a given dimension, but seemingly simply pointed to an equivocation on the part of users on what might be deemed the most socially valued responses. Thus, it is clear that heavy drug users perceive themselves to be somewhat less honest and somewhat less safe than others. But only heroin users fit both categories.

Both alcohol and drugs were used by a sizeable segment of both the victim and offender samples. Alcohol use, as was expected, was more commonplace among both groups. More than 70 per cent of the offenders were consumers of hard liquor, although most were persons who consumed only limited amounts. Less than two-fifths of the victims, however, were regular users of alcohol. Like alcohol use, drug use occurred more frequently among offenders than among victims. Among the offender group, one-half used marijuana, almost

one-third used cocaine, and more than one-quarter used heroin. On the other hand, less than one-fifth of the victims used drugs, with marijuana and heroin representing those most frequently used. The question that now emerges is whether there was a difference in alcohol and drug usage by city.

Differences in Substance Abuse by City

Victims, whom we have already indicated were limited users of mood-altering substances, exhibited no significant differences in the regular use of drugs on a city-by-city basis. Although St. Louis users indicated a familiarity with a broader range of drugs, the limited number of drug users among the victim sample makes it difficult to achieve a meaningful comparison. On the issue of alcohol use, though, the situation differs. Among the selected cities, there was a significant difference in alcohol use. For example, only 31 per cent of the Atlanta victims were not regular users of alcohol, but only 50 per cent of the Detroit sample fell into this category. Moreover, a high percentage (92.3) did not use alcohol regularly. Almost 90 per cent of the Atlanta users consumed more than one quart of whiskey per week. Thus, clear differences emerge in the alcohol consumption pattern among individual cities, with Atlanta clearly representing the environment where victims manifested a strong preference for alcohol.

Alcohol was implicated as being related to the homicide incident in 52.2 per cent of the Atlanta cases. The victims were, by community reputation, persons who liked to have a good time (43.5 per cent) and mature settled persons (30.6 per cent). Alcohol was seldom implicated in Detroit (13.6 per cent) and even less so in St. Louis (11.1 per cent). Drugs were said to be related to the victim's death in 42.9 per cent of the Detroit sample and

in 30.0 per cent of the Atlanta sample. Only in St. Louis were drugs seldom related to the victim's death. But in that city almost one-half of the victims were identified as mature settled persons, persons whom we would assume to be only weakly attracted to drugs. On the other hand, this tends to imply that our St. Louis victims, who were described by next of kin, are not necessarily representative of victims from that city.

Hustlers were more frequently found among Detroit victims, and that might possibly account for the higher percentage of deaths in which drugs were thought to be involved. Unfortunately, we are not certain what the drug linkage is in those deaths thought to be drug-related. The connection might relate to drug ingestion, to problems associated with drug acquisition and distribution, or to some combination of the two.

Almost two-fifths of the offenders were reported to be drinking at the time of the homicide, a value considerably below that found in a number of other studies. The median incidence of drinking at the time of the incident, based on a number of studies, is reported to be 54 per cent (Goodwin, 1973: 151). Most offenders indicated they were mildly intoxicated at the time of the homicide. The extent of alcoholism was previously examined among our offenders and was found to characterize only a limited number. But Goodwin has said that homicide "is associated with drinking much more than it is with alcoholism." He further states, "Alcoholism is rarely diagnosed in homicide offenders" (Goodwin, 1973: 154).

Our findings parallel those of others on this dimension, as only about eight per cent of the sample offenders identified themselves as alcoholics. More than 70 per cent of the offenders admitted to being consumers of hard liquor, but only 30.8 per cent were drinking at the time of the incident.

It seems that drinking, based on level of consumption, does often act as a triggering mechanism in transactions which frequently lead to death.

In our three city sample, there were observable differences in the frequency with which offenders reported they were drinking at the time of the incident. It occurred most frequently in Detroit, where 39 per cent were imbibing. Lower drinking frequencies were reported in Atlanta (32.8 per cent) and St. Louis (30.8 per cent). In both Detroit and St. Louis, less than ten per cent reported that they were drunk. Moreover, no Atlanta offender reported being drunk. The modal category of self-reported level of intoxication was that of mildly intoxicated. Almost 30 per cent reported this level of intoxication in Atlanta, whereas only 15 per cent reported this level in St. Louis and Detroit. A similar share of the offenders perceived themselves to be more severely intoxicated in the latter two cities. It is unknown what effect the level of intoxication had on behavior in these circumstances; but it was indicated earlier that consumption levels in the mid-range, as related to blood alcohol content, were thought to have the most significant impact upon aggressive behavior.

Among offenders, drug use at the time of the incident was less than one-half that of alcohol use. Likewise, it is less clear what role drugs might have played in triggering the homicide. Drug use by offenders was much more frequent in Atlanta and St. Louis than in Detroit. Only 11.9 per cent of the Detroit offenders were said to be using drugs at the time of the incident, whereas 27.3 per cent and 30.5 per cent were using drugs in Atlanta and St. Louis. In the latter two cities, drug use -- at the time of the incident -- approached the levels associated with drinking at the time of the incident. In Detroit, however, drug use was surprisingly limited among offenders.

Moreover, in terms of the self-image composition of Detroit's offender sample, this situation does not represent the expected one. This might simply indicate that drug use is a relatively less important agent in prompting a display of aggression. Likewise, the settings in which the incidents took place may assist in explaining the inter-city differences in the pattern of alcohol and drug use at the time the homicide was committed.

In terms of their use of and dependence on mood-altering substances, victims and offenders appear to manifest divergent patterns. In fact, victims generally show a lower frequency use than do offenders. But it should be remembered that this might in part represent a third party reporting bias. When one turns to individual cities, it would appear that our victim and offender sample were drawn from different lifestyle pools. This is partially confirmed by the incongruence among self-image and community reputational identities. More than 90 per cent of the next of kin stated that the community reputation of the offender was correct.

One often gets a very different view of the relative importance of specific mood-altering substances upon the homicide incident, depending on whether one views the incident on the basis of victim or offender involvement. Moreover, this incongruence is highlighted by the often diametrically opposite patterns prevailing in individual cities. Thus, in order to be more definitive about the role of specific substances in both general and particular

settings, there is serious need to attempt to work out these discrepancies.

SECTION TEN

THE HEALTH STATUS OF OFFENDERS AND VICTIMS

The health status of persons engaged in violent altercations is often thought to distinguish them in some way from others, but there is little hard evidence to verify this. Nevertheless, we will attempt to ascertain (1) if this population is different from that drawn from the same genetic and environmental pool, holding age, sex, socioeconomic status, and lifestyle constant, and (2) if the health status of the population is directly associated with a set of behavioral traits that leads it to become embroiled more frequently in acts of interpersonal violence. These and similar questions are important in assisting us to understand both the propensity for engaging in acts of violence and the violence chain on the specific physical and emotional abnormalities that characterize individuals in the sample population.

An attempt will be made to assess the current health status of the offenders, and also to assess their health at the time of the incident. These assessments will be based primarily on self-reported symptoms and offender reports of physician diagnoses. Occasionally, access to official reports will be available, but these describe a very small number of offenders and as such can only be used to supplement the self-reported information. Although self-reported symptoms do not allow us to make a precise assessment of the level of physical and emotional functioning of the individual, they do provide clues to understanding the role of health on the individual's view of himself or herself.

Variables Employed in Assessing Offender Health
Offender Health and Victim Health

The assessment that follows will view health as both an independent variable and a dependent variable. So, although the question of whether health was directly related to the homicide incident is an important one, it is also important to know what variables have a direct impact on the health status of the individual offender or on the pre-homicide health status of the victim. In order to arrive at some tentative conclusions regarding health status as a dependent variable, a number of lifestyles and behavioral propensities will need to be investigated. Evidence of alcohol and drug abuse; fighting behavior; aggressive or passive traits; self-image; and recent parental health problems will be employed to aid in this assessment.

It was previously noted that our sample offenders frequently reported the existence of prior injuries as an outgrowth of fighting. Stab wounds among this group appear to be commonplace. Likewise, this group also reports a striking incidence of fatal circulatory illnesses that have resulted in the recent death of a close relative. Thus, both organic and inorganic disorders have influenced the health status of these individuals in highly visible ways.

The issue of the victim's health status is more difficult to assess. Information available to us on the latter group's health status is derived solely from interviews with the next of kin or spouses. The information gained from these sources, although valuable, cannot be considered as reliable as our self-report data from offenders. On a number of measures, however, an attempt will be made to compare the health status of victims and offenders. It is contended here that the health status of individual

participants in violent altercations is important in understanding the nexus between health and those behavioral traits that lead one person to take the life of another.

Measuring Offender Health Status

The health status of the offender is of interest for a variety of reasons. Among the more important reasons is the need to attempt to ascertain the extent to which the health of the actors influenced the behavior leading to death. Do persons who kill generally differ in health status from the general population? Does their health frequently play a role in the episode leading them to take the life of another? In trying to explain offender behavior, these questions sometimes surface. More often than not when issues of this sort arise, undue emphasis is placed on the offender's mental health. Not having access to diagnostic reports describing the mental health of the sample of interviewees, it becomes very difficult to generalize about the mental health status of the sample. On the question of physical health, the record is somewhat better.

Offenders were asked if they manifested symptoms that they thought pointed to the existence of an illness, and if so, how had a physician diagnosed those symptoms. But for the most part, offender health data are derived from the respondents' subjective assessments of what they believe their health status to be. While this type of health assessment is characterized by weaknesses, it usually serves as an indicator to the individual that contact with the health establishment is or is not required.

Offenders in our interview sample generally report that their health is good. But considering the ages of persons in the interview sample, this should not be surprising. One assumes that a report indicating good health is a sign

of the absence of a chronic disease or at least the absence of one or more diseases that lead to permanent or temporary disability. The morbidity rate for this population is shown to be low; but for that segment of the sample indicating poor health, the disease pattern is one that is often associated with blacks in the general population. Hypertension was mentioned more often than any other single disease, followed by ulcers and nervousness. There is evidence, however, that many of the presently healthy individuals previously suffered encounters of acute illnesses that were brought on by both disease and injury. Injuries leading to hospitalization for acute illnesses were about as widespread as illnesses associated with disease. Acts of violence superseded organic diseases in leading to hospitalization.

On the question of mental health status, the record of offender health is less clear. Nationally it is recognized that mental health problems occur more frequently among the poor and minority populations, based on admissions to public mental health facilities. In addition, it has been shown that persons whose mental health is poor also suffer a greater number of somatic symptoms. By asking offenders to identify a series of somatic symptoms that are often thought to be related to poor mental health, we have indirectly attempted to measure the extent to which offenders might possibly be suffering from mental impairment. Three of the symptoms employed here were among the twelve employed by the National Health Examination Survey of 1960-67. In the latter survey, these twelve items were described as measures of psychological distress.

The three items used by us, and which were previously utilized as components in the National Health Examination Survey, were dizziness, nervousness,

and inability to sleep. Four other illnesses or illness symptoms, which are thought by some to be psychosomatic in origin were also included among this spectrum of disorders: stomach distress, chest pain, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

Slightly more than four-fifths of the offenders reported that their health was good at the time of the interview. This group included those who said that their health was very good, as well as those who said their health was good. Persons who perceived themselves as having good health outnumbered all others. The smallest number of persons were those who perceived their health to be very poor. Differences in perceived health status were in evidence between cities. Detroit offenders (90.0 per cent) were perceived as the healthiest; the largest percentage of offenders who indicated that their health was not good were from Atlanta (38.5 per cent). St. Louis offenders were about midway between Atlanta and Detroit on the health continuum.

In order to gain insight into the health history of offenders, we asked if they were sickly as children. Most reported they were not. In fact, only 13.6 per cent of the offenders reported that they were sickly children. St. Louis offenders, however, reported that they were sickly children much more frequently than did Atlanta or Detroit offenders. The implication is that Atlanta offenders developed most of their illness symptoms after reaching adulthood, but that St. Louis offenders who were sickly children became healthy adults. It is unknown if this situation represents differential access to the health care system, lack of faith in the traditional health care system, or the result of different adult lifestyles. For whatever reason, sickly children in St. Louis had fewer health problems on reaching adulthood; but upon becoming adults, healthy children in Atlanta apparently developed a

variety of illness symptoms.

Retrospective Views of Offender Health

The general health of the offender population was retrospectively ascertained at two points in time: a) as a child and b) at the time of the incident. It was thought that the offender's health at the time of the incident might have influenced the situation leading up to the fatal event. But there is little evidence to support this contention. What is clear, however, is the general deterioration of offender health since the incident. At the time of the interview, most offenders reported that they were in good health. But at the time of the incident, only 13.3 per cent stated that their health was poor in comparison to almost one-fifth who now indicate that their health is poor. Thus, it seems that the group which was on the margin between good and poor health has seen their health deteriorate most in three or four years since the incident.

An Indirect Assessment of Mental Health Status

The spectrum of disorders that are thought by some to be associated with questionable mental health status were examined in relationship to their presence among offenders. Approximately one-third of the offender population experienced some distress as a result of symptoms thought to be associated with this spectrum of disorders. Almost two-thirds of the persons indicating the presence of these symptoms sought medical assistance. Of those reporting that they sought medical assistance, 69.2 per cent indicated the complaint had been brought under control. Only two of the most prevalent symptoms, however,

were reportedly brought under control: stomach distress and nervousness. Nervousness and insomnia were previously cited as indices of psychological distress.

Some of the other symptoms listed in our spectrum of disorders might well embrace some of the somatic complaints included among Alexander's Seven, which includes the following diagnoses: thyrotoxicosis, hypertension, asthma, peptic ulcer, colitis, puritis, and arthritis. These diagnoses, along with several others, were recently employed to test the association between somatic complaints and mental health utilization on the part of two low-income groups in different insurance plans in the city of Seattle (Diehr and Others, 1979: 946-949). Thyrotoxicosis, hypertension, and peptic ulcer were found to be positively associated. The problem is that our symptoms could also be associated with a variety of other diagnoses, and are thereby of questionable merit in attempting to establish a mental health nexus.

The Use of Mood-Altering Substances and Health Status

At the time of the homicide, the health status among users of a variety of substances was somewhat divergent. Persons in poorest health at the time of the incident were amphetamine users (25.0 per cent) and hallucinogen users (25.0 per cent). Liquor drinkers, beer and wine drinkers, and marijuana users reported similar levels of poor health (between 8.0 and 9.0 per cent). Heroin users and cigarette smokers complained of poor health with similar frequency (10-12 per cent). But the best health among substance users was associated with persons who used cocaine. In fact, only 6.3 per cent of the cocaine users reported their health was poor at the time of the incident.

On the issue of the symptom cluster previously identified, persons seeking medical assistance for one or more complaints were most often drawn from the liquor and beer and wine drinkers (34 per cent), and secondarily from the cigarette smokers, marijuana users, and cocaine users. Heroin users, amphetamine users, and hallucinogen users were the least likely to report symptoms appearing in the cluster.

Stomach distress was the most frequently reported symptom of all offenders. Moreover, it was most often observed among cigarette smokers and alcohol users. Nervousness and insomnia, which have been used by others as an index of psychological distress, also showed up among the symptom complaints of the above group. Although essentially the same number of persons were reported to be users of marijuana and beer and wine, the previous symptoms were seldom present among marijuana users, but showed up with the same frequency among beer and wine drinkers as among cigarette smokers and liquor drinkers.

High blood pressure was common to most groups, and thus did not distinguish drug users from alcohol users. Although the assessment of possible psychological distress is crude, it does tend to indicate that distress is more likely to characterize persons who were previously alcohol users than to characterize those who were drug users. The frequency of stomach distress among the former may simply represent the long-term impact of alcohol consumption. Likewise, persons appearing to be in poorest health at the time of the incident were amphetamine, heroin, and hallucinogen users, the group whose health status was generally good at the time of the interview. These were also the persons who showed fewer signs of psychological distress at the later period. Nervousness and insomnia were not complaints that the latter group generally

sought medical assistance for. Yet, 40 per cent of the liquor drinkers sought assistance for these complaints.

Health Status and Self-Image

Another approach to the health of offenders found to be valuable was to observe how health status varied as a function of offender self-image. Responsible family persons, religious persons, and those who like to have a good time were most likely to report that they were in poor health at the time of the incident. Likewise, hustlers and persons who like to have a good time were also most prone to report their health was very good. Regardless of self-image status, few persons were likely to indicate that a chronic illness seriously interfered with their normal routine. But when asked if they had sought medical assistance for elements in the previously described symptom cluster, during their incarceration, almost one-third reported they had. Those least likely to have sought assistance for symptoms in the cluster were persons who like to have a good time, hustlers, and "others." Either these persons were healthier physically and mentally than other self-image groups, or they were simply better able to cope with chronic problems.

Those most often reporting symptoms from the cluster were responsible family persons. Almost one-half of this group, which represents the single largest number of persons in any self-image group, sought assistance for items in the cluster. Responsible family persons sought assistance for each item in the cluster, most often reporting symptoms associated with nervousness, stomach distress, and hypertension. They were almost exclusive possessors of symptoms of nervousness and insomnia, an indication that they were probably more psychologically distressed than any other self-image groups. All other

self-image groups, except hustlers and those who like to have a good time, were bothered solely by stomach distress.

On the basis of this crude assessment of offender health, one would have to conclude that responsible family persons tend to exhibit more signs of poor physical and mental health than do the larger self-image groups. But one must keep in mind that only a minority of persons indicated the presence of chronic illness symptoms. If these data are at all representative of persons possessing these self-images generally, it would appear that hustler types are more often bad, engaging in dyssocial behavior; non-hustlers, particularly responsible family persons, are more likely to suffer from a variety of personality disorders. This statement is made with utmost caution because of the very small data base and the indirect measures of illness on which this interpretation is based.

Offender Illness Treatment

On the matter of chronic illness and health status, the offender sample can be said to represent a population whose health might generally be described as good, since no more than one-fifth reported complaints that could be interpreted as signs of ill health. There were signs, however, of the presence of diseases known to be more prevalent among blacks in general. Of the persons who indicated having episodes of illness prior to the fatal incident, they might best be characterized as persons who have a family physician, who made use of public hospitals or clinics, or who were under the impression that they did not need a doctor. It appears that the sample's encounter with the medical profession was just as likely to derive from acute care needs as from chronic care needs. More than three-fourths of the sample had been hospitalized at some point in their lives. Hospitalization

often led to surgery growing out of a disease diagnosis, but hospitalization was also common for injuries sustained through interpersonal interaction.

The injury-illness dichotomy varied between cities. Only in Atlanta were injuries less important than disease in leading to hospitalization. In that city, infectious diseases often led persons to spend some time in the hospital. In both St. Louis and Detroit, injuries associated with acts of violence often led persons to be admitted to the hospital. In Detroit one-half of the persons hospitalized for injuries had suffered gunshot wounds. It is not known to what extent previously treated illnesses or injuries in acute care facilities influenced one's health status at the time of the incident. But one would assume that serious injuries in particular might likely influence the future health status of the person being treated.

Symptoms for which diagnosis and treatment were sought during incarceration occurred more often among Detroit offenders than among others. More than 70.0 per cent of those offenders reporting illness symptoms indicated that they sought medical assistance. Stomach distress was the most frequently treated symptom among Detroit offenders. The number indicating signs of psychological distress, however, was fairly uniform among each city group. The St. Louis illness pattern bore much similarity to that of Detroit. No Atlanta offender was bothered by stomach distress, but hypertension and diabetes were evident. For some reason Atlanta offenders were less likely to seek medical assistance than were offenders from the other two cities, despite the fact that Atlanta offenders were the largest percentage of those indicating that their health was poor. The latter group also experienced the greatest deterioration in health, in terms of their subjective appraisal, between the time of the incident and the time of the interview. Detroit offender

health, on the contrary, improved during this interval, although those reporting a change in status were few. St. Louis offenders, like those from Atlanta, indicated a general deterioration in their health during this three- or four-year interval.

It was concluded that offenders as a group were relatively healthy both at the time of the interview and at the time of the incident. Few were plagued by chronic disease, and there were only limited signs of emotional distress among the offender sample. There was evidence, however, that offender health status varied a great deal among cities. One final issue regarding the health status of this sample was raised. The issue of the health of close family members was raised. Basically, one was concerned about the health of persons from the same genetic pool, as well as concerned about the possible impact that the offender incident might have had on close family members.

The Health Status of Offender Families

During the five years prior to the interview, close relatives of 43.9 per cent of the offenders had been stricken by a major illness. Illness appeared to be more frequent among offenders who indicated that their own health was very good at present. Persons who reported that their own health was poor at the time of the incident were only slightly less likely (73 per cent) to report that no one in their family had experienced a major illness episode during this period than were persons who reported their health was good (76.0 per cent). St. Louis offender families had the most episodes of illness, with more than one-half indicating the presence of a family illness. Only one-third of the Atlanta and Detroit offenders reported a family illness. It should be remembered, however, that Atlanta offenders were older and that there was higher probability of a primary family member being deceased.

More than two-fifths of the reported illnesses of family members were associated with heart disease. In fact, more than one-half of all Detroit illnesses of family members were associated with that ailment, as well as 44 per cent of those in St. Louis. On the other hand, only 20 per cent of family diseases in Atlanta were related to heart disease. Moreover, heart disease was slightly more frequent for the female members of the family than for males. Fathers who became ill, however, were almost exclusively the target of some cardiovascular disease. Mothers, on the other hand, had a variety of ailments, with heart disease accounting for only 40 per cent of all illnesses. When siblings became ill, their illness was almost equally likely to represent a physical health problem.

Offender families were not as fortunate as offenders in terms of health status over the same general time period, nor should they be expected to be as healthy. Heart disease and circulatory system diseases were responsible for most illnesses. The disease that either resulted in the offender's hospitalization or chronic complaint differed from that of family members. Prior to incarceration most complaining offenders pointed to hypertension as the single most frequent ailment. Yet, hypertension at an early age might be expected to lead to heart disease at a later age. If this conclusion is valid, it would appear that offenders who encounter stresses similar to those encountered by their parents might be expected to show indications of a similar illness profile as the offenders advance in age. Lifestyle differences, however, could lead to a different or somewhat different disease pattern, especially as they relate to disease onset.

The Health Status of Victims and Their Families

The health of the victim is much more difficult to assess than that of the offender. This difficulty in part derives from differences in the nature of the health-related questions that were asked of the next of kin. In this instance, greater emphasis was placed on the changing health status of the victim's family, in response to the incident, than on the victim's prior health status. Family health status was thought to provide some indication of how well close family members adjusted to the victim's death. Since this death represented a stressful life event, one would assume that feedback associated with victimization might possibly trigger illness episodes among selected family members.

The health of members of the victim's primary family could generally be described as good at the time of the interview. In fact, some 72.2 per cent of the next of kin reported that members of the victim's primary family were in good health. Thus, it appears that families of victims were generally in better health than were persons from our offender sample. Victims, too, were slightly less often plagued by chronic disease than were persons from the offender sample. But the margin of difference was small, less than four per cent. More than 70 per cent of the ill victims had been treated for their illnesses by a variety of types of medical practitioners. Both the victims and the members of their families were in good health, and both seemed to possess attributes that would permit them to be described as being in better health than offenders and their families.

The question of the association of victim health with the homicide incident was generally thought to be non-existent by next of kin. In fact, the actual response was that only six per cent of the victims might have had illnesses which had an impact upon the events leading to death. Both physical

disease and drug and alcohol problems were thought to characterize this very small number of victims. The victims in our sample seldom represented persons who were ill, and it was even rarer for the ill health of the victim to be implicated in the transaction that led to death.

Almost 30 per cent of victim families were reported to be suffering from chronic illnesses at the time of the incident. More than 80 per cent of the ill members became ill during the previous five-year period. Only mothers seemed to have been chronically ill for a longer period of time. One-third of the ill family members were treated for their illnesses and recovered, whereas the other two-thirds remained chronically ill. Husbands most often recovered.

A number of the chronically ill relatives attributed their illnesses to the effect of the homicide. More than one-fifth of the ill family members said their illness resulted from the impact of the homicide. Moreover, the illnesses attributed to the homicide were equally divided among those that were said to be physically based and those that were emotionally based. Persons who were treated for homicide-related illnesses were treated by both medical specialists and general practitioners when their ailments were physically based. But among those persons experiencing emotional discomfort, they were more likely to consult with persons outside of medicine.

Detroit families of victims more often reported illnesses occurring with the last five years than was true in Atlanta and St. Louis. Likewise, a greater percentage of the Detroit illnesses were thought to represent responses to the homicide incident. The Detroit pattern also resulted in a higher percentage of persons seeking health care as a means of bringing the disease under control.

It is clear that these populations and their families have had frequent bouts with both chronic and acute illness. Our data are much more explicit regarding the health status of offenders than of victims. Some significant differences emerge among offenders in terms of illness patterns as a function of self-image. Characteristics implicating the possibility of psychological distress as a contributor to somatic signals were observed but our index of psychological distress was a crude indirect measure of mental health status. Thus, the reported results must be treated with caution.

The role of mental health status as a contributing variable to the homicide transaction continues to represent a weakly understood one. In fact, much more work is required in this area if we are ever to become more certain of the specific role played by psychological impairment on violent acting-out behavior. One additional topic of interest is related to the treatment of persons who have been affected by the homicide incident, either in the role of participant or surviving next of kin. The section that follows will provide a very general treatment of this topic within the framework of the role and contribution of community mental health centers in ameliorating problems associated with the incidence of homicide.

Black Utilization of Community Mental Health Centers*

In October, 1963, Congress enacted the "Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Mental Health Centers Construction Act." The intent of this act was to promote a coordinated system of mental health services that was broad in scope and that was aimed at fulfilling the diverse needs of individuals residing in different communities.

It would appear that this type of program, the intent of which was to tailor services to the unique cultures, values, and problems that exist within various communities, would be an important source of mental health care within the black community. This would seem to be a natural source to utilize for individuals who are suffering behavior problems, who may be potential offenders, or who are emotionally disturbed as a result of a homicide incident. The proportion of the black population using community mental health centers in the six cities under study can be found in Table 44.

Table 44

Black Catchment Area Population vs. Black Admission to CMHCS

<u>City Catchment Area</u>	<u>Black Catchment Area Population (% of Total Population)</u>	<u>Black Admissions to CMHC (% of Total Client Population)</u>
<u>Atlanta</u>		
GA-7 (North Fulton)	1,795 (10%)	0 (-)
GA-9 (South Central)	47,814 (50%)	465 (60%)
<u>St. Louis</u>		
No. 17 (Malcolm Bliss)	50,450 (38%)	881 (45%)
No. 19 (Lutheran)	410 (.5%)	2 (.5%)

* This section of the report was prepared by Diane Kutka Simons, Project Manager for this study.

(Table 44 cont'd.)

City Catchment Area	Black Catchment Area Population (% of Total Population)	Black Admissions to CMHC (% of Total Client Population)
<u>Detroit</u> Southwest	46,775 (29%)	235 (45%)
Model City	64,194 (58%)	250 (54%)
Northeast	16,873 (9%)	471 (38%)
<u>Los Angeles</u> West Hollywood	24,531 (16%)	290 (14%)
Central	6,299 (6%)	3,474 (83%)
<u>Pittsburgh</u>	42, 42,316	501
9B-1 (St. Francis)	(21%)	(37%)
9C-1 (Western)	35,355 (25%)	844 (54%)
<u>Houston</u>		
MH 11-12 (West End)	72,564 (37%)	53 (19%)
MH 11-14 (Mid-Houston)	88,760 (40%)	775 (33%)

Source: Inventory of Comprehensive Community Mental Health Centers, Division of Biometrics and Epidemiology, National Institute of Mental Health, 1975.

It appears from this data that blacks generally use CMHC's in excess of their proportion in a catchment area; however, this may not be a very accurate conclusion. Because there is not a CMHC within each catchment area of the city, individuals are free to utilize any CMHC that they wish to, regardless of whether they are residents of the catchment area in which it is located. In one study, it was discovered that 62 per cent of the blacks

who utilized the CMHC services did not reside within the catchment area. (Mayo, 1974: 474)

Besides not being able to make an adequate assessment of black utilization of CMHC's, it appears that other sources of mental health care are used to a large extent by blacks. It has been indicated in the literature that blacks tend to utilize public health facilities (e.g., hospitals) more often than whites do. (Mayo, 1974: 472)

Perhaps one reason for this reliance upon public health facilities is that blacks may not be aware of CMHC services. In a study done by Anderson and Provenzano (1979), it was hypothesized that black catchment area residents are less aware of center services than are white residents. To test this hypothesis, the researchers used utilization statistics, interviewed black community leaders, and surveyed black and white catchment area residents. The hypothesis was supported in each instance. The intent behind this research was to consider the issue that blacks may be unintentionally underserved by these centers because they are not sufficiently aware of the services available; therefore, needs that are unique to this population are perhaps being overlooked.

It appears, then, that services needed by potential offenders with behavioral problems, and by those suffering emotional upset resulting from a homicide, may not be available at the CMHC's because of underutilization of these centers by this group. Also, the CMHC's appear to be rarely located in catchment areas with high homicide rates. This is illustrated in Table 45.

Table 45

Homicide Rate per Catchment Area and CMHC Location

<u>City/Catchment</u>	<u>Homicide Rate</u>	<u>CMHC Location</u>
<u>Detroit</u>		
Southwest	15.9	*
Model Cities	31.1	
Eastside Detroit	71.4	
Northwest	3.7	
East Detroit	5.2	
Woodward/Hamtramck	11.9	
Northpark	53.4	
Central Detroit	73.2	
Northwest Detroit	21.2	
West Central	21.5	
Westside Redford	0	
<u>Atlanta</u>		
North Fulton	0	*
Southcentral Fulton	77.4	*
Central Fulton	57.5	
West Fulton	37.6	
South Fulton	0	
<u>St. Louis</u>		
No. 15	35.7	
No. 16	37.0	
No. 17	24.6	*
No. 18	0	
No. 19	0	*
No. 20	0	

Another issue to consider is the source of referral of black users. Because the available data did not distinguish between black and white referrals to the center, assumptions can only be made by comparing centers that are predominantly black with those that are predominantly white. It appears that the larger the percentage of whites in a CMHC, the greater number of referrals made by self, family, friend, private practice medical health professional, or nonpsychiatric physician. The larger the percentage of blacks in a CMHC, the greater number of referrals made by clergy, public psychiatric

hospitals, other psychiatric facilities, social or community agencies, medical facilities, the school system, the courts, and law enforcement or correction agencies. Table 46 illustrates these referral patterns.

Table 46

Percent Black per Catchment Area and Source of Referral

<u>City/CMHC</u>	<u>% Black</u>	<u>Self, Family, Friend, Private Practice Mental Health Professional, Non- psychiatric Physician</u>	<u>Other</u>
<u>Atlanta</u>			
North Fulton	0	62%	38%
South Central Fulton	0	62%	38%
	61%	38%	62%
<u>Los Angeles</u>			
West Hollywood	15%	50%	50%
Central	84%	35%	65%
<u>St. Louis</u>			
No. 17	46%	62.3%	37.7%
No. 19	not reported		
<u>Detroit</u>			
Southwest	46%	18%	82%
Model Cities	54%	11.2%	88.8%
North East	40%	50.5%	49.5%
<u>Pittsburgh</u>			
9B-1	37%	59%	61%
9C-1	55%	8%	92%
			(86% of these were unknown)
<u>Houston</u>			
MH 11-12	36%	44%	56%
MH 11-14	33%	72.4%	27.6%

Source: Inventory of Comprehensive Community Mental Health Centers, Division of Biometry and Epidemiology, National Institute of Mental Health, 1975.

Although the numerical relationship between percent black and percent referred by other sources is not comparable between cities, within each city the pattern previously described very definitely emerges.

The issues raised in this discussion are important ones to be addressed when considering mental health service provision to those involved in some manner with homicide.

Because of the unique philosophy behind the community mental health center movement, this type of service would appear to be a natural source of assistance to this particular group; however, because of insufficient data, it is difficult to determine whether the centers are being utilized. Judging from the center locations, it may be that they are not situated within areas where homicide is a significant problem; therefore, it is not necessary for these centers to develop services specifically designed to aid these individuals.

Perhaps by strengthening and formalizing the referral network presently operating between the CMHCs and the clergy, public psychiatric hospitals, social and community agencies, the school system, the courts, and law enforcement and correctional agencies, this population would increase its awareness and utilization of the centers.

SECTION ELEVEN

SPOUSES OF VICTIMS: A BRIEF EXAMINATION OF THE READJUSTMENT PROCESS

The taking of a human life is a tragedy that is becoming even more commonplace in American society. Not only do one or more persons lose their life/lives in the homicide transaction, but other persons also have their lives temporarily or permanently disrupted as a result of these tragic events. The disruptive effect is likely to be most severe in the family of procreation and to strike hardest at the surviving spouse who must make arrangements to continue the family intact, if possible, or make other arrangements if necessary.

Wives generally represent the surviving spouse in both natural deaths and homicides, and so it was exclusively with them that we established contact. We interviewed 19 spouses of victims associated with our sample, employing an instrument similar in design to that used with next of kin of victims. The limited overlap between next of kin and spouse affiliation with a common victim does not permit one to compare perspectives. Nevertheless, the spouse's perspective of the victim is important in its own right and no doubt provides a more accurate appraisal of what the victim was like as an adult.

The Adjustment of Spouses to the Homicide Act

The primary goal of this segment of the report is to ascertain how

wives adjusted to the event in the years that followed and what resources they utilized in attempting to overcome the shock of sudden death in the family, as well as to determine the efforts necessary to keep the family going. The problems of black widows, in general, were recently addressed by Gossett who states the following:

Black widows share the problems of Black women in American society which includes poor educational and employment opportunities. She also shares problems of all widows which are related to adult-child dependency, poverty, unemployment, and family disorganization (1975: 310).

Black widows are generally poorer than other black women in all age categories above age 34 (Lopata, 1979: 41). This then is viewed as an especially vulnerable population whose task of adjusting to an extremely stressful life will require a wide range of resources.

The adjustments required of widows in these circumstances are varied, but we will devote most of our attention to problems of financial adequacy and emotional security. Many variables are likely to have an impact upon the status of each, such that a satisfactory adjustment is likely to occur. An unsatisfactory adjustment could be identified as one in which the spouse viewed her position and that of her family as worse off after the end of the normal bereavement period. Three or more years after the death of a spouse, one would suspect that the widow would have adopted a variety of techniques as a means of assisting in overcoming the devastating impact often associated with object loss.

Among the sample spouses, 82.4 per cent reported that they had made a satisfactory adjustment since the death of their husband. More than one-half of the spouses reported that the most severe loss was that of emotional security, followed somewhat closely by loss of financial security.

The severity of loss was tempered by the fact that only 48 per cent of the spouses were living with their husbands at the time of the incident. But for those persons whose marriage was intact, both emotional and financial security were viewed as great losses; however, seldom were these deaths viewed in terms of role model losses for their children.

Since poverty is frequently viewed as a condition that might be expected to embrace widows from low-income households, one chose to acquire information that would provide insight into sources of financial support during this very difficult period of adjustment. Most husbands (84 per cent) were employed at the time of the incident, although only a small percentage had earnings that would enable them to enjoy more than the basic necessities of life. Fifty-two per cent of the wives were also employed at the time of the incident. The combined income of husband and wife resulted in slightly more than one-half of all respondents indicating that they enjoyed a comfortable life at the time of the incident. Yet, almost two-thirds of the respondents indicated that they were without adequate economic resources during the adjustment period. Adequacy of economic resources was not found to be associated with the time required to resume a normal life, indicating that an absence of financial resources persisted long after the period of bereavement had terminated.

Most wives require some financial assistance after the death of a husband, and that assistance was derived from a variety of sources. Some wives, who were not working when the incident occurred, had become a part of the active work force at the time of the interview. Both parents and children assisted in providing financial resources during this period, but parental

contribution was considered most important. Other relatives and the clergy also provided some financial assistance, outranking all additional sources of support. By the time of the interview almost 60 per cent of the spouses had remarried, but remarriage does not generally seem to improve the financial status of the group. On the contrary, 71.4 per cent of those reporting that they were somewhat worse off were persons who had remarried.

Financial adjustments are required whenever there is a major disruption in family organization. Upon reviewing the resources available to this group of women and their children following the event, we found that few are better off today than before. In fact, most indicate their financial status is roughly the same as before. These women have managed to survive financially by employing a variety of coping mechanisms. Similarly, a variety of coping mechanisms were necessary to enable spouses to acquire previously held feelings of emotional security.

Emotional Support During the Adjustment Period

Emotional security was more difficult to regenerate than was financial security, at least in terms of some perceived minimally satisfying state. Adjusting to emotional loss also required a longer period of time than did adjusting to financial loss. Even though more than three-fourths of the respondents specified that family, friends, and other professional associates attempted to comfort them during the first six months of bereavement, only one-half were able to resume a normal life at the end of that period. It has been found that conjugal bereavement can lead to a deterioration in both physical and mental health (Parkes, 1975: 303). Thus, the support and

comfort of others during this period could aid in a normal recovery from the trauma of object loss; however, it seems that the intensity of the trauma is conditioned by the existing relationship between spouses and the suddenness with which death occurs. On this latter point, Parks states, "When advance warning was short and the death is sudden, it seemed to have much greater impact and to lead to greater and more lasting disorganization in the life of the survivor than did deaths which had taken place after adequate warning and gradual termination" (1975: 313).

Among the sources of emotional support available to the bereaved spouses, the most important was that derived from their own parents. In fact, the dependence upon parents for support far exceeded the level of support coming from all others. Children ranked second in providing emotional support, followed by the clergy and other relatives. It is clear that persons from our sample were heavily dependent upon family members for comfort and were generally found to shun other societal support systems. Unlike a growing number of families in America, who, when confronted by tragedy, seek assistance from professional interveners in such circumstances, this group tends to be more traditional in relying upon members of the extended family.

Just more than one-quarter of the spouses reported that the homicide resulted in a deterioration in their health status. Most persons reported an altered health status and manifested symptoms of emotional ill health. Of those responding that their health had been affected by the incident, 83.3 per cent sought professional assistance in order to secure relief from these troublesome symptoms. Relief was generally sought at neighborhood

health clinics, but there was a tendency to shy away from seeking assistance at these clinics, even though the perceived problem was thought to be emotional. Yet, one-half of the ill spouses did say that they would be willing to use the facilities if they had known about them. Persons who opposed using such facilities were those who regularly attended the Baptist church. No other set of attributes was statistically significant in distinguishing willingness to use mental health facilities as was denominational church attendance.

The Role of the Victim in the Family System

The ease or difficulty associated with adjusting to loss of spouse is partially conditioned by the various roles that persons performed within the family system when he or she was alive. Vollman and others, when attempting to address the issue of reaction to sudden death state specifically, "Our experience to date shows, however, that the single most important factor in the reorganization of a family as a continuing social system following a death, is the role the decedent had been assigned, and which he assumed within the family system" (1971: 104). The discussion that follows will view the victim in his role as husband and provider, and will also devote some brief attention to personality attributes which might have been important in leading to the circumstances of death.

In attempting to describe the victim's attributes as a husband, one is basically concerned with the quality of the interpersonal relationship prevailing between the victim and his spouse, and secondarily that between the victim and the children. Quality of interpersonal relationship is measured

in terms of the strength of the marital bond. The respondents were presented with a series of choices of states best describing the nature and strength of the marital bond prevailing in their unions. More than one-half of the respondents indicated that a strong emotional bond linked them and their spouses. Another 30 per cent indicated that their bond was at best intermediate in strength, with the union more likely to be viewed as instrumental rather than expressive. Finally, 12 per cent of the spouses reported that the bond had been broken and that they and the victim maintained a very distant relationship. More than one-half of the victims provided emotional comfort and security for their spouses, although others did so much less effectively. As husbands, the first group, is likely to be sorely missed, and problems involving loss of emotional security are likely to be much more extensive among this group of spouses.

More than one-half of the victim deaths resulted in a surviving set of dependent children. None of the questions in our instrument directly tap the nature of the relationship between fathers and children. Thus, of necessity, any attempt to evaluate father loss upon surviving children will be indirect. Two items can be utilized for this purpose, but they could hardly be considered ideal. The first item relates to the spouse's perception of the victim as a father figure in the household. More than two-fifths of the respondents felt that the loss of the victim would create a major void by removing the father figure from the household. Another one-third said that the victim's role as father was so poorly played that his death would hardly alter things. One-sixth of the respondents were of the opinion that the children, at least in terms of the image projected by the father, would be better off as a result of his death.

It has been shown by others that the stress associated with the death

of a father sometimes results in signs of deviant behavior in surviving children. Silverman states that "The death of a parent during childhood is significantly correlated with their adult problems" (1975: 4). Questions designed to tap evidence of deviant behavior in our survey turned up little evidence of such behavior. Most mothers failed to respond to these items. Among the ten per cent responding, only those questions indicating change in school attendance and increase in delinquent behavior were assumed to be related to father loss. Thus, it is not really possible to ascertain if father loss did in fact lead to serious behavioral problems as this item was generally ignored by respondents.

While the victim was alive, he was generally viewed as an adequate provider of financial resources. Unemployment was not extensive among these heads of households, as almost three-fourths of the spouses considered them to be dependable workers. Of those who reportedly encountered some difficulty in the job market, only 10.5 per cent were identified as persons who were not regularly employed. Most victims were blue-collar workers who occupied jobs identified as "laborer." More than two-fifths of these individuals, however, were upper-level blue-collar workers whose incomes moved them out of the poverty class. The combined incomes of the victim and his working wife allowed the majority of these families to enjoy a comfortable life.

The spouse's view of the victim's success in the world of work generally differs from that provided by next of kin, an indication that victims who were heads of households took those roles seriously and could generally be viewed as adequate providers. This group of victims comes predominantly from Atlanta and tends to be older, a factor that could contribute to their more substantial participation in the work force than was true of that group of

victims described as next of kin.

The Victim's Pattern of Interaction Beyond the Home

The victim's experience with persons outside of the home is likely to have an impact upon the risk of involvement in violent altercations. But in no way is it possible to conclude from the victim's normal relationship with persons outside of the home that he might not get caught up in a rare altercation. Almost four-fifths of the victims were described as friendly and outgoing by their spouses. Only one victim was described as having difficulty making friends. These were not persons who, as a rule, were killed in an altercation involving instrumental motives. But approximately one-fifth of the victims were perceived to be consumers of excessive amounts of alcohol, and one-half were known to have consumed alcohol prior to the fatal incident. Likewise, slightly more than one-half of the wives were of the opinion that alcohol was implicated in the homicide. Thus, mood-altering substances can lead normally non-hostile personalities to become embroiled in fatal altercations.

The Surviving Children

A factor of some interest is that involving the offspring of families in which one parent is a homicide victim. Are these children likely to be severely influenced by this turn of events, such that they manifest behavior that could be thought to lead to lifestyles in which the risk of homicide victimization is increased? Two items were thought to at least indirectly relate to this possibility: children's fighting behavior and children's attitude toward school. As was noted earlier, frequent fighting and dissatisfaction with school were common attributes of homicide

offenders, but somewhat less characteristic of victims. Children of victims were seldom involved in fights, nor was fighting sanctioned by the surviving spouses. In fact, spouses reported that they fought more frequently as children than was true of their own children.

Almost two-fifths of the surviving spouses had children in school. They reported that their children liked school and that their scholastic performance was average or better. Nevertheless, these parents often felt that their children were receiving a lower quality education than they themselves had received. But, in spite of this, most mothers planned for their children to enroll in college or other post-high school training program. Almost one-half of the surviving spouses had completed high school, whereas only about 25 per cent of the victims were high school graduates. If the children of surviving spouses continue their education beyond high school, as their mothers would have them do, the likelihood of becoming involved in a lethal altercation would be substantially reduced. At this stage in their development, the children do not appear to have acquired the set of traits that was so commonplace among offenders: frequent fighting and dislike for school.

Punishment of the Offender

The spouses of victims who have had their lives disrupted by these sudden outbursts might be expected to be angry. If so, one would expect them to manifest some concern regarding the manner in which the offender was punished by the criminal justice system. Yet, only three-fifths of the spouses reporting indicated that they were familiar with the punishment meted out by the criminal justice system. Of that group who were aware of the outcome of the trial proceedings, it was stated that only 46 per cent of the offenders were

found guilty of the offense. The implication here is that the victim's behavior in initiating the altercation was provocative, thereby leading to a decision of "not guilty as charged."

Of those spouses who were aware of the kind of sentence meted out by the criminal justice system, three-fifths viewed the sentence as inadequate. Most thought the sentence, which averaged approximately nine years, was too short and that the culprit should have been more severely punished. Most spouses, however, regardless of their knowledge of how the criminal justice system behaved in this specific instance, were of the opinion that lengthy sentences deter violent crime; only one-sixth of the respondents assumed the opposite view. Clearly, then, most surviving spouses are supporters of more severe punishment than that which was meted out by the criminal justice system. This attitude was acknowledged by next of kin of victims. Although the capital punishment question was not included in the spouse's questionnaire, a sizeable share of the latter group were found to favor capital punishment.

Summary

Spouses' responses to the death of their husbands have been given only limited treatment in this report. Nevertheless, this is a very important topic and should not be overlooked in attempts to measure the impact of stressful life events upon residents of the nation's larger black communities. The limited number of responses in this instance makes it impossible to generalize to the universe of black women who became widows as a result of their spouse's involvement in a lethal altercation. Nevertheless, some tentative insights were acquired regarding this little-studied situation.

Victims were found to be persons who were primarily employed as blue-

collar workers; who provided a comfortable life for their families; and who were friendly and outgoing personalities, who consumed hard liquor with their friends during their leisure. It appears that the latter trait was most often implicated in the tragic act.

Wives, as a group, had made a normal adjustment to their tragedy after three years. Most indicated that their economic status had not changed as a result of the tragedy, although in order to hold onto their old status some women had to enter the labor force. In this instance, the emotional pressures were ameliorated by virtue of the large percentage of persons who were no longer living together at the time of the fatal occurrence.

SECTION TWELVE

VALUES AND LEISURE

Values constitute elements in the cultural fabric of a group and manifest themselves in various ways. Values, according to Rokeach (1973: 5), are "an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite end state." Rokeach indicates that values can be expressed in a number of ways. Moreover, he chooses to view them as terminal or end state preferences and instrumental modes of conduct. In applying values to the study of the violence propensity of groups, most emphasis has seemingly been placed on the role of instrumental values. This is apparently the case among those who support the notion of a subculture of violence.

According to Wolfgang, the illicit use of violence by small groups of urban blacks is viewed as an acceptable mode of conduct that frees one from guilt feelings because the conduct is considered normative (1970: 14). Arguments regarding the validity of this position abound, and it does not appear that the argument is likely to be easily resolved.

Ball-Rokeach, however, is not convinced that there exists a significant relationship between the subculture of violence and values (1973: 736-749). In this regard, she suggests that "the subculture of violence thesis is, at best, incomplete and at worst invalid as an explanation of violent behavior" (p. 748). Nevertheless, this does not diminish our need to ascertain the role that values play in the lives of persons who have served as primary

actors in a lethal transaction.

Establishing Offender Values

We ascertained the values of persons in our offender sample by asking them to select from a list of twelve items those three which they valued most. The list included items that best conform to those described by Rokeach as terminal values. A second assessment of value responses was based on individual offender responses to a set of bipolar adjectives. The bipolar adjective list included a number of items believed to be relatively similar to a number of Rokeach's instrumental values. From these two sets of data, it was possible to derive measures of offender response to selected values thought to be representative of selected terminal and instrumental values. One additional value orientation, which has attracted the attention of many social scientists, particularly as it relates to racial value differences, is that of future time orientation. Thus, a set of future time oriented questions were included in the survey.

The survey instrument employed to tap characteristics of the victim population was less explicit in attempting to directly get at the values of victims. This represents a major shortcoming in our analysis. On the other hand, one would generally expect a strong positive relationship among persons drawn from the same social milieu on the issue of terminal values, but with greater differences possibly occurring around instrumental values. The former are more likely to represent group values; the latter are more sensitive to an individual's psychosocial experiences. One would assume that the former would tend to tap those dimensions shared by members of the black subculture in general, whereas the latter are more indicative of how one has learned to

respond to the exigencies of day-to-day life.

In attempting to indirectly tap selected values of victims, three items describing personal orientations were analyzed. These items relate to concern with personal appearance, material possessions, and future time orientation. It is generally thought that blacks place greater emphasis on clothing styles, which are unique to the group, and on the acquisition of automobiles, which tend to express the owner's concern with style and status, than do other racial or ethnic groups. A future time orientation, in this instance, was based on having a bank account. Even though these data will provide some evidence of an attachment to values, they are far less informative than the value data employed to assess offender value orientation.¹

Included in the general assessment of values is the treatment of the leisure activities valued by most offenders. A list of fourteen leisure activities was presented to the offenders, and they were asked to identify the three activities that they found most enjoyable. Also, they were asked to indicate how frequently they engaged in their most enjoyed activities and with whom they spent most of their leisure time. A further attempt was made to assess the content of selected activities thought to reflect values, as well as an index of the support of violence. These latter activities relate to musical taste and preferences and to television preferences and content. Finally, some attention was given to the role of formal religion in the offender's life, at least in terms of denominational preference vs. non-affiliation. On the religious variable it is possible to make some comparisons between offenders and victims.

Ranking Terminal Values

The surrogate terminal values included among our list were financial success, good education, job security, happy children, strong and positive relationship with relatives, religion, having good friends, honor, self-respect, and a good place to live. These values might be employed as surrogates for a number of the terminal values derived by Rokeach. The values that were of greatest importance to most offenders were, in terms of rank, a good place to live (1), self-respect (2), happy children (3), and strong relationship with relatives and religion were tied(4).

The terminal value found to be most important to offenders is thought to represent a person's concern for domestic security or a secure environment. This is in some ways equivalent to Rokeach's value, described as national security. Happiness was represented among Rokeach's values, but here it is replaced by happy children. Self-respect was employed by Rokeach as a measure of self-esteem. The ranking values chosen by our sample include three of the values most often selected by the Rokeach group of black respondents. These include family security, self-respect, and happiness. Only one of these is among the five ranking values chosen by blacks nationally: family security.

Ranking Instrumental Values

The choice of instrumental values selected by a sample of black offenders differs from those of Rokeach's black non-inmate sample. These differences are partially the result of our use of a more limited number of values and the problems associated with the determination of equivalent values among the two value sets. Likewise, one might expect this population to express some preferences that were not in keeping with those of a more diverse black population.

Prosperity, a comfortable life, a sense of accomplishment, and mature love were values that were bypassed by offenders. The status of this population would lead one to believe that the latter represent values with end states out of easy reach, and therefore were not chosen as terminal values that were important to the respondents.

Instrumental values were derived differently for the offender sample than were terminal values. These values were based on the perceived concordance between selected instrumental values in the Rokeach value schema and selected bipolar adjectives describing the offender's evaluation of himself or herself. Of the 27 bipolar adjectives listed in the survey instrument, seven appear to be relatively strong surrogates for some of the ranking instrumental values in the Rokeach system. Bipolar adjectives were identified that were then employed as surrogates for (a) self-control, (b) ambition, (c) honesty, (d) broadminded, (e) responsible, (f) independent, and (g) forgiving. Four of these seven variables were among the five values to which blacks in Rokeach's national sample expressed the strongest attachment. Clean, the third ranking Rokeach variable, is missing from our list. Self-control and independence were in the lower one-half of the preferred values expressed by persons in the national sample. Since instrumental values are said to undergird modes of conduct, one would logically expect some differences in attitudes to manifest themselves between members of the general populations and a group of incarcerated felons.

Some differences do show up between strength of attachment to selected instrumental values between the Rokeach sample and the offender sample. The offender sample ranked responsibility as the preferred value. Honesty was

ranked third among the respondents, although it was the ranking value of members of the general population. Courageous ranked second. Ambition and self-control were not values for which there existed a strong attachment. Yet ambition was the second ranking variable in the general population of black respondents. It seems, therefore, that our offender sample is one in which assuming responsibility, acting in a courageous fashion, and having limited ambition are foremost. Although honest is still strong, its relative importance is overshadowed by other values. Self-control was the value that was missing more often than all others among this group.

When Ball-Rokeach used the instrumental value scale with a group of felons whose participation in acts of violence varied from none to high, she found honesty, ambition, responsibility, broadmindedness, and courageous to represent the ranking values (1973: 741). Thus, while honesty and ambition rank high among incarcerated felons, such was not the case with our sample.

Self-Image and Values

Differences in value orientation were observed among previously identified groups in our sample. Employing self-reported self-image identification allows us to internally differentiate among offenders in terms of value orientation. Low scores on self-control were common to most self-image groups, but the least control was exhibited by persons who liked to have a good time. The greatest control was associated with the category "other." The latter group exhibited an unduly high level of self-control. Ambition ranked highest among persons who liked to have a good time and ranked lowest among hustlers. If doing well in school is a good indication of ambition, then this

fits well with previous descriptions of the hustler's orientation. Honesty is the preferred value of persons who view themselves as responsible family persons and also ranks high among persons who like to have a good time. Others and hustlers rank honesty considerably lower than do the previously identified groups. Hustlers are ranked as the least responsible and least broadminded persons among self-image groups.

Unfortunately, our bipolar adjectives seldom tapped those values that are associated with machismo lifestyles, and thus we are unable to make meaningful intragroup comparisons on this dimension. The single value, courageous, is the only one assessed that might be thought of as an indicator of the machismo lifestyle. The result of this assessment was not in accord with intuitive judgment. Unexpectedly, responsible family persons ranked highest on this value, and hustlers ranked lowest. But earlier it might be recalled that hustlers stated they were more likely to be the attacked in fighting situations than were they to be the aggressor. According to Ball-Rokeach, the machismo values are an exciting life, freedom, pleasure, social recognition, courageousness, and independence (1973: 741).

The Role of the Family in Value Transmission

The role of the family in transmitting values is assumed to be very important. Offenders were asked which of the following guidelines were emphasized by family members and others as dictates to live by: a) look out for yourself; b) never trust others; or c) deal honestly with people. Honesty was the code of conduct most often emphasized (71.0 per cent) by significant others. This is to be expected in view of the strong preference for honesty that is imbedded in our national culture. Yet, almost one-fifth of the

offenders were urged to look out for themselves, as they were told it was the most important guideline for dealing with others. It is not certain how the most emphasized guidelines influenced the value choices of the offenders, but one thing is certain -- honesty in the home does not always mean that one's children will adopt it as a primary code of conduct.

The most emphasized guidelines adopted by offenders were most likely those influenced by persons who represented the strongest family role model. In most instances, mothers were identified as the strongest role models. Likewise, mothers were prone to strongly support honesty as being the preferred code of conduct. When siblings were reported to represent the strongest family role models, it was found they tended to emphasize "look out for yourself." Siblings constitute almost one-fifth of the role models in Detroit and St. Louis, although the role of the father was strongest in Atlanta. But in no instance did fathers represent more than one-third of the role models, and in most instances they represented less than 15 per cent. Thus, the guidelines for future conduct most often came from mothers, who strongly supported honesty. But, to be sure, some mothers also were supportive of "look out for yourself" as a preferred guideline. Generational changes in values and the circumstances of significant others are likely to influence the choice of guidelines adopted by youth, a condition which can lead to a preference for instrumental values that satisfy the unique needs of the individual.

Value Differences and Other Selected Attributes

Terminal values are less likely than instrumental values to influence one's daily behavior. That is not to say that these values do not play a role

in the way one conducts oneself with others. Instrumental values provide a perceived acceptable mode of conduct for actualizing terminal values. As reflected in their choice of a good place to live as the single most important value (25.4 per cent), most offenders are concerned with attaining a comfortable life. This probably derives from their experience with environments that might be interpreted as noxious or troublesome. Frequently, individuals attribute their circumstances to the environment in which they have grown up. Thus, a good place to live is possibly viewed as a way out of a troublesome life and as the presence of elements of security that have often been missing from their prior environments. A good place to live was the overarching value of persons who had grown up in the city, who did not attend church during their youth, and whose mothers were migrants.

The second most important terminal value, self-respect, usually ranks high among individuals, but seldom does it assume the rank of importance that it does among this group. Self-respect was more often a preferred value of migrants than of non-migrants. Since most migrants represent persons of southern origin, they are more likely to have directly experienced status denial than were persons socialized outside of the South. In addition, self-respect was related to gun ownership. Moreover, persons expressing a strong preference for self-respect were likely to own guns, and those guns were often secured through non-legitimate channels. It appears, then, that self-respect is a primary value of migrants to the city and is likely to have grown out of a history of denial of respect. Migrant status distinguishes the primary ranking of preferred values. Thus, non-migrants overwhelmingly (73.3 per cent) choose a good place to live; migrants are more attached to self-respect (60.0 per cent).

Happy children, the third ranking value, is perceived as a surrogate measure for personal happiness. Most offenders were or had been married and were therefore expressing concern about their children's welfare, realizing that their own lives possibly offered fewer opportunities for happiness. Persons who were most likely to choose "happy children" as a primary value were those who expressed a favorable attitude toward school and those who indicated that they were members of the Baptist religious group. Persons who chose this value were also those who were more likely to have killed an acquaintance than were persons in any other category. In contrast, persons who had killed a stranger showed a relatively strong affinity for the value, self-respect.

Strong family relations and religion were tied as the fourth ranking values. These were the values of ever-married persons and of non-migrants. Responses to these values were diffuse and were those to which attachments were relatively weak. There were some differences, however, among persons who chose these values. Persons who did not own a gun at the time of the incident and who identified themselves as Baptists were persons for whom religion was an important value. Of the several religious groups with which offenders had been associated at sometime during their lives, only persons who viewed themselves as Baptists included religion as a primary value.

Terminal values might be viewed as values of hope, and the strength of attachment to specific values provides an understanding of the direction in which one's hopes lie. When persons choose "a good place to live" and "self-respect," it indicates that they are strongly concerned for themselves and secondarily concerned for others. Moreover, the choice of the above two values indicates that more than two-fifths of the offenders still possess hope. A lack of concern with the ranking values would tend to indicate signs

of diminishing hope. One-fifth of the offenders expressed concern for others through emphasis on the happiness of children and family security. The choice of terminal values provides some support for the position that a sizeable segment of the offender sample represents future-oriented persons. The offender sample was asked some specific questions regarding future orientation in order not to arrive at conclusions based on indirect observation.

Values and Time Horizons

Most offenders express hope in a future and state that they engage in making plans for the future. Only 12.1 per cent do not believe that future planning is necessary. Hustlers are more likely to express doubt about future planning than does any other segment of the offender sample. But 75.0 per cent of that population responded positively regarding the merits of the necessity for future planning. Discussions regarding the present time-future time orientations of class-based behavior seldom specify what is meant in terms of units of measurement. Implicitly it is believed that present-oriented impulsive behavior dominates, eliminating the possibility of persons engaging in behavior that is future time oriented.

As a means of ascertaining the length of one's time horizon and subsequently how far in the future one planned, a series of questions were designed. Specifically, each offender was asked if he or she gave much thought to the future. Almost 90.0 per cent of the offenders responded positively. Following this was a question that attempted to have the offender respond to the time horizon of most of his or her future thoughts. Persons whose time horizon was five years or less were thought to have a short time horizon;

those 5-20 years, an intermediate time horizon; and those more than 20 years, an extended time horizon. Most offenders were characterized by a short time horizon (36.8 per cent), but those possessing an intermediate time horizon (35.3 per cent) were almost equally numerous. The smallest number of persons were those whose thoughts took them beyond the present generation (27.9 per cent). Thus, there is evidence that slightly more than three-fifths of the offenders are clearly future oriented. It is uncertain, however, how differences in expressed time horizon might be related to other aspects of offender behavior and values.

The association between time horizon and self-image is an interesting one. The intermediate time horizon persons were largely drawn from groups identifying themselves as responsible family persons (40.6 per cent) and hustlers (43.8 per cent). But an equal number of hustlers were persons with a short time horizon. The short time horizon group was dominated by persons who like to have a good time, but the extended time horizon group was dominated by "others." The latter group appears to possess values that place them somewhere between hustlers and family persons. Responsible family persons, who were found to constitute a sizeable share of persons whose thoughts were bound by each time group, had the most diverse time horizon.

When asked what type of future they envisioned for themselves, most offenders stated they expected to have a happy, productive future (78.1 per cent), indicating that the possibility of happiness is perceived to be less elusive than we had previously thought. Persons who like to have a good time and hustlers were the least convinced that a happy, productive future was in the offing for them. Both of these groups perceived the future in terms of greater uncertainty than was true of other self-image groups. Nevertheless,

there was evidence that all self-image groups possessed a future orientation. The majority, however, did not rule out a happy, productive future.

It is possible that an incongruence exists in terms of time orientations and behavioral orientations, but there is some evidence to show that persons whose behavior is most likely to be viewed as deviant are also those with the shortest time horizons. For persons to have time horizons that extend well into the future, i.e., the next generation, there must be evidence of hope. Shattering experiences and elusive opportunities are likely to diminish hope, leading persons to focus their attention within a time spectrum of no more than five years.

The Use of Leisure Time

How persons use their time is frequently as important as an explicit time horizon. Since most offenders were unemployed, it would appear that their amount of discretionary time was excessive, and that their choice of how to spend that time was an indication of a personal orientation. Thus, the question, "Which of the fourteen leisure time activities do you find enjoyable?", did not take into consideration the amount of time generally available to pursue pleasurable activities. Only a limited number of the specified activities, however, were enjoyed by as many as one-fourth of the respondent group. The most enjoyed activities were related to family-based entertainment; intersex associations; listening to records; watching television; and watching or participating in sports activity. It was thought that the identification of prized leisure might point up some significant traits possessed by this group, but there is little evidence to support this expectation. A major shortcoming of this leisure activity assessment is the absence of a measure indicating when persons normally participated in these

activities. Even though we have learned what activities offenders find most enjoyable, we do not know how these activities were employed to fill the day or any other time period.

The questions regarding leisure time activity did not ask specifically where these activities took place. They did, indirectly, ask if these were activities that were engaged in at home or elsewhere. For instance, a number of questions were preceded by the statement, "go out," indicating that it was an activity which was not normally engaged in at home. Other activities could have been engaged in at home or away from home. Away-from-home activities tended to dominate the most enjoyed activities of St. Louis respondents, but the ranking activities of Atlanta respondents were those that could be engaged in at home. Detroit respondents were more nearly equally divided in their preference for at-home and non-home activity.

Parties and dancing ranked high among Detroit activities that may not have been engaged in at home; watching TV and listening to records were the preferred at-home activities. Watching television was the lowest ranked major leisure activity among St. Louis respondents and the highest ranking activity among Atlanta respondents. As was true on any number of other measures, differences in leisure time preferences were observed in each of our cities.

Chapin, who has devoted considerable effort in attempting to delineate how individual groups structure leisure activity or discretionary time, is of the opinion that the use of discretionary time differs among populations as characterized by what he chooses to call "making it" and "not making it" (1974: 161-163). He seems less certain about the commitment to a different set of activities on the part of this dichotomous population, but does conclude that those "not making it" will be more inclined to engage in activities

that might be described as socializing. These activities are viewed as important sources of communication and information and often take place in pool halls, in persons' homes, and at locations where street-corner men hang out (Chapin, 1974: 160). Most of these social-interaction locations are likely to be found within a narrow radius of the place of residence of the participants.

One would expect the tensions and frustrations of "not making it" to manifest themselves in interaction styles that readily lead to both verbal and physical confrontations. Thus, for those persons who have an excessive amount of discretionary time and who most enjoy leisure activities that are conducted in settings where the risk of confrontation is heightened, the possibility of the risk of victimization is also increased. This situation is likely to be even more aggravated when individuals with increased amounts of discretionary time choose to use their time to engage in a wide variety of hustling oriented activities, i.e., gambling, drug sales, robbery, etc. Both the amount of discretionary time available and the structure of leisure activity are likely to have an impact on the risk of victimization. Most leisure activity among low-income persons takes place in their home or within close proximity to their home. Such persons are said to have a limited activity space; and within these circumscribed spaces, the frustration of not making it can be expected to take its toll.

The Association Between Music and Values

Among the leisure activities that were thought to be sensitive indexes to the values of the respondents were listening to records and watching television. Music is, itself, an expression of aspects of culture; and both

musical styles and lyrics have been associated with segments of the population such that they are frequently thought to reflect both internal and external aspects of group life. Hence, black music and musical tastes are often accorded the status of cultural traits. As the focal concerns and status of the group have been altered, the content, orientation, and style of black music has changed over time.

Prior to the twentieth century the blues began to grow in popularity. The blues, unlike gospel and spiritual music, were expressions of despair and of the individual's plight where hope was ephemeral at best. The blues were described by Levine as "the most highly personalized, indeed, the first almost completely personalized music that Afro-Americans developed" (1977: 221). He suggests that the blues performed a similar function for the secularized masses as did religion among the spiritually oriented. Specifically, Levine states that "it spoke out of a group experience; it made many individual problems -- dislocation, loneliness, broken families, economic difficulties -- seem more common and converted them into shared experiences" (1977: 235).

Levine suggests that black music is an expression of black culture and that "Black secular song revealed a culture which kept large elements of its own autonomous standards alive, which continued a rich internal life, which interacted with a larger society that deeply affected it but to which it did not completely succumb" (1977: 297). Evidence suggests that black music continues to undergo change, but without a loss in its identity as representing the concerns and stylistic orientations of black performers.

Almost a generation ago a musical style, popularly described as soul music, came into being. This music, according to Keil, represents the stylistic

fusion of sacred music, the blues, and jazz (1966: 32). He identified it as the music of the people. This latest musical form is thought to be the product of urban ghettos. Most previous styles represented the problems and methods of coping with problems associated with rural southern life. Blues performers and blues recording artists largely came from rural backgrounds in selected southern states, especially Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas (Haralambos, 1975: 40-41).

The pre-1950's outmigration from the South provided a market for southern musical styles, but the post-1950 generation, living outside of the South, seemed to be less enamored with music that focused on conditions with which they were only vaguely familiar. Thus, the stage was set for the advent of a new dominant musical style that was more representative of the status and plight of black Americans during the fifties and early sixties. Soul music not only became the new dominant musical expression of blacks, it also had become big business and offered a limited number of entertainers an escape from environments that as a rule provided only minimum opportunity.

Listening to records was assumed to represent an activity that was engaged in extensively by both adolescents and young adults in black communities throughout the nation. The ubiquitous transistor radio, which could be observed almost everywhere a decade ago, and the current widespread use of portable tape decks in public space, indicate that black youths listen to music on an extensive scale. The rise in national popularity and status of black musical performers can also be expected to have an impact on sales of their recordings.

It was recently noted that record and tape sales grossed an estimated \$4.2 billion in 1978, exceeding retail sales income generated by both movies

spectator sports (Bernstein, 1979: 59). Soul music was said to account for a sizeable share of those sales, and disco -- the new musical style -- was thought to account for one-fourth of the retail income alone. Black performers are known to participate in the more lucrative phases of the recording business, and the largest share of their market is concentrated in the black community. Moreover, some believe that these performers transmit a set of values which subsequently have an impact upon the attitudes and behaviors of their listening audience.

The Role of Music as a Propagator of Values

A number of attempts have been made to establish the role of lyrical content on values. It has been demonstrated that a number of musical taste cultures can be identified and are primarily associated with age, race, social class, and geographical region (Fox and Wince, 1975: 201). It is also assumed by some that music acts as an agent of socialization and that the dominance of specific musical tastes can be employed as indicators of support for the core culture.

Country and western music has been said to reflect strong support for, or at least limited alienation from, the existing political system; rock music and folk music more often display evidence of estrangement from core values (Mashkin and Volgy, 1975: 452). The latter writers describe country and western music as the ballad of the silent majority; however, they concluded that only a small percentage of persons are attracted to music because of its lyrical content. But others strongly contend that values are disseminated through the lyrical content of music, at the same time being aware that the musical sounds themselves also reflect both mood and value shifts.

Carey, in the late sixties, attempted to evaluate evidence that certain musical styles were carriers of old or new values. He examined the lyrical content of musical styles described as rhythm and blues, rock and roll, and others (i.e., country and western, easy listening), finding that the new values were the predominant ones in rock and roll, but that both rhythm and blues and others were dominated by a lyrical content representing old values (Carey, 1969: 155). Nevertheless, Carey concludes the following:

Lyrics may reveal general values, but this is not necessarily the reason for listening to them. It is the nature of the music itself, combined with its vocal or lyrical aspects, which seems to account for its popularity (1969: 162).

It is unclear, however, to what extent the most popular music of the mid-1970's was a propagator of the new values. The growing popularity of rock and disco leads one intuitively to assume that the mechanism for disseminating new values has been strengthened. Yet, the growth in the popularity of country and western music could possibly lead to maintaining an equilibrium state. But in the black communities across the country, music supporting the new values tends to saturate the airwaves. Moreover, the growing popularity of this music and of the values and attitudes displayed by its lyrics have resulted in a public outcry against its perceived demoralizing and negative behavioral effects by at least one nationally prominent black leader.

Musical Experiences of Offenders

It was assumed that the musical preferences of offenders might provide additional clues to their value orientation. The results, however, are far less promising than had been hoped. Most offenders indicated that they did not enjoy listening to records, contrasting with the expected response as

there is substantial evidence that this is a popular activity in the black community. It is unknown if this represented a misinterpretation of the question, or if this simply did not represent an enjoyable activity. Yet when members of the sample ranked this activity among other leisure activities, it was usually ranked high. It might be that listening to records is viewed as a supplementary activity associated with some more highly valued primary activity; and when it appears as a single item, it loses some of its importance. Listening to records, then, might be influenced, in terms of enjoyment level, by the context in which the activity takes place.

It is quite possible that listening to records is viewed as a socializing experience in the presence of others, i.e., parties, dances, tavern outings. On the other hand, watching TV might be considered a restful and relaxing experience to be enjoyed in a private or semi-private state. If this is a valid point, it becomes more difficult to determine the role of value dissemination through listening to recordings. It is quite possible that the ubiquitous presence of this mode of communications may more often lead to a subliminal acceptance of values, as opposed to a direct acquisition of values via listening to records. The fact that offenders indicate that they do not enjoy listening to records does not mean that they seldom participate in this activity, nor does the lyrical content fail to have an impact upon their value orientation.

Changing Musical Tastes as an Expression of Changing Community Values

By 1975 the most popular recordings aimed at the nation's black communities were clearly beginning to manifest different orientations and styles than those observed during the era of the predominance of soul music. The

fusion of blues and gospel styles of the prior era were becoming less evident in the Soul Brothers Top 20, published weekly by Jet magazine. The fusion of rock and soul was beginning to show itself, and evidence of a decline in old values was apparent. An enumeration of the 13 records that appeared in the Soul Brothers Top 20 for the longest number of weeks during the calendar year 1975 can be employed to validate this point. These 13 records are shown in table 47.

Table 47.

The Thirteen Most Popular Records in the Nation's Black Communities -- 1975

<u>Record</u>	<u>Artist</u>	<u>Values</u>
Lady Marmalade	La Belle	New
This Will Be	Natalie Cole	Mixed
Supernatural Thing	Ben E. King	New
Get Down Tonight	K.C. and the Sunshine Band	New
Games People Play	Spinners	Old
Shining Star	Earth, Wind and Fire	Old
Fly Robin, Fly	Silver Convention	Old
Let's Do It Again	Staple Singers	New
Love Won't Let Me Wait	Major Harris	New
Get Down, Get Down	Joe Simon	New
Fire	Ohio Players	New
Fight the Power	Isley Brothers	Old
Hope That We Can Be Together Soon	Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes	Old

While there is variety among the choices, with evidence of both old and new values, it is clear that new values predominate. In the 1960's, Rokeach had shown that blacks were most supportive of value orientations associated with freedom, equality, a comfortable life, and self-respect. These may, in this instance, be viewed as the old values. An exciting life, pleasure, and social recognition were values found on the low end of the terminal value; thus, their ascendancy might permit us to describe them as new values. The new values clearly predominate in the lyrical content of the top records that were beamed into the black community. The most frequently occurring value was pleasure, followed by an exciting life. Of the old values, inner harmony, self-respect, freedom, and equality were the most frequently observed, but they were seen far less often than the new values.

It is unknown how important value shifts, as reflected in changes in the lyrical content of black popular music, are in terms of their influence on the consumer's behavior. But these trends should not go unobserved if they are thought to promote patterns of behavior that could spur the potential for aggression and subsequently increase the potential for behavior leading to death. To the extent that values govern behavior, this new phase of musical development could possibly be implicated in the growing incidence of homicide in the nation's black communities.

Further, the music consumed by the black community is a product of the stage of development of the larger national culture, which has been described by Lasch as "The Culture of Narcissism." Concern with individual pleasure and with personal gratification appears to transcend all else in late twentieth century America. Moreover, the values expressed in much of the music now permeating the black community is congruent with this orientation. Over the

past 100 years, black music has shifted its emphasis from a concern with group salvation to a concern with immediate self-gratification. Although the despair associated with limited prior opportunity no longer represents the focal concern of black popular music, the alternate set of concerns that have come to dominate music consumed by blacks does not indicate they have overcome that despair. To the contrary, it appears that the population has succumbed to the most negative influences associated with an external value system which threatens to undermine the existing national structure.

In terms of the destructive potential associated with emerging value shifts, selected segments of the black population appear most vulnerable. Lasch has described aspects of this emerging cultural orientation in the following way:

Today Americans are overcome not by the sense of endless possibility but by the banality of the social order they have erected against it. Having internalized the social restraints by means of which they formally sought to keep possibility within civilized limits, they feel themselves overwhelmed by an annihilating boredom, like animals whose instincts have withered in captivity. A reversion to savagery threatens them so little that they long precisely for a more vigorous instinctual existence. People nowadays complain of an inability to feel (1978: 11).

Summary

The topic of values and subcultural orientations have permeated this document throughout most of our discussions. This orientation was chosen because it has assumed an important role in homicide research and because it has assumed an important role in homicide research and because it is a convenient way of attempting to tap the impact of external forces, i.e., the environment on behavior. In this section of the report, we engage in a truncated discussion of a very complex topic, employing a somewhat idiosyncratic approach. Both direct and indirect evidence were employed to attempt to specify the role of values on the potential behavior of our offender sample, as well as the general influence of values on lifestyle choices in the nation's black communities.

A number of prior intuitive judgments were brought into question as a result of the associations that emerged with regard to specific terminal values. But, as a rule, the terminal values ranked highest by individual self-image groups were in the appropriate direction. Our attempt to evaluate instrumental values was more obtuse and provided less clear evidence on who placed the strongest attachments on individual instrumental values. One thing is clear, though, regarding our sample of offenders, and that is they are generally future-oriented, even under the bleakest of circumstances.

The use of musical tastes as a means of attempting to document the modal value orientations of consumers of popular music in the black community appears to represent a potentially fruitful approach. As of now, it remains a formally untapped source of information, which might shed additional light on general shifts in values in that community, as well as the potential behavioral consequences associated with value shifts. The materials presented in this section

are no doubt the most tentative in allowing us to gain insights into the problem at hand, but they are at the same time among the more intellectually challenging sources of information presented in terms of some future work on the question of culture and blacks resorting to acts of lethal violence.

SECTION THIRTEEN

OVERVIEW AND SELECTED RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Life in large urban centers has been associated with economic gains for selected members of at least two generations of black migrants. During this interval blacks have been transformed from a basically rural population to a predominantly urban population and have come to represent a significant numerical element in many of the nation's older and larger central cities. Although progress can be measured on a variety of indices in association with the previously noted rural to urban transition, a number of serious problems have also accompanied the change in the modal environmental context of residence. This report has addressed itself to one of the many problems confronting blacks in large urban environments, but one that seems to have attracted only limited public attention: the unusually high incidence of homicide deaths among black Americans.

Black-on-black homicide is a major cause of death among black Americans and one that disproportionately leads to reducing the life span of black males. By employing an interdisciplinary approach to a preliminary assessment of the problem, this pilot investigation has attempted to provide some clues to the rapid escalation in this mode during the period 1970-75. The basic goal of this research has been to attempt to acquire a more precise understanding of variables contributing to black homicide in large urban environments. Subsequent to achieving this research objective, it is assumed that a set of

recommendations might be forged which would result in a lowered level of risk of victimization.

Changing National Norms and the Role of Culture on Homicide Incidence

In a number of the earlier sections of this report, much emphasis was placed on changing national norms and on subsequent changes in the structure of American values. It was assumed that this represented a suitable overarching structure to be employed in attempting to understand the increasing role of violence as an element in American society in general and in the nation's larger black communities in particular. Such a framework would also facilitate an examination of the various theories, which relate to the role of culture on the propensity to commit acts of lethal violence, that have been put forth and that continue to find support in some quarters.

As the nation has moved from a period in which agrarian values dictated the roles of conduct in interpersonal relationships, to values chiefly fostered by industrial dominance, and finally to a period in which post-industrial values are beginning to gnaw away at previously held traditions, these earlier notions regarding the appropriateness of using violence in specific contexts have also been altered. Throughout this report it has been assumed that interpersonal conduct leading to violent displays was culturally conditioned and that any changes in the cultural superstructure could possibly alter the pattern of violent responses in various ways. During the most recent fifteen-year period, violent deaths, i.e., homicides, suicides, and accidents, have emerged as the third leading cause of death in the nation (Holinger, 1980: 472); and this in part has been attributed to a lack of respect for traditional values by young adults (Waldron and Eyer, 1975: 383-396).

In almost all units in a national system of cities, there is growing evidence that the changes previously described have set the stage for increases in the risk of violent victimization in urban environments primarily occupied by a diverse black population. Moreover, in such instances, value shifts and subcultural explanations simply provide clues to the range of expected behavior under a prescribed set of circumstances. These circumstances evolve out of a combination of external determinants and internal responses.

High Homicide Risk Environments and the Pattern of Victimization

During the most recent period, the increasing complexity of circumstances in which individuals find themselves and the growing diffuseness regarding what might be considered a normative response often lead to behavior that is inimical to the best interest of the group and of the community of which it is a part. From the perspective of black youth, whose commitment to the values of their parents has been weakened by the emergence of new values, the incongruence between perceived and actual opportunity in the urban economy sets into motion a range of behaviors that were uncommon during a prior period. The incidence of black-on-black homicide is just one example of the behavioral manifestations of this situation that detracts from the quality of life available in large urban environments.

In an attempt to draw public attention to the homicide problem and to state more precisely its dimensions, this study has focused exclusively on the growing seriousness of this problem in several of the nation's larger black communities. Few studies during the most recent upsurge in homicide frequency

have devoted exclusive attention to the population at greatest risk of victimization -- black Americans. Thus our effort, of necessity, had to rely on existing models as a means of attempting to unravel the various strands that account for blacks being both the principal victims and offenders in homicide transactions, at least on a per capita basis.

Another uncommon feature of this investigation was to assign a higher priority to the homicide environment than has usually been the case. It was found that the risk of homicide victimization varies greatly over space within the black community generally, but that the extent of the variation was partially related both to the nature of a given city's spatial configuration and to the sorting out of population along socioeconomic and lifestyle orientations. Varying combinations of environmental attributes obviously are associated with inherent risk-promoting features that are independent of external forces leading to variation in aggregate frequency of homicide within a specified time interval.

High risk environments were prevalent in each of our sample cities. Likewise, a set of stable high risk environments could often be identified. Nevertheless, the structure of victimization was observed to differ within specific high risk environments such that high-risk expressive and instrumental environments were likely to occur within different segments of the black community. A preliminary investigation has allowed us to target the location of this dual set of high risk environments and to consider ways that might be most appropriate in reducing risk in those areas which contribute most to raising the total level of victimization within some specified time interval. The presence of stable high risk environments seems to suggest the existence of

a subculture of violence that is place specific, even at a micro-scale. In those high risk environments where expressive violence represents the modal type, shades of the southern regional culture of violence predominate; and the cast of participants generally involves persons who have lost hope of ever escaping their marginal economic status.

High risk environments in which instrumentally motivated acts predominate are often place specific within the context of the black community. They tend more often to be found outside of the context of poverty neighborhoods, with working class neighborhoods more often representing the modal site. Such neighborhoods no doubt represent environments of greater opportunity for the commission of the type of felony in which the probability of a lethal response is heightened, i.e., armed robbery. Since the basic motivation associated with this dichotomous homicide pattern is different, one should expect differences in the modal environment of victimization. Yet there is much evidence of overlapping spatial patterns and changes in modal dominance in specific neighborhood clusters over time. This we attribute to the population dynamics occurring within black communities, which frequently lead to alteration of neighborhood structure, both in terms of stage in the life cycle and in socioeconomic status.

Attempts to explain risk at the neighborhood scale, employing a set of structural variables, produced mixed results. The structural variables employed were less likely to explain risk in those environments where stress was low to intermediate than were they in high stress neighborhoods. High stress neighborhoods were much more likely to be environments dominated by expressive violence; instrumental violence was generally more commonplace in environments of intermediate stress, a situation indicating the juxtaposition

of poor and non-poor populations. Only recently has more attention been devoted to this dichotomous set of homicide motivations.

Parker and Smith (1979: 614-622) recently noted that the failure to recognize these motivational distinctions led to a weakness in accurately specifying the contribution of individual variables on homicide rates, as well as the strength of deterrence. At a much larger scale, i. e., states as units of analysis, the previous writers produced findings similar to our own in terms of the strength of a common set of predictors to explain differential risk without acknowledging that homicide does not represent a unidimensional phenomenon. As those writers suggested, increased effort should be devoted to the specification of models that are more likely to predict risk of instrumental or non-primary homicides.

Regional Differences in Homicide Pattern

Our interest in the role of value shifts resulted in our employment of life cycle stage and sex role differences as major points of departure in our effort to shed as much light as possible on this poorly understood phenomena. These variables were primarily examined through the use of statistics secured from public health departments and segments of the criminal justice system. This approach allowed us to simultaneously pursue the applicability of the two principal premises of the role of culture on the propensity for violence within a context of black residence in selected urban environments. Like many previous writers, we found weaknesses in both, but attempted to resolve the differences existing between the two on the basis of norms associated with the primary motivations for engaging in conflicts leading to death, which we agreed

were regionally specific -- at least at some point of temporal origin. Thus, a major premise extracted from the subculture of violence and southern regional culture of violence theses was that the former was predicated upon using violence to acquire some valued resource, whereas the latter was more likely to be related to preserving a valued position or relationship.

Blacks, we contend, were simply socialized in a context where one or the other principal motivation was operant. Because of both the black population's economic marginality and the environment's role upon their personality development, they were more likely to resort to violence when these dual norms suggested violence to be an appropriate response. We contend this led southern blacks to frequently engage in acts of expressive violence as a function of being socialized in an agrarian system, where honor and respect were primary themes associated with norms of conduct.

The desire for material resources on the part of blacks, who find these resources difficult to acquire through legitimate channels, leads to a willingness on the part of some group members to engage in violence to achieve such goals. The socialization process that provides legitimacy for this behavior is thought to have evolved in an urban industrial context, but has attained maturity in post-industrial settings. This leads to a much higher probability of primary homicide, i.e., expressive, in large southern urban environments and the inverse in large northern environments. The mix of the black population in terms of regional socialization patterns, stage in the life cycle, economic marginality, and ability to successfully penetrate the legitimate economy are likely to greatly influence the expressive-instrumental

mix in the pattern of homicide victimization within a given urban setting. The secondary data employed in this analysis provide some support this position, but more scrutiny will be necessary in order to provide validation.

The Structure of the Study

The two-tiered structure associated with this investigation has allowed us to view this issue both on a broad general level and on the basis of individual responses to specific items thought to be associated with a broad range of behaviors that influences the risk of victimization. Greater insight into the situations, ambitions, and feelings of individual actors, who were in some way associated with the homicidal drama, was gained through face-to-face contact.

The shortcomings associated with the conduct of the survey and the resulting small sample size were outlined in the initial section of the report. But despite these shortcomings, at least on an intuitive basis, there was much to be gained from this experience. The complementarity associated with this two-tiered approach provides advantages that would not be possible in simply using one approach or the other in attempting to establish the merits of this pilot investigation to provide insight into the recent upsurge in black homicide.

Our survey data tapped a wide variety of responses to life in the black community in particular and in urban America in general. Although it would have been scientifically more meritorious to have captured a larger share of the randomly drawn sample, the nature of the sample population and the time constraint under which we were operating precluded that possibility. Nevertheless,

the responses extracted from our several actor groups enable us to proceed cautiously in an attempt to specify those forces currently at work which prompt individuals with specific characteristics to behave in ways that heighten the risk of victimization. Another principal advantage of this approach was the ability to seek responses from offenders and representatives of victims. In the first tier of this investigation, little emphasis was placed on the offender's role because our primary focus was on the victim; that shortcoming was basically overcome in the second section of the report.

The nature of the survey responses enabled us to determine how well individual actors were functioning in the urban social economy, but failed to provide the desired insight into the direct contributions of the micro-environment to status and the threat of victimization. But the sample was not drawn in such a way that it could be subarea specific within the context of the larger black community. The individual's perception of his or her environment was tapped, but the density of these responses would not allow one to generalize about the role of individual neighborhoods on a variety of elements thought to be important contributors to risk. Thus, our survey data largely enabled us to compile a set of personal histories and to deduce how those histories led to homicidal outcome.

Although our survey data did not shed much light on the role of the micro-environment on risk of victimization, it did reveal a strong association between self-image and community reputation on a broad spectrum of behavioral and attitudinal traits. These traits often served as significant predictors of behavior that had a high likelihood of proving troublesome for the respondent. The dichotomous hustler/non-hustler image forged by offenders

often served as a critical variable in attempts to explain one's world view. This seems to represent a productive approach to aid in understanding current behavior. But it is obviously more important to learn what elements lead individuals to view themselves along the hustler/non-hustler continuum, for those forces are most important in influencing lifestyle preferences and the willingness to engage in a variety of activities to support those lifestyles.

This investigation brought that issue into sharper focus, at least as it relates to the risk of victimization; but much additional work is required in this area if we are expected to intervene in effectively reducing the risk of victimization and at the same time promoting the development of strong black communities. What information that is now currently available on this topic must be drawn from the spate of anecdotal works that have appeared within the last several years, but they all describe communities of despair rather than communities of hope.

Specific black populations were chosen as targets of this investigation. Residents of the central cities of Atlanta, St. Louis, and Detroit between 1970-75 constituted our primary population; and residents of Houston, Pittsburgh, and Los Angeles were our secondary target population. These places satisfied our several criteria related to patterns of black population growth, changing economies, and regional location. The attention given our secondary cities in this pilot effort was much less than originally planned. But the two-tier approach we chose to employ, in terms of data collection and analysis, simply left much less time and effort to be given to the latter group of places. Nevertheless, there appears to exist a series of comparative homicide trends. Among our sample cities, only Pittsburgh is without a well-

matched counterpart, and we attribute that to its much smaller black population base.

The homicide trajectories, during the previously specified interval, were characterized by different slopes. By the end of the interval, the absolute level of black victimization was decreasing in Atlanta and Detroit, but increasing in St. Louis. Since the Atlanta and Detroit populations were projected to be growing more rapidly than the St. Louis population, we can conclude that risk of victimization was increasing in the latter city, while showing signs of decrease in the former. Among the secondary cities, homicide frequency was on the increase, except in Pittsburgh, where it showed signs of instability. The question of risk in Houston and Los Angeles is less clear, but it generally appears that risk is also rising.

Knowledge of Structure of Victimization Necessary Basis for Recommended Intervention Strategies

In order to be able to suggest place specific recommendations, however, one needs to become familiar with the structure of victimization and the modal environment of greatest risk. It was demonstrated that acquaintance homicides showed the greatest decline among young adult males in Atlanta; the inverse of this situation was true in St. Louis. In Detroit there was a downturn in the level of instrumental victimization during this interval. The crudeness of our measures of expressive and instrumental deaths, however, could lead to misclassifications, resulting in minor exaggerations in the structure of victimization at the individual city level. This was previously illustrated by citing the softness of the category defined as unknowns in

calculating the level of instrumental death. Improved police clearance rates could shift a person from the unknown category to the acquaintance category, which would lead to the impression that instrumental deaths were decreasing, when in fact the opposite might be true. A case in point is the solving of deaths related to the control of the drug trade. Such deaths are clearly instrumentally motivated, but often bring together victims and offenders who are known to one another, i. e., acquaintances. It appears from our data that the possibility for the greatest misclassification might possibly have occurred in St. Louis during the interval between 1970-75.

The structure of victimization in our three city sample was city specific and influenced the microenvironment of risk in individual places. Expressive homicides clearly predominate in Atlanta; instrumental deaths take on greater relative importance in both Detroit and St. Louis. The extent to which the existing patterns continue to prevail appears to be directly related to the modal lifestyle orientation of young adult males, a situation largely influenced by the changing nature of the economy and by value shifts taking place within the larger society. Increased secularization and the growth of have-not populations with full knowledge of the cornucopia of goods to be consumed in American society have set the stage for the homicide epidemic in the nation's black communities during the previous decade.

What black communities have witnessed during this interval is an inability to protect themselves from within by being unable to screen out influences that abet certain patterns of deviancy which emanate outside of those communities. Of course, this is a logical outcome of tastes that are furthered by the principal promoters of a consumer orientation aimed at more affluent

"have" populations, but which are adopted by those located in a nested hierarchy of subcommunities characterized by continuously less affluence and by those who are increasingly more intolerant of being shut off from a valued set of material resources.

In our view, the foregoing situation has promoted behavior that has increased the relative importance of homicide as a primary cause of death during the previously described interval and has at the same time seriously altered the structure of victimization. Although homicides occurring as an outgrowth of passion, jealousy, and quickness to anger are still commonplace, those associated with avarice and narcissism have evolved under a different set of conditions that threatens to erode any gains acquired by those holding onto the old values or developing the necessary skills to advance in a changing economy.

Young adult black males have been most seriously affected by this turn of events. Those least able to adapt to these changing circumstances are at the greatest risk of victimization. The number of life years lost among victims in our sample averaged 27. The major killer diseases are much less ruthless in that they strike their victims at higher average ages and thus lead to many fewer life years lost. The cohort of black males born since 1945 has become the group most subject to both the greatest likelihood of falling victim to homicide acts, as well as becoming victim to instrumentally motivated behavior. The younger age structure of the urban black population partially accounts for this phenomena; but in those cities with large elderly populations, they too have become increasingly vulnerable, although the

absolute risk decreases with age. In his nine-year study of Chicago, Block points out that older black males experienced the highest percentage excess-increase in victimization among age-race-sex groups, and he largely attributes this to an increase in robbery homicides (Block, 1976: 504).

It has been demonstrated that homicide in the nation's larger urban environments is not a trivial cause of death. Possibly because blacks and other low status persons have a history of a quick resort to violence, which frequently leads to death, little concern has been exhibited during this most recent epidemic because members of the larger society consider this to represent normative behavior for members of this population. This attitude is projected by Briggs-Bruce in his defense of the citizen's right to bear arms. In this context he states, "The great majority of these killings are among poor, restless, alcoholic, troubled people, usually with long criminal records. Applying the domestic homicide rate of these people to the presumably upstanding citizens whom they prey upon is seriously misleading" (Briggs-Bruce 1976: 40). But another response to this situation was recently expressed by Wolfgang. He indicates that "so long as the poor and blacks were raping, robbing, and killing one another, the general majority public concern with crimes of violence was minimal" (Wolfgang, 1978: 147). But the growing spillover of this behavior now threatens persons beyond the margins of the nation's black communities such that it is no longer what Briggs-Bruce simplistically refers to as a "niggertown Saturday night" phenomenon.

The Need to Promote Ongoing Research Efforts

As has been pointed out numerous times in this report, homicide is not a unidimensional phenomenon. Like many other leading causes of death, it

has a complex etiology and is thus not subject to an easy solution. Its many strains cannot be isolated in a laboratory setting as is true of disease-based killers, thereby making it even more difficult to explicate than the non-behavioral causes of death. Yet each of the major killer diseases is able to attract financial resources for research that is expected to lead to their eradication through foundations established for that purpose. Through continuous, costly, painstaking research, the American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association are slowly but surely having some impact on the risk of death from these diseases. Unfortunately, no such foundation exists to provide ongoing support of research that would lead to reducing homicide deaths. This is either an indication that homicide is perceived to be only a minor contributor to the risk of dying, that it is too complex an issue to justify the investment that might be required to reduce its intensity, or that its disproportionate impact upon segments of the black population is inadequate to arouse national interest in its minimization.

What Will It Cost to Bring Homicide Risk Down to Some Acceptable Level?

It seems safe to conclude that the perceived benefits of such an investment do not justify the benefits to be derived. What represents an acceptable level of risk in this area? And, how much are we willing to pay to reduce the current risk to some to-be-determined acceptable risk? Such questions are seldom formally asked, but our ballooning health care costs tend to indicate that Americans are indeed willing to defray the expenditures associated with attempts to delay death, albeit even if it is through third party payment mechanisms. Dinman, in his discussion of risks on the expenditures necessary to reduce them, has this to say: "Those risks that excite general concern

are marked by a willingness to commit public resources to prevention are, per se, unacceptable" (1980: 1227).

A major goal of homicide research should be to make the current levels of risk unacceptable. But in order to do that, we must be able to specify what measures should be taken and what they would cost us. Whether we are willing to take the most effective measures depends upon how much segments of society are willing to sacrifice, and the level of reduced risk that might be expected by introducing various measures.

Public Response to One Suggested Risk Lowering Strategy

Recommendations that are thought likely to lead to a reduction in the risk of victimization are highly varied and frequently seemingly infeasible, as evidenced by the public's response to them. This statement is partially predicated upon the call for an effective gun regulation policy and the strength of the efforts of countervailing forces to assure the public that this is either too high a price to pay for risk or that risk is not likely to be seriously altered in the high risk environments which we have identified. Yet, Farley thinks most of the recent increase in homicide deaths can be attributed to gun availability. He states unequivocally ". . . that, within the non-white community, the increase in homicide results almost exclusively from murders by guns" (Farley, 1980: 184). This, like many other attributes, is not likely to be easily or quickly resolved.

Our recommendations of the steps to reduce the risk of victimization will not treat the gun and other standard deterrent issues, i.e., the role of the court, in this report. A supplemental report will be produced several months hence that will reflect an evaluation of these issues as they have potential

impact on risk in our primary and secondary sample cities. The time required to analyze that information would simply have further delayed making available information which we think should become available at the earliest possible date.

The Role of the Opportunity Structure on Risk ✓

At this time, on the basis of our approach to the study of black-on-black homicide, our most significant recommendations will focus on the opportunity structure, and the need for more effective programs to enable a larger share of persons to escape the necessity of choosing lifestyles that are risk-promoting. Our data showed that more than one-half of all offenders and only slightly less than one-half of all victims were unemployed at the time of the incident. Unless persons, and particularly young persons, can identify productive outlets for their excess energy, the heavy burden of discretionary time is likely to prove troublesome. If we are unable to develop acceptable opportunities for such persons, the risk will remain high; and they will simply represent a population surplus that we are unable to accommodate in our rapidly changing economy.

The Need for Innovative Educational Programs as a Risk Abatement Strategy ✓

Another finding, which is related to the previous one, is the lack of success of the standard or regular educational programs to sustain the interest of persons who often become either victims or offenders. School suspensions, truancy, and inability to find a role for themselves in the schools' extra-curricular programs were all earmarks of persons likely to later encounter

risk-enhancing difficulties. It is imperative that we develop non-stigmatizing educational programs which can successfully both educate and simultaneously generate feelings of self-worth in persons whom the regular or traditional school programs tend to deny worth. If we are serious about producing potentially productive citizens out of persons who appear to be programmed for failure within the traditional school organizational structure, a major overhaul of our urban public school systems might be required. These persons can usually be identified very early in their school careers and should be candidates for programs designed to treat their specific problems.

Magnet schools have been designed to slow white flight from our school systems under court order to desegregate, and they are usually outfitted with the most attractive programs conceivable. Thus, concepts of this sort must not only be employed to prevent white and upwardly mobile blacks from fleeing to the suburbs, but they should also be designed to prevent children who encounter difficulties in traditional programs from moving toward an early death. More than a decade ago, Robins indicated that school truancy was a good indicator of St. Louis schoolboys who would die at an early age (1968, 15-19), and our data finds that this and other indices of lack of school success do indeed point in that direction.

The Need to Promote Alternative Lifestyle Orientations as Means of Altering Risk

As stated earlier, the hustler/non-hustler self-image that distinguished offenders turned out to be a primary determinant of lifestyle preferences and tastes which were risk promoting. In order to make the hustle a less viable option, or to at least direct those personalities with the inclination to

devote creative energy toward survival into legitimate outlets, the opportunity structure in the nation's black communities must be expanded. Failing at this, a variety of subeconomies will emerge in which illicit activity will constitute an integral element.

Institutional Responses to Risk

These recommendations all revolve around attempts to forge local institutional structures that enhance one's chance of surviving in urban America rather than increasing the risk of failure and the subsequent risk of an early death. In order to alter these risks, as a nation we must be unwilling to sacrifice a growing element of young adult blacks who indiscriminately choose lifestyles which are fostered by an overemphasis on consumerism at the expense of longevity. Yet longevity, although a desired object in and of itself, must include a full and productive life. These are problems that appear intractable; but unless we are able to come to grips with them, the number of victims and offenders in cities can generally be expected to increase.

Major institutions do not respond quickly to what is perceived to represent a non-crisis situation. So, even if massive efforts of the sort discussed above were initiated, the benefits would probably be slow in coming. Nevertheless, they will be required if we wish to reduce the risk within a cohort by some specified ratio, such that a given cohort might be subject to the probability of an increase in its total life years. In the meantime, local programs which reflect the needs of local communities to treat the problem can be developed by organizations established for that purpose in conjunction with existing public agencies. The idea of establishing homicide

prevention efforts, patterned after other preventive organizational efforts, appears to be new.

Nancy Allen, who is a health education specialist at U.C.L.A. and who has previous experience with other forms of life threatening behavior, recently published a book that suggests ways to initiate homicide prevention (Allen, 1980). This simply indicates that some interest is beginning to surface which attempts to foster or marshal efforts, at all levels, to come to grips with a serious form of life threatening behavior.

Approaches to Risk Reduction on the Basis of Specific Contributors to Risk

The preventative methods employed to curb one set of homicide motivations may not be effective for another set of motivations. Most attention is now focused on attempts to bring predatory behavior under control. In those environments where instrumental behavior adds appreciably to the risk of victimization, programs centered around drug education and abuse seem to be vital. New drugs, with which neither consumers nor medical practitioners have much previous experience, are appearing in our communities. But it is apparent that the behavioral consequences of ingestion increase the risk of victimization.

Efforts are underway in some communities to rid themselves of persons actively promoting the distribution and sale of phencyclidine, known variously as angel dust, PCP, etc. The black press in Los Angeles recently reported local efforts to rid the community of this dangerous drug. It was also recently reported in the Journal of the National Medical Association that PCP abusers treated at the Martin Luther King Jr. General Hospital in Los Angeles

were predominantly black, even though the hospital's service population was 40 per cent Mexican-American (Alexander, 1980: 849).

There is little question that drugs have played a role in the increased victimization, but we must gain a more precise knowledge of the role of individual drugs upon the incidence of violent death. The phencyclidine problem among sample cities surfaced only in Los Angeles. But drug abuse and drug apparatus were found to be considerable in both St. Louis and Detroit. A major effort is required to bring the illicit drug trade under control in those cities where it is known to heighten the risk of victimization, especially among young adult males.

Block suggests that the problem of robbery homicide could possibly be reduced by providing low-income, high-risk environment residents with a greater access to the cashless society (1977: 100). He is also a strong supporter of hardening the target through a variety of physical design innovations in high-risk communities. The latter strategy has been strongly promoted by Newman, whose work in this area has become well-known. In addressing himself to this issue in one of our sample cities, St. Louis, he partially attributes the high crime rate in the low-income black community to the design characteristics of some public housing units (Newman, 1980: 91-92).

In the past most persons have assumed that non-predatory homicides were outside the realm of public intervention as they most often occurred in private rather than public space. But as domestic disturbances continue to aggravate the risk of victimization, a few police departments have introduced Family Crisis Intervention Units to aid in amelioration of risk. Such a unit was placed into operation in Atlanta in 1976. It is not known how effective

this mechanism has been in altering the risk of family victimization in this instance. This and other innovative techniques are required where domestic homicide rates reflect the need for intervention. Since most non-predatory homicides occur between friends and relatives, far less effort has been expended on formal programs that might lead to alleviation of risk.

Summary

We have attempted to establish the importance of homicide as a primary cause of death in many of the nation's larger black communities. Like most other causes of death, it does not represent a unidimensional phenomenon, but rather one characterized by many complex interactions between persons and their environment. Many of the facets of life in urban America that we think add to a better understanding of the problem were pursued in this pilot investigation. But we have only tapped the surface of understanding. We envision, however, being able to establish a precise set of relations that can be expected to increase the risk of victimization under a given set of circumstances.

If we are unable to begin to intervene in the risk of victimization in high risk urban environments, the currently popular song in the nation's black communities, "Another One Bites the Dust," will accurately describe the wild westlike atmosphere that has come to pervade sub-areas in black communities across the nation.

NOTES

SECTION ONE

1. The absence of published data, which can be secured from a central repository, describing the race of the victim at the city level makes it difficult to engage in comparative race specific assessments of homicide victimization patterns between cities.

2. The data describing homicide victimization rates in 1973 includes in the denominator blacks and members of other races who are not described as white. The relatively small numbers of such persons among homicide victims does not seriously alter the accuracy of the rate attributed to blacks.

3. The two transactions described in the case reports were reconstructed by Laura Moser, a Project Assistant in this research project.

SECTION FIVE

1. Six cities constituted the sample cities: Houston, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Los Angeles, and Atlanta. However, data on black female homicide victims were only available for three: Houston, Detroit, and Atlanta.

2. Sampling was with replacement with homicide victims in the six cities in 1973 and 1974.

SECTION SIX

1. For a more in-depth interview of the literature, see also Joy Pollock, "Early Theories of Female Criminality," in Women, Crime and the Criminal Justice System, ed. Lee H. Bowker (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1978).

2. Instrumental violence is defined as violence designed to enable one to secure a goal, i.e., money, other material goods and so forth, as opposed to expressive violence, which results from a situationally motivated outburst of anger.

3. Sampling was with replacement with homicide victims killed in the six cities in 1973 and 1974.

4. No female offender agreed to an interview in St. Louis, so the sub-sample consists of two offenders from Atlanta and seven from Detroit.

5. Although there were 119 female offenders in the six sample cities for 1975, there were only 117 victims. The percentages of weapons are calculated on the number of victims as opposed to the number of offenders.

SECTION TWELVE

1. A more detailed treatment of the data collected describing victim values will be included in a supplemental report that will also treat selected additional facets of the problem.

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