SEXUAL VICTIMIZATION REPORTING: THE EFFECTS OF INDIVIDUAL AND COUNTY FACTORS ON VICTIMS’ DECISION TO REPORT TO THE POLICE

A Thesis in
Administration of Justice

by

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This dissertation used a social ecology framework (Barker, 1968; Hawley, 1950, 1986; Janowitz, 1978; Meier & Miethe, 1993) to examine the effects of individual- and contextual-level factors on victims’ decision to contact the police. Two studies were conducted. The first study surveyed college students to investigate social norms regarding the labeling of and the advice to report criminal events to the police. Specifically, two questions guided the research: (a) whether the nature of the victim-offender relationship (acquaintances, acquaintances in a long-standing dispute, acquaintances who were provoked, strangers), and (b) whether the subjects’ county of origin (rural versus urban) affected the labeling of and the advice to report the event to the police. Results indicated that the severity of the assault, victim-offender relationship, and county-type affected the labeling of and the advice to report crimes.

Study 2 examined the combined effects of individual-level and contextual-level factors on actual sexual assault victims’ decision to contact the police. This study used victimization data collected by 48 rape crisis centers throughout Pennsylvania. Because of the hierarchical nature of the data (victims nested within counties), and because the dependent variable was dichotomous, hierarchical logistic regression was used to examine victims’ decisions to contact the police. Individual-level factors, including the severity of the assault, and the victim’s age, level of intoxication, and relationship to the offender, were examined. Contextual-level factors examined included county type, gender equality, victim services, and percentage of stranger assaults.

Results demonstrated that both individual and county factors affect victims’ decision to contact the police. At the individual level, severity of the assault, offender type, and their
interaction affected victims’ decision. That is, the odds of the victim contacting the police were
greater when the assault was severe or was committed by a stranger. The significant interaction
term indicated that even when the assault was severe, victims assaulted by known offenders were
unlikely to report to the police. At the county level, indicators traditionally associated with
crime (i.e., population density, population heterogeneity, poverty, and proportion of males 15 to
24) reduced the odds of victims contacting the police. In addition, county type moderated the
effects of both gender equality and victim services on victims’ decision to contact the police.
Specifically, increased gender equality or victim services decreased the odds that rural as
compared to urban victims reported to the police, net of the other factors in the model.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction – Rape and Sexual Assault Prevalence and Reporting

According to the 2001 Uniform Crime Reports (FBI, 2001), 90,491 rapes were reported to the police in the United States. However, this number likely underestimates the annual number of rapes, as government estimates suggest that 3 to 10 times more rapes occur than are reported (Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, 1975). Moreover, many victims suffer multiple victimizations. Figures on the prevalence of repeat sexual victimization vary from a low of 21% of victims based on a clinical sample (Ellis, Atkeson, & Calhoun, 1982) to a high of 67% based on a community sample (Sorenson, Stein, Siegel, Golding, & Burman, 1987).

Regardless of the actual rate of victimizations, the individual and societal costs of sexual assault are high. Many sexual assault victims report physical trauma (Coker, Walls, & Johnson, 1998; Koss, Heise, & Russo, 1994; Koss, Koss, & Woodruff, 1991) and psychological trauma (Kimerling & Calhoun, 1992; Rothbaum, Foa, Riggs, Murdock, & Walsh, 1992). The social cost, though rarely considered, goes beyond the expenditures to operate social support and criminal justice agencies, to include additional medical expenses and decreased health and productivity found among victimized employees (Golding, 1994, 1996; Koss, et al., 1991; Miller, Cohen, & Wiersema, 1996). Indeed, one study found that when pain, suffering, and lost quality of life of the victim are included in the cost of rape, the cost rises from $7.5 billion to $127 billion annually (Miller et al., 1996).

This research will focus on aspects about the victim and society that may affect sexual victimization and reporting. At the individual level, attributes of the victim (e.g., age, gender) increase the risk of being raped (Koss & Dinero, 1989; Schwartz & Pitts, 1995). In addition, alcohol consumption and a relationship between the victim and the offender decrease the
likelihood of individuals both labeling an event a crime and suggesting that such an event should be reported to the police (Ruback, Ménard, Outlaw, & Shaffer, 1999). Thus, in addition to the macro level factors outlined below, the study will also examine the effect of individual-level characteristics, such as alcohol consumption, and victim-offender relationship, on reporting to the police. It was hypothesized that the severity of the assault, victims’ youth, victims’ alcohol consumption, and victims’ acquaintanceship with the perpetrator would decrease the likelihood of reporting to the police.

At the contextual level, a society that espouses gender inequality may increase the risk of rape incidence by normalizing violent behavior against women (Baron & Straus, 1987). In addition, greater economic disparity may also increase rape victimization by failing to provide needed services to victims. Similarly, a rural environment characterized by greater secrecy regarding personal problems, greater acquaintance density, and greater physical isolation has also been found to increase the risk of sexual assault victimization and to decrease reporting to the police (Ruback & Ménard, 2001). Failure to report sexual assault reduces the consequences for offenders and may serve to normalize the behavior. This normalization process may increase the risk of victimization while decreasing the rate of reporting. Information regarding the characteristics of the county in which the victim resides was examined to determine their role, if any, on victimization and reporting behavior. It was hypothesized that rural counties with greater acquaintance density, less gender equality, and limited funding for victim services would have higher rates of sexual assault but lower rates of reporting to the police.

Finally, this research project looked at both individual- and contextual-level factors simultaneously in order to gain a better understanding of their independent and shared role in sexual victimization reporting. As prior research has not investigated the independent
contributions of individual and contextual level factors in predicting rape reporting, it was impossible to determine which would provide the greater predictive power.

**Rape Incidence and Prevalence**

Estimates of rape incidence and prevalence are affected by the source of data and by the location of the sample. There are three types of data used to estimate the incidence and prevalence of rape: (1) reports to the police, (2) probability samples of the general population, and (3) probability samples of specific populations (e.g., college students). Because these data sources rely on samples that differ substantially in risk of sexual assault, estimates of the incidence and prevalence of rape also vary substantially. In addition, different data sources tend to use different methodologies, further altering the composition of samples across studies. Moreover, even when the same data source and methods are utilized, sample composition and consequently rape rates, can vary by location. In this section, reviewed studies demonstrate how data source, methodology, and location affect sample composition and thus rape rates.

**National data.** There are two national sources of rape victimization data in the United States: the Uniform Crime Reports and the National Crime Victimization Survey. The first national source of data, Uniform Crime Reports (UCR; FBI, 2001), is based on reports to the police and provides detailed information about the offender (including age, sex, and race) but only limited information about the victim. The UCR also provides some information about the crime itself, such as location and whether or not a weapon was used. The UCR is frequently used as a source of rape data because it is easy to use and has the imprimatur of the FBI.

However, there are five problems with the UCR estimates of rape. The primary disadvantage of this data source is that the sample is not representative of all rapes, because most victimizations do not come to the attention of the police. Indeed, studies consistently
indicate that most crime victims do not report their victimization to the police (Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987; Russell, 1984). For example, according to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), only 37.5% of rape victims report to the police (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2001). A second disadvantage of the UCR is that it limits the definition of rape to “carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will” (FBI, 1998, p.23), thereby excluding other forms of sexual assault, incapacitation by means other than force, and male and spousal victims. The UCR uses this definition despite the fact that most states’ laws include these other offenses in their crime codes (Searles & Berger, 1987). A third disadvantage, especially as it relates to incidence and prevalence, is the use of the hierarchical counting rule. That is, when multiple crimes take place within the same incident, only the most serious crime is counted. Because rape is a first-degree felony, the counting rule is generally not problematic. However, it could result in the undercounting of some types of sexual assaults, such as aggravated indecent assault, which are not as serious. A fourth disadvantage with the UCR is that the reported numbers reflect, to some extent, general organizational factors about police departments and specific ways in which they manage rape victimizations (Jensen & Karpos, 1993). For example, the number of female employees and the use of specialized sex crimes units likely affect the rape rates recorded by the departments. Finally, reporting to the FBI is affected by where police departments are located; with about 97% of departments in Metropolitan Statistical Areas reported to the FBI, compared to only 90% of departments located outside of metropolitan areas, and 89% of departments in rural areas (FBI, 1998).

According to the UCR (FBI, 2001), .06% of women were raped in 2001, based on that years’ Census population estimates. However, because of the five limitations outlined above, actual figures are almost certainly higher.
The second national data source, the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), is the preeminent source of information on victimization in the United States. The NCVS uses a rotating panel design, with interviews of approximately 100,000 participants, from 50,000 households, every 6 months, for a three and a half year period. Annual victimization rates are then calculated and made available in the summer of the year following data collection (e.g., 2000 data are available in the summer of 2001). Because of the availability and cost-effectiveness of the NCVS, it is frequently used to estimate victimization rates in the United States. In addition, because the data are the result of a national probability sample, the results are generalizable.

However, the NCVS has a number of limitations. Prior to its redesign in 1992, the national victimization survey was heavily criticized for methodological problems that some authors felt undermined rape data (Koss, 1992; 1996; Russell, 1984). Chief among these concerns was the failure to ask specifically about rape victimizations. That is, there were questions about whether participants had been beaten, hit, knifed, shot at, or in any way attacked, but there was no question about rape. Another concern was the failure to inquire about victimizations committed by friends or relatives. Finally, the exclusion of multiple victimizations by the same perpetrator likely resulted in further undercounting of rapes (Koss, 1992).

Although changes in the NCVS design and screening questions in 1992 addressed these three concerns, resulting in a 157% increase in rape rates (Kinderman, Lynch, & Cantor, 1997), the NCVS probably still produces underestimates of the crime of rape because other problems remain. First, the failure to inquire about sexual victimization in behavioral rather than legalistic terms could result in the underreporting of rapes. That is, the use of the legal terms,
such as rape and sexual assault, may cause participants to conceptualize this crime in stereotypic terms (i.e., violent attack by a stranger). Second, victimizations may also be missed, because only one member of the household is generally surveyed, and this individual may not be aware of all household members’ sexual victimizations. Finally, because most interviews are conducted by telephone and other family members may be present, underestimates are likely greater for intrafamilial than for stranger victimizations.

In 2001, the most recent year for published NCVS data, there were an estimated 248,250 sexual victimizations. This number means that .11% individuals 12 years of age and older experienced rape or sexual assault (BJS, 2003). However, because of the above problems, these figures, in all probability, undercount the occurrence of rape and sexual assault.

Community data. Because of the limitations in the UCR and NCVS, a number of studies have incorporated methodological improvements to complement these data sources (Fisher, Cullen & Turner, 2000; Kilpatrick, Saunders, Veronen, Best & Von, 1987; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987; Russell, 1982; Tjaden, and Thoennes, 2000). Specific population samples, such as community or student samples, target the population of interest (almost always women), and therefore, tend to produce higher annual rates of sexual assault. That is, because young women, as compared to older women or men, are at a higher risk of sexual assault (BJS, 2003), samples that have higher proportions of this group will have higher rape rates than samples that include these other groups. However, because these data sources are not probability samples of the entire population, the resulting data are not generalizable.

The first study analyzed data from a probability sample of 930 female residents of San Francisco aged 18 and over (Russell, 1982). In order to increase participation and facilitate disclosure, in-person interviews were conducted by trained female interviewers, who were
paired with participants of the same race or ethnicity whenever possible. The survey contained 18 behavioral and relationship-specific questions regarding participants’ experience of attempted or completed rape. Excluding marital rape, which was not illegal at the time of the survey, 34 women (3.7%) indicated that they had been raped in the previous 12 months. In addition, 379 participants (41%) disclosed an attempted or completed non-marital rape in their lifetime. These rates are substantially higher than that obtained by the NCVS. The difference can be explained, at least in part, by Russell’s use of face-to-face interviews, which are associated with higher rates of disclosure (Peter, Wyatt & Finkelhor, 1986).

Interview method alone however, likely cannot account for the difference in sexual assault rates. For instance, in a second study by Kilpatrick and his colleagues (1987), telephone interviews also resulted in elevated rates of sexual assault. Kilpatrick et al. sampled 391 adult females (mean age 39.8 years) regarding their lifetime sexual victimizations. The authors used screener questions designed to counteract the tendency to define rape in narrow, stereotypic terms (i.e., violent attack by a stranger), choosing instead to operationally define it as forced vaginal, oral, or anal penetration. Based on this definition and interview method, 23.3 percent of the sample experienced a completed rape in their lifetime.

Student data. Although community sample rates may appear high, they are consistent with results from college students. In their study of 3,187 female college students from 32 institutions, Koss and her colleagues (1987) used the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES) to ask respondents about their sexual assault victimization. The SES contains 10 questions concerned with a range of sexual experiences, from giving in to sex because of continual arguments to having sexual intercourse because of threat or physical force. Including only those items (8, 9, and 10) that met the legal definition of rape, 63 women (2%) reported 98 rape experiences in
the previous 12 months. A much higher percentage of women (15.4% based on weighted data) reported experiencing a rape when all assaults since the age 14 were included.

A Canadian study of college students using the SES (DeKeseredy & Kelly, 1993) provides further evidence for these elevated rates. In this study, 46 colleges and universities allowed investigators to survey 3,142 students (1,835 women and 1,307 men). As in Koss and colleagues’ study, 2 percent of the women sampled indicated that they had sexual intercourse in the last 12 months because of a man’s use of threat or force (item #9). The victimization rate increased to 6.6% of surveyed women when all incidents since leaving high school were included. Because the Koss et al. study includes all victimizations since the age of 14, and the DeKeseredy and Kelly study includes all victimizations since leaving high school, it is inappropriate to compare the lifetime prevalence rates across these two studies.

Both the studies by Koss et al. (1987) and by DeKeseredy and Kelly (1993) have been criticized for being over-inclusive in their definition of rape and sexual assault. Indeed, only 27% of those classified as rape victims by Koss and her colleagues (1987) actually identified themselves as such. Also, because these studies used different methodologies (i.e., different time frames), cross-study comparisons are problematic. For this reason, more recent surveys have attempted to more closely mirror the NCVS methodology while using more, and more behaviorally specific, screener questions (Fisher et al., 2000; Johnson & Sacco, 1995; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).

Using five behaviorally specific screener questions, the National College Women Sexual Victimization (NCWSV) survey (Fisher et al., 2000) obtained rates of sexual assault victimization similar to studies using the SES. The NCWSV survey sampled 4,446 female college students attending 2- or 4-year colleges or universities. Telephone interviews took
place from February to May of 1997. Similar to the NCVS, the survey used a two-stage question format to collect data on sexual victimization. That is, participants were first asked whether they had been victimized and, if they had, they were then asked to complete an “incident report” concerning their victimization. Based on this approach, 2.8% of the sample had experienced either a completed (1.7%) or an attempted rape (1.1%) since the beginning of the academic year (Fisher et al., 2000, p.10).

* Violence against women data. * Public concern with violence against women resulted in two recent studies that included questions about sexual assault victimizations. The first study, conducted in Canada, used a representative probability sample of 12,300 women aged 18 years or older (Johnson & Sacco, 1995). Telephone interviews regarding sexual victimization took place from February to June 1993. Given the sensitive nature of the subject matter under study, the researchers used four special considerations to improve subjects’ participation. First, to facilitate rapport and potential disclosure, the interviewers were highly trained females. Second, researchers used a toll-free telephone number that participants could call should they suddenly need to hang up and resume the interview at later time. Third, interviewers had lists of help agencies located in the participants’ area, in the event that participants became distressed. Finally, the project hired a psychologist to assist in the selection of interviewers and to provide debriefing for the interviewers following stressful calls.

Two questions inquired about sexual assault victimizations: the first was concerned with sexual attacks using threat or force and the second was concerned with unwanted sexual touching. Both questions asked specifically about incidents involving strangers and known men other than intimates. However, only the sexual attack question made specific reference to intimate perpetrators such as dates or boyfriends, as pilot data revealed that participants had
difficulty classifying unwanted sexual touching by this group. Because Canada’s Criminal
Code definition of sexual assault does not require vaginal penetration for an offense to have
taken place, the sexual attack question did not require, or refer to, penetration. Based on this
definition, 1 percent of women suffered a sexual attack and 5 percent suffered unwanted sexual
touching in the previous 12 months. When the time frame was expanded to include
victimizations since the participant was 16 years of age, the percentages increased substantially,
with 24% of women having experienced a sexual attack and 25% having experienced unwanted
sexual touching (Johnson & Sacco, 1995, Table 2).

The American counterpart to this study, the National Violence Against Women
(NVAW) survey, was conducted from November 1995 to May 1996 to gain a better
understanding of violence against women in the United States. This telephone survey
questioned 8,000 women and 8,008 men aged 18 or older regarding violent crimes. To improve
upon the NCVS, which asks only two general screener questions, the NVAW survey used five
behavioral screening questions dealing specifically with sexual victimization. According to
estimates from the NVAW survey, 302,091 (.3%) women and 92,748 (.1%) men were sexually
assaulted in the previous 12 months (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000, exhibit 4). Based on estimates
of the total population from the U.S. Census for the year 1996, the annual rape incident rate is
.87% for women and .12% for men (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000, exhibit 5).

In sum, annual rape rates vary widely across data source, from a low of .06% of women
according to the UCR to a high of 3.65% of women according to Russell’s study. Despite the
increasing similarities in the interview strategies used in more recent studies, methodological
issues still affect the incidence and prevalence of sexual assault. First, participants’ ages vary
across studies (e.g., NVAW included only women 18 years of age or older, and the NCWSV
included only college women). This variation is important because risk of sexual victimization varies by age (BJS, 2003). Second, the operational definitions of sexual assault vary across studies (i.e., Koss et al. and DeKeseredy and Kelly used the SES, whereas both the NVAW and the NCWSV used five screener questions). Studies that ask more, and more behaviorally specific rape questions, find higher rates of rape than those that ask fewer questions and that use legal terminology (i.e., NVAW and NCWSV versus NCVS). Third, data gathering methods vary across studies. Studies using in-person interviews produce higher rape rates than those using telephone interviews or self-report (i.e., Russell’s study versus all other studies). Finally, the reference periods vary across studies (i.e., Koss et al. included victimization since subjects were 14 years of age, whereas DeKeseredy and Kelly inquired about victimizations since leaving high school; see Koss, 1992, 1996; Muehlenhard, Powch, Phelps & Giusti, 1992; White & Farmer, 1992 for a review of methodological issues relating to the study of sexual assault).

The length of the reference period can affect rape rates in two ways. First, as the reference period increases, so too does the time the subject is at risk for sexual assault. Confounding this problem is the fact that research finds that the accuracy of information decreases as the reference period increases (Bachman & Taylor, 1994).

Sample location. Even when the same definitions and methods are used, study location can affect sample composition and, in turn, rape rates (Baron & Straus, 1987; BJS, 2003; George, Winfield & Blazer, 1992; Ruback & Ménard, 2001). According to the most recent NCVS, rates of sexual assault are higher in urban areas (2.3 per 1,000 residents aged 12 and older), than in suburban areas (1.6 per 1,000 residents aged 12 and older), and rates are higher in suburban areas than in rural areas (1.3 per 1,000 residents aged 12 and older; Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2001, Table 57). A positive relation between location size and the percentage
of rapes is also found in the UCR data: cities report higher rates of rape and sexual assault arrests (.007% for rapes and .02% for all other sexual offenses) than suburban areas (.002% for rapes and .009% for all other sexual offenses) or rural areas (.0008% for rapes and .002% for all other sexual offenses; FBI, 1999).

Other studies generally report similar trends. For instance, the National Institute of Mental Health Epidemiologic Catchment Area (ECA) Program also found higher rates of sexual assault in urban areas (George et al., 1992). This research collected data on mental health from five different locations in the United States. In two of these areas, North Carolina (George et al., 1992) and Los Angeles (Sorenson et al., 1987), participants were also questioned regarding sexual victimization. Despite using similar definitions and methods, the two sites obtained different rates of sexual assault. The lifetime prevalence rate of sexual assault in the North Carolina sample (considered by the authors to be mostly rural) was 5.9% compared to a rate of 16.7% in the Los Angeles sample (considered to be urban). Interestingly, although the North Carolina sample had lower sexual assault rates, more of the reported assaults were completed rapes (82%) than was true in the Los Angeles sample (50%), suggesting that different norms regarding what constitutes a rape may operate in the two areas. Alternatively, these different rates may be due to methodological differences in data collection across these two areas. That is, because they were working independently from one another, the two research groups may have inadvertently deviated from the data collection protocol altering the rape rates. Or, the authors’ failure to control for contextual characteristics of the two areas, such as gender inequality, poverty, and population heterogeneity, may account for both the difference in rape rates generally, as well as the difference in completed rapes more specifically.
In an effort to ascertain what factors about a location affect rape rates, Baron and Straus (1987, 1989) examined UCR state-level rape data from all 50 states. Six contextual factors affected rape rates. First, greater gender inequality, as measured by indicators of the economic, political, and legal status of women, was associated with higher rape rates at the state level. Second, higher social disorganization, as measured by geographical mobility, divorce, lack of religious affiliation, and female-headed households, was associated with higher rates of rape. Third, greater use of pornography, as measured by the circulation of eight sexually explicit magazines in the state, was associated with higher rape rates. In addition, Baron and Straus found higher rape rates in states with higher percentages of individuals living in Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs), higher levels of economic inequality, and higher percentages of unemployed individuals.

The Baron and Straus study is the best and most widely known study of the role of contextual factors in the incidence of rape. Despite its theoretical strengths and empirical rigor, the study has three weaknesses (Ruback & Ménard, 2001). First, the authors assumed that their theoretical constructs (gender inequality, social disorganization, pornography) are the mediating processes through which social structure affects rape rates. An alternative conception is that these constructs moderate the relationship between social structure and rape rates. That is, rape rates may vary as a function of the interaction of these theoretical constructs with other variables (i.e., rural versus urban location) rather than operating through them (see Baron & Kenny, 1986). A second weakness is that state-level analyses are not very helpful for understanding mediating mechanisms, because the amount of variation within states is sometimes as great as the variation between states. The state of Pennsylvania exemplifies this problem. Because Pennsylvania is the sixth largest state in population and has two large
metropolitan areas, it is usually considered an urban state. However, based on its population of 3.7 million rural residents, Pennsylvania is in fact the most rural state in the country (Center for Rural Pennsylvania, 1999). A third weakness of the Baron and Straus study is that the researchers assumed that data source and area measures do not interact. That is, they assumed that the relative rankings of states by rape rates would be the same whether they used UCR or NCVS data. However, this assumption was called into question by a study using UCR and crisis center data for the state of Pennsylvania (Ruback & Ménard, 2001).

Based on UCR statistics and four years of archival data from all rape crisis centers in the state of Pennsylvania, Ruback and Ménard (2001) found that data source and location affected sexual assault rates. With regard to data source, two findings indicated that UCR and crisis center data were not measuring the same phenomenon. First, crisis center reporting rate and the UCR rape rate were not significantly correlated ($r = .18, p = .16$). Second, using multivariate analyses, the two datasets produced different predictive models of sexual victimization. That is, UCR victimization rates were predicted by population heterogeneity, population density, and percent female headed households, whereas the crisis center victimization rate was predicted by the percentage of males aged 15 to 24 years, the percentage of females in political office, and the interaction of county type (rural versus urban) and percentage of females in political office. The difference in these two data sets cannot be explained by reporting alone, as analyses of the aggregate reporting rate in the crisis center data produced still a different predictive model.

With regard to the effects of location, both data sources produced different rates by county type. According to UCR data, urban counties had higher rates of sexual assaults than rural counties, although this difference was not statistically significant. As for the crisis center data, although the average number of sexual assaults was significantly greater in urban counties (1202.68) than
in rural counties (231.14), the rate of sexual assault was significantly higher in rural counties (1103.00 per 100,000 women) than in urban counties (708.20 per 100,000 women).

These results are inconsistent with other data that have found higher rates in urban rather than rural areas (BJS, 2003; FBI, 1999; George et al., 1992). The higher crime rates reported in urban areas are usually attributed to the greater population density, ethnic heterogeneity, residential mobility, and poverty found in these areas (Shaw & McKay, 1942). However, an alternative explanation proposed by Ruback & Ménard (2001) is that the actual rates of crime are the same or even higher in rural areas but that the labeling and reporting of crime is higher in urban areas.

Compared to urban areas, rural locations are characterized by greater acquaintance density (i.e., more acquaintances in the community), greater physical isolation, and a social climate that fosters greater informal control, mistrust of government, and a propensity to conceal personal problems (Weisheit, Wells, & Falcone, 1995). In terms of sexual assault, all three factors, but especially acquaintance density, could produce lower rape rates in rural areas. In rural areas, most social interactions occur among acquaintances, as do most sexual assaults (Koss, 1998; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). This fact is important because research indicates that those who are assaulted by known offenders are less likely to label the event rape and less likely to report it to police and social scientists (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Koss, Dinero, Seibel, & Cox, 1988; Ruback, 1993; Ruback & Ménard, 2001), which could explain the lower rates reported in both the UCR and the NCVS. Thus, characteristics of a location may affect rape rates.

In sum, sample composition is important because different samples may produce different sexual assault rates. Research suggests that factors such as sex, age, and context are
related to the probability of being sexually assaulted. Women and the young have higher rates of sexual victimization than men and the elderly (BJS, 2003; Tjaden, and Thoennes, 2000). For this reason, samples of female college students produce higher sexual assault rates than probability samples of the general population (e.g., NCWVS compared to the NCVS). Survey location (rural versus urban) may also affect sample composition, and thus rates of sexual assault. Characteristics of a location, including acquaintance density, ethnic heterogeneity, physical isolation, and poverty, affect the sample composition, which in turn may affect rape rates.

Predictors of Rape

This section describes four factors that increase the risk of sexual assault victimization: youth, sexual activity, intoxication, and prior victimization. In addition, this section describes eight theoretical frameworks used to explain these factors.

Youth. The NCVS consistently finds a curvilinear relationship between age and sexual assault victimization (BJS, 2003). Specifically, the rate of victimization per 1,000 persons is 4.0 for those 12-15 years, 6.9 for those 16 to 19 years, 4.3 for those 20-24 years, 1.7 for those 25 to 34 years, .8 for those 35-49 years, .2 for those 50 to 65 years, and .1 for those over 65 years of age (BJS, 2003, Table 3). The highest proportion of victims is among those who are 16 to 19 years of age, with the proportion of victims decreasing as respondents’ age increases. The one exception to this trend is among 12 to 15 year old respondents. Compared to their older counterparts, these youngsters have a lower rate of victimization. However, proxy interviews are most likely to occur among this age group, and, the parents or guardians who complete the survey on their behalf may not be aware of all their victimizations. Moreover, research asking children about their victimizations has found that children who are 10 or 11 years old are less
likely to report abuse than are children who are 12 to 16 years old (Finkelhor, 1998). They are also less likely to disclose abuse to anyone (Finkelhor, Hotelling, Lewis, & Smith, 1990) or to report victimizations to the police (Finkelhor & Ormrod, 1999). Thus, self-report surveys likely underestimate the rate of sexual assault among younger victims.

Three reasons may account for the greater vulnerability of younger women. First, men in all societies value youth and consider younger women more attractive than their older counterparts (Buss & Schmitt, 1993). Further, the greater occurrence of rape among the young may be due to reproductive viability. That is, evolutionary theory posits that because males have lower parental certainty and no offspring investment, their best reproductive strategy is to inseminate as many females as possible. Conversely, because females have high parental certainty and high investment, their best strategy is to be very selective when mating. This reproductive conflict may result in aggressive copulatory tactics (rape) by some males as an adaptation to their natural selection pressure to reproduce. Because the goal of copulation is reproduction, younger females of reproductive age are more likely to be the victims of rape. Studies conducted worldwide consistently find the greatest concentration of rape victims are among women of reproductive years, from 13 to 35 (Ellis, 1989).

A second approach, routine activities or lifestyle/exposure theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Hindelang, Gottfredson, & Garofalo, 1978; Miethe & Meier, 1994), posits that crime is more likely to occur when there is a convergence in space and time of a motivated offender and an attractive target in the absence of some form of guardianship. Since younger people are more likely to go out on dates, thereby increasing their exposure to motivated offenders while decreasing potential guardianship by a parent, they are more susceptible to victimization, consistent with the routine activities perspective.
A third approach, a reformulation of lifestyle/routine activities, proposes a three-prong model of congruency (i.e., target vulnerability, target gratifiability, and target antagonism) to explain all types of youth victimization. According to this model by Finkelhor and Asdigian (1996), characteristics of certain youth make them more congruent with the needs, motivations, and responses of potential offenders. For instance, the physical, mental, and psychological weaknesses of youth increase their vulnerability. Further, characteristics sought by the offender, such as female gender in the case of child sexual abuse, increases target gratifiability for the offender. Finally, target antagonism refers to the notion that characteristics of the youth may increase the offender’s propensity to assault. Thus, according to this theoretical framework, younger people are at greater risk of sexual assault victimization because the victim is more vulnerable, more desired, and more antagonistic to the offender than would be an older victim.

With regard to child rape more specifically, Finkelhor (1984) proposed that four conditions were necessary for child sexual abuse to take place: (a) the offender must be motivated, (b) the offender must overcome internal inhibitions against sexual abuse, (c) the offender must overcome external inhibitors against abuse, and (d) the offender must overcome resistance by the victim. Younger victims would be attractive to a motivated offender because they are less likely to be able to physically resist the offender, especially when the victim is dependent on the perpetrator. This dependency may also force the victim to keep the assault secret, thereby helping the offender overcome external inhibitors, such as public knowledge of the assault.

Sexual activity. In addition to youth, sexual activity, as indicated by age at first intercourse and number of sexual partners, is also associated with greater risk of sexual
victimization. This conclusion is based on retrospective studies using undergraduates, retrospective national surveys of undergraduates, longitudinal studies of undergraduates, and retrospective research on minority women. Based on in-depth interviews with 248 female undergraduate students, Koss (1985) found that age at first intercourse and number of sexual partners significantly differentiated victimized from non-victimized women. Similarly, in a study of date rape among 330 incoming freshmen, Himelein and her colleagues (Himelein, 1995; Himelein, Vogel, & Wachowiak, 1994) found that sexual victimization was related to childhood sexual abuse, the total number of sex partners, and the age of first consensual sexual relations. And, in a survey of 282 female undergraduates investigating personality and situational factors that might increase the risk of sexual victimization, Mandoki and Burkhart (1989) found that the number of consensual sexual partners significantly predicted sexual victimization.

National surveys also show this same pattern. In their nationally representative survey of 2,723 female college students, Koss and Dinero (1989) found that, compared to non-victimized women, victims of rape or sexual coercion had significantly more sexual partners. Similar results were also obtained in the National College Health Risk Behavior Survey (NCHRBS), which examined risky behavior among 4,609 undergraduate students from 148 institutions across the United States (Brener, McMahon, Warren, & Douglas, 1999). In addition to other risky behaviors, results indicated that, compared to women who had not been raped, women who had been raped were more likely to have multiple sex partners, to have had sexual intercourse before 15 years of age, and to use alcohol or drugs.

Sexual activity also increased the risk of sexual victimization according to a prospective study of 274 undergraduate women (Greene and Navarro, 1998). Subjects were surveyed three
times over the course of the academic year: once at the beginning of the year, the second time at the end of fall semester, and the final time at the end of the spring semester. Information obtained at time one predicted subjects’ sexual assault victimization at times two and three. Results indicated that women with lower assertiveness, higher levels of depression and anxiety, and more frequent alcohol use and sexual activity were at greater risk of sexual victimization and revictimization.

Sexual activity also increased the risk of victimization among women of color from low-income neighborhoods in five California counties. The main purpose of the Young Women Survey was to investigate the relationship between forced sex and the risk of sexually transmitted diseases (Molitor, Ruiz, Klausner, & McFarland, 2000). Analyses, based on data from interviews with 2,522 women aged 18 to 29, indicated that women with histories of forced sexual victimization reported a greater number of lifetime sexual partners and a younger age at first intercourse.

In summary, four types of studies have been used to examine the relationship between sexual activity and sexual victimization: retrospective single-campus undergraduate samples, retrospective national undergraduate surveys, prospective undergraduate studies, and studies of minorities. The consistency of findings across studies using different methods and samples lend support to the notion that being more sexually active and for a longer period of time are risk factors for sexual assault victimization.

Three theories have been used to explain why those with an earlier age of first intercourse and a greater number of sexual partners are at increased risk of sexual assault. First, feminists propose that liberated women (i.e., those with more liberal attitudes regarding sex) are being punished by men for espousing non-traditional gender roles. Thus, men use rape in order
to maintain their dominant position in society (Brownmiller, 1975; Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Korman & Leslie, 1982; Russell, 1984; Scully & Marolla, 1985). A second explanation is that traumatic sexualization resulting from a history of child sexual abuse may increase a woman’s sexual behavior and consequently her risk of victimization (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986; Finkelhor and Brown, 1985; Russell, 1986). Finally, a probability explanation suggests that the longer and more frequently a woman is sexually active, the greater her risk of coming into contact with a sexually aggressive partner (Koss & Dinero, 1989).

Intoxication. In addition to youth and sexual activity, research has consistently found an association between alcohol use and sexual assault (Abbey, McAuslan, & Ross, 1998; Abbey, Ross, McDuffie, & McAuslan, 1996; Kanin, 1985; Koss & Gaines, 1993; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987). However, much of this research concerns alcohol use by the perpetrator, not the victim. Only recently have studies explored victims’ alcohol use as a potential risk factor for sexual victimization. For instance, in a survey of 341 female and 294 male college students, victims’ alcohol consumption predicted sexually aggressive dates (Muehlenhard & Linton, 1987). In this study, Muehlenhard and Linton asked college students to describe their most recent date and, if applicable, a date involving sexual aggression. Results showed that in addition to the acceptance of traditional gender roles and beliefs, heavy alcohol or drug use among students (male or female) increased the likelihood of a sexually aggressive date.

Alcohol consumption also predicted sexual assault in a study of 1,149 adolescent females (Small & Kerns, 1993). In this study, students were administered a 160-item self-report questionnaire regarding their experience of unwanted sex, alcohol use, peer conformity, history of sexual abuse, and parenting style. Results demonstrated that adolescents were at greater risk for unwanted sexual contact if they had a history of abuse, if they reported excessive alcohol
use, if they scored high on peer conformity, and if their parents were authoritarian and did not monitor their behavior.

A study of date rape completed with 1,965 undergraduates also found an association between alcohol use and sexual assault victimization (Canterbury et al., 1993). This study compared students who reported ever experiencing a date rape to those without this experience. Results indicated that both males and females who drank two to four times a week were more likely to report being a victim of date rape than those who drank fewer or no alcoholic beverages per week.

Investigating risk factors associated with sexual assault, Schwartz and Pitts (1995) surveyed 288 undergraduate women regarding their experiences. Results from multivariate analyses indicated that the most powerful predictors of whether a woman was sexually victimized were the number of times she drank per week, the quantity she drank at each time, and the number of her male friends who got women drunk to have sex with them.

Finally, in one of the few prospective studies with a non-college sample, Testa and Livingston (2000) also found that alcohol consumption increased the risk of rape victimization. Specifically, after controlling for any prior sexual victimization, greater alcohol consumption and alcohol problems (measured using the Short Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test; Selzer, Vinokur, & van Rooijen, 1975) predicted sexual assault victimization one year later.

Individually, these studies have weaknesses that limit the interpretability of the effects of alcohol. Specifically, many of these studies used retrospective designs with small or exclusively college samples. However, other studies using prospective designs (Green & Navarro, 1998; Testa & Livingston, 2000) and adolescent (Erickson & Rapkin, 1991; Small & Kerns, 1993) or community samples (Miller, Downs, & Testa, 1993; Testa & Livingston, 2000)
produce similar results. Moreover, Testa and Parks’ (1996) review of the literature on alcohol consumption and sexual victimization concluded that alcohol consumption is related to sexual victimization. Thus, despite the weaknesses found in a number of these studies, the convergence of this finding across several studies with different sample types and methods lends support to the idea that heavy alcohol use increases the risk for rape victimization.

Theoretical explanations for the increased risk of victimization among those who consume more alcohol include lifestyle/routine activities, attributional theories, and traumatic vulnerability theories. First, the routine activities perspective would suggest that intoxication increases the risk of victimization by reducing the victim’s level of self-guardianship (i.e., her ability to recognize danger and to defend herself). Second, offenders’ misattribution of the victim’s sexual interest may also increase the risk of victimization. That is, studies have shown that people share common beliefs or expectations about alcohol’s effects, including that it will increase sex drive (Leigh & Stacy, 1993). Thus, potential offenders may become motivated to assault women whom they perceive to be interested in sexual activity. Finally, alcohol use may be part of an overall pattern of risky behavior engaged in as a traumatic response to prior victimization (Brener, et al., 1999; Browne & Finkelhor, 1986; Finkelhor & Brown, 1985).

**Prior victimization.** In addition to the effects of youth, sexual activity, and alcohol on sexual victimization, considerable research finds an association between prior victimization and sexual revictimization (Gydyucz, Coble, Latham, Layman, 1993; Koverola, Proulx, Battle, and Hanna, 1996; Sorenson, Siegel, Golding, & Stein, 1991; but cf. Briere & Runtz, 1987). Research using college, community, and clinical samples, found that prior victimization increases the risk of revictimization (Messman & Long, 1996). Indeed, a meta-analysis of 19 studies found a large overall effect (.59) of child abuse on revictimization (Roodman & Clum,
For instance, support for the effect of early victimization on later revictimization comes from a study of 654 female college students (Mayall & Gold, 1995). In this study, Mayall and Gold (1995) investigated the effects of parental support, attributional style, coping, age, severity of assault, and therapeutic intervention on revictimization. Using a modified version of Finkelhor’s (1979) Childhood/Adult Sexual Experiences survey, both child sexual abuse and adult sexual assault were operationally defined in three different ways based on the severity of the assault (non-contact, physical contact only, and genital contact/intercourse for child sexual abuse; non-contact, contact, and force for adult sexual assault). Results indicated that contact forms of child sexual abuse were associated with revictimization, whereas non-contact forms of child sexual abuse were not significantly associated with revictimization. Further, the rate of revictimization was twice as high for those with a history of child sexual abuse, as for those without such a history.

An association between childhood sexual abuse and later revictimization was also found in a study of 633 female undergraduate students (Messman-Moore & Long, 2000). Specifically, child sexual abuse victims (N=127 or 20%) were more likely to suffer revictimization (a) by an acquaintance due to the victim’s alcohol or drug use, (b) by an acquaintance due to the use of physical force or the misuse of authority, and (c) by a stranger due to the misuse of authority. In addition to adult sexual revictimization, this study also examined physical and psychological maltreatment that occurred in adulthood. Results indicated that child sexual abuse victims were significantly more likely to suffer all three forms of revictimization.

Childhood victimization also increased the risk of adult revictimization in one of the few
studies using an ethnically diverse college sample (i.e., 56% white, 12% African-American, 16% Latina, and 16% Asian). In interviews with 243 college women, Urquiza and Goodlin-Jones (1994) found that 83 (34%) reported a history of child sexual abuse and 57 (24%) reported an adult sexual victimization. Of the women who reported an adult sexual victimization, 65% had been sexually abused before age 18, whereas among non-victimized women only 35% had a history of abuse. Moreover, this difference was significant according to a chi-square test, across all respondents, as well as within each ethnic group except Asians.

In a prospective study investigating the causes of revictimization, Gidycz and her colleagues (1993) found an effect for prior victimization and a link between psychological health and revictimization among a sample of 857 female college students. Participants were assessed at the beginning and at the end of the quarter (9 weeks) to obtain pre- and post-victimization measures of psychological functioning according to the Beck Depression and Anxiety Inventories. Participants assaulted during the quarter (rape, N=31; attempted rape, N=29) were significantly more likely to have a history of childhood or adolescent sexual victimization. Specifically, 30% of child sexual abuse victims, 32% of child sexual abuse attempt victims, and 14% of non-victims, reported a victimization during the quarter.

Similar results were obtained in a study of 248 African-American and white female community members, aged 18 to 36, in Los Angeles County. That is, those who experienced a sexual assault in childhood (N=154) were at greater risk of revictimization in adulthood (Wyatt, Guthrie, & Notgrass, 1992). Specifically, compared to those without an abuse history (N=89), those abused in childhood were 2.4 times more likely to be revictimized in adulthood.

Convergent results were also found in a study of 409 consecutively admitted female inpatients. Women with a history of child abuse were more likely to have experienced an adult
sexual assault, compared to those who were not abused (Cloitre, Tardiff, Marzuk, Leon, & Portera, 1996). Controlling for sociodemographics (age, race, marital status, education, and employment) and diagnostic status (schizophrenia, depression, mania, substance abuse, and borderline personality disorder), logistic regression indicated that women with a history of abuse were 3.1 times more like to report a sexual assault victimization in adulthood. Of the total sample, 45% reported a history of child abuse and 22% reported an adult sexual assault. Additionally, prevalence rates of adult sexual victimization varied by abuse type: 51% for physical and sexual abuse, 36% for physical abuse only, and 13% for sexual abuse only. Interestingly, those who suffered both physical and sexual abuse had higher rates of revictimization than those who experienced sexual abuse only.

Prior victimization was also found to increase the risk of revictimization in a one-year longitudinal study of 325 adolescent mothers (Collins, 1998). Specifically, those who initially reported any sexual victimization, a prior rape, or prior physical abuse by a partner were significantly more likely to report a sexual victimization one year later. Participants were primarily rural residents, 17 or younger at the time of their first pregnancy, and taking part in a program designed to meet their unique needs. For this reason, this sample is not representative. However, the results are consistent with prior research.

A number of the above studies have methodological weaknesses that affect the interpretability of the results. That is, many of the studies use cross-sectional data, retrospective inquires regarding both child and adult sexual victimization, and small or college-only samples. However, the consistency of the results across all studies, and the large effect size of revictimization obtained in the meta-analysis, lend credibility to the assertion that prior victimization increases the risk of revictimization.
The increased risk of victimization among child abuse victims has been explained using two theoretical approaches. First, consistent with social learning theories (Akers, 1985; Bandura, 1977), child sexual abuse victims may learn inappropriate sexual attitudes and scripts that make them vulnerable to revictimization. For instance, Jehu and Gazan (1983) posited that (a) low self-esteem, (b) hostility toward men, and (c) lack of assertiveness (learned from the perpetrator and his spouse in the case of incest victims) increase child sexual abuse victims’ vulnerability and consequent risk for revictimization. Second, consistent with Finkelhor and Brown’s (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986; Finkelhor & Browne, 1985) Traumagenic Dynamics model, trauma-causing factors of the abuse (i.e., traumatic sexualization, betrayal, powerlessness, and stigmatization) may increase the risk of revictimization. For instance, with regard to traumatic sexualization, a child sexual abuse victim may be rewarded for sexual behavior, thereby teaching the child to use sex as a means of manipulating others into meeting his or her needs. Further, a sense of betrayal stemming from the abuse may result in extreme dependency, impairing victims’ judgment in intimate relations. Similarly, a child’s sense of powerlessness, following repeated abuse, may condition the child to accept, rather than rebuke, assaultive acts from others. Finally, stigmatization from the abuse may result in victims getting involved in drugs or alcohol, further increasing their risk of victimization. Thus, these four factors may result in victims having dysfunctional interpersonal styles that put them in risky situations while simultaneously decreasing their self-protective behaviors.

To summarize, factors associated with increased risk for sexual assault include youth, younger age at first intercourse, a higher number of sexual partners, alcohol use, and prior sexual victimization. Further, consistent with lifestyle/routine activities theory (and its reformulation by Finkelhor and Asdigian) and Browne and Finkelhor’s traumagenic model,
these factors likely increase the risk of victimization by increasing offenders’ motivation due to the target’s attractiveness, vulnerability, and gratifiability in the absence of self-guardianship.

Victims’ Decision Making

Victims are the primary filters of the criminal justice system (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1988). If victims do not report criminal events to the police, criminal justice involvement is unlikely because most crimes come to the attention of the police through victim reporting (Hindelang & Gottfredson, 1976). Similarly, other help agencies will not be involved unless the victim first requests them to do so. This section explores victims’ decision-making processes from labeling the event to determining whether or not to seek help from the criminal justice system.

Labeling. In order for rape victims to label themselves as victims, they must decide that the event in question was a crime. No crime is subject to greater definitional variation than the crime of rape (Koss, 1985, 1992). Indeed, in one nationally representative college sample, over half (54%) of respondents whose experiences met the legal definition of rape did not categorize themselves as rape victims (Fisher et al., 2000). When people are uncertain of the interpretation of an event, they consult with others in order to make their determination (Ruback et al., 1984) and they rely on social norms (i.e., commonly held dictates of behavior; Bates, 1956; Cialdini & Trost, 1998; Kallgren, Reno, Cialdini, 2000) to help them decide what to do. With regard to rape, research suggests there are norms that govern when a rape victim should label the event a crime and contact the police (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Ruback et al. 1999). Thus, the divergence between the legal definition of a rape and individuals’ labeling themselves rape victims is likely due in part to norms regarding what constitutes a rape. That is, victims whose assaults do not fall within the normative definition of rape (e.g., victims of acquaintance rape)
are less likely to label themselves rape victims, because their assaults do not fall within the socially accepted definition of sexual assault (e.g., violent assault by a stranger).

Seeking help. Following a criminal victimization, victims have a number of options: (a) call the police, (b) call some other agency, (c) call a friend, or (d) do nothing. Research demonstrates that many crime victims consult with others prior to determining what to do (Greenberg, Ruback, Westcott, 1983a; Ruback, 1994; Ruback et al., 1984) and that they follow the advice given, even when the advisor is a stranger (Greenberg et al., 1983a). Thus, advisors help the victim determine the severity of the crime and what action (e.g., seeking formal or informal assistance), if any, should be taken. Because of the social stigma of sexual assault however, many victims do not report the crime to police or to other help agencies (Finkelhor, 1979; Finkelston & Oswalt, 1995; Koss, Gidycz, Wisniewski, 1987; Ruback et al., 1984). According to the NCVS, only 28% of rape victims report to the police, making rape the most underreported of all violent crimes (BJS, 2003, Table 93). However, other self-report data suggest that even fewer sexual assault victims report to police or other help agencies. In one national sample of 6,159 female college students, only 5% reported to the police or to another help agency (Koss et al., 1987). Despite efforts to increase rape awareness and reporting, a more recent national sample of 4,446 female college students still found fewer than 5% of rape victims reported to the police or another authority (Fisher et al., 2000).

Although the majority of victims do not call the police or another help agency, most victims do seek help from informal sources such as friends and family members (Golding, Siegel, Sorenson, Burnam, & Stein, 1989; Koss et al., 1988). For instance, in the two national samples discussed above, 58% (Koss et al., 1987) and 70% (Fisher et al., 2000) of victims,
respectively, told someone about the assault. Other self-report surveys find similarly high rates of informal help seeking (Golding et al., 1989; Pitts & Schwartz, 1993).

Victims generally contact informal help sources for emotional support (e.g., comforting), informational support (e.g., information about insurance), or tangible support (e.g., ride to the hospital; Biaggio, Brownell, & Watts, 1991; Coker, Derrick, Lumpkin, Aldrich, & Oldendick, 2000; Vaux, 1988). Further, research shows that social support ameliorates the negative impact of sexual assault and other crimes regardless of whether the support is perceived or actually received (Kaniasty & Norris, 1992; Testa, Miller, Downs, & Panek, 1992; Wyatt & Mickey, 1987). In addition to providing support to victims, informal help sources may also serve as normative referents, who can cue the victims to contact formal help providers (Greenberg et al., 1983). In one study of 179 rape victims, social expectations from friends and family predicted whether victims sought help from social service agencies or the police (Feldman-Summers & Norris, 1984). In subsequent sections, individual and contextual factors that affect victims’ decisions to report to the police are described (Ruback & Ménard, 2001; Ullman & Filipas, 2001).

**Individual Factors that Affect Rape Reporting**

A number of individual-level factors affect a victim’s decision to contact the police, including the severity of the crime, the victim’s age, the victim’s gender, the victim’s level of intoxication, and the closeness of the victim’s relationship to the offender.

**Severity.** The greater the severity of the assault, the more likely it will be reported to the police. Specifically, the use of a weapon or physical force by the offender (Bachman, 1993, 1998; Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Skogan, 1976, 1984), combined with injuries to the victim, especially injuries requiring medical attention (Bachman, 1993, 1998; Gartner & Macmillan,
increase the likelihood of reporting. Victims were more likely to contact the police when threats or a weapon were used in the course of the assault, according to a study of archival records from 2,526 rape victims (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992). A large nationally representative study of Canadian women obtained similar results. In this study, seriousness measures including physical and psychological harm, economic loss, and weapon use, accounted for 15% of the variance in reporting to police (Gartner & Macmillan, 1995). Indeed, a number of studies find that the more a crime resembles what Williams (1984) termed “classic rape” (i.e., violent attack by a stranger), the more likely it will be reported to the police (Fisher, Daigle, Cullen, & Turner, 2003). Further, victims cite the lack of seriousness as a reason for not reporting to the police, according to both the NCVS (BJS, 2003, Table 102) and other victimization surveys (Fisher et al., 2003).

**Age.** In addition to the seriousness of the crime, victims’ age also affects reporting. Research consistently finds that older victims, as compared to younger victims, are more likely to report their victimization to the police (Conaway & Lohr, 1994; Harlow, 1985; Skogan, 1976; 1984). A longitudinal study using the NCVS data found that the older the victim, the greater the likelihood of reporting a criminal victimization to the police (Conaway and Lohr, 1994). Recent sexual assault victimization statistics (BJS, 2001, Table 96) find a positive relationship between age and reporting to the police. That is, 25% of those 12 to 19 years of age, 29% of those 20 to 34 years of age, 36% of those 35 to 49 years of age, and 55% of those 50 years and older reported to the police.

**Gender.** Victims’ gender also affects reporting behavior. Victimization surveys indicate that women are more likely to report being the victim of a crime than are men (Conway and Lohr 1994; Kaukinen, 2002; Ruback, 1994; Skogan, 1976). Indeed, the most recent NCVS
finds that 53% of female violent crime victims reported to the police, compared to only 45.9% of male violent crime victims (BJS, 2003, Table 93). In a telephone survey of 1,649 residents of Georgia, respondents were more likely to suggest contacting the police if the victim was a female (Ruback, 1994). Research conducted with college students obtained similar results (Ruback et al., 1999). That is, respondents were more likely to suggest reporting when the victim was a female. With regard to rape victimization specifically, a study using the NCVS found that the odds of male rape victims reporting to the police were only 60% of that of female rape victims (Pino & Meier, 1999).

**Intoxication.** Another factor that affects victims’ decision to contact the police is alcohol or drug consumption. A survey of 140 college women, found that 80% of rape victims were intoxicated at the time of the assault. Further, these victims indicated that their intoxication was a reason they did not report their victimization to the police or other authorities (Finkelson & Oswalt, 1995). A national-level study of 4,446 college women also found that victims were less likely to report if they were drinking or had taken drugs (Fisher et al., 2003). This effect may result from third parties, including members of the criminal justice system, attributing more responsibility to intoxicated victims than to victims who have not been drinking (Hammock & Richardson, 1997; Richardson & Campbell, 1982). For example, in a study of normative standards for crime victims, respondents were less likely to suggest victims contact the police when the victim was under 21 years of age and was intoxicated (Ruback et al., 1999). Further, a study of 212 police officers found that the officers perceived intoxicated victims, as compared to their sober counterparts, as less credible and more blameworthy (Schuller & Stewart, 2000). Similarly, negative victim characteristics, including the use of alcohol or drugs, reduced the length of sentences meted out to rape perpetrators (Kingsworth,
Taken together, these findings imply that there are norms not to report to the police and not to view the crime as seriously when the victim has been drinking or using drugs.

**Victim-offender relationship.** In addition to crime severity, age, gender, and intoxication, the victim-offender relationship generally affects victim reporting, such that the closer the relationship between the victim and the offender, the less likely the crime will be reported to the police (BJS, 2003; Gartner & Macmillan, 1995; Hanson, Resnick, Saunders, Kilpatrick, & Best, 1999; Hindelang & Gottfredson, 1976; Kaukinen, 2002; Lizotte, 1985; Ruback, 1993, 1994; Williams, 1984). Similarly, the victim-offender relationship also affects criminal justice system members’ decision to proceed with a case (Bouffard, 2000; Frazier & Haney, 1996; Frohmann, 1991; Gray, 1993; Kingsnorth, MacIntosh, & Wentworth, 1999; LaFree, 1989; Marsh, Geist, & Caplan, 1982; McCormick, Maric, Seto, & Barbaree, 1998; Miethe, 1965; Simon, 1996; Spears & Spohn, 1997; Spohn & Holleran, 2001; Strouds, Martens, & Barker, 1999). A study using data from the National Crime Survey Cities Attitude Subsample, found that women raped by known offenders were less likely to report to the police than those raped by strangers (Lizotte, 1985). Similarly, using data from the 1993 Canadian Violence Against Women Survey, Gartner and Macmillan (1995) found that the more intimate the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, the less likely police were to be made aware of the crime. Lower reporting rates for rapes committed by known assailants are also evident in the NCVS. Data from the most recent survey indicate that only 33.5% of women raped by known offenders reported to the police compared to 45.9% of women assaulted by strangers (BJS, 2003, Table 93).

However, not all research finds that victim-offender relationship affects reporting to the
police (Bachman, 1993, 1998). In a multivariate analysis of NCVS data for the years 1987 to 1990, Bachman (1993) found that victim-offender relationship did not significantly predict the victim’s decision to report the rape to the police when factors such as the offender’s use of force or need for medical attention were included in the model. Another multivariate study conducted by Bachman (1998) using data from the years 1992 to 1994 from the redesigned NCVS obtained similar results. In this study, victim-offender relationship did not significantly predict reporting net of the effects of physical injury and the offender’s use of a weapon (Bachman, 1998).

These studies are not without their critics, however. Because the NCVS likely results in the underreporting of intimate violence, including rape, some researchers have questioned the appropriateness of using this dataset to examine reporting behavior (Koss, 1992; Koss, et al., 1987). Indeed two authors (Pollard, 1995; Ruback 1993) commented on Bachman’s first study (1993), and their criticisms apply equally well to her second study. That is, although her second study used data from the revised NSVC, which resulted in increased rape reporting, it did not substantively address the problems outlined below. Ruback (1993) indicated that the number of rape victims in Bachman’s sample was too small to provide sufficient power to detect effects. In addition, Ruback pointed out that the level of injury is dependent upon victim-offender relationship (Ruback & Ivie, 1988), such that the failure to find significant effects may be due to multicollinearity. Ruback also demonstrated that in the NCVS data for all but two of 19 years examined (1988, 1990), victims of stranger rape were more likely to report than were victims of acquaintance rape. Finally, Pollard (1995) noted the data were likely biased in favor of reporting, as 51% of Bachman’s (1993) sample had reported to the police compared to only 5% in other large samples (Koss et al. 1987; Fisher et al., 2003).
In sum, a number of individual-level factors affect reporting to the police. Compared to their opposite counterparts, older, sober, female victims of serious sexual assault committed by a stranger are more likely to report their victimization to the police.

**Contextual Factors Affecting Rape Rates**

In addition to individual-level factors, contextual factors also affect reporting to the police. Contextual factors include characteristics of the aggregation of people (e.g., social, economic, and political structures) and characteristics of the location (e.g., geographical setting). At the contextual level, gender inequality, economic inequality, percentage of stranger assaults, and urbanicity affect rape rates.

**Gender Inequality**

Gender inequality (i.e., gender disparity in social, political, and economic status) affects rape reporting presumably because traditional values that espouse male dominance may make it more “acceptable” for males to commit rape and more difficult for females to report a rape once it has occurred. This section reviews the literature on contextual factors that affect rape rates and suggests reasons for the conflicting results regarding gender inequality and rape.

**Cross-national studies.** A recent cross-national study used Interpol rape rates from 89 countries to examine the relationship between gender equality and rape (Austin & Kim, 2000). Four measures of gender equality were included: female education, female labor participation, percent of female administrators and managers, and percent of females in parliament. Zero order correlations showed a significant positive relationship between three of the gender equality measures (education, labor, and administrators/managers) and rape. Multivariate regression produced significant results for only one of the gender equality variables (administrators/managers) and that relationship was positive. Thus, this study found that as
gender equality increased so too did rape rates.

*Standard metropolitan statistical area studies.* Using both victimization and arrest data, Ellis and Beattie (1983) examined the relationship between gender inequality and rape in 26 large metropolitan areas in the United States. Rape rates were computed in three ways: (a) using city-level UCR data, (b) using city-level NCS data, and (c) using standard metropolitan area-level (SMSA) data. Sex disparity in earnings, education, employment, and professional/managerial positions composed the gender inequality measures. In addition, for the analyses of the SMSA UCR data, two measures of sex disparity in the criminal justice profession (lawyers and judges, and police and detectives) were included as a measure of gender inequality. Because of the small sample, only zero, first order partial, and second order partial correlations were computed. Results were mixed. The victimization data produced a positive relationship between rape rates and gender inequality (for earnings only). However, the UCR data produced a negative relationship between gender inequality and rape (for employment only in the city-level analyses, and for employment, earnings, and police/detectives in the SMSA analyses). Moreover, of all the relationships, only the sex disparity in police and detectives remained significant at the lowest second order partial correlation level.

Peterson and Bailey (1992) used official rape arrest rates (for 1981) at the SMSA level and three measures of gender inequality: median income, high school graduation, and professional occupation. The male-female income gap was positively related to rape rates net of the effects of general income inequality. However, the other two indicators of gender inequality (education and professional occupation) were not significantly related to rape rates.

In sum, results from studies using UCR data at the SMSA level of aggregation have
produced mixed results. In the first study, support for the effect of gender inequality on rape reporting was found using victimization data but not arrest data. In the second study using official rape arrests, support was found for only one of the three gender inequality measures.

State-level studies. Studies using state-level data have also produced mixed results (Baron and Straus 1984, 1987, 1989). In their first study, Baron and Straus (1984) examined the relationship between gender equality and rape rates using a status-of-women index (SWX; Yllo, 1983) and UCR data for 1979. The index comprised 22 variables representing four areas of gender equality: economic, educational, political, and legal (alpha reliability was .54). The bivariate correlation between rape and the SWX was small and nonsignificant (b = .17). Further, the multivariate regression analysis produced a positive relationship between rape and gender equality (i.e., as gender equality increased, so too did rape rates).

In the second study, Baron and Straus (1987, 1989) used the average UCR rape rates for the years 1980 to 1982 and used a revised gender-equality index (GEX; Yllo & Straus, 1984; Sugarman & Straus, 1988). The GEX comprised 24 variables reflecting three areas of gender equality: economic, political, and legal (alpha reliability was .60). Results from the structural equation model indicated that gender equality, economic inequality, social disorganization, circulation of pornography, level of unemployment, and percent residing in a SMSA (a city of at least 50,000 population) had direct effects on reported rapes. With one exception, all variables were positively related to rape rates, such that as values on these variables increased, so too did rape rates. The exception to this trend was gender equality. As state-level gender equality increased, rape rates decreased. Gender equality also mediated the effects of three variables. States with higher levels of social disorganization, lower levels of legitimate violence, and less economic inequality, had greater gender equality.
To summarize, these two state-level studies contradict one another. However, because two different gender equality indexes were used (neither of which had a high alpha reliability coefficient) and because data from different years were used, it is impossible to determine whether these divergent findings stem from a real difference in the relationship between rape and gender equality or from other factors. Moreover, as some (Peterson & Bailey, 1992; Ruback & Ménard, 2001) have argued, states are very heterogeneous and thus may not be the best level of aggregation to examine the relationship between gender inequality and rape.

*County-level study.* One study examined the effects of gender equality on county-level rape victimization and reporting using rape crisis center data (for 1994-1998) and reporting rates using UCR (for 1990) for all 67 counties in the state of Pennsylvania (Ruback & Ménard, 2001). Bivariate correlations were significant for percentage of females in political office (a proxy for gender equality) and rape victimization in rural counties using crisis center data, and for rape reporting in urban counties using UCR data. At the multivariate level, the percentage of females in political office was not significantly related to reporting to police using either crisis center or UCR data. However, the proportion of females in political office was related to the crisis center victimization rate, both as a main effect and as an interaction with county type (rural versus urban). Counties with higher rates of females in political office had higher rates of rape, especially in rural counties.

Although it does not resolve the gender inequality and rape relationship issue, this study suggests three possible avenues to explore in determining the source of this conflict. First, the effects of gender inequality on reporting may not be uniform. They are probably least likely to be evident in the most egregious cases (i.e., violent assaults by a stranger) and most likely to be evident in acquaintance rapes. Second, SMSAs and state-level analyses may not be appropriate
levels of aggregation to answer this question. That is, both SMSAs and states are likely too heterogeneous with regard to women’s social status. Third, characteristics of location may condition the relationship between gender inequality and rape.

Economic Inequality

In addition to gender inequality, general economic inequality, as measured by both poverty and government funding (e.g., for emergency services), may also affect reporting to the police. Although a number of studies have examined the effects of poverty on official rape rates (Baron & Straus, 1984, 1987, 1989; Smith & Bennett, 1985; Peterson & Bailey, 1988, 1992), only two studies have examined aggregate-level funding for public services on rape reporting (Ménard & Ruback, 2003; Ruback & Ménard, 2001). Studies including both types of economic indicators are reviewed in this section, as they are likely related because research finds that disadvantaged areas often have lower levels of public services (Pino, 2001; Sampson, 2001).

Standard metropolitan statistical areas studies. Three studies using SMSAs (Smith & Bennett, 1985; Peterson & Bailey, 1988, 1992) and two studies using state-level analysis (Baron & Straus, 1984, 1987, 1989) have found a relationship between official rape rates and poverty. In the first study, Smith and Bennett (1985) examined the average rape arrest rates (for the years 1979-1981) for the 88 SMSAs that were at least one standard deviation above or below the mean rape rate. The percentage of the population living below the poverty level according to the Census (1980) served as their measure of poverty. Results of the multivariate analysis suggested a positive, albeit small ($\beta = .14$) relationship between poverty and rape rates. Using data from the same years but including 243 SMSAs, the second study by Peterson & Bailey (1988) also found support for a relationship between rape and inequality (both general and
However, in this study two indicators of poverty were included (Gini index and percentage living below the poverty level) and only one indicator (Gini index) significantly predicted rape rates. Interestingly, in both studies divorce rate produced the largest effect size ($\beta = .67$ and .45, respectively) in the prediction of rape rates.

In the final SMSA study, Peterson and Bailey (1992) examined the relationship between general, racial, and gender inequality and reported rape rates (for 1981) in 263 SMSAs. Although racial inequality did not significantly predict rape, support was found for the relationship between both general and gender inequality. Two indicators of general inequality were included in this study (percentage of families living below the poverty level and Gini index), but only the Gini index significantly predicted rape reporting. That is, as poverty increased so too did rape rates.

Thus, all three studies found some association between SMSA level of poverty and rape reporting. In the first study, only one indicator of poverty (percentage below poverty) was used and it significantly predicted rape reporting. In the latter two studies, two indicators of poverty were used, percentage below poverty and Gini Index, but only the Gini index significantly predicted official rape rates. It is possible that percentage below poverty did not achieve standard levels of significance due to problems of multicollinearity. Regardless, in all three studies, as poverty increased so too did rape rates.

**State-level studies.** The two state-level analyses also found a positive relationship between poverty and official rape rates. In the first study, Baron and Straus (1984) used only one measure of poverty, the percentage of the population with incomes below federal poverty lines. Results from the multivariate analysis indicated a positive relationship between poverty and state-level rape rates. In the second study (Baron & Straus, 1987, 1989), structural equation
modeling was used to examine the effect on rape rates of two indicators of poverty, the Gini Index and the percent of unemployed. Both indicators were significant, indicating a positive relationship between rape rates and poverty. In addition to these direct effects, economic inequality (Gini Index) also had an indirect effect on rape rates through circulation of pornographic magazines and gender inequality. In sum, both SMSA and state-level analyses have found positive relationships between poverty and UCR rape rates.

County-level studies. Two studies examined the effects of economic inequality on rape rates using both percentage below the poverty level and government funding for public services (Ménard & Ruback, 2003; Ruback & Ménard, 2001). The first of these studies (Ruback & Ménard, 2001) included only adult females and had three dependent variables: rape victimization using crisis center data, reporting rate using crisis center data, and rape reporting using UCR data. The bivariate correlations of UCR rape reporting with poverty and with funding were significant in urban, but not rural counties. Moreover, both of these rural and urban paired correlations were significantly different from one another based on Fisher’s $r$ to $z$ transformation. However, neither percentage living below the poverty level nor county spending per capita predicted rape victimization or reporting according to crisis center and UCR data in the multivariate analyses. The only variable that significantly predicted rape reporting based on UCR data was social conditions (a composite variable composed of population heterogeneity, population density, and percentage of female-headed households). This variable was also significantly associated with rape reporting based on the crisis center data. However, the effect of social conditions was not significant when other contextual variables were added to the model.

The second study (Ménard & Ruback, 2003) included only sexual assault victims who
were less than 18 years of age. This study examined the processing of sexual abuse cases using five dependent variables: child sexual abuse and reporting rate according to crisis center data, child sexual abuse victimization and substantiation using Children and Youth Services (CYS) data, and child sexual abuse sentencing using the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing data. Multivariate analyses indicated that the effect of poverty was marginally significant ($p < .08$) for sexual abuse substantiation, suggesting that counties with higher levels of poverty had lower rates of abuse substantiation. County per capita spending produced three main effects, and two interaction effects on sexual abuse case processing. Counties that spent more money had significantly higher rates of sexual abuse reporting according to crisis center data, higher rates of victimization according to CYS data, and higher rates of sentencing. A county type by county expenditures per person interaction indicated that higher expenditures per person were more strongly associated with higher rates of reporting and substantiation in rural rather than urban counties.

To summarize, poverty was related to official rape rates at the SMSA and state level, but not at the county level. In addition, government funding for emergency services was significantly related to county-level sexual assault rates in one of the two studies that examined the effects of funding. The fact that both poverty and government funding were significantly related to rape reporting for urban counties at the bivariate level in one study and that funding interacted with urban/rural county type in predicting reporting and substantiation in the other study suggests that contextual variables, namely degree of rurality, are important in the prediction of rape reporting.

*Percentage of Stranger Assaults*

In addition to gender inequality and economic inequality, the percentage of stranger
assaults in an area also affects reporting to the police. Two studies have examined the effects of the percentage of stranger assaults on reporting rates (Ménard & Ruback, 2003; Ruback & Ménard, 2001). A review of both studies is provided below.

The first study examined the effects of percentage stranger assault on rape victimization and reporting to police using crisis center data and official rape rates using UCR data for the state of Pennsylvania (Ruback & Ménard, 2001). The bivariate correlation of the victimization rate with the percentage of stranger assaults was significant in rural but not in urban areas. With regard to the crisis center reporting rate, bivariate correlations with the percentage of stranger assaults were significant for both rural and urban areas. Moreover, these correlations were significantly different from one another based on Fisher’s $r$ to $z$ transformation. This difference was also reflected in the multivariate analyses, which found a significant county type by stranger assaults interaction. That is, rural counties with higher percentages of stranger assaults had higher rates of reporting to the police. There was also a main effect for percentage of stranger assaults, indicating that counties with a higher percentage of stranger assaults had higher rates of reporting.

The second study also used data from Pennsylvania (Ménard & Ruback, 2003). This study included only sexual assaults against victims who were less than 18 years of age. Recall that five dependent variables were included: victimization and reporting according to crisis center data, victimization and substantiation according to Children and Youth Services (CYS) data, and child sexual assault sentencing according to Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing data. Results indicated that counties with higher percentages of stranger assaults had higher rates of reporting to police based on crisis center data, but they had lower rates of substantiation based on CYS data. This difference was likely due to CYS’s child protection mandate. That is,
stranger assaults generally do not involve child protection issues (i.e., removal from the familial home) and thus may not fall under the purview of this agency very often.

In summary, the percentage of stranger assaults was significantly related to reporting in both studies. That is, the higher the percentage of stranger assaults, the higher was the rate of reporting to the police. In addition, county type moderated the effect of stranger assaults in the first study, with rural counties with higher rates of stranger assaults having the highest rates of reporting. This result also suggests that contextual factors, including type of county, are important in the prediction of rape reporting to the police.

*Urban/Rural Location*

Aside from structural characteristics, like gender inequality, economic inequality, and stranger assaults, another contextual factor that may affect reporting is whether the location is rural or urban. Only two studies have examined the effects of county type (rural versus urban) on rape reporting rates (Ménard & Ruback, 2003; Ruback & Ménard, 2001). In the first study (Ruback & Ménard, 2001), although county type did not predict rape reporting according to the UCR data, it significantly predicted reporting according to crisis center data. Indeed, results indicated that county type (rural versus urban), percentage of stranger assaults, and their interaction predicted reporting to the police. That is, both urban counties and those with higher percentages of stranger assaults had higher reporting rates, and this was especially true for rural counties with high rates of stranger assaults. In the second study (Ménard & Ruback, 2003), county type predicted sexual abuse reporting according to crisis center data and sexual victimization according to CYS data. In addition, county type moderated the effects of funding on both reporting and substantiation, with rural counties with higher funding having higher rates of both reporting and substantiation. Interestingly, and contrary to prior research, which found
higher rates of crime in urban areas (Bachman, 1994; Laub, 1983), results from both of these studies indicated that rates of sexual assault were higher in rural counties.

As compared to urban areas, rural areas are characterized by greater acquaintance density (i.e., number of acquaintances in the community), greater physical isolation, and a social climate that fosters greater informal control, mistrust of government, and a propensity to conceal internal or personal problems (Websdale, 1998; Weisheit & Wells, 1996, 1999; Weisheit, Wells, & Falcone, 1995). These three factors can have a substantial effect on rape reporting. A social climate that advocates keeping private matters private may increase the risk of rape, as it encourages secrecy regarding all problems, including rape victimization. Moreover, the veil of secrecy may serve to shield offenders from detection by authorities or other agents of social control, thereby allowing perpetrators to continue their crimes unabated.

Physical isolation may also affect rape reporting. Rural areas provide many isolated places for sexual assaults to occur. Additionally, once an offense has taken place, the lack of telephones or public transportation to a caring friend or help agencies can make reporting difficult for some victims. Moreover, fiscal constraints found in many rural areas may make less available the tangible and informational social support provided by help agencies. This lack of social support to rape victims may decrease reporting.

In sum, contextual factors (both social and geographical) appear to affect rape reporting. Gender inequality is often associated with rape reporting, although the direction of this relationship is unclear. Economic inequality is also related to rape rates, with impoverished areas having higher rates of rape. Additionally, although some studies find higher rape rates in urban areas using UCR data (Bachman, 1994; Baron & Straus, 1987), a study that also included crisis center data suggests that this effect may be due to the higher percentage of stranger
assaults in urban as compared to rural areas (Ruback & Ménard, 2001). Characteristics of rural areas, such as physical isolation, acquaintance density, greater use of informal social control, and a social climate that promotes privacy, may make it difficult for rape victims to seek help from the police. Thus, context may have both a direct and conditioning effects on victims’ reporting behavior.
CHAPTER 2
Explaining Victims’ Decision to Contact the Police

Theoretical Introduction

At the individual level, rational choice theory is frequently used to explain victims’ decision to seek help from the police. That is, victims weigh the benefits and cost of seeking help and make their decision accordingly. However, some authors have argued that a purely rational model is inappropriate, because the stress of victimization likely affects the rationality of victims’ decision making (Greenberg, Ruback & Westcott, 1983a; Greenberg & Ruback, 1992). Still others have criticized rational choice models of victim decision making for their failure to take into account the social context within which such decisions take place (Pescosolido, 1991, 1992). At the aggregate level, social control theory and social disorganization theory (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Hirschi, 1969; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Shaw & McKay, 1942) are often used to explain official crime or victimization rates. Social control theory contends that crime is a function of a social group’s or society’s inability to regulate itself. Relatedly, social disorganization theory posits that areas with higher levels of social disorganization have higher crime rates due to the breakdown of social control found in such areas.

Integrating these two levels of aggregation, a social ecology framework suggests that an understanding of human behavior must include consideration of the context in which individuals exist. That is, because the type of control or norms used may vary by groups or by location, explanations of victims’ decision to contact the police must include a measure of
context. This section reviews theoretical perspectives used in the explanation of victims’
decision to seek help from the police. It argues that a more complete understanding of victims’
decision to contact the police requires a multi-level framework that integrates victims’ decision
making with the context in which such decision are made.

**Individual-Level Explanations – Rational Choice and Social Norms**

Block (1974) was among the first to propose that police notification following
victimization was not automatic, but rather reflected victims’ decision to take action. Using
assault data from the National Opinion Research Center, he found that victims’ race, income,
and relationship with the offender affected their decisions to contact the police. Based on his
results, he proposed a rational choice model of decision making, wherein victims weighed the
cost and benefits of contacting the police and acted (i.e., contacting or not contacting the police)
according to what they believed would be best for them. Although rudimentary, this model was
important because it demonstrated the need for a theoretical framework to understand victims’
decision to contact the police.

Although still grounded in rational choice theory, more recent theoretical efforts have
demonstrated greater appreciation for the stress of victimization, the influence of consulted
others, and the complexity of seeking help from others, especially the police (Greenberg,
Ruback, and Wescott, 1983a; Gross & McMullen, 1983). For example, using Darley and
Latané’s (1970) help giving model, Gross and McMullen (1983), proposed a three-stage model
of help seeking behavior: (a) perceiving a problem, (b) deciding to seek help, and (c)
operationalizing strategies to alleviate the problem. Despite the sequential presentation of these
stages, the authors noted that the help seeking process is not necessarily linear, but rather that
some stages may be repeated or omitted altogether. Using a number of psychosocial theories,
Gross and McMullen argued that seeking help has two broad forms of cost: (a) the personal cost of maintaining self-esteem and self-concept (attribution theory), and (b) the social costs involved with interpersonal relationships with others (equity theory). Thus, the help-seeker must weigh the negative feelings associated with seeking help (loss of esteem following the admission that one is unable to solve the problem oneself) against the potential gain of receiving help.

Gross and McMullen’s help seeking model improves upon Block’s by disaggregating the help seeking decision into three stages, thereby allowing for greater refinement and consequent understanding of the process. That is, rather than assuming that help seeking is one decision, the authors break the process down into three decisions. However, the model does not sufficiently emphasize factors unique to victims’ help seeking following a criminal victimization, including distress and arousal.

Greenberg and Ruback (1992) proposed a similar multi-staged, semi-reasoned model of help seeking by victims. Pursuant to their empirical research demonstrating that most victims consult with, and are influenced by, others in their help seeking decisions (Greenberg, Ruback, & Westcott, 1983b; Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Ruback, Greenberg, & Westcott, 1984), the authors relied on the notion of social influence in the construction of their help seeking model. According to their model, following the discovery of a crime, victims’ decision making follows a three stage process: (a) label the event a crime, (b) determine the seriousness of the crime, and (c) decide what action, if any, to take. At each stage of the decision making process, victims are influenced by their own motivational set (consistent with their level of stress or vulnerability following the victimization) and by the advice received from others. Consulted others can influence victims in four ways: (a) by cuing victims to a particular script, (b) by providing
informational advice, arguments, or modeling, (c) by providing normative standards, and (d) by providing socioemotional support or nonsupport (Ruback et al., 1984). Thus, victims’ decision to contact the police is not one static decision, but rather a series of contingent decisions, derived in consultation with others. An example of this process would be as follows. A victim suffers forced sexual intercourse. The victim must first determine whether a crime took place. In making this determination, she may consult with friends to see if they too would label the event a crime. If the victim determines that a crime has taken place, she must next determine the seriousness of the crime. Again, she may consult with others who serve as normative referents in determining the severity of the crime. Finally, if she believes the crime is serious enough to warrant outside intervention, the victim may again consult with others to decide what action to take (e.g., deal with the matter privately, reevaluate the situation, call the police, or do nothing).

This model improves upon Gross and McMullen’s work by placing greater emphasis on two elements that are key to victim’s decision to contact the police: (a) victim motivation (as affected by stress and arousal) and (b) the effects of social influence. Both refinements are especially germane to the crime of sexual assault, wherein victims’ own stress and the social influence of others are likely to affect their decision making process (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1974; Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Feldman-Summers & Ashworth, 1981; Ruback et al., 1999; Williams 1984). Thus, although a victim may label the sexual activity a crime and feel its severity warrants contacting the police, she may choose not to because she feels the criminal justice process may be too traumatizing to seek outside intervention. Similarly, despite the severity of the assault, consulted others may advise against reporting to the police because they do not believe that a criminal justice response will be helpful, they blame the victim, or in the
case of familial consultants, they feel that the victim’s disclosure of sexual assault victimization could bring them shame.

Although Greenberg and Ruback’s model incorporates social influence into the decision making process, as a victim-focused rational choice model, it can still be criticized for failing to adequately capture the social nature of human interactions, that is, the individual is nested within a social context (Pescosolido, 1992) or the potential effects of context (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Meier & Miethe, 1993).

Aggregate-Level Explanations – Social Control and Social Disorganization

Although not concerned specifically with victim reporting to the police, two theories used to explain crime at the aggregate level, social control and social disorganization, may also be helpful in understanding victims’ decision to contact the police, as crime statistics rely heavily on victim reporting. A central tenet of these sociological and criminological theories is that crime or social violation is a manifestation of society’s inability to maintain social order through formal and informal avenues (anomie – Durkheim, 1897; social control - Hirschi, 1969; human ecology - Park, 1936). That is, social groups or societies regulate their members’ behavior through a combination of formal sanctions (i.e., criminal or civil action) and informal sanctions (i.e., withdrawal of privilege or affection, and ostracism).

Durkheim (1897), for instance, argued that rapid social change brought about by industrialization resulted in the breakdown of social controls and thus resulted in an increase in suicides (a social violation akin to a crime in the predominantly Catholic society of Durkheim’s time). Reiss (1951) was among the first to apply this concept to criminality, arguing that delinquent behavior resulted from the failure of the socialization process (i.e., social control). Nye (1958) expanded on Reiss’ work by identifying three main categories of social control used
in the prevention of delinquency: (a) direct control (punishment imposed for nonconformity and rewards imposed for conformity), (b) indirect control (youth avoids nonconformity for fear of pain or disapproval), and (c) internal control (youth avoids nonconformity due to feelings of guilt).

Further elaborating on the socialization process, Hirschi (1969) proposed that crime resulted from a failure to bond with society. He argued that social institutions, like schools and the family, were instrumental to the socializing process and he proposed four primary mechanisms through which social bonding took place. Specifically, he contended that the violation of rules was facilitated by the failure to be attached (i.e., caring for others), to be committed (i.e., investing in society), to be involved (i.e., in conventional activities), and to believe in the social order (i.e., accept social values). Although much of the research in support of this theory concerned juvenile delinquency (Hirschi, 1969; Matza, 1964; Nye, 1958; Reiss, 1951), it still provides insight into the mechanisms through which societies constrain their members’ behavior.

Finally, focusing more on a lack of social control and guided by plant ecology, Park (1936) and other members of the Chicago school (Burgess, 1928; Shaw & McKay, 1942), proposed that social disorder itself contributed to crime. Following their observation that higher crime rates occurred in the same areas or “zones” of Chicago regardless of migratory patterns (i.e., the location rather than the people contributed to crime), Shaw and McKay (1942) argued that areas characterized by high poverty, high population mobility, and high population heterogeneity have higher crime rates because they are more socially disorganized. Although some have interpreted this to mean that social disorganization has a direct effect on crime, Bursik (1988) argued that social disorganization has an indirect effect on crime through reduced
formal and informal social control. That is, areas with high poverty, residential mobility, and population heterogeneity are less effective at organizing the community toward a common goal of reducing crime. This reduced efficacy may manifest itself in two ways: (a) reduced monitoring or regulation, and (b) reduced ability to secure resources (e.g., public services including police and fire stations).

The role of collective efficacy in explaining how social disorganization contributes to crime is important and has become a primary focus among researchers investigating social disorganization theory (e.g., Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997). Thus, whereas anomie and control theory focus on how weakened social bonds result in nonconformity, social disorganization theory investigates pathways through which such bonds may come to be weak in the first place (Kornhauser, 1978). Although support for social disorganization theory comes primarily from tests completed in urban areas (Sampson & Groves, 1989, Sampson et al., 1997), a recent test of the theory demonstrates that it explains crime in rural settings too (Osgood & Chambers, 2002).

Focusing specifically on sexual assault, gender inequality, in addition to traditional social disorganization variables, may also contribute to a community’s inability to prevent this crime. That is, areas with less gender equality may be less able to organize themselves in support of women’s issues, including reducing rape victimization and encouraging reporting. A number of feminist scholars argue that men rape in order to maintain their dominant position in society (Brownmiller, 1975; Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Russell, 1984, Scully & Marolla, 1985). According to this logic, as women gain greater equality, rape rates should go down. However, empirical evidence for the relationship between gender equality and rape has been mixed, with more recent multivariate studies reporting a positive relationship (Austin & Kim, 2000; Baron...
& Strauss, 1987; Ellis & Beattie, 1983; McConahay & McConahay, 1977). To explain these results, some have proposed a backlash hypothesis (Bailey & Peterson, 1995; Russell, 1975). That is, as women achieved greater equality, rape becomes more prevalent as a means of putting women back in their place.

An alternative explanation using the concept of collective efficacy from social disorganization theory is that as women gained equality, they were able to activate informal and formal systems toward rape prevention and reporting. Accordingly, the positive relationship between gender equality and rape rates may more accurately reflect an increase in rape reporting, rather than an increase in rape occurrence. Support for the role of greater collective efficacy can be seen in changes within the criminal justice system regarding rape. For instance, legal changes concerning rape (e.g., definition of the offense, evidentiary rules, and penalty structure; Horney & Spohn, 1991, Spohn & Horney, 1992; Searles, & Berger, 1987) occurred largely due to the lobbying work of feminists like Catherine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin. Women were also instrumental in the implementation of specialized sexual assault units, which may also have served to increase the rates of rape reporting (Jensen & Karpos, 1993). Thus, gender equality may result in greater efficacy at securing resources in support of women’s issues including rape victimization and this in turn may increase the rate of rape reporting.

Regardless of their emphasis, these theoretical frameworks describe groups’ ability to influence their members’ behaviors through formal and informal sanctions. That social context affects behavior has three implications for rape reporting. First, it indicates that definitions of what constitutes a rape can vary by social context. Second, consistent with these divergent definitions, groups can differentially promote reporting. That is, groups that do not consider rape to be a crime may discourage rape reporting, whereas others may permit the reporting of
rape only in certain socially prescribed circumstances (i.e., violent assaults by strangers). Third, it indicates that socially constructed factors, like collective efficacy, may affect groups’ abilities to achieve their intended goals. Thus, even groups that are sympathetic to rape victims may not be able to achieve the common goal of providing needed services to victims following an assault, which in turn may reduce reporting.

Although both social control and social disorganization frameworks comprise formal and informal components of control, suggesting that they operate at the individual- and contextual-level, most research using these theoretical perspectives has been conducted at the aggregate-level (e.g., Osgood & Chambers, 2002; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Warner & Pierce, 1993; but, cf. Miethe & McDowall, 1993; Sampson et al., 1997). Failure to incorporate elements of informal and formal control at both levels of aggregation means that information regarding the underlying mechanism of control is lost or may be misspecified. An integrated approach would call for the inclusion of both levels, as factors associated with the context and the individual are likely to affect control.

*Integrating Micro- and Macro-Level Explanations – Social Ecology*

Sociologists and social and psychological ecologists have emphasized the need to incorporate all levels of aggregation to fully understand human behavior, including crime and victimization (Barker, 1968; Hawley, 1950, 1986; Janowitz, 1978; Liska, 1990; Meier & Miethe, 1993). That is, because victims are nested within a broader context, their behavior can be understood only by taking into account the influence of interpersonal and sociocultural factors that compose that context (Belsky, 1993; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Grauerholz, 2000; Heise, 1998).
Shifting the focus from the individual to the individual nested within the social network, Pescosolido (1992) proposed a social organization strategy (SOS) to understand help seeking behavior. Arguing that social interactions form the basis of human life, and that social networks serve as the mechanism through which such interactions occur, Pescosolido replaced individual decision making with socially constructed patterns of decision-making. That is, because decisions are not made in a vacuum, but rather are part of a dynamic interaction with the social environment (consistent with symbolic interactionism), the influence of that social environment must be included to fully understand the decision making process. For example, she noted that if the cause of help seeking (sexual assault victimization in this case) brings costs or damages to the social network (e.g., familial embarrassment), it would reduce the likelihood of seeking help. Moreover, she pointed out that by failing to incorporate the social context within which decisions are made, the effects these factors are also lost. These dimensions are important, as they can affect the labeling of the crime, the determination of the seriousness of the crime, and the decision to seek help from the police. This point can be exemplified using rape victims’ help seeking: in the U.S. until the last third of the 20th century, sexual assaults committed by a spouse were not labeled rape, they were not considered serious, and most victims did not contact the police to deal with this form of victimization. Thus, context affects how the victim interprets the event and the actions taken in response to it.

Sociologists concerned with social order have also emphasized the need to include other levels of nesting to reflect government or structural influence (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Hunter, 1985; Taylor, 1997). Indeed, Hunter (1985) contended that social control operates at three mutually coexisting levels: (a) the private, (b) the parochial, and (c) the public. The three levels operate along a continuum consistent with level of acquaintanceship. Thus, the private
level includes close friends and relatives, the parochial includes acquaintances and business
associates, and the public includes strangers. According to Hunter (1985), each level plays a
somewhat different, albeit interdependent, role in maintaining members’ compliance. Thus,
private order relies most heavily on the exchange of social support, the parochial relies most
heavily on the exchange of voluntary labor, and the public relies most heavily on the exchange
of money, which produces rights (benefits) and duties (costs). The denial or granting of
currency (i.e., support, voluntary labor, or money) maintains the social order.

Janowitz (1978), incorporating sociological and ecological constructs, has also
emphasized the hierarchical nature of social existence in his systems analysis of social
organization. Elaborating on the concept of control, he described two primary components, the
normative, (consistent with informal control) and the structural (consistent with formal control).
In the normative component, the social group’s standards and values dictate what is appropriate
or deviant behavior, whereas in the structural component, the distribution of resources and the
use of law sanctions members’ behavior. Consequently, the normative component may be more
influential at the private level and the structural component may be more influential at the
public level. However, he emphasized that because of their symbiotic nature, both levels
influence social conformity.

Janowitz’s model provides a cogent explanation of how both the individual and the
aggregate can influence behavior. At the individual level, and similar to the models proposed
by Greenberg and Ruback, social norms influence behavior. At the aggregate level, formal
social control or structural components, including the distribution of resources and the
imposition of laws influence behavior. The best understanding of individual behavior will use a
combination of both levels, because behavior at the individual level may be contingent upon
factors at the structural level. To demonstrate using rape reporting, legal changes affecting the
definition of rape and consequently victims’ rights and services at the aggregate level can affect
social norms regarding the labeling of rape, the determination of its seriousness, and the
decision to report to the police. Thus, failing to incorporate both levels of aggregation may
result in a misspecification of the reporting process.

This study extends prior research by using a social ecology framework to examine the
effects of context on victims’ decision to report to the police following a sexual assault. Since
victims’ decisions to label the event a crime and to report to the police are affected by the
advice they received (i.e., social norms) and by the larger social context (e.g., county type,
gender equality, and victim services), both levels must be included to fully understand the
decision making process. For instance, advisors who live in rural communities with fewer
services for victims may provide different advice than those who live in rape supportive
counties (e.g., urban counties with more victim services).

*Individual-Level Hypotheses*

1. **Victims whose assaults more closely resemble the classic rape (i.e., violent stranger assault) will be more likely to contact the police.**
   
   Based on prior research, I expected those who suffer serious assaults (as indicated by the
   offender’s use of a weapon or by victim injury) by a stranger would be more likely to label the
   event a crime, to determine the crime is severe, to believe it warrants official intervention, and
   consequently to report to the police.

2. **Older, as compared to younger victims, will be more likely to report to the police.**
Based on past research, I expected older victims would be more likely to report their victimization to the police. One factor likely explains this effect older victims are likely to have a better relationship with the police, thereby increasing the likelihood they will be believed, whereas younger victims are less trusting of police, possibly due to their own criminal behavior (i.e., drug use or underage drinking at the time of the assault; Ruback et al., 1999).

3. Victims who consumed no drugs or alcohol prior to the assault will be more likely to report to the police than those who have consumed drugs or alcohol.

Because prior research demonstrates that victims who use drugs or alcohol are judged more blameworthy, fewer of these victims were expected to report to the police.

 contextual-level hypotheses

4. Contextual-level factors, including victim services, gender equality, percentage of stranger assaults, and county type (rural versus urban), will affect the rate of victimization and the victims’ decisions to contact the police.

Consistent with the primary tenet of social disorganization theories, victimization rates are likely to be higher and victims are less likely to report in areas with fewer victim services (as measured by county emergency and victim services, and availability of rape educational programs). Consistent with the notion of efficacy from social disorganization theory, victimization rates are likely to be higher, but victims are less likely to report to the police in areas with less gender equality. Consistent with prior research, victimization rates are likely to be lower, but victims are more likely to report to the police in counties with higher rates of stranger assaults. Finally, because rural areas are characterized by greater acquaintance density, greater secrecy concerning personal problems, greater mistrust of government, and greater use
of informal social control, victimization rates are likely to be higher in rural areas, but victims are less likely to contact the police.

5. As compared to urban counties, rural counties with greater gender equality (as measured by the percentage of females in political office, in the legal profession, and with post-secondary education) will have higher victimization rates, and victims from these compared to other counties will be more likely to report rape.

Although prior research has produced mixed results regarding the effects of gender equality on rape victimization and reporting, I expected rural counties with greater gender equality to have higher rates of victimization. The reasoning is as follows. First, because most sexual assaults are committed by known perpetrators and rural areas have higher levels of acquaintance density, victimization rates are likely to be higher in these counties. Second, with regard to gender equality, lifestyle/routine activities theory suggests that greater gender equality will likely mean that women’s lifestyles (e.g., working outside the home) will put them at increased risk for victimization. Thus, because both gender equality and rural location are likely to increase the risk of victimization, the highest rate of victimization should occur when these two factors are combined (i.e., rural areas with greater gender equality). With regard to reporting, consistent with the concept of efficacy from social disorganization theory, I expected an interaction between county type (rural versus urban) and gender equality, such that victims who live in rural areas with greater gender equality would be more likely to report, as compared to victims who live in rural areas with less gender equality. Because rural residents are more likely to espouse traditional values, greater gender equality in rural counties is likely to impact victims’ decisions to report to police. Gender equality was expected to have little impact on victims who live in urban areas.
6. Rural counties with fewer services for victims (as measured by emergency, victim, and rape education services) will have lower rates of victimization, and victims in these counties will be more likely to contact the police than victims in urban counties or rural counties without these characteristics.

Based on prior research that finds higher rape rates in areas with greater economic inequality and that rural areas have higher rates of economic inequality, I expected that rural areas with greater victim services would have lower rape victimization rates. With regard to reporting, consistent with prior research and the concept of efficacy from social disorganization theory, I expected an interaction between county type (rural versus urban) and victim services, such that victims who live in rural areas with more funding would be more likely to report, as compared to victims who live in rural areas with less funding. Because rural areas are unlikely to have alternative services for victims, funding and service availability in these areas may be crucial to victim reporting. Availability of victim services was expected to have little impact on victims who live in urban areas.

Cross-level Interaction Hypotheses

7. County type (rural versus urban) will condition the effect of victim-offender relationship on victims’ decision to contact the police.

Consistent with sociological and ecological theories that emphasize the importance of context on behavior, county characteristics were expected to moderate the reporting behavior of victims assaulted by known perpetrators. That is, because rural areas are characterized by greater concern for privacy (especially as it relates to personal problems), greater mistrust of government, greater physical isolation, and greater use of informal social control, these characteristics were expected to affect the labeling, determination of seriousness, and decision.
to contact police for crimes committed by known offenders but not crimes committed by strangers. In urban areas, the victim-offender relationship was expected to still be important but to matter less than in rural areas.

Research Strategy

Tests of these hypotheses used a multiplist strategy (Cook, 1985). That is, the dissertation involved two related studies using different methods, different data sources (the first study using a questionnaire with college students and the second using secondary data analyses with sexual assault victims), and different statistical techniques. By using different methods and data sources, one can be more confident that results are due to real differences rather than to method or source bias. Although this strategy may be problematic when non-convergent findings arise (Shotland & Mark, 1987), it is preferable to making mistakes about causality due to method or data artifacts (Cook & Campbell, 1979). The strategy was to first examine decisions to report to police under controlled conditions and then to test the generalizability of the findings in a natural setting with real victims. These studies extend prior research by investigating the effects of both individual- and contextual-level factors on rape victims’ decision to contact the police. The first study investigated rural-urban differences in college students’ labeling of criminal events and their decisions about whether the police should be involved.

The second study used data collected by 48 rape crisis centers in Pennsylvania to examine individual and county factors that affect rape reporting to the police. At the individual-level, factors including age, severity of the assault, alcohol or drug use, and victim-offender relationship were examined. County factors that were tested included county type, gender equality, victim services, and percent of stranger assaults. Gender inequality and victim
services were also tested in interactions with county type. In addition, a cross-level interaction examining whether or not the effects of victim-offender relationship on reporting vary as a function of county type was also tested. This second study extends prior research by examining both individual- and county-level factors that affect rape victims’ decision to contact the police.
CHAPTER 3

Normative Advice for Labeling and Reporting Crime - Study 1

Victimization surveys consistently find that many victims do not report their experience to the police (BJS, 2001). Further, research suggests that victims’ failure to report is due, in part, to social influence. That is, victims consult others to assist in the labeling of crime, the determination of its seriousness, and the appropriate course of action, if any, to take (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Ruback et al., 1984). The importance of social influence in victims’ decision making suggests that there are normative standards (Bates, 1956; Cialdini & Trost, 1998; Kallgren, Reno, Cialdini, 2000) regarding the labeling and reporting of crime. Further, research demonstrates that crime severity is the best predictor of whether an event is labeled a crime and is reported to the police (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Skogan, 1984, Warr, Meier, & Erickson, 1983). That is, the greater the harm as indicated by offenders’ weapon use, victim injury, or the extent of monetary loss the more serious the crime will be judged, and the more likely it will be reported to the police. A number of secondary factors including victim-offender relationship and country of origin have also been found to affect normative standards regarding what constitutes a crime worthy of criminal justice intervention (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Newman, 1976). What is not known is whether these norms vary by type of acquaintanceship (e.g., stranger, acquaintance, acquaintances in long-standing dispute, provoked acquaintances) or at smaller levels of aggregation (e.g., county rather than nation). The purpose of this study was to investigate whether type of acquaintanceship or county of residency affects participants’ labeling and advice to report criminal events.
Seriousness is the most consistent and robust factor found to influence the definition and reporting of crime (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Rossi, Waite, Bose, & Berk, 1974; Skogan, 1984; Warr, 1989). That is, the more serious the crime as indicated by weapon use, injury suffered, or monetary loss, the more likely it will be labeled a crime worthy of police intervention. Research by Warr (1989) suggests that crime seriousness ratings consist of two components: (a) normative evaluation (i.e., perceived wrongfulness) and (b) factual assessment of the consequences (i.e., perceived harmfulness). Moreover, the influence of these two components, although closely related, appeared to vary as a function of crime type (i.e., personal, property, or public order) and component’s severity. Specifically, Warr found greater influence of the normative component for crimes deemed more wrongful than harmful (personal and property crimes), and greater influence of the factual component for crimes judged more harmful than wrongful (public order crimes). Thus, the dominant feature of the crime, be it wrongfulness or harmfulness, best predicted judged seriousness of the criminal event.

The largest and most comprehensive study of crime severity was the National Survey of Crime Severity (NSCS; Wolfgang, Figlio, Tracy, & Singer, 1985), which was conducted as part of the 1977 National Crime Survey. The NSCS asked 60,000 individuals to rate 25 criminal events, from one of 12 forms, for a total of 204 events. The criminal events covered a broad range of offenses, and many of these varied according to the victim type, monetary loss, injury suffered, and weapon use. For the purpose of cross-item comparison, each severity score was transformed to a ratio score. Across all crimes, violent crimes were consistently rated more serious than property crimes. Indeed, replications and extensions of this study demonstrate that crime severity is the single best predictor of seriousness score, the labeling of an event as a crime, and advice to report to the police (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Rossi et al, 1974; Skogan,
1984; Warr, 1989). While crime severity is the primary determinant used in the definition of
and advice to report crimes, secondary factors including gender of the advisor, victim-offender
relationship, and group affiliation (nationality or ethnicity) also affect the seriousness ratings
and consequently the labeling and reporting of crime (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Rossi et al,
1974; Skogan, 1984; Warr, 1989).

With regard to the gender of the respondent, women, as compared to men, are generally
more likely to suggest reporting victimizations to police (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Ruback
1993, 1994; Ruback, et al., 1999). Similarly, victimization surveys consistently find that female
victims, as compared to male victims, are more likely to report to police (BJS, 2001, Table 93;
Skogan, 1984). Men’s unwillingness to seek assistance from others is a common finding in the
broader help seeking literature as well (Addis & Mahlik, 2003; Kaukinen, 2002; Pirog-Good &
Stets, 1989; Schonert-Reichl & Muller, 1996; Tamres, Janicki, & Helgeson, 2002). Gender
differences in seeking help, especially from the police, may be due to sex role socialization
(Addis & Mahlik, 2003; Pollack, 1998). That is, men may be less likely to report crime because
they are socialized to be self-reliant. Indeed, one study concerned with advice to campus crime
victims found that men were more likely than women to suggest victims handle the matter
privately rather than seek criminal justice intervention (Ruback et al., 1999).

With regard to victim-offender relationship, crimes by known perpetrators are generally
viewed as less serious than crimes committed by strangers, and consequently, are less likely to
be seen as appropriate for police contact (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Rossi et al., 1974;
Ruback 1994; Skogan, 1976; Warr, 1989). Perhaps as Warr (1994) suggests, the reason violent
offenses against known victims are perceived as less serious is that raters assume that violence
between acquaintances or intimates results from a long-standing dispute or provocation. In
such cases, victims are likely judged more responsible for their own victimization, thereby reducing the perceived wrongfulness, and consequently, the seriousness rating. Support for this contention was obtained in Warr’s (1989) study of crime seriousness. Specifically, for person crimes committed by known-perpetrators, the existence of a prior relationship between the victim and the offender reduced the judged wrongfulness of the offense, but not its harmfulness. Since wrongfulness was also found to be the dominant component used in the evaluation of person crimes, a reduction in this component necessarily resulted in a reduction of the seriousness score. However, a more thorough evaluation of this process involves varying the nature of the victim-offender relationship to determine whether victims’ blameworthiness (due to long-standing dispute or provocation) affects the labeling and advice to report a crime to the police.

Few studies have examined the effects of group affiliation or location on the judgment of crime severity and the advice to report to the police. Newman (1976) asked respondents’ from six different countries (e.g., India, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, the United States, and Yugoslavia) to rate each of nine events in terms of their severity, and to indicate whether or not the crimes should be reported to the police or other authority. In a second study, Greenberg and Ruback (1992) asked respondents from four different countries (India, Nigeria, Thailand, the United States) to rate the severity and appropriateness of contacting the police for 49 of Wolfgang and colleagues’ (1985) criminal events. In both studies, the severity of the crime best predicted approval for contacting the police in all countries. However, severity ratings and approval to contact the police also varied across nations. For instance, in the Newman study, U.S. respondents were most likely to suggest calling the police for the crime of robbery even though their rating of this crime was fourth in severity. Similar severity-reporting disjunctures
were found in Greenberg and Ruback’s study. Crimes against women were considered more serious in the U.S. than in the other countries. Yet sex crimes (which more often involve female victims) were not rated as serious in the U.S. as in the other three countries. Additionally, although spousal assaults were considered serious in all four countries, Indian respondents were least likely to approve of contacting the police for this crime.

Greenberg and Ruback’s study also documented different ratings across cultural or ethnic groups within the same country. Specifically, they found differences in the approval for contacting the police between Northern and Southern respondents from India, and among Latinos and Koreans as compared to blacks and whites in the United States. Although race contributed only moderately to the seriousness ratings, Rossi and his colleagues (1974) also found ethnic differences, with African-American respondents giving higher serious ratings than did their white counterparts. Thus, group affiliation or location seems to affect the severity rating and the approval for police contact.

With regard to sexual assault specifically, location affects victimization and crime rates (BJS, 2001, Table 57; FBI 1999). Both the NCVS and the UCR find that urban areas have higher rates of sexual assault than rural areas. The higher rate of crime found in urban areas is usually attributed to greater population density, ethnic heterogeneity, residential mobility, and poverty (Shaw & McKay, 1942).

An alternative explanation is that the actual rate of sexual assault is the same in both areas, but that victims in rural areas are less likely to label and report their assault (Ménard & Ruback, 2003; Ruback & Ménard, 2001). That is, rural, as compared to urban areas, have greater acquaintance density (i.e., more acquaintances in the community), greater physical isolation, and a social climate that promotes greater informal social control especially for
personal problems (Weisheit et al., 1995). Combined, these factors could explain the difference in rates. Specifically, greater acquaintance density means that sexual assaults are more likely perpetrated by acquaintances and a greater propensity to keep personal problems private means that victims assaulted by acquaintances would be less likely to report. Further, research indicates that those who are victimized by known offenders are less likely to label the event rape and less likely to report to police or survey personnel (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Koss et al., 1988; Ruback, 1993, 1994). What is not known is whether such cultural differences exist within the United States at other levels of aggregation (e.g., the county level).

This study investigated two questions: (a) whether the nature of the victim-offender relationship (i.e., acquaintances, acquaintances in a long-standing dispute, acquaintances who were provoked, or strangers), and (b) whether the location (i.e., type of county - rural versus urban) affect the labeling of an event and advice to contact the police. Four hypotheses were used to examine the effects of secondary factors on the labeling and judged appropriateness of reporting criminal events to the police:

*Hypothesis 1:* Given that gender is associated with all types of help seeking, I expected female respondents would be more likely than male respondents to label an event a crime and to advice the victim report to the police.

*Hypothesis 2:* Given the importance of victim-offender relationship in mediating the effects of wrongfulness, I expected criminal events committed by known perpetrators, especially those following long-standing disputes or provocation, would be less frequently labeled crimes worthy of police contact.

*Hypothesis 3:* Given that the use of informal social control is more prevalent in rural rather than urban areas, I expected respondents from rural areas would be less likely than their urban
counterparts to label an event a crime or to suggest contacting the police.

**Hypothesis 4:** Given the greater tendency to deal privately with personal problems in rural as compared to urban areas, I expected county type would moderate the effect of victim-offender relationship on the labeling and reporting of crimes. Specifically, for rural as compared to urban residents, events depicting acquaintance victims in long-standing disputes or following provocation would be less likely to be labeled a crime and to be judged appropriate for reporting to the police, whereas urban and rural residents would not differ in their judgments about crimes involving strangers.

**Method**

The study explored these issues using a 2 (rural versus urban) x 4 (victim-offender relationship) x 2 (gender) between - x 30 (crimes) within-subjects design. Participants rated (on a 9-point scale) the extent to which they would consider each of 30 events serious enough to label it a crime and to call the police. The 30 criminal events were selected from among the 204 events used in the NSCS study (Wolfgang et al., 1985). Because sexual crimes were of primary interest, all five sexual assaults from the Wolfgang et al. study were included in this survey. The remaining items were selected to represent a variety of crime types and severity: 14 assaults, 9 robberies, and 2 household crimes. On the Wolfgang et al. scale the items ranged in severity from a low of 0.6 for trespassing in the backyard of a home, to a high of 30 for forcible rape of a woman that required hospitalization. This study was approved by the Pennsylvania State University Institutional Review Board.

**Participants**

The initial sample comprised 475 college students. However, eight cases were excluded due either to missing data (two cases) or to foreign nationality (six cases). Thus, the final
sample contained 466 college students, who ranged in age from 18 to 48 ($M = 21; Mdn = 21$).
Participants were recruited during the summer session of 2000 in psychology, sociology, and criminal justice courses at the Pennsylvania State University. They completed the questionnaire in about 15 minutes. Participants signed consent forms indicating that they understood that their participation was voluntary, anonymous, and confidential, and that they could discontinue at any time without penalty.

Procedure

After completing their age, gender, and county of residence, participants were asked to read a brief description of 30 criminal events and to indicate on 9-point scales, ranging from A “not at all” to I “definitely” (a) the extent to which they would recommend the victim consider the event a crime and (b) the extent to which they would recommend the victim contact the police. There was also a between-subjects victim-offender manipulation; the questionnaires described the perpetrator either as a stranger, an acquaintance, an acquaintance with whom the victim had a long-standing dispute, or an acquaintance whom the victim had provoked. Participants were randomly assigned to one of these four victim-offender manipulations. The order of crime presentation was fixed across conditions. Copies of the questionnaires appear in Appendix A.

Variables

County type. The determination of a county as urban or rural was based on the distinction used by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania (an agency of the Pennsylvania legislature). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a place is rural if the population is less than 2,500 and it is not contiguous to built-up urbanized areas. Applied at the county-level, this definition over-classifies counties as urban. The Center for Rural Pennsylvania considers a
county to be rural if at least half of the residents in the county fit this description (Center for Rural Pennsylvania, 1999). Because this categorization more accurately reflects county type, it was used in lieu of the Census definition. For Pennsylvania residents, the Center for Rural Pennsylvania county classification was used. For non-Pennsylvania residents, the Census population of participants’ counties of residency and adjacent counties was used to make the county-type determination in keeping with the Center for Rural Pennsylvania’s classification system. Six subjects were excluded because they were not from the United States. Rural counties were coded 0 and urban counties were coded 1.

**Gender.** Participants were asked to indicate their gender on the questionnaire. One hundred ninety-one participants were men and 283 were women. Male college students were coded 0 and female college students were coded 1.

**Victim-offender relationship.** To investigate whether participants infer conflict when crimes occur between acquaintances, three types of acquaintanceship were examined. In the first group, there was a mention of acquaintanceship but nothing about the type of acquaintanceship. In the second group, acquaintances were described as being in a long-standing dispute. In the third group, acquaintance-victims were described as having provoked the offender. To contrast different types of acquaintanceship, a final group characterized the victim and offender as strangers.

**Crimes.** Thirty of Wolfgang and his colleagues’ (1985) 204 crimes were selected to broadly represent different severity levels of four different types of crime (5 sexual crimes, 14 assaults, 9 robberies, and two household crimes). Overall, severity ratings of the chosen criminal events ranged from a low of .6 for trespassing in the backyard of a private home, to a high of 30 for forcible rape of a woman that required hospitalization. Consistent with severity
ratings, events also varied with regard to the type of weapon used by the offender (threat, fist, lead pipe, knife, and gun), level of injury experienced by the victim (none, requiring treatment by a doctor, requiring hospitalization), and value of monetary loss incurred by the victim ($10 or $1,000).

Results

Overview

In order to examine the effect of crime severity on the advice to call the police, I conducted bivariate analyses of the labeling of criminal events, the advice for reporting the criminal event to the police, and for the NSCS severity scores (Wolfgang et al., 1985) for each of the 30 criminal events. Next, I conducted regression analyses to predict participants’ advice to contact the police for the 30 crime events using the NSCS severity scores and the four crime types (sex crimes, assaults, robbery, and household crimes).

Finally, I conducted multivariate analyses of variance to examine factors that affect participants’ labeling of and advice to report the crime events. Because it would have been unwieldy to examine all 30 criminal events separately, they were grouped into 4 crime types (sex crimes, assaults, robberies, and household crimes) according to the nature of the event (personal or property offenses). All analyses used a 2 (Participant Gender) x 2 (Participant County of Residence – Rural/Urban) x 4 (Victim-Offender Relationship) between-subjects x the 4 (Crime Types) within-subjects analysis of variance.

Correlations

To examine the association among crime severity and the labeling of crime events and the advice to report the events to police, I conducted bivariate correlations for each of the 30 criminal events. As seen in Table 1, the NSCS scores were positively and significantly related
to both participants’ labeling scores and participants’ advice to report to the police scores. In addition, participants’ labeling and reporting scores were almost perfectly correlated \((r = .976)\), suggesting that if participants label an event a crime they also believe that it is worthy of police intervention.

Table 1. Bivariate Correlation of Labeling Events, Advice to Report to Police, and the NSCS Severity Scores (Wolfgang, et al., 1985).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Labeling Scores</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Advice to Report Scores</td>
<td>.976**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. NSCS Severity Score</td>
<td>.672**</td>
<td>.723**</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Regression Analyses

Table 2. Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Advice to Report to the Police for the 30 Criminal Events (N = 30).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>4.703</td>
<td>.380</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSCS Severity Scores</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.723***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>4.240</td>
<td>.779</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSCS Severity Scores</td>
<td>.167</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.818***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime Typea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Crimes</td>
<td>-.470</td>
<td>1.009</td>
<td>-.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assaults</td>
<td>.264</td>
<td>.845</td>
<td>.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robberies</td>
<td>.615</td>
<td>.855</td>
<td>.187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: R² = .51 for Step 1; Δ R² = .05 for Step 2 (p = .433).

* *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

*a Household crime is the reference category.

To determine how well both crime severity and crime type predicted advice to contact the police, I conducted regression analyses. Participants’ scores on the advice to contact the police were regressed on to the NSCS severity scores and the four crime types. Because participants’ labeling scores were so highly correlated with participants’ reporting scores in the
bivariate analyses, they were not included in this regression analyses. As seen in Table 2, the NSCS severity scores significantly predicted whether or not participants would advise the victim to report to the police. The type of crime rated (i.e., sex crimes, assaults, robberies, household crimes) did not significantly predict participants’ advice to report to the police, nor did it add to the predictive power of the model.

**Sex Crimes**

Results from the analyses of the two judgments (labeling and advice for reporting) for the five types of sex crimes are presented first.

*Labeling.* A 2 (Participant Gender) x 2 (Participant County of Residence – Rural/Urban) x 4 (Victim-Offender Relationship) between-subjects x 5 within-subjects (Types of Sexual Assaults) analysis of variance produced one significant between- and one significant within-subjects effects for labeling the event. With regard to whether or not participants would recommend the victim consider the event a crime, there was a significant Relationship by County Type interaction $F(3, 450) = 4.21, p < .01$.

Table 3. Significant Between-Subjects Interaction for Labeling Sex Crimes – Relationship by County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship Type</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>$7.42_{bc}$</td>
<td>$7.37_{abc}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance</td>
<td>$7.07^{a}$</td>
<td>$7.59^{c}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance in long standing dispute</td>
<td>$7.41_{abc}$</td>
<td>$7.27_{bc}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance provoked</td>
<td>$7.40_{abc}$</td>
<td>$7.18_{ab}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p < .05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

As seen in Table 3, rural participants were least likely to recommend considering the event a crime when the perpetrator was an acquaintance, whereas urban participants were most likely to
recommend labeling the event a crime when the perpetrator was an acquaintance. The remaining relationship conditions were not significantly different from one another.

There was also a significant within-subjects effect for type of crime $F(4, 1800) = 272.47, p < .001$ (see Table 4). That is, participants were significantly less likely to recommend the victim consider the events depicting the perpetrator running his hands over the victim’s body, and dragging the victim into an alley and tearing her clothes, but not sexually assaulting her respectively, crimes. Ratings of these two events were significantly different from each other and from the remaining three crimes, which despite different levels of injury, did not differ significantly from one another.

Table 4. Significant Within-Subjects Effect for Labeling Sex Crimes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex Crimes, $F(4, 1800) = 272.47, p &lt; .001$</th>
<th>Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Crime Type</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man runs hand over woman’s body then runs away</td>
<td>5.83$^a$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man drags women into alley tears her clothes but flees – no injury</td>
<td>7.35$^b$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man forcibly rapes women – no injuries</td>
<td>7.83$^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man forcibly rapes women – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.84$^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man forcibly rapes women – injuries require hospitalization</td>
<td>7.80$^c$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p<.05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

Calling the police. With regard to recommending that the victim contact the police, the analysis of variance produced one significant between- and three significant within-subjects effects for contacting the police. There was a significant Relationship by County Type interaction $F(3, 450) = 4.21, p < .01$ (see Table 5). Rural participants were least likely to suggest contacting the police when the perpetrator was an acquaintance, whereas urban participants were least likely to suggest contacting the police when the victim-acquaintance had provoked the offender. Ratings for these two events were not significantly different from one another. Only rural participants’ ratings for acquaintances was significantly different from the
remaining six conditions.

Table 5. Significant Between-Subjects Interaction for Reporting Sex Crimes – Relationship by County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship x County, $F(3, 450) = 4.21, p &lt; .01$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance in long standing dispute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance provoked</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p<.05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

Similar to judgments regarding the labeling of sex crimes, participants were least likely to suggest contacting the police for the events of running hands over the victim’s body and dragging the victim into an alley and tearing her clothes $F(4, 1800) = 472.30, p < .001$. These two events were significantly different from each other and from the other three conditions. Despite the three levels of injury described in the remaining three crimes (all forcible rapes), participants’ ratings did not different significantly by events (see Table 6).

Table 6. Significant Within-Subjects Effect for Reporting Sex Crimes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex Crimes, $F(4, 1800) = 472.30, p &lt; .001$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Crime Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man runs hand over woman’s body then runs away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man drags women into alley tears her clothes but flees – no injury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man forcibly rapes women – no injuries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man forcibly rapes women – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man forcibly rapes women – injuries require hospitalization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p<.05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

The within-subjects Relationship by Crime events interaction was significant $F(12, 1800) = 2.60, p < .01$. As seen in Table 7, participants were least likely to suggest calling the police for the event in which a man runs his hands over a women’s body and, they were least
likely to do so when this crime was committed by an acquaintance. For the event in which a man drags a woman into the alley, participants were also least likely to suggest calling the police when the victim provoked the offender and were most likely to do so when the offender was a stranger. The remaining conditions did not differ significantly from one another.

Table 7. Significant Within-Subjects Interaction for Reporting Sex Crimes – Relationship by Sex Crimes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship x Sex Crimes,  ( F(12, 1800) = 2.60, p &lt; .01 )</th>
<th>Relationship Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex Crime Type</td>
<td>Stranger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man runs hand over woman’s body then runs away</td>
<td>4.86(^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man drags women into alley tears her clothes but flees – no injury</td>
<td>7.41(^{ef})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man forcibly rapes women – No injuries</td>
<td>7.80(^f)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man forcibly rapes women – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.75(^f)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man forcibly rapes women – injuries require hospitalization</td>
<td>7.82(^f)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different (\(p<.05\)) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

Finally, there was a significant Relationship by County Type by Crime events within-subjects interaction \( F(12, 1800) = 2.04, p < .05 \). This effect resulted primarily from participants’ unwillingness to suggest victims’ contact the police for the crime event depicting a man running his hands over the victim’s body. Rural/urban differences regarding advice to contact the police resulted in a secondary pattern. Compared to urban residents, rural residents were significantly less likely to suggest calling the police for this crime when the perpetrator was an acquaintance (see Table 8).
Table 8. Significant Within-Subjects Interaction for Reporting Sex Crimes – Relationship by Sex Crimes by County.

Relationship x Sex Crimes x County, $F(12, 1800) = 2.04, p < .05$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship and County Type</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strgr</td>
<td>Acq</td>
<td>LS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man runs hand over woman’s body then runs away</td>
<td>4.99&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.40&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man drags women into alley, tears her clothes but flees – no injury</td>
<td>7.86&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>7.65&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man forcibly rapes women – no injuries</td>
<td>7.71&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>7.69&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man forcibly rapes women – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.41&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>6.96&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man forcibly rapes women – injuries require hospitalization</td>
<td>7.80&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>7.58&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p < .05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests. Strgr = stranger, Acq = acquaintance, LS = Acquaintance in long standing dispute, Prov = Acquaintance provoked.

Assault

Results from the analyses of the two judgments (labeling and advice to report to police) for the 14 types of assaults are presented next.

Labeling. A 2 (Participant Gender) x 2 (Participant County of Residence – Rural/Urban) x 4 (Victim-Offender Relationship) between-subjects x 14 within-subjects (Types of Assault) analysis of variance produced two significant between- and one significant within-subjects effects for labeling the event a crime. With regard to whether or not participants would recommend the victim consider the event a crime, there was a significant relationship effect $F(3, 450) = 2.87, p < .05$ (see Table 9). Participants were significantly more likely to consider the event a crime when the victim was a stranger, than when the victim was an acquaintance, or
an acquaintance with whom the perpetrator had a long-standing dispute, which did not differ from each other. Judgments for the stranger and the acquaintance-provoked condition did not differ significantly from one another.

Relationship, $F(3, 450) = 2.87, p < .05$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Relationship</th>
<th>Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>7.02$^b$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance</td>
<td>6.74$^a$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance in long standing dispute</td>
<td>6.70$^a$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance provoked</td>
<td>6.86$^{ab}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p<.05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

The Relationship by County Type interaction was significant $F(3, 450) = 2.76, p < .05$ (see Table 10). Rural participants’ ratings of assaults upon a stranger were significantly different from assaults on an acquaintance, and from urban participants’ ratings of assaults against an acquaintance, with whom the perpetrator had a long standing dispute. The latter two conditions did not differ significantly from one another, or from the remaining ratings.

Table 10. Significant Between-Subjects Interaction for Labeling Assaults - Relationship by County.  
Relationship x County, $F(3, 450) = 2.76, p < .05$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship Type</th>
<th>County Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>7.03$^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance</td>
<td>6.64$^{ab}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance in long standing dispute</td>
<td>6.85$^{bc}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance provoked</td>
<td>6.86$^{bc}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p<.05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

With regard to within-subjects effects, there was a significant effect for type of crime $F(13, 5850) = 509.69, p < .001$. With few exceptions (discussed below), all crime types were significantly different from one another. As seen in Table 11, participants were most likely to
consider an event a crime when the perpetrator intentionally shot the victim with a gun and the victim required hospitalization and they were least likely to consider the event a crime when the perpetrator intentionally shoved the victim but no medical treatment was required. The crimes of stabbing the victim with a knife, but no medical treatment is required, attempts to kill victim with a gun but the gun misfires and the victim escapes harm, and intentionally hits the victim with a lead pipe requiring hospitalization, were significantly different from the remaining crimes, but not from one another. Similarly, the crimes school boys beat elderly woman requiring hospitalization, and school boys beat middle-aged woman requiring hospitalization, were significantly different from the remaining crimes, but not from each other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assault Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally shoves – no medical treatment required</td>
<td>3.12&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatens to seriously injure victim</td>
<td>4.88&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beats with fists – hurt but does not require medical treatment</td>
<td>6.29&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beats with fists – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>6.62&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beats victim with fists – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>6.94&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school boys beat man – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.19&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally hits with lead pipe – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.46&lt;sup&gt;g&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school boys beat elderly woman – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.50&lt;sup&gt;h&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school boys beat middle-aged woman – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.51&lt;sup&gt;i&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally hits victim with lead pipe – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.56&lt;sup&gt;j&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stabs victim with knife – no medical treatment required</td>
<td>7.59&lt;sup&gt;i&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempts to kill with gun – victim escapes unharmed</td>
<td>7.59&lt;sup&gt;i&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally shoots with gun – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.69&lt;sup&gt;j&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoots victim with gun – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.77&lt;sup&gt;k&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different (p<.05) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

*Calling the police.* Decisions to call the police for the assault events produced two significant between-subjects effects and three significant within-subjects effects. There was a significant main effect for gender, with males less likely to suggest calling the police (M = 6.41)
than females ($M = 6.64), F(1, 450) = 7.16, p < .01.

In addition, the County Type by Relationship interaction, $F(3, 450) = 3.54, p < .05$ was also significant (see Table 12). When the perpetrator and victim were acquaintances in a long-standing dispute, urban participants were less likely than rural participants to suggest reporting. For none of the other relationship types, did urban and rural participants differ in their judgments about reporting.

Table 12. Significant Between-Subjects Interaction for Reporting Assaults - Relationship by County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship Type</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>6.73$b$</td>
<td>6.72$b$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance</td>
<td>6.31$^{ab}$</td>
<td>6.67$b$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance in long standing dispute</td>
<td>6.72$b$</td>
<td>6.25$a$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance provoked</td>
<td>6.55$^{ab}$</td>
<td>6.42$^{ab}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p < .05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

There was a significant within-subjects main effect for crime type, $F(13, 5850) = 509.69, p < .001$. Similar to the labeling judgments, with a few exceptions (discussed below), all crime types were significantly different from one another. As seen in Table 13, participants were least likely to suggest calling the police when the perpetrator intentionally shoved the victim but no medical treatment was required and were most likely to suggest calling the police when the perpetrator intentionally shot the victim with a gun and the victim required hospitalization. Endorsements of this crime were not significantly different from those of the perpetrator shooting a victim with a gun requiring medical treatment but not hospitalization. Similarly, participants’ ratings also did not differ for the events involving school boys attacking an elderly woman versus a middle-aged woman.
Table 13. Significant Within-Subjects Effects for Reporting Assaults.

Assaults, $F(13, 5850) = 509.69, p < .001$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assault Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally shoves – no medical treatment required</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatens to seriously injure victim</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beats with fists – hurt but does not require medical treatment</td>
<td>5.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beats with fists – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>6.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beats victim with fists – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>6.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school boys beat man – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>6.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally hits with lead pipe – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stabs victim with knife – no medical treatment required</td>
<td>7.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally hits victim with lead pipe – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school boys beat elderly woman – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school boys beat middle-aged woman – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempts to kill with gun – victim escapes unharmed</td>
<td>7.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally shoots with gun – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoots victim with gun – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p < .05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

The Relationship by Crime Type interaction produced the second significant within-subjects effect, $F(39, 5850) = 1.70, p < .01$ (see Table 14). This effect resulted from two general trends. First, with two exceptions (e.g., shot with a gun requiring hospitalization and shot with a gun wherein victim requires treatment but not hospitalization), participants were more likely to suggest calling the police when the victim was a stranger. Second, compared to the other events, the crimes of shoving the victim and threatening the victim received less support for calling the police.
Table 14. Significant Within-Subjects Interaction for Reporting Assaults - Relationship by Assaults.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assault Type</th>
<th>Relationship Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally shoves – no medical treatment required</td>
<td>Stranger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatens to seriously injure victim</td>
<td>2.16&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beats with fists – hurt but does not require medical treatment</td>
<td>4.87&lt;sup&gt;cd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beats with fists – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>5.72&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beats victim with fists – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>6.49&lt;sup&gt;ghi&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school boys beat man – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.10&lt;sup&gt;jklmno&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally hits with lead pipe – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.11&lt;sup&gt;jklmno&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stabs victim with knife – no medical treatment required</td>
<td>7.35&lt;sup&gt;klmno&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally hits victim with lead pipe – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.46&lt;sup&gt;lmno&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school boys beat elderly woman – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.54&lt;sup&gt;lmno&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school boys beat middle-aged woman – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.57&lt;sup&gt;lmno&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempts to kill with gun – victim escapes unharmed</td>
<td>7.69&lt;sup&gt;no&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally shoots with gun – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.68&lt;sup&gt;no&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoots victim with gun – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.71&lt;sup&gt;no&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different (&lt;i&gt;p&lt;/i&gt; &lt; .05) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Gender by Crime Type interaction produced the final significant within-subjects
effect for calling the police, $F(13, 5850) = 3.21, p < .001$. With few exceptions (discussed below and as seen in Table 15), all ratings differed by both gender and crime type. Generally, there is greater endorsement for calling the police by female participants and when the assault involved a weapon. In the first exception, males and females did not differ significantly from one another on their suggestions to call the police for the event of attempting to kill the victim but the gun misfires and the victim escapes harm. In the second exception, females’ ratings for the event involving high school boys beating a classmate with their fists did not differ from males’ ratings of the crime of hitting someone with a lead-pipe.

Table 15. Significant Within-Subjects Interaction for Reporting Assaults - Assaults by Gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assault Type</th>
<th>Participants’ Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally shoves – no medical treatment required</td>
<td>2.00\textsuperscript{a}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatens to seriously injure victim</td>
<td>4.29\textsuperscript{c}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beats with fists – hurt but does not require medical treatment</td>
<td>5.06\textsuperscript{e}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beats with fists – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>5.81\textsuperscript{g}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beats victim with fists – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>6.45\textsuperscript{i}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school boys beat man – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>6.61\textsuperscript{j}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally hits with lead pipe – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.13\textsuperscript{l}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stabs victim with knife – no medical treatment required</td>
<td>7.36\textsuperscript{o}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally hits victim with lead pipe – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.34\textsuperscript{n}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school boys beat elderly woman – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.42\textsuperscript{p}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school boys beat middle-aged woman – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.49\textsuperscript{q}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempts to kill with gun – victim escapes unharmed</td>
<td>7.54\textsuperscript{s}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally shoots with gun – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.66\textsuperscript{u}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoots victim with gun – requires hospitalization</td>
<td>7.61\textsuperscript{t}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p<.05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.
Robbery

Results from analyses of the two judgments (labeling and advice to report) for the nine types of robberies are presented next.

**Labeling.** A 2 (Participant Gender) x 2 (Participant County of Residence – Rural/Urban) x 4 (Victim-Offender Relationship) between-subjects x 9 within-subjects (Types of Robberies) analysis of variance produced one significant between-subjects and three significant within-subjects effects for labeling the event a crime. There was a significant main effect for the victim-offender relationship, $F(3, 450) = 10.92, p < .001$. As seen in Table 16, participants were least likely to label an event a crime when the victim was an acquaintance with whom the perpetrator had a long-standing dispute. This relationship category was significantly different from the remaining categories, which did not differ significantly from one another.

Table 16. Significant Between-Subjects Effect for Labeling Robbery - Relationship. $F(3, 450) = 10.92, p < .0001$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>7.30(^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance</td>
<td>7.18(^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance in long standing dispute</td>
<td>6.61(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance provoked</td>
<td>7.06(^b)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p<.05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

With regard to within-subjects effects, there was a main effect for crime type $F(8, 3600) = 141.89, p < .001$ (see Table 17). With few exceptions (discussed below), participants’ ratings varied significantly by crime type. Participants did not differ in their ratings on the criminal events depicting the perpetrator robbing the victim of $10$, using force but without causing
physical harm, and the crime of robbing the victim of $10 by using threat of harm without actually causing harm. Similarly, the events involving the snatching of a handbag containing $10 and the robbery of $10 by means of a threat but without harm were not significantly different from one another. In both these instances, although these pairs did not differ from one another, they were different from all other crimes.

Table 17. Significant Within-Subjects Effect for Labeling Robberies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Robbery Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using force robs victim – no physical harm</td>
<td>6.01^a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without a weapon threatens to harm the victim – victim gives $10 – not harmed</td>
<td>6.24^a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed with a lead pipe robs victim of $10 – no physical harm</td>
<td>6.86^b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snatches handbag containing $10</td>
<td>6.87^b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim – injured but not hospitalized</td>
<td>6.97^c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using force robs victim of $1,000 – no physical harm</td>
<td>7.46^d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim of $10 at gunpoint – requires treatment by doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.59^e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed with lead pipe steals $1,000 – requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.65^f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim at of $1,000 gunpoint – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.75^g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different (p<.05) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

Relationship by Crime Type produced the second significant within-subjects interaction, F(24, 3600) = 3.98, p < .001. As seen in Table 18, participants were most likely to label an event a robbery, when the event was committed by a stranger (this was the case for 5 of the 9 events) or an acquaintance (the case for 4 of the 9 events), but they were least likely to consider the event a crime when the victim and offender were in long-standing dispute (the case for 8 of the 9 events).
Table 18. Significant Within-Subjects Interaction for Labeling Robberies – Relationship by Robbery.

| Robbery Type | Relationship Type | | | 
|--------------|-------------------|---|---|---|
|              | Stranger | Acquaintance | Long Standing | Provoked |
| Using force robs victim – no physical harm | 6.67<sup>cdef</sup> | 6.28<sup>ab</sup> | 5.11<sup>a</sup> | 5.89<sup>b</sup> |
| Without a weapon threatens to harm the victim – victim gives $10 – not harmed | 6.66<sup>cdef</sup> | 6.23<sup>bc</sup> | 5.57<sup>ab</sup> | 6.45<sup>cd</sup> |
| Armed with a lead pipe robs victim of $10 – no physical harm | 7.18<sup>fgijkl</sup> | 6.93<sup>defgh</sup> | 6.35<sup>c</sup> | 6.93<sup>defgh</sup> |
| Snatches handbag containing $10 | 7.06<sup>efghi</sup> | 6.93<sup>defgh</sup> | 6.6<sup>d</sup> | 6.87<sup>defg</sup> |
| Robs victim – injured but not hospitalized | 7.31<sup>ghijklm</sup> | 7.15<sup>efghijk</sup> | 6.43<sup>cd</sup> | 6.95<sup>defgh</sup> |
| Using force robs victim of $1,000 – no physical harm | 7.64<sup>klm</sup> | 7.66<sup>klm</sup> | 7.03<sup>efghi</sup> | 7.50<sup>hijklm</sup> |
| Robs victim of $10 at gunpoint – requires treatment by doctor but not hospitalized | 7.66<sup>klm</sup> | 7.75<sup>lm</sup> | 7.40<sup>ghijklm</sup> | 7.54<sup>ijklm</sup> |
| Armed with lead pipe steals $1,000 – requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalized | 7.78<sup>m</sup> | 7.82<sup>m</sup> | 7.36<sup>ghijklm</sup> | 7.63<sup>klm</sup> |
| Robs victim at of $1,000 gunpoint – requires doctor but not hospitalization | 7.75<sup>lm</sup> | 7.85<sup>m</sup> | 7.62<sup>klm</sup> | 7.56<sup>ijklm</sup> |

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different (<i>p</i> < .05) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

Finally, there was a significant Gender by Crime Type interaction <i>F(8, 3600) = 2.62, p < .01</i> (see Table 19). Male and female participants’ ratings were significantly different for three crimes. First, males were more likely than females to consider the event robbing a victim of $10 using force without causing harm a crime. Second, males were more likely than females to consider robbing a victim causing injury, which does not require hospitalization a crime. Third,
females were more likely than males to consider perpetrator robbing a victim of $10 using threat but not a weapon a crime. The ratings for the remaining crimes did not differ significantly by gender.

Table 19. Significant Within-Subjects Interaction for Labeling Robberies – Robberies by Gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Robbery Type</th>
<th>Participants’ Gender</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using force robs victim – no physical harm</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6.18&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without a weapon threatens to harm the victim – victim gives $10 – not harm</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5.89&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed with a lead pipe robs victim of $10 – no physical harm</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6.08&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6.35&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snatches handbag containing $10</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6.83&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6.88&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim – injured but not hospitalized</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6.92&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6.83&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using force robs victim of $1,000 – no physical harm</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7.06&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6.90&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim of $10 at gunpoint – requires treatment by doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7.42&lt;sup&gt;g&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7.49&lt;sup&gt;gh&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed with lead pipe steals $1,000 – requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7.61&lt;sup&gt;hi&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7.57&lt;sup&gt;hi&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim at of $1,000 gunpoint – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7.61&lt;sup&gt;hi&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7.68&lt;sup&gt;ij&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.68&lt;sup&gt;ij&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.79&lt;sup&gt;j&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different (<p>.05) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

**Calling the police.** Decisions to call the police for the nine robbery events produced three significant between-subjects and three significant within-subjects effects. There was a main effect for the relationship condition, F(3,450) = 3.86, p < .01 (see Table 20). Participants were most likely to suggest calling the police when the victim was a stranger and least likely to suggest calling the police following a long-standing dispute. Although these two conditions were significantly different from one another, they were not different from the remaining relationship categories.
Table 20. Significant Between-Subjects Effect for Reporting Robberies - Relationship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>6.69(^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance</td>
<td>6.50(^ab)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance in long standing dispute</td>
<td>6.21(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance provoked</td>
<td>6.47(^ab)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different (\(p<.05\)) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

The County Type by Gender interaction was significant, \(F(1, 450) = 3.93, p < .05\).

Urban males were significantly less likely to suggest calling the police (\(M = 6.14\)) than either urban females (\(M = 6.59\)) or rural residents of either gender (males \(M = 6.54\); females \(M = 6.50\), respectively).

Finally, there was a significant Relation by Gender by County interaction, \(F(3, 450) = 2.92, p < .05\) (see Table 21). With regard to acquaintances in a long-standing dispute, urban males were significantly less likely than rural participants and urban females to suggest reporting the event to the police. For the other relationship types, gender and county type did not significantly affect judgments about reporting.

Table 21. Significant Between-Subjects Interaction for Reporting Robberies - Relationship by Gender by County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship x Gender x County, (F(3, 450) = 2.92, p &lt; .05)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County Type and Participants’ Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Standing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provoked</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different (\(p<.05\)) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

With regard to within-subjects effects, there was a main effect for crime type, \(F(8, 3600)\).
Participants were least likely to suggest calling the police for the event involving the robbery of $10 by threat but without causing injury and were most likely to suggest calling the police for the event depicting the robbery of $1,000 at gunpoint requiring hospitalization. With two exceptions, purse snatching and robbery of $10 with a lead pipe but without harm to the victim, all crimes were significantly different from one another.

Table 22. Significant Within-Subjects Effect for Reporting Robberies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Robbery Type</th>
<th>Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using force robs victim – no physical harm</td>
<td>4.47a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without a weapon threatens to harm the victim – victim gives $10 – not harmed</td>
<td>5.06b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed with a lead pipe robs victim of $10 – no physical harm</td>
<td>5.97c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snatches handbag containing $10</td>
<td>5.98c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim – injured but not hospitalized</td>
<td>6.62d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using force robs victim of $1,000 – no physical harm</td>
<td>7.37e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim of $10 at gunpoint – requires treatment by doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.44f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed with lead pipe steals $1,000 – requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.65g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim of $1,000 gunpoint – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.70h</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different (p<.05) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

There was a significant Relationship by Crime Type interaction, $F(24, 3600) = 2.05, p < .01$. This effect was driven by the ratings for three crimes: (a) forcefully robs victim without causing harm, (b) robs victim, the victim is injured but not hospitalized, and (c) without a weapon, threatens to harm victim, victim gives $10 and is not harmed. In all three cases, participants were least likely to suggest calling the police when the events involved acquaintances in a long-standing dispute and were most likely to suggest calling the police when the victim was a stranger. As seen in Table 23, most of the remaining ratings did not differ by crime or by victim-offender relationship.
Table 23. Significant Within-Subjects Interaction for Reporting Robberies – Relationship by Robberies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Robbery Type</th>
<th>Relationship Type</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using force robs victim – no physical harm</td>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>5.19\textsuperscript{d}</td>
<td>4.30\textsuperscript{b}</td>
<td>3.83\textsuperscript{a}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without a weapon threatens to harm the victim – victim gives $10 – not harmed</td>
<td>Acquaintance</td>
<td>5.42\textsuperscript{de}</td>
<td>4.93\textsuperscript{cd}</td>
<td>4.62\textsuperscript{bc}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed with a lead pipe robs victim of $10 – no physical harm</td>
<td>Long Standing</td>
<td>6.03\textsuperscript{ef}</td>
<td>5.95\textsuperscript{ef}</td>
<td>5.86\textsuperscript{e}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snatches handbag containing $10</td>
<td>Provoked</td>
<td>5.99\textsuperscript{ef}</td>
<td>5.93\textsuperscript{ef}</td>
<td>6.02\textsuperscript{ef}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim – injured but not hospitalized</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.08\textsuperscript{hij}</td>
<td>6.76\textsuperscript{gh}</td>
<td>6.18\textsuperscript{f}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using force robs victim of $1,000 – no physical harm</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.53\textsuperscript{ij}</td>
<td>7.57\textsuperscript{ij}</td>
<td>6.98\textsuperscript{hi}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim of $10 at gunpoint – requires treatment by doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.48\textsuperscript{ij}</td>
<td>7.48\textsuperscript{ij}</td>
<td>7.39\textsuperscript{ij}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed with lead pipe steals $1,000 – requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.77\textsuperscript{ij}</td>
<td>7.77\textsuperscript{ij}</td>
<td>7.46\textsuperscript{ij}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim at of $1,000 gunpoint – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.74\textsuperscript{ij}</td>
<td>7.78\textsuperscript{ij}</td>
<td>7.54\textsuperscript{ij}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p<.05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

The last significant within-subjects effect for the crime of robbery resulted from the Gender by Crime Type interaction $F(8, 3600) = 2.85, p < .01$. With the exception of robbing a victim of $10 by force but without causing physical harm and robbing someone causing injury that does not require hospitalization, females as compared to males, were more likely to suggest calling the police. Ratings for the crime of purse snatching did not differ by gender (see Table
Table 24. Significant Within-Subjects Interaction for Reporting Robberies – Gender by Robberies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Robbery Type</th>
<th>Participants’ Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using force robs victim – no physical harm</td>
<td>4.54&lt;sup&gt;o&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without a weapon threatens to harm the victim – victim gives $10 – not harmed</td>
<td>4.74&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed with a lead pipe robs victim of $10 – no physical harm</td>
<td>5.71&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snatches handbag containing $10</td>
<td>5.94&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim – injured but not hospitalized</td>
<td>6.72&lt;sup&gt;j&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using force robs victim of $1,000 – no physical harm</td>
<td>7.27&lt;sup&gt;i&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim of $10 at gunpoint – requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.35&lt;sup&gt;jk&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed with lead pipe steals $1,000 – requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.55&lt;sup&gt;im&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robs victim at of $1,000 gunpoint – requires doctor but not hospitalization</td>
<td>7.61&lt;sup&gt;mn&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p<.05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

**Household Crimes**

Results from analyses of the two judgments (labeling and advice for reporting) for the two types of household crimes are presented next.

**Labeling.** A 2 (Participant Gender) x 2 (Participant County of Residence – Rural/Urban) x 4 (Victim-Offender Relationship) between-subjects x 2 within-subjects (Types of Household Crime) analysis of variance produced one significant between-subjects effect and one significant within-subjects effect for labeling the event a crime. There was a significant Gender by County type interaction, $F(1, 450) = 4.80, p < .05$ (see Table 25). Rural women and urban men were least likely to consider these events crimes, whereas rural men and urban women were most likely to consider these events crimes.
Table 25. Significant Between-Subjects Interaction for Labeling Household Crimes – Gender by County Type.

Gender x County, \( F(1, 450) = 4.80, p < .05 \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants' Gender</th>
<th>County Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>(5.67^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>(5.27^a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different \((p < .05)\) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

There was also a significant main effect for type of crime \( F(1, 450) = 1301.18, p < .001 \). Participants were less likely to consider the event of trespassing a crime \((M = 3.33)\) than the event of having someone break in and steal $1,000 from one’s home \((M = 7.56)\).

Calling the police. For the judgments of calling the police, there were three significant between- and one significant within-subjects effect. There was a significant Relationship by County Type between-subjects interaction, \( F(3, 450) = 4.72, p < .01 \) (see Table 26). When the victim and offender were acquaintances, rural participants were significantly less likely than were urban participants to suggest calling the police. In contrast, for none of the other relationship types did county type affect judgments about reporting.

Table 26. Significant Between-Subjects Interaction for Reporting Household Crimes – Relationship by County.

Relationship x County, \( F(3, 450) = 4.72, p < .01 \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship Type</th>
<th>County Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>(5.33^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance</td>
<td>(4.66^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long standing dispute</td>
<td>(5.32^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provoked</td>
<td>(5.01^{ab})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different \((p < .05)\) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

There was also a significant Gender by County Type interaction, \( F(1, 450) = 5.22, p < .05 \). Similar to labeling, rural women and urban men were significantly less likely to suggest
reporting to the police than urban women and rural men, but these pairs did not differ from one another (see Table 27).

Table 27. Significant Between-Subjects Interaction for Reporting Household Crimes – Gender by County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender x County, $F(1, 450) = 5.22, p &lt; .05$</th>
<th>County Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants’ Gender</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>5.31$^b$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>4.90$^a$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p<.05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.

There was also a significant Relationship by Gender by County Type interaction, $F(3, 450) = 2.78, p < .05$. As seen in Table 28, urban males were significantly less likely to suggest calling the police when the victim and offender were acquaintances in a long-standing dispute, than rural males under the same condition, or than rural males when the offender was a stranger, or than urban males when the offender was an acquaintance. Judgments by urban males were not significantly different from the remaining conditions, nor were the latter three conditions (rural males – long-standing dispute, rural males – stranger, urban males – acquaintances) significantly different from each other or from the remaining conditions.

Table 28. Significant Between-Subjects Interaction for Reporting Household Crimes – Relationship by Gender by County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship x Gender x County, $F(3, 450) = 2.78, p &lt; .05$</th>
<th>County Type and Participants’ Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Type</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>Males$^b$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance</td>
<td>4.67$^{ab}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long standing</td>
<td>Males$^b$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provoked</td>
<td>5.25$^{ab}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Higher numbers represent a stronger belief that the event is a crime. Means not sharing a common superscript are significantly different ($p<.05$) according to post hoc Newman-Keuls tests.
Finally, similar to the labeling ratings, there was a significant within-subjects effect for crime type $F(1, 450) = 1510.98, p < .001$. Participants were more likely to suggest calling the police for the crime event of breaking into someone’s home and stealing $1,000 (M = 7.54)$ than for the crime event of trespassing ($M = 2.61$).

**Discussion**

Study 1 consisted of analyses for each of four crime types to determine whether type of acquaintanceship (stranger, acquaintance, acquaintance in long-standing dispute, provoked acquaintances) and location of residency (urban versus rural county) affected participants’ ratings of criminal events. This study extends prior research by examining whether type of acquaintanceship and location of residency affect norms regarding the labeling and reporting of crime. Further, by using events rated in prior studies it allows for cross-study comparisons. However, there are also a number of limitations to the study. First, because rated events were brief hypothetical scenarios and participants had to fill in a lot of contextual detail, it is possible that participants’ labeling and reporting advice would be different for real crimes. Second, because most participants came from Pennsylvania, results may not generalize to other states. Third, because participants in this study were college students, results may not be generalizable, as only about half of American adults have attended college (U.S. Bureau of Statistics, 1999). Further, given their youth, college students are less likely than older adults to have experienced a serious victimization but are more likely to espouse liberal beliefs than the general population. Conversely, given their youth and level of education, college students may be more aware of normative standards of behavior, thereby increasing the generalizability of their results (Rossi et al., 1974). With these caveats in mind, results indicate that four factors affected participants’ ratings: severity, participants’ gender, victim-offender relationship, and location of residency.
Severity. Consistent with prior literature, severity significantly affected both the labeling and the advice to call the police for most crime types. Further, the NSCS severity ratings (Wolfgang et al., 1985) significantly predicted participants’ advice to contact the police. Within each crime type the more serious the event, as indicated by weapon use or monetary value stolen, the more likely it was to be labeled a crime and to be judged as warranting police intervention. However, counter to prior research, the level of injury did not affect severity ratings, and this was especially true for the crime of rape. This effect may be due to the use of the legalistic term “rape” in three of the five sex crimes. That is, even though the level of injury varied across the three forcible rape events (i.e., no injury, injury requiring a doctor, and injury requiring hospitalization), participants’ ratings did not vary by level of injury. Thus, perhaps the term “forcible rape” caused participants to infer injury regardless of the elaboration provided. To permit the deconstruction of the effects of victim injury and offender weapon use on the labeling and perceived appropriateness of reporting sexual assault, future research should use more detailed scenarios that describe rape in behavioral rather legalistic terms. However, even among assault crimes, weapon use (i.e., gun, lead pipe, but not fists) superseded injury in severity ratings. Perhaps it is easier for participants to quantify harm caused by a gun or lead pipe than that caused by fists or by various levels of injury. Thus, the failure to clearly describe the harm or injury incurred may have affected participants’ judgments. Alternatively, it may be that participants chose to give socially desirable ratings rather than their true appraisal. This may be especially true for the crimes involving forcible rape as educational campaigns have gone to great lengths to inform the public that all rapes are injurious. Regardless, these results suggest that using the presence of injury and of a weapon as interchangeable proxies for severity may not be appropriate. Future research should investigate the distinct roles played by
these two concepts in individuals' determination of severity.

Consistent with prior research, events with female rather than male victims were more likely to be labeled crimes and to be seen as appropriate for police contact. However, the victim’s age did not matter. For instance, ratings for both labeling and police contact did not differ significantly for the two female victims who differed in age (i.e., a middle-aged and an elderly woman). Because surveyed participants were college-age students (mean and median age of 21 years), it may be that they did not distinguish between these two age groups. That is, from their youthful perspective a “middle-aged” and an “elderly” woman may both have been considered “old.”

Participants’ gender. Participants’ gender affected the labeling of and the advice to contact the police for some but not all crimes. For instance, gender did not affect the labeling or the advice to contact the police for the sex crimes. Further, for the assault crimes, it affected only participants’ decision to contact the police, not the labeling of the crime. These results are counter to most research, which finds females are more likely to label events crimes and more likely to advise police contact (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Ruback 1994). Several factors may explain these divergent results. First, social desirability may again be responsible for the lack of a gender difference for the sex crimes. Second, as the assault results suggest, it may be that gender of the advisor affects different points in the decision making process. Recall that Greenberg and Ruback (1992) proposed that victims’ decision to contact the police follows a three-stage process: determine the event was a crime, evaluate its seriousness, and decide what to do. Thus, it may be that gender differences are most pronounced at the final stage of this process. Third, because contacting the police was the only action available to respondents, it may be that the lack of other alternatives obscured gender differences. For instance, males may
have preferred other alternatives, such as handling the matter themselves, to legal intervention (Ruback et al., 1999). Fourth, as suggested by Ruback (1994), it may be that gender effects are irrelevant at very high levels of crime severity.

Finally, gender effects may be conditioned by other factors, such as seriousness or county type. Although severity of the crime was tested only in a regression model, it is noteworthy that crime severity varied within each crime type and that gender by crime interactions were significant for the advice to report to the police for assault crimes and for the labeling and reporting of robbery crimes. Moreover, county type moderated the effect of participants’ gender for the reporting of robbery crimes and for the labeling and reporting of household crimes. These results suggest that the effect of advisors’ gender may be more complex than originally thought. Further, it points to crime severity and context (i.e., county type) as possible sources of clarification.

**Victim-offender relationship.** Victim-offender relationship mattered, but not always at the level of specificity hypothesized. Consistent with prior studies (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Ruback 1993, 1994), whether or not the victim and the offender were acquainted affected (either as a main or interaction effects) the labeling and reporting of most crimes (the only exception was the labeling of household crimes). That is, respondents were more likely to label an event a crime and suggest calling the police when the perpetrator was a stranger, rather than an acquaintance of any type. The manipulation regarding the nature of the acquaintanceship between the victim and the offender (i.e., acquaintance, long-standing dispute, and provoked) produced a significant main effect for the labeling of assaults and for the labeling and reporting of robberies only. Assaults committed by strangers were significantly more likely to be labeled crimes than those committed by acquaintances or acquaintances in long-standing disputes, but
they were not different from assaults by provoked acquaintances. Robberies committed by acquaintances in long-standing disputes were least likely to be judged crimes and were also judged less worthy of police intervention.

Although victim-offender relationship had limited main effects, victim-offender relationship, as conditioned by county type and crime type, affected ratings for almost all crimes. With regard to county type, among rural participants events committed by acquaintances were less likely to be labeled crimes and were less likely to be judged appropriate for police contact, whereas among urban participants crimes committed by acquaintances in a long-standing dispute or following provocation were less likely to be labeled crimes and were less likely to be judged to warrant police contact. Additionally, for two of the judgments (labeling for sex crimes and police contact for household crimes), rural participants gave acquaintances the lowest ratings, whereas urban participants gave acquaintances the highest ratings. Thus, it is possible that in addition to other problems (e.g., Pollard, 1995; Ruback, 1993), Bachman (1993; 1998) may have failed to find that victim-offender relationship mattered in victims’ decision to contact the police because of these two confounds (nature of acquaintanceship and county of residency). That is, the proportion of urban versus rural residents surveyed may alter the outcomes regarding victim-offender relationship.

With regard to the effect of crime type, victim-offender relationship was less influential the greater the severity of the crime (as indicated by weapon use and monetary loss). This trend was found for the reporting of sex crimes and assaults, and for the labeling and reporting of robbery crimes. That is, participants’ ratings did not differ by victim-offender relationship for the most serious sex crimes (forcible rape), but they did differ for the least serious crime (man runs hand over women’s body). Moreover, the type of acquaintanceship mattered at the lower
end of crime-severity continuum. For instance, the ratings for both judgments concerning the robbery event depicting an unharmed victim who surrenders $10 following the offender’s weaponless threat showed significant differences by acquaintance type. Thus, as with the gender differences discussed above, it may be that secondary factors, such as victim-offender relationship matter little at high levels of crime seriousness (Ruback, 1994) but do matter at moderate or low levels. At these levels of severity, participants may judge victims more or less culpable depending upon the nature of their relationship to the offender (Warr 1989, 1994). For instance, a victim who provokes an assailant may be judged more culpable for the victimization. In this instance, participants might be less likely to label the event a crime or to suggest police contact. Moreover, when this kind of relational information is not provided, participants may use their own experience or beliefs to fill in the missing information. Results from this study, although tentative, suggest that future research should examine different types of acquaintanceship to determine their effects on participants’ labeling and reporting of criminal events. Further, such studies should include a more diverse selection of criminal events in order to determine the crime type and the level of severity for which acquaintance type matters.

Location. Although county type did not produce a main effect on the labeling of crimes or judgments to contact police, it moderated the effects of both victim-offender relationship and participants’ gender for almost all criminal events. In general, compared to urban participants, rural participants were more likely to label an event a crime and suggest calling the police when the perpetrator was a stranger rather than an acquaintance of any kind. Further, the judgments of urban participants, especially males, were more likely to differ by type of acquaintanceship. Additionally, in two instances (labeling sex crimes and reporting household crimes), urban and rural participants gave events involving acquaintances significantly different (highest versus
lowest) ratings.

County type moderated the effect of participants’ gender on the reporting of robbery crimes and the labeling and reporting of household crimes. Compared to the other groups, urban males were significantly less likely to label robbery events crimes, perhaps because they are more accustomed to this type of crime and so do not consider it as serious. Interestingly, for both of the household crime judgments, rural females and urban males gave lower ratings than did rural males and urban females. It is unclear why rural males’ ratings would be similar to urban females’ for household crimes. Although rural males and urban females rated household crimes similarly, perhaps they did so for different reasons. For instance, rural males may have more traditional beliefs (i.e., a man’s house is his castle) and so may judge trespassing and household burglary more seriously. For their part, urban females may feel more vulnerable to crime in their homes and for this reason, judged household crimes more seriously.

Results concerning rural/urban differences in participants’ ratings are consistent with cross-national studies which find that location matters (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Newman, 1976). That is, although there are commonalities in participants’ ratings across location of residency, especially as they relate to crime severity, location conditions secondary factors (participants’ gender and victim-offender relationship) that affect the labeling and reporting of crime. This suggests that secondary factors that affect the labeling and reporting of crime do so in a complex fashion. Stated differently, the effects of victim-offender relationship and participants’ gender vary depending upon social reference group. Because they live in different locations, urban and rural residents likely have different reference groups with different beliefs and values, and these in turn likely produce different norms regarding the labeling and reporting of crimes. For instance, rural areas are characterized by greater acquaintance density and a
social climate that fosters greater mistrust of government, and a greater propensity to conceal personal problems (Weisheit et al., 1995). These characteristics may affect both the labeling and the reporting of criminal victimization. Specifically, greater acquaintance density may affect the labeling and reporting of crime, because it may be more difficult for victims of known perpetrators to define the event as a crime. Further, the lack of anonymity may make reporting less desirable. Similarly, greater mistrust of government and a greater propensity to keep personal problems secret may affect the labeling and the reporting of crimes, especially when the victim knows, or is related to, the offender.

In sum, results suggest that there are norms regarding both the labeling of criminal events and the advice to report these events to police. Consistent with prior research, the more serious the crime (as indicated by use of a weapon or monetary loss), the more likely it will be labeled a crime, and the more it is labeled a crime, the more likely it will be deemed to warrant police contact. In addition, the victim-offender relationship and county of residency also affected participants’ judgments. Although this study extends prior research by examining the effects of different types of acquaintanceship at smaller units of aggregation (county type), these results involved a simulation with college student participants. What remains to be answered is whether the factors found to be significant in this simulation are important in the decisions of actual victims. This was the objective of the second study.
CHAPTER 4

Sexual Assault Victims’ Decision to Contact the Police – Study 2

The first study found that assault severity, victim-offender relationship, and county-type affected both the labeling of a criminal event and the advice to report that event to the police. Moreover, it found that the effect of victim-offender relationship on advice to report to the police varied as a function of location, with rural residents less likely to suggest reporting acquaintance crimes. These results suggest that norms vary by location. One possibility for the rural-urban difference in Study 1 is that characteristics of location, including beliefs in traditional values, affect reporting. An alternative explanation is that social disorganization factors, specifically a lack of collective efficacy, result in fewer services for victims and a social atmosphere that reduces reporting. However, because Study 1 involved the rating of a small number of crimes by college students, and could not control for contextual factors, these conclusions are tentative. In order to have confidence in these results, there needs to be better control for potentially confounding contextual factors.

To date, individual and contextual factors that affect reporting have been studied independently. Study 2 extends prior research by using multilevel analyses to examine the combined effects of individual-level and county-level factors on victims’ decision to contact the police following a rape or sexual assault.

Reporting to Police

As noted earlier, at the individual-level a number of factors affect victims’ decision to contact the police, including severity of the assault, the victim’s age, the victim’s gender, the
victim’s use of intoxicants, and the victim’s relationship to the offender. One of the most consistent findings regarding crime reporting is that more serious crimes, as measured by victim injury or offenders’ weapon use, are more likely to be reported to the police (Bachman, 1993, 1998; Estrich, 1978; Gartner & MacMillan, 1995; Greenberg & Ruback, 1992; Lizotte, 1985; Skogan 1976, 1984; Williams, 1984). In addition to crime severity, research also generally finds that older, as compared to younger victims, are more likely to report to the police (BJS, 2001, Table 96; Conway & Lohr, 1994; Skogan, 1976, 1984). This result is likely due to older individuals having better rapport with and easier access to police. Victims’ gender also affects reporting behavior. Victimization surveys find that women are more likely than men to report being the victim of a crime (Conway & Lohr, 1984, Kaukinen, 2002; Pino & Meier, 1999; Ruback 1994; Skogan, 1976). Victims’ decision to report to police is also affected by whether or not they used of drugs or alcohol prior to the assault. For instance, a survey of college victims, 80% of whom had been drinking at the time of their assault, indicated that they did not report to the police because of their own intoxication (Finkelson & Oswald, 1995). Finally, victimization surveys conducted in both the United States and Canada generally find that victims assaulted by someone known, or related to them, are less likely to report to the police (BJS, 2003, Table 93; Gartner & Macmillan, 1995; Kaukinen, 2002; Lizotte, 1985; Ruback, 1993, 1994; Williams, 1984).

**Contextual Factors Affecting Rape Rates**

At the aggregate-level, a number of factors affect rape rates, including gender equality, economic inequality, and type of location (i.e., rural versus urban – Austin & Kim, 2000; Baron & Strauss, 1984, 1987, 1989; Ellis & Beattie, 1983; Peterson & Bailey, 1992; Ménard & Ruback, 2003; Ruback & Ménard, 2001; Smith & Bennett, 1985). With regard to gender
equality, research demonstrates that gender equality, as indicated by social, political, and economic measures, can affect rape rates, although the nature of this relationship is not always clear (cf. Baron & Strauss 1984, 1987, 1989). Specifically, the relationship between gender equality and rape rates has been positive in some studies (Austin & Kim, 2000; Baron & Strauss, 1984; McConahay & McConahay, 1977), negative in others (Baron & Strauss, 1987, 1989), and mixed in still other studies (i.e., support for one measure of gender equality or data type, but not for others - Ellis & Beattie, 1993; Peterson & Bailey, 1992).

Unlike gender equality, economic inequality is generally associated with higher rape rates (Baron & Strauss, 1984, 1987, 1989; Ménard & Ruback, 2003; Peterson & Bailey, 1988, 1992; Ruback & Ménard, 2001; Smith & Bennett, 1985). That is, using UCR data, regardless of whether the unit of analysis is at the state or SMSA level, greater economic inequality is associated with higher rates of rape and sexual assault.

In addition to gender equality and economic inequality, whether a location is rural or urban also affects rape and sexual assault rates. Although research generally finds rates of crime are higher in urban areas (Bachman, 1994; Duhart, 2000; Laub, 1983), this trend may not hold for the crime of rape (Ménard & Ruback, 2003; Ruback & Ménard, 2001). Further, county type may condition the effects of other variables on rape rates. Only two studies have examined the effects of county type (rural versus urban) on the reporting of sexual assault (Ménard & Ruback, 2003; Ruback & Ménard, 2001). In both studies, type of county conditioned the effect of other contextual variables (e.g., percent stranger assault, per capita funding for emergency services) on reporting to the police. Thus, county type may have both a direct and a moderating effect on victims’ decision to contact the police following a rape or sexual assault.

In sum, previous research indicates that a number of factors, both individual and
contextual, affect victims’ decision to report to the police and, consequently, official rape rates. The fact that victims’ decision making is affected by both characteristics of the crime and of the location, suggests that there is a normative component and a structural component to the decision making process. One perspective that incorporates both of these levels of explanation is social ecology (Janowitz, 1978).

**Integrating Micro and Macro Explanations of Behavior: A Social Ecology Model**

Social and psychological ecologists contend that human behavior is multiply determined by factors at different levels of aggregation and thus can be understood only when both micro and macro levels are included (Barker, 1968; Belsky, 1993; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Hawley, 1950, 1986; Janowitz, 1978; Liska, 1990; Pescosolido, 1992). Because victims are nested within a broader social context, an understanding of their decision making process can be obtained only by taking into account the influence of the sociocultural factors that compose that context (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Grauerholz, 2000; Heise, 1998; Pescosolido, 1992).

Recall that at the micro-level, rational choice (Block, 1973) and normative standards of behavior (Greenberg & Ruback, 1992) affect victims’ decision making. That is, victims weigh the benefits and costs of seeking help from the police and their choice is affected by the normative influence of consulted others. However, these theoretical frameworks fail to take into account the fact that rational choices and social norms may vary by location.

At the macro-level, explanations of crime frequently use social control theories (Durkheim, 1897; Nye, 1958; Reiss, 1951) and social disorganization theories (Bursik, 1988; Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Shaw & McKay, 1942) to explain crime rates. Although social control and social disorganization are different theoretical perspectives, a common theme runs through both: a lack of social control (i.e., social disorganization) contributes to an area’s level
of criminality (Kornhauser, 1978). Two mechanisms in this process are thought to be key in crime control: (a) reduced monitoring and regulation, and (b) reduced ability to secure resources, referred to as “collective efficacy” (Sampson et al., 1997). That is, residents in an area will be unlikely to achieve social order (reduce crime) if they cannot regulate behavior and obtain resources to help them do so. Although these theoretical frameworks aid in the understanding of the structural components that affect crime, they fail to take into account the variation in normative values that may exist across locations.

A social ecology perspective incorporates both micro and macro level influences on social control. Janowitz (1978) described two primary components central to the concept of control: (a) the normative component (consistent with informal control or normative standards) and (b) the structural component (consistent with formal control or collective efficacy). In the normative component, the group’s values and the threat of ostracism dictate appropriate behavior, whereas in the structural component the distribution of resources prescribe members’ behavior. Thus, the normative component may be more influential at the micro or individual level, and the structural component may be more influential at the macro or contextual level. However, because individual behavior may be contingent upon the social structure in which it is nested, the best understanding of behavior comes from the combination of both explanatory levels.

This study extends prior research by using a social ecology framework to examine the effects of county-level factors on individuals’ decision to contact the police following a sexual assault. I had six hypotheses about the effects of individual- and county-level factors on victims’ decision to contact the police:

Hypothesis 1: Given research indicates that victims whose assaults more closely resemble the
classic rape (i.e., violent stranger assaults) are more likely to report, I expected that those who suffer serious assaults (as indicated by victim injury or offender’s weapon use) inflicted by a stranger would be more likely to contact the police.

_Hypothesis 2:_ Given the research showing that older victims are generally more likely than younger victims to report to police, I expected that older victims would be more likely to contact the police following the assault.

_Hypothesis 3:_ Given prior studies find that victims who consume drugs or alcohol are less likely to contact the police, especially if this consumption was illegal (involved illegal drugs or drinking while under the legal age), I expected victims who used intoxicants would be less likely to contact the police.

_Hypothesis 4:_ Given research demonstrates that contextual-level factors including economic inequality, gender equality, and county type affect rape rates, I expected that victims who reside in counties with greater economic inequality (as measured by services for victims), less gender equality, and a rural classification would be at increased risk of victimization, but would be less likely to contact the police.

_Hypothesis 5:_ Given that the effects of gender and economic inequality vary by location, I expected that victims from rural counties with greater gender equality and less economic inequality would be more likely to contact the police than would be victims in rural counties without there characteristics.

_Hypothesis 6:_ Given study 1 found that advice to crime victims of known perpetrators varied as a function of county type, I expected that rural victims assaulted by known perpetrators would be less likely to contact the police, than urban victims assaulted by someone they know.
Methods and Data Source

This study is a secondary data analysis approved by the Pennsylvania State University IRB. Data regarding sexual victimization and reporting came from the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR), which serves as the clearinghouse for all 52 rape crisis centers in the 67 counties of Pennsylvania. PCAR was created in 1975 when the existing network of crisis centers incorporated. In addition to providing services to thousands of sexual assault victims annually, PCAR also lobbies for victims’ rights and provides educational programs in schools and in the community at large.

Of the 52 crisis centers in the state, 48 participated in the study\(^1\). At each rape crisis center, data collection followed a standard procedure. After each contact with a sexual assault victim, rape crisis workers completed a form detailing the nature of the assault, the victim’s demographic information, the offender’s demographic information, the victim-offender relationship, and whether or not the victim reported the crime to the police. Although other information regarding the circumstances of the sexual assault was gathered, in the interest of parsimony, only those variables examined in this study will be discussed. All of the information gathered by the rape crisis workers is presented on the data collection form, which appears in Appendix B.

The data for this study were collected for a period of three months from April 1, 2001 through June 30, 2001. At the end of each month, participating crisis centers forwarded the

\(^1\) The 4 centers that did not participate represented the following counties: Adam, Armstrong, Bedford, Berks, Bucks, Cameron, Columbia, Dauphin, Delaware, Franklin, Fulton, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lawrence, Montour, Perry, Pike, Susquehanna, and Wayne.
anonymous data forms to PCAR. I then collected the forms from PCAR and entered them onto the computer using SPSS statistical software.

**Individual-Level Variables**

*Sexual victimization.* For the study period, crisis center workers surveyed individuals who experienced one of 15 different types of sexual assault: rape, statutory rape, spousal rape, attempted rape, rape by a foreign object, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, sexual assault, incest, aggravated indecent assault, indecent assault, indecent exposure, corrupting the morals of a minor, terroristic threat, sexual harassment, harassment/stalking, and a category for other types of assault. Because individuals are unlikely to contact a rape crisis center if they have not suffered some form of sexual assault, and because many victims suffered multiple forms of assault, all victims who experienced at least one of these 15 types of crimes were included.

*Reporting to the police.* The PCAR survey included a number of variables concerned with whether or not a victim contacted the police. This variable was coded 1, indicating the victim contacted the police, if the victim was accompanied to the police by a crisis worker (104), was referred to the crisis center by the police (187), or went to the police as their first action following the assault (56). If none of these applied, the victim was deemed not to have contacted the police and the variable was coded 0.

*Severity.* From the victim surveys, two items were used to indicate the severity of the assault: weapon use and victim injury. Weapon use was assessed by asking victims whether the offender used a weapon during the assault. Physical injury was assessed by asking victims whether they received any additional physical injuries beyond the assault itself. Three categories were provided for this item: no injuries, minor injuries, and severe injuries. Because there was substantial overlap (40%) between injury and weapon use (i.e., offenders used a
weapon and victim was injured) and in the interest of saving degrees of freedom, these variables were collapsed into one. Thus, if the victim received minor or severe injuries, or if the offender used a weapon, severity was coded 1. If the victim suffered no additional injuries and the offender did not use a weapon, severity was coded 0.

The analyses were limited to female victims because almost all the victims were female (86%) and there were not enough males to make gender comparisons. From the victims’ surveys completed by PCAR, three additional variables representing characteristics of the victim that have been found to affect reporting were included in the analyses: the victim’s age, the victim’s level of sobriety, and the relationship, if any, the victim had with the offender prior to the assault.

**Victim’s age.** The victim’s age at the time of contacting the crisis center was noted on the form. However, if the victim’s exact age was not known, crisis center workers indicated the victim’s approximate age according to the following categories: 0 to 5 years, 6 to 11 years, 12 to 17 years, 18 to 21 years, 22 to 34 years, 35 to 54 years, and 55 or older. A final category indicating that the victim’s age was unknown was also included. Because only age ranges were provided for a number of victims, all victims’ ages were reclassified into the above age ranges and were treated as ordinal categorical data.

**Victim’s use of intoxicants.** Victims were asked to indicate whether they had consumed no alcohol or drugs, consumed some alcohol or drugs, or were intoxicated at the time of the assault. Because only 27% had consumed drugs or alcohol at the time of the assault, this variable was dichotomized to indicate whether or not substances were used.

**Victim-offender relationship.** The survey obtained information regarding the type of relationship the victim had with the offender at the time of the assault. Fifteen categories of
victim-offender relationship were collected: stranger, three levels of acquaintance (recognition only, speaking, just met), friend, date, boyfriend/girlfriend, live-in significant other, husband/wife, natural parent (mother, father), adoptive parent (mother, father), stepparent (mother, father), paramour of parent, blood relative, sibling, unknown, and other. These 15 categories were recoded into four levels of increasingly close relationships: stranger, friend/date, intimate, and relative.

*County-Level Variables*

In addition to the assault and victim information obtained from victims by crisis center workers, contextual information about each of the 67 counties in the state was also obtained. Information regarding the population makeup and the available funding of each county came from the 2000 Census (Bureau of the Census, 2000) and from state agencies. Information regarding programming and funding for victim services came from the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape and the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. Finally, information regarding women’s participation in political office came from *The Pennsylvania Manual* (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1993, 1997).

*Rurality.* As in the previous study, the determination of a county as urban or rural was based on the distinction used by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, which considers a county to be rural if at least half of the residents in the county live in a place that has a population less than 2,500 and is not contiguous to a built up urbanized area (Center for Rural Pennsylvania, 1999). Because this categorization more accurately reflects county type, it was used in lieu of the Census definition. In addition to analyses based on this definition, all analyses were also completed with the percentage of the population that is defined as rural according to the Census. Results were not substantively different, so in the interest of clarity, the rural/urban dichotomy
was used in both the tables and text. Rural counties were coded 0 and urban counties were coded 1.

**Gender equality.** Four variables represented counties’ level of gender equality: the percentage of females in political office, the percentage of females in the legal profession, the percentage of females with an associate degree or higher, and the percentage of females in the workforce. The females in political office measure consisted of the proportion of females in three county-level political offices (county commissioners, judges, and district attorneys). At a minimum, this would include five county-level officials, in that each county has three county commissioners, at least one county judge, and one district attorney. In the larger counties, there are additional county-level officers. To get more stable estimates, two timeframes were used: 1993-94 and 1997-98. The gender of these county-level officers was obtained from information in *The Pennsylvania Manual* (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1993, 1997). The remaining variables were obtained from the Census. The number of females in the legal profession, those with an associate degree or higher, and those in the workforce were each divided by the number of females age 16 years or older who resided in the county. Each of these values was then multiplied by 100 to form percentages of females in each group. Because these items were highly correlated, they were transformed into z-scores and summed to form a composite (alpha = .79).

**Victim Services.** Because traditional measures of economic inequality were too highly correlated with the control composite and because a county’s level of collective efficacy was the ultimate phenomenon of interest, the availability of victim services was used a proxy to represent this construct. Three variables composed the availability of services for victims. First, from the Census, I included all funds expended per capita for police, hospitals, mental
health, and welfare per county. The total Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding to each county from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) for the three fiscal years 1997-98, 1998-99, and 1999-00 was also included. Finally, in addition to providing services to victims, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape also provides a number of educational programs to both school children and the community at large. Because the dollar value of funding for these programs was not available, the average number of people per county who took part in these programs from July 1, 1994 to June 30, 1998 was used to represent PCAR preventive educational services. The rate of program attendees per county was computed by dividing this mean by the number of individuals in the county according to the Census data. Further, because these items were related, each item was transformed into a z-score and summed to form a composite (alpha = .67).

*Percent stranger assaults.* To determine the aggregate percentage of assaults by strangers, the mean number of stranger assaults by county for the fiscal year 2000-2001 from PCAR was used. The number of stranger assaults was divided by the total number of sexual assaults reported to PCAR during this time and then multiplied by 100 to produce the percentage of stranger assaults per county.

*Structural disadvantage.* Four variables generally found to correlate significantly with crime rates were used as statistical controls: percentage of the county residents living below poverty level, percentage of males between the ages of 15 and 24, population density (total county population divided by area in square miles), and population heterogeneity (computed using the technique of Warner and Pierce, [1993], by subtracting from 1 the sum of the squared proportion of persons in each group). Because these items were correlated, each item was transformed into z-scores and summed to form a composite (alpha = .62).
Assessment of the Data

This is the first analysis of rape reporting containing both individual- and contextual-level data from across a state. Such a data set has several advantages. The number of individuals who visited the rape crisis centers over the three-month period of this study is quite large (approximately 1,200 clients from the 48 participating crisis centers), meaning that the estimates are fairly stable. In addition, because the information is obtained from empathic counselors trained to deal with this type of victimization, the information obtained may be more valid than that obtained from victimization surveys like the NCVS (Koss, 1992, 1996).

Although data from crisis centers have been used in other studies of sexual assault (e.g., Ménard & Ruback, 2003; Ruback & Ivie, 1988; Ruback & Ménard, 2001), crisis center data have seven limitations that affect their validity. First, it may be that usage rates are low, which would mean that crisis center rates underestimate the true extent of sexual assaults. Second, there is evidence that some cases involve sexual assaults that occurred many months, and perhaps many years, earlier (Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, 1990). In particular, some of the clients of rape crisis centers may be adult survivors of child sexual assault and incest. This source of error would produce estimates of sexual assault that are higher than the true level of current victimization. To limit this bias, the current analyses were limited to recent (i.e., since 1995) victimizations. Third, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape sample is not random (i.e., victims were self-selected). Fourth, many variables, such as the circumstances surrounding individual assaults were not in the data set. Fifth, many predictor variables of potential theoretical interest (e.g., female income) were not available at the county-level. Sixth, similar to police reports, the sample may over-represent serious assaults and those committed
by strangers. Finally, because these analyses were completed on data from Pennsylvania, they may not be generalizable to other states.

**Overview of Analyses**

First, zero-order correlations were computed for all variables to determine their relationship to one another at the bivariate level. Second, because of the importance of context, mean rural and urban differences for all variables were examined using t-tests. Third, negative binomial regression was used to predict county victimization rate according to PCAR data and rape rate according to the Uniform Crime Reports data (Osgood & Chambers, 2000; Osgood, 2000). Ordinary least squares (OLS) regression is inappropriate for this type of data because (a) the assumptions of homogeneity of variance are violated due to the differences in population size across counties and (b) the assumption of normal and symmetrical distribution of the error variance is violated due to the highly skewed distribution of small counts. Negative binomial regression was used rather than a basic Poisson regression model to overcome the problem of overdispersion (i.e., the residual variance is greater than the fitted values). Variables used in the regression analyses to predict victimization were entered in the following order: the log of the female population per county, statistical controls, victim services, gender equality, county rate of stranger assaults, county type, and the interactions of county type with the control variable, victim services, gender equality, and percentage stranger assault.

Finally, because of the nested nature of the data (i.e., victims within county), multilevel modeling was conducted (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992). The hierarchical model is a straightforward extension of the random coefficient model and is specified by adding county-level indicators (i.e., rurality, gender equality) as predictors of the individual-level coefficients. HLM overcomes the problem of dependency through the use of random coefficients. However,
if dependency is not a problem, random coefficients are not required. In order to determine whether or not random coefficients are required, all variables were entered with a random coefficient and chi-square tests of the variance component were conducted. A significant chi-square indicates that dependency is a problem and that random coefficients are required. None of the chi-square tests of these data were significant, indicating random coefficients were not required. Thus, none were included in the model.

In addition, because the dependent variable, contacting the police, is dichotomous, hierarchical logistic modeling was used to estimate the effect of county variation on reporting to the police. Logistic regression uses a probability distribution for dichotomous data and allows the dependent variable to be non-linearly related to the predictor variables through a logit link function that models the log of the odds of the dependent variable (Liao, 1994). The coefficient from the logit model must be exponentiated to produce the odds of the dependent variable. In this type of analysis, HLM estimates the individual-level equation using a logistic regression and the county-level equation using normal estimating procedures. Thus, the logit link function in level one connects the probability model to the ordinary linear regression equation (Raudenbush, Bryk, Cheong, & Congdon, 2000).

The test of county-level effects on victims’ decision to contact the police proceeded in four steps. First, a null or fully unconditional model (without predictor variables) was specified. This model was computed to obtain the true mean of the outcome variable (victims’ decision to contact the police) and the proportion of the variance between counties (τ00). Second, a random coefficient model was used to determine whether the dependent variable varied by county and if so, the degree of variation in the effects of individual-level characteristics across county. Third, the random coefficient model was extended by including the county-level
variables as predictors of individual-level coefficients. Finally, a cross-level interaction term was added to the model, to determine the conditioning effect of a county-level variable (county type) on an individual-level variable (victim-offender relationship). For each model after the null model, multivariate hypothesis or Wald tests were completed to determine whether the addition of individual-level variables, county-level variables, and the cross-level interaction significantly added to the predictive power of the model. Specifically, victims’ decision to contact the police was examined using four individual level variables (victims’ age, severity of the assault, victims’ use of intoxicants, and victims’ relationship with the offender), eight county-level variables (structural disadvantage, victim services, gender equality, percentage of stranger assaults, county type, county type by structural disadvantage, county type by victim services, and county type by gender equality), and the cross-level interaction of victim-offender relationship by county type. Variables were entered into the final model as follows:

Level-1 Model

\[ \text{Prob}(Y=1|B) = P \]

\[ \log\left[\frac{P}{1-P}\right] = B_0 + B_1(\text{victim’s age}) + B_2(\text{severity of the assault}) + B_3(\text{victim’s use of intoxicants}) + B_4(\text{victim-offender relationship}) \]

Level-2 Model

\[ B_0 = G_{00} + G_{01}(\text{structural disadvantage}) + G_{02}(\text{victim services}) + G_{03}(\text{gender equality}) + G_{04}(\text{percent stranger assaults}) + G_{05}(\text{county type}) + G_{06}(\text{county type by structural disadvantage}) + G_{07}(\text{county type by victim services}) + G_{08}(\text{county type by gender equality}) + G_{09}(\text{county type by mean stranger}) + U_0 \]

\[ B_1 = G_{10} \]

\[ B_2 = G_{20} \]

\[ B_3 = G_{30} \]

\[ B_4 = G_{30} + G_{11}(\text{county type}) \]

**Results**

*Sample Descriptives*
The initial sample contained 1,234 victims of sexual assault from 48 of the 67 counties in Pennsylvania. However, to reduce the effects of retrospective bias, only victims whose assaults took place since 1995 were included in the analyses. Further, because there were too few males (176 in the full sample, 79 since 1995) to do gender comparisons, the sample was restricted to females. Finally, missing data resulted in the exclusion of two cases. Thus, the final sample contained 674 female victims from 48 counties. However, because of missing data on some variables, the multilevel analyses involved 625 victims from 46 counties.

Consistent with prior research and as seen in Table 29, 376 victims (56%) did not contact the police regarding their assault. With regard to the severity of the assault, most victims suffered a severe assault (74%), as indicated by the offender’s use of a weapon or victim injury. Only 19 percent of victims (131) used drugs or alcohol prior to the assault. This percentage is low compared to most research, which finds a high rate of alcohol use among sexual assault victims (Finkelson & Oswalt, 1995; Fisher et al., 2003). However, this low rate is likely to due to the youthfulness of the sample. That is, although there were victims in all seven-age categories, 54 percent of victims were younger than 18 years of age when surveyed. Specifically, 5% were between 0 and 5 years, 13% were between 6 and 11 years, 36% were between 12 and 17 years, 12% were between 18 and 21 years, 17% were between 22 and 34 years, 14% were between 35 and 54 years, and the remaining 2% were 55 years of age or older. The discontinuity in the age distribution (only 12% between 18 and 21 years) is likely because of two things: (a) this range is the smallest of the age range (includes only 3 years) and (b) women in this age group likely went to a college counseling service rather than a PCAR center. That is, because most colleges have student counseling services, college student victims likely used these rather than community crisis center services. Finally, most victims knew their
offenders. Indeed, only 13 percent of offenders were strangers, whereas 48 percent were friends or dates, 5 percent were intimates (i.e., spouse or cohabitant), and 23 percent were relatives.

Table 29. Descriptive Statistics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reporting to Police (0 – 1)</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim’s Age (1 – 7)</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim’s use of Intoxicants (0 – 1)</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severity of the Assault (0 – 1)</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender Type (1 – 4)</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Disadvantage$^a$ (scale)</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>-3.01</td>
<td>16.71</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Equality$^b$ (scale)</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>-4.26</td>
<td>11.13</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim Services$^c$ (scale)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>-3.13</td>
<td>16.80</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Stranger Assaults (%)</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Type (0 –1)</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $^a$This variable is a standardized composite of population heterogeneity, population density, percent of the population living below poverty, and percent of the population that are males 15-24 years.  
$^b$This variable is a standardized composite of the percent of females in legal profession, the percent of females with an associates degree or higher, the percent of females in political office, and the percent of females in the workforce.  
$^c$This variable is a standardized composite of the per capita of PCAR educational events, the per capita Victim of Crime Act funding, and the per capita government funding for emergency services.

Correlations

At the bivariate level, a number of variables were significantly related to victims’ decision to contact the police, to county-level victimization rates, and to county-level UCR rape rates. As seen in Table 30, victims’ decision to report to the police was significantly and negatively related to UCR rape rates, to offender type, to the structural disadvantage composite, and to victim services. There was also a significant relationship between victims’ decision to contact the police and gender equality such that victims who reside in counties with greater gender equality were more likely to contact the police. Several variables were also significantly related to county victimization rate using PCAR data. That is, UCR rape rate, structural disadvantage, mean county stranger assaults, gender equality, and county type were all
negatively related to the county victimization rate. The victim services composite was the only variable that was positively correlated with PCAR victimization rate. Finally, the relationship between county-level UCR rape rate and several of the county-level predictor variables was significant. Specifically, as county score on the structural disadvantage composite, victim services, gender equality, and percentage of stranger assault increased, so too did county-level UCR rape rate. Further, UCR rape rate was higher in urban than rural counties. Two points should be made regarding these relationships. First, it is noteworthy that UCR rape rate was negatively related to both PCAR victimization rate and to victims’ decision to contact the police. Second, the structural disadvantage composite was included to control for factors that generally predict official crime rates and its very high correlation with the UCR rape rate indicates that it is doing just that.

With regard to significant relationships among the individual-level predictor variables, victims’ age was positively related to use of intoxicants, and severity of the assault, but was negatively related to offender type, indicating that older victims were more likely to use intoxicants and to experience more severe assaults but were less likely to be intimately related to the offender. Additionally, the relationship between victims’ use of intoxicants and severity of the assault and offender type indicates that victims who consumed intoxicants were more likely to experience severe assaults and were more likely to be assaulted by those with whom they were less intimate. Finally, the relationship between severity of the assault and offender type demonstrates that assaults by known offenders were less severe.

Several of the county-level predictor variables were also significantly related to one another. Specifically, as a county’s score on the structural disadvantage composite increased, so too did a county’s level of victim services, gender equality, and the percentage of stranger
assaults. Additionally, the level of structural disadvantage was higher in urban rather than rural counties. The county victim services composite was negatively related to both gender equality and county type. There was also a strong positive relationship between county rate of stranger assaults and both county type and gender equality, indicating that rates of stranger assaults were higher in urban counties and in counties with greater gender equality. Finally, as compared to rural counties, urban counties were associated with greater gender equality.

Table 30. Bivariate Correlations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Rate of victims (PCAR)</td>
<td>.347***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. UCR Rape Rate</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>-.079</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Reporting to Police</td>
<td>-.012</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Victim’s Age</td>
<td>-.065</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.288***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Offense Severity</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>-.026</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.206***</td>
<td>.134***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Victims’ use of intoxicants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Offender Type</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>-.029</td>
<td>-.091*</td>
<td>-.160***</td>
<td>-.164***</td>
<td>-.125***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Structural Disadvantage</td>
<td>-.224***</td>
<td>.934***</td>
<td>-.135***</td>
<td>.060</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.038</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Gender Equality</td>
<td>-.296***</td>
<td>.273***</td>
<td>.111**</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>-.003</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.126***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Victim Services</td>
<td>.438***</td>
<td>.353***</td>
<td>-.095*</td>
<td>-.013</td>
<td>-.048</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.383***</td>
<td>-.099**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Percent Stranger Assaults</td>
<td>-.336***</td>
<td>.409***</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>-.048</td>
<td>-.034</td>
<td>.301***</td>
<td>.409***</td>
<td>-.039</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. County Type</td>
<td>-.303***</td>
<td>.296***</td>
<td>-.011</td>
<td>-.020</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>.209***</td>
<td>.548***</td>
<td>-.130***</td>
<td>.562***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Comparison of Rural and Urban Counties

Consistent with prior research, rural and urban counties differed on a number of aggregate-level variables. However, none of the individual-level variables differed by county type. As seen in Table 31, although the number of victims according to PCAR data was significantly higher in urban than rural counties, the rate of victimization was higher in rural
rather than urban counties. The same trend was found using rape rates according to the Uniform Crime Reports. That is, the number of rapes was higher in urban counties, but the rate of rape was higher in rural rather than urban counties.

Table 31. Mean Comparison of Urban and Rural Counties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Urban (n=19)</th>
<th>Rural (n=27)</th>
<th>t-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting to the Police</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim’s Age</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim’s use of Intoxicants</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severity of the Assault</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender Type</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Disadvantage(^a)</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>2.27*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Equality(^b)</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>6.32***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim Services(^c)</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Stranger Assaults</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>4.31***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Victims (PCAR)</td>
<td>23.89</td>
<td>8.14</td>
<td>3.73***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of Victimization (PCAR)(^d)</td>
<td>15.49</td>
<td>33.90</td>
<td>2.39*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Rapes (UCR)</td>
<td>96.60</td>
<td>14.64</td>
<td>2.66**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of Rapes (UCR)(^d)</td>
<td>19.26</td>
<td>28.27</td>
<td>2.69**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *\(p < .05\), **\(p < .01\), ***\(p < .001\).

\(^a\)This variable is a standardized composite of population heterogeneity, population density, percent of the population living below poverty, and percent of the population that is male 15-24 years.

\(^b\)This variable is a standardized composite of the percent of females in legal profession, the percent of females with an associates degree or higher, the percent of females in political office, and the percent of females in the work force.

\(^c\)This variable is a standardized composite of the per capita of PCAR educational events, the per capita Victim of Crime Act funding, and the per capita government funding for emergency services.

\(^d\)Rates are per 100,000 females for PCAR data and per 100,000 population for UCR data.

Interestingly, victims’ decision to report to the police according to PCAR data did not differ significantly by county type, suggesting that crisis center and official crime (UCR) data may not be measuring the same thing (Ruback & Ménard, 2001). That is, because UCR rape rate varied
by county type, whereas victim reporting rate did not, suggests that these two data sets may not
be measuring the same thing or sampling the same individuals. There were also significant
rural/urban differences with regard to gender equality, mean stranger assaults, and the control
composite. That is, urban counties had greater gender equality, a higher rate of stranger
assaults, and were more structurally disadvantaged. Although the value of the victim service
composite in urban counties was almost twice that of rural counties (.80 versus .47), this
difference was not statistically significant.

Predicting Sexual Assault

County rates of sexual assault were determined using both PCAR data and UCR data.

Table 32. Negative Binomial Odds of County-Level PCAR Sexual Victimization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Coefficients</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>b/SE</th>
<th>Exp B</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-6.365</td>
<td>2.603</td>
<td>-2.445</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Female Population</td>
<td>.812</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td>3.121</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Disadvantage(^a)</td>
<td>-0.045</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>-.913</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Equality(^b)</td>
<td>-.020</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>-.484</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim Services(^c)</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>1.384</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Stranger Assaults</td>
<td>1.573</td>
<td>4.346</td>
<td>.362</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>.717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Type</td>
<td>-.181</td>
<td>.517</td>
<td>-.351</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.726</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)This variable is a standardized composite of population heterogeneity, population density,
percent of the population living below poverty, and percent of the population that is male 15-24
years.

\(^b\)This variable is a standardized composite of the percent of females in legal profession, the
percent of females with an associates degree or higher, the percent of females in political office,
and the percent of females in the workforce.

\(^c\)This variable is a standardized composite of the per capita of PCAR educational events, the per
capita Victim of Crime Act funding, and the per capita government funding for emergency
services.

PCAR victimization data. In the first negative binomial regression model, PCAR
victimization data for each county were regressed onto county-level factors entered as main
effects and interactions. In this analysis, the baseline model included the natural logarithm of
the female population per county and a fixed coefficient of one. By adding these terms, we obtain an analysis of the rates of victimization per capita, rather than counts of these events.

With the exception of the log of the county’s female population, none of the variables or their interactions significantly predicted the PCAR sexual assaults (see Table 32). With regard to the population, a one unit increase in the log of the county’s female population decreased the rate of victimization by .83 (i.e., $e^{-0.81}$).

**UCR rape data.** In this negative binomial regression model, the Uniform Crime Reports rape victimization data for each county was regressed onto county factors entered as main effects and interactions. Again, the baseline model included the natural logarithm of the female population per county and a fixed coefficient of one. As seen in Table 33, several county factors predicted county UCR rape rates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Coefficients</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>b/SE</th>
<th>Exp B</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-10.038</td>
<td>.958</td>
<td>-10.48</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Total Population</td>
<td>1.209</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td>13.96</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Composite&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Equality&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim Services&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Stranger Assaults</td>
<td>-3.397</td>
<td>1.674</td>
<td>-2.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Type</td>
<td>-.959</td>
<td>.147</td>
<td>-6.53</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>This variable is a standardized composite of population heterogeneity, population density, percent of the population living below poverty, and percent of the population that is male 15-24 years.

<sup>b</sup>This variable is a standardized composite of the percent of females in legal profession, the percent of females with an associates degree or higher, the percent of females in political office, and the percent of females in the workforce.

<sup>c</sup>This variable is a standardized composite of the per capita of PCAR educational events, the per capita Victim of Crime Act funding, and the per capita government funding for emergency services.
Specifically, a one unit increase in the log of the female population increased the rate of UCR rapes by 23 percent. A one unit increase in structural disadvantage decreased the rate of rape by 62 percent and a unit increase in the percentage of stranger assault reduced the rape rate by 99 percent. Finally, urban county of residency decreased the rate of UCR rape by 86 percent. Gender equality and victim services were not significantly related to county UCR rapes. Similarly, none of the interaction terms was significantly related to UCR rapes and hence do not appear in the table.

**Multilevel Analyses**

The hierarchical logistic regression analyses proceeded in four steps. First, a fully unconditional, or null model, was completed to obtain baseline information on the average number of victims who contacted the police and the amount of variation available to be explained (variance component). Second, individual-level variables were added to the null model and a multivariate hypothesis or Wald test was conducted to determine whether these variables significantly added to the predictive power of the model. Because it was anticipated that offender type might moderate the effects of severity of the assault and the victims’ use of intoxicants, both of these interactions were included in the model and a Wald test was completed. However, in the interest of parsimony, only the interaction term (offender type by severity) that significantly contributed to the predictive power of the model is presented. Third, county-level variables were added to the above model and a Wald test was completed to determine whether county factors significantly predicted victims’ decision to contact the police above and beyond the effects of the individual-level variables. Because it was anticipated that county type might moderate the effects of the structural disadvantage composite, gender equality, victim services, and percentage stranger assaults, these interaction terms were included
in the model and a Wald test was completed. Again, in the interest of parsimony, only those interaction terms (county type by gender equality and county type by victim services) that significantly contributed to the predictive power of the model are presented. Finally, a cross-level interaction (county type by offender type) was added to the full model and a t-test was used to determine if it significantly added to the predictive power of the model. Although results from the first study indicated that a cross-level interaction was worth investigating (i.e., effects of victim-offender relationship varied by county type), the addition of the cross-level interaction did not significantly add to the predictive power of the model. For this reason, the model containing this additional interaction term was not presented in the table or the text. All variables were grand mean centered in these analyses.

As seen in Table 34, the exponentiated coefficient from the null model demonstrated that the county average value for victims’ decision to contact the police was .39 (i.e., \( e^{-46}/1 + e^{47} \)), with a value of 1 indicating that victims had contacted the police.

The addition of the individual-level variables significantly added to the predictive power of the model according to a multivariate hypothesis or Wald test (\( \chi^2 = 11.99, \text{df} = 4, p = .017 \)). Much of this effect was due to offender type, the only variable that significantly predicted victims’ decision to contact the police. That is, for every one unit increase in the intimacy of the victim-offender relationship (offender type), the odds of the victim contacting the police decreased by almost 26 percent (i.e., \( e^{-29} \)). When the offender type by severity of the assault interaction term was added to the model, both of these variables, as main effects, significantly predicted victims’ decision to contact the police. That is, the odds of the victim contacting the police increased 262% (i.e., \( e^{1.28} \)) when the assault was severe. A one unit increase in the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed Effects</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Std Error</th>
<th>Exp(β)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept γ00</td>
<td>-.468</td>
<td>.159</td>
<td>.626</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random Effects Component</td>
<td>.609</td>
<td>.780</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model 2 (Individual)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed Effects</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Std Error</th>
<th>Exp(β)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept γ00</td>
<td>-.472</td>
<td>.169</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim’s Age γ10</td>
<td>-.031</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim’s use of Intoxicants γ20</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>.231</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>.847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severity of the Assault γ30</td>
<td>1.285</td>
<td>.601</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender Type γ40</td>
<td>-.215</td>
<td>.107</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severity x Offender Type</td>
<td>-.468</td>
<td>.261</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.073</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Random Effects Component Std Dev Df
Variance Component u0 .722 .849 45 .000

Chi-square for added variables = 11.997
T value for interaction term = -3.048

Model 3 (Individual and County)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed Effects</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Std Error</th>
<th>Exp(β)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept γ00</td>
<td>-.473</td>
<td>.163</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim’s Age γ10</td>
<td>-.031</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim’s use of Intoxicants γ20</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.235</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severity of the Assault γ30</td>
<td>1.448</td>
<td>.607</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender Type γ40</td>
<td>-.209</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severity x Offender Type</td>
<td>-.516</td>
<td>.261</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Disadvantage a</td>
<td>-.201</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Equality b</td>
<td>-.241</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim Services c</td>
<td>-.150</td>
<td>.093</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Stranger Assault</td>
<td>-.141</td>
<td>5.354</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Type</td>
<td>.491</td>
<td>.533</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>.363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Eq x County Type</td>
<td>.342</td>
<td>.145</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim Serv x County Type</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.372</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>.052</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Random Effects Component Std Dev Df
Variance Component u0 .526 .725 38 .000
Chi-square for level 2 variables = 5.669
Chi-square for interaction terms = 9.075

aThis variable is a standardized composite of population heterogeneity, population density, percent of the population living below poverty, and percent of the population that is male 15-24 years.
bThis variable is a standardized composite of the percent of females in legal profession, the percent of females with an associates degree or higher, the percent of females in political office, and the percent of females in the workforce.
cThis variable is a standardized composite of the per capita of PCAR educational events, the per capita Victim of Crime Act funding, and the per capita government funding for emergency services.
intimacy between the victim and the offender reduced the odds of the victim contacting the police by 19% (i.e., $e^{-0.21}$). Further, the offender type by severity interaction term approached significance ($p = .073$). As seen in Figure 1, this effect occurred because the victim-offender relationship had little effect on victims’ decision to contact the police in non-severe assaults (i.e., no injury or weapon). However, when the assault was severe, the offender type affected victims’ decision, with victims less likely to contact the police the closer their relationship to the offender. None of the remaining offender type interactions added to the predictive power of the model.

Figure 1. Severity by Offender Type Interaction on Victims’ Decision to Report to Police.

The addition of the individual-level variables resulted in a slight increase (from .61 to .72) in the between-county variance (variance component), indicating that the individual-level variables varied by county type. Generally, the addition of explanatory variables results in a decrease in the value of the variance components. However, because the introduction of explanatory variables also results in an increase in the variance that can be explained, the loss of
degrees of freedom, and an increase in error, component values sometimes increase, as seen here (Kreft & De Leeuw, 1998).

In the next model, county-level variables were added as predictors of victims’ decision to contact the police. A Wald test revealed that the addition of county-level variables did not increase the explanatory power of the model. However, the addition of the interactive terms did add to the predictive power of the model and resulted in several variables, both as main effects and as interactive terms, significantly predicting victims’ decision to contact the police net of individual-level variables ($\chi^2 = 9.07, \text{df} = 2, p = .011$). The structural disadvantage composite significantly predicted victims’ decision to contact the police. That is, for every one unit increase in structural disadvantage (indicating greater population heterogeneity, density, poverty, and percentage of young males in a county), the odds of victims contacting the police decreased by 18%. The main effect for gender equality also approached standard levels of significance ($p = .076$).

Figure 2. County Type by Gender Equality Interaction on Victims’ Decision to Report to the Police.
Specifically, for every one unit increase in a county’s level of gender equality, the odds of a victim contacting the police decreased by 21% (i.e., $e^{-0.24}$). The gender equality by county type interaction also significantly affected victims’ decision to contact the police. As seen in Figure 2, greater gender equality had little effect on urban victims’ decision to contact the police, but it decreased the odds that rural victims would contact the police.

Finally, the county type by victim services interaction approached standard levels of significance ($p = .052$). As seen in Figure 3, greater victim services increased the odds that urban victims would contact the police, but it decreased the odds that rural victims would do so.

Figure 3. County Type by Victim Services Interaction on Victims’ Decision to Report to Police.

The inclusion of county variables and the interaction terms decreased the variance component to .52, indicating that county factors explained some of the between county variance in victims’ decision to contact the police. Moreover, the addition of the county-level variables only minimally affected the relationship of the individual-level variables on victims’ decision to
contact the police. That is, severity of the assault, offender type, and severity by offender type remained significant predictors of victims’ decision to contact the police even after adding the county-level variables.

**Discussion**

Study 2 used a social ecology perspective to examine the effects of individual- and county-level factors on victims’ decision to contact the police. Results indicate that factors about both the assault and the county in which victims reside affect victims’ decision to contact the police. This study extends prior research by using multilevel analysis to simultaneously examine the effects of individual and county factors on victims’ decision to contact the police. Additionally, the inclusion of victims of all ages provides a unique contribution, as most studies examine adult and child victims separately. Further, by using data obtained from counselors trained to deal with this type of victimization, this study provides information that is likely more valid than that obtained from surveys in which rapport with the victim is lacking (Koss, 1996).

Despite these strengths, there are also a number of limitations to the study. First, the data are not random, because surveyed victims chose to contact crisis centers (i.e., victims were self-selected). Thus, the sample may over-represent more serious assaults, which may have resulted in higher reporting rates. Second, because in some cases the information was obtained months or even years after the assault, memory loss may bias some results. Third, results may not be generalizable to all sexual assault victims, as the data came from Pennsylvania. Fourth, because there were too few men to complete gender comparisons, only women’s decisions were examined. Thus, it is unknown whether men’s decision making would be similar to that of women’s. Indeed, the broader help seeking literature (Kaukinen, 2002; Schonert-Reichl & Muller, 1996) and the results from Study 1 suggest that men’s decision making would be quite
different. Finally, although the research ascertained the type of county in which the victim resides, it was not possible to determine whether the sexual assault took place in the victim’s home county. Thus, there may be some error in the county classification used.

With these caveats in mind, results from Study 2 suggest that five factors influence victims’ decision to contact the police: severity of the assault, victim-offender relationship, gender equality, victim services, and county type.

Consistent with prior research (Feldman-Summers & Norris, 1984; Fisher et al., 2003; Gartner & Macmillan, 1995; Kaukinen, 2002; Ménard & Ruback, 2003; Ruback, 1993, 1994; Ruback & Ménard, 2001; Williams, 1985) and the first hypothesis, results from the multivariate analyses indicate that victims of violent stranger assaults were more likely to contact the police than victims of non-violent acquaintance assaults. However, only victim-offender relationship but not severity of the assault was significant at the bivariate level. This result suggests that despite changes in the legal definitions of rape and sexual assault in Pennsylvania, which have resulted in the repealing of force requirements and spousal exemptions, normative standards for reporting to the police still use traditional or common law definitions of this crime. This contradiction may arise because the degree to which the sexual assault is unwanted is unclear when the victim and the perpetrator are acquainted. It is possible that perceivers assume that the couple has previously engaged in consensual sex, making consent for the current encounter ambiguous. Further, because of this ambiguity, perceivers may be less likely to label the event rape or suggest police contact is appropriate. Regardless of whether this is the mechanism that underlies this belief, prior research indicates that normative standards suggest that reporting to police is inappropriate when the victim and offender are acquainted (Feldman-Summers & Norris, 1984; Gartner & Macmillan, 1995; Kaukinen, 2002; Ruback, 1993, 1994). Thus,
victims assaulted by known perpetrators anticipate that others, including members of the criminal justice system (Simon, 1996), are less likely to believe them, and so they choose not to report.

Counter to prior research (BJS, 2003; Conaway & Lohr, 1994; Harlow, 1985; Skogan, 1976, 1984) and the second hypothesis, age did not affect victims’ decision to contact the police at either the bivariate or multivariate level. This result is likely due to the inclusion of victims of all ages. Most prior research has included only adult victims and the typical finding of a positive relationship between age and reporting may be the result of this restricted age range. Indeed, additional analyses including only the individual-level variables found a quadratic effect of age (largely U-shaped) on victims’ decision to contact the police (see Figure 4). Specifically, victims between the ages 0 and five years were unlikely to report to police. Figure 4. Log Odds of Reporting to the Police by Victims’ Age.

![Log Odds of Reporting to Police by Victims' Age](image)

Reporting increased slightly among victims aged 6 to 10 but then decreased until the 22 to 34 year category after which point reporting increased with age. Thus, if only adult victims were
included in the analyses, results would be consistent with prior research. The fact that older, as compared to younger victims are more likely to report sexual assault victimization to the police is likely due to their greater rapport with police and a greater assumption that police will believe them and provide them with assistance. Further, with older as compared to younger victims, there is an increased chance that victims or other household members may have benefited from police services in the past, and research suggests that previous positive experiences increase the likelihood of police contact in the future (Skogan, 1976).

Counter to the third hypothesis and prior research (Finkelson & Oswalt, 1995; Fisher et al., 2003), victims’ use of intoxicants did not affect their decision to contact the police either alone or when controlling for other variables. This finding is likely due to a lack of variation on this construct. That is, only 19 percent of victims consumed (or at least admitted to consuming) drugs or alcohol, probably because a large proportion of them (54%) were less than 18 years of age. Most prior studies concerned with the effects of victims’ drug or alcohol consumption on reporting were limited to college samples (Finkelson & Oswalt, 1995; Fisher et al., 2003). It is possible that college students are more susceptible to perceptions that they will be judged responsible for the assault, especially if they themselves are involved in illegal activity, such as drug use or underage drinking (Ruback et al., 1999). This perception is not unfounded, as research demonstrates that victims who have been drinking are judged more culpable for their victimization (Hammock & Richardson, 1997; Norris & Cubbins, 1992; Richardson & Campbell, 1982). Similarly, members of the criminal justice system, including police and jurors, are less likely to consider an event rape if the victim had been drinking prior to the assault (Lopez, 1992). Because the current sample included victims of all ages, few of whom used intoxicants, victims’ use of intoxicants did not affect reporting to the police.
Results show mixed support for the fourth hypothesis regarding the effects of county-level factors on victimization and reporting rates. Specifically, although all of the county-level variables predicted victimization rates at the bivariate level and victimization rates were significantly higher in rural counties, none of these variables predicted rape victimization in the multivariate analyses. In the multivariate analyses, only the log of the female population affected the odds of victimization. It is possible that the population size is so closely related to the other county-level variables that it accounts for the variation found among these variables at the bivariate level. Review of the bivariate correlations of the log of the counties’ female population with the county-level variables demonstrates that all but one set of correlations were large and significant (only the correlation for the control composite did not reach standard levels of significance – \( p = .06 \); the remaining correlations were all significant and ranged from a low of -.47 for victim services to a high of .72 for county type). Further, a significance test comparing the base model (including only the constant and the log of the female population) to the full model (including all predictor variables) using a likelihood ratio test (calculated by taking twice the difference in the log likelihoods with degrees of freedom equal to the number of variables added to the model) reveals that the added variables did not significantly add to the predictive power of the model (\( \chi^2 = 4.36, \text{df} = 5 \)). Finally, none of the variables significantly predicted county victimization, even when the log of the female population was removed from the model. Thus, net of population size, sexual assault victimization seems unaffected by county-level factors, suggesting that the problem is ubiquitous.

With regard to contacting the police, all county-level variables predicted UCR rape rates at the bivariate level and most predicted UCR rape rates in the multivariate analyses (gender equality and victim services were the only exception). Similarly, most county-level indicators
had either direct or moderating effects on rape reporting using crisis center data according to both the bivariate and multilevel analyses (only the percentage of stranger assaults was unrelated to victims’ decision to contact the police). Combining the victimization results with the reporting results suggests that while sexual assault victimization is ubiquitous, the decision to proceed in these cases is not. That is, county characteristics, including county type, victim service, gender equality, and structural disadvantage, affect victims’ decision to contact the police and official statistics for this crime.

With regard to county characteristics, it is noteworthy that the effects of these variables vary depending upon whether official crime rates or crisis center victims’ decision to contact the police are examined. The effects of the structural disadvantage composite best illustrate this point. Recall that this variable was included to control for factors generally associated with crime, namely population density, population heterogeneity, percentage living below the poverty level, and percentage of males between the ages of 15 and 24 years. The fact that the composite was highly correlated with UCR rape rates (r = .934) indicates that it does represent factors associated with official crime rates. However, it is negatively correlated with both victimization rates and victims’ decision to contact the police using crisis center data.

Similarly, and consistent with prior research (Ruback & Ménard, 2001), UCR rape rates were negatively related to victimization rate, suggesting that UCR rape data are not representative of sexual assault victimization, but rather are dependent upon characteristics of the location from which they are culled. Given that the variables included in the composite are generally associated with urban rather than rural areas, it suggests that official crime statistics are more congruent with urban rather than rural crime. That county type moderates the effects of other
county-level variables on victims’ decision to contact the police can also be seen in the effects of gender equality and victim services.

Contrary to both prior research (Ruback & Ménard, 2001) and the fifth hypothesis, victims from rural counties with greater gender equality were not more likely to be victimized or to contact the police. That is, the gender equality by county type interaction was unrelated to victimization and negatively related to contacting the police. Compared to victims from urban areas, victims from rural counties with greater gender equality were less likely to contact the police. Recall that prior research concerned with the effects of gender equality on rape rates has been mixed. Results from this study suggest two sources for this inconsistency. First, results varied by county type. Thus, prior research using larger units of aggregation (e.g., country or state) may not have allowed for the variation found within these units. Similarly, prior research using SMSAs did not allow for variation across location, as all locations were urban. Second, many of these studies relied on official crime data, which appears to more accurately reflect urban rather than rural crime. Both of these limitations may explain why in some instances, gender equality was associated with higher rape rates, while in others it was associated with lower rape rates.

It is nonetheless noteworthy to find that the effects of gender equality on victims’ decision to contact the police vary by county type. In rural counties, gender equality is associated with a decrease in reporting to the police, whereas in urban counties it is associated with an increase in reporting. This result seems to undermine feminists’ explanations for rape. First, feminists contend that greater gender equality should result in fewer rapes. However, results from this study indicate that gender equality is unrelated to rape victimization but is related to reporting. Second, results also undermine the backlash hypothesis, which states that
greater gender equality will result in an increase in rapes, as men use rape to retaliate for women’s social and economic gains. However, greater gender equality results in less rape reporting in rural counties, areas more prone to backlash because men in these counties likely hold more traditional values (Tonnies, 1940; Websdale, 1998; Weisheit et al., 1995; Wilkinson, 1984a).

Collective efficacy may explain the effects of gender equality on rape rates, in that greater gender equality should result in greater concern for, and attention to, women’s issues. Compared to men, women are more likely to be the victims of sexual assault. Thus, greater gender equality should result in greater support for reporting sexual assault. The fact that both victim services and gender equality had similar effects on rape reporting (reduced reporting in rural areas) suggests that both may be markers of collective efficacy. However, even if collective efficacy does explain the effects of gender equality on reporting, it does so only in urban and not rural counties. Although characteristics of a community, including disorganization and a lack of collective efficacy, have been found to explain crime in rural areas (Osgood & Chambers, 2000; Sampson, 1983), the present results suggest that this theoretical framework may be inappropriate to explain interpersonal crimes, like sexual assault, in rural counties.

Similar to the effects of gender equality and counter to the sixth hypothesis, analysis of crisis center data indicated that greater victim services did not affect victimization but did result in lower reporting among victims from rural counties. Interestingly, at the bivariate level, victim services resulted in higher rates of victimization according to crisis center data and higher rape rates according to UCR data, but lower rates of police contact according to crisis center data. These findings also provide further support for the notion that UCR data more
accurately reflect urban rather than rural crime, as the bivariate correlation shows that greater victim services results in a greater number of UCR rapes. Combined, these results suggest that collective efficacy, which should result in greater rape reporting in areas with more services for victims, is a better explanation of urban rather than rural rape patterns. That measures of collective efficacy explain urban but not rural rape rates, suggest that there is something unique about experiencing interpersonal crime in rural areas. Perhaps informal sanctions or norms of keeping personal problems, like sexual assault victimization, a secret are so strong in rural areas that they reverse the effects of service availability on victims’ decision to contact the police.

Rural counties may have such strong norms against reporting that when other services are available, victims choose these alternative services instead of reporting to the police. Indeed, it may be that greater victim services resulted in lower rates of reporting to the police because a higher rate of rural than urban victims went to crisis centers (the source of the current sample), but the rate of reporting to the police remained the same. Thus, the rate of reporting declined because the number of clients increased (the denominator), but the number of reporters remained the same (the numerator). This explanation is supported by the fact that victim services was positively related to the rape victimization rate and is consistent with the notion that rural victims deal with sexual assault through means other than police contact.

Counter to the seventh hypothesis, county type did not moderate the effect of victim-offender relationship on victims’ decision to contact the police. Based on the results of Study 1, which found that county of residency affected the labeling and perceived appropriateness of calling the police for crimes involving known individuals and on rural-urban differences more generally, it was anticipated that rural victims would be less likely to contact the police when assaulted by a known perpetrator. However, results from Study 2 did not support this
hypothesis. It is possible that the distinctions found in the first study were based on characteristics of the county and when these characteristics are accounted for, as is the case in Study 2, county type no longer matters in victims’ decision process. Alternatively, it may be that rural areas have such strong taboos regarding the discussion of personal problems of this nature, that victim-offender relationship becomes irrelevant to the reporting decision. Indeed, rural victims seem unlikely to seek any type of support following victimization by a known perpetrator. For instance, the data collection form also inquired about victims’ first action following the assault and additional analyses of victims’ first action indicates that rural victims are less likely to contact anyone (i.e., friend, family, crisis center, hospital, or other help agency aside from the police), the closer the victim-offender relationship. In contrast, urban victims are more likely to contact someone, the closer the victim-offender relationship ($p = .048$ for the county type by victim-offender relationship cross-level interaction in a multilevel model with victims’ first action as the dependent variable and with the same independent variables as previous models). Future research should simultaneously examine residents’ value system and crime victim decision making in order to determine the mechanism underlying rural victims’ decision not to contact the police. Further, both formal and informal responses to rape victimization should be explored to determine whether county type conditions the effect of victim-offender relationship on other kinds of help seeking behavior.

In addition to the tested hypotheses, other findings regarding the source of data examined are worthy of discussion. Specifically, these two data sources, crisis center and the Uniform Crime Reports, appear to be measuring different phenomena. Because these two data sources included some subject overlap (as 44% of crisis victims reported to the police and thus are included in UCR statistics), the expectation might be that they would produce similar
findings. However, the two data sources instead produced different results in both the bivariate and the multivariate analyses. In particular, the bivariate correlation between PCAR victimization rate and UCR rape rate was negative ($r = -0.347, p < .001$). Even the bivariate correlation between the PCAR reporting rate and the UCR rape rate was negative, albeit small ($r = -0.015, \text{n.s.}$). Further, the two data sources produced different predictive models of reporting, although the PCAR reporting model controlled for some individual-level factors that were not included in the UCR model. For example, victim services and gender equality interacted with county type to affect PCAR victims’ decision to report to the police, but these variables did not significantly predict UCR rape rates. Combined, these findings suggest that the two data sources represent two different samples. That is, some victims report to police, whereas others choose to go to crisis centers.

Other studies predicting victim reporting using official and crisis center data have obtained similar results (Ruback & Ménard, 2001). Because social norms regarding what constitutes a rape or sexual assault differ from the legal definitions of these crimes, it is not surprising that crisis center and UCR data contain different samples. Indeed, it was precisely because official crime statistics missed a large portion of victims that victimization surveys were originally developed.

One factor that likely contributed to a victim’s decision to go to a rape crisis center rather than the police was her relationship with the offender. In the PCAR sample, only 13% of offenders were strangers, whereas national UCR data\(^2\) on rape and sexual assault indicate that 35.6% of offenders were strangers (BJS, 2003, Table 27). Thus, victims raped by known

\(^2\) This information was not available at the county level.
offenders are overrepresented in PCAR data. Because social norms dictate that non-stranger rape is not supposed to be reported, the PCAR data suggest that these victims seek help from crisis centers instead of the police.

In conclusion, both individual and county factors influenced victims’ decision to contact the police, although not always in the manner hypothesized. Consistent with prior research and normative standards, victims of violent assaults committed by strangers were more likely to contact the police. However, the effects of these social norms did not vary by county type. Additionally, and consistent with the concept of collective efficacy found in both social control and social disorganization theories, characteristics of the county, including victim services and gender equality, also affected victims’ decision to contact the police, net of individual-level factors. However, the effects of county characteristics predicted urban rather than rural victims’ decision making. These results demonstrate that a more complete understanding of victims’ decision making process is obtained by including characteristics of the victim and of the community in which she resides. Further, they imply that notions of crime derived from research using UCR data from urban areas may not readily apply to rural counties. Specifically, research generally finds that crime is more prevalent in urban rather than rural areas (Duhart, 2000; Laub, 1983; but cf. Gibbs, 1979; Smith & Huff, 1982), and this difference is generally attributed to social disorganization factors (i.e., population density, heterogeneity, and poverty) present in these areas. Yet, results from the current study indicate that the rate of sexual assault is significantly higher in rural counties and that collective efficacy does not explain this fact. Given the higher rate of sexual assault in rural areas, future research should try to determine what community factors explain rural victims’ decision to contact the police.
CHAPTER 5

General Discussion and Policy Implications

Findings from these two studies indicate that normative standards and contextual factors affect the labeling and reporting of crime. Moreover, consistent with a social ecology framework, it appears that both individual and county factors are necessary for understanding victims’ decision making process. In this final section, I summarize the findings from the two studies and then discuss their theoretical, research, and policy implications. Finally, based on the current findings regarding the importance of reporting norms, I suggest avenues for future research.

Summary of the Research

The first study examined, for four types of crime (sex crimes, assaults, robberies, and household crimes), college students’ normative standards for the labeling of events and judged appropriateness of contacting the police. Results indicated that severity of the incident, the victim-offender relationship described in the crime scenario, and participants’ gender affected the labeling of the event as a crime and the judged appropriateness of contacting the police. Additionally, county type moderated the effects of the victim-offender relationship and of participants’ gender on the labeling and the reporting of crime.

With regard to severity (as indicated by level of monetary loss, victim injury, and offender use of weapon), participants were more likely to label an event a crime and suggest police contact for more serious rather than less serious events. Participants were also most likely to label an event a crime and suggest police contact when the offender was a stranger and
were least likely to do so when the offender was someone with whom the victim had a long-standing dispute. Compared to women, men were less likely to believe calling the police was appropriate. With regard to the county type by victim-offender relationship interaction, as compared to urban participants, rural participants were generally less likely to label events crimes or to suggest police contact when the perpetrator was an acquaintance rather than a stranger. Finally, gender and county type interacted in their effects on the labeling and reporting of some crimes, with urban men less likely than any other group to suggest calling the police.

The within-subjects analyses also produced a number of significant effects. For both judgments, serious events were more likely to be labeled crimes worthy of police intervention. Additionally, the victim-offender relationship and participants’ gender interacted with crime severity in their effects on the labeling and reporting of several criminal events (sex crimes, assaults, and robberies). Specifically, the victim-offender relationship mattered little at the lowest and at the highest levels of severity, but it affected participants’ ratings of crimes of moderate severity, with participants less likely to label an event a crime or to suggest reporting to the police when the victim and the offender were acquainted. Similarly, participants’ gender mattered little at the lowest and the highest levels of severity, but for crimes of mid-range severity women were more likely than men to label an event a crime and suggest police contact.

The second study used multilevel analysis to examine the individual- and county-level factors that affect sexual assault victims’ decision to contact the police. At the individual level, greater severity of the assault and greater relational distance between the victim and the offender increased the odds of victims’ contacting the police. These variables also produced a significant interaction effect on reporting with greater severity increasing reporting among
strangers, but decreasing reporting among those who knew their perpetrator. Further, net of these individual-level effects, gender equality, victim services, and their interaction with county type affected victims’ decision to contact the police. Specifically, although higher levels of gender equality and victim services increased urban victims’ reporting, the county’s level of gender equality or victim services had no effect on rural victims’ reporting behavior. Finally, although a number of county factors affected UCR rape rates, only the size of the female population affected victimization rates, suggesting that county factors affect the reporting but not the occurrence of rape.

**Consistent findings.** In sum, results from these two studies were generally consistent. Across both studies, the severity of the assault, the victim-offender relationship, and the county type influenced the labeling and reporting of crimes.

**Severity.** The presence of a weapon or of victim injury increased approval for police contact among both college students and real victims. These findings suggest that people are more approving of police contact when an incident is clearly defined as a crime. When an incident involves a weapon or victim injury, almost certainly it is perceived as more dangerous, a greater moral wrong, and a greater violation of community standards of behavior. Further, these same circumstances may make both victims and observers less likely to confront the offender themselves. Instead, out of fear for their own safety, they choose to rely on the police. Additionally, the increased threat that arises from these serious crimes likely gives reporters greater confidence that their social network, the police, and the criminal justice system as a whole, will respond favorably and see reporting as justified.

**Victim-offender relationship.** Another factor that affects the definition of crime is the relationship between the victim and offender. Among both college students and actual victims,
approval for contacting the police was greater when the offender was a stranger. It may be that when the victim and offender are acquainted, their relationship contradicts preconceived stereotypes of what constitutes a “normal crime” (Sudnow, 1965). That is, perceivers may assume that victims are more blameworthy and less credible in these situations. As suggested by the first study, they may assume that the crime results from provocation or a long-standing dispute. Further, they may assume that a prior relationship will reduce the chance of conviction because victims may be less likely to testify, may be more likely to reconcile with offenders, or may withdraw their allegations for fear of retaliation, all of which would contribute to the futility of police intervention. Despite law reforms, the legal system has a long history of treating incidents involving friends or relatives as less serious “private matters.” Perhaps due to this tradition, these incidents are more difficult to define as crimes, or if defined as crimes, both the general public and criminal justice professionals determine they do not warrant police contact.

This practice appears to be especially relevant for sex crimes, where an ongoing relationship between the victim and offender confuses the issue of consent, a key element of this crime. This trend continues in spite of the fact that rape shield laws preclude using prior sexual relations between the victim and the offender in evidence. However, when the offender is a stranger, the issue of consent generally is irrelevant and the determination that the event is a crime is much easier. When the offender is someone known to the victim, many questions arise regarding the victims’ motives and actions. Perhaps it is because of this concern that victims, knowing that they are likely to be scrutinized throughout the justice process, choose not to contact the police when assaulted by someone they know.
County type. In addition to severity and victim-offender relationship, county type also had important conditioning effects across both studies. In the first study, county type interacted with victim-offender relationship, such that rural participants were less likely to label an event a crime or to suggest police contact. In the second study, county type moderated the effects of gender equality and of victim services on reporting, such that urban victims’ reporting increased with greater gender equality and higher levels of victim services, whereas rural victims were unlikely to contact the police regardless of the level of gender equality or victim services. Combined, these findings suggest that urban and rural residents do not perceive criminal events similarly. Perhaps the use of informal social control to deal with problems is so prevalent among rural residents that it neutralizes the effects of both severity and victim-offender relationship on decisions to report to the police. That is, if one is more inclined to handle criminal events privately (i.e., by keeping it a secret) rather than formally under all circumstances, then the type of circumstance is unlikely to affect official sanctioning decisions. By contrast, urban residents tend to use formal sanctions, namely the police, so factors such as severity and victim-offender relationship influence their decisions to contact the police. Research showing rural residents were more likely than urban residents to indicate that they did not report a crime to the police because it was a “private or personal matter” provides some support for this argument (Laub, 1981). The strong kinship ties in rural areas may have fostered this belief system (Weisheit et al., 1995), in that, because most residents in rural areas are known to one another, personal crime truly is a private matter.

Rural and urban differences, including kinship, have several implications specific to the crime of rape. First, most sexual assaults are committed by acquaintances (Koss, 1998; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). In rural areas, where population dispersion is high, most social interactions
occur among acquaintances (Wilkinson, 1984a, 1984b). Thus, compared to urban residents, rural residents are more frequently exposed to potential offenders. Second, rural areas have greater physical isolation. This isolation provides more remote locations for sexual assaults to occur and reduces the likelihood that someone else can intervene on behalf of the victim. Third, residents in rural areas have a greater tendency of keeping personal problems a secret. Combined, these differences suggest that rural residents are at greater risk for sexual assault by known offenders, but are less likely to discuss these assaults, especially with the police.

Inconsistent findings. Although results from the two studies were generally consistent, some inconsistencies were found. In the first study, county type moderated the effects of victim-offender relationship. Yet, the cross-level interaction in the second study did not reproduce this effect. Failure to find this effect in the second study may have been due to power limitations, as there were only 46 counties included in the multilevel analyses. Further, it may be that when other county factors are controlled, as in the second study, county type no longer matters. Alternatively, people’s approval for suggesting that someone else should contact the police in a hypothetical situation may differ from what they themselves actually do, at least as it pertains to rape reporting. Finally, it may be that rural rape victims are not only less likely to contact the police, but they are also less likely to contact a crisis center, which may account for the non-significant findings.

Some cross-study comparisons, however, were not possible because of the different methodologies and samples used. First, due to sample limitations the effects of gender could not be examined in the second study. Second, due to a lack of variation in participants’ age in the first study, it was not possible to compare the effects of age across both studies. Third, due to time constraints and out of concern for the victim, the victim was not asked if she labeled the
assault a crime. That is, for fear that victims would not feel that the crisis workers believed or supported them, they were not asked if they thought the event was a crime. Fourth, for similar reasons it was not deemed appropriate to ascertain whether the sexual assault occurred after provocation or a long-standing dispute. Fifth, because alcohol was not a factor manipulated in the first study, its effects could not be compared across the two studies. Thus, future research should try to incorporate more of the same factors across both experimental and survey methodologies to determine their effects on victims’ decision to contact the police.

**Theoretical Implications**

Results from this research supported aspects of both social norms and social disorganization/control theories. Consonant with a social norms perspective, there were normative standards as to when it was appropriate to label an event a crime and to suggest police intervention. Similarly, there was support, albeit among urban residents only, for the role of collective efficacy on victims’ decision to contact the police. A county’s level of gender equality and victim services did increase urban victims’ reporting, suggesting that groups’ collective efforts can affect reporting rates. Moreover, consistent with a social ecology framework, greater understanding of victims’ decision making came from the inclusion of both levels of influence, suggesting micro and macro theory integration is feasible (see also Bernard & Snipes, 1996). That is, because components from both social norms and social control/disorganization theories independently contributed to the explanatory power of the model, these two theoretical frameworks can be used in concert to explain reporting behavior. Indeed, although not always conceived in this fashion, social disorganization and social control theories include a micro and a macro level component to explain criminal behavior (i.e., Bursik, 1988; Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Hunter, 1985; Janowitz, 1978).
Both components generally work well in explaining criminal behavior. However, results from the present studies suggest that these components may operate somewhat differently for rape than they do for other crimes, and further, that the integration of both components is crucial when it comes to understanding rape victims’ decision to report. For instance, Bursik (1988) argued that social disorganization affects crime through reduced informal and formal social control. His assumption was that reduced informal control increases crime because of reduced supervision and that reduced formal control increases crime through the community’s inability to secure needed resources (i.e., police) to combat crime. A poorer, more transient, heterogeneous community is less able to organize around a common goal of reducing crime through increased monitoring or through seeking increased resources.

Yet, because most interpersonal crimes like rape occur in private rather than public places, informal social control does not inhibit the behavior. Rather, based on the results from this research, informal social control inhibits the reporting of the behavior through the normative standards established by the community. Because much of the research on the informal element of control has been concerned with street crime, which is more prevalent in public places and so is more susceptible to monitoring, theoretical development of this concept has tended to overemphasize the capacity of informal social control to reduce crime. However, in doing so two important facts are ignored: (a) crime rates are a consequence of victim reporting, and (b) as Pescosolido (1992) and Greenberg and Ruback (1992) have noted, victim reporting is influenced by the social environment (or network). That is, because victims generally consult with others before determining what action, if any, to take, the cost to the consulted other must be factored into the decision making process. In sexual assault cases, because reporting the crime to police could bring shame or embarrassment to the social
network, informal social control or norms may inhibit victim reporting, especially in close-knit rural communities. Failure to incorporate elements of context on reporting results in false assumptions about crime rates, especially in rural areas where private crimes are likely to be more prevalent (Stinchcombe, 1963).

Even the formal component of social disorganization/control falls short where rape is concerned. That is, because sexual assaults tend to take place in “private,” they are less likely to be subject to formal means of control unless the victim reports the crime. Even non-police responses to sexual assault (e.g., victim services) are dependent upon the victims seeking help. Given that the results of this research indicate that normative standards discourage reporting except for violent stranger assaults, it is understandable that communities may not have as their common goal to reduce a problem that they do not know exists. Thus, in rural areas, where acquaintance density increases the odds that offenders are acquaintances and where normative standards against reporting are especially strong, it is not surprising that collective efficacy has little effect on victims’ decision to contact the police. Rural residents may not realize just how prevalent a problem sexual assault is in their community. Recall that the proxies for collective efficacy, namely gender equality and victim services, did not increase reporting among rural residents. However, in both instances the levels of efficacy found in rural counties were about half those found in urban counties (2.77 versus 1.47 for gender equality and .08 versus .04 for victim services), despite the fact that rural counties had significantly higher rates of sexual assaults (per 100,000 female population: 15.49 in urban counties versus 33.90 in rural counties). Thus, it may be that false assumptions regarding the prevalence of rape and sexual assault in rural areas resulted in little collective effort to increase rape reporting.
The fact that both gender equality and victim services had similar effects on victims’ decision to contact the police and on UCR rape rates also suggests that gender equality may be a better representation of collective efficacy than of gender oppression. Gender equality, which is frequently operationalized using women’s education, women’s income or poverty, and the type of positions held by women (i.e., managerial), is often used by feminists to represent contentions that men maintain their dominant position in society by raping women (Brownmiller, 1975; Radford & Stanko, 1996). Conceived in this fashion, gender equality becomes a normative standard of behavior for men in this culture. Yet, the influence that gender equality has on rape rates may be more practical or structural (efficacy at influencing the criminal justice system - Jensen & Karpos, 1993) than philosophical or normative (means of keeping women oppressed).

Conceptualizing gender equality as a form of collective efficacy provides a more plausible and less tautological explanation for the effects of gender equality on rape rates. One problem with feminists’ theories concerning the effects of gender equality on rape is that they predict both a positive and a negative association between gender equality and rape rates. For instance, if gender equality is low and rape rates are high, the contention is that men use rape to keep women subservient (Brownmiller, 1975). Conversely, if gender equality is high and rape rates are high, the contention is that men are raping women in retaliation against women’s newfound equality (Russell, 1989). However, it may simply be that as women achieve greater equality, they are better able to mobilize their collective efforts toward women’s issues, including rape. That is, as women play a greater role in the criminal justice system (e.g., as police officers, lawyers, and judges), they may be more able to influence the criminal justice system’s response to rape.
In sum, consistent with a social ecology framework, both micro-level and macro-level theories helped to explain victims’ decision to contact the police. The role of informal control was manifest through normative standards at the individual-level and the influence of formal control was manifest through collective efficacy at the aggregate-level. Further, these effects varied by county type, demonstrating the importance of considering context in theoretical development. In addition to context, results concerning the effects of gender equality also demonstrate the importance of properly operationalizing theoretical constructs of interest. In short, to explain criminal behavior more fully, theories of crime must incorporate elements from the individual as well as the broader ecological or social context within which the behavior occurs.

Methodological Implications

Methodologically, the research design had both strengths and weaknesses that have implications for future investigations of victims’ decision to report crime. With regard to its strengths, this project used different methods, different sources of data, and different analytical techniques to determine the factors that affect victims’ decision to contact the police. Methodologists recommend this strategy because it allows for greater confidence in the results (Cook, 1984; Cook and Campbell, 1979; Mark & Shotland, 1987). First, by using different methods there is a reduced likelihood of method bias. For instance, results from these two studies were inconsistent with regard to the moderating effects of county type on victim-offender relationship. These divergent findings suggest that individuals may not act as they say they will, consistent with prior research on decision making (Konečni & Ebbeson, 1982). Thus, research concerned with victims’ behavior should endeavor to question actual victims about their actions. Conclusions drawn based on the results would have been incorrect had only the
experimental study been completed. Second, using different data sources reduces the likelihood of sample bias. This point is especially important when examining a crime like sexual assault, which is rarely reported. Many studies use only official data, but in doing so, results are biased toward officially processed cases. Further, results from this and other studies (Ruback & Ménard, 2001) suggest that data sets differ in important ways, especially for rape reporting. Third, using different analytical techniques reduces the likelihood of statistical bias. For instance, if the study had been limited to the bivariate analyses, the important moderating effects of county type, observed in the multivariate and multilevel analyses, would have been missed.

Another strength of this research is that it used multilevel analysis to examine the combined influence of individual and county factors on reporting. That both levels of aggregation predict individual behavior suggests that this is an important analytical strategy. For instance, many elaborations of social disorganization and control theories include a micro- and a macro-level component, suggesting multilevel analyses would be most appropriate. However, some studies do not include both levels of aggregation and, as evident in this study, failure to include both components of victims’ decision making leaves out an important part of the decision making process.

A final strength of the research design came from using county as the aggregate unit of analysis. Many aggregate-level analyses of crime have used census tract, neighborhood, SMSA, or state as the unit of analyses. However, these levels of aggregation may not be appropriate for the analysis of some crimes. Smaller units may be too homogeneous and larger units may be too heterogeneous to permit the examination of moderating processes such as those found here with county type. Further, since policy and funding decisions are made at the
county-level, it is logical to examine their effects on the reporting of crime. Finally, since county type conditioned the influence of several factors on victims’ decision making in this study, future research should examine rural/urban differences in other areas of crime, especially interpersonal crimes.

With regard to weaknesses, both studies were cross-sectional, making causal inferences about reporting behavior impossible. A prospective research design would provide a greater understanding of how selected factors affect victims’ reporting behavior. However, given the nature of sexual assault, such a design is problematic. A second weakness concerns the fact that the samples used came from only one state. Because Pennsylvania has a large population of both rural and urban residents and it is close to the eastern seaboard where much of the American population resides, views of participants are likely fairly representative of many people living in America. With regard to rape issues more specifically, Pennsylvania is also a good state to study because it enacted fairly strong legislative reforms to its rape laws in 1976. However, these results may not be generalizable to other states with different cultural or ethnic compositions (i.e., Southern or Western states). Future research should try to include a broader sample with additional state or national data. Third, given the insights achieved by testing comparable factors across both studies, it would have been better to manipulate more of the same factors in both studies.

Policy Implications

Three findings from this research have implications for rape prevention education and criminal justice policies. First, normative definitions of rape are inconsistent with the legal definitions of this crime. Second, county type affects the prevalence and reporting of rape and
sexual assault. Finally, contextual factors designed to increase reporting do not work in rural counties.

*Normative definitions.* Results from the first and second study indicate that social norms encourage victims to contact the police for serious crimes committed by strangers. Thus, as noted earlier, although victim advocates were largely successful in reforming rape laws, these legal changes have had little impact on the social norms used to define this crime (Bryden & Lengnick, 1997; Jordan, 2001; Tang, 1998; Temkin, 1987, 1997). That rape stereotypes remain despite legal changes suggests that efforts to increase rape victims’ reporting should focus on informal rather than formal responses to this crime. Specifically, rather than simply using legal reforms to affect rape labeling and reporting, the inclusion of a public education component may be more productive, especially in rural counties where increased victim services decreased reporting. Because most victims consult with others to determine what course of action they should take, interventions should inform victims and their consultants that legal changes dictate that assaults by known perpetrators are rapes worthy of police contact. In other words, perhaps the stereotype could be changed if the social environment, especially potential advisors to victims, were made aware of the prevalence of acquaintance rape and of the cost of rape both to the victim and to society (Hamilton & Sherman, 1994; White, Hogg, & Terry, 2002; Wittenbrink & Henly, 1996). Failure to change public perceptions that acquaintance rapes are real rapes means that victims will not be taken seriously by the public or members of the criminal justice system, that they will not receive adequate support (either formal from public agencies or informal from family and friends), and that they will be at increased risk of revictimization. Equally important, victims’ failure to report means that offenders will not be prosecuted and so will not be prevented (through incarceration) or deterred (through their own
or others’ punishment) from future offending. In short, failure to treat acquaintance rape as a crime will result in the continued normalization of this behavior within our society.

**Type of county.** Another important finding from this research is that county type matters. Study 2 found the rate of sexual assault was significantly higher in rural areas. However, it is generally believed that urban areas are more criminogenic than rural areas (Wolfgang, 1968), since, with greater anonymity comes a reduction in community members’ ability to regulate behavior through informal means. This reduction of informal social control means that police become the primary sanctioning agents, thereby increasing crime rates. In rural areas, individuals are more likely to be part of a close-knit community, reducing anonymity, and increasing the community’s ability to informally regulate behavior. Instead of the police, community members are the primary agents of social control, thereby reducing official crime rates (Wilkins, 1965). Thus, official crime rates are lower because police are not made aware of the crime. Although this model works well in explaining official crime rates for some crimes, it appears not to work as well in explaining actual crime rates, especially for sex crimes.

Moreover, rural victims’ failure to report sexual assault to the police not only obscures actual sexual assault rates, but also reduces the services available to victims in these areas. Recall that despite the fact that rural counties had significantly higher rates of sexual assault, their mean level of victim services was only about half that found in urban counties. This pattern suggests that policy makers should not rely on the number of sexual assaults obtained exclusively from arrest data (UCR) when determining the level of funding and services provided to rape victims. An over-reliance on the number of rapes according to official crime data has meant that funding allocations have discriminated against rural victims. Further, the
effects of this under-funding are exacerbated by the fact that providing services to rural as compared to urban victims is more costly because of greater physical isolation, coupled with a lack of public transportation, fewer public telephones, and fewer hospitals or other victim services (Lewis, 2003). Thus, to improve victim services in rural areas, funding allocations should be commensurate with the rate of sexual assaults according to both official and crisis center data.

_Urban solutions ill-suited to rural sexual assault._ In addition to underestimating the rates of sexual assault in rural areas, over-reliance on official crime data has likely distorted our understanding of crime more generally. Much of our knowledge of the causes and correlates of crime is based on research using official crime data for public crimes in urban areas. The tendency has been to study crime in urban areas and then to assume that criminal behavior is the same, albeit less prevalent, in rural areas. Yet, the unique characteristics of rural areas make this assumption tenuous at best. In the second study, collective responses to rape and sexual assault, including victim services and gender equality, were related to urban but not rural victims’ reporting. Results from this study suggest that programs intended to deal with victimization use urban areas as the “model” and assume that they will work in rural areas. However, because rural areas show a greater propensity to use informal social control to deal with sexual assault, efforts to increase reporting through greater gender equality or increased victim services do not work. If increased gender equality and victim services do not increase reporting in rural areas, policy makers should provide funding so that future research can determine what factors are effective in order to ensure rural victims get needed services.

In sum, both social norms and collective efficacy influence victims’ decision to contact the police, implying that intervention programs designed to increase rape reporting should be
conducted at both individual and county levels of aggregation. At the individual level, education programs designed to inform the general public that acquaintance rape is real rape should be implemented. The fact that UCR and crisis center data resulted in different models of reporting suggests that victims who report to these two agencies are using different definitions of rape and sexual assault. Further, the key factor that appears to determine whether a victim goes to a crisis center or to police is her relationship with the offender. That is, UCR data appears to overrepresent stranger rapes, whereas crisis center data appears to overrepresent acquaintance rape. That victims filter themselves out of the criminal justice system based on their relationship to the offender may help to increase the efficiency of the system through conviction rates. However, it also likely means that crisis center victims are being denied funding and resources provided to those who utilize the criminal justice system. Further, that victims use different or lower standards to justify crisis center versus criminal justice intervention suggests that victims’ labeling an event a rape or a sexual assault is different from their determination that the event is a crime worthy of police intervention. Only through educational campaigns that teach women that acquaintance rape is real rape will these apparently different definitions of rape come in line with one another.

At the county level, programs designed to increase gender equality and victim services should also be implemented. Although the level of victim services was negatively related to rape reporting in rural counties, this pattern of victim response was likely due to rural victims using alternative services (e.g., crisis centers) instead of the police. The fact that rural victims were more likely to use alternative services in lieu of reporting speaks to the very need for these services. That is, although increasing victim services and gender equality may not immediately increase reporting to the police in rural areas, it nonetheless improves conditions for victims and
women more generally. In time, these improved conditions may result in rural victims reporting at a rate similar to their urban counterparts.

Finally, research should be conducted to determine what county-level factors might help to increase victim reporting in rural areas. Changing the normative standards for rape so that people believe it includes attacks committed by acquaintances may increase rape and sexual assault reporting, but other efforts toward this end should not be ignored, and research should be at the forefront of this endeavor. Given that rape and sexual assault are the least reported of all crimes, all avenues to increase reporting in both rural and urban areas should be explored.

Future Research

Prevalence of sexual assault in rural areas. One of the most noteworthy findings of this study is that consistent with some other studies, sexual assault rates are higher in rural rather than urban counties (Ménard & Ruback, 2003; Ruback & Ménard, 2001; Smith & Huff, 1982). To test the generalizability of this finding, future research should use several states that are geographically, demographically, and culturally different from Pennsylvania and Ohio where prior studies were conducted. Moreover, these other states should contain significant rural/urban variation to be meaningful and with a sufficient number of counties to allow for multivariate analyses.

California would be a good state to begin this examination. First, the rape crisis center network in the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA), has been operating since 1980. In addition, CALCASA, having recently established the Rape Prevention Resource Center, is also committed to research. Second, California has tremendous geographic, demographic and cultural variation, all of which contribute to the diversity of the state’s population. Geographically, California comprises shoreline, desert, and mountainous regions,
which contribute to the population distribution of the state. Shoreline counties, such as Los Angeles and San Francisco, are densely populated, whereas counties in the mountainous and some desert regions are sparsely populated (e.g., Alpine County with a 2000 Census population of 1,208), providing sufficient rural/urban variation for county-level analyses. California is also unique in its demographic makeup. Unlike Pennsylvania’s population, which is primarily Caucasian (85.4%), 32% of California’s population is Hispanic or Latino, 11% is Asian, 7% is African American, and 59% is Caucasian (sum of percentages is greater than 100 because some Hispanics are also classified as Caucasians). More broadly, California, located in the western region of the country, is likely different from Pennsylvania, which is located in the northeastern portion of the country. Finally, with 58 counties, the sample size would be large enough to allow for several variables to be examined using a variety of statistical techniques. If the current findings were replicated in a state as different as California, we would be more confident that unique characteristics of rural areas increase the risk of sexual assault, while simultaneously reducing reporting. Because rural counties compose nearly 75% of all counties in the United States, such a finding would have ramifications for victims throughout the country (Nord, 1997).

Race and Ethnicity. In addition to increasing the generalizability of the current study’s findings, a replication conducted in California would also allow for the examination of race and ethnicity. Specifically, the diverse population in California, which is distributed across both urban and rural counties would allow researchers to examine the effects of ethnic composition on victims’ decision to report to police. The effect of victims’ ethnicity on reporting is important because many of the same characteristics used to describe individuals from rural areas (i.e., isolated, tendency to keep personal problems private) also characterize individuals
from different ethnic groups. For instance, although perhaps not physically isolated, many ethnic minorities feel isolated from mainstream society because of language or other cultural barriers.

Similarly, many race and ethnic groups hold more collectivist than individualist values (i.e., they put the needs of the community above that of the individual), and this cultural factor may discourage reporting sexual assaults to the police. That is, because collectivist societies frequently promote (a) the group’s goals over that of the individual, (b) harmony over interpersonal conflict and violence, and (c) shame as a deterrent against crime (Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988), they may be less likely to report sexual assault victimization. Support for this contention can be found in the work of Greenberg and Ruback (1992), which found cross-national differences in the severity and judged appropriateness of contacting the police.

Even in this country, victimization and arrest data suggest that there are ethnic differences in rape reporting. That is, the few studies that have examined the effects of race on reporting, have found that women of color are less likely to report sexual assault than are their white counterparts (Feldman-Summers & Ashworth, 1981; Wyatt, 1992). Because many minority groups including Asians, Hispanics, and African Americans place the needs of family and of the community above those of the individual, they may have normative standards against reporting rape and sexual assault, as doing so could bring shame to their familial, ethnic, or cultural group. Thus, although social and economic stratification are generally associated with higher crime rates (Blau & Blau, 1982), the high stigma associated with rape coupled with collectivist norms against reporting may result in lower reporting rates of this particular crime among ethnic minorities in the United States.
It is important to determine whether race and ethnic groups differ in their reporting rates, because results from the current study indicate that funding for victim services is allotted based on the number of arrests rather than the rate of victimization. If racial and ethnic minorities are less likely to report than their Euro-American counterparts, efforts should be made to increase reporting among these groups in order to better serve victims of all racial and ethnic origins.

**Gender.** This project presented some interesting findings with regard to gender in the first study, but it was not able to examine gender differences in actual victims’ reporting decisions. Although women are much more likely than men to be the victims of rape and sexual assault, gender differences in child sexual abuse rates are much smaller (Finkelhor, 1994). Further, at least some portion of the gender difference in victimization rate can be accounted for by the fact that males, of all ages, are less likely to disclose their experience to anyone, including the police (Fritz, Stoll, & Wagner, 1981; Kaukinen, 2002; Kimerling, Rellini, Kelly, Judson, & Learnam, 2002; Nasjleti, 1980; Pino & Meier, 1999). Part of males’ reluctance to report may be due to the fact that like women, males of all ages are more likely to be assaulted by men (Finkelhor, 1981; Groth & Burgess, 1980; Mezey & King, 1998). Thus, males may be reticent to report a sexual assault victimization because it is likely to raises issues regarding their sexuality. Further, sex role socialization dictates that men be more self-reliant than women (Pleck, 1995; Walklate, 1997).

Combined, these facts suggest that male rape victims may be even less likely to report their victimization to the police because of normative standards against reporting. Indeed, one study of rape victims seen at a county hospital found that male victims did not want to admit they had been raped. Further, as compared to women, men were more likely to be assaulted by multiple offenders, to sustain greater physical injury, and to be held captive longer (Kaufman,
Divasto, Jackson, Voorhees, & Christy, 1980). Although these findings might suggest that male rape victims suffer greater physical trauma, a more likely explanation given the men’s reluctance to admit that they had been raped was that only those men who suffered the most severe assaults sought medical attention.

Despite knowing that male victims are less likely to report, few studies have examined what factors affect men’s and boys’ reporting decisions (but cf. Kaukinen, 2002; Pino & Meier, 1999). In one of the few studies that have examined gender differences in rape reporting, Pino and Meier (1999) found that women’s reporting decision was influenced by several factors, including victim-offender relationship and weapon use, but men’s reporting decision was influenced only by the degree of bodily harm (injury and need for medical attention). Although intriguing, these results come from only one study examining only 81 male victims of sexual assault. Further, it examined only gender and not sexual orientation. This omission is important because one hospital study that examined gender differences in rape victim and crime characteristics found that male victims were more likely to identify as gay or bisexual (Kimerling et al., 2002). Because it is assumed that male rape is an emasculating experience that calls one’s sexual orientation into question (Alder, 1992), it would be important to determine whether the same factors predict heterosexual and homosexual men’s reporting behavior. To complete such a study, it would be necessary to collect data in a large metropolitan area, ideally one with a large population of homosexual males (e.g., San Francisco).

A greater understanding of the factors that affect male victims’ decision to report to police must be achieved in order to provide these victims with resources commensurate with their experience. To date, much of the accommodations made by the criminal justice system to
help victims cope with sexual assault have been made with female victims in mind (e.g., Sexual Assault Nurse Exams). Thus, male victims are the quintessential underserved population where rape and sexual assault are concerned, and research must be undertaken to rectify this situation.

**Summary**

The purpose of this research was to provide a more complete understanding of the factors that affect victims’ decisions to contact the police. The need for a greater understanding of victims’ decision making is especially relevant for sexual assaults, because it is among the least reported of all crimes. As demonstrated in this research, individual and county factors affect victims’ decision to report to police. Further, the research provides direction for other areas of inquiry regarding victims’ decision making process.
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Appendix A

On the scantron starting in the left-hand column, use the space for section number to indicate your current AGE.

On the scantron starting in the left-hand column, use the space for book number to indicate your SEX ⇒ male = 0 female = 1.

On the scantron starting in the left-hand column, use the space for score to indicate the numeric value for your COUNTY OF PERMANENT RESIDENCE (that is, where you went to high school). If you are from Pennsylvania, using the list below find your county of permanent residence and fill in the corresponding number (e.g., if you are from Adams county bubble in 01). If you are not from Pennsylvania, please fill in the name of the county and state you are from on the instructor and date lines of the scantron.

Please do not write on the questionnaire. Return it with your completed scantron.

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Complete the remaining information on the scantron beginning with the number 1.

(A) A person, using force, robs a victim of $10. No physical harm occurs.

1. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

2. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all

(B) A person intentionally shoots a victim with a gun. The victim requires hospitalization.

3. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

4. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all

(C) A person trespasses in the backyard of a private home.

5. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all

6. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all

(D) A man runs his hands over the body of a female victim, then runs away.

7. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all

8. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all

(E) A person robs a victim. The victim is injured but not hospitalized.

9. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all

10. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
    A B C D E F G H I
        Not at all

(F) A person snatches a handbag containing $10 from a victim on the street.

11. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
    A B C D E F G H I
        Not at all

12. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
    A B C D E F G H I
        Not at all
(G) A person beats a victim with his fists. The victim is hurt but does not require medical treatment.

13. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all   Definitely

14. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all   Definitely

(H) A person attempts to kill a victim with a gun. The gun misfires and the victim escapes unharmed.

15. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all   Definitely

16. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all   Definitely

(I) A person, armed with a lead pipe, robs a victim of $1,000. The victim is hurt and requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

17. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all   Definitely

18. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all   Definitely

(J) A person stabs a victim with a knife. No medical treatment is required.

19. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all   Definitely

20. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all   Definitely

(K) A person intentionally hits a victim with a lead pipe. The victim requires hospitalization.

21. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all   Definitely

22. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all   Definitely

(L) A man forcibly rapes a woman. No other physical injury occurs.

23. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all   Definitely

24. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all   Definitely
(M) A person, using force, robs a victim of $1,000. No physical harm occurs.

25. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

26. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(N) A person robs a victim of $1,000 at gunpoint. The victim is injured and requires hospitalization.

27. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

28. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(O) A person robs a victim of $10 at gunpoint. The victim is wounded and requires treatment by a doctor, but not hospitalization.

29. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

30. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(P) A man forcibly rapes a woman. Her physical injuries require treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

31. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

32. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(Q) Ten high school boys beat a male with their fists. He requires hospitalization.

33. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

34. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(R) A person does not have a weapon. He threatens to harm a victim unless the victim gives him money. The victim gives him $10 and is not harmed.

35. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

36. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely
(S) A person intentionally shoots a victim with a gun. The victim requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

37. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all
   Definitely

38. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all
   Definitely

(T) A person intentionally hits a victim with a lead pipe. The victim requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

39. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all
   Definitely

40. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all
   Definitely

(U) A man drags a woman into an alley, tears her clothes, but flees before she is physically harmed or sexually attacked.

41. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all
   Definitely

42. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all
   Definitely

(V) A person intentionally shoves or pushes a victim. No medical treatment is required.

43. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all
   Definitely

44. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all
   Definitely

(W) A high school boy beats an elderly woman with his fists. She requires hospitalization.

45. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all
   Definitely

46. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all
   Definitely

(X) A person beats a victim with his fists. The victim requires hospitalization.

47. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all
   Definitely

48. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
   Not at all
   Definitely
(Y) A person threatens to seriously injure a victim.

49. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all    Definitely

50. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all    Definitely

(Z) A man forcibly rapes a woman. Her physical injuries require hospitalization.

51. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all    Definitely

52. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all    Definitely

(AA) A high school boy beats a middle-aged woman with his fists. She requires hospitalization.

53. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all    Definitely

54. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all    Definitely

(BB) A person breaks into a home and steals $1,000.

55. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all    Definitely

56. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all    Definitely

(CC) A person, armed with a lead pipe, robs a victim of $10. No physical harm occurs.

57. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all    Definitely

58. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all    Definitely

(DD) A person beats a victim with his fists. The victim requires treatment by a doctor, but not hospitalization.

59. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all    Definitely

60. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all    Definitely
On the scantron starting in the left-hand column, use the space for **section number** to indicate your current **AGE**.

On the scantron starting in the left-hand column, use the space for **book number** to indicate your **SEX** ⇒ male = 0 female = 1.

On the scantron starting in the left-hand column, use the space for **score** to indicate the numeric value for your **COUNTY OF PERMANENT RESIDENCE** (that is, where you went to high school). **If you are from Pennsylvania**, using the list below find your county of permanent residence and fill in the corresponding **number** (e.g., if you are from Adams county bubble in 01). **If you are not from Pennsylvania**, please fill in the name of the **county and state** you are from on the **instructor and date** lines of the scantron.

Please **do not write** on the questionnaire. Return it with your completed scantron.

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Complete the remaining information on the scantron beginning with the number 1.

(A) A person, using force, robs an acquaintance of $10. No physical harm occurs.

1. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

2. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(B) A person intentionally shoots an acquaintance with a gun. The victim requires hospitalization.

3. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

4. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(C) A person trespasses in the backyard of an acquaintance’s home.

5. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

6. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(D) A man runs his hands over the body of a female acquaintance, then runs away.

7. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

8. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(E) A person robs an acquaintance. The victim is injured but not hospitalized.

9. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

10. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
    A B C D E F G H I
    Not at all Definitely

(F) A person snatches a handbag containing $10 from an acquaintance on the street.

11. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
    A B C D E F G H I
    Not at all Definitely

12. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
    A B C D E F G H I
    Not at all Definitely
(G) A person beats an acquaintance with his fists. The victim is hurt but does not require medical treatment.

13. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

14. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(H) A person attempts to kill an acquaintance with a gun. The gun misfires and the victim escapes unharmed.

15. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

16. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(I) A person, armed with a lead pipe, robs an acquaintance of $1,000. The victim is hurt and requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

17. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

18. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(J) A person stabs an acquaintance with a knife. No medical treatment is required.

19. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

20. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(K) A person intentionally hits an acquaintance with a lead pipe. The victim requires hospitalization.

21. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

22. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(L) A man forcibly rapes a female acquaintance. No other physical injury occurs.

23. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

24. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely
(M) A person, using force, robs an acquaintance of $1,000. No physical harm occurs.

25. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

26. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

(N) A person robs an acquaintance of $1,000 at gunpoint. The victim is injured and requires hospitalization.

27. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

28. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

(O) A person robs an acquaintance of $10 at gunpoint. The victim is wounded and requires treatment by a doctor, but not hospitalization.

29. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

30. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

(P) A man forcibly rapes a female acquaintance. Her physical injuries require treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

31. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

32. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

(Q) Ten high school boys beat a male classmate with their fists. He requires hospitalization.

33. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

34. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

(R) A person does not have a weapon. He threatens to harm an acquaintance unless the acquaintance gives him money. The victim gives him $10 and is not harmed.

35. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

36. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all
(S) A person intentionally shoots an acquaintance with a gun. The victim requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

37. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all Definitely

38. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all Definitely

(T) A person intentionally hits an acquaintance with a lead pipe. The victim requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

39. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all Definitely

40. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all Definitely

(U) A man drags a female acquaintance into an alley, tears her clothes, but flees before she is physically harmed or sexually attacked.

41. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all Definitely

42. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all Definitely

(V) A person intentionally shoves or pushes an acquaintance. No medical treatment is required.

43. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all Definitely

44. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all Definitely

(W) A high school boy beats an elderly female acquaintance with his fists. She requires hospitalization.

45. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all Definitely

46. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all Definitely

(X) A person beats an acquaintance with his fists. The victim requires hospitalization.

47. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all Definitely

48. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   I
Not at all Definitely
(Y) A person threatens to seriously injure an acquaintance.

49. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all

50. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all

(Z) A man forcibly rapes a female acquaintance. Her physical injuries require hospitalization.

51. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all

52. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all

(AA) A high school boy beats a middle-aged female acquaintance with his fists. She requires hospitalization.

53. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all

54. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all

(BB) A person breaks into the home of an acquaintance and steals $1,000.

55. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all

56. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all

(CC) A person, armed with a lead pipe, robs an acquaintance of $10. No physical harm occurs.

57. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all

58. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all

(DD) A person beats an acquaintance with his fists. The victim requires treatment by a doctor, but not hospitalization.

59. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all

60. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all
On the scantron starting in the left-hand column, use the space for **section number** to indicate your current **AGE**

On the scantron starting in the left-hand column, use the space for **book number** to indicate your **SEX**: male = 0  female = 1

On the scantron starting in the left-hand column, use the space for **score** to indicate the numeric value for your **COUNTY OF PERMANENT RESIDENCE** (that is, where you went to high school). **If you are from Pennsylvania**, using the list below find your county of permanent residence and fill in the corresponding **number** (e.g., if you are from Adams county bubble in 01). **If you are not from Pennsylvania**, please fill in the name of the **county and state** you are from on the **instructor and date** lines of the scantron.

Please do not write on the questionnaire. Return it with your completed scantron.

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Complete the remaining information on the scantron beginning with the number 1.

(A) A person, using force, robs an acquaintance of $10. No physical harm occurs.
   1. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
      A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
      Not at all Definitely

   2. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
      A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
      Not at all Definitely

(B) A person intentionally shoots an acquaintance with a gun. The victim requires hospitalization.

   3. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
      A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
      Not at all Definitely

   4. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
      A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
      Not at all Definitely

(C) A person trespasses in the backyard of an acquaintance’s home.

   5. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
      A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
      Not at all Definitely

   6. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
      A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
      Not at all Definitely

(D) A man runs his hands over the body of a female acquaintance, then runs away.

   7. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
      A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
      Not at all Definitely

   8. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
      A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
      Not at all Definitely

(E) A person robs an acquaintance. The victim is injured but not hospitalized.

   9. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
      A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
      Not at all Definitely

  10. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
      A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
      Not at all Definitely

(F) A person snatches a handbag containing $10 from an acquaintance on the street.

   11. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
      A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
      Not at all Definitely

   12. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
      A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
      Not at all Definitely
(G) A person beats an acquaintance with his fists. The victim is hurt but does not require medical treatment.

13. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A Not at all
B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
Definitely

14. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A Not at all
B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
Definitely

(H) A person attempts to kill an acquaintance with a gun. The gun misfires and the victim escapes unharmed.

15. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A Not at all
B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
Definitely

16. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A Not at all
B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
Definitely

(I) A person, armed with a lead pipe, robs an acquaintance of $1,000. The victim is hurt and requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

17. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A Not at all
B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
Definitely

18. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A Not at all
B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
Definitely

(J) A person stabs an acquaintance with a knife. No medical treatment is required.

19. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A Not at all
B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
Definitely

20. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A Not at all
B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
Definitely

(K) A person intentionally hits an acquaintance with a lead pipe. The victim requires hospitalization.

21. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A Not at all
B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
Definitely

22. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A Not at all
B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
Definitely

(L) A man forcibly rapes a female acquaintance. No other physical injury occurs.

23. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A Not at all
B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
Definitely

24. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A Not at all
B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
Definitely
(M) A person, using force, robs an acquaintance of $1,000. No physical harm occurs.

25. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

26. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(N) A person robs an acquaintance of $1,000 at gunpoint. The victim is injured and requires hospitalization.

27. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

28. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(O) A person robs an acquaintance of $10 at gunpoint. The victim is wounded and requires treatment by a doctor, but not hospitalization.

29. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

30. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(P) A man forcibly rapes a female acquaintance. Her physical injuries require treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

31. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

32. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(Q) Ten high school boys beat a male classmate with their fists. He requires hospitalization.

33. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

34. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(R) A person does not have a weapon. He threatens to harm an acquaintance unless the acquaintance gives him money. The victim gives him $10 and is not harmed.

35. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

36. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely
(S) A person intentionally shoots an acquaintance with a gun. The victim requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

37. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

38. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

(T) A person intentionally hits an acquaintance with a lead pipe. The victim requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

39. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

40. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

(U) A man drags a female acquaintance into an alley, tears her clothes, but flees before she is physically harmed or sexually attacked.

41. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

42. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

(V) A person intentionally shoves or pushes an acquaintance. No medical treatment is required.

43. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

44. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

(W) A high school boy beats an elderly female acquaintance with his fists. She requires hospitalization.

45. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

46. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

(X) A person beats an acquaintance with his fists. The victim requires hospitalization.

47. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all

48. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I
   Not at all
(Y) A person threatens to seriously injure an acquaintance.

49. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

50. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(Z) A man forcibly rapes a female acquaintance. Her physical injuries require hospitalization.

51. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

52. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(AA) A high school boy beats a middle-aged female acquaintance with his fists. She requires hospitalization.

53. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

54. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(BB) A person breaks into the home of an acquaintance and steals $1,000.

55. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

56. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(CC) A person, armed with a lead pipe, robs an acquaintance of $10. No physical harm occurs.

57. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

58. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

(DD) A person beats an acquaintance with his fists. The victim requires treatment by a doctor, but not hospitalization.

59. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely

60. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all Definitely
On the scantron starting in the left-hand column, use the space for **section number** to indicate your current **AGE**

On the scantron starting in the left-hand column, use the space for **book number** to indicate your **SEX** $\Rightarrow$ male = 0  female = 1

On the scantron starting in the left-hand column, use the space for **score** to indicate the numeric value for your **COUNTY OF PERMANENT RESIDENCE** (that is, where you went to high school). **If you are from Pennsylvania**, using the list below find your county of permanent residence and fill in the corresponding **number** (e.g., if you are from Adams county bubble in 01). **If you are not from Pennsylvania**, please fill in the name of the **county and state** you are from on the **instructor and date** lines of the scantron.

Please do not write on the questionnaire. Return it with your completed scantron.

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<th>County</th>
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</table>
Complete the remaining information on the scantron beginning with the number 1.

(A) Immediately following provocation, a person, using force, robs an acquaintance of $10. No physical harm occurs.

1. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

2. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(B) Immediately following provocation, a person intentionally shoots an acquaintance with a gun. The victim requires hospitalization.

3. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

4. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(C) Immediately following provocation, a person trespasses in the backyard of an acquaintance’s home.

5. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

6. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(D) Immediately following provocation, a man runs his hands over the body of a female acquaintance, then runs away.

7. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

8. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(E) Immediately following provocation, a person robs an acquaintance. The victim is injured but not hospitalized.

9. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

10. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
    A B C D E F G H I
        Not at all Definitely

(F) Immediately following provocation, a person snatches a handbag containing $10 from an acquaintance on the street.

11. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
    A B C D E F G H I
        Not at all Definitely

12. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
    A B C D E F G H I
        Not at all Definitely
Immediately following provocation, a person beats an acquaintance with his fists. The victim is hurt but does not require medical treatment.

13. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  
   Not at all Definitely

14. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  
   Not at all Definitely

Immediately following provocation, a person attempts to kill an acquaintance with a gun. The gun misfires and the victim escapes unharmed.

15. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  
   Not at all Definitely

16. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  
   Not at all Definitely

Immediately following provocation, a person, armed with a lead pipe, robs an acquaintance of $1,000. The victim is hurt and requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

17. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  
   Not at all Definitely

18. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  
   Not at all Definitely

Immediately following provocation, a person stabs an acquaintance with a knife. No medical treatment is required.

19. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  
   Not at all Definitely

20. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  
   Not at all Definitely

Immediately following provocation, a person intentionally hits an acquaintance with a lead pipe. The victim requires hospitalization.

21. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  
   Not at all Definitely

22. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  
   Not at all Definitely

Immediately following provocation, a man forcibly rapes a female acquaintance. No other physical injury occurs.

23. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  
   Not at all Definitely
24. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all
B Definitely

(M) Immediately following provocation, a person, using force, robs an acquaintance of $1,000. No physical harm occurs.

25. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all
B Definitely

26. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all
B Definitely

(N) Immediately following provocation, a person robs an acquaintance of $1,000 at gunpoint. The victim is injured and requires hospitalization.

27. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all
B Definitely

28. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all
B Definitely

(O) Immediately following provocation, a person robs an acquaintance of $10 at gunpoint. The victim is wounded and requires treatment by a doctor, but not hospitalization.

29. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all
B Definitely

30. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all
B Definitely

(P) Immediately following provocation, a man forcibly rapes a female acquaintance. Her physical injuries require treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

31. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all
B Definitely

32. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all
B Definitely

(Q) Immediately following provocation, ten high school boys beat a male classmate with their fists. He requires hospitalization.

33. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all
B Definitely

34. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A B C D E F G H I
Not at all
B Definitely
(R) A person does not have a weapon. Immediately following provocation, he threatens to harm an acquaintance unless the acquaintance gives him money. The victim gives him $10 and is not harmed.

35. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A Not at all  B C D E F G H I

36. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A Not at all  B C D E F G H I

(S) Immediately following provocation, a person intentionally shoots an acquaintance with a gun. The victim requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

37. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A Not at all  B C D E F G H I

38. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A Not at all  B C D E F G H I

(T) Immediately following provocation, a person intentionally hits an acquaintance with a lead pipe. The victim requires treatment by a doctor but not hospitalization.

39. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A Not at all  B C D E F G H I

40. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A Not at all  B C D E F G H I

(U) Immediately following provocation, a man drags a female acquaintance into an alley, tears her clothes, but flees before she is physically harmed or sexually attacked.

41. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A Not at all  B C D E F G H I

42. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
A Not at all  B C D E F G H I

(V) Immediately following provocation, a person intentionally shoves or pushes an acquaintance. No medical treatment is required.

43. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
A Not at all  B C D E F G H I

44. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
(W) Immediately following provocation, a high school boy beats an elderly female acquaintance with his fists. She requires hospitalization.

45. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A Not at all B C D E F G H I
   Definitely

46. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A Not at all B C D E F G H I
   Definitely

(X) Immediately following provocation, a person beats an acquaintance with his fists. The victim requires hospitalization.

47. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A Not at all B C D E F G H I
   Definitely

48. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A Not at all B C D E F G H I
   Definitely

(Y) Immediately following provocation, a person threatens to seriously injure an acquaintance.

49. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A Not at all B C D E F G H I
   Definitely

50. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A Not at all B C D E F G H I
   Definitely

(Z) Immediately following provocation, a man forcibly rapes a female acquaintance. Her physical injuries require hospitalization.

51. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A Not at all B C D E F G H I
   Definitely

52. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A Not at all B C D E F G H I
   Definitely

(AA) Immediately following provocation, a high school boy beats a middle-aged female acquaintance with his fists. She requires hospitalization.

53. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A Not at all B C D E F G H I
   Definitely

54. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
(BB) Immediately following provocation, a person breaks into the home of an acquaintance and steals $1,000.

55. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

56. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(CC) Immediately following provocation, a person, armed with a lead pipe, robs an acquaintance of $10. No physical harm occurs.

57. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

58. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

(DD) Immediately following provocation, a person beats an acquaintance with his fists. The victim requires treatment by a doctor, but not hospitalization.

59. To what extent would you recommend the victim consider this a crime?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely

60. To what extent would you recommend the victim contact the police?
   A B C D E F G H I
   Not at all Definitely
Appendix B

Please see next page.
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape – Sexual Assault – Client Form

| Counselor name: ___________________________ | Referrals: one box must be checked under From. Only check To if you refer the client elsewhere. |
| Client identifier: __________________________ | From | To |
| County: ___________________________ | [ ] Criminal justice system | [ ] |
| Initial contact date: _________________ | [ ] Human Service Agency | [ ] |
| Date of the assault: _________________ | [ ] Medical System | [ ] |
| Time since the assault | [ ] Family or relatives | [ ] |
| [ ] under 1 hour | [ ] Friends or co-workers | [ ] |
| [ ] 1 to 3 hours | [ ] Self referral | [ ] |
| [ ] 3 to 6 hours | [ ] Clergy | [ ] |
| [ ] 6 to 12 hours | [ ] School Personnel | [ ] |
| [ ] 12 to 24 hours | [ ] Drug and Alcohol Treatment | [ ] |
| [ ] 1 to 7 days | [ ] Children & Youth Services | [ ] |
| [ ] 8 days to 1 month | [ ] Domestic Violence Agency | [ ] |
| [ ] 1 month to 1 year | [ ] MH/MR | [ ] |
| [ ] more than 1 year | [ ] Other | [ ] |
| [ ] Unknown | | |
| Reason for the delay in contacting center? | Reason for the delay in contacting center? (check all that apply) |
| [ ] no transportation | [ ] no transportation |
| [ ] no telephone | [ ] no telephone |
| [ ] fear community members would find out | [ ] fear community members would find out |
| [ ] not ready to talk about it | [ ] not ready to talk about it |
| [ ] incest survivor | [ ] incest survivor |
| [ ] repressed memories | [ ] repressed memories |
| [ ] there was no delay | [ ] other: ___________________________ |
| [ ] other: ___________________________ | |
| How long has the victim lived in this county? | | |
| _______ years and _______ months | How long has the victim lived in this county? |
| Services | |
| A | [ ] Phone call | |
| [ ] In person | |
| [ ] Hotline | |
| B | [ ] Crisis intervention | |
| [ ] Non-crisis counseling | |
| [ ] Accompaniment to hospital | |
| [ ] Accompaniment to police | |
| [ ] Accompaniment to court | |
| [ ] Other (specify): ___________________________ | |
| Victim Data | |
| A | Victim’s Gender |
| [ ] Male | [ ] Female | [ ] Unknown |
| B | Victim’s current Age |
| Victim’s age: ______ years. If actual age not known, indicate age range below: |
| [ ] 0-5 Years | |
| [ ] 6-11 Years | |
| [ ] 12-17 Years | |
| [ ] 18-21 Years | |
| [ ] 22-24 Years | |
| [ ] 25-34 Years | |
| [ ] 35-54 Years | |
| [ ] 55+ Years | |
| [ ] Unknown | |
| C | Victim’s Ethnicity (check all that apply) |
| [ ] White | |
| [ ] Black | |
| [ ] Hispanic | |
| [ ] Pacific/Asian | |
| [ ] Native Amer. | |
| [ ] Other | |
| [ ] Unknown | |
| D | Victim’s Current Emotional State (check all that apply) |
| [ ] victim is angry | |
| [ ] victim is fearful | |
| [ ] victim is depressed | |
| [ ] victim is anxious | |
| [ ] victims is self-blaming | |
| [ ] other (specify) _______________ | |
| E | Victim’s Strategy (check all that apply) |
| What strategy was used against the offender? | |
| [ ] no strategy used | |
| [ ] talking, pleading, crying | |
| [ ] yelling, screaming | |
| [ ] attempting to flee | |
| [ ] fighting | |
| [ ] freezing | |
| [ ] complying | |
| [ ] other (specify) ___________________________ | |
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape – Sexual Assault – Client Form Continued

F Victim’s State during assault
[ ] no alcohol or drugs consumed
[ ] consumed some alcohol or drugs
[ ] intoxicated
[ ] unknown

Was victim’s alcohol/drug consumption voluntary?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

What was the victim’s first action following the assault?
[ ] call a friend
[ ] call a family member
[ ] call/go to the crisis center
[ ] call/go to the hospital
[ ] call/go to police
[ ] call/go to other agency/professional
[ ] no action taken
[ ] other (specify) ___________________

If the victim’s first action was to speak to someone, what advice, if any, was given?
[ ] no advice given
[ ] handle matter privately
[ ] seek medical help
[ ] seek police help
[ ] seek crisis center help
[ ] seek other agency/professional help
[ ] other (specify) ___________________

Was the advice followed?
[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ]

What is the victim’s plan of action?
[ ] go to relatives
[ ] go to friends
[ ] go to hospital
[ ] go to police
[ ] go to other agency/professional
[ ] continue counseling
[ ] other (specify) ___________________
[ ] unknown

Has the victim suffered prior victimization?
[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Unknown

If yes, at what age(s) __________________________

If prior victimizations have occurred, were they:
[ ] separate crime(s)
[ ] recurring crime(s)

If it was a recurring abuse, what was the duration of the recurring crime
______ years and _______ months

If it was a recurring abuse, what was the frequency of assaults
______ times a week
______ times a month
______ times a year
______ unknown

Offender Data
* If multiple offenders, indicate the # of Offenders that apply per category

A Offender’s Gender
[ ] Male [ ] Female [ ] Unknown

B Offender’s current Age
Offender’s age: ________ years
If actual age is unknown, indicate age range below:
[ ] 0-5 Years
[ ] 6-11 Years
[ ] 12-17 Years
[ ] 18-21 Years
[ ] 22-34 Years
[ ] 35-54 Years
[ ] 55+ Years
[ ] Unknown

C Number of offenders
[ ] one
[ ] two
[ ] three or more

D Offender’s Ethnicity (check all that apply)
[ ] White
[ ] Black
[ ] Hispanic
[ ] Pacific/Asian
[ ] Native Amer.
[ ] Other (specify) __________________________
[ ] Unknown

E Offender’s Relationship to Victim
[ ] Stranger
[ ] Acquaintance (recognition only)
[ ] Acquaintance (speaking)
[ ] Acquaintance (just met)
[ ] Friend
[ ] Date
[ ] Boyfriend/girlfriend
[ ] Live-in significant other
[ ] Husband/wife
[ ] Natural Parent -
Father [ ] Mother [ ]
[ ] Adoptive parent
Father [ ] Mother [ ]
[ ] Stepparent
Father [ ] Mother [ ]
[ ] Paramour of parent
[ ] Blood relative (not parent)
[ ] Sibling
[ ] Unknown
[ ] Other (specify) __________________________

F Offender’s State
[ ] no alcohol or drugs consumed
[ ] consumed alcohol or drugs
[ ] intoxicated
[ ] unknown
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Publications


Book Review


Technical Report