

VICTIMS OF ROBBERY: A REPORT ON A WINNIPEG SURVEY

by

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Victims of Robbery: A Report on a Winnipeg Survey

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ABSTRACT

The rate of violent crimes in Canada has been steadily increasing. Eight of every 100 Criminal Code offences reported to the police in 1984 were violent crimes, a two percent increase between 1983 and 1984 marking the seventh consecutive year in which the rate of violent crimes has risen. Not unexpectantly, there is quite an abundance of literature that studies these crimes, with a primary focus on offenders. What seems surprising, however, is that little attention has been focused on the victims of these acts of violence.

This neglect appears to be especially evident for the crime of robbery -- a crime which encompassed 23,310 incidents in Canada in 1984. Literature that would help us to understand the impact of robbery on its victims is virtually non-existent. It is the purpose of this thesis to provide a better understanding of the effects of a robbery experience upon some of its victims, to make an attempt at identifying the needs of these victims, and to determine what, if anything, the police can do to help fulfill these needs.

This thesis presents a study which evaluates a sample of 64 victims who were robbed in Winnipeg, Manitoba between September 1, 1983 and August 31, 1984. These victims were working in either a convenience store, gas station or pharmacy when the robbery occurred. In addition, a sample of 70 Winnipeg police officers was surveyed on the topic. Findings from this study

indicate that while victims are, as a whole, able to cope with their robbery experience, certain needs arising from victim contact with members of the police agency are not being met. In conclusion, the thesis suggests ways in which police officers can further assist robbery victims, and discusses implications for policy development and for future research.

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DEDICATION

To my family who always took the time
to let me know that I was missed.

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INTRODUCTION

The rate of violent crimes in Canada has been steadily increasing. Eight of every 100 Criminal Code offences reported to the police in 1984 were violent crimes, a two percent increase between 1983 and 1984 marking the seventh consecutive year in which the rate of violent crimes has risen (Canadian Crime Statistics, 1984). Not unexpectantly, there is an abundance of literature that studies these crimes with a primary focus on offenders. What seems surprising, however, is that little attention has been focused on the victims of these acts of violence.

This neglect appears to be especially true for the violent crime of robbery -- a crime which encompassed 23,310 incidents in Canada in 1984. A few Canadian studies focus on the persons who commit this particular offence, but scant attention has been given specifically to the victims of robbery. Literature that would help us to understand the impact of robbery on its victims is virtually non-existent. It is the purpose of this thesis, therefore, to provide a better understanding of the impact of the effects of a robbery experience upon some of its victims, and to make an attempt at identifying the needs of these victims.

In Chapter I, following a definition of the word victim, there is a look into the first major Canadian report written on the victims of crime and its findings. What ensues are additional findings from several studies which deal with the aftermath of victimization, describing the psychological reactions victims of violent crimes often experience. Since the police are usually the first agency to come in contact with the victim once a crime has been committed, the role of the representatives of this agency i.e., the police officers, is outlined along with their role once a citizen reports a robbery.

Chapter II defines the crime of robbery and its scope, after which follows some statistics on this violent crime. This is followed by a review of the literature which presently exists on the victims of robbery.

The framework surrounding the empirical research undertaken as part of this thesis is described in Chapter III. This includes a report on the objectives, scope, sample, data sources and procedure of the research. Included also is an examination of the two data collection tools used in the study.

Chapter IV reports the details of the research data collected and describes the general findings of the study. In addition, comparisons are made among several of the findings reported by the two survey groups.

Chapter V, in conclusion, makes recommendations for ways in which the police can further assist robbery victims along with some potential policy implications arising from the study. Recommendations are also discussed with regard to future research.

CHAPTER I

VICTIMS OF CRIME

We are all victims of crime
because we are all afraid of
victimization (Bard and Sangrey, 1980:xiv).

How many of us avoid walking alone at night, or lock our car doors as we drive around town? How many of us avoid carrying large sums of money on our persons or avoid certain types of employment which require working alone until the early hours? For most members of society the fear of victimization has become a part of life. Not a day goes by that we do not hear about someone becoming the victim of a violent crime. Yet some of us, maybe because of a need to deny the possibility, believe that it only happens to others and that it could not happen to ourselves. Despite all we hear about crime in society we still maintain a sense of trust towards others and hold the belief that we are in charge of our lives. Few experiences in our past prepare us for the role of 'victim' of a violent crime.

As Symonds (1975:21) explains:

It seems that the word [victim] has its etymological roots in early antiquity. It originally meant a beast selected for sacrifice, and it is intimately tied up with the concept of the scapegoat. The sacrifice of the victim or the exclusion of the scapegoat would symbolically make the rest of the community safe from harm. When the victim was a person, it had, with few exceptions, to be someone very old or a stranger. The ideal victim was someone who had no deep roots in the community.

Even to this day, states Symonds (1975:21), "the word victim has unpleasant associations, and people usually have feelings of

uneasiness when they associate or are identified with victims".

Birkbeck (1983:272) states that among victimologists, the following is a generally accepted definition of the word:

A victim is any individual or institution harmed or damaged by others and recognized as such for the purposes of treatment or restitution by public, private or community agencies.

Birkbeck (1983:272) goes on to point out that:

Clearly, a victim can be either an individual or an institution, and, from what has been said above, evidently victimization is the result of actions initiated by others (whether provoked or not). A principal element of study is the notion of harm or damage, for this is what largely defines the victim and distinguishes him or her from other social categories. Also of importance is the notion of social recognition for the victim, for it is this that determines the mobilization of public, private or community resources in the resolution of the problem caused by the victimization. Finally, it is necessary to include the possibility of either treatment or restitution in the process of resolution.

When used within the context of this thesis, however, the definition of the word victim will refer only to individuals -- individuals who suffer death, loss, or injury as the result of criminal behaviour.

Criminal Victimization

Until recently, Canadian criminal justice agencies have focused little, if any, attention on the victims of crime. It was not until 1981 that federal and provincial ministers responsible for criminal justice established a special Task Force to examine the needs of victims of crime, to look into

their experience with the justice system, and to make recommendations which might improve present methods of assistance to victims. Data used in support of these objectives were collected in 1982 through a victimization survey conducted in seven major Canadian cities: Greater Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, Halifax-Dartmouth, and St. John's.

The Task Force report (1983), based on a random sample of over 61,000 Canadians, provided an overview of criminal victimization. According to the report, growing concern for the victim has developed for a number of reasons - partly humanitarian whereby there is now regard for the victim's loss or suffering, partly from the belief that the state has an obligation to these victims, and partly because the criminal justice system, in its attempt to apprehend and prosecute offenders, needs the cooperation of victims of crime.

The Task Force concluded that those victimized not only suffered financially, physically and psychologically, but they also suffered discomfort and were often inconvenienced. As stated in their report (1983:2):

Even though the system depends on the willing co-operation of victims to report crimes and of witnesses to testify, their treatment within the system often does little to inspire or encourage that co-operation. The victim is often given little assistance to overcome the effects of his victimization and is provided with little, if any, information about the progress of the case; he may receive little or no compensation for his losses and it is unlikely that he will be consulted with regard to any decisions which are made. It is often the case that the victim is twice victimized: once by the offender and once more by the process.

With regard to financial suffering by victims, of the seven cities surveyed, the gross figures for 1982 were as follows: \$211,500,000 in unrecovered property and cash; \$41,900,000 in damage to property; and, \$7,000,000 in lost wages and medical expenses (Task Force, 1983). When totalled, these figures put the cost of crime to victims for one year at \$260,400,000.

The impact of such losses, without a doubt, fell more heavily on some groups of victims than others. Lower income victims were, of course, the ones who suffered from these financial losses the most. They were less likely to be able to recoup their losses and even when some form of loss recovery was feasible, the waiting period involved was often lengthy and inconvenient.

Task Force information concerning the physical costs of victimization indicated that 22% of the 1,600,000 crimes reported in 1982 involved personal contact with the offender. While this was not a considerably high percentage, there were still 50,000 nights spent in hospital, and 405,700 days of work lost as a result of injury sustained. Of the victims who were assaulted, sexually assaulted or robbed, ten percent had to seek some form of medical attention.

Although serious injury or death were quite infrequent, the physical consequences of victimization were, again, often experienced differently by some categories of victims than by others. The elderly, for example, were less likely (because of

their frailty) to be resilient in recovering from physical injuries than other groups of victims. Also, the impact on victims of some categories of offences was greater than on other victims. The Task Force found, for example, that the victims of sexual assault were more likely to be injured than other victims and that the injury incurred was more likely to require medical treatment.

Information on the psychological impact of victimization was more limited. It was known, however, that the fear produced as the result of victimization could be quite severe. As stated by the Task Force (1983:59-60):

We do know that the fear produced by some forms of victimization can become crippling and can turn victims inward, closing them off from social support when they need it most. We are becoming increasingly aware of the insidious and emotionally crippling effects of certain kinds of offences on the victims and their families, both in the short term and long after the offender has been dealt with by the criminal justice system. In addition the victims' emotional suffering may be made more acute by their experience with the criminal justice system.

The victimization survey results revealed that one-quarter of all those victimized felt that they should have some form of psychological counselling available to them.

With regard to their experience with the criminal justice system, "[v]ictims may feel that the system is insensitive to their suffering and their needs" (p. 59). The Task Force found that most victims of crime believed they required more assistance in dealing with their losses and sufferings and that they should be fully compensated for their losses. Many would

have liked to play a more active role in the judicial system and most felt far more information should be provided to them about their case and its handling by the criminal justice system. As concluded by the Task Force (1983:4-5):

The provision of more information to victims, in itself, would significantly reduce the sense of bewilderment and confusion that many victims experience in their contact with the system. The information they require is of two kinds: first, information on the criminal justice system and how it operates and why it operates as it does; second, information on the progress of the case in which they are involved. They need to know why their stolen property may not be promptly returned to them when it has been recovered by the police; why a charge was reduced; why a trial had to be adjourned; why the offender was not ordered to make restitution; about the availability of Criminal Injuries Compensation and other programs and agencies which may be able to assist them; and so forth. At least they need to know how to obtain such information.

In attempting to respond to these various issues, and without trying to overshadow the criminal justice system's basic objectives of protecting society through the apprehension and prosecution of offenders, the Task Force recommended that more services be developed which would provide victims with practical help, emotional support and counselling, information and advice about crime prevention measures. The Task Force also recommended that police officers be trained in such a way as to sensitize them to the needs of victims.

Still, before more services can be developed or persons trained to fulfill the needs of victims, some understanding of the psychological turmoil which the person may experience once he/she becomes the victim of a violent crime is essential. A

review of the literature revealed that, up to date, no research has been reported which examines, in specific, the psychological aftermath of the crime of robbery, but some research was found which described the experiences of victims of violent crimes in general. What follows documents some of these findings. This was done in an attempt to depict the severe emotional impact a crime of violence may have on the victim and to point out that the victimizing experience does not end immediately after the criminal act has ended but sometimes continues for months, and even years, after the incident has taken place.

The Aftermath of Victimization

Once the crime has been committed, the victim begins to grapple with the effects of the experience. As Bard and Sangrey (1980:xii) explained:

Every victim of personal crime is confronted with a brutal reality: the deliberate violation of one human being by another. The crime may be a murder or a rape, a robbery or a burglary,...a pocket picking or a purse snatching - but the essential internal injury is the same. Victims have been assaulted - emotionally and sometimes physically - by a predator who has shaken their world to its foundations.

Despite years of watching cops and robbers on television or reading the many books written on crime, victims are still invariably taken aback by reality (Bard and Sangrey, 1980).

Victims are also perplexed over the reactions and attitudes of others. Not only must the victim try to deal with his/her own reactions, for example, with feelings of fear, anger, guilt or

shame, but he/she must also cope with a sense of being stigmatized which, as Bard and Sangrey suggested, is often reinforced by the insensitivity of others.

Symonds (1975:19-20), a practicing psychiatrist, noted a similar finding in his dealings with victims of crime in which he asserted the following:

Early in my exploration on the subject of victims of violent crimes, I became aware that society has strange attitudes toward victims. There seems to be a marked reluctance and resistance to accept the innocence or accidental nature of victim behavior. Such reluctance is shown by community responses, police behavior, family reactions, and, surprisingly, by the victims themselves. Reluctance or resistance to accept or believe in the total innocence of the victims of violent crimes is shown by the early responses to victims after the initial shock response of the nonvictim listener wears off. 'Didn't you know this neighborhood is dangerous to walk in after dark?' 'Did you have your door locked?' 'Weren't you suspicious of that man in the elevator?' 'Why didn't you scream?' 'Did you look before you opened the door?'...All these questions imply that the victims could have prevented or avoided their injuries. If we could talk to the tragic victims who died as a result of violent street crimes, would we ask, 'Why did you walk alone in that neighborhood?' 'Didn't you know that was dangerous?' People sometimes respond angrily to rape victims and say: 'If she was stupid enough to go out in a neighborhood like that, she deserved it'.

Symonds in addition to studying the reactions of society to the victims of violent crimes, has also recorded the psychological responses of the victims themselves.¹ He discovered, for example, that when individuals are subjected to

¹It should be noted that the work of Symonds (1975), along with that of Everstine and Everstine (1983) and Bard and Sangrey (1979) (soon to be discussed), are not based on actual empirical studies but based on their professional dealings with victims of crime. Although this means that their research cannot be replicated, it provides the best information on victims presently available in the literature.

a sudden and unexpected attack of violence, they will respond first with shock, disbelief and numbness, followed then by feelings of anger or fright. According to Symonds, these feelings of anger and fright arise because the victim knows that there is the threat of bodily harm if he/she does not comply with the criminal's demands.

Symonds also reported that these responses of victims were comparable to the psychological responses of a person who experiences sudden and unexpected loss. In such instances, the person exhibits signs of shock and denial. When denial is no longer possible, feelings of fright take over which often cause the individual to talk compulsively about his/her loss. This phase is followed by apathy, mixed with moments of resentment and anger until, states Symonds, resolution occurs.

Some individuals, however, become fixated in one or more of these phases with fixation often lasting several months. For some victims, there is difficulty getting over the fear. According to Symonds (1975:24), "[e]xtra locks, extra precautions, and excessive suspiciousness substitute for judgement". Other victims suffer extended periods of apathy, with feelings of resentment and anger. These psychological responses become intensified when people show little consideration for the victim at a time when he/she needs their support the most. Symonds (1975:25) concluded:

When one suffers an injury from a criminal one is a victim of a crime. When society responds by ignoring, excluding, and in addition accusing the victim of

participating in the criminal act, he then becomes a victim of society. This paradoxical attitude of society causes the victim to feel isolated and helpless and to experience the world as hostile.

Everstine and Everstine (1983), two clinical psychologists, have also observed the general behavioural characteristics of victims of violent crimes. Their observations comment on the diverse "psychological phenomena" that are associated with individuals who have the misfortune of becoming victims. According to these two authors, being victimized begins a process by which a person goes through a "trauma response" and "recovery cycle".

The trauma response begins with the victim's reaction to the immediate situation. In most cases, the violation comes as a total surprise with the victim being caught totally off guard. Very often the individual experiences a sense of disbelief and pretends that the crime is not really happening. But soon reality descends at which time the victim will do almost anything to survive. According to Everstine and Everstine, most victims will remain in this "cognitive survival state" until the victimization crisis comes to an end.

Immediately after the crime, most victims will go into a state of shock marking the beginning of the recovery cycle. Often, state Everstine and Everstine, this shock is misconstrued as a sign that the victim is not upset by his/her victimization. Shock can last anywhere from a few hours to a few days. Once this shock wears off it is followed by such phenomena as

depression, anger, and finally a period of "laying-to-rest" in which, if all goes well, the victim now thinks of his/her experience as a thing of the past - that is, as just a bad memory.

The severity of psychological trauma was reported by these authors to be associated with five factors. The first factor was the degree of violation of self. That is to say that, if the body was physically injured, the trauma experienced was often greater than if no violation had occurred. The second factor was the victim's coping ability. The victim's past experiences often dictated how well he/she was able to cope with the victimization. Third, there was the extent to which the victim feared being killed during the crime. A fourth factor was whether or not the victim knew the offender(s). According to Everstine and Everstine, the severity of trauma increased if the offender was indeed someone the victim knew than if it was committed by a total stranger. And fifth, the trauma experienced by the victim depended on where the crime took place. It is widely known that many people feel safer in their homes than they do in a public place - such as on a dimly lit street corner. Therefore, when people were violated in a place where they felt secure and out of danger, more traumatization was likely to occur.

Another set of observations about the effects of criminal victimization were those done by Bard and Sangrey (1979). In one chapter of their book attention focused specifically on peoples'

reactions and behaviors when they became victims of a personal crime. These authors stated, for example, that being the victim of a personal crime is highly stressful and that this stress often gives rise to a crisis reaction in the victim.² The sudden and unpredictable nature of the crime makes it nearly impossible for victims to prepare themselves for the effects of the stress, thereby making it difficult to pull themselves back together again right away.

The effects of criminal victimization may vary greatly - from becoming physically ill to having difficulty thinking, acting, and/or relating to others. Every victim will respond in his or her own way, with some being affected more severely than others. Despite this wide range of suffering, Bard and Sangrey assert that every crime victim in crisis will experience some disruption to some degree.

As did Everstine and Everstine (1983), Bard and Sangrey alleged that the severity of psychological turmoil depended on the degree of violation of self. Victims of violence, such as an assault, for example, experienced a greater degree of crisis than did those victims of, say, a purse snatching, where the degree of violation of self was usually less severe. Also, in those instances where property was taken, victims felt a greater sense of violation when the property had sentimental value than

²Bard and Sangrey (1979:51) defined a crisis as, "a sudden, arbitrary, unpredictable event that is threatening to the self and produces significant disruption in the emotions and behavior of the threatened person".

when the property did not.

A second factor reported to affect the severity of the crisis, was a factor also reported by Everstine and Everstine (1983), and that was the capacity of the person to deal with stress. Past experiences, along with present circumstances in the victim's life, dictated how capable the individual was to deal with his/her victimization. An example given by Bard and Sangrey was that of a rape victim whose husband had died a year before the rape. The woman stated that the rape did not affect her as much as it might have because she had experienced a greater crisis prior to the rape crisis.

The third and maybe most important factor alleged to affect the progress of the victim's crisis reaction was the kind of help made available to the individual immediately after the crime. As Bard and Sangrey explained, even a psychologically healthy individual may be hurled into a crisis reaction under the stress generated by criminal victimization. Understanding exhibited by family and friends can be extremely helpful to the victim if they can try to appreciate what the victim is feeling. People in crisis frequently display behavior which is out of character but those around them must try and remain supportive.

While it was mentioned earlier that each victim will respond in his/her own way, Bard and Sangrey noted that many of the crime victims experienced similar feelings and exhibited many of the behaviors associated with peoples' reactions to crisis.

Furthermore, a pattern exists in the typical crisis reaction which "can serve as a broad outline on which victims can overlay their own unique experiences" (Bard and Sangrey, 1979:33).

There are three stages in a crisis reaction, each of which is an essential part of the psychological recovery process. Immediately after the crime, the victim goes through what Bard and Sangrey (1979:34) call the "impact phase", in which the individual experiences a period of disorganization where things fall apart inside:

Some victims become numb and disoriented. They move about aimlessly or feel physically immobilized. Physiological disturbances such as the inability to sleep or to eat are common. Disbelief is a frequent reaction: 'This just can't be happening to me'.

Furthermore:

The impact phase is often marked by feelings of vulnerability and helplessness. Victims are sometimes filled with a profound sense of loneliness, a feeling that they are alone and bereft. They may become quite childlike and dependent, unable to make even the simplest decisions (p. 35).

This impact stage may last several hours or even several days after the crime. During this time, when the victim often needs some kind of assistance, the most helpful response by others is to try and fill these needs. Bard and Sangrey (1979:37) note that:

Really helping a person in trouble requires extraordinary sensitivity and discipline. People who really want to help must focus on the victim, listen carefully for the victim's expression of his or her needs and then respond to that expression - without imposing their own suggestions or judgments or perceptions. The ideal helper is one who is able to create a climate in which victims will be able to ask for and get whatever help they want.

This stage is often characterized by victims who have difficulty thinking clearly or have trouble remembering the details of the crime. Here, again, if other people become angry with the victim or become impatient, they will only make matters worse. Those trying to help must refrain from being critical. For example, asking an assault victim why he/she was walking down the street so late at night would only serve to make the victim feel worse, as though becoming a victim of an assault was his/her own fault. (And while some people hold the belief that crimes are often precipitated by the victim, this would not be the time to give the victim a lecture about his/her behavior.) Those who have contact with the victim immediately after the crime has occurred, must try and encourage the rebuilding of the victim's defenses. As Bard and Sangrey (1979:39-40) explain:

If another person - a friend or relative, a police officer or a nurse - is able to move in quickly and with authority, he or she can do a great deal to reduce the effects of the crisis. Minutes of skillful support by any sensitive person immediately after the crime can be worth more than hours of professional counseling later.

The second stage of the crisis reaction identified by Bard and Sangrey is the "recoil phase" when victims attempt to deal with distressing emotions such as fear, anger, guilt and self-pity. Often, however, this stage is also characteristic of victims who become tired of struggling with these emotions and try to deny these feelings. This in itself is described as being a necessary part of the recovery process because it permits the victim to gradually come to terms with all of the feelings that otherwise prove to be overpowering if they had to be dealt with

all at once.

It is between these periods of denial that the victims attempt to face the emotions brought on by their victimization. They struggle to remember the events of the crime and struggle to cope with the feelings that have been aroused.

An upsetting aspect of the recoil stage, according to Bard and Sangrey, is that victims often feel they are coming along fine one day, but then suddenly experience feelings of anxiety and helplessness the next day. Victims often feel that they are never going to recover fully from the victimization. As Bard and Sangrey (1979:46) state:

Friends and loved ones can help the victim not to panic on the downswing if they can provide some stability and reassurance during the bad days. When victims become discouraged and feel that they'll never make it, the last thing they need is another person who reflects that fear by sharing it. Someone who is emotionally distant enough to remind the victim that he or she has been coping pretty well can be very supportive.

As with the laying-to-rest period identified by Everstine and Everstine (1983), it was alleged that eventually the final stage of reorganization is reached where the victim recovers from the violating experience. After the crime, occurrences in the victim's life, such as seeing a person who looks like the criminal, may bring back some anxiety but, in most cases, this anxiety is short lived. As Bard and Sangrey (1979:47) point out:

Victims never entirely forget the crime. Their suffering lessens, but other effects of the experience remain as part of the self. Their view of themselves and of the world will be permanently altered in some way, depending on the severity of the crime and the degree of its

impact. The violation of self can hardly be called a positive experience, but it does present an opportunity for change. One of two things will happen: Either victims become reordered, reborn, put back together so that they are stronger than before, or their experiences during the crisis will promote further disorder with long-term negative consequences.

A great deal depends on the kind of help the victim receives. The victim of a personal crime has been violated by another person. If the victim's recovery is supported by other people, their help provides a kind of counterbalance to the violation, reassuring the victim of the essential trustworthiness of most people. The victim who receives appropriate help from family and friends, for example, will come out of the crisis with a heightened appreciation for them and a greater ability to seek their help again.

As the above studies have indicated, this support does not have to come from family members alone for other people can help as well. Immediate support from friends or even strangers can also aid in reducing the effects of the victimization and can begin the process of rebuilding the victim's inner world. In many cases, the first person the victim comes in contact with is the police officer. It is this officer to whom the victimized individual first turns and who is the one that can begin this rebuilding process. This all important role of the police officer is outlined in the next section along with a description of the procedures generally taken, in Canada, by police officers once they have been dispatched to the scene of a robbery.

The Role of the Police and the Investigation

The most important agency of the criminal justice system for helping victims is the police for they are customarily the first ones to have contact with the victims. Once a robbery has been committed, and then reported, the initial persons to encounter the victims are the responding police officers. Usually it is the uniformed officers who first respond to the scene although, typically, investigative officers (i.e., detectives) are also dispatched to every robbery. It is the uniformed officers, however, who are responsible for initially handling the report (Billingsley, *et al.*, 1984). Upon the arrival of the police, given the quickness with which most robberies occur, the suspect(s) have usually made good their escape and the officers must rely on information provided to them by the victim(s) regarding the robbery's course of events. Obtaining this information, however, is not always an easy task for the police officers. While many victims have some idea of what to expect of the police, the officers, in turn, cannot always know what to expect from the victims prior to their appearance at the scene. Different people will react to their victimization in different ways. Therefore, upon arrival, the police may find the victim suffering anything from physical to emotional distress and/or both. The officers are put in the difficult position of trying to assess the victim's immediate needs and being responsive to them. According to Zlotnick (1979), if these victim's needs are not recognized and the officers do not show, for example, any

signs of concern or understanding, this experience with the police can be just as detrimental and frightening as was the crime itself - contributing significantly to the victim's suffering. Behavior of the police officers can either cause the victim further feelings of violation or begin the process of restoring the victim's faith in humanity. Their attitudes can be very crucial in lessening the amount of psychological trauma the victims experience (Bard and Sangrey, 1979; Symonds, 1975).

Despite the fact that it is very difficult to question distraught or angered victims, the officers must try to compile important information. They need information about the victim, the nature of the robbery, property damaged or stolen, plus, if possible, a description of the suspect(s) and the means of escape (Billingsley, *et al.*, 1984). Normally, before the responding officers leave the crime scene, an incident number is assigned to the report and given to the victim, along with a phone number he/she can call should they have further information to offer or have any question.³ Further information beyond the initial report taken at the scene is handled by other members of the detective unit.

If no arrest has been made or no suspects identified, these detectives can only proceed with the investigation by attempting to generate further information from victims and witnesses (Ericson, 1981). In addition to improving their awareness about

³This incident number is necessary for insurance purposes and makes it possible for the victim to later identify the robbery he/she reported.

the details of the case, Ericson (1981:97) found that in cases where little could be done, the detectives, as a means of appeasing the victim, "tried to impress that as representatives of the Police Force, they were concerned about the matter and doing the best job they could in a difficult position". Sanders (1977) as well found that detectives were often concerned primarily with providing a gloss for their investigative activities. When the victim of a crime complained that little was being done about his/her case, Sanders stated that the job of public relations sometimes involved contacting the victim to keep up the appearance of looking for the suspect, or explaining to the victim that little could be done.

Once the victim has provided the police with the necessary information needed to investigate the incident, it is possible that he/she may never hear from the police again. The police may decide that the victim's complaint is unfounded, they may not be able to gather enough evidence to make an arrest, or they may, in fact, make one or more arrests without any further assistance from the victim.

On the other hand, in many instances, the victim may be asked to cooperate with the police and the investigation (Task Force, 1983). He/she may be asked to view a series of mug shots (criminal photos), or help a police artist construct a composite drawing of the criminal. The victim may also be asked to come down to the police station to make an identification or view a line-up of suspects. He/she may also be requested to identify

stolen property that has been recovered. Although many victims are only too willing to assist the police in any way they can (since this may, for example, increase the police chances of apprehending the offender or aid the police in recovering stolen property), for some victims, attending the police department on numerous occasions may cause some degree of inconvenience. There could be, for example, a problem with finding a sitter for their children, getting time off work, or arranging transportation to the station.

Once the victim has provided all the information and assistance he/she can (or is willing to provide), there is generally a promise made by the detectives that they will 'keep in touch' (Task Force, 1983). Most victims expect this promise to be kept, becoming very upset and angered if it is not. They want to know if, for example, anyone has been apprehended or if the investigation has been halted for lack of evidence. As noted by the Task Force (1983:39):

Victims who report a crime to the police consider the case to be "their" own. Following the compilation of the occurrence report by the police, victims expect further contact. They want to know if the investigation is being actively pursued and if a suspect has been apprehended. They may also expect to have some input into the investigation of "their" case.... Obviously the police department will have certain priorities, and a murder investigation will demand more attention and personnel than a break-and-enter. From the victims' point of view the police are working for them and "their" case is important.

Bard and Sangrey (1979) found that many victims complained that the police officers showed little interest in what they had

just experienced. Although many police officers wear protective armour to shield themselves from the often gruelling psychological aspects of their work, Bard and Sangrey (1979:120) stated that a total detachment from human feeling is "sure to make the victim feel even more isolated". Symonds (1975:21) also noted the seeming indifference to the victim's plight:

This is the most common complaint of victims of violent crimes when they discuss the way the community responded to what happened to them, and is frequently aimed at the police...

The seeming indifference of the police which the victim experiences is due to a misinterpretation by the police of the concept of professionalism. In their zeal to be neutral, and since the crime is in the past and the criminal gone, they aggressively question the victim about the details of the crime. This behavior rejects the victim's expectations of comfort,....

Having emotional needs rejected and/or ignored during a crisis period in the victim's life often serves to deepen the victim's feelings of isolation and despair (Zlotnick, 1979). Yet presently, the police, judges, prosecutors, and the legal profession are still not fully attuned to the needs of the victim (Symonds, 1975).

Probably the most arresting description of how individuals feel about their needs and role as victim was one noted by Geis (1975:62-63):

Many victims feel that their needs have low priority in the business of the police, the courts, and the correctional system. They feel that they are, at best, tolerated and then often only with ill humor. Their role, they say, seems much like that of the expectant father in the hospital at delivery time; necessary for things to have gotten underway in the past, but at the moment rather superfluous and mildly bothersome.

This chapter has attempted to present certain neglected areas concerning today's victims of crime. It was acknowledged that, until recently, criminal justice agencies in Canada have focused little of their attention on these victims. Information documenting how violent crimes can affect persons has to date been relatively scarce. Nevertheless, in order for society to be better equipped to respond to the needs of victims, more specific research is necessary. In order for police agencies to become better attuned to the feelings of victims and their needs following a crime, specific information is, again, necessary. The following chapter introduces the violent crime of robbery, setting the stage for the empirical study of robbery victims.

CHAPTER II

THE VIOLENT CRIME OF ROBBERY

The discussion so far has centred primarily around victims of violent crimes in general. Research focusing on victims of robbery, in particular, has been less than prolific. This chapter sets out to summarize existing information on this offence category by presenting (1) a working definition of robbery as a socio-legal phenomenon, (2) some of the available statistics on the offence, and (3) a review of the scant literature available about the robbery victim.

Definition and Scope of Robbery

The crime of robbery is contained in section 302 of the Canadian Criminal Code and is defined as follows:

302. Every one commits robbery who
- a. steals, and for the purpose of extorting whatever is stolen or to prevent or overcome resistance to the stealing, uses violence or threats of violence to a person or property;
 - b. steals from any person and, at the time he steals or immediately before or immediately thereafter, wounds, beats, strikes or uses any personal violence to that person;
 - c. assaults any person with intent to steal from him; or
 - d. steals from any person while armed with an offensive weapon or imitation thereof.

Section 303 states:

303. Every one who commits robbery is guilty of an indictable offence and is liable to imprisonment for life.

Often, the crime of robbery is confused with the crime of theft. The difference between these two offences is that robbery involves personal violence, or the threat of such violence, while theft does not. An individual, for example, upon returning home to find that his/her home has been broken into may cry, "I've been robbed!", but, in fact, no robbery has been committed because violence, or the threat of violence was not used. The amount of violence expended during a robbery does not have to be severe nor does it have to cause injury to the victim. Anything from a push to a punch will meet the criteria for violence. In other words, the crime of robbery is very broad and encompasses a wide spectrum of criminal behavior, from that which is very serious to behavior considered as being of lesser consequence. It can involve anything from an eight year old boy threatening to beat up another child if that child doesn't hand over his/her money, to a knife wielding robber threatening the life of another citizen. Robbery, then, is made up of two basic elements:

1. theft, or the intention to commit theft; and,
2. violence, or the threat of violence.

The following six examples of case law in Canada bring these elements to light, exemplifying some of the requirements which must be met to constitute the act of robbery within the meaning of section 302 of the Criminal Code.

In the first example of R. v. McDonald (1984), the Crown appealed the accused's acquittal on a charge of robbery. On the

day in question, the accused entered a drugstore, picked up a Halloween mask from the front of the store, and then proceeded to the back of the store towards the pharmacists. The accused stated, "This is a hold up" and, "I want some morphine". He then demanded more drugs, which he obtained, and walked out of the store - without the mask but picking up a pair of sunglasses as he left. The pharmacist was nervous and believed the accused might resort to violence.

The trial Judge, Hall, J.A., stated that according to section 302(a), there must be a threat of violence and not merely the presence of a person who may cause another person to experience fear. The Crown, however, appealed on the grounds that the trial Judge erred in law in believing that robbery had not been proved. In the opinion of the Crown, the words spoken by the accused put the pharmacist in a state of fear, thus facilitating the theft by the accused.

The appeal was allowed and a conviction of 'theft' was replaced with 'robbery'. The sentence disposition of two months imprisonment followed by two years supervised probation which was given for the conviction of theft remained the same for the conviction of robbery.

In R. v. Sayers and McCoy (1983), the Crown appealed the accused's acquittal on charges of three counts of robbery - each count relating to a different teller of the same bank. On Saturday afternoon, the day in question, the two accused entered

the bank and while one of the accused remained at the door acting as a lookout, the other jumped onto the counter, pointed with two fingers on each hand, and said, "This is a robbery in progress". The accused was also heard saying, "I'm not gonna hurt anyone. Just open your drawers and give me the money". He took money from three tellers. The accused who was the lookout person also said, "This is a robbery". After the money was taken, both men walked out of the bank but were quickly arrested.

It was the opinion of the Crown that the trial Judge, Lacourciere, J.A., erred in law in his interpretation of what constitutes a robbery. Although there were no weapons, and no assaults made, the Crown stated that the words used by the two accused, and the manner in which the one accused screamed his demands to the tellers, caused the tellers to be apprehensive about being harmed, thereby constituting 'threats of violence'. The appeal was allowed and the two accused were convicted of three counts of robbery.

In the third case, R. v. Thieriault (1981), the respondent was also brought to trial on a charge of robbery. The evidence presented, however, did not prove beyond a reasonable doubt that a robbery within the meaning of section 302(a) was committed. The events can be briefly summarized as follows: The accused, upon entering a bank, threw an empty shopping bag on the counter and although it is not certain precisely what was said by the accused, the words went something like, "Put the money in" and,

"This is not a joke". One of the two tellers involved, because she could not see the hands of the accused from where she stood, was concerned that the accused might be in possession of some sort of weapon.

What had to be determined, then, was whether or not what occurred constituted a threat of violence to the tellers. The results were that the Judge, Coe, Co. Ct. J., was not satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that there were such threats. The charge of robbery was dismissed and the accused was convicted of the included offence of theft.

In the fourth example, R. v. McLaren (1984), the accused was convicted by the Nova Scotia County Court of one count of robbery, the facts being presented as follows: The accused and Mr. Baird were casual acquaintances, prior to the day in question. On that day both men were at the same tavern although not together. During the evening, Mr. Baird went to the washroom but as he was about to leave was approached by the accused. The accused, who claimed that Baird owed him ten dollars, threatened Baird. Baird stated that he did not owe the accused ten dollars but as a result of the accused threatening to "snap him in the head", the victim gave him what money he had, which he later testified to be between twenty and thirty dollars. Baird also stated he was pushed and shoved by the accused. This version of what transpired was corroborated by a witness. The accused was convicted of robbery contrary to section 302 of the Criminal Code and sentenced to three years' imprisonment. The accused

appealed his conviction on the grounds that he had a right to take the money from Baird.

The appeal court Judge, Macdonald, J.A., however, stated that there was no evidence that the accused honestly believed Mr. Baird owed him ten dollars. Furthermore, the accused proceeded to take all of the victim's money. The accused obviously did not believe that he had a lawful claim to the money in excess of ten dollars which he obtained from Baird by threats of violence. Therefore, the appeal against conviction was dismissed.

The appeal by the Crown of a conviction of theft, in R. v. Fleury, provides a fifth example of what can constitute the act of robbery. The events of the day in question are briefly summarized as follows: The accused man snatched the victim's purse, which was on a strap over her shoulder. When the accused yanked on the purse the result was that the woman fell to the ground. The trial Judge, McGillivray, C.J.A., stated that the Crown had clearly proved beyond a reasonable doubt that there was a theft, however, the question remained as to whether it was proven beyond a doubt that there was an assault of such a nature as to raise the crime of theft to robbery. The trial Judge convicted the accused of theft but acquitted him of robbery.

The Crown, in its appeal, stated that there was an assault as outlined in section 302(c) of the Criminal Code and that concern was not with the *nature* of the assault. There was an

assault and it was an assault with intent to steal. As a result, because a robbery was committed, the Crown's appeal was allowed and the conviction of theft was replaced by a conviction of robbery.

The sixth and final example is one which describes the behaviour of the accused leading to the charge of robbery, but (as with the third example) is one which does not end in proof beyond a reasonable doubt that a robbery was committed. Contrary to section 302(d) of the Criminal Code, the accused, in R. v. Gouchie (1976), was charged with having stolen money while he simulated being in possession of an offensive weapon or imitation thereof. On the day in question, the accused admitted entering the premises of a business establishment while accompanied by a juvenile, and yelling, "This is a hold up". Upon vaulting the counter at the place in question, the accused indicated having something in his hand. His accomplice then gathered up the money, the sum of \$2,208.75, in the presence of the cashier. Both were arrested, in the company of a third person, shortly after the incident had transpired.

During the trial, witnesses to the robbery stated that the accused was hiding something behind his clothing, appearing to them to be a weapon, and that he was pointing it in their direction. Testifying in his defence, however, the accused stated that he had only hidden his fist behind his coat and that he had no object in his hand. As a result, the finding of the Court was that there was no proof the accused had an offensive

weapon in his possession nor that he had an object which could resemble a weapon. Furthermore, the Judge stated that no part of the human body can resemble an offensive weapon and, therefore, the accused cannot be convicted of robbery. The accused was convicted of simple theft.

In summary, this review of Canadian criminal cases emphasizes the two basic elements of the crime of robbery i.e., not only must there be theft or the intention to commit theft, but there must also be violence or the threat of violence - an element which is often debated in courts of law and one which may, on occasions, be difficult to prove.

The legal aspects of robbery alone, however, are not the only reasons why fear about this crime exists among society's members. A social aspect of robbery, and one that probably creates the greatest amount of anxiety in the public regarding this offence is the fact that, as Conklin (1972:5) states:

...it is usually committed by a stranger in an unexpected and potentially violent manner. The victim often feels that he was the target of the offender through pure chance, and the apparent unpredictability of the crime makes it even more threatening.

Whereas crimes of murder or assault, for example, are often committed by someone the victim knows, the crime of robbery usually attracts offenders unknown to the victims. This social element can make citizens wary of every person with whom they come in contact.

In terms of evaluating the impact of crime, one way is to look at the financial costs - for example, property lost, damaged, or destroyed. A second way of evaluating the impact is to consider the harm done to its victims. Murder, of course, is classified as the most serious with assaults and rape, where serious physical injury is incurred, following closely behind. There is also, however, the psychological harm which must not be overlooked. Mental trauma suffered as the result of an assault, rape, or robbery can stay with the victim long after all physical injuries have healed. And, while few robberies actually involve loss of life or injury, this fact is of little comfort to the person who ends up with a knife at his/her throat or a gun to his/her back (MacDonald, 1975). As Ciale and Leroux (1984:4) point out:

And even when there is no physical harm, victims will recall the trauma long after the event. It is not unusual for them to relive the experience a hundred times dreading the moment when it might reoccur. The stress is often only relieved by seeking safer employment elsewhere. Equally, witnesses who are sometimes accidentally injured or killed are reminders to the potential danger residing in every hold-up.

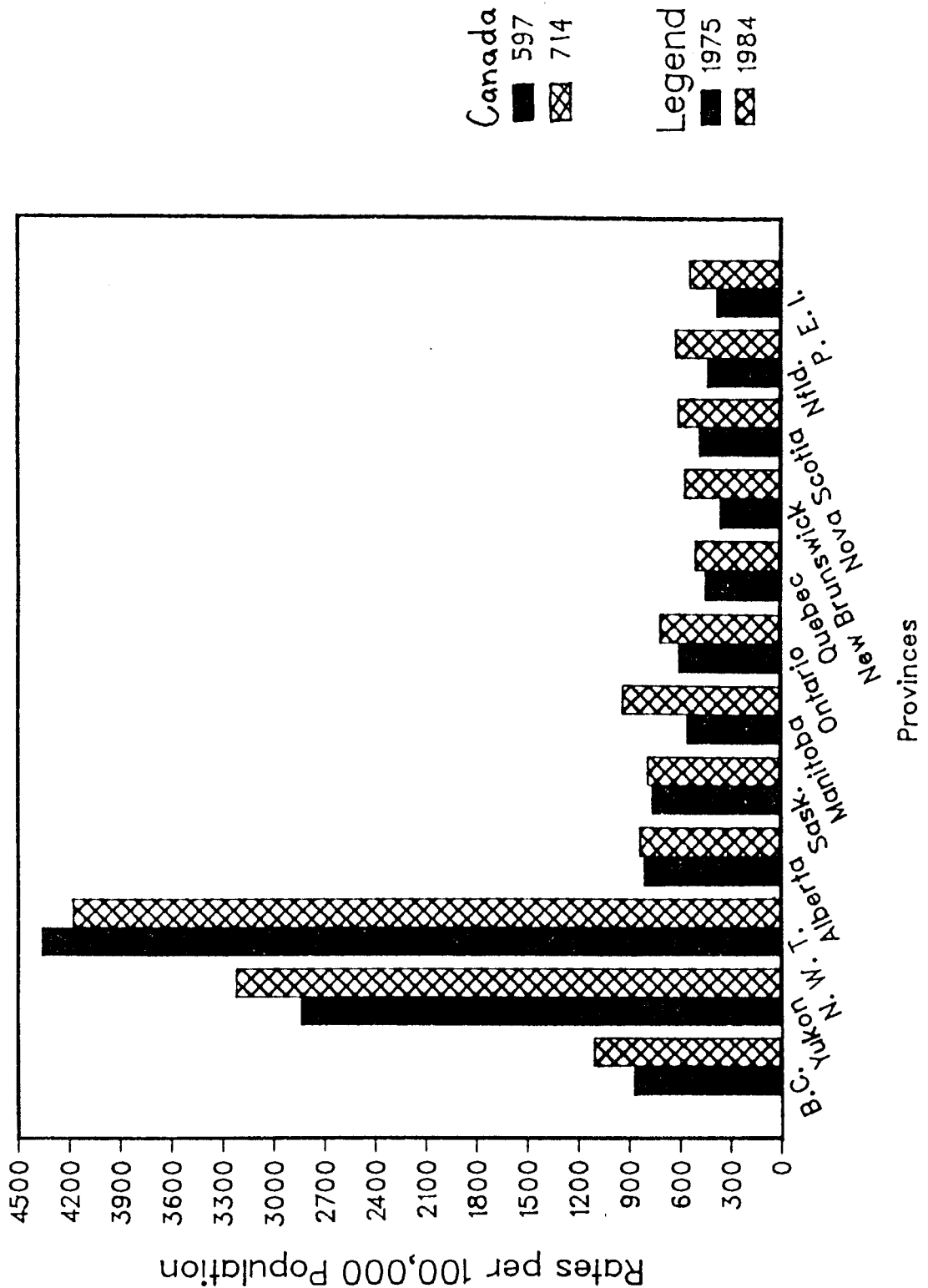
Some Statistics on Robbery

In the past, violent crimes (homicide, attempted murder, assault, robbery, and abduction) have comprised approximately eight percent of the total criminal code offences in Canada.¹ The violent crime rate for Canada of 714 offences per 100,000 population in 1984 was 20% above the 1975 rate of 597. Comparing the violent crime rates of 1975 and 1984 shows that Manitoba, New Brunswick and Newfoundland recorded the highest increases of this period (68%, 58% and 42% respectively). In contrast, Saskatchewan and Alberta recorded the smallest increases (2%) with the North West Territories being the only province to record a percentage decrease in the violent crime rate for this period (see Figure 2.1). During 1984, 84% of these violent crimes were assaults. Following assaults, the second most frequent incident of violent crime was robbery. Approximately 13 out of every 100 violent crime offences reported to the police across Canada were robberies. For the year 1984 there were

¹A note of caution regarding official crime statistics is in order. As a rule, crime rates are calculated as the number of crimes that have been committed in a particular city, for example, relative to the total number of people residing in that city and based on a census taken once every ten years. So when statistics indicate an increase in crime rates over a certain period of time - this increase may be due not to a higher number of crimes being committed, but as a result, for example, of a recent influx of people into the city. Other than taking a census on a yearly basis, a more accurate way of compiling crime rates for robbery, for example, would be to base the number of robberies on the number of targets at risk of being selected by the robbers. However, at present, such crime based statistics are not available and until they are, caution should be exercised when such statistics are used. All statistics used here are based on Canadian Crime Statistics, 1984.

Figure 2.1

Rates per 100,000 Population of Violent Crime Offences, by Province, 1975 and 1984



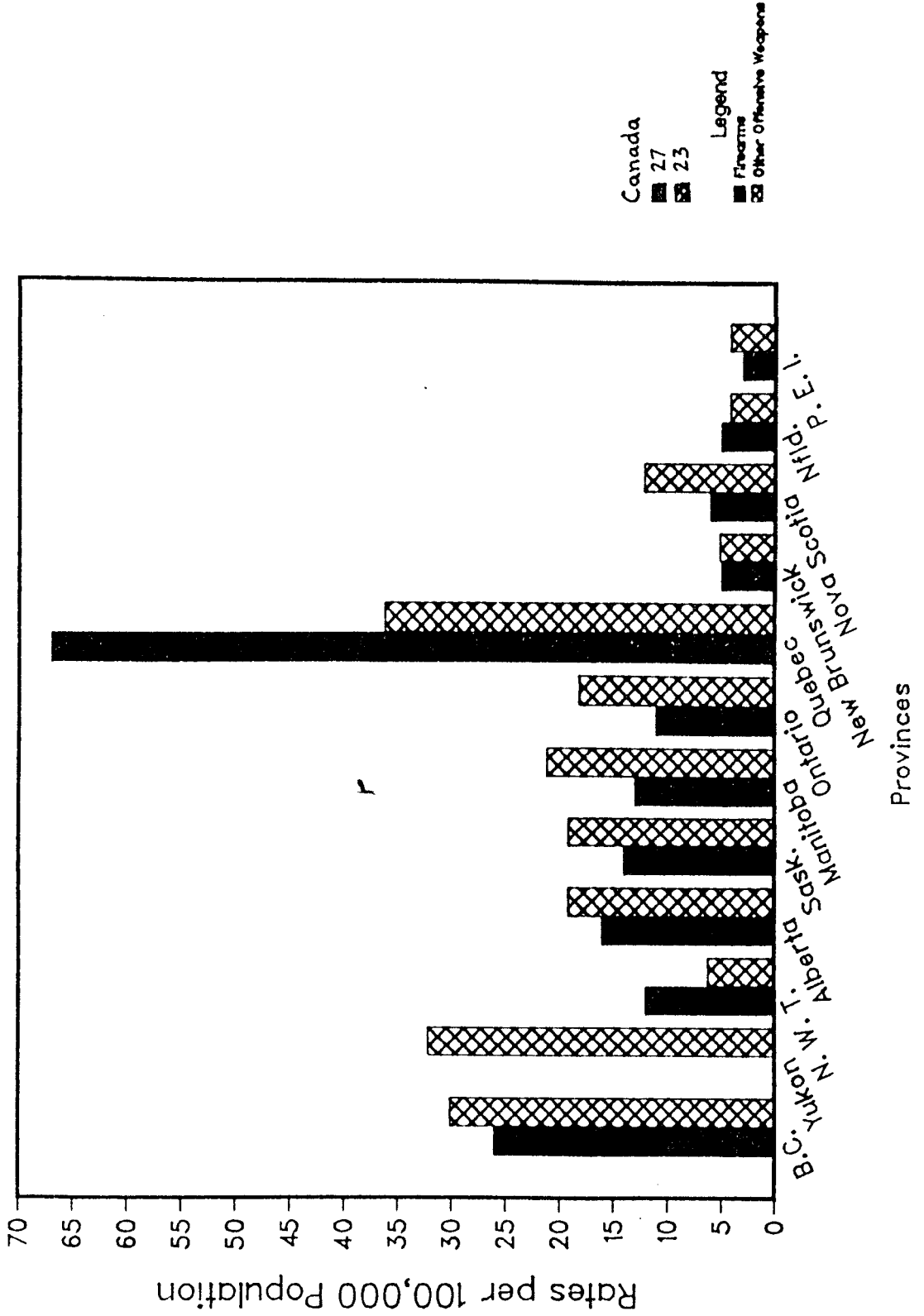
23,310 total robbery offences. Breaking this figure down, this puts the total robbery rate for Canada at 93 offences per 100,000 population in 1984. Although this was a five percent decrease from 1983, and the second decrease recorded nationally since 1978, this figure is still 27% higher than it was in 1974 at which time the rate was 76 offences per 100,000 population.

According to Statistics Canada, when the category of robbery is broken down into three subcategories the following statistics were calculated for 1984: the national rate for 'robbery with firearms' was 27 offences per 100,000 population, a ten percent decrease since the 1983 rate of 30 offences but a 33% increase since 1974; for 'robbery with other offensive weapons', this rate remained constant with 23 offences in 1984, but saw a 53% increase from 15 offences per 100,000 population in 1975 to the 1984 rate; and, for 'other robbery offences', this rate showed a five percent decrease (the second decrease since 1977) between the 1983 figure of 44 offences to the 1984 figure of 42 offences per 100,000 population, but here again, rising eight percent in the past ten years (see Figure 2.2).

Quebec was the only province which recorded a 'robbery with firearms' rate (67) in 1984 higher than the national average. British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan had the next highest rates of 26, 16, and 14 offences per 100,000 population respectively. With regard to 'robbery with other offensive weapons', Quebec, British Columbia and the Yukon were the only provinces to record a rate higher than the national average

Figure 2.2

Rates per 100,000 Population for Selected Robbery Offences, by Province, 1984



i.e., 36, 30, and 32 offences per 100,000 population respectively.

Generally, crimes of violence involve a face to face encounter between the victim and the offender, whereas with property crimes, this personal confrontation is usually absent. This means that the victims of violent crimes are more often able to identify the person responsible for the offence than are other victims, leading to higher clearance rates for violent as compared to property crimes. For the crime of robbery in 1984, 28% of the offences were cleared by charge; four percent were cleared otherwise²; and 68% were not cleared.

Review of Robbery Literature

Literature dealing specifically with the victims of robbery has, up to date, been very limited. When examining studies that focused on the crime of robbery, very few were found that even mentioned the victim. Those that did, only did so by providing a brief description of the victim's physical attributes, for example, or in outlining the circumstances in which the victim was attacked. Most attention centred on the characteristics of the robbery, itself, and on the characteristics of the offender (for example, McClintock and Gibson, 1961; Normandeau, 1968; Conklin, 1972; MacDonald, 1975; and, Ciale and Leroux, 1984). Although the primary focus of this thesis is the victims of

² Police know the identity of the suspect but the victim refuses to sign a complaint.

robbery, some reported characteristics of this crime will also be described. This has been done in an attempt to make the reader more knowledgeable about the crime of robbery.

McClintock and Gibson (1961) studied robbery cases recorded in London in 1950 and 1957. The data used were those documented by the police in crime reports and information obtained from criminal record dossiers, attention being given primarily to the offender. For example, their study examined such factors as the offender's social background, penal record, pattern of criminal behavior and punishment. Only one brief section in their work on robbery mentioned the victim.

According to these authors, there were five circumstances in which individuals became the victim of a robbery: 1) robbery of persons who, as part of their employment, were in charge of money or goods; 2) robbery in the open following a sudden attack; 3) robbery on private premises; 4) robbery after preliminary association of short duration between victim and offender; and, 5) robbery in cases of previous association of some duration between victim and offender.

Furthermore, McClintock and Gibson found most victims of robbery to be male (71% in 1957), ten percent of victims were under the age of 21, 20% were over the age of 50, three-quarters of the victims were alone, and about half of the victims were likely to be in charge of money or goods during working hours.

Normandeau (1968) studied trends and patterns in crimes of robbery from among 1,722 cases that occurred in Philadelphia between 1960 and 1966.³ His primary source of data was police records from which he collected information on 1,785 victims, 2,482 offenders, and 892 arrested offenders.

With regard to overall trends in Philadelphia, the following statistics were calculated: 44% of the robberies produced no injury at all, with 56% producing some injury to the victims - 26% minor; 25% treatment and discharged; and, five percent hospitalization.

When looking at the occurrence of robbery in Philadelphia, 52% occurred in the open following sudden attacks on individuals. Twenty-six percent of the robberies were of persons in charge of money or goods as part of their employment, seven percent were of householders on private premises, ten percent were between victim and offender with short-term associations, and five percent of the robberies were between victim and offender associations of long duration.

Among robberies in the open following sudden attacks: 50% were committed against males; 40% against females; and ten percent against victims under the age of 14.

Whereas other crimes of violence involve persons known to each other, more than 85% of all robberies were committed

³ Much of Normandeau's work has only been reported in French and so, because of this language barrier, the researcher was able to examine only those studies reported in English.

against complete strangers.

Up to 60% of the robberies in Philadelphia were not solved, thereby allowing many robbers to enjoy freedom from punishment. Different types of robbery, however, did have different clearance rates. Robberies involving persons in charge of money or goods as part of their employment, for example, had clearance rates between 20 and 30%. It was only when there were previous associations between the offender and victim that the chances of impunity fell quite drastically. The proportion of unsolved robberies of persons in charge of money or goods increased from 70% in 1960 to over 80% in 1966.

Normandeau also found that in Philadelphia there was a significant relationship between robbery and the race and sex of both the offender and victim. Black and male involvement in robbery exceeded their proportions in the general population. Whites, however, when compared with other crimes of violence, were more often victimized in crimes of robbery. White victims were subject to more serious robberies than black victims, as well as all male victims in comparison to all females. Black offenders were associated more with serious robberies in comparison with white offenders, as well as all male offenders in comparison with female offenders.

Among offenders, the age groups '15-19' and '20-24' were most common, while for victims the age groups '20-24' and '25-29' predominated. The chances of becoming a victim or

offender in a robbery under the age of 15 were very low, while over the age of 50, the chances of being a victim were much higher than that of being an offender.

With regard to temporal patterns, robberies were more frequent on Fridays and Saturdays, at night, and during the winter months (particularly December). When spatial patterns were considered, other crimes of violence usually occurred inside a dwelling but most robberies occurred outdoors in street settings. Robbers also tended to travel farther in order to find victims unknown to them.

Normandeau's study revealed that alcohol was present in less than 15% of the cases: eight percent in the victim alone; four percent in the offender alone; and, three percent in both the victim and offender. This, stated Normandeau, was quite different from other violent crimes, where the presence of alcohol is much higher.

Also, very few victims (8%), but a high proportion of robbers (84%), had a prior arrest record. This finding, stated Normandeau, was opposite to that of other crimes of violence in which victims, not offenders, had the higher proportion of prior arrest records.

Finally, Normandeau (1968) found that two-thirds of those arrested and over three-quarters of those who went to court were found guilty, with severity of punishment being associated with such variables as: male offender; armed robbery (versus unarmed

robbery); guilty on two or more charges; and, prior conviction record for robbery.

Conklin (1972) studied robbery rates from 1960 to 1969 for Boston, for cities the size of Boston (population between 500,000 and 1,000,000) and for the United States as a whole. He examined trends in robbery rates, types of offenders, and other demographic aspects of the crime. However, little reference was made to victims of this crime.

It was not until 1981 that the work of Normandeau provided the first substantial Canadian account of robbery from the perspective of the victim. As Normandeau (1981:307) put it:

The professionals in the justice system (judges, lawyers, criminologists) and even prisoners have had a great deal to say in the past few years. It is time we also listened to the victims.

In his study, Normandeau (1981) assessed the attitudes and experiences of 100 robbery victims. These victims were selected at random from statistical files on armed robbery in Montreal in 1979. One-quarter of the victims were bank employees, two-thirds were the employees or owners of other businesses, and nearly ten percent had been robbed in a public place or on the street. Equal numbers of both male and female victims were interviewed.

With respect to the impact of armed robbery, information was gathered as to the physical, financial, and psychological aftermath. The physical aftermath was found to be minimal as less than five percent of victims suffered from physical injuries. Financial losses were of greatest concern to the small

businesspersons since employees in larger businesses did not view the money as theirs personally. Although most businesses were covered by insurance there was the fear (especially among small businesspersons) of having to pay higher premiums if they were the target of too many robberies. Psychologically, Normandeau (1981:309) found that different victims suffered different consequences:

The psychological aftermath is harder to assess but seems to be of major proportions. About half the victims suffered only slight aftereffects of this type, according to their own testimony. After the shock caused by the incident, they still felt a certain fear, but quickly regained control of their emotions. They say that after several hours they no longer felt any ill effects. Most of these people are clerks and cashiers at banks who had experienced robberies where the assailants had operated quickly, calmly and smoothly.

On the contrary, the other half, particularly the small storekeepers, believe that they have been permanently scarred. At the moment of the attack these victims were seized with a nameless terror, and often the fear of losing their lives. They say they sustained a nervous shock and are still suffering from it. In spite of these traumas and psychological disturbances, these people continue to live as normal a working life as possible. As they put it, the fear, the sleeplessness, the haunting memories and nightmares, though they have changed their lives, are no logical reason to stop working.

Some sold their businesses or changed jobs after the robbery; the majority, however, on thinking it over, were unable to resign themselves to this fate.

The degree to which the persons were victimized appeared to depend on two factors: "duration" and "frequency". As the duration of the robbery increased and the frequency with which one was robbed increased, so did the feeling of anxiety (Normandeau, 1981:309).

Normandeau also found that for the majority of these victims, contact with the criminal justice system ended with the police. Only a handful of victims attended court, for only one case of armed robbery out of four was solved by the police and only five percent of these solved cases involved them as witnesses. For those victims who did attend court, their views of the judicial process were quite negative. Such factors as delays, legal jargon, collusion between prosecutors and the defence, and too lenient sentences brought about these negative attitudes.

The study of armed robbery in Ottawa, by Ciale and Leroux (1984) focused on the ways and means of preventing this type of crime through target hardening.⁴ Data for this study were collected from 495 armed robbery incidents reported to the City of Ottawa in 1981.

The targets found to be most vulnerable were small merchants, druggists, convenience store clerks, gas station attendants, and lone individuals. With respect to the date and time of occurrence, armed robberies were found to occur most frequently on Friday (22%) and least frequently on Sunday (1%). With the exception of the month of November⁵ (16%), any month of the year was equally vulnerable to armed robbery (8% per month). Most robberies (56%) occurred between 19:00 and 24:00 hours

⁴Target hardening refers to the setting up of obstacles in an attempt to delay the actual act of robbery.

⁵This was attributed to earlier nightfall, pre-Christmas shopping, etc.

which was usually the period just before closing time. It was also found that more offenders committed armed robbery alone than in groups for all types of targets, including banks, which were robbed by more than one offender only 44% of the time.

As stated earlier, one of the basic elements of robbery is violence, or the *threat* of violence. Ciale and Leroux (1984) found that offenders threatened the victims in 58% of the robberies (the threat of violence not being specified in the other 42% of the cases) for the purpose of creating fear and for establishing immediate control of the situation. While offenders used many types of weapons to control both the victim and the situation, the preferred weapon was a firearm - reported in 43% of the robberies. Also revealed in the study was that over half of the offenders (55%) did not use any disguise but that most victims - because of their surprise and shock - were unable to recall details after the incident had occurred. It appeared that the preferred method of approach was on foot (46%), as well as the means of escape (59%), presupposing that the offender was familiar with the target area. Although on foot and not using a fast get-away car, the number of offenders arrested at the scene of the crime, or in the vicinity, was very low (11%). While any business establishment could become a target of armed robbery, most targets were located either on or near a main artery or in isolated areas allowing for easy access and escape. Ciale and Leroux (1984) found that injury to victims was not a common occurrence - 93% of the victims were not hurt. Of those who were

injured: less than one percent required long hospitalization; less than one percent, again, required short-term hospitalization; four percent required first-aid at a hospital; and, one percent first-aid at the scene of the crime. Of those seven percent injured, the greatest majority were attacked as they were walking home late at night or were depositing money.

In summary, all of these robbery studies provide information on the characteristics of the crime and on the offenders but, at the same time, offer little information about the robbery from the point of view of the victim. Chapter III describes a study undertaken in an attempt to allow victims the opportunity of providing information about their victimization and to express their attitudes towards the police. In turn, Chapter III also describes the attempt made to have police officers express their attitudes towards the victims.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

As a review of the literature has indicated, little has been documented which would help us to understand the crime of robbery as experienced by the victim. What the victim experiences and how he/she is affected by the robbery has, to date, been given minimal attention. This can also be said about information regarding the police and their contact with the robbery victim. As Zlotnick (1979:11) points out:

One of the reasons for a lack of model development in crisis intervention training for police in dealing with victims of burglary and robbery or with families of homicide victims can be attributed to an absence of critical information on the needs of such victims.

In an attempt to begin filling this informational gap on the needs of victims of robbery in specific, the following objectives were set out for the study:

1. To provide a descriptive analysis of the role of police officers responding to a call of robbery;
2. To provide a descriptive analysis of the reactions of victims when robbed;
3. To measure the attitudes of victims towards the police with respect to the robbery they reported;
4. To measure the attitudes of police officers towards the robbery victims;
5. To determine the needs of victims resulting from the robbery; and,

6. To determine what, if anything, the police can do to help meet these needs.

Moreover, it was believed that the collection of data from two sample sets would allow for comparative analyses between the two samples and would also undoubtedly contribute to the accumulation of some vital information.

Scope

This research was conducted in the city of Winnipeg, Manitoba, which has a population of approximately 564,473 (Canadian Crime Statistics, 1981). Data were collected over a one year period - from September 1st, 1983 to August 31st, 1984 - and included data from all six police stations/districts within the city. As of August 31st, 1984, 1065 officers were employed by the city's police department.

Sample

The sample consisted of 64 robbery victims and 70 police officers. With respect to the victims, all had, because of their employment, been involved in a robbery within the time frame specified by this study. Although some of these victims had experienced a robbery outside the time frame of this study, the collection of data was based solely on their most recent victimization i.e., the most recent robbery victimization occurring within the specified time frame. All of the victims

were working in either a convenience store, gas station or pharmacy when the robbery occurred. Only six of the victims were actual owners of the businesses which were the subject of a robbery.

With respect to the police officers, all had a minimum of five years experience with the force, with 58 ranked as 'constable' and 12 ranked as 'detective'. This five year minimum was chosen in an attempt to ensure that the officers interviewed had experience responding to a variety of robbery calls. Although this reduced the number of officers who could be selected for interview, and may have resulted in the sampling of officers whose reactions and attitudes towards victims had become more routinized and jaded over the years, it was believed, on balance, that the data set was of greater value if it included officers who had more experience dealing with robbery victims.

Data Sources

The first source of data was the Winnipeg Police Department. Having been employed by the department prior to the commencement of this research gave me the opportunity to meet with the constable in charge of the Victim Services Program¹ and allowed

¹The Victim Services Program began in May 1982, headed by a constable of the Winnipeg Police Department. The purpose of the program was to become available to three types of victims:

1. Victims of all robberies in the city (excluding businesses) who were to be contacted by phone or, if this failed, contacted in person.

me to develop some knowledge about police record keeping practices. With the aid of this constable, information was compiled from the police daily occurrence reports. These reports were records kept of the day's criminal activities, documenting the types and locations of offences committed, the names of those involved, along with a brief summary of each incident. The second source of information was interviews conducted with robbery victims and with police officers. These data were collected with the aid of two questionnaires - one designed specifically for the victims and the other questionnaire designed specifically for the officers.

The victim survey was, in part, adapted from a set of questions administered during a burglary study currently being conducted through the Home Office in England.² Additional questions viewed as appropriate were also constructed and

1(cont'd)

2. Victims of all residential break-ins within Winnipeg who were to be sent a letter describing the program and encouraging any inquiries they may have.
3. Victims of all break and enters in the city who were 60 years of age or over. These individuals were to be contacted in person and to be provided with assistance upon request.

Persons referred to Victim Services from other police departments or agencies were also to be contacted. Essentially, the main purpose of contacting the victims was to offer them immediate assistance, and refer them, if required, to other available agencies.

Subsequent to the favourable response received from persons contacted by the program, a decision was made to contact as many victims as possible, especially in cases of violence. Officers are now encouraged to bring to the attention of the Victim Services anyone who they feel requires the program's assistance.

²The authors of this instrument are members of Steer, Davies and Gleave, Ltd.

incorporated into the interviewing instrument. In keeping with the objectives of this research, the victim questionnaire comprised segments which dealt with the following: 1) the robbery; 2) police visits; 3) the victims; 4) police investigation in general; 5) crime prevention; 6) evaluation of the investigation; and, 7) robberies and the police in general (see Appendix B).

The questionnaire designed for the police officers mirrored many of the questions posed to the robbery victims and was also designed to meet the objectives of this research (see Appendix C).

Procedure

At the outset, through the use of the police daily occurrence reports, all robberies reported to the police within the time frame of this study were recorded. These data included all known occurrences of personal, residential, and commercial crimes of robbery. Although a comparative study of all three types of robbery would have been the ideal, several problems arose with this concept. To begin with, in Winnipeg, due to the infrequent occurrence of residential robberies, a large enough sample size could not be generated. And although there were several reports of personal robbery, especially pursesnatchings, the complainants were, for the most part, quite elderly. Such victims, because of their age and because of Winnipeg's diverse

ethnic population, also posed a problem. For many of the elderly, English is not their first language, creating a definite barrier for survey research.

Once the possibility of including these two types of robbery in the research was rejected, attention focused on commercial robberies committed within the city limits. The most popular targets were convenience stores, gas stations and pharmacies. It was decided at this time that the victims of these three target businesses would become the focal point of this study.³

Once this was determined, and again from police daily occurrence reports, names of the individuals so victimized were recorded, along with their address and telephone number. Next, a letter was sent by the Winnipeg Police Department to all of the victims describing the research and asking for their cooperation (see Appendix A).

A few days after the letters were sent, an attempt was made to contact the victims by telephone and to set up a time at which point I would meet with them and conduct the interview. However, after making the first few telephone calls, it was learned that these interviews would be granted by more victims

³Although the Winnipeg Police Department maintains records documenting annual incident rates of robbery, these rates are broken down into the three types of robbery (i.e., 'robbery with firearms', 'robbery with other offensive weapons', and 'other robbery') and not the targets of these robberies. In Winnipeg, for the year 1984, the robbery rates were as follows: 1) 138 'robbery with firearms' - 76 cleared by charge, 1 otherwise, 2) 226 'robbery with other offensive weapons' - 96 cleared by charge, 2 otherwise, and 3) 565 'other robbery' - 337 cleared by charge, 6 otherwise.

if conducted over the telephone. Most of the individuals I talked to seemed to be too busy with other activities and could not find the time for face to face interviews. Nevertheless, they were quite willing to grant interviews conducted over the phone. In fact, once it was decided upon to make this change in the procedure, not one victim whom I spoke to refused to respond to a telephone interview. Out of a possible 84 victims who were sent a letter, a total of 64 respondents were actually contacted by telephone. The remaining 20 victims could not be contacted because they had either moved following the robbery without leaving a forwarding address, or were not reachable by telephone. Little, if any, information could be obtained about the characteristics of these victims -- a situation which prevented any conclusion being drawn as to whether or not they differed in any important respects than the victims who were interviewed.

The data collection tool used during the interview was a questionnaire. Having such a device that was very straightforward in nature, with the majority of questions having fixed responses, made it possible to switch from interviews to be conducted in person to those conducted over the telephone. Although there are advantages and disadvantages associated with any method of obtaining information, administering a telephone survey instead of a face to face survey did not present any difficulties nor suggest that the quality of responses would suffer.

As already mentioned, the questions were, for the most part, designed with fixed responses. For those questions with more than three alternatives, the question was broken down into a series of simpler questions. As with face to face interviews, the respondents in the telephone survey were still able to ask any questions they might have concerning the meaning of any of the items. Despite the fact that their names were known, not speaking to them in person seemed to preserve a certain degree of anonymity and appeared to elicit more cooperation from the victims. According to Sudman and Bradburn (1982), when results from previous studies were observed (except in cases where answers to threatening questions are sought), one method of data collection was not found to be superior to another. Backstrom and Hursh-Cesar (1981:21-2) also maintain that the attitude once held by some that telephone data is of lesser quality than face to face interviews is no longer supportable. With respect to this study, administering the victim questionnaire by telephone also proved to be less time consuming and less costly.

Somewhat surprisingly, the verbal interaction between interviewer and interviewee always went very smoothly. From the moment of contact with the victims, no problems were encountered in establishing the legitimacy of the survey. As soon as mention was made of the introductory letter they received from the police department, the victims did not question my identity. Again, no refusals for participating in the survey were given. On the contrary, respondents appeared quite willing to offer

their account of the victimizing experience and many gave the impression of appreciating having someone interested in their plight. Each interview lasted approximately 20-30 minutes. Once all victim telephone interviews were completed, the next task was to interview police officers.

To begin with, a letter was sent to the officer in charge at each of the six police stations within the city by a member of the downtown police department. This letter described the research being undertaken and asked for the officer's cooperation. Following the letter, a telephone call was placed to each senior officer in charge to determine his willingness in having his officers participate in the study. Each of the senior officers granted me his cooperation and a convenient date and time for the administration of interviews was arranged. I arrived at each station at the end and beginning of a shift so that a large number of police officers would be available for the interviews. At each district station I was directed to a small office from which to conduct the interviews. Again, as with the victim interviews, collection of data was aided by the use of a questionnaire. I was told that as an officer became available i.e., came in from off the streets or just before doing so - he/she would be sent to the office. The refusal rate, if there was one, was difficult to assess since the officers were requested by their superior to participate in the survey. To the best of the interviewer's knowledge, no officer refused this request. All of the officers seemed willing to partake in

the study.

When the officers first came into the office, some appeared apprehensive but after the purpose of the the questionnaire was explained and after the first few questions were asked, the officers became more relaxed. In fact, many of the police officers themselves helped to 'break the ice' with the next respondent by telling them, for example, that the "questions aren't too difficult", or that "the interview wasn't at all too painful". Each interview generally lasted for 10-15 minutes, with approximately 8-12 officers being interviewed at each police station.

Victim Questionnaire

Most of the items contained in the victim questionnaire were adapted from a set of questions currently being undertaken in a burglary study in the United Kingdom. A few additional questions considered as appropriate with respect to the objectives of the survey were also developed and included in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into the following sections:

1. The Robbery: This section contained items concerned with the victim's prior involvement, if any, with the crime of robbery, along with his/her most recent robbery experience. With respect to the most recent robbery reported, the items assessed the occurrence of personal injury, damage to

property/merchandise and whether any other inconvenience was suffered as a result of the robbery. Except for this last open-ended item assessing any other inconvenience, the items were all fixed response.

2. Police Visits: The fixed response items here, were used to generate information on the police investigation. For example, how many officers responded to the crime scene, how long did they stay, how long did it take them to arrive, etc., with additional items in this section assessing what the police officers did once they responded to the victim's call for help. In turn, items concerned with how the victims described the way in which the police conducted their inquiries were also asked.

3. The Victims: Items in this section were concerned with the respondents' reactions to their victimization. For example, by giving a 'yes' or 'no' response, victims were asked if they reacted with feelings of anger, surprise, fear, confusion, and so on, at the time of the incident. Items were also concerned with whether or not the respondents received any help in dealing with their feelings, and whether or not there was any other kind of assistance they could have used from the police but did not get. If respondents answered 'yes' to these items, they were asked to specify.

4. Investigation in General: Respondent items in this section assessed, through the use of fixed responses, such information as the victims' ability to give the police any description, did they feel that this was a strong or weak lead, whether anyone was arrested in connection with the robbery, did the police give any indication of the chances of apprehending the robber(s), and did the police ever indicate they had finished their inquiries into the incident.

5. Crime Prevention: In this section, victims were asked about the advice, if any, they received from the police on preventing robbery and about the advice, if any, they received about a Victim Services Program. One fixed response item was also concerned with reasons given by the victims as to why they were robbed. Was it because of such factors as: the number of staff present at one time; location of the business; merchandise available; hours of operation; or some other reason(s). If the victims felt they were robbed because of some other reason, they were asked to specify.

6. Evaluation: With the use of a five point Likert scale, victims were asked to rate the following aspects of the police investigation: the manner of the police officers; the advice given on crime prevention; and the information, if any, given about what was happening with the police

investigation.⁴ A five point Likert scale was also used to obtain the victims' overall level of satisfaction with the way the police conducted their inquiries, and their satisfaction with the way the police treated them as people. In addition, the victims were asked to respond either 'yes' or 'no' to an item assessing what the victims would like to see from the police if they were to be robbed again in a similar manner.

7. Robberies and the Police in General: Finally, this section tried to assess the victims' knowledge about business robberies and the police in general. Four items were used to ask the following: 1) For every five robberies of businesses in this area, how many do you think the police were able to solve last year?; 2) For every five robberies of businesses, in how many of the cases does the victim suffer personal injury?; 3) Out of five robberies of businesses, the premises receive damage by the robber in how many cases?; and, 4) Would you say that most robberies of businesses occur during the week or on weekends?

⁴For example, whether anyone was arrested in connection with the case, or whether the case was, indeed, still being actively investigated by the police.

Police Member Questionnaire

As already stated, the items in this survey mirrored most of the items described in the victim questionnaire. The only major differences were in two of the sections - one labelled 'The Victims' and the other labelled 'Crime Prevention'. In the former section, additional items were included concerned with whether or not the police officers felt they were able to help the victims deal with their feelings and whether they felt it was their responsibility to try and do so. In the latter section, one additional item assessed the police officers' feelings about receiving training relating to the needs of victims following a robbery.

Before the results of the data collected from both sets of respondents are discussed, a brief note on data analysis is necessary.

Data Analysis

Upon the completion of both victim and police questionnaires, the first step in preparing the data for statistical analysis was the coding of responses. Having structured items with fixed options did not make this task difficult, in that, for every response category possible, a number was assigned to that category. Those few items characterized by open ended responses were left uncoded.

The principal purpose of the two questionnaires was to provide descriptive analyses of a robbery experience from the view of its victims and of the police investigation which follows as a result of the robbery. In an attempt to do this, frequencies, crosstabulations and correlational statistics were generated. To test the strength of association between two variables the chi square (χ^2) statistic was used. The following chapter discusses the results of the data analyses compiled with the aid of the Michigan Terminal System at Simon Fraser University, using the SPSSx statistical package.

CHAPTER IV
RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

As a means of structuring the presentation of data, results from the victim survey will be reported first, followed by results of the police member survey. In addition to the reporting of results collected through the two surveys, comparisons between the victim and police data will also be made.

Victim Survey

Demographic Variables

Of the 64 victims who were interviewed, 52% were women and 48% were men, with the majority of respondents being single (78%). The respondents' ages ranged from 18 to 62 years although much of the sample fell to the lower end of this scale, the mean age being 27. For the purpose of data analysis, these ages were divided into two categories: '18-25' years (59%) and '26-62' years (41%). Respondents were evenly distributed by employment with 36% working as clerks in convenience stores, 39% hired as gas station attendants and 25% employed as pharmacists.

All 64 victims stated they always reported to the police following a robbery although the majority (77%) had not been robbed prior to this last occasion. Of those 23% who had reported a previous robbery, 93% had done so once or twice

before. It was made clear at this point, however, that the questions asked of the victims were aimed at their most recent robbery experience.

The Robbery

A review of the literature revealed that most crimes (except, of course, crimes of murder or assault) do not end in injury to the victims (Task Force, 1983; MacDonald, 1975). A similar finding was obtained in this study for only a minority of victims (9%) suffered physical harm as a result of the robbery. All of these injuries, except for one victim who was stabbed in the arm, were relatively minor e.g., cuts and bruises. As for property damage caused by the robber(s), 31% of the victims stated that some damage did occur, although none described the premises as being 'badly damaged'. Other than physical injury, some victims (17%) stated they suffered additional inconvenience as a result of the robbery. When asked to specify, most complained of having to stay after closing time or after finishing their shift to answer police questions. One victim, in particular, was angered with the fact that because of having to stay overtime, she had to wait for the bus at a much later hour. This, after just becoming the victim of a serious crime, made her very nervous. As well, two victims had their personal identification and money stolen.

In summary, for the majority of respondents, this was their first experience as a robbery victim. While no serious physical

injuries were incurred, the premises received at least a little damage in over one quarter of the robberies. Other than physical injury, the most common complaint of the victims stemming from the robbery was the time spent at the scene once the police arrived. Most wanted to leave the premises as soon as possible.

Police Visits

With respect to the police investigation and how many times the police came to investigate the robbery, the majority (84%) stated they came once or twice. The most frequent answer recorded as to the number of police officers arriving on the scene was six, with 41% of the victims giving this response. This was followed with responses of four police officers (28%) and eight officers (14%), the mean being five. As for how long the police officers stayed at the scene of the robbery, 60 minutes was the most frequently cited response (30%) by the victims. Other victim responses did range, however, anywhere from 20 minutes to 120 minutes, the mean time being 59 minutes.

Almost all of the victims (95%) stated that it took the police 'less than 15 minutes' to get to the scene from the time they were called. Sixty-one percent of these victims thought the police were 'very fast' in arriving at the robbery site and 31% felt they were 'fast'. Three percent stated they were 'neither slow nor fast'. The remaining five percent of victims stated it took the police '16-30' minutes to arrive and believed this response rate to be 'slow'.

When asked what the police did once they arrived, the answers given were generally the same for the following three items: the majority stated the police officers asked for details of how the robbery happened; stated the officers took a signed statement of the details of the robbery; and, asked for details of the goods stolen. Some (23%) also indicated that fingerprints, footprints and/or photographs were also taken.

When victims were asked to evaluate (by means of a five point bi-polar continuum), the way in which the police officers conducted their inquiries at the time of the initial report, the following results were recorded. Beginning with the question, "Would you say the police officers were...", responses were distributed in the following manner:

1. Thorough or neglectful - 91% very thorough/fairly thorough;
2. Organized or disorganized - 95% very organized/fairly organized;
3. Experienced or inexperienced - 94% very experienced/fairly experienced;
4. Rushed or ready to take the time (i.e., were the officers ready to take the time to write up a detailed report, to try and do all that they could to bring things back under control, etc., or were they rushed?) - 91% very ready to take the time/fairly ready to take the time; and
5. Expert or amateur - 62% very expert/fairly expert.

In summary, the police were given very positive evaluations by the victims in the way they conducted their initial inquiries

with very few negative ratings recorded for the five items measured (see Table 4.1). In their evaluation overall, 88% were very satisfied/fairly satisfied.

Again, using a five point, bi-polar continuum, victims were also asked to describe the manner of the police officers. This was done with the aid of seven items. Beginning with the question, "Would you say the police officers were...", responses were distributed in the following manner:

1. Sympathetic or unsympathetic - 63% very sympathetic/fairly sympathetic;
2. Special or routine (i.e., did the officers treat their case as one which was special or routine?) - 86% very routine/fairly routine;
3. Unhelpful or helpful - 61% very helpful/fairly helpful;
4. Polite or rude - 95% very polite/fairly polite;
5. Informative or uninformative (i.e., of what was happening and/or going to happen) - 27% very informative/fairly informative; 45% neither informative nor uninformative; and 28% very uninformative/ fairly uninformative;
6. Considerate or Inconsiderate - 79% very considerate/fairly considerate; and,
7. Concerned or unconcerned - 72% very concerned/fairly concerned.

Again, the majority of victims gave very positive evaluations in terms of the manner of the police officers. All responses, except for one item, were favourable ones and,

Table 4.1

Frequencies of Victims' Responses
to the Way the Police Conducted Their Inquiries

	Very	Fairly	Neither	Fairly	Very	
Thorough	37 (58%)	21 (33%)	6 (9%)	.	.	Neglectful
Organized	50 (78%)	11 (17%)	2 (3%)	.	1 (2%)	Disorganized
Experienced	36 (56%)	24 (38%)	4 (6%)	.	.	Inexperienced
Rushed	2 (3%)	1 (2%)	9 (14%)	4 (6%)	48 (75%)	Ready
Expert	20 (31%)	20 (31%)	24 (38%)	.	.	Amateur

indeed, often very favourable. The one item which drew a negative response, however, was that which evaluated how informative or uninformative were the officers (see Table 4.2). Many of the victims complained that the officers furnished them with very few details about what was happening and/or going to happen but that such information would have been helpful (a similar need for information was found by the Task Force (1983) in their report on victims of crime in general).

An interesting finding, although not significant at the .05 level, was that females were more than twice as likely (71%) to describe the police officers as being informative than were the males (29%). Therefore, the police may indeed provide more

Table 4.2

Frequencies of Victims' Responses to
the Manner of the Police Officers

	Very	Fairly	Neither	Fairly	Very	
Sympathetic	28 (44%)	12 (19%)	11 (17%)	.	13 (20%)	Unsympathetic
Special	7 (11%)	.	2 (3%)	1 (2%)	54 (84%)	Routine
Unhelpful	3 (5%)	1 (2%)	21 (33%)	10 (16%)	29 (45%)	Helpful
Polite	53 (83%)	8 (13%)	1 (2%)	.	2 (3%)	Rude
Informative	10 (16%)	7 (11%)	29 (45%)	4 (6%)	14 (22%)	Uninformative
Considerate	38 (59%)	13 (20%)	8 (13%)	1 (2%)	4 (6%)	Inconsiderate
Concerned	34 (53%)	12 (19%)	12 (19%)	3 (5%)	3 (5%)	Unconcerned

information when dealing with women than with men. A further finding -- and one which was significant -- was that victims were more likely to describe the officers as being 'neither informative nor uninformative' in cases where no damage was sustained (83%), compared to cases where there was damage to property ($x^2=6.41$, $df=2$, $p=.0406$). In cases where there was damage, respondents were half as likely to perceive the officers as being uninformative (33%) (compared to 67% in no damage cases). One reason for this, although purely speculative, could be that officers perceived victims as being more upset in cases

where damage occurred and therefore warranted more information to the victims.

In summary, in their *overall* evaluations of the manner of the police officers, an equal number of victims (34%) thought it was either 'as expected' or 'a little better than expected', with a few victims (20%) giving the officers' manner a 'much better than expected' evaluation. The remaining respondents described their manner as 'a little disappointing'. Only 22%, however, stated they would want the police to improve their manner.

With respect to the way the police treated the victim as a person, the majority (89%) were either very satisfied/fairly satisfied.¹ Only two percent were 'very dissatisfied', five percent 'fairly dissatisfied', and four percent were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'.

When asked whether or not the responding police officers left an incident card along with a telephone number at which they could be contacted in case of further question, the majority of the victims (70%) stated they did receive such a card with five percent of the victims responding to the 'don't

¹ Curtis (1970:85) reported similar satisfaction levels in his study on attitudes of the Toronto public towards the police, in which he interviewed 967 individuals, aged 18 years and over. When asked whether they held favourable or unfavourable attitudes, the majority of respondents (85%) stated they were favourably disposed towards the police. One additional finding of his, although not found in this study, was that the younger respondents (especially in the '18-24' age group) were generally more likely to have feelings of hostility towards the police than older respondents.

know' category. Over half of the victims (58%) indicated they were encouraged to contact the police in case of further information or questions, although again, some (20%) responded with 'don't know'.

Just over one quarter of the victims were present at the scene when the police made a second visit and, in general, the same procedure was followed by the officers as on the first visit. The only difference was that most of the victims (92%) stated that more advice (6%) was given on crime prevention during the subsequent visit. This follow-up was conducted by detectives rather than patrol officers, suggesting that the former give such advice more than do the latter types of officers. Overall, including both first and second visits, 69% of victims rated the advice on crime prevention 'as expected' or 'a little better than expected' and more than half of the victims (55%), if they were to be robbed again, would want more of such advice.

Only six percent of the victims indicated they had been informed of the Victim Services Program by a police officer, with many (73%) who stated that, if they were to be robbed again, they would want more information about this program. Although not statistically significant, nearly twice as many victims (66%) between the ages of 18 and 25 would want more information about the Victim Services Program than those between the ages of 26 to 62 (34%).

The Victims

Of all the victims, both male and female, not one of them could say that he/she was not upset or bothered by the robbery. All were affected by their victimization. The following describes the feelings provoked as a result of the robbery experience:

Anger - 24 were angered, 40 were not;

Fear - 54 felt fear, 10 did not;

Pain - 6 experienced physical pain, 58 did not;

Surprise - 62 were surprised, 2 were not;

Confusion - 28 experienced confusion, 36 did not;

Sick - Only 3 actually felt sick, while 61 did not;

Nervous - 50 were nervous, 14 were not;

Crying - 24 stated they cried, 40 did not; and,

Other - 17 stated having experienced feelings other than those mentioned above although many could not put a specific name on these feelings. Hysteria and nervous laughter were cited by some victims.

In summary, all victims were affected in some way by their victimization with reactions ranging from surprise to physical illness. The three most commonly reported responses were surprise, fear and nervousness. A relationship found approaching statistical significance was found between the variable 'anger' and whether or not the victim had ever reported a robbery before. Respondents with no previously reported robbery victimization were more likely (85%) to *not* have feelings of

anger than those persons who had reported an earlier robbery (15%). It is easy to understand that victims become more angered with each robbery experience. Another interesting finding, though not significant, was that victims were three times more likely to have feelings of anger (75%) in those cases where some damage to property was sustained than in those incidents where no damage was caused by the robber(s) (25%). It is, again, quite easy to see why such findings were discovered. Even though the property that was damaged usually did not belong to the victims personally, a sense of having responsibility over the property may have set off these feelings of anger.

Upon the arrival of the police, half the victims stated they received help in dealing with their feelings. They indicated, for example, that the police officers tried to calm them down, had them sit down in order to relax, and/or gave them a chance to drink some coffee or water before giving the details of the robbery. These individuals who reported receiving help from the police were equally distributed among the convenience store, gas station and pharmacy victims. That is to say, victims who were pharmacists, for example, did not receive more help than victims who were gas station attendents or clerks in convenience stores, and vice versa. A significant relationship did exist, however, between this variable and the victim's gender for nearly twice as many females stated they received help from the police than did the males ($x^2=4.58$, $df=1$, $p=.0323$).

Upon the arrival of the police, while half the respondents stated they received help in dealing with their feelings, a few indicated they could have used further assistance in dealing with other matters. One victim, for example, stated he needed help in contacting his manager, while the other victims stated they would have appreciated a ride home after the ordeal was over.

Investigation in General

In summary, 57 victims (89%) indicated they were able to give the police officers a description of the suspect(s), and over half (61%) felt this gave the police a strong lead. Despite the feeling of being able to assist the police, the majority of victims (72%) did not know if anyone was actually arrested in connection with their case. According to the police, the chances of apprehending the suspect(s) were 'good' in over one third (38%) of the cases, 'fair' in 50% of the cases and 'poor' in the remaining cases. A disturbing factor for most of the victims (93%) was that they were not kept informed of the progress of the investigation nor did the police ever indicate to the victims that they had finished their inquiries into the case. One victim working as a pharmacist expressed her disappointment as follows:

It was about two months after the robbery had occurred when a customer, who had been a witness to the offence, came into the store. He was wondering if the police had caught the person responsible for the crime. I was sorry to say that I did not know. Since the initial report was taken by the officers, no one had informed me about the progress of the investigation. Not being able to answer

the customer's question made me feel embarrassed. It was as if I was to be blamed for not being informed.

Not surprising, then, was that 91% of the victims stated that if they were to be robbed again, they would definitely want to be given more information.

Crime Prevention

When asked about reasons why their place of employment was robbed, 60 out of the 64 victims attributed the robbery, in part, to one or more of the following factors: the number of staff present at one time (72%); the location of the business (45%); the merchandise available (37%); and the hours of operation (63%). Ten percent of the victims attributed the robbery to other reasons -- reasons such as not being busy all of the time, thereby reducing the chances of having many witnesses, and having quick and easy exits once the crime has been committed.

Robberies and the Police in General

In summary, nearly half of the victims (47%) estimated the police solve '2 out of every 5' business robberies, followed by 33% who estimated they solve '1 out of 5' such robberies. According to clearance rates for robbery in Winnipeg in 1984 (Canadian Crime Statistics, 1984), 37% of the offences were cleared, while 63% were not cleared. Using this same percentage for robberies of businesses in Winnipeg, then, suggests that approximately two in five such offences are actually solved by

the police - the category chosen by nearly one half of the victims, indicating their fairly accurate appraisal of clearance rates.

Further, nearly half of the victims (48%) believed that for every five robberies of businesses, '1 in 5' cases result in victim injury, followed by 27% who believed injury to occur in every '2 in 5' cases. In actuality, only nine percent of the robberies in this study resulted in injury to the victim (this was a similar percentage to that found by Ciale and Leroux (1984) in their study of robbery in Ottawa, although their seven percent finding referred to robbery victims in general and not to victims in charge of money or goods as part of their employment in specific). This would put the 'less than 1 in 5' category as the most probable figure, suggesting that victims believe injury to occur in more incidents than it actually does. Forty-four percent of the victims believed that for every five robberies of businesses, either '1 in 5' or '2 in 5' cases result in damage to the premises. Again, in actuality, 31% of the robberies in this study resulted in damage to the premises. When this percentage is calculated for every five robberies of businesses, then 1.6 premises out of the five would receive damage -- the figure closely estimated by the victims.

When asked what part of the week most robberies of businesses occur, over half (53%) thought most take place on the weekend (i.e., Saturdays and Sundays), while the others believed that most robberies occur during the week. These responses were

belied by the findings in this study which indicated that 77% of the robberies took place during the week. More robberies, then, were occurring during the week than most victims realized. While a review of the literature found most robberies to occur on Fridays and Saturdays (Normandeau, 1968; Ciale and Leroux, 1984), the most popular day for business robberies in this study was a Monday. Therefore, it is likely that different cities are characterized by different patterns of robbery.

In referring to the police in general, the victims were asked to respond to three statements, the first being, "The police are not so helpful to people like me". On a five point scale, the majority (83%) agreed or strongly agreed. The second statement was, "It is not the job of the police to comfort the victims of crime". Most (94%) strongly agreed/agreed. As for the third statement, "The police catch as many criminals as can be expected", 61% disagreed or strongly disagreed and 25% neither agreed nor disagreed. For both the first and second statements, those respondents who agreed with the statements were more likely to be in the '18-25' age category (62%) than in the '26-62' group (38%). Those respondents who disagreed with the third statement were also more likely to be in the younger age group category (56%) than in the older age group category (44%). As for any differences in gender, females (52%) were more likely to agree with the second statement than were males (48%). No differences in gender were found for the first and third statements. Responses to these statements, however, did lead to

some contradictory findings.

Although half the victims stated they received help from the police upon their arrival at the crime scene, 83% of the victim respondents also agreed with the statement, "The police are not so helpful to people like me". The majority of victims also agreed with the statement, "It is not the job of the police to comfort the victims of crime", but at the same time, were impressed by the fact that the officers seemed to understand how a robbery experience can effect a victim and, in turn, tried to help the victim deal with his/her feelings. Victims appeared prepared to judge police in general according to a role model which did not necessarily fit their own victimization experience and needs. Further, when the victims were asked to respond to the statement, "The police catch as many criminals as can be expected", the findings suggested that they did not believe the police were doing an outstanding job.

This disparity of views is not easy to explain although it may be that, when the victims were asked to evaluate police performance in general, they were less concerned with issues which affected them as individuals and more concerned with matters which were of importance to the community at large.

Conclusion

Upon analyzing the data overall, the findings suggest that the victims who participated in this study found their initial contact with the police, on the whole, to be positive. However,

the majority of victims, in their general evaluations of the police follow up procedures were, at times, quite critical. During the interviews respondents, although remarking upon the speed with which the police responded to their call for help and commenting positively about the politeness and concern shown by the officers, also expressed disappointment with the officers' seeming reluctance to provide information regarding what was happening and/or going to happen. Nearly all of those interviewed stated that this was the most disturbing aspect of their contact with the police, along with not being informed whether the police had finished their inquiries into the robbery. The respondents indicated that should they be the victim of another robbery, they would definitely want to be kept more informed about the police activities regarding their case.

Up to now, the discussion has focused on the victim respondents of this study and on information they were able to provide concerning their robbery experience and their contact with the police. The following pages provide a report on the data collected through the police member survey, and compare many of the findings to those furnished by the victims.

Police Member Survey

The Robbery

When asked how many times in all the police go to the scene to investigate a robbery, the majority of the 70 police officers (87%) stated once, coinciding with victim responses. Those officers who gave answers of more than once were all detectives - their answers not being unusual since detectives are the ones who are assigned to the robbery cases once the initial reports have been taken and their investigation may require one or more return visits to the scene of the robbery.

Estimates of the number of police officers who generally respond to an initial call varied from two to eight (Mean = 4) -- these figures were slightly lower than those given by the victims (Mean = 5). Responses concerning time spent at the robbery site were also quite varied - ranging anywhere from 15 minutes to two hours (Mean = 47 minutes). Responses given by the victims suggested a longer time span (Mean = 59 minutes). Respondents in the police sample were unanimous in their estimations of how long it takes the police to arrive on the scene from the time of dispatch. 'Less than 15 minutes' was the response given by all the officers as well as by the majority of victims.

Upon arriving at the scene of the robbery, the officers stated that the following procedures are generally followed. A check is first made to see if anyone is injured - medical

attention being summoned when necessary. The officers then try to quickly get a description of the suspect(s) and his/her getaway and broadcast it to other officers in the vicinity, making a search of the area themselves if there is a chance that the suspect is still nearby. Obtaining the names and detailed statements from the victim(s) or witnesses is the next step, along with collecting any evidence such as fingerprints, footprints, photographs, etc. (These procedures were comparable to those reported by the victims and were similar to those reported by Billingsley *et al.* (1984) in their study of robbery in Ottawa.)

Upon obtaining all the details of the robbery, the majority of police officers (99%) stated that an incident card is always left with the victims and that any further contact with the police by the victim is encouraged. In comparison, only 70% of victims stated they received such a card and, furthermore, only 58% stated they were encouraged to contact the police. Victim responses did, however, coincide with those given by the officers, in that any follow-up investigation on return visits was usually to reinterview the victims in an attempt to obtain additional information and/or have the victims view 'mug' shots. (This also coincided with the police literature e.g., Billingsley *et al.*, 1984; Task Force, 1983; and Ericson, 1981.)

The Victims

When asked what they believe the victims of a robbery feel at the time of the incident, the police officers who were interviewed gave the following responses:

- Not upset - only 4% of police stated that, in general, victims are not upset by the robbery incident;
- Anger - 39% of police believed victims feel anger, 61% do not;
- Fear - 76% of police believed victims feel fear, 24% do not;
- Pain - 6% of police believed victims feel pain, 94% do not;
- Surprise - 36% of police believed victims feel surprise, 64% do not;
- Confusion - 64% of police believed victims feel confusion, 36% do not;
- Sick - 7% of police believed victims feel sick, 93% do not;
- Nervous - 73% of police believed victims feel nervous, 27% do not;
- Crying - 51% of police believed victims cry, 49% do not; and
- Other - 3% of police stated the victims experience shock.

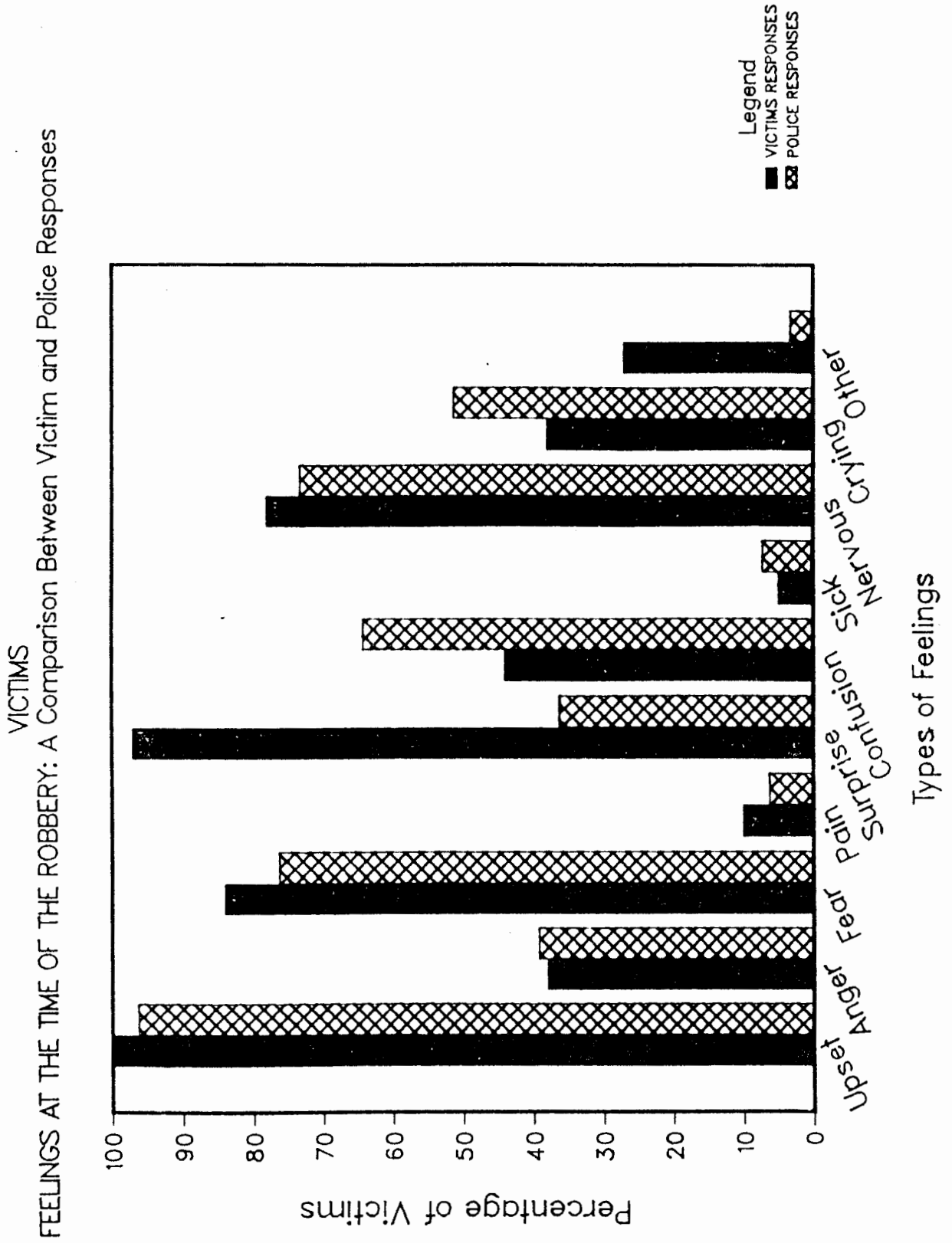
In summary, the police officers appeared to be very attuned to the feelings of victims at the time of the robbery. When asked to reveal what they thought the victims feel most, the three most frequent police responses matched those given by the victims i.e., feelings of fear, nervousness and confusion. The only major disparity was with the surprise category. More than

twice as many victims experience surprise than was perceived by the officers (see Figure 4.3). Although the majority of police officers (80%) believed they were able to help victims in dealing with these feelings, only half of the victims stated they received such help. Answers differed the most between the two sample groups when they were asked whether or not it is actually the responsibility of the police to try to help the victims deal with their emotions. The majority of officers (90%) felt it *was* their responsibility to do so yet almost the same majority of victims (94%) believed it was *not* the job of the police to comfort the victims of crime.

Investigation in General

According to the sample of police officers interviewed, the majority of robbery victims (54%) are able to give 'fair' descriptions of the robber(s). The remaining 27% give 'poor' descriptions, while 19% give 'good' descriptions. While 61% of the victims thought their descriptions provided a strong lead for the police investigation, the police stated that, in fact, these descriptions were only mildly helpful. This finding suggests that many of the respondents may believe that once the police have a description of the robber, the chances of apprehension are likely. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. While half of the 70 officers stated that the police usually provide victims with some indication as to the chances of apprehending the suspect(s), keeping the victim informed as

Figure 4.3



to the progress of the investigation was not found to be an everyday feature of detective work. Fifty-six percent stated this sort of contact occurred 'almost never'. Contacting the victims when inquiries into their case have ceased was also disclosed by detectives (67%) as being an infrequent occurrence, with six percent of these detectives indicating contact with the victim only following an arrest.²

Crime Prevention

The majority of police officers (84%) stated that advice on ways of preventing robbery is frequently given, however, less than half stated they inform the victim about the Victim Services Program. This failure to provide information about the program was corroborated by statements given by the victims. And while 60% of the officers believed that training relating to the needs of the victims following a robbery would be beneficial, 39% felt that on the job experience was training enough (one percent answered with 'don't know').

Asked for reasons why the three types of businesses were robbed (i.e., convenience stores, gas stations and pharmacies), responses of the police officers were very similar to those given by the victims. Both sets of respondents attributed the robberies largely to the number of staff present at one time, the hours of operation and the location of the business. With

²It should be noted that the officers tended to give statements which reflected their own activities and, therefore, did not represent the activities of all police officers.

just one staff member present at one time, this alone makes it easier for the robber to control the situation. When it turns out that the business is also opened at all hours and is located in an out of the way area, the offender has the chance of committing the robbery with very few witnesses thereby reducing his/her chances of being arrested.

Robberies in General

When asked how many robberies of businesses the police are able to solve out of five, 29% of the police officers responded with '2 in 5'. The two other most common responses were '3 in 5' (26%) and '1 in 5' (20%). Although the most frequent response given by the officers approximated the number of robberies solved in Winnipeg, a higher percentage of victims were able to estimate the actual rate of clearance.

More than half of the officers (53%) stated that 'less than 1 in 5' robberies result in injury to the victim - the actual figure found in this study.

More than half of the officers (60%) also believed that 'less than 1 in 5' robberies result in damage to the premises. Compared to actual findings of this study (where between one and two premises out of five received damage), the majority of the police responses underestimated this frequency rate. Surprisingly, the victims were better able to estimate the number of damaged premises.

Asked when they thought most robberies of businesses occur, 49% of the police officers believed most occur on weekends; 33% during the week; and 17% believed they occur in equal numbers during the week as on weekends. When contrasted with actual findings in this study, the majority of police responses, as well as the victim responses, underestimated the incidence of robberies occurring during the week.

Conclusion

The main purpose of administering the police member questionnaire, which mirrored several of the items asked of the victims, was to be able to compare these findings with those found in the victim survey. An analysis of the data, in terms of the technical aspects of the police investigation i.e., the response time, how many officers, how long do they stay, what do they do, etc., revealed answers similar to those given by the victims. The most frequent and strongest complaint of the victims i.e., of not being informed about the investigation, was supported by the police in that they, too, reported the rarity of such a procedure.

A second objective of the police survey was to measure the officers' awareness and ability to identify the feelings of victims at the time of the robbery. Findings suggested that the officers were, indeed, very attuned to their feelings - the three most frequent police responses reflecting those reported by the victims. Therefore, this understanding of what the

robbery victim experiences may explain the favorable evaluations generally given by the victims of their contact with members of the police agency.

As mentioned at the outset, the purpose of this chapter was to present to the reader the findings of the research. Some of the observations were, of course, more substantial and revealing than others. In the following concluding chapter, the major issues raised by the data are highlighted and discussed.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In Chapter II of this thesis, it was stated that, next to assault, the most prevalent violent crime in Canada in 1984 was robbery. Although in 1984 this offence category reported its second decrease nationally since 1978, there are still thousands of persons who become the victims of this crime every year. This high level of criminal victimization, states Zlotnick (1979:5), "mandates not only an improved capacity for dealing with crime and the apprehension of the criminal, but also an improved capacity for responding to the needs of the victims". Before police forces can do so, however, they must have more information about these needs.

This study was undertaken to at least begin the process of such data collection. Prior to the outset of the research, very little information was available -- especially with regard to the psychological trauma suffered by robbery victims and their needs following the robbery experience. Whereas previous research has reported on the psychological impact of violent crimes upon victims in general, this research has been more specific in nature, focusing on a particular set of respondents. The investigation was also valuable in that it reported on the contact three types of robbery victims (i.e., victims of convenience store, gas station or pharmacy robberies) had with members of the police agency. Not only was there a report on the

nature of this contact immediately after the robbery occurred, but also during the time following the initial completion of the robbery report. This concluding chapter now summarizes some of the major issues raised throughout the study, along with their implications, and offers suggestions for future research.

Summary of Findings and Their Potential Implications for Policy

In Chapter I, much of the discussion focused on the varied psychological phenomena that are associated with being a victim of a violent crime. The general reactions of individuals to their victimizing experience were described and it was noted that when persons are subjected to a sudden attack of violence, many are overwhelmed with such feelings as shock, fright, disbelief and often anger (Symonds, 1975; Bard and Sangrey, 1979; and, Everstine and Everstine, 1983). Although most victims are able to cope with the emotional impact resulting from the crime, the length of time needed for the healing process to occur may be anywhere from a few days to even years. The present study has led to findings which indicate that robbery victims experience an emotional impact similar to that of other victims of violent crime. Individuals who find themselves victims of a robbery react most often with feelings of surprise, fear and nervousness. Although the present study did not follow the victims through their recovery process, the respondents, at the time of the interviews, provided information which suggested they were generally able to cope with the psychological aspects

of being robbed.¹

Besides the personal strength of the victims to deal with stress, their ability to cope with the robbery experience may have been assisted by the efforts of the police officers who responded to their call for help. Subsequent to their arrival at the scene of the robbery, the majority of respondents indicated that these officers appeared concerned about their immediate feelings. Not only were the police officers prompt in responding, but their politeness, thoughtfulness and sympathetic manner made the respondents feel that someone really cared about their victimization.

The data obtained from the present study also reported on the officers' awareness of the victims' feelings at the time of the robbery. While a review of the literature implied that police in general were not conscious of victims' needs (Bard and Sangrey, 1979; Zlotnick, 1979), it appears that the officers involved in this study were attuned to at least the immediate *feelings* of victims of robbery. When asked what they thought robbery victims felt, the three most frequent police responses matched those given by the victims i.e., feelings of fear, nervousness and confusion. This does not mean, however, that

¹ Data, however, did suggest that the *impact* of robbery -- although similar to that experienced by other victims of violent crimes -- did not appear to be as severe in comparison to findings reviewed in Chapter I. The fact that most victims were just employees and not actual owners of the businesses that were robbed could have contributed to these findings. Interviewing victims up to one year after their robbery experience (when they have had the chance to recover from the ordeal) may have also been the reason for the lower reported level of traumatization.

these police officers were just as aware of the victim's *needs*. For the majority of victims, the most upsetting aspect of their experience with the police was the lack of information provided by them at the time of the initial report taking, and during any follow-up investigation.

Once the officers had completed their initial report at the scene of the robbery, victims wanted to know what was going to happen next. Were the police going to return on a subsequent visit to ask them more questions? Would officers return to have the victim look at mug shots? Would the victim have to go down to police headquarters to view a lineup of suspects? Although patrol officers do not know for certain, at the time of the initial report taking, what further assistance detectives taking over the case may require from the victims, informing them of what *may* be required would, as stated by the victims, have helped to reduce some of their anxieties associated with having to report a robbery.

For the majority of victims, again, the second upsetting aspect of their contact with the police was not being informed about the progress of the investigation into their case. The respondents were not appreciative of the fact that, after helping the police officers as best they could - including taking the time out, as many did, to go down to police headquarters in an attempt to identify the suspect - the police did not find the time to let them know how the investigation was progressing. Few victims were told whether or not an arrest had

been made, and none had been informed if inquiries into their case had been terminated in the absence of additional facts or evidence. If police officers were to make even one telephone call concerning their investigation, many of the robbery victims would be more than grateful for this show of concern and regard for their needs.

In summary, the data suggest that, at present, members of the police agency i.e., both patrol officers and detectives, are not conscious of the victims' needs for information. Training programs to help police officers become better aware of these victims' needs would likely improve communication between the two parties. As recommended by the Task Force (1983), if police officers are unable to provide certain informational assistance, victims need to at least know where to obtain such information.

The present study also found that only a small minority of the victims had been informed about the Winnipeg Police Department's "Victim Services Program". While some officers had made the victims aware of this program, many of the respondents did not even know of the program's existence until it was mentioned at the time of the interview. Almost three quarters of the robbery victims stated that, if they were to be robbed again, they would very much appreciate acquiring more knowledge about this program and its services. To do this, police officers could provide victims with a brochure describing the Program and, thereby, give the victims an additional opportunity for obtaining any further assistance.

Another finding of the present study was that while the victims were positively disposed towards the responding police officers during their initial response to the criminal event, they had more negative feelings towards the police relating to their subsequent follow up procedures. Despite their satisfaction with the way in which the police conducted their inquiries overall, victims did not believe the police were as helpful as they could be, nor did they catch as many criminals as might be expected. These negative responses from the victims may, again, reflect poor communication between themselves and the police. When the victims needed information, the police were not very helpful in providing such assistance. Since the officers did not attempt to make contact with them following the robbery, victims did not know if the offender had been apprehended. It is likely that many of the victims just assumed the criminal had escaped undetected. If the officers had made even one attempt during their investigation to make some kind of contact with these respondents, this may have been sufficient to change these negative attitudes.

When responses between the two sample populations of the present study were compared, significant disparity was uncovered in only one specific area. The data collected from both the victim and police surveys revealed a striking difference in attitudes concerning the role of the police. While the majority of victims believed it *was not* the responsibility of the police to comfort the victims of crime, the majority of police officers

felt it was their responsibility. Not only was this a surprising finding but it also appeared to contradict the finding made earlier that the victims were very appreciative of any comfort they received from the responding officers immediately after the robbery had taken place.

Two implications may be drawn from these seemingly contradictory results. First, victims tend to be aware only of the technical aspect of police work i.e., of catching criminals. From what was gleaned during the interviews with these respondents, the victims seemed to hold the belief that if the police have to spend time comforting victims, valuable time would be lost apprehending the offenders. But as police agencies have found, calmer and more relaxed victims are able to furnish better descriptions of the suspected criminals and provide more accurate accounts of their victimization (Zlotnick, 1979). Therefore, by having police officers assume the role of comforting victims, not only do the victims benefit but, as a result, the quality of the information victims are able to give the police is also enhanced. Second, in order to improve services to victims and to prove such a policy effective, the entire police department must take part. As recommended by the Task Force (1983:108), it is important that, "the responsibility for helping victims...is accepted as part of the normal duties of all members of the police departments and not simply that of a group of officers designated to do so". It is important that

both the police and victims be made aware of how they can each assist one another.

Suggestions for Research

While the two surveys used in this research yielded some interesting data, it must be kept in mind that these data were produced from a sample small in number and that the findings are limited to the sample interviewed. Similar research in the future, based upon a larger sample, may report different results and possibly find a greater number of statistically significant relationships between variables than were found in this study. The present research also relied, to a great extent, upon the memory of its respondents. Although the victim respondents did not appear to have difficulty recalling the events of their robbery experience i.e., when asked to respond to various questions, the victims did not say things like, "Sorry, but I can't remember", or, "Oh, I forget", tests reveal decreasing levels of recall over a period of time (Skogan, 1975:24).

At the same time, however, Skogan (1975:25) states that the rate at which interviews recover events is still fairly high. Nevertheless, to eliminate the chances of recall errors, future research might examine aspects of the victimizing experience immediately after the victims report the robbery to the police. Accompanying the responding officers to the scene of a robbery would provide an excellent opportunity for collecting data. This

would also eliminate the possibility of having victims telescoping events that occurred prior to the time limits of the research. In addition, due to time and financial constraints, this study was only directed at one aspect of the victims' contact with the criminal justice system i.e., the police. Subsequent research may find it interesting to document the victims' experiences with *all* agencies of the criminal justice system.

Despite these limitations, it is believed that the present study should assist police policy makers in making decisions about the training required for officers who deal with victims of violent crime like robbery. Police in Winnipeg, as is almost certainly the case in similar departments across Canada, are already sympathetic in their response to such victims but improvements could be made to this response which would be of benefit to both law enforcement agencies and the community.

As further research develops on victims and their needs, it seems clear that both the police and the general public will have a shared interest in such research. Not only would additional victimization studies enhance the knowledge base from which to develop better services to the victims of crime, but would also increase the willingness of members of the community to cooperate with the police. Besides being aware that any information they are able to put forth might help the police apprehend the persons responsible for their victimizing experience, those who suffer at the hands of a criminal need to

know that law enforcement agencies really do care about their plight. Victims of crime would not only like to see such concern, as this present study has indicated, but as many would agree, have a right to improved treatment and services. No longer should victims feel that the criminal justice system is insensitive to their suffering and needs but, rather, that a better attempt is being made to alleviate the effects of their victimization.

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Police de Winnipeg

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to Chief of Police
Adresser toute correspondance
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TELEPHONE: 946-0360

HER STEPHEN
1985-01-11

Dear

Recently you were a victim of a crime. The Winnipeg Police Department recognizes the feelings of fear, anger and anxiety a crime such as robbery can have on it's victim. Victim Services was established to assist victims in coping with the effects of crime. We are also interested in training our police officers to become more aware and sensitive to the needs of victims. However, we need further information in this area. A study is being conducted and we are asking for your assistance.

This study is being conducted by Ms. Sandy Woytowich, who is completing her Masters Degree in Criminology at Simon Fraser University, British Columbia. The object of the study is to obtain personal views of victims such as yourself.

I should stress that any information provided by you will be entirely confidential. You are under no obligation to participate in this study. We do feel, however, that any information gained should prove valuable to the police and other services in helping victims such as yourself.

Sandy will be contacting you by telephone in the next few days to ask for your permission to participate and then arrange for a convenient time to meet with you. The interview will last approximately 25 minutes.

If there are any further questions in regards to this study please feel free to contact Constable Bernie Dionne, Victim Services, 985-6350.

Yours truly,

D. DePourcq,
Superintendent (Crime).

APPENDIX B

VICTIMS OF ROBBERY SURVEY

THE ROBBERY

Q1 Have you ever reported a robbery to the Police before this occasion?

Yes
No
Don't Know

If Yes
Q2 How many times have you been robbed (and reported it) not including this last robbery?

Once
Twice
Three Times
Four times
Five times
Six times or more
Don't know

Q3 Did you report more than one robbery last year?

Yes
No
Don't know

I would like to talk to you about the last robbery you reported to the Police.

Q4 Did you suffer any personal injury as a result of this robbery?

Yes
No
Don't know

Q5 Was anything actually damaged by the robber(s)?

Yes
No
Don't know

Q6 If yes
How would you describe any damage?

A little damaged
Damaged
Badly damaged
Don't know

Q7 Other than personal injury, loss or damage of property|merchandise, did you suffer any other inconvenience as a result of this incident?

Yes
No
Don't know

If yes (specify)

POLICE VISITS

Q8 Thinking now of the police investigation, how many times in all did they come and investigate the robbery?

For each visit:

Q9 (a) How many officers were present? _____

Q10 (b) How long did they stay? _____

First visit

Q11 How long would you say it took them to get to the scene from when they were called?

Less than 15 mins.
16-30 mins.
31-45 mins.
46-60 mins.
Over 60 mins.
Don't know

Q12 Would you say they were...

Very slow
Slow
Neither slow nor fast
Fast
Very fast
Don't know

On the first visit, can you remember what the police actually did?

- Q13 (a) Asked for details of how the robbery happened? _____
- Q14 (b) Took a signed statement of how the robbery happened? _____
- Q15 (c) Asked for details of the goods stolen? _____
- Q16 (d) Took fingerprints|footprints|photographs? _____
- Q17 (e) Gave advice on preventing future robberies? _____

Thinking of this first occasion would you please describe the way the Police conducted their inquiries.

On a scale of 1 to 5, would you say they were...

- Q18 Thorough - Neglectful _____
- Q19 Organized - Disorganized _____
- Q20 Experienced - Inexperienced _____
- Q21 Rushed - Ready to take time _____
- Q22 Expert - Amateur _____

If yes

On this second visit, can you remember what the Police actually did?

- Q33 (a) Asked for details of how the robbery happened? _____
- Q34 (b) Took a signed statement of how the robbery happened? _____
- Q35 (c) Asked for details of the goods stolen? _____
- Q36 (d) Took fingerprints|footprints|photographs? _____
- Q37 (e) Gave advice on preventing future robberies? _____

THE VICTIMS

People tell us a lot of different things about how they feel when they are victims of a crime. Would you please tell me how you felt at the time of the incident?

- Q38 (a) Not upset|not bothered _____
- Q39 (b) Anger _____
- Q40 (c) Fear _____
- Q41 (d) Pain (physical) _____
- Q42 (e) Surprise _____
- Q43 (f) Confusion _____
- Q44 (g) Sick _____
- Q45 (h) Nervous _____
- Q46 (i) Crying _____
- Q47 (j) Other (specify) _____
- Q48 (k) Don't know _____

Q49 Upon the arrival of the Police, did you receive any help from them in dealing with these feelings?

Yes
(specify)
No
Don't know

Q50 Was there any other kind of assistance that you could have used from the Police but didn't get?

Yes
(specify)
No
Don't know

INVESTIGATION IN GENERAL

Now I would like you to think of the investigation as a whole.

Q51 Were you able to give the Police any descriptions?

Yes
No
Don't know

If yes

Q52 Would you say this was...

A strong lead
A weak lead
Don't know

Q53 Was anyone arrested in connection with your case?

Yes
(skip to Q59)
No
Don't know

If 'no' or 'don't know'

Q54 Did the Police give any indication of the chances of catching the robber(s)?

Yes
No
Don't know

If yes

Q55 Was this...

Good
Fair
Poor

Q56 Did the Police ever indicate that they had finished their inquiries into your case?

Yes
No
Don't know

How did you receive this information?

Q57 (a) Police contacted you

Q58 (b) You contacted the Police

CRIME PREVENTION

Q59 Did the Police, at any time, give you advice on preventing robbery?

Yes
No
Don't know

If yes

Q60 Can you remember if it was a uniformed or plain clothes officer?

Uniformed
Plain clothes
Don't know

Q61 Were you advised about a Victim Services Program?

Yes
No
Don't know

Q62 Looking back, can you think of any particular reason why your business was robbed?

Yes
No
Don't know

If yes
What reason is this?

- Q63 (a) Number of staff present at one time? _____
- Q64 (b) Location of business? _____
- Q65 (c) Merchandise available? _____
- Q66 (d) Hours of operation? _____
- Q67 (e) Other (specify)? _____

EVALUATION

Would you now give me your impressions of the investigation overall.

How would you rate the following aspects of the investigation...

- Q68 (a) Manner of the police officers _____
- Q69 (b) The advice given on crime prevention? _____
- Q70 (c) The information given about what was happening and going to happen? _____

Read out for each

1. Very disappointing
2. A little disappointing
3. As expected
4. A little better than expected
5. Much better than expected

If you were to be robbed again, in the same way, which of the following would you like to see from the Police?

- Q71 (a) More information? _____
- Q72 (b) More advice on crime prevention? _____
- Q73 (c) A better manner? _____
- Q74 (d) More information about Victim Services Program? _____

Q75 So to summarize overall, how satisfied are you with the way the Police conducted their inquiries?

Very satisfied
Fairly satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Fairly dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied

Q76 How satisfied are you with the way the Police treated you as a person?

Very satisfied
Fairly satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Fairly dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied

ROBBERIES AND THE POLICE IN GENERAL

Now I have some questions about robberies in general.

Q77 For every five robberies of businesses, how many do you think the Police were able to solve last year?

Less than 1 in 5
1 in 5
2 in 5
3 in 5
4 in 5
5 in 5
Don't know

Q78 For every five robberies of businesses, in how many of the cases does the victim suffer physical injury?

Less than 1 in 5
1 in 5
2 in 5
3 in 5
4 in 5
5 in 5
Don't know

Q79 Out of five robberies or businesses, the premises receive damage by the robber(s) in how many cases?

- Less than 1 in 5
- 1 in 5
- 2 in 5
- 3 in 5
- 4 in 5
- 5 in 5
- Don't know

Q80 Would you say that most robberies of businesses occur during the week, on weekends, or equally during the week as on weekends?

- During the week
- On weekends
- Equally

Thinking now of the Police in general, can you tell me whether you agree, disagree, or neither agree nor disagree with each of the following statements?

Q81 (a) "The Police are not so helpful to people like me."

If 'agree', do you 'strongly agree' or just 'agree'?

If 'disagree', do you 'strongly disagree' or just 'disagree'?

Q82 (b) "It is not the job of the Police to comfort the victims of crime."

(as Q81)

Q83 (c) "The Police catch as many criminals as can be expected."

(as Q81)

Finally, just one last question to help with statistics.

Q84 Are you married (including common-law) or single?

- Married
- Single

APPENDIX C
POLICE MEMBER SURVEY

THE ROBBERY

Q1 Generally speaking, how many times in all do the Police go to the scene to investigate a business robbery?

For each visit:

Q2 (a) How many officers are present?

Q3 (b) Approximately how long do you stay?

Q4 How long would you say it takes the Police to respond to the scene from the time of the dispatch?

- Less than 15 mins.
- 16-30 mins.
- 31-45 mins.
- 46-60 mins.
- Over 60 mins.
- Don't know

Q5 Upon arriving, what do the Police usually do?

(Write in)

Q6 After talking to the robbery victim(s), do you give them an incident card with your name and phone number where you can be contacted in case of further information or questions?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Q7 Is this further contact encouraged by officers?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Q8 If the POLice return to the robbery location on a subsequent visit, what is actually done?

(write in)

THE VICTIMS

People tell us a lot of different things about how they feel when they are victims of a crime. Would you please tell me what you think victims of a robbery feel at the time of the incident?

Q9 (a) Not upset|not bothered

Q10 (b) Anger

Q11 (c) Fear

Q12 (d) Pain

Q13 (e) Surprise

Q14 (f) Confusion

Q15 (g) Sick

Q16 (h) Nervous

Q17 (i) Crying

Q18 (j) Other (specify)

Q19 (k) Don't know

(Respondents answered with 'yes' or 'no'.)

Q20 Do you feel that you are able to help the victims in dealing with these feelings?

Yes
No
Don't know

Q21 Do you feel it is a part of a policeman's responsibility to deal with some of the feelings a robbery victim may have?

Yes
No
Don't know

INVESTIGATION IN GENERAL

Q22 Are the victims of robbery able to give the Police (good____, fair____, Poor____) descriptions of the robber(s)?

Q23 Do the Police give any indication of the chances of catching the robber(s)?

Yes
No
Don't know

Q24 Do the Police ever indicate that they have finished their inquiries into the case?

Yes
No
Don't know

Q25 How often do Police contact the victim to inform them of the progress of the investigation?

Each time
Often
Sometimes
Almost never
Only when an arrest(s) has been made

CRIME PREVENTION

Q26 Do the Police give advice on preventing robbery?

Yes
No
Don't know

Q27 Do the Police advise robbery victims of the Victim Services Program?

Yes
NO
Don't know

Q28 Do you feel it is necessary for police officers to receive training relating to the needs of victims following a robbery?

Yes
No
Don't know

Q29 Do you feel there is a particular reason(s) for a business being robbed?

Yes
No
Don't know

If yes

What reason(s) is this?

Q30 (a) Number of staff present at one time? _____

Q31 (b) Location of the business? _____

Q32 (c) Merchandise available? _____

Q33 (d) Hours of operation? _____

Q34 (e) Other (specify)? _____

ROBBERIES IN GENERAL

Q35 For every five robberies of businesses, how many are the Police able to solve?

Less than 1 in 5
1 in 5
2 in 5
3 in 5
4 in 5
5 in 5
Don't know

Q36 For every five robberies of businesses, in how many cases does the victim(s) suffer physical injury?

Less than 1 in 5
1 in 5
2 in 5
3 in 5
4 in 5
5 in 5
Don't know

Q37 Out of five robberies of businesses, the premises receive damage by the robber(s) in how many cases?

Less than 1 in 5
1 in 5
2 in 5
3 in 5
4 in 5
5 in 5
Don't know

Q38 Would you say that most robberies of businesses occur during the week, on weekends, or equally during the week as on weekends?

During the week
On weekends
Equally

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